

# Letters from our readers

25 October 2005

*The following is a selection of recent letters to the World Socialist Web Site.*

*On “The Asian tsunami, Hurricane Katrina and the Kashmiri earthquake: lessons for the working class”*

Dear Mr. Dias,

May I express my deepest gratitude for your speech. It was delivered in Sri Lanka and rings all over the world. You spoke with passion, ordinary expression, the complete absence of metaphysics and abstraction, close to what can be gained from “the facts” in their unfolding—real life. Being an academic, I am especially attuned to real speech, having been sickened by its opposite.

I have heard from those who have come across Trotsky in life. I have a close friend whose Jewish grandfather saw Trotsky off on a ship in Montreal that took him to the revolution that could have swept the world and saved us all this horror. But “historical laws are reflected through the prism of accident.” I worked as well for years with an elderly gentleman whose father saw Trotsky speak in those years. I always imagined he sounded like you.

Thank you,

AL

Toronto, Canada

21 October 2005

*On “Legal lynching of Saddam Hussein begins in Iraq”*

What a farce! War criminals trying someone for war crimes! Essentially, the US-backed tribunal is trying its own war crimes, since it was the United States that supplied Hussein with weapons and money and encouraged him to use the same during the 1980s. Freud would have a field day!

CZ

San Francisco

19 October 2005

At the dentist yesterday, I was trying to figure out what was most uncomfortable, the dental procedure or

the blating of Fox News on the TV. Fox’s gloating over Saddam’s certain demise indicates/supports the notion that the trial is nothing but a false legal veneer to kill the man. The Fox anchorman was truly something, saying, sardonically (to paraphrase): “Yeah, I’m gonna lose a lot of sleep over it” if something bad happens to Saddam. Also, providing other insights, such as: “Saddam’s victims were publicly executed. Do you think Saddam’s will be a public execution?” It’s sad to think that anyone—much less a vast number of Americans—use Fox and other like sources for their information. America is truly in trouble.

RM

Mobile, Alabama

19 October 2005

*On “British Columbia teachers strike in grave danger”*

I support these teachers. Our education system is falling apart because of the government. The teachers should stand their ground. I am an union person as well for 18 years with the IWA and then the plumbers and pipefitters. With all the work in Alberta I’m enjoying some great years, but we see an end coming to the unions as well here. We need to support them across Canada and start a new party for the working class.

TB

Edmonton, Alberta

21 October 2005

*On “US auto union goes to court against its own members”*

You are right as usual. While neo-cons may well criticize your findings and remedies as atavistic remains of a “failed” utopian socialism they offer no relief to displaced workers and others who have lost their benefits, save appeals to the “greater good” and “self reliance.”

LL

Whitehall, Pennsylvania

22 October 2005

*On* “Northwest and Delta executives to make millions from bankruptcies”

It really appalls me to think these CEOs and top executives will make out ok, while the average workers of these corporations will lose their jobs and health care. Hardly seems worth it to get up every morning and go to work. Maybe the working class of America should all just take a day off and see what happens!

SD

19 October 2005

*On* “Political lessons of the New York transit workers’ contract struggle”

[Bob] Kiley and [Tim] O’Toole, managers of the London Underground, have sent letters to all workers and managers to attend a conference about the future of the LU. At the conference, gauging the mood for support for the new contracts will be tested. The most peculiar thing about this conference is that neither the middle management nor the unions were told about it. The local Socialist Workers Party union reps are all upset. This morning they had a meeting with the top management about this conference. Asked about the content of this conference they claim they know nothing. All they were told is to maximise the coverage of the workers who will go by rotating groups to the conference at Waterloo station.

We are all very worried and apprehensive. I have decided to have your articles about the New York transit posted in our depot news board. (“Political lessons of the New York transit workers’ contract struggle” among others.) An article of your site by Tony Robson in 2001 about the union’s role in winding down opposition to privatisation was also posted in June on our news board at work (“Rail union winds down opposition to London Underground privatisation”). It created a bit of a stir but most said it was true. The reps did not tear it down.

Last year, Bob Crow forced onto the local reps of the signallers at LU a new contract with phased redundancy and apprentice schemes that supply cheaper workforce to the LU. Many workers opposed it. But the reps, under the pressure of Crow, voted for it. In the copy of the contract it explicitly states that the Rail, Marine and Transport workers union will not oppose the implementation of new work measures. Also on the stations, the booking offices clerks are being phased out. About 200 posts were lost last year. The staff on

stations got their holidays increased to 10 weeks.

Of course the local SWP reps here still maintain we should keep political struggle within union boundaries.

DE

London, England

20 October 2005

*On* “US soldiers caught on film desecrating bodies of Afghans”

I am a former US Army soldier. Early in basic training and again in Advanced Training, the rules imposed by the Geneva Convention were taught to myself and other trainees. How any US Army soldier could torture or otherwise mistreat prisoners and believe that this is not a violation of Army standards of conduct perplexes and disgusts me. I don’t know how anyone—especially a US Army soldier—could commit atrocities as described in the above article with a clear conscience. I am increasingly ashamed to admit that I am an American, and that I served.

BP

Clearwater, Florida

22 October 2005

*On* “Bush vows crackdown on immigrant workers”

It is alarming that we see again their answer is further militarization and prison-building. In view of the letter today from PG (See “Letters from our readers”) in regards to his/her Louisiana relative who has not been released from what was to be a seven-day holding, I am inclined to wonder just what procedures there would be for the release of prisoners from over the border who do not have family here to petition for them. Is it to be a Guantánamo-like situation where there is no notification of relatives and no release in sight? Will crossing our border become a dice game wherein death or imprisonment are the two biggest odds? American dream? Killed it.

CMS

Portland, Oregon

20 October 2005



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