

# Letters from our readers

27 February 2007

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

*On “Seven die in Pennsylvania house fire”*

Thank you for reporting this story, another tragedy in the so-called “land of plenty.” It’s great to see some outlet isn’t so distracted by the goings-on of Anna Nicole or Britney Spears and can report some real news! Given the grotesque amounts this country is spending to plunge Iraq into hell, no man, woman, or child in the US should have to worry about basic necessities; yet, when it is left to the “free market” (i.e., “free” to exploit the people who work for slave wages in the US and globally), people are left to their own.

In any civilized nation, it would be mandatory for a company to provide gas/heat to families living in zero-below climate zones. Yet here, if you can’t pay the system leaves you for dead. These deaths represent an ongoing social failure and speak volumes about what the US is and is not. Keep up the great work and thank you for reporting about “The People,” those of us working poor, struggling to get by.

JH

23 February 2007

*On WSWs coverage of the 2004 California grocery strike*

In your coverage of the strike you said, “Stater Bros. employees voted before the strike began to accept any agreement reached, [UFCW spokesperson Ellen] Anreder said.” This is a lie! Stater Bros. management voted, not the employees! I tried to bring this out back during the strike but I was told we needed one employee to verify this and all were too scared to put our names forward in fear of retaliation. Again, Stater Bros. union employees never voted; management worked out a deal with the UFCW, who stabbed us in the back and rigged the elections to make sure it passed.

They were surprised as hell when we voted unanimously (except for the Newport Beach store) to

vote no! I guess the Union didn’t get their bonus since we didn’t do their bidding and accept the so-called “great contract” that we “should” (or else) accept. The union told us that we would be out in the street without union backing if we voted no. Instead we all got a \$650 bonus to vote yes—for 1,292 employees! Because we gained this for ourselves the Union didn’t get the half-cut like we usually have to give them for their protection (Mafia lingo). Too bad!

Anyway, tomorrow we vote again for a contract and the Union, UFCW Local 324, won’t let us see it or ask questions about it or discuss about it with each other to figure out how bad it really is. By this time we have all figured out that it must be bad, so who needs to see it to vote no? Again! Really a lame excuse for trying to force another lame contract down our throats yet again! They even made it hard for those workers to have the time; they’ve scheduled the vote between 8 and 5 Friday. This means we will have little time to see or discuss the contract and then we must run back to work.

Of course, some say we must take our union’s word that this contract is great (just like the last one?) How dumb do they think we are? They also said we were allowed to vote! Not true. After I contacted their union I was told by them and Gelson’s management that we were not allowed to vote. I called the *Oakland County Register* and Galvin, a reporter there, found out that, yes, I was allowed to vote. Oops! Greg Conger had said, as did his treasurer, that we had no right to vote at all! Oops!

GC

Newport Beach, CA, USA

22 February 2007

*On “Venus and The Pursuit of Happiness: two films with a little something to say”*

I had the pleasure of reading your review of Venus over the telephone to my older friend (I am 65) who had just seen the movie. Even though I have not yet seen the film, we both thoroughly enjoyed your review,

the humorous quotes, and your insights. Thank you.

JW

22 February 2007

*On* “What the New York Times doesn’t say about the court ruling on habeas corpus”

Great piece of work. “When fascism comes to America, it will come in any other name.”

Have the Democrat and Republican political majority so combined themselves that they have the same mindset?

The great labor leaders of the past would speak out against the oligarchy. Is the labor movement so diminished that there are no courageous speakers?

Thanks for doing so.

MS

Santa Rosa, California, USA

24 February 2007



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