

Letters from our readers

9 October 2007

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

On “Retiring military chief declares: American people can’t vote to end Iraq war”

I think for the first time in reading reports on the WSWs I laughed when I read the title of this one. How absurd, to declare democracy secondary to military. Except it’s not funny after the initial absurdity. Thanks for the reporting.

MS

Santa Rosa, California, USA

4 October 2007

On “Socialist Equality Party in Australia announces federal election candidates”

It was thrilling and hope inspiring to see the many candidates standing for office in Australia. That they will run campaigns based on the issues and the critical analysis thereof means this will be an interesting election cycle, indeed. It also means that, finally, an electorate will have an actual choice, and that those long-jaded will have a reason to go to the polls.

It also means that people will realize that working people have not only the interest but the ability to enter the ring. This is, perhaps, the most important thing. In the coming months, as debates and statements occur, it will become clear that we are a class of thinkers, of doers, and perfectly capable of seeing what is what and what needs to be done.

CMS

Portland, Oregon, USA

4 October 2007

On “Brain injuries more prevalent among US troops than earlier estimates”

This is just another of the hidden costs of the Iraqi invasion and occupation. What is going to happen to these veterans? When the inadequate VA system boots them out, they will wind up homeless, on the streets like the many Vietnam veterans. They will then be arrested and placed into the prison system, where there

are no facilities for mental health care. The number of brain-damaged veterans is staggering. What kind of future is this for those whose lives have been sacrificed for the profits of the US war machine and the demented dreams of power of the ideological fanatics of the Bush administration and their corporate masters?

This is just another nightmare outcome of the US drive for global hegemony. The ruling elite in their gated communities will not notice the men and women lying in the gutters outside their walls. The homeless and unemployment problem will be taken care of by filling up those camps Halliburton is building.

CZ

San Francisco, California, USA

1 October 2007

On “Payroll crisis causes hardship for Los Angeles teachers”

Your article on the disaster of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) payroll system understates the catastrophe. I am a teacher in LAUSD and this BTS (Basic Tools for Schools) system was a rip-off from the start as you pointed out. The teachers ‘union,’ the United Teachers of Los Angeles, which carries credentials now as the ‘left-led’ union is *still* trying to build up an even closer political “collaborative” (their term) with the District/Board.

Deloitte Touche Corp/BTS Corp, etc. knew that they actually did *not* have the programming advanced enough to deal with the 89,000-member LAUSD. They wanted the contracts and the humongous profits. So folks like us got hit before and after because of their lobbyists greasing the palms of the Democrats and Republicans in Sacramento. This is a big reason why the teachers union (45,000+ members) has done little except file expensive but impotent lawsuits and now boycott after school meetings on sites that are technically unpaid hours anyway!

As you say, many teachers (but especially new and substitute teachers) live close to paycheck to paycheck.

This is not to mention extra hardships on the classified workers, cafeteria staffs, janitors, etc. This crisis has painfully taught many that there is no good coming from the ideology of a brotherhood of (private or state) capital and labor. Those who passively or even actively accept these relations are bound to keep getting exploited by the ruling class and its political state. We can do better to fight back, but we need our own organization, built from below.

NC

Los Angeles, California, USA

2 October 2007

On “Germany: Train drivers need a new perspective”

The idea that a railway strike could be effective over just one day is absurd, and, as stated, clearly designed to hold the working class back. With freight transport in particular, the real effects would not show for a few days, as the supply line of cargo for industrial production, fuel, electricity and international trade began to collapse.

Most disturbing is the plan of Deutsche Bahn to use foreign workers and new hires as train drivers in the event of the strike. Regardless of the skill of these workers, the peculiarities and particulars of various routes and regulations is vital knowledge acquired from training and experience. To try and bypass this—rather than improving the conditions of those on strike—is a criminal threat to safety.

JL

Richmond, Virginia, USA

5 October 2007

On “Sri Lankan president’s speech at UN: lies in defence of war and human rights abuses”

Your article on Rajapakse’s duplicity and treacherous lies is very pertinent and reflects the current depressing and dangerous situation in Sri Lanka. The so-called international community (read US, EU and Japan) has no moral or legal authority to be role models, when they break each and every provision of the international law or covenants with their naked aggression and subjugation of the oppressed and the weak. In Sri Lanka, the oppressed and discriminated Tamil community would have received a better response and treatment by joining the Sinhala working class and the peasants. Instead the Tamil Tigers have forcefully and mercilessly taken control of this tragedy for their (the LTTE’s) personal gain and advantage. What a fate! Is

there an alternate path to achieve peace and understanding?

KM

5 October 2007

On “Recycling Stalinist lies about the Spanish Civil War”

Well, I liked this article. Ann Talbot’s article does a very good job at refuting the Stalinist lies that the demand for workers power during the Spanish revolution was somehow counterrevolutionary. In reality, it was the political subordination of the Communist Party to the bourgeois “Republican” government that was counterrevolutionary. The Republic collapsed precisely because workers were required to subordinate themselves to the “anti-fascist bourgeoisie.” But this “anti-fascist bourgeoisie” was in fact closer to the pro-fascist bourgeoisie than to the popular masses, just as the Chinese “national” bourgeoisie in 1925-1927 was closer to the imperialist bourgeoisie than to the proletariat. Hence, the betrayal committed by the “anti-fascist” bourgeoisie, which bears a close resemblance to the betrayal committed by Chiang Kai-Shek’s “progressive” bourgeoisie in 1927. In both cases, the outcome was tragic. In both cases, the fact that there was no political independence for the working class led to tragic defeats.

What the international working class needs is the theory of Permanent Revolution. The time of bourgeois revolution has long passed. Today, the world is ripe for proletarian revolution.

RF

6 October 2007



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