

Letters from our readers

3 April 2008

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

On “US Treasury plan shields Wall Street speculators”

You write, “Significantly, the mandate of this new agency would not extend to investment banks, even though investment banks have now been given access to government-backed loans at the Fed’s discount window.” Yes, and this singular emergency measure for a “moment of crisis” has now quietly passed into the practice of Standard Operating Procedure.

MG

Los Angeles, California, USA

2 April 2008

As Balzac wrote, “Behind every great fortune, lies a great crime.”

BW

1 April 2008

On “WSWS at American Axle picket line in Detroit”

The video is something the whole US needs to see and really listen to what the people are saying. The one guy said it all just like I did—revolution is on its way. I told my kids that when my oldest was in 7th-8th grade, and they laughed; my oldest is 32 now. Too bad it’s not on TV too.

YB

2 April 2008

On “American Axle strike at the crossroad”

I am a Canadian auto worker, and I thank God that we broke away from the UAW years ago. Since that break we have had substantial gains in our contracts while our American brothers and sisters have suffered. Canadians of all working classes that I have spoken to and explained the cuts that AAM wants are shocked and appalled! You are in the fight of your life right now. DO NOT TRUST THE UAW! GM, Dauch, and the UAW have most certainly met prior to the strike and given the slow sales of trucks and SUVs have set a timeline for how long this strike could go on. Do you

think it’s coincidence that AAM releases their business info to the UAW a day after Malibu sales may be threatened? Hang tough and trust nobody not holding a picket sign.

CM

2 April 2008

On “US food stamp use projected to swell to record levels”

You touched but passed over an issue in food stamps and other programs: the \$2,000 asset limit. There are hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people that would qualify for food stamps and Medicaid but for that \$2,000 limit. That limit has existed for years and has not changed.

The \$2,000 can be a junk car. It could be a \$1,000 true piece of junk and \$1,000 from a paycheck. Maybe \$500 or \$600 could come from an apartment deposit. Even \$10,000 in savings today is no security at all.

The government does enforce this limit and can find violations from bank records that it can access. Nonetheless I do think a lot of people cheat on this point.

I have unsuccessfully tried to figure out when this limit was set and what it would now be if adjusted for inflation. This issue is never discussed despite the fact that it affects so many people. Someone should figure out and document what this figure would be today if it had been inflation adjusted and how many people would otherwise qualify.

KJ

2 April 2008

Thanks to Naomi Spencer for her article on the swelling demand for food stamp assistance. I have friends and family members that have been forced to take what jobs they can in order to just take care of the basics, and now that is even becoming impossible. After the rent and energy bills are paid, there isn’t much left in the cupboard, and their energy company, Toledo Edison, recently applied for a rate increase (to

the tune of about 9 percent) even though they raked in over a billion dollars in profit last year and paid their CEO a \$14 million salary.

Anyone interested in reviving a secession movement???

DR

Detroit, Michigan, USA 2 April 2008

On "Writer David Mamet: Man overboard"

I relish your wonderful insights and snazzy as well as keenly thought-out compositions. Occasionally, there's a disagreement I bring to your attention. This is one such occasion.

In the educating comment on David Mamet's about-face, you comment very briefly on his and America's general perspective on the Holocaust and offer yours. Though the article early on promises something of substance presumably, of course, in relation to the artist's consciousness, the brief comment that ensues simply states a geopolitical truism: "this horrible crime was committed by crisis-ridden German imperialism in response to the threat represented by social revolution."

While identity politics may frame Mamet's false consciousness—it's not to my knowing—there's an essential connection between mass-scale social dislocation, state oppression and the choices of millions of individuals that enabled this unbearably tortuous event, which brought the word genocide fully into our modern vocabulary and international institutions.

Our repeatedly shown failure to sufficiently comprehend and adequately counter the power of dehumanizing, exterminating hate forms the basis of another discussion we all need to have again and again. And in your rich collection of work there are many jumping-off points for this, as well thus for delving into the horror and agony of the Holocaust. A simple, two-page name search of the web site brings this helpful psychological insight from a Lynch film review on-screen:

"The secret of an individual's life, however, particularly someone who has lived his life in relatively oppressed circumstances, may not lie in his own ken. Lynch does not trouble himself to explore the possibility that in *Straight* the mixture of truth and banality might express both the manner in which harsh reality has forced its way through to consciousness and the generally unfavorable conditions for intellectual development."

Certainly, Mr. Walsh, you have done much—I might say without unction, some not so small wonders—for my intellectual development. (Its many shortcomings of course my responsibility to own.)

JRC

Toronto, Canada

1 April 2008

Thanks for articulating what had been bothering me about Mamet for a number of years now. I tended to just count him in with the other rather insincere and unpleasant writers of this era without really thinking about just why I found him to be so. The astute observations of the article are well appreciated.

CMS

1 April 2008



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