

Letters from our readers

27 June 2008

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

On “Obama attacks US Supreme Court decision barring death penalty for child rape”

Senator Obama’s comments leave aside the reality that people who target children for sexual abuse or violence are mentally ill in most instances. Even if it could be argued that some are qualifiedly sane, such a notion would leave aside the tendency of commercial culture to employ soft porn in advertising and entertainment that goes out of its way to sexualize or sensualize adolescent and pre-adolescent children, the notorious sensation around the late child model Jon Benet being a prime example.

As your article suggests, Senator Obama’s comments are his version of the Ricky Rector field play. Having given his Sistah Souljah diatribe a couple of weeks ago on Father’s Day with his comments on the shortcomings of black fatherhood, Senator Obama continues to work every angle that will endear him to Blue Dog Democrats and the corporate right quite energetically. I have to say that as much contempt as I have for the “Democratic” Party and its watchmen, I thought Obama would try to string “progressives” and “liberals” along at least until the convention. But why bother, since he has them eating out of his hand already.

He is definitely a godsend to the US ruling class, which would be having a much more difficult time putting this same old tired stuff across with the blatantly mercenary and venal Hillary Clinton in the driver’s seat. Though I can hardly wait to see the face of the true believers when he picks her as his running mate, which is looking more and more likely as the summer wears on. All the way with JFK and LBJ.

MH

Seattle, Washington, USA

26 June 2008

On “Social satirist George Carlin dead at 71”

George Carlin was a paradigm of social honesty and courage. In these times, too many comedians tend to retreat into the kitschy and the familiar, or escape into absurdism. Worse, some surrender to the abhorrent politics of scapegoating, targeting the most vulnerable (immigrants, Muslims, women, gays, etc.). Carlin was a realist, an entertainer at his funniest when he wasn’t joking. He never hesitated to unleash his ire on the ruling class or its institutions and values. He will be sorely missed, especially in light of the fact that our current climate seems unlikely to produce another of his caliber anytime soon. Thank you for your commemoration.

Sincerely,

LP

Wilmington, North Carolina, USA

24 June 2008

Excellent article and important. You catch what the bourgeois press can only see out of the corner of the eye.

BE

24 June 2008

Thank you for bringing out the better side of Carlin and reminding us of his real talent. Unfortunately the misanthropy and extreme cynicism had impacted his work in the later years to the point where the shows were almost unwatchable, certainly less enjoyable. Reading some of his better work still elicits laugh out loud moments, so much more so then the unengaged irony that fills up so much of popular culture at the moment.

I think your point that good comedy is cruel is a truism; at his finest moments he wielded the weapon well and appropriately engaged the necessary victims. Unfortunately, he became like his machete-yielding maniac in the bar and swung it too indiscriminately.

CO

Ferndale, Michigan, USA

25 June 2008

On “Social crisis in Detroit—An investigative report”

Thank you very much for your insightful piece on the situation in Detroit. I live in Southeast Michigan and the situation in the city is very bad. Most people are of the opinion that “things are getting better” due to the construction of a successful yet small entertainment/bar district, along with casinos and sports facilities. Granted, it’s probably better that these are there than nothing, but I think they distort the picture that many suburbanites, wealthy and middle class alike, have of the city. Many locals have some tie to the city and are able to assuage the guilt of their role in the city’s decline by blaming the problem on the political institution (which you have correctly identified as corrupt), but fail to see how the economic institutions surrounding these are really at the core of the current problems faced in the city. It’s shameful and depressing that a country as wealthy and prosperous as the United States allows destitution of this sort to persist.

MT

Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA

23 June 2008

On “US housing figures and other data: A picture of rapidly growing social misery”

This is a very good article. Unfortunately enough publicity is not given in the world arena so that people understand that the Americans are sacrificing their own people for the sake of conquering others to rob them of their natural resources—e.g., oil, etc. The American media concentrate on how terrible China is and Russia is an undemocratic state with all the worst crime, fraud, etc., etc. And, of course, Hamas, Hezbollah, the Syrians and the Iranians, not to mention Hugo Chavez, are all terrorists and Bad. With the United States, charity should begin at *home*.

In Canada, we get all this crap from our neighbors and very few actually keep up-to-date with international news.

YW

Woodville, Canada

25 June 2008

On “McCain adviser suggests that Republican campaign would benefit from another 9/11 attack”

The surprise might not even be authored by the usual suspects. The Iraqi resistance, being acute observers and followers of the US political situation, may have a

trick up their sleeves themselves.

The surprise would come in the form of a major, 5-point attack on the Green Zone in the middle of September or early October, producing a high US body count. It’s not farfetched when one stops to reflect on how riddled with moles the Iraqi government is.

Such an attack, timed to coincide with the US elections, if it produced a high body count, may produce a level of outrage that would dramatically change the political calculations of Obama and McCain. The rhetoric on the war, depending on the reaction of Americans, would shift drastically. Following such an attack, it might be politically untenable for either candidate to talk about either staying in Iraq for 100 years or for keeping a sizeable contingent behind to provide “security.”

KK

25 June 2008

On “An American oligarch: Former Exxon CEO leaves company with massive payout”

Rereading your April 15, 2006 piece on the CEO of Exxon and his associates after reading the Supreme Court’s ruling today made me want to cry. I wonder if it is just a coincidence that oilmen are now sitting in the White House while this travesty is occurring.

JK

26 June 2008



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