

Letters from our readers

7 October 2008

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

On "US Senate passes Wall Street bill"

Here's an interesting question: why not give the \$700,000,000,000 to the people losing their homes, or others at the bottom? They would certainly spend it paying their mortgages, etc., and the economy would get a boost. The Congress is essentially arguing this bailout to the rich is needed so that those depending on the rich for loans and jobs won't suffer. So why not hand the cash directly to the people who need it? As your article points out, there are no provisions to help the homeowners. They lose their homes while the banks who lent them the money incur no cost. This is the nature of late capitalism, or we might call it state capitalism: privatize profit, socialize risk.

BB

Oklahoma, USA

3 October 2008

In light of all this market manipulation and complex financial problems, an intelligent appraisal of the problems of contemporary society may cite these recent events as further evidence of the failure of capitalism. The goal of some is the establishment of world socialism. The vehicle for this transformation is the international working class, and that in the twenty-first century the fate of working people, and ultimately mankind as a whole, depends upon the success of the socialist revolution.

I don't agree. The establishment of world socialism means whatever work people accomplish, everyone receives the same salary. Overall, I think the money system is bad. If we go into a depression, most of the country will be homeless because everyone's house will be owned by a defunct bank. Food production will stop when workers don't get paid. If people built their own homes and were responsible for their own food production, whatever happens with how the rest of the world materializes (modern day conveniences, technology, luxury items), people would always have homes to live in and food to eat.

RT

3 October 2008

On "US congressman: 'If we don't pass this bill, we're going to have martial law in the United States'"

This is a very important article. These guys know exactly what they are doing. They have been preparing for it for decades. The precepts for martial law have already been put into place with the militarization of police forces--i.e., army-grade equipment and weapons for local police forces, including snipers. Most police chiefs now come directly from the FBI Academy, and even at my workplace, for example, the new chief of security is no longer a retired sheriff or cop, but a graduate of the FBI. Surveillance cameras and barbed wire fences surrounding our work sites where none existed before are just a few more manifestations of the road toward the full-fledged police state that the boss class is headed. We are told that this is to protect us from "terrorists"--but the real terrorists are the financial elite and their political minions who are stealing our social wage and driving us into wars, social insecurity, unemployment and poverty.

GC

USA

3 October 2008

On "Benelux countries intervene to bail out Fortis"

This shows all the lying going on all over the world by governments and the media about "no money" when it is for the benefit of the people. But when it is for enriching the fascist capitalists, all of a sudden multi-trillions are available right now. This whole charade shows that the time for socialism to run the world for the benefit of the working people instead of the fascist capitalists is long overdue. Electronic money transfer normally takes three days. Monday, I wrote a cheque to electronic transfer US\$ and was informed by the Bangkok Bank, "Now with all the financial problems in America it will be forty-five days before the money is in Bangkok."

FBR

Thailand

1 October 2008

By this stage, there can be no doubt, even to the dyed-in-the-wool capitalist proponents: the chickens are coming to roost! The mountain of debt, based on fictitious money, that is capitalism's "lifeblood," is now falling as an avalanche that threatens to sweep the Old Order to oblivion. Pundits talk of a "bloodbath," "greed" and "misbehaviour" by the

financial elite. This is all bollocks. The capital enterprises went there, because there was profit to be made, as analysed by Marx and Engels more than 150 years ago. Attempts are also made to shift the blame on the victim, in accordance with the "individual responsibility" principle, so beloved of the neo-cons. Now, the whole elaborate ideological superstructure is being revealed as a house of cards, the corpse of capitalism is on life support, ready to be taken out feet first. But then, where are the gravediggers? At this time, this situation recalls the darkest days of 1915, a time of utter confusion and disorientation of the working class; but at least there was a Bolshevik Party to drive a progressive political perspective and clarity. Today, despite worldwide discontent, the pauperisation and the rising consciousness of the masses of the working people, there is no attempt to organise a mass movement that would challenge capitalism. A mood of hopelessness and helplessness takes over, leading to a widely held view that "there is no alternative" to the capitalist mode of production. The result is widespread cynicism and alienation of the population towards political parties, the state and its institutions, and big business.

There are continuing signs of a deep social malaise and alienation, as witnessed in a comparative "backwater" of Finland just recently. As Rosa Luxemburg remarked about 90 years ago, mankind stands before a stark choice: "either socialism or barbarism"; and, of course, the corollary is also true: without socialism, there *will* be barbarism. This is why the role of WSWS and SEP is so crucial, and even more so in these uncertain and potentially revolutionary times of ferment and rising working class consciousness. The challenge is to begin to form a mass socialist revolutionary movement from what still remains, a largely marginal propagandist activity. Of crucial importance is a membership drive to widen support amongst the working class, with all the benefits of a mass movement, such as political weight and effectiveness.

MS

Queanbeyan, Australia

2 October 2008

You observe that billions of euros of public funds have gone into bailing out this ailing bank. As a Dutch taxpayer, obviously I find this alarming. However, this arrangement seems preferable to the US one, whereby the US Treasury simply buys the bad assets of the Wall Street investment firms. Apparently Sweden did reasonably well in the 1990s when it partly nationalized troubled banks; it later recuperated most of the costs of the bailout by selling the assets when the market had recovered.

On the other hand, I would have no objection to the bank remaining in public hands, much like the Dutch Rijkspostspaarbank was for most of the past century. If the

Fortis operation is harbinger for future (re)nationalizations, I'm all for it; socialism, I believe, can only be achieved in small steps.

CB

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

4 October 2008

On "Political power struggle in Malaysia continues unabated"

As a Malaysian I agree with your final analysis that neither Abdullah nor Anwar will change the economic situation in Malaysia. What is perhaps not widely known to the Malaysian public is that the recent upsurge in Anwar's popularity is due to the financial and material support of his powerful backers, the US and people close to Anwar in Washington. The US involvement in Malaysia is not new. It began at the time of Malaysia's independence in 1957, as part of the cold war strategy.

C

30 September 2008

On "Neanderthals and modern humans--a key to understanding human evolution"

First, let me thank you for this wonderful article. I am very happy to see the WSWS have an interest in such important subjects. More to the point, I see topics such as these to unravel many of the intellectual concepts that are part of the socialization package of a capitalist society. Beyond faith in the free market economy, the Western world holds many archaic notions which are being or have been disproved by modern science but are not generally accepted because these new facts conflict with this Western worldview.

Another topic that I feel is very worthy of consideration is the modern belief in IQ, a concept that was so brilliantly repudiated in Stephen Gould's *Mismeasure of Man* but is still an acceptable concept across the board. I feel that IQ, like excessive wealth, is another means of creating elitism by fostering another unfair system of haves and have-nots. Its use as a tool of racism has also been proven time and again.

Thank you again for your excellent efforts.

OC

Tongyoung, South Korea

4 October 2008



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