

Letters from our readers

2 December 2008

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

On "Michigan GM worker answers attack by New York Times columnist"

Thank you so much for running this article. It's high time the workers who are so often maligned get a direct say in the press. Sorkin may have an easy time demonizing her from afar, but I wonder what he'd say to Kandy O'Neill face to face?

I'd like to see Sorkin try to support his family on \$14/hour, as the new hires have to do. Should be no problem, since it's such an outrageously high amount, no? I dare him for a month.

Christie S

Oregon, USA 27 November 2008

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Great article and videos showing compassion for Detroit workers, such as firefighter Walter Harris and auto worker Kandy O'Neill, that expose the great class divide separating the lives of working people from the well-off elite. What insensitive arrogance for Mr. Sorkin to advocate bankruptcy for auto employees, which would mean social shock treatment for hundreds of thousands of workers and their communities, while he and his milieu enjoy plenty of comfort. It is our hard labor and that of past generations that have produced the *real* wealth, supporting the parasitic wealthy elite who dominate society through their ownership of the big banks and corporations on Wall Street. The working class majority around the world—who long for genuine democracy and equality—will soon realize that as a society we can no longer afford the privileged, wealthy few in business and government having obscene income levels, while the masses struggle to survive.

BL

27 November 2008

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Bravo. I will be passing this one around—to workers, but also to *Baltimore Sun* reporters.

Maureen M

27 November 2008

On "Video: Kandy O'Neil speaks to the WWSW"

I could not agree with Kandy more! Who is running this show any way? Is it not ridiculous that middle class Americans have to sit back and witness the Wall Street execs who are responsible for putting us in this mess get their bailout? I understand the circumstances, but I am sick and tired of this pathetic groveling I see on the news. How about making these guys who are hoarding all of the country's money give some of it back, or better yet

prosecute some of them for some of their crimes?

I am sickened by what I have watched in the past several months. No one should blame the autoworkers or any other blue-collar worker. These are the people who make this country work. But there has to be some sort of control on the *greedy, selfish* individuals at the top. The auto executives, just like the Wall Street executives, knew this day would come. They sat back and ignored the warnings signs over the years thinking they will not have to deal with it, because it would all fall on the middle class. Do they think they are fooling everyone? When is our country going to stop putting up with this ridiculous behavior? There is a level of moral responsibility that should go with holding these positions. And for them to come crawling on their hand and knees to ask the taxpayers to help them makes me sick.

Hey, here's a question: When Joe Schmoe who owns a small business, goes out and makes a wrong financial or business decision and it puts him out of business does he get to come and ask the rest of the taxpayers to foot the bill? Or, how about all of the middle class and lower class Americans go to Washington and ask for a handout because they went out last night and didn't make sound financial decisions?

It is a very sad day in our country. Even worse, I'm not too sure that enough Americans can see just what is happening before our very eyes. We cannot let this continue! I don't know if Obama is going to hold up to his promises, but I know something has to happen quick! Punish those who got us here and *never* let it happen again through diminishing the evil of greed! One cannot be an island of prosperity floating in a sea of despair!

Thomas G

Texas, USA

27 November 2008

On "Obama vows to slash federal budget"

Obama talks of change; when he starts to dismantle the military/industrial/corporate rulers of that country then I will say, "Ah, *change*." However, he is intent on continuing the military expansion overseas. With his bailout of industry and government savings cuts, that only means attacks on the normal services of the ordinary people and more steam to the people with the money and the power to continue to screw the people. After all, if he wasn't going to do that he would never have got to where he is now.

John C

26 November 2008

On "The Gates appointment: Obama slaps antiwar voters in the face"

He did.

Peter S

Vermont, USA

28 November 2008

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You seem to be right about the significance of the retention of Gates as secretary of defense, but you fail to sketch out that man's grievous past crimes, especially his involvement under Brzezinski in the "destabilization" of Afghanistan, and the creation of the Mujahideen, the genie that refuses to go back in the bottle.

Franz A

28 November 2998

On "Art and socialism: the real premises"

You write, "Art is a means of thinking about and feeling the world in images." Well put. A more concrete statement of the essence that draws us to art won't be found. Really good art speaks to a part of us that yearns for, demands even, recognition. John Lennon's lasting contribution to music is a wonderful example. Stifled by "the force of the objective" in the school system in Liverpool, England, where more often than not "teachers were trying to beat me into being a fucking dentist or a teacher," Lennon was able in his own way and his own means, through historical circumstances, to carve a place for himself, to have a larger vision, as you say, to the great benefit for all those of us who have enjoyed his expressive energy through his musical legacy.

He reflected reality in truly moving ways. When fans and managers tried to beat him into being a Beatle he rebelled from that as well. It no longer suited him that he was known for his talent, everyone liked his screaming just the way it was... He sensed that he was being used and breaking out into a solo career proclaimed: "It's just like I've just left school again! I just graduated from the school of Show Biz or whatever it was called."

Over the years he would continue to attract a base of listeners by reflecting the times that everyone found themselves in. If the words "There is room at the top they are telling you still, But first you must learn to smile as you kill, If you want to be like the folks on the hill" from his "Working Class Hero" song are pondered the question arises: What determines the principled position people sometimes take? Surely a confluence of factors both genetic and social, beyond our present grasp. Lennon's eloquent yet poignant reflection of the recent period that he experienced is a timeless and a bit harrowing debunking of Marcuse's "that which is already there is of no importance to art," especially today when applied to Barack Obama's meteoric rise in American politics and his willingness to put on a happy face.

Admittedly those words were a bit disconcerting for a 14-year-old prole that glommed on to them in the ebb tide that followed their release, but they pointed clearly to what one shouldn't be willing to do even if the opportunity was to arise. Fortunately, he followed up three years later with another great reflection on life with his "Whatever Gets You Through the Night" effort from his lost weekend period. "Don't need no gun to blow your mind, oh no oh no." It didn't answer all of my questions, but one thing is certain: when the Fabs are all dead and gone, it won't be Johnny that is remembered as the eunuch of the lot.

Heinz S

27 November 2008

On "CEOs 'cashed out' prior to economic crisis"

Kudos to Tom Eley for a splendid article that eloquently indicts the top brass of many corporations for their criminal self-serving actions, which have resulted in millions of jobs lost and billions of savings destroyed or robbed! The morally bankrupt Richard Fuld of Lehman Brothers made according to *Forbes* about half a billion dollars in the last six years, not the smaller figure reported!

Anthony JGY

Italy

28 November 2008

On "Sri Lankan soldiers and their families speak to the WSWS"

As I have said before, I agree with WSWS approaches to the chauvinistic problems by chauvinistic political thugs who run the country. Let's face it: politics over the decades boils down to 'Tamil bashing' by the southern political parties as a passport to power. It is like a public auction—the meanest wins! It has got the Sinhala public hooked on from 1956 at every election up until the last one in October 2005. On the other side, the party that offers the greatest resistance to ethnic and religious chauvinism wins. The Tigers are at the top of the pinnacle, naturally for the Tamils. People like Devananda and Anandasangaree are an ephemeral phenomenon who are being propped up by the chauvinistic forces from the south naturally.

One can well understand the plight of the poor Sinhala lads. If they join the military, it is for want of a decent choice. As you have so well pointed out, it is zero choice between risky employment and starvation. If this is what a 'democratic socialist' country has to offer, the problem lies at the top. It is a combined power and riches end game for the politicians and the military top brass.

You have not touched on the problem of desertions, which has become serious and endemic—some 15,000 and said to be rising; 1,600 have been court-martialed and sentenced to prison terms reportedly, while another 5,000 have been rounded up and are said to await trial.

As for the plight of the Tamil people, it is quite another matter all together. It is one of basic survival and want. That is why there is a clear-cut case for their right to self-determination.

Saravan

28 November 2008



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