

# Letters from our readers

31 January 2009

*On "Michigan man, 93, freezes to death after city cuts off electricity"*

The death of this old man clearly shows the contempt the rich class has for the working class, it doesn't matter whether you have worked all your life or served your country. If you can't pay then you don't get it, unless you are of course a bank that is responsible for the economic situation that affects us all—lying constantly to generations of workers time and time again. This coming period will force millions of workers into conflict once again, with this economic and political system. And once again we will hear the excuses for a situation in which an old man is denied the electricity to heat his home, workers all over the world are losing their homes and losing their jobs. The capitalist system is a system that holds nothing for the interests of the working class and everything for the minority greedy class. The working class must unite only on the political perspective of the SEP and the International Committee.

MB

United Kingdom 30 January 2009

*On "Investigate US torture and prosecute those responsible"*

Does torture really work? Of course it does—at least to the extent that anyone can be "broken." The military's own training to resist torture and interrogation is based on this premise. You are supposed to resist to your limit and, once broken, resist again. Of course, your ultimate protection is the Geneva Conventions (made laughable at this point by our own violations).

A couple of points: One is the validity and reliability of intelligence gained this way. The main one though is merely trivial: That this is a grotesque violation of anyone's human rights, and we—the United States—are the perpetrators. To bring those responsible for these horrendous crimes to justice is the least we can do to reassert our fundamental constitutional, and moral and

ethical values. I am not optimistic, however—I'm pretty sure these thugs are going to walk.

Rob M

28 January 2009

*On "Murder-suicide in Southern California leaves seven family members dead"*

This is appalling. So much for Kaiser Permanente's smug advertising line, "Thrive". Their line to the Lupoes would more accurately be, "Die"!! If ever there was an argument against private medical corporations—their evil accomplices and the insurance companies—this is surely it. How exactly were the five children of the Lupoes supposed to "thrive" after their parents both lost their jobs? How exactly is society supposed to "thrive" under the sway of callous employees such as the person who told Mr. Lupoe to "blow his brains out"? What kind of human being, could even think of saying such a thing to a father of five, who was losing his employment at the hands of the very person who gave this "advice"?

The cruelty and flippantly arrogant employers who can make decisions like this—and then flip off their desperate victims are truly the children of the capitalist ethic. Money and ruthlessness are more important than humanity and compassion. What monsters capitalism has to answer for!

Carolyn Z

California, USA

29 January 2009

*On "Novelist John Updike dead at 76: Was he a 'great novelist'?"*

What an uncanny review of Updike's writings by David Walsh. The comments in the *New York Times* of the *Times* obituary of Updike were uncompromisingly positive about Updike. I, like Walsh, admire Updike's talent as a writer, but am wary of what I think is the importance of style over content for Updike. See, in this regard, The New Yorker piece by Updike on watching 9/11 take place. And, how could he ever have

endorsed The Vietnam War, a travesty of rational human action?

Richard L

Florida, USA 29 January 2009

*On "The Spanish Civil War and the Popular Front"*

Thank you, Ann Talbot, for your enlightening two-part article, a real treat that has finally unscrambled for me the politics of the Spanish Civil War.

Michael S

Arizona, USA

30 January 2009



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