

Letters from our readers

6 February 2009

On “British unions back reactionary strikes against foreign workers”

Excellent report and analysis on this dangerous situation. The trade union leadership in Britain have a long and disgraceful record of nationalism. With the shrinking global markets and the inevitable job losses this will bring, the union fat cats will look to divert workers’ attentions away from fighting capitalism. If these reactionaries win “the right of British jobs for British workers” we have to ask, Where will it end? Will the next stage be a return to the reactionary demands during the economic crisis of the 70s and 80s of local jobs for local people? Will workers from Liverpool be looked upon as outcasts in Britain as building workers were back then?

Last Saturday there was a major demonstration in Liverpool against the British National Party. It forced these backward thugs to abandon their planned mass leafleting of Liverpool for that day. The actions of Liverpool activists have to be applauded, but it is not enough. Conscious workers also have a duty to fight the reactionary policies of trade union leaders and those who throw their weight behind them. There must be an equally organised and supported response against this reactionary support for nationalism.

Danny D
UK
2 February 2009
* * *

I read of the strikes while abroad. A Unite official, Bobby Buirds, was quoted as saying that the strike was not against foreign workers but that they “only wanted a level playing field”. This is almost certainly the same Bobby Buirds I knew in 1976. He was a member of the IS/SWP and a main organiser of a March to London to protest against unemployment

Mike Martin
2 February 2009

On “Stalinists and Socialist Party defend “Britons first” refinery protest”

A couple of years ago the Irish unions struck the ferries going between Ireland and the UK for employing non-union Polish workers at sub-union wages. The Irish workers demand was that *all* workers on the ferries be paid union scale wages. I think that this was a demand that served to defend prevailing wage levels without attacking foreign workers—but rather supporting them. It seems much different than what these national chauvinist phonies are doing.

Bob M
Massachusetts, USA
3 February 2009

On “US: Nationwide salmonella outbreak forces major recall, plant closure”

Surely you must have the wrong country. It must be China where this food poison problem is, not in perfect America with all its enforcements of terrorism, homeland security, regular army used for people control to name but some. Are the people involved also being executed as those involved in the baby milk contamination people were in China?

All the time while reading this article my mind kept telling me there is something identical in my data bank about two years ago. Thank you for giving at the end a link to the case of the contaminated peanut butter two years ago.

Keep up the good work.

As always,

Frans
Thailand
2 February 2009

On “Obama prepares another trillion-dollar bank bailout”

I find it inconceivable that the American people are going

to stand by and allows this to happen. Wall Street and the government and taking away “our” country. We are reverting back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. There will only be “the nabob’s & the poor.” *Stand up America; take back what is ours!*

John S
3 February 2009

On “Israel bombs Gaza-Egypt border”

According to Norman Finkelstein, the Israeli foreign policy is motivated by the “deterrent” value of the IDF, a euphemism to indicate instilling fear into Arab regimes. Events from 1967 to the present seem to confirm that analysis. That year, in the Six-day War, in a carefully planned operation, Israel attacked Egypt, wiping out its air force in one morning, then pushing with its armour to the Suez Canal. Ever since, Egypt and other neighbouring Arab states have been afraid of Israel and the mega-power that supported it. As the old adage goes, “It’s better to be feared than to be respected”. In the present context of the Gaza “conflict”, it is instructive to note that whilst Egypt collaborated fully with the Zionist State in the siege of Gaza, for which it received praise, the impending Israeli assault was signalled by Tsipi Livini from Cairo, an exercise of imperial arrogance, as well as a gesture of humiliation for Egypt. Even if the Egyptian ruling class could swallow this insult, the common people could not: a wave of protest and riots in the Arab World broke out, not only in Egypt. But wait, there’s more! Egypt then rushed more police and troops to the Rafah border, to make sure Palestinians are well and truly trapped in this cauldron of death and destruction. After the unilateral truce declared by Israel—to allow the Obama inauguration to proceed without losing any of its festive tone—as the agreement by Rice and Livini to control “arms smuggling” at the Rafah border was announced in Washington, the two diplomats embraced, apparently unaware of the irony and cynicism of two governments making a deal over control of a border of a third country. Apart from a mild protest from the Egyptian foreign minister the next day, which was simply ignored, things moved back to normal, The Mubarak regime is now blocking the entry of an Iranian humanitarian ship and insisting that any aid should be funnelled through the Palestinian Authority and Abbas. We should expect more bouquets for Mubarak bathed in Palestinian blood.

It goes without saying, that although Israel’s Arab neighbours are afraid of her, they see their own political interests in supporting the Zionist state, as well as the

interests of the US and the EU. It is only by a mobilisation of the working class in these countries that there could be genuine peace in the Middle East—but don’t look to Israelis, where support for this terrorist attack is over 90 percent!

Mirek
Australia
1 February 2009

On “The Pope readmits Holocaust denier into the church”

What else can one expect from a former member of the Hitler Youth who has never publicly apologized for his participation in that organization, or from someone who threatened excommunication to those who complained about clergy abuse once they left the confession box? These are grim times.

Tony W
3 February 2009

On “The world economic crisis and the return of history”

Who made the comic? This is going on my dorm room door for sheer awesomeness! Kudos to whoever did it. Cheers!

Bryan S
3 February 2009



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact