

Letters from our readers

16 May 2009

On “‘Socialism in One Country’ and the Soviet economic debates of the 1920s—Part 2”

Dear Mr. Beams,

I picked up a used copy of *The Atlantic*, May 2009 issue, on the same day I read your article about Trotsky and the economic debates in the 1920s.

Allow me to quote the passage that ends an article in this Atlantic issue by Professor Simon Johnson, former chief economist at the IMF during 2007 and 2008:

“The conventional wisdom among the elite is still that the current slump ‘cannot be as bad as the Great Depression.’ This view is wrong. What we face now could, in fact, be worse than the Great Depression—because the world is now so much more international and because the banking sector is now so big. We face a synchronized downturn in almost all countries, a weakening of confidence among individuals and firms, and major problems for government finances.”

What distinguishes this insight into the economic crisis and the one that you present? The most startling difference is that Mr. Johnson has emptied his essay of any reference to working people; they just don’t exist in the intellectual landscape he occupies. Is this merely ignorance, or impudence, on his part?

The MIT Professor is addressing only the “elite” when he acknowledges that “[the] crash has laid bare many unpleasant truths about the United States”—“unpleasant” to his social class, but criminal to those among the working classes.

To understand what is happening, Nick Beams closes his article, addressing the same “downturn” with this analysis:

“[T]he globalized character of production means that any attempts to isolate or blockade a workers’ state established in the present era will have far-reaching consequences for the world capitalist economy itself. Just consider in that regard the relationship between

China and the United States.

“In addition, the ferocious competitive struggle for markets and profits, which has been a driving force of globalization, will provide opportunities for a newly established workers’ state to tack and manoeuvre between the conflicting capitalist powers as the socialist revolution develops internationally.

“And above all, the very nature of globalized production, which has forged the objective unity of the international working class on a scale never before attained, means that the socialist revolution will itself take the form of a global political movement, that, like the productive forces themselves, will rapidly leap across time zones, national borders and continents.”

This is why I read WSWS.

Randy R

Oregon, US

13 May 2009

On “*Marxism, History & Socialist Consciousness*”

Greetings WSWS,

I bought *Marxism, History & Socialist Consciousness* along with *Marxism and Trade Unions* through Mehring books. David North analyses brilliantly the social form of trade unions and its relationship to the class struggle in *Marxism and Trade Unions*. In *Marxism, History & Socialist Consciousness*, he refutes the claims in “left” political parties on the importance of the utopian or even revisionist beliefs, which continue to persist.

I would recommend all the readers of the WSWS to read these two important documents, which are necessary to analyze contemporary issues. Not only are they interesting but after reading Rosa Luxemburg’s *Reform or Revolution* it is incredible the way Bernstein’s revisionism survived 1908 and is present, and I would say even stronger, 100 years later.

Yours fraternally,

David S

13 May 2009

On "Seven Days in May, 2009"

A recent article in *Haaretz* might offer some explanation for the strange activity Patrick Martin wrote about in his perspective article. According to the article, "The Israel Air Force recently staged military exercises between Israel and the British colony of Gibraltar." The paper added that the exercises are seen as "concrete preparations" for an attack on Iran by the IDF.

Obama's team wants to take a slower approach to confronting Iran while the US military concentrates on the AfPak theatre. Cheney is anticipating an Israeli attack and very possibly helping coordinate it. If the Israelis do attack Iran's nuclear facilities, it will be the signal for some sort of a coup in America.

Mick B

Dublin, Ireland

13 May 2009

On "Pentagon changes Afghanistan commander as military's crisis deepens"

It's common knowledge that mentally ill people should not be sold weapons, but we have tens of thousands of people with PTSD in Afghanistan and Iraq who are required to carry them around, day in and day out. I'm not surprised this happened, but I'm even more surprised it doesn't happen on a daily basis. Extending tours of people 3 or 5 times is inhumane and creating human time-bombs just waiting to go off. Most of them will wait until they return home to go off, and we're going to have to deal with that soon enough.

How many lives is that Chevron pipeline going to cost us, anyway?

PK

13 May 2009

On "US airstrikes kill scores of civilians in Afghanistan"

This is a matter that has to be discussed in UN Security Council. The UN Security Council has the power to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations. So the US bombing of Afghanistan is an international matter happening between two countries, not an internal matter of any country. So the UN Security Council should consider this killing by the

US, and the UN should demand that it stop bombing Afghanistan.

Ubhaya P

13 May 2009



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