

# Letters from our readers

29 May 2009

*On “The Peruvian tragedy”*

I am a 22 year-old Peruvian reader of the WWS. It was your art reviews, Mr. Walsh, that introduced me to the WWS and, eventually, to the ICFI and Trotskyism.

I wanted to comment about your review of the film *Oblivion* and the glimpses of life in this country that you’ve got through it. Although I had heard before the name of the director (Heddy Honigmann), I didn’t know about this documentary. I hope it gets here soon.

From your review I see that you’ve had encounters with many of the realities around here that most of the politicians, members of the bourgeoisie and, even, a number of intellectuals, don’t want anyone to face. They are too busy trying to keep inside their minds a fantasized view of this country that, of course, serves as a shell for their class position.

Yes, as the bartender notes, there is an immense skepticism in politics and contempt of politicians, especially in the youth. How could it be otherwise? My generation and the older one had lived through 10 years of a criminal dictatorship and had seen countless cases of political scandals. And, obviously, there is great frustration at not knowing what to do or how to change things. But I, of course, know what is to be done, thanks to the ICFI.

The part of your review that surprised me the most was when you described the situation of the shoeshine boy and his interview with Honigmann. Because it is the condition of this character and his “saddest face ever” which I found on hundreds of people anywhere and everyday...

Shanty-towns, kids begging from cars, etc. Yes, all of this I see on a daily basis.

But the time will come, when people will realize that they have to fight for their survival and rights; the only question left is: who will lead the masses?

Best regards,

Eduardo M.

Lima, Peru

21 May 2009

*On “Obama’s sermon at Notre Dame”*

Thank you, Tom, for your impassioned report on the “sermon” at Notre Dame. I particularly liked the paragraph beginning with “What is Obama’s point?” It reflects my own anger with these monstrous ideas.

Here, again, we see the influence that “post-modernism” has had on ethical thinking. Obama approaches these diametrically opposed positions as though one argument carried the same weight as the other; as though these are merely two different “opinions” with equal validity. That is the premise of post-modernist thought everywhere, in every field. It is a corrupt and amoral doctrine where any objective truth is considered to be one item floating in the universe, no better or worse than any other. No wonder there is no up or down in the present “floating” thoughts of everyone from political leaders to novelists, filmmakers, poets, teachers, historians and so-called philosophers.

The emptiness is like the vertigo from which I suffer from time to time. No up; no down, a flailing to find the ground; nausea.

Carolyn

California, USA

21 May 2009

*On “The economic crisis and the resurgence of class conflict in the United States”*

This analysis has one major shortcoming—the strike hours and lost man days due to strikes are compared across the years in equal terms. This would only be correct if the number of workers were constant and the average number of hours worked remained constant. Thirty-nine years after that 1970 peak, we have millions more workers, and I believe that they are

working a higher average number of hours per year. If your analysis showed the number of strikers and lost man hours as a percentage of the total number of workers and man hours worked, I believe your picture would be more accurate and would actually bolster your point.

Tony J  
Arkansas, USA  
19 May 2009

*On “Sri Lankan army slaughters LTTE leaders”*

Mr. Ratnayake and the WSWs do a humanitarian service to mankind. You do it in the midst of abuses and charges against journalists who do their profession. Mr. Ratnayake writes the truth, and we bow our head. Keep up the good work. If not today, one day common masses will rise up to haunt the real enemies of the working class.

Sithamparam  
UK  
19 May 2009

*On “Eyewitness account of Sri Lankan detention camps”*

Now I know why any media or aid workers are not allowed to these camps. Today my friend was shot down in the camp only because her husband was an LTTE. He is not alive now and she never touched a gun.

I am sure most of the people in the camp will die or be murdered before UN, UK or US get involved.

Thusa  
UK

22 May 2009

*On “Unemployed graduates in China to reach 3 million in 2009”*

Politicians and pundits are forever presenting the “knowledge economy” as a solution to the loss of industrial jobs in Western countries. What they forget is that labour, especially skilled labour, is just another commodity. And while countries like China are better off for having millions more university graduates each year, as a commodity this labour is subject to the same limitations of capitalism as any other. The logic of competition increases the number of students, as individuals and nations seek a comparative advantage. But the ability to utilize this concentrated labour is limited because it can only be put to use through

commercial exchange. And so the use value of education is ignored in favour of the exchange value. At the moment, China seems to be facing a crisis of overproduction of university graduates. Here, the logic of capitalist production has led to, as Marx said, the absurdity of too much civilization.

Stephen P  
Toronto, Canada  
20 May 2009

*On: The Idea Man at the Elephant Theatre Company in Los Angeles”*

This review makes me sorry I’m not a resident of LA so that I might avail myself of this work. How refreshing it must be to see workers portrayed in their conflicted reality in a believable (and humorous) way for a change. Thanks for the peek.

G Clifford  
California, USA  
18 May 2009



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