

Letters from our readers

25 June 2009

On “Take the profit out of health care”

The whole idea that health care should be considered a business that has to run at a profit is barbaric. Here we are in the 21st century, and health care in the United States is viewed simply as a commodity, with no human dimension. It is considered to be like shoes, or soap. How can a civilization continue to exist when everything is reduced to a number on a financial balance sheet?

It seems as though social Darwinism has re-emerged with a vengeance. Anyone not able to contribute to the profit streams of insurance and pharmaceutical corporations dies, period. Sometimes I wonder if a large chunk of the human race is de-evolving. We are back in the jungle, except that in the jungle the predators kill to eat. The present-day predators kill for money.

Carolyn
California, USA
22 June 2009

On “Back in the fold: Comic Stephen Colbert in Baghdad”

Thank you! Thank you for this wonderful antidote to the gushing praises heaped upon Colbert for his Iraq trip. You have touched on everything about it that bothered me so. Not only was it unfunny, but it was not satire—it was nothing short of brown-nosing flackery.

What makes this so sad is that Colbert—like Stewart, who has turned into a cheerleader for the “right war” in Afghanistan—is smarter than this. Their unwillingness to turn their sharper eyes on the current administration renders them nothing more than court jesters. Now that the “good guys” are in office, the kid gloves are on. So long, comedy.

Christie MS
Oregon, USA
19 June 2009

On “Orson Welles, the blacklist and Hollywood

filmmaking”

I’m pleased to read the letters about the interview with Joe McBride concerning Orson Welles that appeared in today’s issue. I’m sure many more will follow. What I’d like to do here commend the WSWS for its excellent interview with Joe.

He has been active in film criticism for nearly 40 years and wrote many of his indispensable, well-researched books on John Ford, Frank Capra, and Spielberg well before he entered San Francisco State University. He has already surpassed many of his academic contemporaries by working “outside the system” and by rights he should have been appointed at the rank of full professor with tenure. However, he provides a very important role model in showing how fine work can be produced “outside the system.”

The comment about discovering him “surrounded by piles of books, videos, and DVDs” struck a resonant chord with me as well as the fact that his research is still continuing, seen in the little known fact about the blacklisting affecting Eddie Albert’s wife. Robert Aldrich (a director also influenced by Welles’s radicalism and visual style) helped Albert move into serious acting and, according to blacklist victim Jean Rouverol “saved our family from starving” by providing work.

One wonders whether the lack of financial support by industry figures such as Eastwood, Spielberg, and Stone for *The Other Side of the Wind* stems more from the fact that its modernist radical structures puts *their* work in a bad light rather from any deficiencies in the film itself?

Finally, I would like to commend McBride and one letter mentioning Welles’ sense of humor. Christopher Plummer comments about this in his autobiography *In Spite of Myself* (2008), and I have very fond memories of Welles’s comic performance as the grotesque Captain in *Ferry to Hong Kong* (1959). It is one of his “lesser films” as an actor, but one where he saw the

absurdities in the script and decided to send it up. Not everybody got the joke, but one young audience member did. Welles was dangerous because he was creative and radical. Does this not strike a bell in this unique web site?

Tony W

20 June 2009

On "Letters on Orson Welles"

KV (Vancouver) and other readers should read *The Gordon File: A Screenwriter Recalls Twenty Years of FBI Surveillance* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), the autobiography of the late Bernard Gordon. He refers to himself "as one of several hundred screenwriters and filmmakers who have FBI files hundreds of pages long..." (p.1). After giving a long and impressive list of cultural figures in the same boat, he refers to the file on Albert Einstein, which ran to 1,427 pages (p.192). I also recommend Fred Jerome's *The Einstein File: J. Edgar Hoover's Secret War Against the World's Most Famous Scientist* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003).

Reynold H

Paris, France

21 June 2009

On "Canada: Cover-up of RCMP murder of immigrant worker unravels"

Killing people and then lying about it. Despicable!

Death by tasing seems to be the 21st century version of the old Gestapo line that the prisoner was "shot while trying to escape."

Thanks to the authors for reminding readers that the RCMP, like the Gestapo and other police organisations, is a bourgeois institution that exists to intimidate the working class and destroy their political leadership.

Dan P

20 June 2009

On "Canada: RCMP tried to suppress video of fatal tasing of Dziekanski"

My brother and I were both horrified at what happened to Mr. Dziekanski, contrasting it with the way our parents were welcomed into this country when they came here as refugees from Hungary in 1956. So much has changed since then. Our parents' generation was sadly used as Cold War propaganda, when in fact they were mostly social democrats by instinct, who had run afoul of the Stalinist regime in Hungary at the time. (My father belonged to an illegal trade union). In any

case, they were welcomed into this country, not attacked because they couldn't speak the language when they arrived.

KV

British Columbia, Canada

21 June 2009

On "University of California faces scandal over chancellors"

Thank you for this article. I'd like to add that, on June 17, Gene D. Block, Chancellor for UCLA, announced furloughs and salary cuts for all UCLA employees on the basis that these are unprecedented times of crisis. Obviously, such crisis must not affect the likes of Susan Desmond-Hellman or Linda Katehi or, for that matter, Block himself. The cuts, in short, amount to an 8 percent pay reduction for people making more than \$46,000 and a 4 percent cut for people making less than \$46,000. There are three options available, depending on how one prefers to absorb the loss (cut, furlough or a combination thereof).

The whole announcement can be seen here.

The state of California is in flames, socially speaking. Today the LAUSD board approved yet another \$1.6 billion in cuts over the next three years. This, of course, is on top of billions already being slashed by Schwarzenegger and his Democratic accomplices that make up the state congress majority. Obama has clearly shown his stance by turning his back on California workers and wishes to make an example of the golden state on how to transfer losses onto the working class. With unemployment at 11.5 percent (close to 20 percent if we looked at a U6 measure), California, the richest state of the union, is a socially volatile area.

Marc W

24 June 2009



To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact