

Letters from our readers

10 September 2009

On "Obama on Labor Day: Hollow promises of economic recovery"

When Obama says "Our recovery plan is working" the working class should keep in mind that it *is* working for the corporate class. Those are the entities that the Obama administration identifies with, and therefore he is speaking the truth if his remarks are taken in that context. Workers must always remember that when Obama says "we" or "our" he is talking about his true constituency, not ordinary American workers. But as far as that "we" and "our" being inclusive of the working class, his remarks are, of course, an outrageous lie.

Carolyn
California, USA
8 September 2009

All I have to say about Obama and his workmen speech: Oh? So that's it? That's what Americans took clubs over their heads for? Tear gas, jail cells, and permanent police and FBI files? Published a million issues of the underground press? To get a president who doesn't have a revolutionary bone in his body? Not a muscle or nerve or tissue or organ that seriously questions cherished establishment beliefs concerning terrorism, permanent war, Israel, torture, marijuana, health care, and the primacy of profit over the environment and all else? Karl Marx is surely turning over in his London grave. If the modern counter-revolutionary United States had existed at the time of the American Revolution, it would have crushed that revolution. And a colonial (white) Barack Obama would have worked diligently to achieve some sort of bi-partisan compromise with the King of England, telling him we need to look forward, not backward.

As always,
Frans
Thailand
8 September 2009

Obama: Is he the flim-flam man?

Karen H

8 September 2009

On "Letters from our readers"

Elyse wrote in regarding the review of *Inglourious Basterds*, "If people would just lighten up a bit and stop digging too deep, maybe they would enjoy the film a little more." She then goes onto say "WWII is a serious and tragic event in history; we have two wars going on and a fledging economy."

My two concerns with this are:

1. Going to the cinema should be an enlightening experience, rewarding, insightful, in Trotsky's words "that inexhaustible fount of impressions and emotions." David Walsh wrote (in "Superman Returns, Pirates II, Clerks II: No 'fount of impressions and emotions' at present"), "The lack of independent working class political life in America has also resulted in a great deal of inarticulate outrage, sadness, joy and despair, which found more or less conscious expression elsewhere, being channeled into popular culture."

This is a truly profound statement. Nowhere in *Inglourious Basterds* is there to be found any of this genuine expression or emotion let alone any clarification around World War II, the 70th anniversary this year.

In another review ("Star Wars—Episode 1: The Phantom Menace"), Walsh wrote, "An image not charged by serious ideas or deep emotions is not of any importance. The appeal of such images, insofar as it is genuine and not simply media-generated, is another expression of a filmgoing audience largely at sea, which is only given the opportunity, by and large, to pick and choose between different samples of empty bombast. The technical effects, advanced and astonishing as they are, cannot possibly compensate for the blandness and conformism at the core of this work."

Clearly there has been a terrible degeneration in the works of Tarantino, evident in the fact that when conscious moviegoers like myself saw the trailer for this

film, we noted, "I'm not going to waste my time seeing that just to be let down."

2. If you want to escape reality, fine, but it's what you "escape" to that is the question. Whether what you escape to is genuine entertainment and all that entices, or just the worst of the worst sort of the lowest-of-the-low common denominators.

Hiram Lee did address the view to "lighten up" in the review. "Tarantino's defenders will claim his ultra-stylized celebrations of violence aren't to be taken seriously. 'It's only a movie,' is the refrain heard again and again."

Yet, the obsession with revenge is not limited to Tarantino, it is rank all over the recent Hollywood blockbusters and those who are behind them, i.e. *GI Joe: the rise of Cobra* (gross revenue \$279,857,892); *Transformers: Revenge of the fallen* (\$830,676,252); *Terminator Salvation* (\$371,295,903); and *Inglourious Basterds* (\$179,085,005). Of course I won't deny these films "entertain" and make millions of dollars for their respective movie companies.

Chris R.F.

New Zealand

8 September 2009

On "Against European calls for UN conference on Afghanistan"

If it looks like a duck, waddles like a duck and quacks like a duck then it is a duck. Similarly for the imperialist campaign in Afghanistan, a dead duck if ever I saw one. President Karzai has stuffed more ballot boxes than his opponent. The Western military campaign, killing civilians by the lorry load, is a recruiting sergeant for the resistance. There is no broad support for the war in Europe. Consequently public expenditure cuts will highlight all the military expenditure in Afghanistan. Given all this, European politicians have to have something to say and now they have. "These matters will all be addressed at the coming conference". I know the political suits of the elite are none too bright, but they would be thicker than the thickest plank to believe there was any other option than retreat, any other option than defeat. P.S., if the conference ever takes place and only Europeans attend, they will rat out the government of America.

Chris

Ireland

8 September 2009

I must commend you for the article on the call for a UN

Conference on Afghanistan at the beginning of next year. This ploy of the heads of the European powers as announced by Angela Merkel of Germany and PM Brown of Great Britain is, in my opinion, likely to redound to the disadvantage of the bourgeoisies of western Europe and to the US's current running of the war under Obama. I think popular opinion will increase in opposition to this war due to the increased unemployment of the working class in the US and Europe. As the economic crisis deepens, people will increasingly show opposition to this rotten war, as it becomes more evident that the huge amounts of money used to fund it are being taken from people already unemployed or about to be unemployed. In short, people simply will refuse to pay for it and will increasingly demonstrate against it in ever growing numbers. The US is going to become a battle zone, in my opinion, between an impoverished working class and a bourgeois police state. Mass arrests, jailing and imprisonment of protest leaders will become increasingly common as this conflict deepens and spreads. The police will be backed by National Guard units and repression will increase against protest dramatically by next summer. We are heading into a truly historic era of very deep class struggle possibly even taking the proportions of a revolutionary confrontation and establishment of a situation of dual power within the next two years.

I must commend Alex Lantier and your organization for your top-notch presentation of news vital to the working class and your really excellent explanation of issues affecting all of us and especially the working class.

Steve H

Massachusetts, USA

8 September 2009



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