Letters from our readers

19 September 2009

On "Death squads, disappearances and torture in Pakistan"

Having just finished reading Bill Van Auken's perspective piece, I was revolted by the horrendous torture and massacre of the civilian population of the Swat Valley region in Pakistan. People living there accused the Pakistani military of these horrible atrocities. The similarity of these acts to those committed in Fallujah and in Vietnam in an earlier era all point to US Special Forces responsibility as being part of their "counterinsurgency program"—i.e., a terrorization of ordinary civilians in order to destroy all civilian support for those forces fighting US and NATO armies engaged in the AfPak War. This is the most heinous kind of war possible and reminds one of the terrible war carried out in the Soviet Union in WWII by the SS and even the regular German Army. That the Obama Administration would allow these kind of atrocities to be committed even though done by the Pakistani Army bodes ill for the civilians in any area being contested by US and allied troops, anywhere the US military is being used.

Many more civilians will die horribly in the AfPak War and in Iraq and in Iran if the US/Israeli forces decide to invade that country. Also, more ominously, if major upheavals occur by the working class around the world, the US will sponsor this type of terror operations in order to crush working class militancy, which is gaining an upper hand over the police and regular army repression. Whether they will try it in the chief metropolitan countries such as the US, Britain and western European nations is uncertain, but is certain they will do so in Third World countries such as is now occurring in Columbia. It is my earnest hope that the working class will arise here in the US and also worldwide to overthrow this criminal gang of bourgeois monsters who fatten themselves on our increasingly impoverished situations. Despite the unfortunate lack of solidarity and militancy in the majority of the working class now, I think they will finally awake to make a worldwide revolution creating a world socialist community.

Steve H
Massachusetts, USA
16 September 2009

On "Obama goes cap in hand to Wall Street"

As I read this article, I am reminded of the resistance to accept change and the fear of leaving familiar territory that seems to be driving the collective consciousness of Americans who have enjoyed the excessive monetary benefits of their trade. Not unlike the health insurance companies, pharmaceutical manufacturers and gluttonous medical personnel who forgot the oath to cause no harm. President Obama speaks a monumental truth on both fronts, the banking debacle and the nightmare that we call our healthcare system. No one wants to hear the painful truth, because in most cases a lot of people have to look in the mirror and recognize that their actions have caused this country to tailspin into an economic depression that too closely resembles the 1930s. I hear a lot of people criticizing the actions of our President, but no one is coming up with better solutions. Why? Because then business as usual would be replaced with business done in an honest manner with full disclosure. I'm not sure that any of these people have any idea of how to go about that. It is much easier to confuse the issues with twisted scenarios and false accusations to instill fear and confusion in the American public. I hope that as a whole we are much more intelligent and informed to be sold down the river yet again by these unscrupulous individuals.

Sherry V
Florida, USA

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16 September 2009

On "US: Senate Finance Committee chair releases health care proposal"

Let's see—Why do 47 million people currently not have health insurance? Because they don't need/want it? No, because it's too expensive and they can't afford it. So we are going to mandate to these people that they now go out and buy insurance or they will suffer substantial fines.

What is it going to take before people say "enough"?

Rom M

17 September 2009

On "A reply to a critic on Obama's health care overhaul"

This is an important polemic, exposing the credentials of the so-called "left", including those, like the critic involved, who front for the *Nation*, regarding this most important issue of healthcare. Joe Kishore elaborates the socialist program for socialization of healthcare i.e. "not a government-run health care service within the framework of the profit system."

It is also important to note that these "lefts", ex-leftists and even pseudo-Trotskyists were attracted to the "Iranian revolution" i.e. petty-bourgeois protest movement against a "rigged election" but when a real rigged election as exposed by the WSWS, in a previous perspectives piece, in Afghanistan took place they are silent!

Regards,

Chris

New Zealand

17 September 2009

On "Six die in New Year's Day house fire in Washington DC"

Tawana was one of my best friends in high school. We both attended Dunbar Senior High School. She was a very unique kind of person. She always stood up for what she believed in. I couldn't believe that she passed away. When I heard this, my heart dropped to the ground. As I read this article, a piece of me felt helpless. I'm so hurt by this, and my prayers go out to her father, because she always used to talk about how good of a person he is. Tawana, you will be missed.

Raylynn M

Washington, DC, USA

14 September 2009

On "W: A crude approach is not good for grasping much of anything"

Having only just watched the Oliver Stone movie "W.", I would like to say that I entirely agree with your assessment but I'd like to add a few comments about Stone. In the DVD of "Wall Street" there is a very telling detail. In what is to me the film's crucial scene, Michael Douglas as Gordon Gekko makes a confession that he doesn't produce anything but just shifts vast amounts of money around to make more money. This is a remarkable (perhaps unique?) moment in Hollywood cinema in which a member of the capitalist class gleefully confesses to being a pure parasite.

How astonishing then to find that in the accompanying documentary Stone refers to this scene as being superficially what the film is about. If this is so then what is "Wall Street" really about? Stone doesn't say but notes that many viewers thought the Gekko character was the real hero of the film and many wanted to emulate him. Assuming that Stone is sincerely presenting a view that opposes corporate greed then, given this perverse backfiring effect on viewers, you would expect him to be disgusted and to at least want to burn every copy. But Stone just laughs and goes on to make predictable and banal remarks about how attracted we are to the "dark beast that is within us all."

All of this follows on from Stone's remark that his father had no time for the workers' point of view. I would suggest that Stone serves a very useful—perhaps indispensable—ideological role. While posing as the black sheep or wild child of the ruling class he is in fact diverting attention away from any real oppositional point of view.

George M

Scotland

17 September 2009

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