

Letters from our readers

15 October 2009

On "Demand the release of Tamil detainees in Sri Lanka"

As a teacher of social studies and history, I applaud and fully support the campaign of the Socialist Equality Party for the immediate end to the detention of a quarter or more million Tamils in Sri Lanka. It would be difficult to estimate the number of victims of the Sri Lankan government for whom this campaign is too late.

As a person whose mother lost perhaps two dozen family members in the Nazi genocide during World War II, I believe this forced removal of Tamil refugees into concentration camps and the horrifying treatment they receive is not qualitatively different than those crimes against humanity. And like those earlier crimes whose roots lay in the crisis of capitalism, these present attacks are part of an attack on the working class as a whole.

The international unity of the working class against the terror of the Rajapakse regime and the imperialist power of the United States that it emulates is urgent for these unfortunates in the detention camps.

In solidarity,

HL

New York, USA

7 October 2009

On "Imperialist interests drive US focus on Iran, Afghanistan"

Thought this perspective article was very important. In tracing US imperialist "diplomacy" from Carter to Obama, it clarifies the relative unimportance of the personalities or the big business parties in charge at a particular juncture. I think that this article should be widely distributed on campuses, etc. Not all of the young persons who have been radicalized during the Bush II years are fully aware of this history or what's been driving it. The latter, what's been driving US policy, is part of what distinguishes WSWs from

Professor Noam Chomsky, who does a good job of exposing US imperialism's long record of atrocities but who doesn't identify the real source of the menace to the world's people (a ruling class tenaciously clutching its hold on wealth and power, even if it means disaster for humanity) and certainly doesn't point to or even see a way forward (in the international class struggle and the international political independence of the working class).

Ken

Ohio, USA

10 October 2009

On "Michael Moore's Capitalism: A Love Story"

You write in your review, "At the film's climactic moment, Moore calls for the replacement of capitalism...by 'democracy' What does that mean? It means more than anything else that he hasn't the political courage to mention socialism."

I think it may well be a bit worse here than a lack of political courage. In an interview with The Onion AV Club on October 2, he answers a question about the possibilities of reform with the following:

"I don't think you can repair or reform the existing system, and I think it's crazy to try it. I think that it's the 21st century. Let's create a new economic order that fits this century. We're smart enough to do that. Why are we having this debate between a 16th-century economic philosophy and a 19th-century economic philosophy? Capitalism vs. socialism."

In the same interview he also explains the religious elements that he added to the movie were essentially an attempt to ingratiate himself with elements of the right and prove that he is not so different from them.

TM

11 October 2009

Superficial? Contradictory? Here is Moore exhorting the sheep to continue following the Judas Goat: "All I

ask of those who voted for Obama is to not pile on him too quickly. Yes, make your voice heard (his phone number is 202-456-1414). But don't abandon the best hope we've had in our lifetime for change. And for God's sake, don't head to bummerville if he says or does something we don't like. Do you ever see Republicans behave that way? I mean, the Right had 20 years of Republican presidents and they still couldn't get prayer in the public schools, or outlaw abortion, or initiate a flat tax or put our Social Security into the stock market. They did a lot of damage, no doubt about that, but on the key issues that the Christian Right fought for, they came up nearly empty handed. No wonder they've been driven crazy lately. They'll never have it as good again as they've had it since Reagan took office.

"But—do you ever see them looking all gloomy and defeated? No! They keep on fighting! Every day. Our side? At the first sign of wavering, we just pack up our toys and go home."

And yet, as always, he has a point. The right-wingers know that their president is on their side and the "progressive" left who give up too quickly also realize that "our" president is on "their" side. I regret to say that the only posture I can muster under the present circumstances alternates between impotent rage and ironic detachment.

Michael G
California, USA
11 October 2009

On "The sordid coalition pursuing filmmaker Roman Polanski"

Just as we cannot ignore the judicial misconduct, we must also look at the values implied by supporting him. For example, the acceptance of unbalanced power, in favor of the male, in sexual relationships. As for an alliance with the right-wing, both socialists and libertarians disagreed with the bail-out, but this did not mean socialists should abandon the position, only that we must be clear about where we disagree with our counterparts on the right. In this case, Polanski is receiving criticism from the left for perpetrating a rape, an act which has been used for centuries to disempower women. Shall we ignore this?

Anonymous
11 October 2009

On "Obama continues assault on democratic rights"

Hannah Arendt's prescient warnings from the era of the Nazi and Soviet Empires have never rung so true: "Empire abroad (always) entails tyranny at home".

Alan M
Maine, USA
12 October 2009

On "Mercedes Sosa, 1935-2009"

What a voice! Thank you so much for this article about Sosa. I had never heard her before. I have long admired Victor Jara, but I'm sorry to say I had never heard of Sosa. She has left a wonderful legacy to us.

Carolyn
California, USA
10 October 2009



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