

# Letters from our readers

31 October 2009

*On “Pakistani army offensive devastates tribal communities”*

This statement hit home:

“The Pakistani air force is using American-upgraded F-16s and helicopter gunships to conduct a continuous campaign of indiscriminate aerial assaults, particularly on the two main towns.” The article links to Al Jazeera television coverage of a bombed-out schoolyard and a hospital full of wounded children and widows.

The combination of blindness and arrogance on the part of the corporations who provide the military hardware for these operations is simply breathtaking. The complacency of their white-collar employees is just as bad.

Let’s take Boeing, the corporation whose profit comes largely from the sales of those F-16 fighter planes and Apache helicopter gunships. Daily, they push out emails to their approximately 160,000 employees, bragging of their corporate success in building and selling such hardware. Every single sale is proof of the “flawless execution” by Boeing’s workers of the contracts they hold from their “customers”—the military forces of the US and its client states, including Pakistan (and Israel). Each sale shows Boeing’s “commitment to our warfighters [!].” And usually a reference to how they are “protecting our freedoms” here at home is not too far behind.

At the same time, Boeing relentlessly pushes on its lower-level workers (including the white collars: engineers, designers, scientists, technicians) a propaganda program designed to ferret out all lapses in what they call (don’t laugh) “ethics.” A curious feature of corporate ethics is the perfect correlation between the maximum profit and advantage to the company, and the ethical behavior of their workers. (Any worker behavior that does not benefit them is considered unethical.)

Meanwhile, upper management is not subject to any ethical constraint as they attack the pensions, wages, and health benefits of Boeing’s workers here at home. It is this management layer, and not the Taliban, who are the greatest threat to our people.

Naturally, one never sees in the antiseptic corporate

atmosphere anything about bombed-out schools in South Waziristan, hospitals without water or medicines in Iraq, displaced populations in Kosovo, or corrupt politicians (in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Washington or anywhere else).

An internal Boeing propaganda poster is widely posted in coffee rooms and hallways. It shows a pretty young Asian woman with a pensive expression, eyes looking toward infinity, hands clasped at her chin, index fingers extended and lightly touching one another near her nose. “Until you’ve considered the ethics, the decision isn’t made,” the poster says. Beneath that: “Boeing is ethical because you are.” (One is tempted to take a black marker and draw in a speech balloon showing the young woman’s thoughts: “I wonder if I have given full ethical weight to the poor families who’ve been displaced in the dead of winter in the Hindu Kush because of our F-16 upgrade contract?” Ha, ha!)

Why did I write this letter? I think it is because connections exist between the apparently innocent activities of the workers doing their jobs here in the US, and the ferocious military aggression and destruction of innocent people throughout the world by the US military apparatus. These connections need to be brought out and made clear and explicit to the employees themselves. I mentioned their complacency, and that is correct. However, if they were made aware of the consequences of their work, and of the huge contradiction between how they see themselves and what is really happening in the world, you can bet that they will not like it. I think this is an important step in bringing the world’s most powerful “working class” around to the socialist point of view. I think the WSWs has precisely this role to play.

CH

Texas, USA

*On “What are US troops dying for in Afghanistan?”*

Thank you Bill Van Auken for your article. Many ask for a smoking gun when claims of imperialist conquest are made regarding the Iraqi and “Af-Pak” wars. Van Auken preempts such demands by citing a high-level military source that baldly declares the objectives for the wars. Such information might never see the light of day if not for the WSWs, whose perspective of scientific socialist analysis shreds fabrications

like so much wrapping paper.

In fact, what we have in the US is the same agenda wrapped in the “change(d)” rhetoric of Obama. The nakedness of the imperialist aims were over-exposed by the Bush administration. Obama was ushered with the aim of defusing anger by his use of lofty, empty euphemisms and outright lies.

Thanks for once again making sense of the crises of capitalism and the military adventurism of this parasitic and decrepit capitalist class.

Sincerely,

Mike  
New York, USA  
29 October 2009

*On “Mass opposition to Ford-UAW concessions contract”*

Wouldn’t you think that after such an instance—an apparent instance of fraud considering the information, that there would be someone with balls enough to motion for an investigation, or the pressing of charges against the leadership?

Might not these numbers, and the workers’ reports of voting at the other plants, be enough of a hint of fraud? Who will tolerate these leaders? Their credibility and honesty are now plainly exposed.

This is a breakthrough for the workers and for WSWS/SEP.

JB  
27 October 2009

*On “Obama declares US national emergency over H1N1 flu”*

You have an extraordinary web site, superb contributors, and Tom Eley is one of them. But no one is perfect, and today Tom is wrong on a crucial topic—swine flu and vaccines for it.

I’ve written half a dozen articles on this, discussed with experts on my program, have Dr. Viera Schreibner (the most noted vaccine expert) coming on Nov. 4 at 3:00 AM her time to discuss the great dangers.

I’m unequivocal. Swine flu is no different from seasonal flu. It’s not the problem. The vaccines are. They’re bioweapons designed to cause mass illnesses and deaths.

Stephen L  
Illinois, USA  
26 October 2009

*On “US formally requests extradition of filmmaker Roman Polanski”*

You write, “[I]t is extraordinary to note the lengths to which US authorities have gone to apprehend a 76-year-old filmmaker wanted on 30-year-old charges, charges that the victim in the case, no less, has asked be dropped. Meanwhile, war criminals and corporate looters walk the streets of Washington and New York without a care in the world.”

I have read with great interest the WSWS take on the Polanski intrigue, agreeing for the most part with the line(s) of argument taken by staff members. The paragraph above, however, is a travesty. The insinuation in the first sentence is that age, time and distance (from possible criminal activity) should be motivating factors in our extending sympathy for Roman Polanski. The problem is: Who will allow distance, age, time and other extenuating circumstances for the murderous figures of our age...those people without a care in the world?

Nathan J  
Budapest, Hungary  
27 October 2009

*On “The sordid coalition pursuing filmmaker Roman Polanski”*

Thank you for your principled and articulate defence of Roman Polanski. The first intelligent thing I’ve read on the subject.

James  
28 October 2009

*On “Israel, the United States and international law”*

Just wanted to say that this was an excellent article on the two faced nature of US politics and its attitude toward international law. The obvious hypocrisy is astounding.

Bryan S  
28 October 2009



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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