

## Letters from our readers

10 November 2009

*On “Wall Street banks go to the front of the line for H1N1 shots”*

Will the revelation that the rich bastards are hoarding the vaccine finally put to rest the conspiracy theory that it's harmful and being deliberately administered to the poor? I imagine this will be ignored since it reveals something of the real workings of our society. We certainly don't need to invent threats to the working class...

EG

7 November 2009

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I bank with Citibank, so the next time I go to the bank, instead of withdrawing cash, I'll ask for a flu shot.

Carolyn

California, USA

7 November 2009

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Its clear the immoral arrogance of the Obama administration in its defence of these parasitic administration centers is the epitome of capitalism. On the one hand they claim that the defence of its people justifies the Iraq Afghanistan war and the war on terror. Then on the other hand, they stuff you in the wake of one of the worlds worst pandemics in recent history. However, this is not a surprise to Marxists, as they are the only ones who really understand the essence of capitalist administrators.

Malcolm B

UK

7 November 2009

*On “End the persecution of Sri Lankan Tamils”*

Those who believe the farce of the so-called “peace process” in Sri Lanka should take a look at this and wake up to what is really going on there. This young Tamil mental patient was beaten by a cop and two civilian thugs as he was forced back into the sea, and ended up drowning. This is only one such incident that

just happened to make the official press: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvjZAZ8svfk&feature=related>

Thanks for telling the truth.

Anouk

Australia

7 November 2009

*On “After troop deaths, British establishment rallies behind Afghan war”*

Regarding Kim Howells' comments and their relationship to certain sections of the secret state, it should be pointed out that his article openly admitted that what he was proposing would never happen because it would involve a fundamental shift in the UK's relationship with the US. Sections of the UK's security services may well hold the views that Howells expresses, but unless their counterparts in the US change their minds about the usefulness of war overseas the UK's position will not change. Of course, we should recognise that both governments have police state apparatus in place for both anti-war protest and wider social unrest due to the world recession, but their balance is still towards the offensive abroad. Thank you, however, for pointing out the background and logic of Howells' position.

Peter P

7 November 2009

*On “Philadelphia transit worker killed as SEPTA strike enters third day”*

In Philadelphia, we are witness to the hypocrisy of Governor Rendell, Mayor Nutter and the corporate media that is a marvel to behold! Their denunciations of SEPTA workers for defending their livelihoods ring hollow in the light of recent events.

The state of Pennsylvania went without a budget for four months following a July 1st deadline. State workers were unpaid for almost a month, social services agencies were decimated; many closing permanently; and schools and libraries were forced to

operate on loans to remain operational. Currently Governor Rendell is withholding funding for state universities because the legislature cannot agree on how to tax table games in slot parlors. Millions of Pennsylvanians have been subjected to hardships and financial uncertainty because Republican and Democratic state legislators could not agree about how they should take a pound of flesh from the workers of Pennsylvania to resolve the financial crisis created by these same politicians in their support of the corporate and financial elite.

SEPTA workers have been working without a contract since March 31st. The major area of dispute is the SEPTA workers' pension fund that is only 52 percent funded because SEPTA underfunded its portion of the payments for the past twenty years.

City workers have been working without a contract since July 1st. Their pension fund is also the main area of dispute after years of underfunding and outright looting of city workers pension funds by Mayor Nutter and his predecessors for funds to cover budget deficits. Public school employees have been without a contract since August 31st.

The state budget crisis was met by the corporate media with hand wringing. True to form, this same media attacks SEPTA workers for defending their pension funds. The workers are vilified in the press with hysterical cries of outrage saying SEPTA workers should be grateful to have a job and take whatever management offers.

A strike is a hardship for anyone, especially the strikers. The SEPTA workers should be supported because in the long run everyone benefits when workers fight against attempts to make them pay for the financial and business community's mismanagement of the economy for private profits.

Tom B  
Pennsylvania, USA  
7 November 2009

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I appreciated the interviews. I understand the workers position more clearly. (See previous letter). However, I still believe that striking at this point was a bad decision. The union declared a strike without a warning to other workers, and did not communicate their position to the public. It is a major failure by TWU president Willie Brown. Furthermore, I believe that

unions should act on behalf of all workers, and should act in such a way that does not alienate or divide the working class. Nevertheless, I am grateful that this website has provided a much different perspective on the strike than other major media outlets.

Adrian A  
Pennsylvania, USA  
6 November 2009

*On "The postwar novelist in regression: Norman Mailer (1923-2007)"*

I am grateful for your assessment of Norman Mailer. I recall as a young person reading some of his work in the 1970s, and feeling very confused. He mixed what seemed to be a left-wing, dissenting view of the establishment with an ugly and degrading misogyny and an apparent contempt for people in general. At least that's how it seemed me in my teens, looking to authors for guidance I was not receiving elsewhere.

Kamilla V  
British Columbia, Canada  
6 November 2009

*On "US unemployment rate surges to highest level in 26 years"*

I hope to see someone write about the impact (if any) that our welfare reform has had on those who lose their jobs and those whose unemployment insurance expires. Welfare programs were replaced with "workfare"; this has essentially created a huge pool of bottom-wage/no workers' rights replacement labor, and it's logical to assume that the workfare labor rolls have grown. What happens to those who become ill/disabled, and lose their jobs? The length of time it takes the government to process a disability aid application far exceeds the time limit on any sort of cash welfare program that might still exist. We really don't know much about what happens to individuals and families under such circumstances, though, because this issue isn't covered in the media.

Dianka F  
Wisconsin, USA  
8 November 2009



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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