

Letters from our readers

12 December 2009

On “US takes hard line against poor nations, China”

At the end of Al Gore’s *An Inconvenient Truth*, there are suggestions on how to stop global warming: “change your thermostat,” “winterize your home,” “if you can—buy a hybrid car (!)” I remember that the Live Earth concert that aired a couple of years ago was filled with such hints in between the songs. Unfortunately, this bankrupt individualistic approach is also what is taught in college environmental science classes—i.e., “how to reduce your carbon footprint.” Capitalism is based on an atomized, fractured world while the problems facing humanity demand social solutions. The profound changes that the human race is tasked with can only be realized by going beyond the capitalist system. This requires a historic overturn—the coming to power of the world’s working people!

Terrence M
Massachusetts, USA
11 December 2009

On “Obama calls for austerity in Washington ‘jobs speech’”

“The Fourth International declares uncompromising war on the politics of the capitalists, which, to considerable degree, like the politics of their agents, the reformists, aims to place the sole burden of militarism, the crisis, the disorganization of the monetary systems and all other scourges stemming from capitalism’s death agony upon the backs of the toilers.”

This is from Trotsky’s “The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International,” written in 1938. Given the current state of politics—or lack thereof in the developed “democracies”—and the collapse of the worldwide capitalist economies—with the US at the vanguard, and that the price for its ongoing wars and the bailout of Wall Street to the tune

of trillions of dollars—given all this, among other things, I don’t see how this quote could be more relevant—especially as it is the working classes who are expected to pay for it—and who are indeed almost broken under this burden already.

Rob M
9 December 2009

In regards to COBRA, the recipients have to pay for coverage—quite a bit more than they did when they had the job to which the benefits were attached. It can be very difficult, as I found, to keep making these payments if one is out of a job.

I would be interested to know how many people found this was something they flat out could not afford at the time of their job’s disappearance.

Christie S
Oregon, USA
9 December 2009

On “German Green leader Joschka Fischer bangs the drum for Afghanistan war”

Hard to believe that I attended some of the same anti-imperialist protests as Fischer did back in the early 1970s in Frankfurt am Main. He has certainly sold out to the powers he used to oppose.

Ron J
10 December 2009

On “Michigan woman dies after Medicaid dental care is cut”

This article really boils my blood. I’m a single mother of one. My daughter and I have Medicaid and have some major dental problems. I’m 25 and can’t

afford to get my wisdom teeth taken out, and they kill me! My daughter had to get 2-3 fillings already at the age of six. I worry because I know for a fact I can't afford for us to get the regular check-ups, x-rays and work done off of my income of \$100-\$200/week. We live in low-income housing, and I pay my taxes still too! I have to pay for my own heat and electricity like everyone else, yet our medical insurance can't cover for any of the major problems I as an adult have. I need to be here and around for my girl! I'm angered at Granholm for the fact that Dental Health is an extremely important part to any health. I know a girl my age who already had a minor heart attack due to her teeth. Your teeth are just as important as your heart. Not just for looks—it's for your health! I worry everyday that something bad is going to happen and I'll never get to that point to be out of debt to doctors and dentists to have a chance at a real life for my daughter and me. I'm not ready to die due to my teeth and other health issues that Medicaid refuses to cover.

Carrie
Michigan, USA
9 December 2009
On Tiger Woods

I read an op-ed piece sourced from the *New York Times* about Tiger Woods not having a right to privacy. This is ridiculous. He has committed no crime, and most of the damage has been inflicted by the media, not his actions. This is especially true for the hospitalization of his mother-in-law. Again the media swarm like locusts over a "juicy" story while the figures responsible for the misery of millions are untouched.

Stan
New Zealand
11 December 2009

On "US jobless claims rise, job openings decline"

A new Chevy Malibu is priced around \$23,000.00. Add to this 7.5 percent sales tax, insurance, and another \$1,000 in my city for plates and you have yourself one luxury automobile. The problem is that 50 percent of the people in my state do not make \$9.50/hour. The median income is \$18,000. A decent home is \$130,000.

If your weekly pay should be your house payment, then a single-income family in my town would be living in a \$40,000 home. Houses are not \$40,000 or even \$80,000. Without a resurgence of union wages and union membership and union buying power we have decades of poverty ahead of us. Perhaps a long, hard, cold winter will get unemployed people out in the streets. Something has to give.

PK
11 December 2009



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