

Letters from our readers

13 February 2010

On “The ‘Tea Party’ movement in the US: A right-wing media creation”

This is another pitch perfect article from Walsh. He neither overestimates their current political significance nor underestimates the danger that such groups will pose as the current crisis deepens.

Certainly the “Tea Party” groupings are no mass movement, but they are an initial grouping of far-right and fascistic elements into what would be pre-party elements, especially if the Republican Party were to split under the impact of the current crisis.

The 20th Century was littered with failed working class insurrections that all followed the same pattern; bourgeoisie forces organized under leadership that was willing to use any and all means to maintain their power, facing working classes trapped behind reformist leaderships that failed when the crisis became white hot.

Trotsky’s statement, “The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat,” has lost none of its relevance and becomes more urgent daily.

Coley
11 February 2010

Thanks for all the information. Good article; I saved it for reference. As Obama’s attacks on American workers grow, so will the funds provided for the Tea Baggers.

There is going to be much much more of this sponsored outrage from the right. I don’t envy you in having to trawl through this muck. Five minutes of Palin and friends on the TV, and I want to throw up.

Chris
Ireland
9 February 2010

Thanks for clearing up this “Tea Party” thing. I was wondering why a “grassroots movement” would charge people more than \$500 a ticket to be at their convention.

Greg S
New Hampshire, USA
10 February 2010

On “Spain: Government and unions conspire to impose austerity measures”

You write, “According to *El Pais*, some investors openly expressed their doubts of whether the PSOE’s measures would be enough and that the Spanish government faced a dilemma: If it adopts harsher austerity measures it confronts social discontent. If it does not, it faces punishment by the markets.”

Conflicts between governments imposing austerity measures on the one hand and dealing with rising social discontent on the other are frequently noted on the WSWS.

All bourgeois governments, everywhere and at all times, make the same identical choice: impose the bankers’ austerity measures regardless of the social cost, and apply all the military and police force needed to crush any hint of social discontent. Counterexamples are almost never observed.

Suppose a regime existed somewhere in which IMF’s austerity measures were utterly rejected simply because they would create an unacceptable level of pain in the working population. It would be no surprise that such a regime would soon be under attack by financial

speculators, and become subject to sanctions and military threats from abroad. The peculiar thing is this: while these governments are afraid of a counterattack from the working class in their own countries, they are even more afraid of attacks from foreign markets. Why?

I think part of the answer is foreign bankers and armies, but another must be the utter venality of the local bourgeoisie. (The term “comprador”—literally, “buyer”—is often used for these people, but as I understand the concept, “comprados”—“the bought”—would be a better term.) These will always work for the advantage of their foreign paymasters over the needs of their local working population. The comprados chase the carrot as fast as they can while trying to avoid the stick. They have no trouble applying a stick to their own working class, however. They are imperialism’s middle management.

The comprados will always receive generous subsidies from the foreign paymasters if they buy their expensive “stick” (military and police power) from the paymaster, and only for the purpose of suppressing local dissent. They will pay a far higher price, however, if they try to make their own stick locally, or buy it with a view to increasing their own national independence.

Of course, the life of the comprados must be a life lived in abject terror. What if our workers do somehow get out of line? What if they come and kill us all? What if the foreign paymaster changes his goals or methods and we are slow to notice? What if a local political movement provokes a foreign invasion? Life is hard if you’re a comprador!

None of this is news to Marxists, but well-meaning people continue to support bourgeois governments in the mistaken belief that they are somehow “progressive.” I consider myself a budding Marxist, but I have made the same mistake in the past. Nowadays, I get into some intense discussions with people who still have not decolonized their own minds.

Charles H
Texas, USA

10 February 2010

On “Vancouver Olympics: Public anger over security measures and free speech limits”

It’s always exciting to see our city showcased on your website! I remember how Expo 86 (the World’s Fair of that year) was supposed to “put Vancouver on the map”. Some clever people have pasted old Expo 86 posters around the city, as an ironic reflection of the artificial euphoria whipped up around the Olympics. As a pseudo-event that benefits real estate speculators, corporations and the growth of the war-security state, the Olympics now exploit emotions and ideals that would be extremely powerful in inspiring people to bring about real positive change in the world, if they were not distracted and manipulated as they are.

Kamilla
British Columbia, Canada
11 February 2010

On “Jazz drummer Ed Thigpen dies at 79”

The WSWS obituaries for jazz musicians and other arts would be useful in compiling a history of jazz musicians so that these people won’t be forgotten. A lot of us who use WSWS have been jazz fans since childhood. Becoming a jazz fan is a rite of passage for red diaper kids. It’s like the FBI starting a file on you; that means that the FBI always will consider you a person of interest and/or one of the usual suspects.

It is the same for other arts. If you are interested in the arts, you tend to be a socialist too. I don’t recall encountering a rabid reactionary at a concert, jam session or anyplace jazz is played.

Larry L
11 February 2010



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