

Letters from our readers

10 April 2010

On "Obama nominates cost-cutting advocate as Medicare and Medicaid chief"

Richard Cooper delivered a devastating response to the Dartmouth study in a recent *New England Journal of Medicine* opinion piece. The study looked at the cost of the last two years of life of Medicare patients who had died. There was a great disparity in cost. The conclusion was that some hospitals spent too much, as the outcome was the same.

However, he said, they also should have taken into consideration outcomes in their measure of efficiency. If hospital A spent no money for a serious disease, and all 100 patients died, they look efficient. But what if hospital B spent \$1 per patient and 50 survived. Thus, this hospital spent \$100, but only the 50 dead patients were counted in terms of efficiency. The fact that 50 patients survived at a total cost of \$100 is not taken into account.

As you say, this is all a way of cutting costs for the vast majority of Americans while the rich get the most expensive care available. By the way, as a WSWS article noted last year, Rahm Emanuel's brother Ezekiel openly advocates minimal care for the very young and very old, basic care for the majority, and everything possible for the rich.

Alfred L
7 April 2010

On "No economic recovery for the working class"

I feel your article does justice. The number of the unemployed and underemployed are larger than reported. Colleges are reporting large numbers of older students returning to college, most people are forced to take any type of work that comes their way. I have been out of work and its harder to find a job, because of my age, and because there is no job that pays. I end up working for free or doing jobs in exchange for food.

We do need training programs that teach skills and give gainful employment. The time has come to build a party that supports workers and educates workers to unite and demand jobs that pay. Build the SEP party.

Paul M
Washington, USA
7 April 2010

On "Oppose furloughs and all school cuts! For a working class movement to defend public education!"

My girlfriend has been a second grade teacher in a poor, majority Hispanic area in Maryland for three years. Her school was awarded a Blue Ribbon for exhibiting high performance and/or significant improvement in reading and mathematics achievement. Her school is also one of 11 schools to receive the National Excellence in Urban Education Award in 2009 from the National Center for Urban School Transformation.

After the politicians were done giving their speeches, they proceeded to cut rewards programs for teachers working on their Masters degrees, which would have increased my girlfriend's pay once she completes her education. She is also scared that she may lose her job altogether as they will fire freshmen teachers.

It makes me sick.
M
Maryland, USA

On "The New York Times fingers whistleblower WikiLeaks"

Thanks for this article, David. The *New York Times* is in particularly slimy mode on this one. The idea that an atrocity like the one on the video can be brushed off like so much dandruff and that the messenger can be fingered for a hit instead is chilling, to say the least. We need a free Internet more than ever.

Carolyn
California, USA
8 April 2010

On "Obama orders assassination of US citizen"

As a former military intelligence officer, I'm stunned, but in the current environment, not surprised. I remember when serving, we were periodically called in and briefed, and signed statements to the fact, that we were specifically forbidden from collecting information on US citizens, in case there was some wingnut among us who didn't understand this. And assassination—it was a given that this was outlawed by Ford. Much has changed since the Church committee, and Murder Inc. is in full swing again. We live in dark times when the powers that be—and it started with an illegitimate and criminal cabal—can freely abrogate our constitutional rights of protection. Kill an American without trial or evidence?

This is the logic of fascists, the Mafia. What happened to America? (Don't answer, we know...)

We are way overdue for a new Nuremberg. The irony is profound.

Rob
Alabama, USA
8 April 2010

On "New US nuclear doctrine targets Iran, North Korea"

The presentation in the bourgeois press of the nuclear treaty has displayed again the fetishistic thinking that always predominates in societies based on a division into social classes. The historical point about nuclear weapons is that this is the first weapons system whose use can eliminate the human species. Of course it will not be the last. Under capitalism and its correlate, the nation-state, biological, genetic and nano weapons systems will be developed. And the deployment of new means of species elimination is as inevitable as the next financial bubble. The next economic crash. And now, as indicated by global warming, the concrete possibility arises that the integration of technologies by the capitalist relations of production can of itself eliminate

the species. In sum, it is perfectly apparent that class society has run its historical course. And if the working class does not bury capitalism, it will bury us all.

P.S. As the precarious position of the species becomes apparent the number of defectors from the current ruling regimes will certainly grow.

Chris
Ireland
8 April 2010



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