

Letters from our readers

8 May 2010

On "An American Chernobyl"

I was immediately drawn to this quote since it's almost exactly the quote I have read three or four times in the past decade: "'It's hard to write a plan for a catastrophic event that has no precedent, which is what this was,' he said, 'what could never be in a plan, what you couldn't anticipate.'"

I really cannot tell whether this quote is taken from the oil volcano in the Gulf or from 9/11 or from the failed invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq or from the credit default swaps or even from the broken water main in Boston. Is this statement the new "go-to" excuse for every bungled event in the world today?

PK

3 May 2010

On "BP oil spill hits Gulf coast"

Thank you for this highly informative article. I've been trying unsuccessfully to get a clear picture of this disaster since it was first reported. In fact, the inadequate reporting was what first made me think this was probably far worse than we were being led to believe by the media. BP, Halliburton, Transocean, gangsters all. It couldn't be clearer that we must begin operating as a planet or we are surely doomed. Socialism is once again showing itself to be the only way out of this mess and the urgency is being ramped up exponentially by corporate crimes like this one. The WSWs is certainly doing its part and I'm thankful for that.

GC

California, USA

4 May 2010

On "Obama seeks to contain anger over BP oil spill"

Good article! Thanks for laying out the sequence of events and passage of time so clearly. The lack of response truly was as stunning as the Katrina episode. This, though, is potentially far worse. It is inaccurate to call it a "spill". It is an underwater gusher. Did you see any information about how much oil they expected to pump out of this deposit? Not to sound alarmist, but could it not be capable of contaminating all of the oceans and connected lakes?

Kate

4 May 2010

On "Europe-IMF bailout, social cuts announced in Greece"

The figure you give of 51.3 percent of Greeks prepared to take to the streets to defend their rights and standard of living was also given by the French daily *Le Monde* (neoliberal and centre-right). However, another figure was given: 60 percent of Greeks opposed to the unions' handling of strikes and demonstrations.

For *Le Monde* this constitutes a contradiction. Not a bit. Rather it might corroborate your arguments on the role of unions: people simply do not trust Greek unions to represent workers' rights.

This growing hostility to unions constantly trying to defuse popular discontent could also explain the enormous drop in the turnout on May Day in certain countries of Europe. However, this could also be put down to despair and resignation, more likely to give rise to individual acts of violence than to organised opposition.

Greece is a small country and virtually isolated, with xenophobia rife in the populist press in Europe. Last week a populist French paper carried the following title

on its front page: “Greece will cost us a lot of money”.

The “us”, of course, does not include those, in Greece and elsewhere, responsible for the current catastrophe. And there is no longer any mention of the huge economic efforts made by Greece at the time of the Olympic Games to modernise the airport of Athens, public highways and other infrastructures. Praise has given way to the cant-filled moralising of people like Merkel.

Sincerely,
Reynold H
Paris, France
3 May 2010

On “Democrats call for deployment of National Guard in Chicago”

The 40th anniversary of the killings of four students at Kent State University in Ohio is Tuesday, May 4. It should be remembered that those students were shot dead by National Guard troops. Deploying the National Guard in the city of Chicago ostensibly as a crime-prevention tactic will bear the same fruits as were seen on the ground in Kent in 1970.

Carolyn
California, USA
3 May 2010

On “SEP candidate Robert Skelton speaks on DM Digital TV’s ‘Spotlight’”

Gayle O’Donovan (Green Party)’s comments only show that this party, the Greens, are incapable of opposing the capitalist system; they are a part of the problem. She says in the article that there is “no connection” between the Irish and English Green parties. Well great. This shows clearly that the Greens will line up with their “own” ruling classes and obey their financial elites every demand and order!

As for Zulfikar, his organisation, an election platform, is just playing the typical pressure-politics, which won’t attract anyone who is seriously looking for a real socialist alternative.

In contrast to these bankrupt organisations, the SEP is

actually a genuinely international party, which is representing not only the independent interests of the world working class, but also the progressive interests of the world’s productive forces which for the financial elites, for example in the “advanced capitalist countries”, in the UK, US, Australia, and New Zealand (especially!) have become only useful when they can be profited from, and if not, completely destroyed.

Chris
New Zealand
4 May 2010

On “Socialist internationalism and the defense of immigrant workers”

Thank you, Bill! This critically important reality—that we workers are the same the world over—is an uncomfortable concept for the proponents of national chauvinism. Those, who—in the name of “defending” workers—are actually serving the interests of the bosses by helping to divide us against each other on the basis of national origin or transitory work status between capitalist “nation states.”

Divide and conquer strategies such as these by the ruling class need to be vigorously opposed, not embraced, by anyone who purports to defend us workers. Genuine solidarity and internationalism brings *all* members of the working class together, regardless of personal circumstances because it is the concept of *class* that unites us all, not any other artificial constructs created by the capitalist class, their apologists and defenders.

Eugene
California, USA
4 May 2010



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