

Letters from our readers

13 May 2010

On "Committee Against Utility Shutoffs launches campaign"

The inquiry and the formation of the committee is something I am following with great interest. The comments of Sylvia Young at the end of this article, that she no longer felt alone and that people were standing with her, feel to me to be a great step forward in this struggle.

I wholeheartedly support the committee, it is doing the right thing.

Vincent
6 May 2010

On "The life and career of actor Corin Redgrave"

I read with interest Dave Hyland's letter regarding David Walsh's and David North's obituary on Corin Redgrave. I was impressed with the clarity and objectivism of North, Walsh and Hyland's analysis of the link between the political degeneration of the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party and the political disorientation of those artists and intellectuals like Corin Redgrave who joined the SLL/Workers Revolutionary Party.

It would have been easy but ignorant for North, Walsh and Hyland to subjectively condemn those like Redgrave, who after being expelled from the WRP quickly moved toward left liberal causes. But as Dave rightly notes, if the revolutionary party is to win over intellectuals and artists, the issue is to learn the lessons of the political processes which resulted in the degeneration of the leadership of the WRP and those like Corin Redgrave.

Finally, I agree with the analysis of the very low cultural level within the British working class at present. Of course he is right to condemn the role played by the Labour Party, the trade union bureaucracy and leadership of the WRP in this process. Hyland's assertion that in view of the global catastrophe of capitalism a new generation of intellectuals and artists will come into the revolutionary party is in my view a correct and important assertion. I do think a more in-depth analysis is needed if workers, artists and intellectuals are to understand the connection between the low cultural level within the British working class and the loss from revolutionary politics of those like Redgrave.

I would suggest that the defeat of the 1984-85 miner's strike and subsequent defeats experienced by the British working class during the past 25 years have also played a major part in the low cultural level we see amongst sections of British

workers today. Whilst I am not suggesting that the problems of drug and alcohol abuse are wholesale within the working class and youth, I think that when the jobs went so did communities, and the impact of this can be seen in issues of drugs, alcohol and family breakdown amongst layers of disaffected workers and youth.

Jean M
England
6 May 2010

On "Drop in California state revenues exacerbates budget crisis"

Liked your article. I just saw a flyer being handed out in Santa Cruz, California that directs seniors to a website, www.sccs.santacruz.k12.ca.us, which offers an application for those over 65 years of age living within the city to receive a parcel property tax exemption of \$203.00. They openly state that the three parcel tax rates that add up to this amount are used to support Santa Cruz elementary and high school programs. Senior citizens are being given this tax cut to facilitate the destruction of public school programs for library and counseling services, music and art programs and one that supports lower class sizes. This is probably happening in other cities across California and the US.

Best wishes,
Bob
California, USA
8 May 2010

On "Pressure from US ensures Sudanese poll goes ahead, despite fraud"

Brian Smith implies, in his otherwise accurate article, that the US and other Western powers are opposed to the secession of southern Sudan—the likely outcome of next January's referendum. While the public record is sparse on this point, most circumstantial evidence indicates that, to the contrary, Washington is cementing a close alliance with the southern government. The strategically located, oil-rich, nation-to-be is already receiving substantial military and infrastructure support from the US and has close ties with neighboring US allies. While Smith correctly notes that Washington's relationship with Khartoum is less hostile than it is often portrayed to be, the Bashir regime has never displayed sufficient fealty to be a trusted client state.

On a separate note, Smith's observation that "Washington has historically openly supported the interests of the South against Khartoum" is only true of the 1990s. The Nimeiri dictatorship in Khartoum received crucial aid from the US from the late 1970s until its fall in 1985—a period of time during which the North waged a brutal civil war against the South.

Steven Fake, coauthor of *Scramble for Africa: Darfur—Intervention and the USA*
Massachusetts USA

8 May 2010

On "*Socialist internationalism and the defense of immigrant workers*"

Thank you for your excellent article on the importance of the unity of the international working class against the international capitalist class and its scapegoating of immigrants. Your article was excellent, but perhaps a few more examples of the deadly results of scapegoating will help.

The Holocaust, in particular the murder of six million of Europe's nine million Jews by capitalist, fascist Germany, was the end result of racist scapegoating of Jews, Gypsies, and Slavs, all of whom suffered immensely at the hands of Nazi Germany, so as to divert the attention of the German working class from the cause of their problems during the Great Depression of the 1930s where the Great Depression was worse than in the US, namely the capitalist profit motive, which is also the cause of our problems today. Only a united working class can carry out a general strike to take state power to put an end to the capitalist profit motive, the cause of all our grief, and establish socialism, the only hope for humanity and Planet Earth.

In the United States, we have a long and bitter history of racism that is the reason why this country is the most backward in the industrialized world, with the highest infant mortality and the lowest life expectancy in the industrialized world. This country was founded on genocide of Native Americans, enslavement of Africans, and the vicious exploitation of the labor of all nationalities, all pitted against each other, so as to maximize the profits of the capitalist class, as all profits are our stolen labor. Only when unity was achieved did we win anything, including but not limited to Social Security and unemployment insurance.

We still have the death penalty, unlike most of the world, because we have a bitter legacy of racism against African Americans, the most common victims of this anti-working class weapon of terror, and the death penalty is today's lynching. The police state terror and murder exists in the African-American community, and to a slightly lesser extent, in the Latino community, so as to promote division in the working class, all to prevent labor organizing, which depends on unity of the working class, and would certainly improve our wages and working conditions.

The only viable immigration reform is amnesty for all

undocumented immigrants currently residing here so they can obtain legal papers. With the threat of deportation removed, we can do serious labor organizing. The ruling capitalist class understands this and that is why there is no amnesty proposal before Congress.

If the horror of racism is remote to those who do not remember the civil rights movement of the 1960s, please read as much as you can about that history. It is imperative that we oppose racism everywhere, including racist profiling mandated by Arizona's anti-immigrant law. Since everyone of Mediterranean descent, including but not limited to Jews, Arabs, Italians, Spaniards, French, Yugoslavs and many others, "looks Mexican," this racist profiling could, and soon will, be applied to everyone. The phony reform proposals before Congress clearly indicate the capitalist class plans to make war on all of us, native born and foreign born, so as to maximize their profits, the primary law and goal of capitalism.

There is simply no excuse for anyone who claims to be for the working class to support any attacks on immigrants. An Injury to One is An Injury to All is labor's fundamental principle, and on that basis, we can and must put an end to capitalism and achieve socialism, and the sooner, the better.

M

4 May 2010

On "*Iran, the US and the UN nuclear conference*"

Thank you for today's analysis and article regarding Iran, the political maneuvering against it led by Israel and the United States. How either of the two has any credibility in their portrayal of Iran is owed to the mainstream media's subservience.

Unfortunately, the history of the region is also controlled by those who write it and seek their benefit, not unlike the history of socialism and Trotsky as has been the mission of WSWS.

Though I do not agree with a few things put forth by SEP, your article and others regarding the Middle East and Iran would do America well if it was more widely read. Otherwise, the drumbeat of military conquest drowns rational discussion, as demonstrated by those powers that wouldn't even listen to the Iranian president's speech.

Michael S

6 May 2010



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