Letters from our readers

1 July 2010

On "The mass repression at the G20 summit in Toronto"

I'm 60. The last vestiges of the democratic rights and protections I took for granted growing up are now gone—I speak as an American, but the cataclysm is global. The repression and provocations in Toronto and the debacle in the Gulf of Mexico are of a piece, orchestrated and controlled by the same indifferent elites, who are now in the final stages of bankrupting the world and ruining the hopes and dreams of all working people—who have little enough as it is and who will be made to pay for the crimes of the likes of those at the G20 summit, who are cloistered and protected and have been made to pay for exactly nothing.

A key point you make is that the leaders at this summit are universally loathed by their citizens. The disjunct between the reality people daily face and the constant lies of the mass media—the voice and propaganda machine of the oligarchs—is too apparent anymore to be conveniently shoved down the memory hole—the Ozian facade is cracking—and the powers that be can only respond with brute force.

The situation too much resembles conditions in the ancien regime before the French Revolution—the complete hubris and indifference of the elites, the vast social and economic inequality, the lack of any voice or relief through official political channels—among others, clearly presage and form the conditions for a revolution.

Worse is coming, certainly in America. As things worsen, what remains of posse comitatus will disappear, and America's monolithic military/police apparatus will be turned on its own people.

Toronto is just a warm-up.

Rob M
30 June 2010

On "Toronto police violently suppress G20 protests, arrest over 600"

It is becoming more and more convincing to me that one of the main purposes of these events, if not the main purpose, is to provide an opportunity for the police to practice crowd control and repression. They need the practice, because the austerity measures being implemented against the majority of people worldwide will soon result in widespread social unrest.

KV
28 June 2010

On "Opposition grows to police repression in Toronto"

Good reporting. I live off the University of Toronto and walk through downtown daily to get to work in a school in Moss Park neighbourhood, for lack of a better word, the slums. There were before the school where I teach twenty recent graduates of police academies searching anyone with a vaguely "anarchist" look about them, and that included anyone roughly dressed in black, a heavy metal form of symbolic identification of roughly half or more of the younger citizens. The other half are Moslems, with a mosque and many "halal" restaurants [nearby].

I was born after the Holocaust in the Jewish Ghetto the year the Stalinists took power in Hungary in 1947. I know exactly what is happening, and it's very bad. Keep up the reporting.

AL
Toronto, Canada

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29 June 2010

On "The Australian Labor Party coup: a warning to the working class"

The highly secretive nature of the coup which installed Julia Gillard as prime minister of Australia has underlined its anti-democratic character. The factional warlords and trade union bureaucrats that you describe were very sensitive to and rattled by the polling that indicated Rudd's and the Governments rapid loss of support.

These elements use all sorts of polling, the most notorious type being push-polling, which attempts to find the lowest common denominator in the community and then build a policy around it. This is a substitute for leadership which reflects the opportunist character of the Labor party. The recent polling was in the context of the mining industry whipping up a scare campaign combined with elements of anti-communist hysteria.

More conscious elements were describing the present period as being similar to that leading up to sacking of the Whitlam government in 1975. However, on this occasion it did not take much to scare the Laborites and this is yet another indication of how far the Labor Party is removed from the democratic and social aspirations of the people.

The fact that Rudd was the first elected prime minister that was removed while still the prime minister is another indication of how easily parliament is now being manipulated by vested interests. Governments controlled by the manipulation of polling runs counter to the historical experience and rights of the working class. The working class in its historical development decided from bitter experience that their leader to parliament should be elected for fixed periods.

Your point on Australia being extremely sensitive to geo-political shifts in the region is not overstated. The example you give about the impact of the defeat of US imperialism in 1975 is a very good example of international pressures bearing on the domestic political scene. On that occasion the bourgeoisie had no qualms about removing an entire elected government. On this occasion they only had to remove the Prime Minister to get the desired result.

I think the events of the last week indicate a fundamental shift in the political structure and indicates how sensitive the political establishment is to the rapidly deteriorating world economic crisis.

What is required is a conscious understanding of strategic experiences of the working class. This historical understanding is in opposition to spontaneous trade union consciousness promoted by the middle class radical rabble that constantly feeds illusions that you can somehow push the Laborites to the left.

Rod R
28 June 2010

On "Australia: Top mental health adviser resigns"

What we are seeing here is a power play by big pharma and big psychiatry to get billions of dollars poured into more meds and more beds, neither of which actually improve mental health outcomes. There is nothing in the mantra of McGorry, Mendoza and Hickie about primary prevention, that is, addressing such serious social problems as child abuse, domestic violence, unemployment, poverty, homophobia, etc.

Stephen
Australia
26 June 2010

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