

Letters from our readers

16 September 2010

On "One in seven Americans now living in poverty"

Not everyone can work, and there aren't enough jobs for all who need them. We are not, and have never been, a full-employment economy. There has always been a segment of the population effectively locked out of the economy, sometimes many people, sometimes fewer. We always condemned them as "lazy welfare bums." The only thing that has changed is that we got rid of welfare. In 1996, America decided that the appropriate response to poverty was "tough," so we shredded the social safety net. If you would check with our welfare reform legislation, it clearly states that our government accepts no reason for being unemployed as acceptable.

This is the hardest thing for Americans to accept today, after decades of anti-poor rhetoric by the media and our political leadership: If you're out of work and out of money, you are no different from any other poor Americans. It is simply your turn to find out what US poverty is really like. You will try to tell yourself that you're somehow different from, better than, the poor—not really one of THOSE people. It probably won't work. Then, maybe, you'll "get it." Poverty is not caused by "bad attitudes," but by an economic system that no longer works for ordinary people.

DHF

Wisconsin, USA

15 September 2010

On "A letter from a Canadian telecom worker on the unions"

I just read the letter about the Canadian Telecom workers being sold out by their union. It seems to also be a case of the old selling out the young to keep higher pay until they die. But the young will never see the pay rate of the old guys.

Much like the Caterpillar strike result. Greedy

corporations are turning workers into fear-ridden, cannibalistic mobs.

Today, after fear-driven negotiations, of course, Harley-Davidson brass pounded its Wisconsin workers into near dust.

I hope you folks do a real in-depth report on this H-D story; I would like to hear the old guys' side and that of the younger workers. And what tax breaks did they steal from Wisconsin taxpayers?

Thank you!

Richey H

14 September 2010

On "Poverty in America: 2010"

Almost every day I read the WSWS and find it astounding that you still promote the tired and age-old lies that unions, high wages, fair labor practices and social equality are the cure for what ails our nation. Time and time again economists have shown that money in the hands of the lower and middle class does nothing to enhance the power of the rich and prosperous of this nation.

Listen to Mr. Obama, he will tell you. Corporate profits are the solution, not money, not wages, not infrastructure, not security or any of these tangible things. How will we ever boast having the richest people on earth if we continue to poke holes in their profits with wage increases and diversions of money to people who need it.

It would be one thing if poor and working class people actually spent the money they earned, but historically they do not. I have seen them in the alleyways and empty lots around my city burying it in tin cans. What a fine world it would be if we could just give them wages and have them exchange them for goods and services, thus lifting the entire economy up and increasing the quality of life for everyone, but they don't. They just burn the money, bury the money, use it for insulation or otherwise put it to uses that benefit nobody.

I think the WSWS should stop printing these lies and conspiracy stories about the fair distribution of wealth or this country will no longer be #1.

PK

14 September 2010

On "Gas line explosion in California kills four, injures dozens"

I was shocked to learn during the course of the news reporting on Thursday evening, that the St. Francis Hospital Burn Center is the only burn center in the Bay Area. The next closest one is in Sacramento. It is incredible to me that in such a highly populated area there is only one place to take burn victims. This is a signal failure of the health care system. The delay in time and the moving of an injured party a long distance certainly puts lives at risk.

Carolyn

San Francisco, California, USA

14 September 2010

On "US soldiers killed Afghan civilians and kept fingers, skull as trophies"

This story brings to mind the massacre of native Americans in the US in the late 1800s at Sand Creek, Colorado. The soldiers were told to take off their uniforms. They killed women and children, and cut off body parts. Put their uniforms back on, and rode in formation through Denver, with body parts on their uniforms, baby parts, women's breasts, etc. I know that these things happen in wars, and since I am 58 years old, I sometimes wonder if it is getting worse in the world, or we just hear more of it. Which we didn't before the Internet and cable TV.

War is terrible, no matter where and when. But I always think of our soldiers as "our wonderful boys in uniform," that are out there doing what our country asks of them. Not anymore.

Patricia G

USA

11 September 2010

On "The twelve soldiers charged in atrocity and cover-up"

As our area prepares for the return of combat soldiers,

and we think about the damage done to them by witnessing and taking part in said combat, we are exhorted to welcome them as heroes.

War, however, is a criminal endeavor, and these wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have, from the word go, been conducted with a particularly virulent criminality. The tactics used in recruiting the soldiers to be sent there have welcomed in—through the use of "moral waivers"—men and women with violent criminal records. It would be interesting to know if any of these people were let in under such waivers.

Even if they did not have previous records, the violence to which they were subjected and in which they were ordered to engage encourages such dehumanization of "the other." In a military which engages in systematic torture, condoned from the top down, how is a person expected to remain "normal"?

It would be impossible, while being encouraged from above to commit atrocities on the battlefield (which often takes the form of peoples' homes), while being pressured by the idea of being a Band of Brothers to not have such things happen and attempts made to cover them up. Violence has become a way of life, a proof of loyalty and patriotism and strength. It feeds and feeds relentlessly.

And it has to be noted that, in all of this, those who are *most* responsible for these crimes—the Bushes, Cheneys, and Obamas—are let to walk free.

CMS

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10 September 2010



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