

Letters from our readers

9 December 2010

On “The threat of dictatorship in Spain”

Yes, it’s becoming very clear now: bourgeois states have, by and large, the juridical means to become dictatorships. All the ruling class needs to do, is to create a ‘national emergency’ and rule as a police state, as is the case in Egypt since 1981. As WSWs correctly points out with recent egregious examples in France, Greece and now, Spain, any democratic bourgeois government can, and probably will invoke this ‘state of emergency’ to defend the ‘national interest’, i.e. the interest of the ruling class.

This is blindingly obvious from *their* point of view. Of course, the less messy way is to simply stage a coup d’état and impose a ‘government of National Salvation’. The question now before the working class is: how to organise and fight back against this looming assault against it?

Objectively, the working class would have no option but unite against its common enemy, with its mask now torn off, and it would unite internationally, despite all the efforts by the bourgeoisie. However it’s all important to have a clear vision, a revolutionary perspective and well thought out tactics to move forward. It seems we are, or can be, in the situation of 1907-1913 in tsarist Russia, with the reaction well in ascendance: all that we are lacking on this is a Lenin, Trotsky and a workers’ vanguard to lead the fight. But I’m sure that in the intense struggle that is surely coming, the working class, as it has done in the past, will throw up revolutionary leaders and activists to lead to a ‘lutte finale’ against Capitalism. But then, we have to prepare *now*, or face pulverisation by our adversaries, who seem to be holding all the cards.

Mirek
NSW, Australia
6 December 2010

Wow! You are the first and only person that has spoke the truth about this event. Not one corporate media has reported this. I’m American, and live in Spain. I find this ‘work or be arrested’, a democratic dictatorship. I’m appalled. Thanks for speaking out!

RKT
6 December 2010

On “Spanish air traffic controller: ‘We have arrived at something akin to Stalinist Russia, the Stasi or Hitler’s SS’”

This letter from a very brave worker must be commended; it is one of the most frightening and harrowing letters I have read in recent times. This is the extent that governments are prepared to go in order that workers comply to the austerity measures being imposed on the international working class. Workers must learn from these experiences and quickly. The independent mobilisation of the working class under a new leadership—can this struggle be mounted? The trade unions are completely bankrupt to wage any struggle in the class interest of workers. Independent committees must be built, and amalgamated to workers

struggles internationally.

Malcolm B
UK
8 December 2010

On “Fed report reveals multi-trillion-dollar ‘shadow bailout’”

“The entire boom of the Clinton and Bush years was based essentially on a Ponzi scheme.”

The entire debt money system on which modern capitalism rests is a Ponzi scheme. Every “sovereign” state on earth is required to borrow money from private moneylenders, who then ultimately squeeze it out of the sweat and blood of the working class.

Thabo
7 December 2010

On “Interview with Ohio auto parts worker”

“As a member of the working class you know that you’re pissed but you just don’t know who to be pissed at. That’s deliberate. It’s like a mushroom—we’re just sitting in the dark and in the crap.”

Entirely accurate and with an enormously powerful resonance. Best wishes to you, Ronnie J, your family and all your comrades.

Chris
7 December 2010

On “Detroit News targets Michigan teachers for new round of pay cuts”

Why is it they never talk about most of the public school employee’s pay? Most of us will *never* make more than \$30,000 (gross) per year and we are single income families who simply can’t afford to lose anymore than we already have. Why is it the politicians *never* talk about their pay and their benefits?! They receive health benefits for the rest of their lives just for being elected. They are not fighting for our rights but making sure they keep their rights! I would love to see just one of them try to make ends meet on my ridiculous salary! There just aren’t enough jobs out there! What are they going to do when all of the good teachers are gone and very few children actually make it to graduation? All three of my children have/are attending public schools and I would rather pay for a seasoned teacher than one right out of college. How will our kids ever succeed? How will we, as public employees, ever survive?

Kathy C
Michigan, USA
3 December 2010

On "US Congress allows extended jobless benefits to expire"

What everyone has overlooked here is that if you do not receive a check for unemployment then you are no longer considered unemployed!

You can expect the unemployment rate to drop a few points next quarter as these folks are removed from our economy.

PK

1 December 2010

On "*Boston superintendent announces more school closures*"

In the 1940s and 50s, I grew up in Boston, attended good public schools. One, the William Lloyd Garrison grammar school, Leonard Bernstein attended years earlier, and he grew up not far from me in an inner city suburb. Never met him.

My schools, especially Roxbury Memorial High School got me into Harvard. Impossible today. Shocking to me was learning that my two grammar schools, junior high and high school were all closed years ago. The carnage never ended and continues relentlessly there and nationally as part of a scheme to destroy public education, privatize it and make it another business profit center.

Worst of all is the intent to give poor kids minimal educations at best, preparing them for a world with only low-paying, few if any benefits, jobs when they finish that for many or most won't even be through high school.

Some America the beautiful!

My home city Chicago today, of course, is just as bad or worse. Arne Duncan wrecked public education here when he was Chicago Public Schools CEO. I've written plenty on him, including as Obama's Education Secretary.

Stephen L

Illinois, USA

6 December 2010

On "After the Irish bailout: The financial wolf pack targets new victims"

Thank you, Nick Beams, for elucidating the heart and nature of the financial travesty threatening the entire West. It is quite simple to understand, though many find themselves incapable of accepting the obvious. Until they do, no mass opposition can mount to defeat the ravages of capital upon the social and democratic structures of Europe and the US.

Indeed, the people of Ireland "get it". The people of Greece, Spain, and Portugal "get it". It's the American who doesn't. What do they "get"? They realize the austerities imposed upon them are to shield, protect and defend the profits of the bankers, the traders, the market speculators, hedge funds, bond holders and entire investment class who will suffer little if at all from their market losses—because the people will bear their losses.

The Irish have more at stake. As the *Irish Times* explained on November

18, "Having obtained our political independence from Britain to be the masters of our own affairs, we have now surrendered our sovereignty to the European Commission, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund."

Speaking of the men who died in 1916, the *Irish Times* asked: "Was it for this?"

When enough people "get it", this savage raping and looting of Western societies for the benefit of "capital" will be stopped and turned on itself—for extremes produce opposite extremes, very often after sad, tragic and bloody conflict.

The alert American should keep his or her eyes on Ireland, Europe and Great Britain; for, beginning now, "austerity" (IMF style) is arriving here. The investor class—being the determining factor in whether nations sink or swim, whether people eat, starve, live or die—will dictate terms. But the investment class will bask for only a short duration in this, its "last hurrah". For enough of the people inevitably will "get it". There promises to be little mercy for the wealthy in the end.

This is neither a threat to the wealthy or a promise to the disenfranchised. This simply is the law of history.

Michael B

USA

1 December 2010

On "Trotsky's 1908 tribute to Leo Tolstoy"

Thanks for posting Trotsky's marvelous appreciation of Leo Tolstoy. Not for nothing did writer Harold Bloom, no friend to Marxism, describe Trotsky as perhaps the greatest literary critic of the twentieth century. It is astonishing, really. Not only was Trotsky a great journalist, revolutionary organizer, military strategist, Marxist theoretician, opponent of Stalinist degeneration and the founder of the Fourth International, but a literary critic to boot.

Bloom's offhand and freely given opinion of Trotsky is a judgment against the lies and distortions of mediocrities like Robert Service. As one who is reading Tolstoy for the first time, I find Trotsky's essay an invaluable accompaniment to understanding the man and his historical epoch.

EB

5 December 2010

On "Portland teen ensnared in FBI sting operation pleads not guilty"

I am appalled by this situation—all of the local news outlets keep referring to this young man as having "attempted to detonate a bomb near Pioneer Square as the Christmas tree lighting ceremony took place". There was *no bomb*. There was no threat at all to the general populace. The only person in danger was Mohamed Mohamud.

One has to wonder where Mohamud would be had he fallen in with sane people, instead of been groomed by the FBI.

Christie S

Oregon, USA

1 December 2010

On “The cancellation of AMC series *Rubicon*: Too close to home?”

“A weakness of *Rubicon* is that it did not openly make a connection to the highest levels of government itself”. I think that was intentional. They were trying to portray a government that is so slow and clumsy that, not only can it not stop foreign terrorists, it can’t even stop a bunch of old rich guys operating here in the US.

Kevin I
2 December 2010

On “Fair Game: Hollywood liberals treat the drive to war in Iraq”

The most grotesque aspect of the whole Valerie Plame affair is not, as is generally believed, the Bush-Rove conspiracy against the Wilson family, although that is sordid enough. It is the widespread embrace of the CIA as a legitimate organization by people who consider themselves to be politically liberal. Necessarily this fawning over the agency means whitewashing its history producing dubiously legal if not outright criminal enterprises against any and all political tendencies anywhere in the world which have shown the slightest likelihood of becoming democratic. What a spectacle to see liberals arguing in favor of enforcing the Intelligence Identities Protection Act against anyone who might follow the example of Phil Agee, for whom this law was made, and whose exposure in the 1970s of the identities of numerous CIA agents made the agency’s imperial pursuits substantially more difficult than they had ever been before.

Still, other artistic efforts more critical of the CIA should not be forgotten, even if they are imperfect, such as De Niro’s *The Good Shepherd*. After I saw that movie I wanted to vomit—exactly the effect that a truthful movie about the CIA should produce.

CR
6 December 2010



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