

Letters from our readers

29 October 2011

On “Professor Cole gloats over Gaddafi’s murder”

Thank you for speaking to the issue of the pseudo-left as “defenders and justifiers of the crimes of the state”. Amy Goodman is another celebrity “leftist” whose lack of moral principles is clearly illustrated by her coverage of Gaddafi’s death (see Democracy Now, October 21st, “Gaddafi’s Death Sparks Celebrations, Calls for Probe, as Libyans Begin New Era Free of Regime”).

Her sham interview with Peter Bouckaert of Human Rights Watch consisted of a series of absurd talking points in defense of Obama, NATO, and the NTC: (1) It was the French, not the US, who actually bombed Gaddafi’s fleeing convoy, and this was only done because the convoy attacked a rebel base on its way out of Sirte. (2) The murder of Gaddafi was not condoned by the NTC; it was an act of personal vengeance committed by a “street mob”. (3) The idea that Gaddafi’s murder was an assassination by the West is the opinion of a single African Studies professor, Horace Campbell. (4) Initially, the US and NATO really did intervene in Libya for humanitarian reasons, until they realized that the rebels could not defeat Gaddafi on their own. (5) The message Gaddafi’s murder sends to Assad and Saleh is that “there is quite a sordid end for them if they do not meet the people’s demands in terms of human rights and democratic governance.”

Goodman’s large and loyal following seems to have swallowed this whole. I haven’t seen a word of criticism of her on any “progressive” site.

Pam G

28 October 2011

On “*Occupy Wall Street movement at a crossroads*”

No doubt the Occupy movement is at a crossroads. One could see this critical juncture looming the moment the movement took off, and for the very reasons described in the WSWS analysis—inevitable violent repression by the State and, perhaps more significantly, the absence of any revolutionary ideology and a constructive strategy. The ideological vacuum, as evidenced in the “no politics, no leadership” rhetoric, is the predictable result of nearly a century of brutal attacks on and virtual extinction of leftist and progressive individuals, organizations, and discourse. The majority of protesters in the

Occupy movement, the Madison [Wisconsin] uprising, the disappearing anti-war groups, and other manifestations of struggle in the US are largely convinced of “the end of history,” that is they are at best oblivious to or at worst hostile toward a revolutionary socialist program.

This is hardly surprising, of course, given the indoctrination into American exceptionalism and “American dream” propaganda that we are all force-fed throughout our so-called education. But the lack of an explicit anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist political program will doom these movements before they even get started. “Throw the bums out” is not an adequate philosophy to maintain meaningful social struggle or bring about any meaningful social change. Perhaps the most telling image of the ruling class’s position is the one mentioned in the WSWS piece: President Obama schmoozing at a campaign fundraiser just across the Bay from the police state crackdown in Oakland. The President continues to ignore the protesters and the increasingly violent backlash against them, while he fawns over the wealthy and powerful in order to do their bidding. So yes, what is desperately needed is a mass consciousness-ization, raising the consciousness of Americans, or to borrow from Malcolm X, wholesale “unbrainwashing.” As social conditions continue to deteriorate, the possibility of such an awakening seems more plausible.

Peter F

Arizona, USA

26 October 2011

On “*Violent crackdown on Occupy protesters in Oakland, California*”

Gospel of Thomas, Saying 10: “Jesus said, ‘I have cast fire upon the world, and see, I am guarding it until it blazes.’ ” Right now, the fire smolders under the surface; and the Archons—here incarnated as the bourgeois—are able to keep it that way. Maybe they’ll still get away with that for another thousand years. But inevitably, that chain reaction will carry on uninterrupted....

William K

Texas, USA

26 October 2011

On “*Death toll rises in Turkish earthquake*”

I am a long-time reader of the WSWS, and I was disappointed in a factual misrepresentation in the article “Death toll rises in

Turkish earthquake” by Stefan Steinberg. At the end of the article, Steinberg cites the opinion piece “Let’s Use the Earthquake to Beat the PKK” from the Turkish newspaper *Hurriyet* as an example of stepping up Turkish chauvinism against the Kurdish minority.

In reality, despite the title, the opinion piece does not advocate military intervention to crush the PKK when it is weakened from a natural disaster. The article, according to the English translation on *Hurriyet*’s web site, instead advocates to “demonstrate the Turkish-Kurdish solidarity [in] tough times. If we want to win the hearts of our brothers of Kurdish origin, we should act now. We should beat the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) with this approach, which is more effective than arms.” The article goes on to criticize Turkey’s involvement in the bombing of Libya and Turkish Prime minister Erdogan.

I am not an expert in Turkish politics, but it is apparent that there is a section of the Turkish elite that is not interested in rekindling an ethnic conflict with the Kurds. This can be demonstrated by the criticism by the People’s Republic Party, which is led by Kemal Kiliçdaroglu, who is of Kurdish descent (as was mentioned in the WSWs article “Turkey launches anti-Kurdish raids in northern Iraq”). I can only imagine that a section of the Turkish ruling elite is trying to co-opt a section of the Kurdish elite into the existing capitalist system. It is certain “Turkish-Kurdish solidarity” mentioned in *Hurriyet* is not a solidarity of Turkish and Kurdish workers against their common capitalist oppressors, but a unity of ethnic elites to better exploit workers of all ethnicities during the economic crisis. This must be clarified in order to differentiate a socialist criticism of Turkish policy from a liberal criticism of Turkish policy.

Best regards,

Isaac

27 October 2011

On “*Occupy Boston: Noam Chomsky speaks, but offers no way forward*”

You need to cut Chomsky some slack. He is one of the good guys, and there aren’t many of those. When he says that the US population is not ready for a general strike, he probably means (1) most Americans are too stupid to know when they are getting screwed (that’s why they continually vote against their own economic interests; see Michigan) and therefore are difficult to organize, and (2) the solidarity of the working class that existed in the earlier part of the last century doesn’t exist any more, making someone who still has a job go out into the street and march for those who don’t virtually an impossibility.

Regards,

Jonathan F

25 October 2011

On “*The defense of Iranian filmmakers, and their artistic decline*”

Thanks for this very useful article. Although I know much less about Iranian film than you two authors, I have enjoyed many earlier ones and been disappointed by most of the more recent I have seen.

Your remarks about the Iranian “opposition” are most apt.

Susan C

26 October 2011

On “*George Clooney’s The Ides of March: What a great many people already know (and perhaps less)*”

The Ides of March is a dark coming-of-age story. Gosling’s character has ideals which are betrayed by Giamatti’s character (among others). While the film is a bit of an indulgent Machiavellian series of hit and counter-hits, it does give viewers a chance to see short bits of progressive sound bites when we cut to Clooney on the stump. I think it says more about the mood of the country than necessarily about the shortcomings of the filmmakers.

Regardless, Gosling and his supporting cast do heartfelt work creating their characters in a dark vehicle that was chosen to attract viewers. That’s why it’s so cynical. Right or wrong.

Jeff B

California, USA

24 October 2011

On “*Moneyball, and the uneven playing field of professional sports*”

I am a savvy baseball fan, and long-time attendee and follower of Oakland A’s.

Your review of *Moneyball* is far and away the most trenchant I’ve seen. I agree with all its points, and it is well written to boot.

Thanks.

(Oh, one matter I overlooked in the above. The movie’s caricature of the A’s field manager, Art Howe, is grossly inaccurate and unjust.)

George W

California, USA

28 October 2011



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact