

Letters from our readers

6 December 2011

On "US Senate backs military detention of American citizens"

I think Bill van Auken has done a real service to Americans by exposing the vile trampling of American civil rights by the US Senate. That these bastards voted 93-7 for the horrible detention of suspected "terrorists" with no trial by the military is an insult to every civilized person not only in the US but all over the world. Who are these petty dictators who, with Obama & Co., are the main terrorists in the world, voting in a terroristic threat to all civilians in the US that contravenes the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? The trend is clear—the US is moving toward a totalitarian dictatorship for the very rich and powerful.

Steve H
Massachusetts, USA
4 December 2011

Thank you for finally providing what I consider to be a thoughtful, important, and reasoned article that voices absolutely valid concerns on the subject. I'm sick and tired of the Alex Jones crowd running around and screaming that we've suddenly landed in the middle of 1984. Hyperbole is the enemy of opposition.

C
4 December 2011

On "No letup in US aggression following military withdrawal from Iraq"

This is an excellent article.

Something else that may be at stake here is allowing Israel to unilaterally attack Iran. I remember a few years ago, the US had to veto an attack from Israel on Iran because the path of the attack would have taken them through US-controlled airspace. Now such an attack won't. Granted, I doubt Iran would be that stupid to think that Israel didn't have the US's backing, but its the kind of diplomatic shenanigans that characterizes the bourgeoisie, so I wouldn't be surprised if something like that happens.

Bryan D
5 December 2011

On "The way forward in the fight for social equality"

I much appreciate Andre Damon's reporting on the Occupy Movement; I'd like to see more from him. I felt pride for

Andre—and for the Socialist Equality Party—when he spoke at the Wisconsin demonstrations last January and interviewed workers at the events for WSWWS.

There's something stirring among the people; the Wall Street movement proves it. A General Strike is not merely a possibility; it's an eventuality, simply because it's a necessity.

Randy R
Oregon, USA
2 December 2011

In my First-Year Seminar class at Columbia, I am researching people's perspectives on the "Occupy" movement. I have created a short, online survey, and I am writing to ask that you complete the survey. And if you have the time, perhaps you can forward this e-mail to more people, asking them to complete it and pass it on in turn.

Below I have links to the website as well as Twitter and Facebook. If you would be gracious enough to post or tweet to anyone you know I will be most grateful.

Email link: <http://edu.surveygizmo.com/s3/736544/What-are-your-perceptions-of-the-Occupy-Movement>

Tweet:
<http://edu.surveygizmo.com/s3/tweet/736544/adc8ae7defe0>

Facebook:
<http://edu.surveygizmo.com/s3/facebook/736544/20111f208835>

JB
4 December 2011

On "Police helped plan vandalism at Toronto G20 summit"

I agree with the author's conclusion that both the media and politicians of various stripes are engaged in a cover-up of "a giant state provocation aimed at testing out the apparatus for mass repression and acclimatizing the population to police state measures."

One would have to be willfully blind not to see how such provocations naturally follow such a disproportionately massive police, intelligence and military mobilization.

For example, the G20 was protected by what was called the Joint Intelligence Group, made up of the RCMP, the Ontario Provincial

Police and a variety of local police forces across Ontario, including the Toronto Police Service.

The Group was also connected to a variety of “spook” agencies, including the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, and lesser-known intelligence agencies, such as the Canadian Forces National Counter-Intelligence Unit and the Communications Security Establishment Canada.

The Group also had an investigative arm called the Primary Intelligence Investigation Team (PIIT), which was divided into 13 investigative teams, in addition to an RCMP Covert Operations Team (COT). Some PIIT teams conducted surveillance on the various forms of transportation used to get protesters to Toronto for the demonstrations. Other teams were comprised of “Event Monitors” who were placed inside the crowd to report on the “temperament and tempo” of demonstrations.

The COT was in turn charged with conducting “undercover operations to uncover criminality in relation to the 2010 G8-G20 Summits.”

So I doubt an anarchist could sneeze without these agencies knowing about it—and to suggest that black-clad anarchists could trash storefronts and light fires with impunity is ridiculous.

Instead, I think the author’s conclusions are bang-on: “when the state deploys its repressive apparatus under the pretext of fighting ‘extremism,’ it sends its own thugs and agents to make trouble and incite violence.”

“Its objectives are clear: to intimidate demonstrators; to discourage the populace in general from exercising its democratic right to express its opposition to the reactionary agenda of the ruling elite; and to discredit opponents of the government, especially the youth, by smearing them as vandals and criminals.”

Thanks again for the reporting!

Dan

2 December 2011

On “The bankruptcy of American Airlines and the case for public ownership”

Years back, I worked for an airport in Florida.

I recall the day when Pan Am died after an absorption plan by Delta failed to materialize and save the few remaining workers’ jobs. Among airline workers (who always struck me as unusually focused, uncomplaining and positive under pressure), I admired the Pan Am workers most. They were an intelligent and independently flexible breed utterly devoted to service. Many was the time I observed them sorting out complicated problems and cutting red tape with the well-being of their passengers uppermost in their minds.

How gut wrenching it was to see a veteran Pan Am employee

approaching me from the opposite direction on a moving sidewalk early that morning as I was headed to work. Bent over, frowning, with fists striking the air—he exclaimed over and over: “30 years! 30 years! For what? For nothing!”

Somehow, he had kept his job with all the sacrifices it required over all those years—including over a decade of little new hiring and increasing demands. What a degrading end to an honest career.

I don’t know if there are many industries that have traditionally devoted as much effort to promoting images of status, class and privilege as the travel and tourism industries—or inculcated an ethic among its workers to sacrifice and be humbled to as high a degree. (Perhaps only the military surpasses them.) What I do realize today is what I only sensed years ago: that capitalist endeavors are increasingly tuned to extract life from talent and recompense its victims with insults.

The strategic bankruptcy of American Airlines is just one of the latest insults: a lesson to workers of what becomes of sending good to bad.

I would not dare enter any airport today. Homeland Security, all-encompassing political cronyism, and the observable melancholy of slavish workers working insecure hours part-time for paltry pay makes such an environment freakish and distasteful.

Am I alone in my feelings? We have all read how billions have been lost because many people no longer wish to travel here.

I am not surprised. But I am deeply saddened.

Robert L

California, USA

1 December 2011



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