

Letters from our readers

26 January 2012

On “Obama’s State of the Union address: War and wage-cutting”

The first proper analysis of Obama’s State of the Union address I have had opportunity to read today.

David V
South Africa
25 January 2012

Once again, the president is promoting the snake oil of tax cuts for corporations to create undefined “jobs”. We workers have seen nothing but the decline of wages, and there wasn’t anything said by either capitalist party that will reverse that trend.

The inevitable descent of conditions for workers seems assured when considering the fox is guarding the hen house. There is an enormous inequality that exists between a criminally exploitative, insanely rich capitalist elite and workers. In a recent quote in regards to Apple Corporation’s near-slavery conditions of its contracted Chinese toilers, Jared Bernstein, a former economic adviser to the White House, said, “Apple’s an example of why it’s so hard to create middle-class jobs in the US, now if it’s [Apple] the pinnacle of capitalism we should be worried.”

There is also the example of the Egyptian revolution last year against a despotic puppet regime. To maintain their dominance, the elite are trying to channel opposition toward electoral politics and the anti-worker Brotherhood party. This reveals that, along with other recent social upheavals, this is the crisis of the capitalist system globally, and the conclusion that workers have to build their own socialist political parties is what will move society forward.

Steve

New York, USA
25 January 2012

“The unions and the lockouts at Cooper Tire and Caterpillar”

Thanks for the article equating both the unions across the national boundaries and exposing their treacherous roles in the workers’ movement. The trade unions have become nothing but bastard organisations born between the intercourse of bourgeoisie and bureaucracy.

Sathish K
24 January 2012

On “Thousands in Pennsylvania to lose food stamps due to asset test”

Mr. Davidson, in his article, writes:

“The ability of the Department of Welfare to impose the asset test requirement without it being first part of a bill passed by the state legislators is the result of the Pennsylvania budget passed last year. In that bill, the Department of Welfare and, specifically, its director were given the authority to impose new regulations aimed at reducing costs.”

Removing authority from the legislature is a deceitful and blind step ignoring the ethical way in which the program got started to begin with: democratic action necessitated by misery. In this way the government is acting with blinders on, ignoring the lessons of the past and making sure to repeat miserable conditions in the present and future.

JB
22 January 2012

On “Diego Rivera at the Museum of Modern Art: Then and now—revolutionary art for revolutionary times”

I read with much interest the review “Diego Rivera at the Museum of Modern Art: Then and

now—revolutionary art for revolutionary times” by comrade Clare Hurley. Whilst appreciating his valuable article, I’d like to make a remark.

I refer to the Rockefeller affair: destroying of Rivera’s 1933 mural *Man at the Crossroads* on the wall of Rockefeller Centre in New York by its patrons solely because it contained a portrait of V.I. Lenin. Rivera was asked to change his mural before deciding to destroy it. Comrade Hurley explained that Rivera refused to replace Lenin’s likeness with that of an “unknown man” as suggested by his client.

Indeed, the artist refused to remove Lenin’s portrait from the painting even knowing that a further commission to paint a mural for an exhibition at the Chicago World’s Fair might be in jeopardy, and such a stand would cost him a lot financially (it was cancelled eventually, as expected).

He went on to say that it was “the only correct painting to be made in the building [as] an exact and concrete expression of the situation of society under capitalism at the present time, and an indication of the road that man must follow in order to liquidate hunger, oppression, disorder and war.” What a powerful justification and interpretation! These words, I think, are worthy of mention again and again despite the fact that it was once quoted by comrade Tim Tower in his superb review “Diego Rivera’s artistic mastery” (02.09.1999).

Rivera issued a statement that with the money left over from the commission of the mural (he was paid in full though the mural was destroyed) he would repaint the same mural over and over whenever he was requested until the money ran out. What a genuine and uncompromising artist he was! His principled revolutionary stance serves as a model to the present-day artists.

Darshana M
Sri Lanka
22 January 2012

On “War Horse—All heart and no head”

“Saving Private Dobbin”? Doesn’t this sound so familiar! I guess Sir Steven will now get a CBE in addition to all his Oscars as thanks for preparing the audience for a future attack on Iran.

Tony W
23 January 2012
On “Letters from our readers”

I agree completely with RF’s letter in response to the review of *The Iron Lady*.

The actors in the film, particularly Meryl Streep, have participated in a whitewash of Margaret Thatcher and her government. As RF says, Streep cannot claim the excuse of a struggling actor who is forced to take a good job offer in order to survive and add to her resume. Having read the script, Streep is either incredibly naive and ignorant of the facts about Thatcher or else she supports the representation in the script. All of these “stars” have contributed to the passing over of what Thatcher represented. They should all be ashamed of themselves.

Carolyn
California, USA
24 January 2012



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