

Letters from our readers

11 February 2012

On “CIA drones target rescue workers, mourners”

We need to start building our country. Our country is broke, we need jobs to fuel the economy. We are spending on war, we are letting people starve, live homeless, we are spending millions on the presidential elections, supporting more war, our states are broke, and our colleges are becoming breeding grounds for corruption. Wall Street protesters are being denied their rights and thrown in jail, yet we let war criminals work free, become presidents, and no one wants to cut the war spending.

P

Washington, USA

7 February 2012

On “Apple’s sweatshop supply chain”

Ben McGrath’s depiction of Apple’s annual Supplier Responsibility Progress Report as a “cynical public relations exercise designed to whitewash the company’s image” strikes at the heart of Apple’s entire PR platform. But past successes by Apple to circumvent and neutralize “bad press” might soon be over. As a former PR executive, I would say that Apple’s PR team is losing and the competitor is winning. But there are other forces at play under the surface.

Traditionally, Apple was forgiven by the press and consumers when suspected of doing wrong. For example, in its May 2010 issue after the Foxconn scandals, Macworld published a bogus “article” that was lifted from Apple PR releases explaining the 2010 Supplier Report, and titled it, “Apple Cleans Up Its Supply Chain”. Today, however, Apple’s privileged position (with the business press and consumers) is slowly eroding (e.g., the *New York Times* and China Labour Watch stories mentioned by Mr. McGrath). With the passing of Steve Jobs, Apple’s magical halcyon days seem over; the media

feels less loyal; less “bogus” articles are penned; expensive PR counter-campaigns (from competitors) are aimed at influential editors and begin to see print. But there are parallels to geopolitical trends also that mustn’t be overlooked.

While progressives and liberals bemoan working conditions and slave-wages in China, they ignore regressive and punitive working conditions mounting at home. Where in the *New York Times* is mention of Apple’s social responsibility in creating jobs for American workers, in providing them a living wage, job security, health and retirement plans? Who in the media or political pulpits harkens the truth that the loss of American jobs is not due to Asia exploiting the matter; but to “the job destroyers” in Corporate America, finance, Wall Street and Congress who initiated the outsourcing solely to maximize profits at whatever cost to workers in the East, the West, or anywhere in the world?

Finally, keeping in mind that no story is printed as an exposé of a major American corporation by the *New York Times* without the explicit consent of a division of the ruling political and economic classes, I wish to point out that however true and horrific the facts, this story is “placed” and constitutes “spin”. When taken alongside other “placed” reports, it serves a secondary geopolitical “purpose”.

Yes, the story on the surface is about Apple’s negligence in Asia. But an equally important side-agenda is to foment, exacerbate and further anti-Chinese sentiment.

Michael B

Maine, USA

8 February 2012

On “Obama pushes community colleges to serve corporate America”

I agree with the main points of this article, but I don't think I agree with the implications of following paragraph: "Finally, teaching remedial courses requires a thorough knowledge of the deep and complex relationship between cognition and the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics, a capacity that may be lacking among full-time faculty, let alone part-time instructors hired at the last minute." While that capacity "may be lacking," it just as well "may" not be. There are a lot of qualified job applicants out there because academic jobs of whatever kind are in sort supply.

Rosa S

7 February 2012

On "American actor Ben Gazzara (1930-2012)"

Another very informative and intelligent obituary which will not be found elsewhere outside WSWS. My earliest memory of Gazzara was seeing him in the UK ITV 1959 Armchair Theatre production of Cornell Woolrich's *You'll Never See Me Again*, in which he played the distraught husband of a missing wife. He held his own against established British actors such as James Hayer and Brenda deBanzie.

I also liked your reference to Janice Rule as a "talented and underrated actress." Amongst my memories of her TV performances are distinguished roles such as the alcoholic in *The Defenders* 1964 episode "Drink like a Lady" and the wife of terminally ill patient Charles Bronson in the *Dr. Kildare* 1963 episode "Who Ever Heard of a Two Headed Doll?" who plays the role of a bimbo to reassure a very weak man. Gazzara, Rule, and others also delivered great performances on TV at that time and it is a shame that these examples of their work have been forgotten and often not preserved.

Tony W

9 February 2012



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