

Letters from our readers

31 July 2012

On “Imperialist powers unveil their proposed Syrian military strongman”

Good article that puts the central point on a Marxist critique of the Syrian opposition, which has to be based on a class analysis. Any Marxist organisation worth its salt needs to ensure that all the counterrevolutionary forces are exposed in the eyes of the global working class. A failure to do this means that the working class is politically demobilised, with all the consequences.

Marxists do not act as cheerleaders of mass movements no matter how popular they are with the liberal establishment.

Dave T
UK

29 July 2012

On “Which way forward for the Quebec student strike?”

The video about the Quebec Student strikes was a wonderful analysis, comrades. I was lucky enough to be able to travel through Quebec and Ontario recently. In Ottawa I met individual students in the streets bearing red squares and observed even a few elderly folk with them as well. In the ancient alleys of Quebec City one can find red squares in residential windows. By the time I made it to Montreal I was wearing a red square myself to express solidarity.

You’re absolutely right that there is working class support. In Montreal I cornered a few people in the street and asked them about the strikes. The supporters I talked to weren’t even students but workers. I stayed in Mont-Royal, which saw a great concentration of Casserole protests, and documented through pictures an array of red squares in shops, houses and street art. As soon as I arrived back in California some of my coworkers asked about the protests since I had mentioned them before I left. I only regret that I was unable to participate in any when I was in Montreal or to meet with SEP supporters due to material constraints.

Such a broad base of support is heartening and it’s not at all surprising to me that the main political organs have acted

to quash or ignore the desires of the population. I find that people of all shapes are becoming more radical to the point that they’re looking beyond the Big Two parties in America and searching for something of substance. To quote Woody Guthrie, “...people in this world are gettin’ organized...”

Vance O
28 July 2012

On “Oliver Stone’s Savages and the war on drugs”

This is an excellent commentary on Stone’s choice of subject. There is a mirror relationship between the black market and the “white” market of economic life, and I think the money laundering of the Mexican drug cartels by the American banks really epitomizes it. That drug money, in fact, was being used to offset the impact that the imploding housing market had on the books of the banks.

The gambling houses of Las Vegas are just another manifestation of the same process—I have read that one drug smuggler spent \$3 million at a single casino just to get rid of it. Apparently one of the biggest headaches the henchmen of the drug cartels have is that they don’t know what to do, physically, with the large quantities of lower-denomination bills they accumulate. So they stack them on pallets in their apartments. Millions of dollars just sitting around. I’m sure a hedge fund manager would scoff at those amateurs!

Any serious treatment of the black market would have to acknowledge its relationship to the capitalist economy as a whole. Without capitalism, there would be no black market economy. The Mexican working class would deal with the drug cartels. And the American working class would deal with the banks, prison corporations, and the array of quasi-military “border patrol” and “drug enforcement” agencies that have created this plague of drug addiction. I look forward to the day that the millions of poor people locked up for this mess are given the rehabilitation and chance at life they deserve.

EG
30 July 2012

Organized crime is the largest industry in the world. Anything that governments make illegal they will supply. Reagan's war on drugs drove the price of drugs sky-high and made organized crime far richer than they were. They are probably pushing for a ban on firearms so they will have another base for making more money. Any time you hear someone saying let's make something illegal so you will be safer, take a real close look because they may be a lobbyist for organized crime.

RD
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30

On "Global elite descend on East London for Olympics"

This is no surprise. The LA Olympics in 1984 made a profit for the first time. The IOC has always gone with the money. Even though it is in a deprived part of London, it remains to be seen if the East End will benefit from it.

Everyone in the country has been told to celebrate the games and if you don't you will be seen as a killjoy as it is supposed to bring everyone together.

The Olympics is now a money-making venture and the sport is just a sideshow.

David G
27 July 2012

Another fine article from the WSWS. While the fat cats party in luxury in the East End, it is important to remember that the East End was once a thriving working class area with a rich culture and traditions.

While the WSWS does well to remind us of the cost to the average citizen of the UK of the 2012 Olympics, the staging of Olympic Games gives rise to another hidden cost. This is the cost to the cities that bid for the games but lose.

In the early 1990s, the state of Victoria in Australia was undergoing financial difficulties in which Moody's had played a major role. To boost morale, the Kirner government won the right to bid for the 1996 games on behalf of Australia. In order to stage the bid and entertain the fat cats of the IOC as they came to inspect our city, \$20,000,000 of taxpayers' money was diverted from the public purse that should have gone to schools, hospitals, public transport, etc.

In the end, Melbourne lost to Atlanta and the Coca-Cola Olympics. It is believed that Australia's representative on the IOC, Kevin Gosford, helped scuttle Melbourne's bid

knowing that if Melbourne won the games in 1996, Sydney could not get them in 2000. These kind of political games play a major role in determining "winners."

When the cost of such bids to the citizens of cities bidding for the games in the modern era is combined, the sums are staggering. The IOC members, far from encouraging international cooperation, foster a fierce competition, the chief beneficiaries being themselves.

Whether the modern Olympics—with highly paid professional athletes, corporate sponsors, and pricing for tickets so exorbitant that only the wealthy can attend opening ceremonies and prime events—is worth continuing is a matter for debate. If the games are to continue, however, the nonsensical competition to host the games, which almost inevitably leaves the host country the poorer, needs to be abandoned. Greece as the home of the original Olympic games should be made the permanent venue. Perhaps Goldman Sachs, whose fraudulent business practices contributed so directly to the collapse of the Greek economy, can pay to refurbish the 2004 Games venues that now lie in disrepair thanks in no small measure to Goldman Sachs' fraud.

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27 July 2012



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