

Letters from our readers

7 August 2012

On "UN General Assembly targets Syria as US proxy war escalates"

Dear Mr. Lantier,

Thank you very much for your articles on the imperialist assault on Syria.

Just as in Vietnam the imperialist forces destroyed villages to "save" them. So now imperialism in its precipitous decline is destroying countries in rapid succession to save them.

The only card left in the imperialist deck is the relentless promotion of savage sectarianism, tribalism and any form of backwardness they can summon up.

A modern country is being "bombed back to the stone age" and the so-called political leaders of the working class around the world don't raise as much as a whimper in alarm. Indeed they promote the base lies of Washington.

The future that capitalism offers mankind is what is now happening in Syria.

Mervyn C
Ireland

4 August 2012

On "Bloody fighting in Syria as US-backed forces slaughter prisoners"

It is outrageous that the *Washington Post*, a supposedly liberal, moderate newspaper, is openly calling for the murder of a foreign leader. It is true that Assad is a dictator, and he has ruled in line with US interests in the past. But for sections of the US ruling class to brazenly threaten the president of a foreign country with death is something that flouts international law, violates the framework of human rights conventions that have been in place since the end of World War II, and makes a mockery of claims by the US that is supporting democracy in the Arab world.

The disgusting sight of such malicious gloating makes it abundantly clear that while the Assad regime has committed atrocities, the main purveyor of violence in the world is the criminal, predatory US imperialism.

I wonder what the reaction of the US corporate media would be if a foreign government expressed a desire to mete out the same kind of punishment to Obama, Clinton and other American politicians that the *Washington Post* is currently advocating for Assad?

Rupen S
2 August 2012

On "The London Olympics and the social crisis"

Two excellent articles, following each other by Chris Marsden, and well timed. What we can note, is the steady and seemingly unstoppable progress in the commercialisation and militarisation of the Games, and consequent immiseration of the common population, who are on the hook for the lavish associated expenses. This huge Olympic machine of criss-crossing commercial interests is mired in corruption, nepotism, hypocrisy, and self-interest. Part of Greece's current financial and economic problems can be laid at the door of the 2004 Olympiad, whose venues are virtually unused and empty, such as the corporate seating in the current one. In fact, the whole Olympic institution can be thought of as a giant money pump, sucking the wealth from the poorest section of the population to the thin layer of the obscene rich and corporations who serve them.

Another issue is the eruption of flag-waving nationalism, and the principle that to win is all-important; in fact some of the young athletes were in tears, because they *only* won a silver medal. To be sure, the pressure exerted by the sports management of the individual countries, and by the commercial sponsors

on individual athletes, some quite young, is overwhelming and potentially damaging to their psyche.

Lastly, the question of sponsorship, television rights, etc. which is tied up commercially to “protect” the brand, and exclude everyone else. And so, when a young heavyweight, Damian Hooper, donned a black T-shirt with an Aboriginal flag in front, he was immediately summoned in front of Olympic Committee, and forced to apologise, for this “political” symbol. Presumably, if he had the Golden Arches on his chest, it would have been OK, since McDonalds is an official sponsor! Of course, national flags are not a political symbol.

Mirek
Australia
5 August 2012

On “Rio+20 climate conference: ‘An epic failure’”

I regularly follow the WWSWS’s excellent environmental coverage. I would like to offer some comments in the spirit of constructive criticism, however.

In this article, the writer apparently approves of statements made by Oxfam, Greenpeace, and other environmental groups in denouncing Rio+20 as “hoax” and “an epic failure.”

The article goes on to distance itself from these groups, noting that the main distinction is that they are paralyzed by the pro-capitalist politics of the petty-bourgeois “green” movement, while “we” are not.

I think this misses an opportunity to offer readers a clearer, more compelling vision, and articulate distinctions based on important principles that bear further repeating.

First and foremost, huge problems like climate change will not be solved by recycling plastic bags, turning up/down the thermostat, or whatever other “green” personal projects environmental groups and their political parties promote. Not only are these “solutions” delusional, they also happen to provide a political cover for the bourgeoisie’s austerity-drive. In

fact, it is an “inconvenient truth” that many greens support de-industrialization, public service cuts and falling living standards.

These “solutions” are fundamentally different than the one derived on Marxist principles, namely, that climate catastrophes can only be mitigated and/or corrected by radically increasing human productivity, economic growth, and standards of living.

More factories, more industry, more growth you say? Absolutely! Industrial-sized catastrophes require industrial-sized solutions!

As the WWSWS noted in 2002, “The Marxist response to the damaging effects of capitalist production on the environment is to transform society such that man can rationally control his interaction with nature, can subject this interaction to an overall plan, to mold nature according to man’s needs.”

This translates into a political program that stands in stark, stark contrast to the material scarcity and austerity being promoted by the greens.

It is an optimistic message, one promising human liberation and the unleashing of all of humanity’s productive potential. I think it should be heard more often, both loud and proud, particularly in the face of so many dire scientific prognoses in the web site’s environmental coverage.

A small, but I think important point in response to this impressive and otherwise excellent body of work!

Dan
Vancouver, Canada
3 August 2012



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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