

# Letters from our readers

27 October 2012

*On “New York City housing crisis reflects record inequality”*

The article “New York City housing crisis reflects record inequality” demonstrates how the social right of the working class to decent, affordable homes is under attack as the billionaire Mayor Bloomberg proposes “microunit” apartments that in no way solve the problem of homeless families. Another aspect of Bloomberg’s policies is to create a wedge to privatize public housing.

The New York City Housing Authority runs the largest public housing program in the US. Thanks in large part to federal budget cuts, including from the Obama administration, NYCHA has fallen \$6 billion behind in capital improvements and has a \$61 million operating deficit this year, leading to unsafe and unlivable conditions for many residents of public housing.

It is noteworthy that in 2009, after the global financial crisis began, Bloomberg appointed John B. Rhea, the former managing director of the global consumer retail group of the collapsed Lehman Brothers bank. In other words, one of the people who should probably be in prison for creating the world economic crisis is creating a similar crisis in New York’s public housing. It would not be too much of a stretch to consider an intentional motive so that public housing can be further dismantled.

Last December NYCHA announced that it would turn over “underused” property in housing projects to private developers as a way to gain revenue. While not as blatant as the outright destruction of public housing as in some other cities, it is a way for government to subsidize the real estate financiers. An example of this

already underway is degrading the quality of life of the residents in the St. Nicholas project in Harlem, as their only open space has been turned over for the building of a charter school. In this case, Bloomberg and Obama, who both champion privately run charter schools, have combined a move that furthers the privatization of public education and public housing at the same time.

This is indeed the “engine” of private enterprise that Obama referred to during the debates when he agreed with Romney in lauding private enterprise—more bailouts for the failure of the capitalist system. The Socialist Equality Party campaign deserves support for its program that includes returning the resources that the banks and the wealthy claw from the working class in order that the rights of all to decent housing and education can be achieved.

HL

New York City  
24 October 2012

*On “Earth-mass planet found orbiting the nearest star”*

Thank you for the article on the discovery of Alpha Centauri’s planet, which I read about in the same manner as you have described it.

As incredible as I found the latest space dive deal, I found it frightening as well. It imitated earlier experiments conducted by NASA but this time slathered in corporate sponsorship. The *extreme* nature of the act was verified by Red Bull logos all over Simon Baumgartner. This was not an experiment or a test, but an advertisement. This is something we should be fearful of: this privatization of space.

I found out recently, in true plutocratic fashion that much of NASA’s budget is now being rerouted to the private firm Space-X, who we can only presume, hope to turn a profit by doing to space what corporations are

doing to the Earth. It seems there wasn't enough money for NASA if it were only conducting research; it can be allowed to exist only as a front for private industry. Abominable. This is something we have a duty to prevent.

Vance O  
California, USA  
25 October 2012

*On "Notes on the social crisis in America"*

Regarding "Diminishing prospects for secure retirement among working Americans":

Fret not, there is no need for concern since those approaching retirement age will automatically be placed to the top of the President's drone target list....

Stu  
25 October 2012



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