

Letters from our readers

20 December 2012

On “ The enduring significance of the life and work of Comrade Keerthi Balasuriya ”

Well deserved perspective about a well known revolutionary in our circles.

You might have gone, but the tradition you left behind still stays with us,

We follow your path and are proud to say that always...

Regards,

Sathish

18 December 2012

On “ Horror in Newtown ”

Another sickening aspect of this has been the media coverage. Local TV stations here in Houston, Texas (and from other locations in the country, I have been informed) sent reporters to Connecticut to cover the story. How could the presence of reporters with no knowledge of the local community possibly have added to the already massive media coverage? Could they really provide a fresh perspective to the tragedy? I think the motives for sending them several thousand miles had less to do with providing coverage to the story as it did with exploiting the situation in an attempt to gain an advantage over rival stations.

Another item I noticed was during Obama's initial statement after the shooting. As he stood before his podium, he appeared to fight back tears. Considering that he has ordered attacks which have killed children, this can be only be seen as a ploy by a highly skilled manipulator to keep the public off balance. This man is a true sociopath.

Andy H

17 December 2012

On “ School shooting in Connecticut leaves 27 dead, including 20 children ”

Already the agonising over the Connecticut school shootings is narrowing down into the same old “debate” over gun control and the Second Amendment to the US Constitution, with both sides locked into their pet arguments. What is missing is the social and

political context in which people believe they must own guns for self-defence: the fact that many do, even if they themselves believe in stricter gun control laws, suggests that people no longer have any confidence in law and order agencies to provide the kind of consistent security that is needed in communities. Increasingly the police is becoming an agency to be feared and avoided because of a brutal and violent reputation. Mental health facilities are probably also being run down and doctors and psychiatrists are relying more and more on drugs of dubious benefit and with suspicious side effects that include aggressive and violent behaviour.

At about the same time the shootings occurred, there was an incident in Henan province, China, in which a man injured 22 children and teachers at a school with a knife. Commentators point to rapid social change and increasing social inequalities as the backdrop to the recent spate of attacks on schools in China.

Jennifer H

17 December 2012

On “ Media, politicians obscure social roots of Connecticut shooting ”

As a supporter of the WSWWS I was happy to see that you have not taken the reformist position of disarming citizens and arming to the teeth the police and military—probably the two most reactionary institutions in the society. Your continued emphasis on the broader social context is consistent with Trotsky's *Problems of Everyday Life* .

A word of caution: As a former member of the military (a military policeman) and a retired journalist, it is important to be clear on what constitutes an “assault weapon.” A weapon can have that assault-weapon-look but unless it has the high-capacity magazine and a selector switch that allows fully automatic firing it is not an assault rifle, merely one that “looks” like an assault rifle. A hunting rifle that is semi-automatic has the same rate of firing but has a much small magazine, 5 to 7 rounds of ammunition.

This may seem to be splitting hairs but it is important to make that distinction.

Keep up the good work. I read you every morning and distribute WSWs articles as widely as possible.

WD

Tennessee, USA

18 December 2012



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