

# Letters from our readers

16 February 2013

On “US health care ‘individual mandate’ will leave 30 million uninsured”

I just wanted to write that in addition to leaving millions uninsured as the WSWWS has been reporting, I have recently started encountering workers who are having their hours cut to 28 a week thanks to ObamaCare. Many of the people affected work for fast-food and retail store operations. These workers are now seeking out second or third jobs to cover their losses, forcing them to accept more part-time work for pittance wages. It seems that even the supposedly “progressive” parts of the bill that liberals tout as a great success such as the “employee mandate” are at their core thinly veiled assaults on the wages and living conditions of the working class.

Jason  
New York, USA  
14 February 2013

On “The Nation magazine and Obama’s assassination program”

Anyone suggesting that there is need for “debate” on a thing as clearly illegal as assassination is volunteering to serve as legal apologist and accomplice to war crimes. There will have to be a public works program just to build enough docks to try all those responsible for the murder and injustice that’s being perpetrated here.

EG  
Michigan, USA  
13 February 2013

On “The New York bus strike and the defense of public education”

Dear Andre,

Your perspective was extremely well written. I especially appreciated the way the article placed the struggle for the right to an education in an historical context. When you spoke of the fact that the slaveholders of the South were “terrified of an educated population, both slave and free,” you reminded me of

the explanation Fredrick Douglass gave in his autobiography of his master’s fear of him learning to read.

The book, *Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass*, is a fascinating read. Here is a small section of the book explaining his torment:

“The more I read, the more I was led to abhor and detest my enslavers. I could regard them in no other light than a band of successful robbers, who had left their homes, and gone to Africa, and stolen us from our homes, and in a strange land reduced us to slavery. I loathed them as being the meanest as well as the most wicked of men. As I read and contemplated the subject, behold that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish. As I writhed under it, I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow?slaves for their stupidity. I have often wished myself a beast. I preferred the condition of the meanest reptile to my own. Anything, no matter what, to get rid of thinking! It was this everlasting thinking of my condition that tormented me. There was no getting rid of it. It was pressed upon me by every object within sight or hearing, animate or inanimate. The silver trump of freedom had roused my soul to eternal wakefulness. Freedom now appeared, to disappear no more forever. It was heard in every sound, and seen in every thing. It was ever present to torment me with a sense of my wretched condition. I saw nothing without seeing it, I heard nothing without hearing it, and felt nothing without feeling it. It looked from every star, it smiled in every calm, breathed in every wind, and moved in every storm.”

Douglass went on to become one of the foremost

abolitionists and spokesmen in opposition to slavery. His enormous intellect and passion were harnessed and developed because he learned to read and write. To me the most important issue here was that he became conscious of the relations that existed and devoted his heart and soul to its destruction. I'm sure that many workers today will not miss the point that ruling class has the same fear in the education of those it is oppressing. Millions of people all over the world are waking up to the view that wage slavery, like chattel slavery, must be abolished.

Faternally,

L. Porter

13 February 2013

*On* "Stafford Hospital report points to decimation of Britain's National Health Service"

Thank you very much for writing on this. I have been hoping for a WSWs analysis on the disgusting situation affecting Staffordshire for some time.

People should post links and quotes from this article on social media in order to counter the vicious campaign of scapegoating against nurses who were overstretched.

The quote I think is best to include would be:

"Conditions stemmed from the drive by the Labour government to cut costs and creeping privatisation. In 2006 Mid Staffordshire Trust was told it must gain Foundation Trust status. This Labour-initiative was aimed at making hospitals semi-independent of the Department of Health, 'freeing' them to find private sources for their budgets.

"The price of gaining foundation trust status was the trust's decision to reduce costs by £10 million. 'The board decided this saving could only be achieved through cutting staffing levels, which were already insufficient,' Francis reported, with 150 jobs being lost. 'A chronic shortage of staff, particularly nursing staff, was largely responsible for the substandard care,' that report stated."

BH

13 February 2013

*On* "Sri Lankan SEP meeting marks 25th anniversary of Keerthi Balasuriya's death"

It is great to have read this report as one who attended the meeting. The SEP's place in the historical evolution of politics in Sri Lanka since the sordid betrayal by the LSSP in 1964 was made crystal clear in

the process of unfolding the meeting through a number of speakers. David North's eloquent and fiery speech highlighted the role of the ICFI, based on the theory of permanent revolution, in the time to come, which could be characterized as an era of imperialist wars and revolutions.

Keerthi Balasuriya, the foremost Trotskyist leader this island has produced in the 20th century, is in my view a source of pride for Sri Lanka. His selfless fight for international revolution can now be seen producing results. I take this opportunity to pay my respects, from the bottom of my heart, to Keerthi, the heroic Marxist fighter.

IVE

Sri Lanka

15 February 2013

*On* "Los Angeles manhunt ends in shoot-out, inferno"

The LAPD's actions against Christopher Dorner look like extreme overkill and would confirm that he was right in suggesting in his manifesto that it is a brutal and violent agency.

Jennifer H

14 February 2013



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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