

Letters from our readers

18 July 2013

On “Hands off Edward Snowden!”

Edward Snowden’s greatest service has been to expose the near universal cowardice and hypocrisy of capitalist “democratic” governments, afraid to lift a finger to defend the most human right of citizens—that of intimacy and privacy, in order of course, not to offend the US Imperialist master. In a socialist world the same technology employed by the NSA, et al—the abuse of which Snowden has so courageously brought to light, would provide the planet extraordinary powers of simultaneous self-awareness. All technology is a double-edged sword, including the surveillance variety.

Peter Sylveire, Artist

12 July 2013

On “Race and class in America”

This is one of the sharpest, clearest, most precise statements of the relationships among race, class, the pseudo-left, and capital that I’ve ever read. I’m sharing this with everyone I can.

Steven B

Minnesota, USA

16 July 2013

On “Trayvon Martin’s killer, George Zimmerman, acquitted of all charges”

One of the reasons I became an avid reader of the WSWS is the amazing ability of its writers to cut straight to the heart of any issue and lay bare the profound hypocrisy of the state and its media representatives. But Obama’s latest comment, that the US is “a nation of laws, and a jury has spoken” is so unbelievably perverse that it’s hard to imagine anyone being fooled, WSWS reader or not! From Obama, these words are quite simply obscene, and I hope that Trayvon Martin’s loved ones will take some small comfort in the fact that his murder will wake many decent people up to the terrible state of things.

JL

15 July 2013

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The “drone king” has the audacity to mention any respect for the “rule of law”??

How dare he do so! Where is his respect for law of any sort? Just how does the drone king show his respect for the US Constitution? For international law? Remember, this very same drone king sits with his “team” each Tuesday and they go over his own personal “kill list” and decide who gets droned this week.

I am sorry, but to have Gobomber (the drone king and peace prizident) mention respect for any rule of law is beyond all hubris of the vile “Mr. 5 deferments” Cheney.

Charlie B

Louisiana, USA

15 July 2013

On “Britain to use secret evidence in court”

Jordan Shilton,

I’m really glad you’re writing about this, I think it’s one of the most disturbing developments in Britain. (Well actually there are so many disturbing developments going on in the UK right now—but this hits at the heart of democracy.)

We’ve been campaigning about this for a while; we made a short documentary about a man who’d been imprisoned for 5 years without trial in the UK. Three in maximum security, 2 under house arrest. It was shown on BBC Newsnight and then we were threatened with jail by the attorney general for making it.

He’d been embroiled in the secret courts as he’d been arrested under the terrorism act (which previous to this, was the only place they were allowed).

It had an appalling effect on his family, who were for all intents and purposes imprisoned in the house with him.

It came out about 3 years ago, but I thought you might be interested in watching it; it’s 5 minutes long: <https://vimeo.com/60739420> Love what you guys do, keep it up.

Take care,
Fred
15 July 2013

On “City College of San Francisco to lose accreditation”

Community colleges educate 40 percent of college students in the US. Since these are two-year institutions the proportion of freshman and sophomores is even higher. In addition to being a path to a four-year post secondary education they provide the workforce training essential for an advanced economy.

The multi-decade decline of K-14 and university education in California began in the 1960s with the election of Ronald Reagan. As Governor, Reagan championed legislation which introduced tuition for public institutions of higher education. This, in turn, served as a national precedent.

The irony is that the open access at all levels worked as an engine to California’s previous boom economy. Among those who attended a community college and benefited from the opportunities were Steve Jobs and Craig Venter. Both individuals played key roles in the growth of Silicon Valley.

At the time of Prop 13 in 1978 California ranked as a state in the top tier of educational achievement. After 35 years of retrograde decline it now ranks in the lowest.

The cost of labor power (wages) is not a fixed thing. The cost to maintain the lives of workers and future workers (including the social investment in education) reflects the dynamic of the class struggle.

The impending closure of CCSF, like Highland Park Community College in the Detroit area, reflects the desire of the ruling class to redefine downward the cost of labor power.

Most community colleges date to the need following WWII for a massive increase in the numbers of trained workers and managers that four-year colleges in the US could not provide.

Founded with a mandate for open access these institutions now face an impossible situation with caps on funding (which is no longer tied to increases in enrollment) and declining revenue tied to shrinking property values. They face this crunch at the same time that demand for the services they provide has never been greater.

The fate of many of these colleges hangs in the

balance. Wayne County Community College District, for example, narrowly won (by a margin of .1 percent) a millage assessment worth \$20 million annually last November to compensate for the collapse in property values in the Detroit area.

The accelerating effort to cut educational services by the ruling class is no less than a form of social cannibalism that would warm the heart of a Malthus.

Robert G
14 July 2013

On “UK soldiers fast-tracked into teaching”

If this notion of fast-tracking military veterans into teaching primary and secondary school students weren’t true, I’d have thought even Hollywood at its most deranged would balk at turning it into a TV sitcom.

How can military veterans, some of whom may be traumatised from repeated tours of duty, and perhaps trained to treat people in other countries as sub-human, be rushed through a course that in all likelihood will not emphasise care or some knowledge of childhood and adolescent psychology and turned loose onto youngsters who themselves may come from a background in which they were traumatised by soldiers, some of them British? The proposal is beyond a laugh; it may even be downright creepy as a context for future opportunities for abuse of children.

The idea is not even all that original—the British empire depended on generations of men brought up in public schools organised according to quasi-Spartan military principles and values—but that’s to be expected perhaps of the Cameron government’s forward-into-an-imaginary-golden-age approach.

Jennifer H
15 July 2013



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