

Letters from our readers

14 July 2009

On "Tehran and Tegucigalpa: A tale of two capitals"

It's about time someone noticed the disparity between the media coverage of Iran and Honduras. The lack of US media coverage of an anti-democratic coup right in its own backyard has been atrocious. The media praises elections and democracy, but when it's undermined in Central America it's almost ignored. I was beginning to wonder if anybody else was able to see the hypocrisy and servitude of the US media to corporate interests, specifically in this case. My praise goes out to you. Keep up the objective point of view.

Steven M
New Hampshire, USA
9 July 2009

Sometimes, after the facts have been articulated, the only fitting phrase is the cliché-ridden, "lapdogs of their imperial masters."

Michael G
California, USA
9 July 2009

On "Obama administration unveils new cost-cutting plans for health care"

You write, "Under the proposals being considered in Congress, individuals will be required to purchase insurance themselves and could be fined as much as \$1,000 if they do not."

Where, I would like to know, are people without jobs supposed to get enough money to purchase insurance or, for that matter, to pay a \$1,000 fine if they do not? As the financial crisis deepens, there will be more layoffs, industries will collapse, the states are already on life support, and the cities are starved. The insanity of the profit system is becoming ever more evident, even to those who usually refuse to see.

I used to believe that my brother was a little wild in his belief that the capitalist class was out to eliminate the excess population through its measures against the

working class. As time goes on, I have modified my opinion of his theory. It truly is war between class and class, a literal struggle for physical survival.

Carolyn
California, USA
9 July 2009

If one of the poorest countries in the world, Cuba, can provide free medical aid and education to *all* its citizens, then why can't the richest nations in the world (USA, UK, etc.) do the same?

Barry W
UK
9 July 2009

On "Britain: Civil service plans 20 percent 'doomsday' cuts in public spending"

Even the most basic understanding of economics reveals that any plans to sack workers to "save money" will not work and will only be used to make the poor even poorer and, by default, the rich more powerful.

The quote that "there is no easier way to save money than by sacking people from the public payroll" makes no economic sense whatsoever, and one must ponder exactly what sort of schemes people are being taught in the halls of the London School of Economics and universities everywhere. They certainly are not being taught anything resembling economics from where I sit.

Sacking people only creates more unemployment (obviously), reduces demand, lowers prices, stagnates profits, and makes people in debt more vulnerable and people with money more powerful.

Creating jobs, on the other hand, creates more demand, creates more taxable income, creates more inflation, and helps people pay previous debt down with inflated dollars.

The ultimate goal of these government sackings is to keep those in debt exactly where the rich want them, in the shadows and out of the way.

Why doesn't the government simply open some fast-

cash loan shark operations and a company store and remove the illusion that people can pull themselves out of poverty altogether?

PK

9 July 2009

On “Red Cross issues harrowing report on situation in Gaza”

Israel, the US, and the European Union just do not care about how dire the situation in Gaza is. If they did, they would be demanding that Israel end the siege and back up the demand with a countdown to severe sanctions on Israel.

Robzview

Australia

9 July 2009

On “Renowned pianist Krystian Zimerman protests US militarism during concert”

I have just read your article of May 11. Thank you for the excellent coverage. The key sentence is, “Zimerman felt himself compelled to speak out.” Bravo for him! A musician has no choice but to express himself, in order for his music to have authenticity; and everything he thinks and feels is poured into his artistic interpretation. That is why Zimerman’s performance of the Szymanowski “Variations” was so “ferocious” on that occasion. A musician is not an automaton. Poland has long been an important country musically, throughout its turbulent history. Another Polish pianist, Arthur Rubinstein, also felt “compelled” to speak out. In his biography of Rubinstein, Arthur Sachs describes the pianist’s “enraged” reaction upon learning of Mussolini’s edicts against the Jews in 1938. As Reuters reported, “the distinguished Polish pianist Arthur Rubinstein has cancelled all his concerts in Italy and sent back to Mussolini all his Italian medals as a protest against Italy’s anti-Semitic laws.” During the German invasion of Poland (1939), Rubinstein’s recording of Chopin’s “Military Polonaise” (Op. 40, No. 1) was played repeatedly over Polish radio “as it ‘stirred the souls of patriots’ of all nationalities” (National Recording Preservation Board of the Library of Congress). Repressive regimes are afraid of the ability of composers and musicians to touch people’s hearts. The Nazis repressed Chopin’s music in Poland.

Regarding the destruction of Zimerman’s piano at JFK Airport: This is outrageous! Could there be any

clearer demonstration of the sinking level of cultural life in the US? I think this is partly due to the piano’s decline in popularity over the past several decades, and the lack of respect for classical music in general. Concert pianists historically have preferred to transport their own pianos. Pianists, as a group, are particular about keyboard action, tone, etc., as well they should be. For airport security to focus on what kind of glue was holding the piano together is vulgar and crass. “Thuggishness” is the right word. Concert artists should be treated with respect when they travel. Instead of placing obstacles in their paths, every effort should be made to welcome them.

Lesley J

Ohio, USA

9 July 2009

On “New York City Opera threatened by economic crisis”

As private funding for opera and other supposedly elitist art forms dries up, I hope we become more conscious of how important these art forms really are, and find some way to rebuild them from a socialist foundation. I am a classically trained singer (an “opera singer” myself).

KV

British Columbia, Canada

9 July 2009



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