

# Letters from our readers

29 September 2009

*On “US: 2008 census figures show severe impact of recession on workers”*

The local ABC station in Houston, KTRK, dutifully reported last night that (and I’m quoting from memory) “All signs of the recession are over,” and went on to cite employment and manufacturing numbers, and of course stock prices, as proof that there is no longer any cause for concern!

I have long since stopped listening to any news stories on the mass media, but occasionally bad weather prompts me to turn on the TV. Well, a cold front blew through last night. It was my bad luck to stumble upon this “economic” report—and I immediately switched it off.

Charles H  
Texas, USA

23 September 2009

*On “Massive police buildup for Pittsburgh G20 summit”*

Excellent article and timely, too. The photographs are extraordinary and also appalling. Pittsburgh has been completely militarized, and sections of it resemble Baghdad and/or Berlin immediately after WWII, with the barricades and the division of the city into zones. I wonder how the citizens of Pittsburgh feel about this. I would be horrified if I had to try to live and work under such lockdown conditions. The breath of the police state would be always at my back.

Carolyn  
California, USA

24 September 2009

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These big wig gatherings have gotten to be more and more disruptive. Normal activity in a large city’s core is being choked off for a useless gathering. The cost including lost business, lost wages and sales must be fantastic. Not to mention the expense of bringing in a

massive presence of over-militarized police and troops. These meetings should be held on isolated military bases out on some desert where they will not interfere with normal life.

Robert V

24 September 2009

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Last night I saw coverage of this police-state buildup on CNN during Wolf Blitzer’s “The Situation Room.”

The segment showed a CNN reporter standing among protestors in front of a police line, and then recoiling when tear gas fired by police reached him. The cameraman then follows the suffering reporter by a line of protestors, themselves reacting to the noxious gas. Many of the protestors look directly at the camera but are ignored by the camera person, who focuses exclusively on the reporter. Another crew member washes off the reporter’s face, he recovers a bit, and then the segment switches to a studio conversation between Wolf and the reporter. Generic footage of the protest with a “gritty” video editing filter on it plays beside them. “How bad was it?” “Not that bad after awhile.” “How about the anarchists?”

The segment then suddenly switches to Michelle and Barack Obama walking into the conference, and mentions the big important issues that are being discussed.

None of the protestors our poor reporter walks by are interviewed; they are not nearly as interesting as he is. No critical comments are made of the tear gas or massive police buildup, nor is there even a brief summary of what all of these people are protesting. The whole report seemed like a self-parody—one wonders why they had to leave the studio if the final goal was to cover themselves!

Jeff L

25 September 2009

*On “US Senate Finance Committee deliberates*

*Baucus healthcare proposal”*

And so, what started out as our government addressing a grave health care situation has come down to this. If you are too poor to afford health insurance, under this proposed bill you would either find the means to purchase health insurance or become a criminal. Think about this.

Nelson V  
South Dakota, USA  
25 September 2009

*On “California students and faculty denounce education cuts”*

I live in the state of Washington. I have seen our tuition go up to 22 percent. It cost just to go to an community college over \$2,000 a quarter (4 months). The text books cost about \$100 a book. Our college, Columbia Basin College, has eliminated the following degrees: paralegal, human services, chemical dependency and auto body. The problem is without those programs the poor will suffer and go back to drugs. They find enough money to start a new program, radiation monitor, teaching students how to work in a nuclear plant.

I found it interesting that schools ran out of money, but have enough to pay their college president and his staff. I often ask myself where did the money go? They have enough money to keep criminal justice programs going and business programs going, but when it comes to helping people, treating people with respect, the money isn't there.

I feel that we can fund both wars and give the military the money to build new jets and bombs, but we can't fund education. My college lied to me and told me it was because no one is paying consumer tax—that is why they had to raise tuition. I think it was because they became too greedy and wanted to run their college for businesses.

Paul M  
Washington, USA  
27 September 2009

*On “US heightens threats against Iran”*

You write, “Former US national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski made clear on Sunday that any Israel attack should only take place with Washington's authorisation. ‘We are not exactly impotent little babies,’ he told the Daily Beast. ‘They are going to fly over our airspace in Iraq. Are we just going to sit there

and watch? If they fly over, you go up and confront them. They have the choice of turning back or not.’ While he does not speak for the White House, Brzezinski did advise Obama during the presidential election campaign and remains influential.”

This is indeed a very interesting statement by Brzezinski who has been a rather consistent critic of Israel and its aggressive policy toward the Palestinians, of course, from an imperialist perspective.

Taken at face value, Brezezinski seems to be suggesting that perhaps maybe the US and NATO are on a collision course with Israel.

A broad based agreement with the gangster capitalist state in Russia would be necessary in order to “contain” any threat to the West posed by such a seemingly bizarre turn of events.

Charles K  
26 September 2009



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