

Letters from our readers

5 December 2009

Text:

On “Oppose Obama’s escalation of the Afghan-Pakistan war! Withdraw all troops now!”

Listening to Obama’s speech, I couldn’t help thinking that George Orwell must be turning in his grave, given all the double talk and blatant lies Obama continues to spew out. As I was listening, however, my mind wandered briefly to something only somewhat unrelated, and that was the Supreme Court case, *Korematsu v US* (323 US 214) that stated that in times of war, even American citizens can be held indefinitely because of their ethnicity if our government is at war with a particular country. Although it didn’t happen here so explicitly, with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (and Pakistan, with Iran quickly become the next target), the citizens are certainly in a prison that is causing them nothing but death and destruction of their lives for imperialism (much like what happened in WWII). I only mention *Korematsu* because it effectively silenced any opposition to any and all dissenting opinions and actions towards imperialist and capitalist goals in both war and “peace,” and that is exactly what has happened here.

CMC

Scotland

2 December 2009

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The key to understanding the impossibility of Obama’s dilemma is that he is trying to defend a Global Empire with American blood and treasure. Obviously Obama will not articulate this reality, and thus his plan entails seminal incongruities, which are seen by a few, but sensed by the wider audience of Americans.

Obama has tried to gloss over these incongruities by using the historical techniques of Empires’

salesmen—he has engendered fear by characterizing the enemy as a “spreading cancer,” or “falling dominos” like communism. However, the real spreading cancer is the Global Empire that hired him to guilefully defend it with American blood and treasure.

Historically, the salesmanship of Empire has always been based on promising the domestic population that they will share the “spoils of war,” or the “safety of winning,” in return for fighting, and paying, for imperialist adventures.

But Obama, although a consummate salesman, will encounter increasing resistance from the American populus because of the unique incongruities of fighting and paying for a Global Empire with domestic dollars and dead, and without any benefits actually accruing to the American public.

Obama’s dilemma in selling and defending the escalation of war first in Afghanistan, and then in Central Asia and the greater Middle East, is the same as his dilemma regarding his escalating defense of the very same Global Empire on Wall Street—that all the benefits are privatized and all the costs are socialized.

Alan M

Maine, USA

2 December 2009

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Another reason to keep the war going is that the US has only one major export industry—arms for war. Got to keep the money flowing!

Christine C

Maine, USA

2 December 2009

On “What were the 1960s about?: An Education and Pirate Radio”

Of course, in the last 30 years, with the “conservative”—actually, many of the forces were clearly fascistic—onslaught/anathematizing of the '60s, the view is quite blurred, and it needs to be brought into consciousness with historical accuracy. I'm almost 60, so I remember it well—the truth, especially about 1968, is that the powers that be barely contained the social and political push-back. Small wonder that they don't want to remember it.

For the younger generation, this is mostly ancient history—they have little clue about Vietnam, and when I tell them there were 300-500 body bags coming back every *week*, they merely stare.

Rob M
2 December 2009
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See *Four Friends*, by Arthur Penn. A very underestimated, and overlooked, film about the same period, before and after the Divide, that got the period, and the relationship of the individual to it, right. One *can* expect a director to know something.

C Ronk
2 December 2009
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Excellent article and reviews. It made me think of that saying: “Anyone who remembers the Sixties wasn't there.” I also liked the quote from Polanski: “The decade was a time of great aspirations and hopes and joy in general.” Q: You don't see any of that in the world now? Polanski: “I see the contrary, really.”

Reminds me of a conversation I had with MC5 drummer Dennis Thompson a few years ago, where we talked about the Excitement and Anticipation that was evident back in that Era. We don't see any of that nowadays...

Daniel B
Michigan, USA
2 December 2009

On “US Senate begins debate on health care overhaul”

Keep in mind that as the government requires an IRS

collection of a “fee” if you don't buy insurance (and the government is notorious for underestimating your financial needs)—that an unpaid IRS tab can land a citizen in jail. US citizens will go to jail for not buying insurance they cant afford.

Tim T
2 December 2009
On “Switzerland bans minarets”

Bad move. Poorly explained. However, many get the message. My children (Muslim) will no longer be returning to La Suisse to their overly expensive boarding school. I hope many other Muslims also get the message and spend their money elsewhere. People are correct. La Suisse is not the fair-minded, open society that I knew as a young man attending a school in Switzerland. It also goes to show that you do not need our millions of dollars in your banks either.

David H
Liberia
3 December 2009
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The paper here has a letter and opinion piece that focus on comparisons to Saudi Arabia. This is pathetic because Saudi Arabia is an undemocratic kingdom, so why compare with them? How is a handful of minarets upsetting anyone? This law will intensify attacks on migrants and Roma in Austria, Switzerland and Germany, as well as discrimination by customs, employers and landlords. Claims that the new law is anything but racist are wrong.

Stan
3 December 2009



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