

# Letters from our readers

24 December 2009

*On "Obama ordered US air strikes on Yemen"*

I am especially grieved by the tragedy that is about to fall on a very large part of Asia now suffering a series of small wars. These will surely lead to the conflagration you fear, perhaps even the first world war of our new century. After all, it was many small incidents and local wars that added up to World War I. Young Trotsky had a front row seat as a reporter covering the Balkan Wars, incidentally.

Some of the pain from the events you describe comes from the fact that as a young hippie in 1968, I stayed for a while in that part of the world. As a Jew, I fit right in. For one thing, Kabul had a sizable, ancient and very highly respected Jewish community. That their favorite dentist was a German who fled there during the war and that the Pathans—you know, the Taliban—were thought to be of Jewish origin only added to the wackiness of the place, which also featured girls in miniskirts at the university, much left-wing talk among the intelligentsia and...American money flowing in for developmental projects.

To cut the story short, as history had, I went down to Kashmir which was the one spot on earth with a rightful claim to being paradise, then up to Nepal, then my Shangri-la, and both went up in flames for decades. Paradise lost.

A.  
Toronto, Canada  
21 December 2009

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America's new growth industry: Brought to you by Fox News

No job? No health care? Worried about your retirement? (i.e., ending up old, sick and broke). No worries, the Department of Defense is hiring. Why? Because endlessly expanding war is America's new growth industry.

Fox News shilling for the military, gushing about what a great employer it is:

- \* Confidential online mental health assessment.
- \* Free "stress reduction" programs for children at Fort Bliss?
- \* "If you love travel, this is definitely for you."

This is the creepiest "news" story in a long time. But then this is to be expected from multi-nationality/passports holder Rupert Murdoch.

As always,  
Frans  
Thailand  
21 December 2009

*On "White House escalates push for Senate health bill passage"*

For the first time, your reporting comes up short. This bill is much worse than you imagine. It has provisions that preempt state laws regarding required coverage. It removes lifetime caps but not annual caps on coverage. It allows age discrimination; it contains inadequate subsidies; and it makes the IRS a collector for a group of private businesses, which will no doubt merge together the better to maximize the profits.

The health insurance companies will have a new business model. They may charge what they wish, pay as little as they wish and have minimal administrative expenses. The government will collect the money for them, and every American will have to pay a *private company* if they want to live.

I'm sure this isn't your last article on this subject, so update this story as needed.

Phillip S  
19 December 2009

*On "Health care profiteers: A billion-dollar lobby"*

You report, "With the frenzy of lobbying in the last quarter of 2009, the two-year total will go well beyond \$1 billion."

Now we know why health insurance and drugs are so expensive. We are paying for them to lobby to make health insurance and drugs more expensive! We are being compelled to pay for the rope that they are using to hang us. Extortion to finance robbery and more extortion! These people are nothing but criminals, officially sanctioned by their criminal toadies in the Congress and the White House.

I'm surprised that all the Libertarians are not up in arms (literally) at having their money stolen at the doctor's office in order to pay the government they despise for stealing their money. These very Libertarians decry government as being an

impediment to their “freedom”! The disconnect is astonishing.

Carolyn  
California, USA  
21 December 2009

*On “US Senate clears way for passage of Obama-backed health care bill”*

The article is an accurate analysis of the health care hoax. The purpose of the bill is to reduce government spending on health care and eventually achieve the total dismantling of the social safety net commenced by Roosevelt and built upon for the most part under Lyndon Johnson. However, the ability of Americans to rise up is the real issue. They have been so corrupted by the system that repeatedly refers to them as “consumers” that they are incapable of mounting effective opposition. Blogging and such might offer an avenue for venting; however, it is not going to change anything. We’ve been had and we can’t do anything about it.

Rose R  
Connecticut, USA  
22 December 2009

*On “Great powers sacrifice climate on the altar of profit”*

The fact that world leaders, when faced with threat of a level of destruction to Earth itself, cannot agree on some modicum of restraint when it comes to climate changes should be more than enough to warrant very serious thought by the world masses that such people are not just ruthlessly incompetent but mentally ill as well.

Nothing seems to matter to such people if there isn’t some level of profit in it for them.

Throughout history, it is these highly dysfunctional human beings that have been the enemies of Humanity, not the individual monsters and radicalized groups that have been popularized to populaces of individual nations as the “bogeyman” of the moment.

Unfortunately, nothing can be done to stop such people without a complete change in psychology on the part of the average person across the entire spectrum of this Earth. If that were to happen, there would be no need for resistance, revolution, or political upheaval as such people would never be capable of gaining any power in the first place. They would simply be shunned from society in general. A much more peaceful way to go about things than the violence and chaos of warfare and armed upheaval.

Steve N  
New York, USA  
21 December 2009

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Antonio Hill, Oxfam’s climate change adviser, said: “The Copenhagen accord is hugely disappointing, but it also reveals how the traditional approach to international negotiations, based on brinkmanship and national self-interest, is both unfit for pursuing our common destiny and downright dangerous.”

Stan  
New Zealand  
21 December 2009

*On “New York City: Police shooting of vendor underscores deep social tensions”*

Sandy English has turned over another rock exposing the worms of our society that the media try to portray as senseless violence. In addition to the deep social tensions that he describes regarding the daily oppression of minority youth and immigrants by an ever growing and aggressive police state, there stands the fact of over 2 million people in America’s prisons. The statistic of more African-American males of New York City in prison than in college must surely be worsening under the economic crisis. This is directly tied to more than half of them being unemployed, in the city where Wall Street financiers are taking record bonuses.

We may not learn the full story of the reasons for the Times Square gun confrontation, but the reality of the streets of our urban centers motivates many into carrying guns, even if it is only for a street vendor to protect his wares just as many store owners do. One of the fears that may have made Raymond Martinez run and draw a weapon might have been prison time for carrying a weapon that any storeowner could legally have.

While the media and liberal establishment protest the need for gun control in the working class, corporations dump weapons on the streets of our cities, as well as around the world. Yet a clear socialist solution of placing those industries under public control, to remove the profit motive to overproduce weapons, cannot even be raised by those who would not break with the capitalist two-party system. This still, of course, does not address the fundamental problem of social inequality, unemployment, poverty and the police state needed to enforce them.

Harvey L  
20 December 2009



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