Letters from our readers

8 June 2013

On "Furloughs of civilian defense department workers begin in the US"

I am a federal employee. I have been given my furlough notice today.

I asked if I can start the furlough this pay period, as this will have minimum impact as there are nine pay periods left this fiscal year. I would then only have two pay periods where I would have to take off for two days.

I was told that I could not start until the 8th of July. Yet the government tells us they don't want to create hardship. Making us wait will do just that.

SM
3 June 2013

On "Barack Obama's health care counterrevolution"

I know several people who have had their hours cut back in anticipation of the ACA, so that employers don't have to provide them with health insurance. It is especially outrageous given that many of their health problems are caused by the work itself: stress, repetitive motion injuries, arthritis, back and muscle strain, and so on. God forbid you develop age-related health problems, or get pregnant, or develop other basic conditions associated with being a human being. Like we're ants; being a worker, and then dropping dead, is all they want to allow us to do.

EG
Michigan, USA
7 June 2013

On "Bradley Manning's supervisors testify in third day of court martial"

You write, "Rather than mount a political defense to expose the criminality of the government and fraudulent character of the trial, Manning's defense council has tried to work within the confines of these antidemocratic restrictions. Leading defense lawyer David Coombs has repeatedly emphasized Manning's youth, "naïveté" and idealism over the past three days. The defense has already offered a guilty plea on 10 of the 20 charges, which would carry a sentence of 20 years in prison. The government refused."

Sadly, with no chance to move the hearts of a civilian jury, and all the limitations for public access to the courtroom (which might allow to turn the trial into a political platform if it was free), this line of defense is the most logical the lawyers could do—after all Manning's life is at stake, and I wouldn't blame him or his lawyers for not risking it blindly.

It's up to us to mount that political charge.

OL
France
6 June 2013

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