OMNI NEWSLETTER #3 ON MANUFACTURED FEAR USA AND REMEDIES, January 16, 2011. COMPILED BY DICK BENNETT. (First Newsletter on Fear October 22, 2007; 2nd on Nov. 19, 2007.)

These newsletters provide information and ideas for reflection and action. An informed, energetic citizenry is the only way a democracy can be sustained. WE, THE PEOPLE.

Why were people silent against the most destructive president in US history—unconstitutional war crimes/wars of aggression, dismantling of the Bill of Rights, subversion of Congressional power/separation of powers? And these harms have not been reversed by Pres. Obama. Many are the causes. A powerful cause is control of information by the warriors in power. (See my blog 12-30-10).

Another—intimidation to create fear: The number of arrests and threatened arrests (erosion of habeas corpus protection), while corrosive, carries less import than the warning they convey: a message of vulnerability to all but the most highly-connected. Such a message functions to seriously undermine the political discourse which is central to a resolution of the problems confronting this country. So we are called upon to have courage, to speak up, to make our opposition public.

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MANUFACTURING FEAR EVERY DAY IN THE DAILY NEWSPAPERS: SECURITY HYSTERIA dividing the opposition partly explains why the public is silent.


--Big money riding on being named a risk priority: ADG (2-1-08): “Areas Added to Terrorism High-Risk List.”

--Police panic v. Arab-Americans, invading privacy: ADG (2-1-08): “FBI: Students’ Bombs Were Really Fireworks.”

--Terrorism worsening: TNM (2-14-08): “Surveillance Law: Bush Pushes House to Pass Measure; President Warns of Attacks” (“terrorists were planning fresh assaults that would make the Sept. 11 attacks ‘pale by comparison.’”)
MANUFACTURING FEAR: REMEMBER ANTHRAX/RICIN

It's hard to remember just what went down during the anthrax scare in 2001. Here is a little refresher. Remember the National Enquirer editor's death and the embarrassing stories they had been running on the Bush twins and Jeb's fixing of the 2000 Florida elections? Dots a'plenty.

"At the time, I was among the multitude in white robes praying for President Bush every day, so I was in no frame of mind to be suspicious. My revelation came in February 2004, when provisions of the PATRIOT Act were up for renewal but were facing a Senate that was less afraid and slightly more sober. What they needed was another bioterror incident, right? As if by magic, deadly ricin appeared in the office of Republican Senate Majority Leader Bill First." from:  http://www.the7thfire.com/new_world_order/anthrax_trail_leads_to_Bush.html

[Is this article credible? Evidence? D]

BOOKS (newsletter #2 provided a long list of books)

Robert Reich | Why Republicans Don't Want the "New Start" Treaty

Robert Reich's Blog

Robert Reich writes: "Republicans trade in fear. They've mastered the art of turning fear of what's 'out there' into Republican political gains - whether it's fear of terrorists, immigrants, Russia, China, or communists who may still be lurking somewhere in the shadows. They're looking to 2012 and stoking up the fear."

READ MORE  https://mail.google.com/mail/?hl=en&shva=1#inbox/12d0f48229e10175

“The Anatomy of Intolerance” Robert Reich

Friday, August 20, 2010

Connect the dots: Many Americans (and politicians who read the polls) don’t want a mosque at Manhattan’s Ground Zero.

An increasing percent believe the President is a Muslim.

Most Americans approve of Arizona’s new law allowing police to stop anyone who looks Hispanic and demand proof of citizenship.

Most would deny citizenship to children born in the United States to parents who are here illegally. Where is all this coming from?
It’s called fear. When people are deeply anxious about holding on to their homes, their jobs, and their savings, they look for someone to blame. And all too often they find it in “the other” – in people who look or act differently, who come from foreign lands, who have what seem to be strange religions, who cross our borders illegally.

Americans who feel economically insecure may even become paranoid, believing, say, that the President of the United States is secretly one of “them.”

Economic fear is the handmaiden of intolerance. It’s used by demagogues who redirect the fear and anger toward people and groups who aren’t really to blame but are easy scapegoats.

It has happened before.

Economic crises animated the pre-Civil War Know-Nothings and Anti-Masonic movements, the Chinese exclusion acts, the Ku Klux Klan in the economically-ravaged South, and the anti-immigrant movements of the early decades of the 20th century.

In different places around the world, mass economic stress has had far worse results. At its most extreme it has spawned genocide.

We are far from that. But it’s important to understand the roots of America’s growing intolerance. And to fight the hate-mongers and cynical opportunists who are using the fears unleashed by this awful economy to advance their own sordid agendas.

http://robertreich.org/post/984323698/the-anatomy-of-intolerance

CHOMSKY ON FEAR 2010

Chomsky Warns of Risk of Fascism in America
By Matthew Rothschild, April 12, 2010
Noam Chomsky, the leading leftwing intellectual, warned last week that fascism may be coming to the United States.

“I’m just old enough to have heard a number of Hitler’s speeches on the radio,” he said, “and I have a memory of the texture and the tone of the cheering mobs, and I have the dread sense of the dark clouds of fascism gathering” here at home.

Chomsky was speaking to more than 1,000 people at the Orpheum Theatre in Madison, Wisconsin, where he received the University of Wisconsin's A.E. Havens Center's award for lifetime contribution to critical scholarship.

“The level of anger and fear is like nothing I can compare in my lifetime,” he said.

He cited a statistic from a recent poll showing that half the unaffiliated voters say the average tea party member is closer to them than anyone else.

“Ridiculing the tea party shenanigans is a serious error,” Chomsky said.

Their attitudes “are understandable,” he said. “For over 30 years, real incomes have stagnated or declined. This is in large part the consequence of the decision in the 1970s to financialize the
There is class resentment, he noted. “The bankers, who are primarily responsible for the crisis, are now reveling in record bonuses while official unemployment is around 10 percent and unemployment in the manufacturing sector is at Depression-era levels,” he said.

And Obama is linked to the bankers, Chomsky explained. “The financial industry preferred Obama to McCain,” he said. “They expected to be rewarded and they were. Then Obama began to criticize greedy bankers and proposed measures to regulate them. And the punishment for this was very swift: They were going to shift their money to the Republicans. So Obama said bankers are “fine guys” and assured the business world: ‘I, like most of the American people, don't begrudge people success or wealth. That is part of the free-market system.’

People see that and are not happy about it.”

He said “the colossal toll of the institutional crimes of state capitalism” is what is fueling “the indignation and rage of those cast aside.”

FILM OF CHOMSKY ON FEAR:

Watch this film by clicking this Shortened Link to Noam Chomsky: Rebel Without a Pause on Google video site http://tinyurl.com/2vkdxp

Plot summary for Noam Chomsky: Rebel Without a Pause (2003) from imdb.com
Linguist, intellectual and activist, Noam Chomsky discusses and reflects on the state of world events including the War in Iraq, September 11th, the War on Terror, Media Manipulation and Control, Social Activism, Fear, and American Foreign Policy in both large forums and in small interactive discussions with other intellectuals, activists, fans, students and critics.

FEAR CHRISTIAN SOCIAL JUSTICE?

Glenn Beck: Have you heard what Glenn Beck said now? Recently he told his listeners to leave any church that teaches social justice, and to report its pastor to church authorities.

Reply from Gladys: I believe in the biblical call to social justice. I invite you join me, and Jim Wallis of Sojourners, in "reporting" yourself to Glenn Beck, and letting him know that the biblical call to social justice is good news--not fodder for "code word" scare tactics. Click here to report yourself:
WAR ON TERROR in Local Media

Family Security Matters, an online org. that seeks to maintain fears of a terrorist attack, not surprisingly published excerpts from William Federer’s *What Every American Needs to Know about the Qur’an*, in which Federer selects anti-Jewish or anti-Christian texts out of context.

Here are some selections from the numerous fear-mongering articles in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* and *The Morning News*.

Hsu, Spencer. “Carry-on luggage poses terror risk, report says.” *The Washington Post* (11-16-07)

Press Services. “Britain taking security steps to foil terrorists.” *ADG* (11-15-07)


Sullivan, Eileen and Barrett, Devlin. “Areas added to terrorism high-risk list.” *ADG* (2-1-08)

Riechmann, Deb. “Bush Pushes House To Pass Measure” *TMN* (2-14-08)

Apuzzo, Matt. “Court gives Bush team setback over detainees.” *ADG* (2-2-08)

Saunders, Nancy Miller. “Don’t be mislead by fear.” *ADG* (5-17-08)

“Homeland security priorities.” *ADG* (12-5-08)

Brewer, John “Security over diversity.” *ADG* 3-17-08

Dizikes, Cynthia “Terror risk real, Obama warned.” *ADG* (12-5-08)

Lee, Matthew. “U.S. Embassies Still Not Secure: Billions more needed to complete necessary building upgrades.” *TMN* (6-23-08)

Daniel, Douglass K. “Cheney: Obama Detainee Policies Endanger US.” *TMN* (3-16-09)

RESPONSE TO FEAR-MONGERING WAR ON TERROR


“USA Today's Social Security Scaremongering” February 9, 2010

Under the headline "Social Security Races to 'Negative': Rash of Retirements Push Fund to Brink," *USA Today’s* February 8 front page presented an alarmist view on a story that is regularly misreported in the corporate media (*Extra!, 7-8/95, 1-2/05; FAIR Action Alert, 10/19/07).
Reporter Richard Wolf leads with this warning: "Social Security's annual surplus nearly evaporated in 2009 for the first time in 25 years." But several paragraphs later, readers are told that the program has been "accumulating a $2.5 trillion trust fund"--which certainly sounds less ominous than the headline's warning about being on a "brink." And by a "nearly evaporated" surplus, USA Today means that Social Security "took in only $3 billion more in taxes last year than it paid out in benefits."........... For article go to http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=4013

BOOKS on FEAR AND CRITICAL THINKING

--Bovard, James. Attention Deficit Democracy. Palgrave, 2005. The rising ignorance of the electorate; the fearmongering tactics that permeate presidential elections; popular delusions on the inevitability of democracy; messianic democracy—long history of deceit and manipulation, intervention, and invasion in the name of spreading democracy. But also reforms to revive liberty.
--Coon, Carl. One Planet, One People, Beyond 'Us vs. Them.' Former ambassador to Nepal and chair of Am. Humanist Assoc.'s Advisory Board makes case for social evolution in a humanist direction
--Glasser, Barry. The Culture of Fear: Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things. Basic Books, 1999. Discusses some of the fears that distract us from the major problems facing the world: “monster moms,” black men, plane wrecks, etc.). Exposes the people and organizations that manipulate our perceptions and profit from our anxieties. Diagnoses a predominant pathology of our age and provides a rallying cry for a return to rationality.
--Gore, Al. The Assault on Reason. Penguin (2007). Examines the politics, falsehoods, and fears created by ideologies and wealth that distract us from the major problems facing the world, such as climate change. Gore’s antidote to demagogues: faith in government of, by, and for the people.
--Milburn, Michael and Sheree Conrad. The Politics of Denial. MIT P, 1996. Examines the power of emotion in politics—e.g., against welfare, abortion, immigrants--, resulting from punitive child-rearing practices and unresolved negative emotions and from politicians and religious leaders who exploit those emotions.
--Siegel, Marc. False Alarm: The Truth About the Epidemic of Fear. Wiley, 2005. We live in an artificially created culture of fear. From the anthrax panic to bioterror the media continually bombard us with breaking news of yet another super-bug or terrorist plot. Most of the time the disasters never materialize. And if they did, the harm is infinitesimally small compared to the much greater risks of dying in a car accident or from coronary heart disease.

END OF NEWSLETTER #3 ON FEAR USA