

**Cynthia McKinney , International Peace Conference, Munich, Germany
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The most recent official report on employment states that 85,000 U.S. jobs were lost in the month of December. Everything I have read indicates that things are going to get a lot worse in the United States before they get better.

Already, the United States has slipped to 7th in the world's best places to live, behind France, Australia, Switzerland, Germany, and New Zealand. The U.S. place in the world will slip more than that in the future if the brakes are not put on current trends.

The United States is rapidly becoming a country even more divided:

Over 31% of Puerto Ricans live in poverty, making them the poorest ethnic group in the U.S. Meanwhile the war on Latinos continues with police harassment, racial profiling, and deportations of the undocumented--for driving, if you can believe that.

Approximately 166 legal cases winding their way through U.S. courts target Palestinians in the United States who were trying to help Palestine, and they are being prosecuted with new laws that would have been unthinkable a generation ago—like the Secret Evidence Act. My sister, Lynne Stewart, an activist lawyer of conscience, sits in a U.S. prison right now because she dared to represent a Muslim cleric who ran afoul of the U.S. What a message that sends to other lawyers committed to the notion that everyone at least deserves a fair trial.

According to United for a Fair Economy, whose work I adore, Black unemployment is now at 14.7 percent compared to 8.7 % for whites. And in 2007, for every dollar of white wealth, a black family had just one dime.

From the sub-prime banking scam alone, because of mortgage foreclosures, Blacks and Latinos are currently experiencing the greatest loss of wealth in recent U.S. history because 53% of blacks and 47% of Latinos were saddled with sub-prime mortgages, as compared to only 26% of whites. The greedy banking class were in a feeding frenzy, feeding on black and brown hopes to become a part of the American Dream.

According to a recent study, U.S. schools today are more segregated than in the 1950s. In our most diverse state, California, one-half of black and Asian students attend segregated schools, as do one fourth of Latino and Native American students.

And, young black girls are experiencing unwanted sterilizations and other complications because of forced vaccinations with an experimental drug in these schools.

In 1954, the Supreme Court found that segregation inherently meant "unequal."

Correspondingly, schools in low-income areas are highly unequal with not even the slightest remediation of the root societal causes that strongly affect student performance.

This of course feeds quite nicely into the prison-industrial complex that is a nice money-maker for those with the disposable income to invest in the private prisons of the U.S., or are lucky enough to have a business that contracts with the prisons to employ U.S. inmates for pennies an hour.

Yes, the United States, imprisoning more people than any country on the planet, has become an incarceration nation, but only for certain people. Be suspected of being a Latino driving without a drivers license and you can get stopped and deported for having one tail light bulb that's out; but Presidents George Bush, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama can order the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocents all over the planet and they walk around free without the worry of even a citizen's arrest, let alone a warrant from a real, legal Tribunal.

Incredibly, Whites whose fortunes were sinking in the pile of unkept political promises and debilitating U.S.

national debt were proselytized to by special interest media that hatred of the "other" was OK. There was little national outrage when Pat Robertson said that Hugo Chavez should be assassinated and then, more recently, when this man of the cloth opined that Haitians suffered so much because they made a deal with the devil to throw off French slavery.

Incredibly, while a record number of Blacks are seeking emergency food assistance, and people of color are losing not only their homes, but their dreams too, FOX News and CNN propagandize that it is those "others," those people of color who are responsible for the drowning of White America. And that includes President Obama who, one Southern Baptist preacher prayed to God should die. I wonder, who is his God?

True to fashion, the news that is watched by most people in the United States refuses to tell the people the truth of the conditions facing too many in our country and why.

However, according to Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, certain Whites also constitute part of the problem: according to her they are environmentalists and white supremacists. Interestingly, hatred spewing from the likes of special interest television hosts seems OK as long as they buy into the Republican/Democrat political paradigm and stay there.

Napolitano's enemies of the state, White supremacists and environmentalists, left that conformist paradigm over two generations ago. And I believe that any of us who leave that paradigm, and begin to think for ourselves and then act politically on our own independent, critical analysis can begin to put our country on the road to real independence from the special interests that have overtaken every aspect of our governmental, legal, and political apparatus, and like a parasite, has sapped the life from our body politic.

But leaving the acceptable political order puts us in the crosshairs of those whose position and power come from it.

And because the United States today is a rudderless, leaderless, divided society coming apart at the seams, now is the time more than ever that we need to employ what public schools in this country stopped supplying long ago: critical thinking about where we want to stand as a community of nations and where we in the United States want to stand as a country.

And this brings me to the real winners in the midst of this socio-economic collapse. Most people spend so much time looking at the losers in such a scenario, and we must care about the innocent victims that pay the ultimate price in the grand political power plays of our day. But, we must not neglect taking the time to study who it is that is actually sneaking off with the stolen merchandise.

There are real winners and they are the ones whom George Bush called his base: that is, the haves and the have mores.

President Obama has hastened approximately 23.7 trillion of our hard-earned dollars to them. Therefore, the real purpose of our political activity must be to thwart the wholesale theft of a nation under the guise of “Hope,” “Change,” and “Yes we Can.”

That is the only purpose our political activities must now be geared toward.

It means then, that, those of us who have stepped outside of the “acceptable” political paradigm must be willing to break bread with one another and find common ground on which we can operate. My experience has been that such interactions only enhance future opportunities for positive political interactions.

A careful read of the COINTELPRO papers will reveal that the biggest fear inside the government was that the interests of those who pulled the strings would get totally engulfed and swallowed up by Black people and White people coming together during that time, of the civil rights movement and beyond, and successfully pressing for a full justice agenda that encompassed both domestic AND foreign policies. If they were afraid of that then, I guarantee you they are still afraid of it, now.

Secondly, the leadership of this new movement cannot be the leadership that is responsible for the death of the truth, justice, and peace movements inside the United States.

Going to the same people who caused the problem by abandoning their publicly-stated convictions is not going to get us closer to the truth or peace.

This means that we might have to thin our ranks, but we will at least know that those deep in the trenches with us are not sleeping with the enemy.

Finally, we need a voting bloc that places peace and the budget priorities of peace and people’s needs above any other special interest. This voting bloc will not support any candidate running for office from The War Party. Because it should be crystal clear to everyone who cares about peace that we can’t get from here to where we want to be by doing what those who are responsible for this mess want us to do. We’ve got to do something different in order to take our country back and make our country better.

The fact is that unless we are willing to step outside of the box of political conformity, we will continue to get what we’ve always gotten.

Now, finally for the record, let me say that I left Congress, not because I wanted to, but because the special interests and the War Party wanted me out.

What could I have possibly done to raise their ire?

Well, for the twelve years that I was in Congress, I:

1. Filed articles of impeachment against George Bush, Dick Cheney, and Condoleeza Rice;
2. Voted against every Pentagon appropriation, considering it immoral to spend so much money on war when millions of our children go to bed hungry every night;
3. Defied Congressional Democratic Party leaders, by holding a Congressional Hearing exploring the role of race and class in the government’s response to Hurricane Katrina and introduced legislation to punish law enforcement that prevented the mostly Black citizens fleeing the floodwaters from crossing over from New Orleans into its mostly White suburbs;

4. Wrote legislation to ban the importation of coltan from the Democratic Republic of Congo into the United States because of the horrific human rights abuses committed during its mining;
5. Was the first Member of Congress to ask the Bush Administration of the September 11, 2001 attack on the United States, what did it know and when did it know it; and I
6. Led the Congressional Black Caucus Task Force at the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, defying President Bush's boycott.

Currently, I am an endorser of the Brussels Tribunal that cooperated in the filing of a lawsuit in Spain against all the U.S. Presidents responsible for war crimes in Iraq.

I participate in the Malaysia Peace Organization's efforts to criminalize war, establish a War Crimes Tribunal, and hold leaders accountable for their wars.

And in December of 2008, I tried to take humanitarian supplies to the people of Gaza after the start of Operation Cast Lead and the Israeli military rammed and destroyed our boat.

In June 2009, I tried to take crayons to the children of Gaza and the Israelis hijacked our boat, kidnapped us, took us to Israel, where I spent seven days in an Israeli prison.

I do with my body what I did with my Congressional office.

I left Washington because the pro-Israel Lobby was able to utilize all of its leverage inside both the Democratic and Republican parties target and oust me. They ousted me because I dared to believe that all human beings, including Palestinians, have human rights.

In 2007, at a peace rally in front of the Pentagon, I did what I am now asking one million U.S. voters to do: I declared my independence from a national leadership that had caused my country to become complicit in war crimes, torture, crimes against humanity, and crimes against the peace.

I joined the Green Party and in 2008, ran for President of the United States. I traveled the length and breadth of my country and now I travel the world carrying a message of truth, justice, peace, and dignity. I spent approximately 10 of the 12 months in 2009 outside of the country.

But, I'm being told now by my friends and supporters that it's time to come back home. That the real heavy lifting is inside our country. That if we want life to be better for the people in the refugee camps all over the world, that we've got to change the policies coming out of Washington, D.C.

My very first campaign theme was "Warriors Don't Wear Medals, They Wear Scars." And I've borne my scars in public for all the world to see.

And honestly, sometimes, I wonder if it's worth it. I take a look at where the world is and I say what could I possibly do to stop this.

And then, I think of the people of Gaza whom I saw after Israel's Operation Cast Lead. I saw in Gaza, the indomitable spirit of humanity. Despite the pain, the murder, the killing, the destruction--I saw life. I experienced love.

But we don't have to go to Gaza to gain inspiration to continue to struggle. If we just dare to look into the eyes of the homeless man looking for a warm bed, or the tired face of a mother on her way to work at 6:00 in the morning when it's still dark, if we would just dare to love the nameless human beings whose lives turn on the policies that powerful politicians choose to support or ignore, I know we can become inspired. And in the process, spark some

No one deserves to be hopeless.

So, I've come a long way to be with you. And I thank you for the invitation. I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge a friend of mine in the audience who came all the way from Africa to be with us.

When we were organizing our "Emergency Anti-Afghanistan Escalation Rally" in front of the White House, one of my supporters reminded me of my own saying: We must never give in when we are right.

Peace is right and we must never give up.

Thank you so much for giving me this time to share with you this evening.