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Letters To The Editor

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The Tampa Tribune

Published: October 19, 2008

End Of An Era

When the residents of Lexington fired on the British troops, there was no appreciation for the moment defining the nation's birth pangs. Yet it did. And when "the shot heard round the world" was iconized, that space and its many actors gained immortality.

The financial events of the last weeks could be similarly defined in years to come, for they will radically transform America. The unimaginable and catastrophic events resulted in trillions of wealth lost, massive national and worldwide financial rescues, collapses in the foundations of capitalism with the death of investment banks and loss of liquidity in the credit markets.

The only solution is deleveraging of the world economic system to a sustainable level. This level has not been defined, but it would be an order of magnitude less than the 40:1 that convulsed the world - most likely closer to 10:1 (this means that the financial industry would be limited to \$10 of debt for each \$1 held in reserve).

What has passed is the concept of free, unregulated debt markets. Severely reduced standards of living will rock politics. Our neo-economy will take quite a time to define. There will be great resistance politically to an economy much less dependent on debt.

We will have to live not on debt but on what we actually produce. That will not be easy.

VALD SVEKIS

Sarasota

A Taste Of Wealth

It seems to me that, although the editorial pages are a forum for opinion, the Tribune should do more vetting to make sure they don't print misinformation, as was the case in the letter from L. Messina ("Equal Footing," Oct. 15).

All members of Congress participate in the same retirement program as any other federal employee. They must have at least five years of service to be eligible for any retirement income that, at most, pays 80 percent of the final salary. There is an age and years of service formula, so a retiree with only five years of service would receive a nominal benefit.

Since members of the House are elected to two-year terms, a congressman could serve two full terms and not be eligible for any retirement benefit. Conversely, the lowest-paid civil servant would qualify for a lifetime annuity with five years of service and the attainment of age 62.

I do agree that term limits for Congress is the best way to reduce the lobbyists' influence and the opportunity to betray the confidence of "We, the People." But even the few who campaign with promises of

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implementing term limits conveniently forget to pursue them once they've relished the taste of spending others' monies!

THOMAS PETERSON

Riverview

Insensitive Views

Regarding "Yet Another Dueling Banjos Moment" (Daniel Ruth, Local 2, Oct. 16):

Mr. Ruth, yet again you demonstrate your meanness, willing lack of empathy and enthusiastic willingness to not attempt to understand.

You write as though you wish your idol, Sherman, had been successful in his expressed desire of genocide of the Southern people. Hitler had the same desire for a selected group of people. This places you in a despised group.

And, yes, "just as the Nazi Party had every right to march in Skokie, the heart of the Chicago area's Jewish population," the 1st Amendment protects the rights of the likes of you, too. Your visceral hatred for us displays well in your writings.

So, just who, then, is the complete insensitive boob? Doo-Duh, Doo-Duh!

JIMMY L. SHIRLEY JR.

Palm Springs, Fla.

Communist Or Dupe?

Regarding "Yet Another Dueling Banjos Moment:"

Ruth's opinions for the dumbed-down and functionally brain dead never seem to have difficulty getting printed. To say such things about any other group of people would be considered a hate crime; of course, that doesn't seem to apply to white, non-hyphenated Americans.

Ruth demonstrates his ignorance of history by referring to the late "unpleasantries" as the Civil War; it wasn't a Civil War by any definition of that term. The flag flying at the SCV memorial is not the Stars and Bars, the first national flag of the Confederate States.

Yet, the most profound demonstration of Ruth's academic dysfunction is his referring to anything he doesn't like as Nazi or fascist. As a student of the Cold War period of American history, this was and is a primary tactic of the Communist Party, and their dupes, to discredit anything that would expose them for what they truly are. So, should we regard Ruth as a communist or just a dupe?

JOHN REINER

Tampa

Showing Real Leadership

Regarding "Return Incumbents To U.S. House" (Our Opinion, Oct. 16):

When Doug Tudor (Democrat) and I (conservative Republican), both candidates for office, were speaking at a forum, I met him and found him to be willing to hear criticism and take time to explain his views, which are not totally "far left." For example, he once said he is not some left-winger who wishes only to protect the spotted owl at the expense of growth.

Also, Adam Putnam voted for the bailout, which was opposed by upwards of 90 percent of his constituents, some estimates say. Yet Tudor rightly opposed this.

Your liberal paper does not understand that the bailout, in requiring the printing of trillions of dollars, will devalue the dollar. If you don't grasp that, imagine every American holding \$1 million - and see where that leads!

Bottom line: Even had some banks "fallen," houses would not have grown legs and run off. The government rewarded bad lending practices.

Tudor and Kathy Castor, who are not afraid to stand up to their leadership's plan to socialize the banking system, deserve our vote.

GORDON WAYNE WATTS

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Lakeland**The writer is a candidate for state House District 64.**

Learn And Vote

Seeing the editorial headline "To Build Clout, Region Needs New Faces" (Oct. 11), I was elated, certain that the Tribune would be supporting my friend E. J. Ford in his campaign to replace one of those old faces, that of Dr. Ed Homan, who has spent the last six years doing little except support the Republican wrecking crew in Tallahassee.

Alas, it was not to be.

After calling Homan "a reluctant legislator," who has "no ambition of seeking another elected office," and "not much of a politician," you end up with "The Tribune endorses Ed Homan."

Of my man, E.J. Ford, you admit that he "is an intelligent and articulate challenger." But you say "because of his liberal politics, Ford doesn't expect to win" and says that if he does, he doesn't expect to accomplish much." Given the state of the state, what a terrible attitude the Tribune expresses!

If voters learn about him, they will vote for E. J. Ford.

ALVIN W. WOLFE**Lutz**

Christian Negativity

Much of the promotion of the bizarre proposed Amendment 2 comes from so-called "Christian public policy groups." That's exactly the problem. There should be no "Christian public policy" groups.

Whatever happened to the founders' vision of a vital and strong separation of church and state? Have these busybody activists finally gone mad with power?

Take a hard look at anyone who uses nonsensical terms like "radical judges." In Florida, as in the Southeast generally, most judges are, in fact, conservative Republicans. Perhaps these people have never seen an actual radical.

When I was a kid, to be a Christian said something positive about your character. Now it says something very negative about your politics.

SCOTT COCHRAN**Tampa**

The BoSox Truth

I just returned from Boston after having watched the Rays take it to the Sox on Monday and Tuesday. Four of us went. I was expecting the worst at Fenway but got just the opposite.

Whether we were sightseeing around the city in our Rays shirts or at the game, the fans were very welcoming and courteous. Sure, we got the occasional jab, but almost always in fun and never with any anger or malicious attitude.

It amazes me that we have such bad Sox fans here and the real Sox fans are really good sports and great ambassadors for their city.

JERRY HASARA**Tampa**

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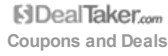
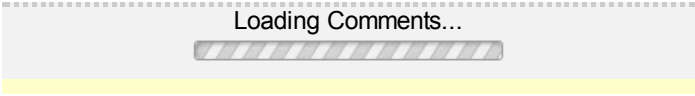
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