

The State of USS Titanic

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

This writer is a manufacturer's rep for various products, one of which is selling sanding belts to Mom and Pop cabinetmakers nationwide. I do most of my sales via the phone, the 'old fashioned way'.

Yesterday I was speaking to a former customer of mine in Iowa. He owns a small cabinet shop for over 30 years. I asked him how he liked having all those Democratic presidential contenders ascending onto his turf. The first response he made was 'Well, they all have lots of promises, but how will they pay for them?'

Figuring he was focusing on the 'Medicare for All' idea that is resounding throughout our nation, I explained how Sanders' plan was different from all the other candidates' ones, who still have the private insurers running the show. I gave the anecdote of when I originally signed up Medicare, that being Humana's Advantage PPO.

My Ear Nose and Throat doctor wanted to do a deviated septum procedure. He assured me that I would be home the same day and that it was an easy surgery. Having had this nasal problem since Clarence Davis, Brooklyn College's star defensive end, damaged it with a forearm during a blocking drill in 1970, I wanted to be able to 'breathe again' through my left nostril. Humana turned down my doc's request, not once... but twice! I then explained to my customer how the very people who oppose such progressive ideas, like the big corporations and small business 'Trump thumpers', would actually *benefit* from Sanders' plan. Think about it, I said, businesses won't have to cover their employees' health insurance, even if they currently only pay perhaps 50% of the premiums. Maybe some of them would actually use a portion of those savings to offer higher pay or other perks. In our current so called 'free market' world, I said, maybe the businesses who did NOT pass on the savings to their employees might lose those workers to firms that did so. Food for thought.

Of course, as with *all* great and creative ideas, the Military Industrial Empire's media and corporate Think Tank lackeys always harp on what this fellow said: *How can we afford it?* I gave him but two easy to comprehend (Was I wrong) solutions: Cut the obscene military spending and tax the super rich. Now, this is where I, as a socialist, part company with even good and decent folks like Bernie Sanders. I told my customer that we currently are seeing 50% of our federal taxes go toward military spending. He had *no* knowledge of that fact. Then I discussed how *all* of our so called 'wars' since WW2 were phony ones. Since he was around my age group, I focused on Vietnam and the disgrace of that phony war. He remained silent, more so I believe for never being aware of the reasons for it... the REAL reasons. He agreed with me on 'Fake news' and then I informed him of a bit of history surrounding WW2 that we high school students never were taught. He had NO idea that the Soviet Union won the war with Germany, beginning with the German defeat at Stalingrad in February of 1943. Sadly, the guy *never* knew what in the hell I was referring to! He did not

realize that the Soviets lost over 25 million people in WW2, while we lost 300+ thousand .

Finally, I asked him if he was what may be called a 'religious or spiritual' man.

He affirmed his faith in God and considered himself a 'Christian' man. I asked him, with all the small farmers and businessmen in his own state going under, and all the indigent around, if it was just that people earning mega millions pay so little in taxes compared to years previous. Sadly, when I informed him that our current TOP federal tax bracket (37%) is about half of what it was in 1980 (70%), and really low compared to that in 1960 (91%) he just remained silent... as if what we have now is OK with him. Is it OK, I asked, that the CEOs of United Health Care's two units, who I have my supplemental insurance with, earned \$ 18 and \$ 21 million respectively last year, when millions of our fellow Americans have no coverage or shitty coverage? He agreed with me... but... he said this is a ' Free market'.

So, what this current two party/one party system has done, while acting as spokespersons for the empire, is like the old joke of *Rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic*. When good and decent people like my customer in Iowa, who has clocked in years of his whole adult life working hard.... should remember the wise words of Frederick Douglass: "*Power concedes NOTHING without demand. It never has. It never will!*"

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Philip A Farruggio is a son and grandson of Brooklyn , NYC longshoremen. He has been a free lance columnist since 2001, with over 400 of his work posted on sites like Global Research, Greenville Post, Off Guardian, Consortium News, Information Clearing House, Nation of Change, World News Trust, Op Ed News, Dissident Voice, Activist Post, Sleuth Journal, Truthout and many others. His blog can be read in full on World News Trust., whereupon he writes a great deal on the need to cut military spending drastically and send the savings back to save our cities. Philip has a internet interview show, ' It's the Empire... Stupid' with producer Chuck Gregory, and can be reached at paf1222@bellsouth.net.

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