

Anti-Depressants Prescribed to Cure Anti-War Blues

by Roxanne Acquistapace

As missiles were raining down on innocent Iraqi families, Betsy McCarty, chief of Santa Cruz County Health Services, made a cameo appearance on the evening news. She admonished us that if this war really started getting to us and we were feeling depressed and having a hard time facing each day, to get ourselves to the doctor for treatment. She was, of course, speaking of pharmaceuticals.

Her advice was so predictable, so western, so Bush-esque! Hadn't Bush asked us to go shopping after 9/11 before the dust had even settled, in order to boost the economy and to show those evil-doers that they could not scare Americans out of their malls? We were to use our credit cards to show our patriotism.

Now we are to turn our disbelief, pain, anger and grief over to western medicine because it hurts and it's not good for us to have these feelings. We were not told that we would also be turning over our personal power that is often strengthened and pushed into action by all these painful feelings.

Betsy McCarty didn't tell us to trust ourselves, to rally together, write a letter to a public official every day, teach our children to question authority, march in the streets, call the White House, write letters to the editors of our corporate-owned, biased newspapers and never, never stop.

She didn't tell us that we were not alone and that there was strength in numbers. She advocated each of us slinking off alone to doctor appointments to become cured of our empathy and humanity. She didn't reveal that only 20 percent of the population who begin drug therapy for depression are ever able to get off the drugs.

McCarty never said, "You have a right to be sad as you watch your brothers and

sisters bleed to death in the streets of Iraq because, like you, they have power-mad leaders to whom their lives are expendable. Your heart is bound to break in half before this war is over. This is normal."

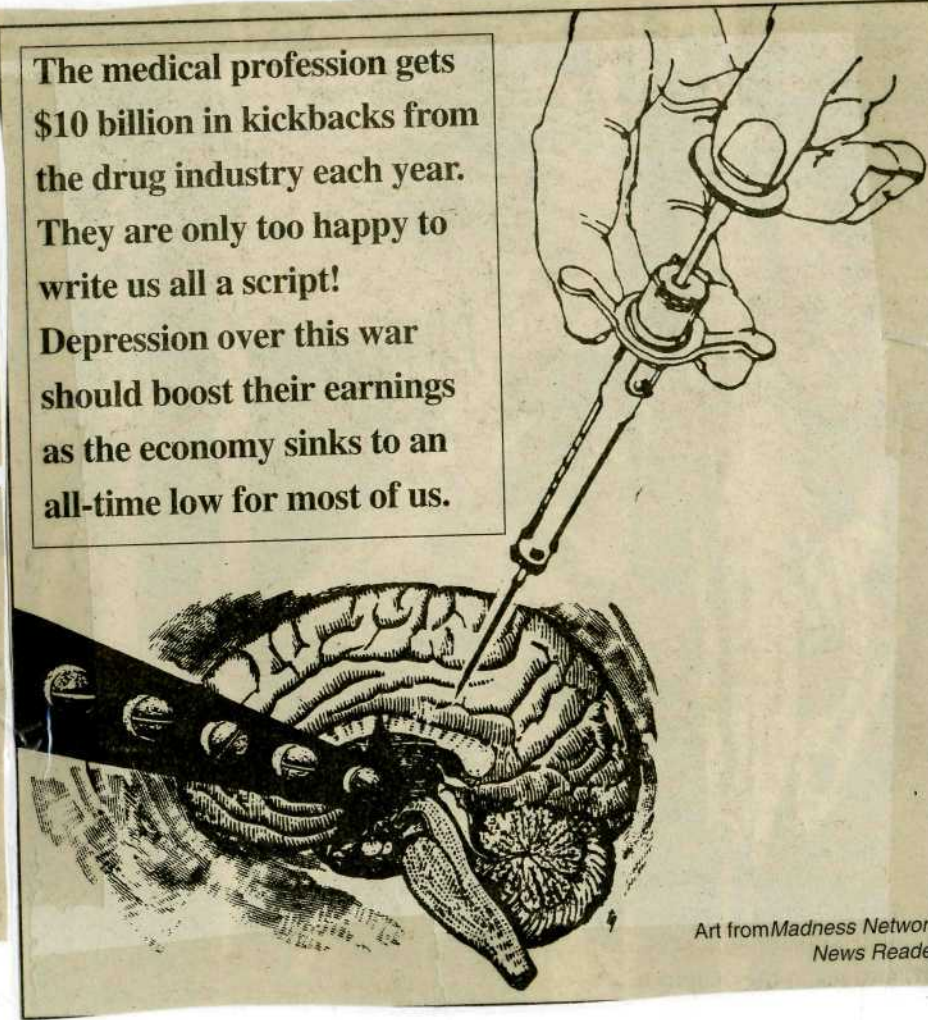
She did not speak to us of our sacred personal power, but saw us as potential patients. This advice is supported by the medical profession, which realizes 10 billion dollars in kickbacks from the drug industry each year. They are only too happy to write us all a script! Depression over this war should boost their earnings

as the economy sinks to an all-time low for most Americans.

Hopelessness allows us to do nothing. It is a powerless, no-fault, feel-bad state that is due to events outside ourselves. It's not fair, it's not our fault, and sometimes it's the straw that breaks the camel's back. That is the big payoff for despair and depression. People just get to shut down and sit still. They run for a legal chemical fix and then are able to go on as usual, once the mental pain is managed.

They can finally get back to redecorating

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