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Notes from editor (not for publication):

Hi, Gino,

—Line 40: I deliberately pulled back a bit on the language you used, which will turn readers' attentions away from your main point here. I also couldn't corroborate your assertion about their views on Iran. I think the edit preserves your overarching point with the entire lot of insane people. We can talk about revisiting the genocide issue in a different piece if you wish.

—Line 62: I made your hypothetical not-the-U.N. a new version of the U.N. because you did so yourself a little further down.

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Maybe we can dream, somehow, of saving our only
2 planet

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

3 Imagine a world where wealthy, powerful zealots don't
4 get to call the shots. Could the majority of people on the Earth
5 somehow dream to design something better?

####END SUBHED####

6 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

7 IF YOU'RE CONFUSED about how the world has gotten so
8 hostile, if you're wondering what happened to sustainability, if
9 you're angry that our country is fighting yet another Middle East
10 war — one which overnight could easily turn nuclear:

11 Understand that the underlying cause is largely
12 economic. It's greed.

13 It's far easier for the ruling class to get even richer on
14 extracting and selling us oil and gas than, say, selling us solar
15 panels. So just as in Kuwait, Iraq, and Venezuela (fortunately, not
16 a war yet) the unfolding Iran situation is very much a grab for
17 fossil fuels.

18 Modern warfare, the cause of so much direct human
19 suffering, is also the greatest user of fossil fuels ever invented.

20 Working people worldwide are struggling to afford
21 enough food, medicine, and shelter to survive. Yet we are failing
22 to end our deadly addiction to oil, gas, and coal. We never will
23 succeed, as long as powerful "petro-states" exist.

24 The United States, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela
25 — and their fossil fuel companies — demand a return on their oil
26 and gas holdings. The money interests of the rich guarantee
27 failure in our combating human-caused climate change.

28 Understand, also, that Donald Trump desperately needs a
29 fresh new war to distract the American people from his Epstein
30 files coverup.

31 Understand, lastly, that another cause of our newest wars
32 is religious fanaticism. In Israel, Iran, and the U.S., the rulers
33 were elected or installed by the most religious factions of their
34 respective populations. Those in charge are on a mission from
35 God.

36 * * *

37 TRUMP AND NETANYAHU, larger than life as they are, are
38 merely symptoms; they are not the cause. The religious zealots
39 who use their holy books as a weapon are the real culprits.
40 Throughout history we see countless examples of zealots

41 dehumanizing other groups in order to lead their followers to
42 war.

43 Powerful religious zealots in Israel are the far-right racist
44 expansionists like Bezalel Smotrich and Itamir Ben-Gavir. In the
45 United States, our zealots are the Christo-fascist charmers like
46 Charlie Kirk, Jerry Falwell Jr., and countless other white
47 evangelical preachers. Some claim a direct line to God.

48 This so-called Christianity they follow is racist,
49 misogynist, and conveniently apocalyptic. They don't believe that
50 continued life on Earth is part of "God's plan," but fighting for
51 Israel is. Eventually, they will go to heaven in a rapture; you and I
52 will go to hell.

53 Moreover, we mustn't forget that techno-fascists like Elon
54 Musk, Peter Thiel, and Curtis Yarvin are religious zealots as well
55 — but of a different sort! They have tens of millions convinced
56 that they will be saved by whatever techno future they are
57 peddling.

58 Trump, Netanyahu, and Putin wouldn't be in power if
59 they weren't financed by, and the voters weren't egged on by, the
60 lies of powerful billionaire class zealots.

61 * * *

62 IMAGINE, INSTEAD, a different world, one that is long
63 overdue: In place of the obsolete and toothless United Nations,
64 could the majority of people on the Earth somehow design
65 something better?

66 Imagine the U.N. as a union of world governments that is
67 not helplessly dominated by the richest and most powerful
68 nations.

69 Imagine if dehumanization of others became a crime.
70 That any religion or ethnic group which believes itself to confer
71 superiority over other religions or nations would be unacceptable
72 in a rewritten U.N. charter. In this imaginary future, fanatical
73 sects of Muslims, Christians, Jews, or any group whose god has
74 "chosen" to dominate others, would not be allowed in the family
75 of nations.

76 Imagine if child abusers, no matter how wealthy, could
77 finally be sent to prison with due process.

78 Somehow, imagine that nuclear and other inhumane
79 weapons not only be banned by treaty but such agreements
80 would have teeth — i.e., they could be enforced by other nation-
81 states). The same could be true for the practice of torture,
82 landmines, and other such weapons and behaviors.

83 Maybe those in power could finally stop the mass human
84 suffering dealt by war.

85 Maybe, with no more apocalyptic theology promoting
86 this highly polluting militarism, fossil-fuel dependency could be
87 ramped down at last.

88 Maybe then, and only then, the diverse members of the
89 human race could together fight disease, injustice, and extinction
90 — and dream, somehow, of saving our only planet.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

91 **GINO PALMERI** runs a small organic orchard, works as a
92 bus driver, and serves on his local conservation commission.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

93 0

####END MAXISSUE####

LINKS:

####BEGIN LINKS####

94

####END LINKS####

VIDEO:

####BEGIN VIDEO####

95

####END VIDEO####

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

####BEGIN LOGLINE####

96

####END LOGLINE####