

The Larger Horror Behind The Sandy Hook Massacre

by Nancy Spannaus

Dec. 29—You could call it the slaughter of the innocents, 2012. Twenty young children mowed down, eviscerated in a rain of bullets. But this time there was no Herod, no autocratic ruler, to blame for the massacre. No, this time the cause of the horror which has devastated hundreds of lives, and shocked the nation, has to be looked at deep within our culture, indeed, within ourselves.

I'm not talking about the so-called "culture of guns." That is rubbish, especially when peddled by the likes of our Murderer-in-Chief Barack Obama, who already has the blood of hundreds of children on his hands, as a result of his drone-warfare policy. Guns don't kill people; people do. And our people, the American population, has a deep sickness which is reflected in the Dec. 14 mass murder spree carried out by Adam Lanza, one of at least 29 such events in the United States since 1999.

No, we're not going to find any quick-fix here. We have no choice but to confront, and radically reverse, the insane, bestial view of man which has infected us, and threatens the very existence of civilized life on this planet.

That bestiality stems from a shift in philosophy about the value of human life itself, a shift which occurred in the midst of the deep pessimism arising in the wake of the death of President Franklin Roosevelt, and, most emphatically, after the murder of President Kennedy and the coverup of its authorship. This shift, which permeates science, education, culture, and even reli-

gion today, promotes the "modern" view that man is simply a more powerful animal, living in a world of limited resources he's threatening to use up, and largely determined by his biological makeup. In such a world, one seeks to "compete" the best one can in one's given environment, attain happiness for the moment in one's local circles, and adapt to those seemingly uncontrollable forces, physical or political, that are dominating the world.

In other words, the guiding philosophy of life has increasingly become that of one of the most candid philosophers of the British Empire, Thomas Hobbes, who said that, in a time when "men live without a common power to keep them all in awe" (i.e., a dictator), "the life of man [is] solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short."

To change this will take nothing less than a revolutionary shift in the view of man, a renaissance. Such a renaissance begins by facing the larger horror that the Sandy Hook massacre represents.

The Kennedy Turning-Point

Lyndon LaRouche, in his Dec. 21, 2012 webcast, as on several other occasions since the massacre, addressed the broader questions raised by the event. One of those was the increasing failure of U.S. government institutions to provide treatment for those with mental health problems.

"What happened in Connecticut, for example, was a case of insanity," he stressed. "That's how it happened, and nobody was watching the switch, on a case who

was about to *freak out*, and do something like that which happened. So, the responsibility for this tragedy lies with the institutions of government of the United States, which *no longer* do anything about mental instability. And you had this young fellow, the so-called perpetrator, who was in a breakdown situation.”

Another point LaRouche raised was the cultural shift after the killing of Kennedy:

“But this is only typical of the potential breakout of homicidal *insanity* in people, since when? Since Kennedy was assassinated. What happened, if you go back about two years after the assassination of Kennedy, is that you will find that the drug and insanity business was launched *then*. And in '68, you had the march of mass insanity, a *real fascism*, the worst kind of fascism, you know, of the Hitler variety. And since that time, the rate of insanity has increased.”

The source of that fascist ideology, LaRouche emphasized, was the British Empire, the mother of the Green movement which calls for the *depopulation* of the planet, to “save the planet.” It is that Green “zero growth” movement, working through the world’s leading financial institutions, governments, and so-called civil society groups, which has massacred aspirations for true scientific and technological progress, especially in the trans-Atlantic region, and thus killed the future for ensuing generations of youth. With that ideology has come the promotion of the rock-drug-sex counterculture, which destroys young minds and renders the current young generation virtually incapable of serious productive work.

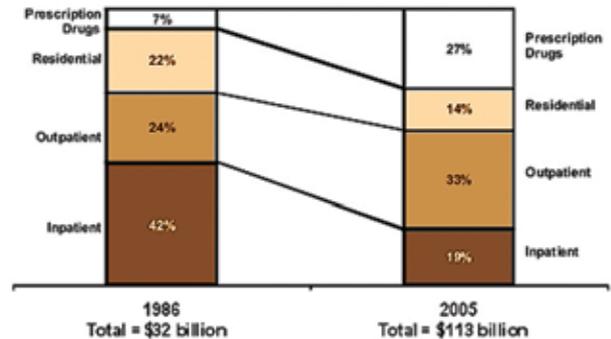
You need only look at today’s embrace of the campaign driven by drug-financiers to legalize mind-destroying drugs to see confirmation of this trend. Narcotic drugs are mental slavery, destroying thought and soul. Only a culture that has lost its soul would seek to legitimize them.

Should anyone wonder at the increasing rates of murder-suicide, within a generation that has no future? Should it be surprising that young people raised in a society that teaches that every person is a drain on society’s resources, not a mind with the capability of contributing to the future, turn toward obsessions with death, murder, and suicide?

Increasing Insanity

It’s not only LaRouche and his movement who see an increasing incidence of insanity in the population of the United States. A number of recent studies, under the

FIGURE 1
Distribution of Mental Health Expenditures by Type of Service, 1986 & 2005



Note: Excludes spending on insurance administration. Data not adjusted for inflation. Source: SAMHSA Spending Estimates Project, 2010.

Kaiser Family Foundation

auspices of U.S. government agencies, have turned up new alarming figures about the current and potential incidence of psychosis in U.S. society. The actual picture is even more alarming than these studies say, since the definition of what constitutes mental illness has, over recent decades, been altered, so as to consider “normal,” behavior that would have been rightly classified as aberrant or insane only a few decades ago.

The CDC Adult Mental Illness Surveillance Report (September 2011) indicated that 50% of U.S. adults will develop at least one serious, diagnosable mental illness during their lifetime, and that that incidence was increasing at an alarming rate.

Apparently, it was the CDC Surveillance Report that prompted a multi-site longitudinal study of mental illness in North America, on which *EIR* was briefed by a Washington, D.C. source. The study was done with funding from the Departments of Homeland Security and of the Army and was conducted at eight study sites: Emory University; Harvard Medical School; University of California, Los Angeles; University of California, San Diego; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; University of Toronto; Yale University; and Zucker Hillside Hospital (part of North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System).

The objective of this study, according to this source (*EIR* has not seen the study), was to achieve early detection of individuals who will develop schizophrenia or other psychotic disorders, with the idea that they could isolate mechanisms underlying the onset of psychosis, and test various preventive intervention modalities. Apparently, current prediction approaches have

very low levels of accuracy. The aim of the study was to determine the risk of conversion to full-blown psychosis in a general population, given certain stress factors, and to develop a set of algorithms that would maximize predictability.

The results were shocking. They indicated that 55% of the adult population presents with pre-psychotic symptoms. That number rose to about 64% among adult males between the ages of 21 to 30. Interestingly, that same slice of the population has the lowest access to health care. The numbers are higher than those indicated in the CDC Surveillance Reports and, additionally, were showing an increase of approximately 22% each year.

Within the group of those presenting with pre-psychotic symptoms, the risk of conversion to psychosis was 35% with the presence of normal stress factors. The transition to full psychosis decelerated over 2.5 years when follow-up treatment was introduced. However, the rate of conversion jumped dramatically to 68% to 80% when 2 or 3 additional features were introduced. Among the additional features, those that showed the highest rate of conversion to full-blown psychosis were: a genetic risk for schizophrenia with recent deterioration in functioning; higher levels of unusual thought content; higher levels of suspicion/paranoia; greater social impairment; and a history of substance abuse.

Not noted was the potential for dramatically escalated stress for the society as a whole, such as economic breakdown, devastating natural disaster, or war.

Mental-Health Care?

Not surprisingly, *EIR*'s source argued, on the basis of the studies he had seen, that the horrific mass shootings recently in the U.S. have everything to do with the lack of any adequate mechanism for the treatment of mental illness. He pointed out that in Israel, a much higher percentage of the population owns firearms, but that this type of occurrence was almost unheard of. He said it has been firmly established that the reason why it doesn't, is the extensive, nationalized health-care system. He said the pattern holds true in other advanced-sector countries where gun ownership is prevalent, but where health care is readily available.

It is indisputable that provisions for mental-health treatment in the United States are abysmal, and getting worse by the year, as the British-fascist philosophy of

“cost-accounting” applied to health care gets more and more institutionalized. Remember, Hitler's first moves toward euthanasia famously argued that it was a waste of money to treat the mentally ill, when so-called healthy Aryans needed the money themselves.

The pattern of reducing treatment for the mentally ill and those otherwise handicapped—a cause President Franklin D. Roosevelt had particularly championed—is a long-standing one, beginning in the 1960s, when the zero-growth ideology was beginning to get a vise-grip on the United States. The first moves, as in the case of the drive toward euthanasia per se, were disguised as “in the patient's interest”: Specifically, exposés of terrible treatment in state mental hospitals led to the campaign to “de-institutionalize” the mentally ill, and put them in “more humane” community-based institutions. Large state-run psychiatric hospitals began to be shut down, and patients sent back to their families, or to so-called community homes, if these existed.

But as could have been predicted, with money in short supply, competent facilities for mental-health care, especially long-term care, did not exist. Instead, patients were left to fend for themselves, perhaps aided by medication (if they could afford it). More and more of the sickest patients began turning up in jails and homeless shelters because they had no other place to go.

With each new ratchet down of the economic-financial crisis, the situation got worse. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, since the “recession” began in 2007, states have made major cuts in their mental-health budgets, with the largest being to long-term care facilities.

On Obama's Watch

During the first three years of Obama's Presidency, from 2009 to 2012, states cut at least \$4.35 billion in public mental-health spending, according to the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors; the association calls this the largest reduction in funding since the “de-institutionalization” drive of the 1960s and '70s.

Since 2009 alone, 3,222 psychiatric hospital beds became unavailable to patients, and another 1,249 may disappear soon because of proposed closures, according to the Association. “That's about 10 percent of all state psychiatric hospital beds gone in about three years,” said Dr. Robert Glover, the association's execu-

tive director, who has worked in mental health for almost five decades.

“This is the worst, in my mind, significant budget cut in public mental health in decades, and it is beginning to show in very big ways,” said Dr. Glover, in interviews this month with ABC and the Huffington Post. “We have a 10 percent budget cut in real dollars [this year], and when you have that occur [alongside] increased demand on an overburdened system already, I can’t tell you that people aren’t being injured or hurt.”

On top of all this, Obama’s proposed FY2013 budget cuts \$142 million from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, bringing it down to \$3.4 billion. Another \$54 million could be eliminated through “non-program-related activity.” Mental Health Block Grants remained the same as FY2012. Suicide-prevention programs are reduced by \$10 million, to \$48 million.

Obama’s proposed budget was, of course, never passed, the excuse being the “fiscal cliff” charade. And as part of this, Obama and House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) have discussed long-term cuts to Medicaid, which underwrites services for more than 60% of people in the public mental-health system. Mental-health advocates say the result could be disastrous. “We already know that people who need help aren’t getting it,” Sarah Steverman, Director of State Policy for Mental Health America, told MSNBC. “As there’s a decrease in coverage or a decrease in providers, the longer people have to wait for appointments, the less likely they are to go. And then they’re less likely to get the help that they need. It’s always been a problem, and I think we’ll see an even bigger problem if we do have cuts to Medicaid.”

About 33% of all newly insured people under the Affordable Care Act’s Medicaid expansion have behavioral health conditions, said Joel E. Miller of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, in a July 15, 2012 presentation. He added that about one-half of that group could have serious mental



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The youth culture of violent video games has contributed to the horror of schoolyard massacres, by creating a generation that is inured to violence.

illnesses.

And if budget sequestration takes place, there will be an 8% cut to resources that the mentally ill depend on, including special education, supportive housing grants, and mental-health research, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

As one example, by no means the worst: California cut 21%, or \$768 million, from its mental-health services programs during the previous three fiscal years, according to a November 2011 report from the National Alliance. This is only the seventh-highest among all states. Almost 2 million adults in California—about 8% of the adult population—“need mental health treatment, and 1 in 12 Californians reported symptoms consistent with serious psychological distress and experienced difficulty functioning at home or at work,” according to a study released last month by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

The Popular Culture of Violence

Any consideration of this mass-murder horror would be incomplete without discussing, at least briefly, the spread of violent video games into the youth culture. Adam Lanza was reportedly heavily involved in some of these games. Other prominent cases of youth killers over the past decade or more, directly testify to the role of point-and-shoot video games in training



EIRNS/Edward Chen

The LaRouche movement champions Classical culture to shift the younger generation away from its trajectory toward death and destruction. Shown is a Christmas concert in Bogota, N.J., on Dec. 16, with LaRouchePAC organizers and others from the community.

“stone-cold killers” among the youth of the United States and other countries.

Back in the early 2000s, the LaRouche movement launched a campaign to ban these games, pointing to their role in such crimes as the killing of African immigrant Amadou Diallo in New York (1999), and school children in such cases as the Jonesboro, Ark. massacre (1998). The Jonesboro case was the specific goad for Lt. Col. David Grossman (ret.), now a renowned expert in the field of what he calls “killology,” to begin his crusade against violent video games. These are “mass-murder simulators,” Grossman said in an interview with [EIR](#), May 24, 2002, they are training a whole generation of youth to kill without question. And as for the connection between the proliferation of these games and the gigantic leaps in violent crime over the last decades (six or sevenfold per-capita increase since 1957), this was documented as early as 1972, by no less an authority than the U.S. Surgeon General.

Also in the early 2000s, Lyndon and Helga LaRouche launched the Commission on the New Vio-

lence, in an attempt to get public action against violent video games.

Unlike other activists against violence, however, the LaRouche movement has championed the positive shifts in economic and cultural policy, which are the indispensable pathways to bringing the younger generation out of the current course toward death and destruction. It will take a generation, at the least, to rescue the current youth of the United States, LaRouche has stressed, and many will remain damaged for life. Classical culture, major projects to upgrade the physical-economic platform of man’s existence, reviving the space program—all are essential to reversing the culture of death which we see everywhere, from our wars, to our video screens.

Let the horror of Sandy Hook Elementary School be a spur to making such a New Renaissance a reality. Without our national leadership taking immediate action, it will inevitably get much, much worse.

Debra Freeman and Edward Spannaus contributed significant research for this article.