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Be sure to read these superb pieces:

Don't Emulate the Baby Boomers *by Gov. Mitch Daniels*

The U. S. has never lost its moral bearings *by Richard Cheney*

Live Free or Die *by Mark Steyn*

Bound to Burn *by Peter W. Huber*

And here's what a **trillion dollars** looks like.

Identity (victim) politics exposed as the pernicious, irrational nonsense it is.

Lost in the Labyrinth of Race

The Sotomayor nomination and the politics of racial identity.

by Victor Davis Hanson, 31 May 2009

...In the last fifty years, United States has evolved into a complex multiracial state. Race no longer is necessarily an indicator of income or material success—as the record of, say, Japanese-Americans or, indeed Asians in general, attests.

And what criterion constitutes race itself nowadays, when almost every family has someone who is half-Hispanic, a quarter-Asian, one-half black, or part Pakistani? What percentage of one's lineage ensures purity of race, or qualifies for minority status? Are California Hispanics minorities, or so-called whites that are now a smaller percentage of the state population?

And what constitutes racial authenticity? Lack of income? An absence of success in the American rat race? Is the fourth generation upper-class Cuban an "Hispanic" who should qualify for affirmative action because his name is Hillario Gonzalez? Does the one-quarter aristocratic Jamaican qualify for American redress on account of his partial blackness?

And how does affirmative action—or even the fuzzy notion of "diversity"—adjudicate all this without mirror-imaging the statisticians of the Old Confederacy who could precisely calibrate the 1/16 drop of black blood? The university where I taught was full of South Americans and Europeans with Spanish surnames that allowed their various departments to be considered "ethnically diverse," while others, having Russian émigrés, or the foreign born from New Delhi, Israel, and Egypt, struggled to satisfy the dictates of diversity czars.

In other words, affirmative action, and the racial identity politics that fuel it, are swamped by their inherent racist contradictions—and made irrelevant by the dynamism of popular culture of the last three decades in which intermarriage, assimilation, and integration have challenged the notion of racial fides itself.

What are we left then with? A mess. And a rather mean and nasty mess at that...

Read the rest: <http://victorhanson.com/articles/hanson053109B.html>

Testing O's Limits (He Has None)

by Ralph Peters, 31 May 2009

In the old days at Officer Candidate School, the "tac officers," snapping and snarling, would circle a hapless would-be lieutenant: "You're lost, Candidate." "You're confused." "What are you going to do now?" "Make a decision! Make a decision!"

That cherished image of the bewildered victim of calculated harassment fits President Obama perfectly, when it comes to the shambles he's made of foreign policy in record time.

Around the globe, our enemies—immediate and potential—are testing Obama to see how far they can go. Thus far, he hasn't set a limit anywhere. Not a single dictator or terrorist leader got a single time-out.

Last week, North Korea nuke-mooned him, then spit missiles in multiple directions. Our president admonished Pyongyang. Words solve everything in Obama-World.

The Master of the Teleprompter didn't seem to grasp the basics: Like spoiled brats, the North Koreans were demanding attention (and got it); Pyongyang never honors agreements; and, above all, this isn't our problem to solve—it's China's. We just need to worry about nuke exports and keep our Navy gainfully employed.

Instead, we've let ourselves be set up as the bad cop, with Beijing as the good cop. We get the responsibilities, Beijing gets the benefits...

More: http://www.nypost.com/seven/05312009/postopinion/opedcolumnists/testing_os_limits__he_has_none__171834.htm

The renowned Princeton professor has written the best essay on abortion that I have ever read.

Obama And His Pro-Life Apologists

by Robert P. George, 29 May 2009

...The issue really cannot be fudged, as people sometimes try to do by imagining that there is a dispute about whether it is really a human being who is dismembered in a dilation and curettage abortion, or whose skin is burned off in a saline abortion, or the base of whose skull is pierced and whose brains are sucked out in a dilation and extraction (or "partial birth") abortion. That issue has long been settled—and it was settled not by religion or philosophy, but by the sciences of human embryology and developmental biology.

So it is clear that what divides us as a nation, and what divides Barack Obama, on one side, from Robert George and Douglas Kmiec, on the other, is not whether the being whose life is taken in abortion and in embryo-destructive research is a living individual of the human species—a *human* being; it is whether all human beings, or only some, possess fundamental dignity and a right to life. Professor Kmiec and I affirm, and the President denies, that every human being, even the youngest, the smallest, the weakest and most vulnerable at the very dawn of their lives, has a life which should be respected and protected by law. The President holds, and we deny, that those in the embryonic and fetal stages of human development may rightly and freely be killed because they are unwanted or potentially burdensome to others, or because materials obtained by dissecting them may be useful in biomedical research...

...We reject the idea that is at the foundation of President Obama's position on abortion and human embryo-destructive research, namely, that those of us who are equal in worth and dignity are equal by virtue of some attribute other than our common humanity—some attribute that unborn children have not yet acquired, justifying others in treating them, despite their humanity, as non-persons, as objects or property, even as disposable material for use in biomedical research.

President Obama knows that an unborn baby is human. He knows that the blood shed by the abortionist's knife is human blood, that the bones broken are human bones. He does not deny that the baby whom nurse Jill Stanek discovered gasping for breath in a soiled linen bin after a failed attempt to end her life by abortion, was a human baby. Even in opposing the Illinois Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, which was designed to assure that such babies were rescued if possible or at least given comfort care while they died, Barack Obama did not deny the humanity of the child. What he denied, and continues to deny, is the fundamental equality of that child—equality with those of us who are safely born and accepted into the human community...

Read the whole thing: <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/viewarticle.php?selectedarticle=2009.05.29.001.pdart>

North Korea Provokes with Impunity

by Mark Steyn, 29 May 2009

...Pyongyang's actions were "a matter of ..." Drumroll, please! "...grave concern," declared the president. Furthermore, if North Korea carries on like this, it will—wait for it—"not find international acceptance." As the comedian Andy Borowitz put it, "President Obama said that the United States was prepared to respond to the threat with 'the strongest possible adjectives.'..."

...The president's general line on the geopolitical big picture is: I don't need this in my life right now. He's a domestic transformationalist, working overtime—via the banks, the automobile industry, health care, etc.—to advance statism's death grip on American dynamism. His principal interest in the rest of the world is that he doesn't want anyone nuking America before he's finished turning it into a socialist basket case. This isn't simply a matter of priorities. A United States government currently borrowing 50 cents for every dollar it spends cannot afford its global role, and thus the Obama cuts to missile defense and other programs have a kind of logic: You can't be Scandinavia writ large with a U.S.-sized military....

...More to the point, the feeble bleatings from the State Department that there may be internal change down the road emphasize the central feature of the present scene: the absence of meaningful American power... We are building a world in which the wealthiest nations on the planet, from Norway to New Zealand, are all but defenseless, while bankrupt dysfunctional squats go nuclear. Even with inevitable and generous submissions to nuclear blackmail, how long do you think that arrangement will last?...

More: <http://www.ocreger.com/articles/north-nuclear-america-2433505-korea-american>

North Korea and Diplomacy

A time-line of Bush futility holds lessons for Obama.

Wall Street Journal, 30 May 2009

Right after North Korea's first nuclear test, in October 2006, Senator Bob Menendez explained that the event "illustrates just how much the Bush Administration's incompetence has endangered our nation." The New Jersey Democrat hasn't said what he thinks North Korea's second test says about the current Administration, so allow us to connect the diplomatic dots.

At the time of the first test, the common liberal lament was that Kim Jong Il was belligerent only because President Bush had eschewed diplomacy in favor of tough rhetoric, like naming Pyongyang to the "axis of evil." Never mind that the U.S. had continued to fulfill its commitments under the 1994 Agreed Framework, including fuel shipments and the building of "civilian" nuclear reactors, until the North admitted it was violating that framework in late 2002. Never mind, too, that by 2006 the Bush Administration had participated in multiple rounds of six-party nuclear talks, or that it had promised to normalize relations with the North....

...We offer this timeline of diplomatic futility as a suggestion that maybe it's time to try something different. The U.S. is now working to secure a fresh U.N. sanctions resolution, and good luck making that stick. North Korea has never honored any commitment, or abided by any convention, or respected any international law. And until some very clear signal is sent by the U.S. and its allies that they will not be gulled again by the allure of negotiations, it never will.

The details: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124363766093667839.html>

When Democrats derailed a GOP Latino nominee

by Byron York, 29 May 2009

...But the Democrats didn't back off. They had a new, very serious question to ask: What is Miguel Estrada hiding?

The answer was nothing, of course. But the strategy worked. Democrats stonewalled Estrada's nomination, and, after losing control of the Senate in 2002, they began an unprecedented round of filibusters to block an entire slate of Bush appeals-courts nominees, Estrada among them. The confirmation process ground to a halt. More than two years after his nomination was announced, Estrada, tired of what appeared to be an endless runaround, withdrew his name from consideration. Instead of being on the federal bench, he is now in private practice in Washington.

And that was how Democrats treated the last high-level Hispanic court nominee. Think about that when you watch their lovefest with Sonia Sotomayor.

The rest: <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/politics/When-Democrats-derailed-a-GOP-Latino-nominee-46407227.html>

Gotta love this Russian patriot. He's a serious culture-warrior, and gives no quarter to nonsense. He sees Obama for the mountebank he is—and has some *very* forthright comments about Barney Frank and his ilk. And Mr. Mishin's [blog](#) even features a quote from [Alexander Nevsky](#).

American capitalism gone with a whimper

Stanislav Mishin, 27 Apr 2009

<http://english.pravda.ru/opinion/columnists/107459-0/>

Just another day in the disgraceful administration of Barack H. Obama. They're not satisfied appeasing and kowtowing to foreign racist criminal scumbags like Hugo Chavez, Kim Jong-Il, and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. They feel they must make obeisance to *home-grown* racist criminal scumbags: the Black Panther Party. So much that Obama & Co. have done can be described by two words: [this one](#), and [this one](#).

Career lawyers overruled on voting case

by Jerry Seper, 29 May 2009

http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/may/29/career-lawyers-overruled-on-voting-case/?feat=home_cube_position1

Mr. Lewis has some very harsh (yet appropriate) words for Obama and his fellow appeasers. But they're not quoted below. You'll have to read the whole thing. It's marvelous.

Defeating a Hitler With Nukes: Nothing Else Matters

by James Lewis, 29 May 2009

...There are only two rational strategies for sane nations in the Second Age of Nuclear Terror. Obama has spoken out against both of them.

The first is preemptive strikes. If somebody is pointing a gun at you, threatening to kill you, you have to kill him first. George W. Bush made it work with Saddam Hussein. For his great wisdom and courage George W. Bush was hysterically abused for eight solid years by the Democrats and their saboteur brigade in the media. In 1981 Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin also acted preemptively by destroying Saddam Hussein's Osirak nuclear power plant.

Those two preemptive military actions helped to postpone the Second Age of Nuclear Terror that Kim's nuclear bomb has just ushered in. They kept us safe for more than two decades. SecDef Robert Gates has pretty much **ruled out** preemption: The Iraq War was too costly, he believes.

What else can we do? The second rational strategy is anti-missile defense. But the SecDef just announced 1.4 billion dollars in cutbacks to our missile defense program...

Read it all: http://www.americanthinker.com/2009/05/defeating_a_hitler_with_nukes.html

Obama's Interlocking Directorate

by Rich Lowry, 29 May 2009

The interlocking directorate is anathema to trustbusters and corporate watchdogs. It occurs when a board member or top executive of one company sits on the board of another company, accumulating undue power over a given industry. When it reduces competition, the arrangement is forbidden by the Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914.

If Henry De Lamar Clayton, the Alabama congressman who introduced the aforementioned act, were still with us, he'd presumably be shocked at the creation of the most far-reaching interlocking directorate in U.S. history. Obama Inc. has effectively won a seat on the board of companies at the heart of the nation's industrial production and its financial system. The robber barons of old would marvel at the tentacles of influence of Barack Obama, a CEO whose power would overawe J. P. Morgan (the famous industrialist, not the bailed-out bank).

In difficult negotiations with business, Obama has the advantage of sitting at both sides of the table. This makes the art of the deal considerably simpler than when Donald Trump wrote about it years ago.

It gets sinister: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=MmNkZmU0NwVjNDg2Y2Y5ZjBiNTBmMTQ5N2JjNzRmZGE=>

"The financial crisis is not the crisis of capitalism. It is the crisis of a system that has distanced itself from the most fundamental values of capitalism, which betrayed the spirit of capitalism."

—Nicolas Sarkozy, Oct 2008

Schumpeter's Moment

Capitalism remains the foundation for economic growth and freedom.

by Carl Schramm, 29 May 2009

...Is this the moment the Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter had envisaged when he spoke of "creative destruction"? After all, it was Schumpeter who worried more than any other modern economist about what might be called the fragile condition of capitalism. He did so having lived through the economic horrors of Weimar, witnessed the terror of Soviet-style political economy, experienced the Depression—and seen the chaos of World War II. Plenty of destruction, to be sure. His life's work concentrated on entrepreneurs renewing the economy through what he called "creative destruction."

If Schumpeter were alive today, he would surely ask, What caused this crisis? And, is this kind of scandal or drama endemic to the nature of capitalism itself? While a lot of attention has been given to the first question, I want to focus on the more ominous second one. Namely, how to save capitalism from a potentially fatal reaction to this crisis...

Read on: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124354060463363743.html>

It's all excellent radio, but the segment on prison gangsters is especially fascinating—and appalling. Ah, the unintended consequences of misguided "fairness"! A reasonable person would think that once someone has been convicted and actually sent to prison, the presumption of innocence might be dialed back just a teensy bit. But no! In America, we coddle the guilty and make everyone else pay for it. Perpetrators aren't held responsible for their crimes; "society" is.

Hugh Hewitt Show

21 May 2009 hour 3

First, a replay of the Mark Steyn interview from Hour 1. 10:33—Hugh uses SCOTUS rulings on abortion to trick Erwin Chemerinsky into saying that a 5-4 decision doesn't make something "settled" law. 14:45—Obama clip re Gitmo, "which the Supreme Court soundly rejected." Then Erwin, Hugh, and John Eastman discuss what to do with the Guantanamo prisoners. John and Hugh argue convincingly that Gitmo detainees aren't entitled to U.S. civil rights or due process.

25:40—Bob, a corrections officer in Fullerton CA, tells how imprisoned gang-members go "Pro Per" and join (individually) in their own legal defense. This enables them to exploit the law to arrange unsupervised meetings with other people, including gang members from other prisons—and at taxpayers' expense. At most of the meetings, nothing but gang business is discussed, including planned murders and drug deals. A clear case of coddling the guilty and penalizing the innocent.

32:10—Two key clips from Richard Cheney's speech on Gitmo.

Listen: <http://hughhewitt.townhall.com/TalkRadio/Show.aspx?RadioShowID=5&ContentGuid=bcbba0f-94c0-42ba-bb15-ec0f3b67ce8e>

Bibi met with Obama last Friday. But June 4 is when The One will unveil his peace plan in a speech in Cairo. Obama's plan is expected to be very anti-Israel. Ms. Glick, though, has a way for Bibi to out-manuever Obama by involving the many Mideast states who, like Israel, would really hate it if Iran had nukes. Incidentally, it occurs to me that Obama's gaffe, during the election campaign, about visiting "all 57 states" might actually have been more of a Freudian slip. The member-states of the Organization of the Islamic Conference are "all 57 states" that Obama cares about.

Netanyahu's Peace Plan

by Caroline B. Glick, 22 May 2009

...By making the achievement of the unachievable goal of making peace between Israel and the Palestinians through the establishment of a Palestinian terror state the centerpiece of his Middle East agenda, Obama is able to cast Israel as the region's villain. This aim is reflected in the administration's intensifying pressure on Israel to destroy Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria.

In portraying Jews who live in mobile homes on barren hilltops in Judea and Samaria—rather than Iranian mullahs who test ballistic missile while enriching uranium and inciting genocide—as the greatest obstacle to peace, the Obama administration not only seeks to deflect attention away from its refusal to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. It is also setting Israel up as the fall guy who it will blame after Iran emerges as a nuclear power...

...According to media reports, Obama's plan will require Israel to withdraw its citizens and its military to the indefensible 1949 armistice lines. It will provide for the free immigration of millions of Israel-hating Arabs to the Palestinian state. And it seeks to represent all of this as in accord with Israel's interests by claiming that after Israel renders itself indefensible, all 57 members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (including Iran) will "normalize" their relations with Israel. In short, Obama is using his peace plan to castigate the Netanyahu government as the chief destabilizing force in the region...

Read on, and see what Netanyahu's peace plan might be:

<http://www.carolineglick.com/e/2009/05/netanyahus-peace-plan.php>

The renowned Princeton professor Robert P. George has founded a new conservative activist group, the American Principles Project.

The Principled Opposition

by Fred Barnes, 28 May 2009

George, who created the popular James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton, is no stranger to politics. He's a pro-life, pro-family conservative who was appointed by the first President Bush to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and by the second to the Council on Bioethics. But his new venture will make him a major political player.

The idea behind George's leap in politics is twofold. First, he would publicize scholarship by academic intellectuals that buttresses the conservative case on issues from family breakdown to the "the sexualizing of children" and bring it to the attention of conservative politicians and activists. He calls this the "mobilization of scholarship." The aim is to change the view of Republican elites that social issues in particular are lowbrow, emotional, and to be avoided.

Second, George wants to elevate issues that reflect conservative popular sentiment—again, notably social issues—and give them a prominent role in the national political debate. Cannon says Republicans and conservatives have missed numerous opportunities to play up social issues, citing the failure to raise strong objections to President Obama's selection

of David Ogden, a lawyer who defended pornographers, as his deputy attorney general.

More: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/553kmyoo.asp>

Up From Poverty

by Carl Schramm, 23 May 2009

For most of recorded history, economic growth was static. For centuries, the global economy grew, according to our best estimates, less than half a percentage point annually. Famous displays of wealth, such as the extravagances of the French Court, reflected the concentrating of wealth by duress within a stagnant economic system—not evidence of an economic system that knew how to make new wealth. By 1820, the industrial revolution was starting to change this dismal pattern. At that time, the United States would have been seen as a bad bet to participate in the world's first real economic expansion. Its enormous wealth in natural resources, locked away in remote forests and prairies, was not fully appreciated. Compared to England and the continental powers—with sophisticated cities, well-established banking cultures, great universities, and phalanxes of proto-scientists and successful merchants—the U.S. was an underdeveloped country. In 1820 China was among the world's most productive nations, accounting for one-third of gross world product. The United States produced only 2%. Just over a century later, the U.S. had eclipsed all nations, accounting for over a quarter of global product. China, meanwhile, had fallen to less than 5%...

Continue: http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/05/23/up_from_poverty_96641.html

This is why the whole "climate change" fable=hoax=scam=canard is so repugnant to people who believe in freedom, and so attractive to liberals. It gives them an excuse to **arrogate more power** to themselves, and take more and more **control over the lives** of a once-free people. During the 2006 congressional campaign, Nancy Pelosi said that if the Democrats won, the gavel would be "in the hands of America's children." Well, it certainly is—in the hands of *idiot children*. And Nancy: why weren't we ever briefed on this?

Pelosi appeals for China's help on climate change

by Audra Ang, 28 May 2009

...In answering a question from a student about how Pelosi was going to get Americans to cut back on their carbon emissions, the leading Democratic lawmaker said it was important to educate children on how to conserve energy and for citizens to build more environmentally friendly homes.

"We have so much room for improvement," she said. "Every aspect of our lives must be subjected to an inventory ... of how we are taking responsibility."...

More: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/28/AR2009052800086.html>

Five Million Green Jobs?

by Tony Blankley, 27 May 2009

...In March, one of Spain's leading universities, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, published an authoritative study "of the effects on employment of public aid to renewable energy sources." The report pointed out: "This study is important for several reasons. First is that the Spanish experience is considered a leading example to be followed by many policy advocates and politicians. This study marks the very first time a critical analysis of the actual performance and impact has been made. Most important, it demonstrates that the Spanish/EU-style 'green jobs' agenda now being promoted in the U.S. in fact destroys jobs, detailing this in terms of jobs destroyed per job created."...

..."The U.S. should expect a loss of at least 2.2 jobs on average, or about 9 jobs lost for every 4 created."... Only 10 percent of the green jobs created were permanent jobs actually operating and maintaining the renewable sources of energy.

Each wind industry job created in Spain required a subsidy of about \$1.4 million. Overall, the average subsidy cost for each green job was about \$800,000 (571,138 euros). And to create about 50,000 green jobs, Spain lost 110,000 jobs elsewhere in the economy, principally in metallurgy, nonmetallic mining and food processing and in the beverage and tobacco industries.

Each green megawatt brought on line destroyed 5.28 jobs elsewhere in the economy (8.99 by photovoltaics, 4.27 by wind energy and 5.05 by mini-hydropower)... The high cost of green energy predictably drove energy-intensive Spanish companies and industries out of Spain to countries with cheaper carbon-based energy, while the cost to Spanish taxpayers of renewable-energy subsidies was enormous...

More: <http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/may/27/five-million-green-jobs/>



(HT: Erik A. and Tony C.)

Empathy vs. Impartiality

by Jonah Goldberg, 27 May 2009

Why make this complicated? President Obama prefers Supreme Court justices who will violate their oath of office...
...The reasoning here is a riot of dubious assumptions. Obama and Sotomayor both assume that a firsthand understanding of the plight of the poor or the African-American or the gay or the old will automatically result in justices voting a certain (liberal) way. "I would hope," Sotomayor said in 2001, "that a wise Latina woman with the richness of her experiences would more often than not reach a better conclusion than a white male who hasn't lived that life." This is not only deeply offensive, it is also nonsense on stilts. Clarence Thomas understands what it is like to be poor and black better than any justice who has ever sat on the bench. How's that working out for liberals?

Of course, liberals say that if you don't agree with their policy prescriptions on, say, racial quotas or abortion, it's because you don't care as much as they do about minorities or women. Which is why they've demonized Thomas as a villainous race-traitor. This, too, is aggressively stupid. But even if it were true, why are we talking about policy preferences and the courts? Judges aren't supposed to have policy preferences, despite Ms. Sotomayor's insistence that the courts are "where policy is made."

More important, who says conservatives are against judicial empathy? I, for one, am all for it. I'm for empathy for the party most deserving of justice before the Supreme Court, within the bounds of the law and Constitution. If that means siding with a poor black man, great. If that means siding with a rich white one, that's great too. The same holds for gays and gun owners, single mothers and media conglomerates. We should all rejoice when justices fulfill their oaths and give everyone a fair hearing, even if that's now out of fashion in the age of Obama.

Full column: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=NGM1Y2U0NTAzMjhhM2NIMGEyNDg2NTQwNzFiNzYxYWQ=>

Sotomayor the Radical

by Quin Hillyer, 26 May 2009

...the most radical possible choice for the Supreme Court, a woman whose speeches and writings are so obscenely racist that no white male could possibly get away with saying anything like those things and live, professionally, for even a single additional day. Obama's emphasis today, in introducing Sotomayor, on biography over all else was absolutely sickening. And despicable. To which all decent Americans ought to respond: No, it does NOT make a difference whether she grew up rich or poor, black or white or Hispanic, left-handed or right-handed, ill or healthy, Jew or gentile. All that matters is whether or not she will uphold her oath to serve the Constitution and laws as written, including the explicit and

tacit restrictions therein on judicial authority. In America, judges are not supposed to be fonts of wisdom, not supposed to "feel" the right things and not supposed to be demigods purveying some sort of cosmic notion of fairness. Instead, they are supposed to apply the laws as provided to them by the political branches within these United States. Period...

More: <http://spectator.org/blog/2009/05/26/sotomayor-the-radical>

A friend of Don John's just couldn't contain his deep and abiding gratitude for all the wonders that Dear Leader has worked in just four short months. We do hope that the President will personally read this heartfelt missive.

Letter to President Barack H. Obama

23 May 2009

Dear Mr President,

I want to thank you for your single-handed destruction of our country with your government-only solutions to everything.

Thank you for apologizing to the rest of the world for our behavior. After all, we only spent over 200 years of OUR blood, sweat, tears, ingenuity, entrepreneurship, risk-taking, financial support and compassion, to make this the greatest country on earth and the world a freer and better place for all.

Thank you for agreeing that unwanted babies should die. At least they won't have to grow up in the country that you will have left them.

Thank you for spreading my hard-earned dollars to those who contribute little or nothing to society.

Thank you for installing a tax cheat as head of the Treasury, so that we can be lectured about foreign business tax loop-holes by a guy who didn't pay taxes on foreign earned income.

Thank you for pushing policies that discourage us hard-working people from striving for bigger and better things. Why should I work hard and make more money, when I'm only going to be demonized and burdened with higher taxes?

Thank you for believing in the man-made global warming hoax and limiting my freedom of choice in the kind of car I can drive, and the life I live.

Thank you for weakening our military and creating a more dangerous world for me and my family.

Thank you for not believing in the American citizen.

Thank you for conveying the message to all good, hard-working citizens, that no matter what you put into life, you'll get the same as everybody else. I can't think of anything that foils the American dream more than your policies.

I'm 47 years old and have done all the right things, I've had jobs since I was 12, I've completed 16 years of school, got married and had 3 incredible children. Now I feel like my family and I are getting a raw deal!

My success and happiness in life was not because I was handed everything and not because I waited for government to tell me how to live. My success and happiness came from parents who gave me the opportunity to sink or swim on my own, to pursue my self-interest, to fight for the life I had and the one I dreamed. They knew that if they handed me everything, I would never gain a sense of pride and independence. My parents believed that the best thing for my success was to get out of the way. I think you and your administration should consider adopting this philosophy.

Let me conclude by thanking you for being the parent that I'm glad I never had.

Sincerely,

CrashKC

Openness for Thee, but Not for Me

Obama gives a whole new definition to 'transparency.'

by Stephen F. Hayes, 1 June 2009 issue

... We have heard this tune before. On January 21, his second day in office, Obama released a memorandum on government transparency. It quoted Louis Brandeis on sunlight. It directed executive agencies to operate with a strong "presumption in favor of disclosure." It spoke of our "national commitment" to open government and proclaimed, "at the heart of that commitment is the idea that accountability is in the interest of the Government and the citizenry alike."

It has been four months. In that time, President Obama has made it clear that he believes in transparency only when it serves his own interest. His administration has used the Freedom of Information Act as a shield, and in important ways his agencies are operating under a strong presumption in favor of secrecy.

The result? The American public has not seen three batches of documents that would better allow us to "make informed judgments" and hold our elected officials accountable. The still-classified documents are deemed sensitive—not

because their release would compromise intelligence but because of their political implications...

Continue: <http://weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/543bhxeh.asp>

The UN Speaks. We Listen. Are We Nuts?

by Robert Fulford, 23 May 2009

...One of the wonders of the world is the reputation of the United Nations. There are many people in many countries who believe (or claim to believe) that it can be relied on for fairness, honesty and competence. Year after year it embarrasses itself through everything from deep bureaucratic corruption to utter failure in dealing with global crises like the genocide in Darfur. Yet somehow its opinions and "facts" still carry weight....

...The Human Rights Council, the worst symbol of the UN's degeneration, was established in 2006 to replace the widely discredited and derided Commission on Human Rights. But the new council's deliberations are a farce, just like the old commission's, and for the same reason: It pretends to promote human rights while it's dominated by states that routinely abuse the rights of their own citizens — China, Saudi Arabia and Cuba, to name three.

Despotism is no barrier to membership. States sitting on the Council are elected in regional blocs: 13 each from African and Asian groups, for instance, and seven from the West. With the Arab countries abundantly represented, it's not surprising that of the first 10 special meetings held to discuss alleged infractions of human rights, five focused on Israel. Hardly a word is said against China or Zimbabwe. Arab delegates complain about "exaggerated" reports of violence against women. A Nigerian representative told the council that "stoning under shariah law for unnatural sexual acts should not be equated with extrajudicial killings."...

More: <http://network.nationalpost.com/np/blogs/fullcomment/archive/2009/05/23/robert-fulford-the-un-speaks-and-the-world-listens-are-we-nuts.aspx>

Moonbats think Richard Cheney is Satan—or they *would* think that, if they believed in Satan.

What must they think of Lt. Col. Peters?

Instant Justice

Gitmo? No. Kill terrorist thugs on the spot.

by Ralph Peters, 26 May 2009

We made one great mistake regarding Guantanamo: No terrorist should have made it that far. All but a handful of those grotesquely romanticized prisoners should have been killed on the battlefield. The *few* kept alive for their intelligence value should have been interrogated secretly, then executed.

Terrorists don't *have* legal rights or human rights. By committing or abetting acts of terror against the innocent, they place themselves outside of humanity's borders. They must be hunted as man-killing animals. And, as a side benefit, dead terrorists don't pose legal quandaries.

Captured terrorists, on the other hand, are *always* a liability. Last week, President Obama revealed his utter failure to comprehend these butchers when he characterized Guantanamo as a terrorist recruiting tool.

Gitmo wasn't any such thing. Not the *real* Gitmo. The Guantanamo Obama believes in is a fiction of the global media. With rare, brief exceptions, Gitmo inmates have been treated far better than US citizens in our federal prisons.

But the reality of Gitmo was irrelevant—the left needed us to be evil, to "reveal" ourselves as the moral equivalent of the terrorists. So they made up their Gitmo myths. Now we're stuck with sub-human creatures who should be decomposing in unmarked graves in a distant desert. Before reality smacked him between the eyes, Obama made blithe campaign promises and quick-draw presidential pronouncements he's now unable to fulfill...

Read it all: http://www.nypost.com/seven/05262009/postopinion/opedcolumnists/instant_justice_171002.htm?page=0

Just another day in the outrageous administration of Barack Obama. He's named his first Supreme Court nominee, Judge Sonia Sotomayor. These two articles—from liberal publications—demonstrate why she is unqualified. The first shows that she is racially prejudiced: she has stated openly that Latina women are superior to white men. Incidentally, she ruled against the New Haven firefighters, too, even though they were clearly the victims of racial discrimination. The second piece reveals Sotomayor to be not only racist but also stupid.

Identity Politics And Sotomayor

by Stuart Taylor, 23 May 2009

"I would hope that a wise Latina woman with the richness of her experiences would more often than not reach a better conclusion [as a judge] than a white male who hasn't lived that life."—Judge Sonia Sotomayor, in her Judge Mario G. Olmos Law and Cultural Diversity Lecture at the University of California (Berkeley) School of Law in 2001...

...Imagine the reaction if someone had unearthed in 2005 a speech in which then-Judge Samuel Alito had asserted, for example: "I would hope that a white male with the richness of his traditional American values would reach a better conclusion than a Latina woman who hasn't lived that life"—and had proceeded to speak of "inherent physiological or cultural differences."...

More: http://www.nationaljournal.com/njmagazine/or_20090523_2724.php

The Case Against Sotomayor

by Jeffrey Rosen, 4 May 2009

...They expressed questions about her temperament, her judicial craftsmanship, and most of all, her ability to provide an intellectual counterweight to the conservative justices, as well as a clear liberal alternative... "not that smart and kind of a bully on the bench," as one former Second Circuit clerk for another judge put it. "She has an inflated opinion of herself, and is domineering during oral arguments, but her questions aren't penetrating and don't get to the heart of the issue"... Her opinions, although competent, are viewed by former prosecutors as not especially clean or tight, and sometimes miss the forest for the trees...

More: <http://www.tnr.com/politics/story.html?id=45d56e6f-f497-4b19-9c63-04e10199a085>

When will Barack Obama stop fudging it?

His reluctance to begin confronting difficult decisions is creating the impression that his administration is simply hoping for the best.

by Simon Heffer, 25 May 2009

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/simonheffer/5381374/When-will-Barack-Obama-stop-fudging-it.html>

Mr. Welch utterly eviscerates the "arguments" of the Governor and his tax-and-spend Democrat pals, and their no-good cronies in the public employee unions, and their apologists at the *L.A. Times*.

The California Scare Campaign

by Matt Welch, 24 May 2009

... Do you know how many 5,000 state jobs are? A whopping 2 percent of the state work force, maximum. If that's "annihilating," how on earth would you characterize a 3 percent cut? As genocide?...

...Here is the fundamental point behind every California budget story: The state has increased spending on K-12 education by 40 percent under Schwarzenegger (it has to; by dumb law, 40 cents on every state dollar has to go to education). THE main drain on the California economy is that these massive increases in spending are producing ZERO noticeable improvements. Because the union-run school districts are infamous laboratories for inefficiency, job protection, and corruption, the state spends and spends, with nothing to show for it. Teachers' unions are literally running out of other people's money, and *now* they warn us about "sub-par schools"?...

Much, much more: <http://www.reason.com/blog/show/133683.html>

An object lesson for California's "Republican" governor and Democrat legislators.

A Governor and His Veto Pen

Minnesota's illuminating budget brawl.

by Kimberley A. Strassel, 22 May 2009

...Throughout this spectacle, Mr. Pawlenty kept voicing three simple principles. "Number one, we must have [because of the constitution] and should have a balanced budget," he told me. "Number two, the state government needs to live within its means, just like everybody else. Number three, we shouldn't raise taxes in the worst recession in 60 years." Minnesota already has one of the highest tax burdens in the nation.

The DFL wasn't listening. As the clock wound down (the session ended at midnight this past Monday), the legislature sent Mr. Pawlenty one large spending bill after another. The assumption was he'd veto them, be forced to call a special session, and then be negotiated into tax hikes. That's when the governor got Minnesota nice.

Upon receiving the last spending bill, he announced that he would exercise the power of "unallotment," which has been on the books since 1939 and which has been used four times. Under it, the governor is allowed to "unallot" (take away) any state spending for which there is no money to pay. Panicked, the DFL passed tax legislation to cover its blowout spending bills, 10 minutes before the session's end. Too late. The governor said he'd veto the bill and would not be calling back the legislature to do any more mischief.

Mr. Pawlenty is now free to strip \$2.7 billion from state spending to balance the budget. Tax hikes are dead. He tells me this will be one of the first times in modern Minnesota history that the state will reduce the size of government in real terms, not just slow its rate of growth. "The correlation in recent history has been between job growth and states that have reasonable government cost structures," he says. These cuts, he says, will position Minnesota to take advantage of the recovery when it comes...

Read the rest: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124295250785545573.html>

A Closer Look at Climate Change

by Mark W. Hendrickson, 25 May 2009

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is widely regarded in the media as the ultimate authority on climate change. Created by two divisions of the United Nations, and recipient of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize, its pronouncements are received as if they come down from Mount Olympus or Mount Sinai. The common presumption is that the IPCC has assembled the best scientific knowledge. Let's take a closer look at this organization to see whether it merits such uncritical deference.

The IPCC's Feb. 2007 report stated: It is "very likely" that human activity is causing global warming. Why then, just two months later, did the Vice Chair of the IPCC, Yuri Izrael, write, "the panic over global warming is totally unjustified;" "there is no serious threat to the climate;" and humanity is "hypothetically...more threatened by cold than by global warming?"

IPCC press releases have warned about increased concentrations of greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere, yet Dr. Vincent Gray, a member of the IPCC's expert reviewers' panel asserts, "There is no relationship between warming and [the] level of gases in the atmosphere."

A 2001 IPCC report presented 245 potential scenarios. The media publicity that followed focused on the most extreme scenario, prompting the report's lead author, atmospheric scientist Dr. John Christy, to rebuke media sensationalism and affirm, "The world is in much better shape than this doomsday scenario paints...the worst-case scenario [is] not going to happen."

Clearly, the IPCC does not speak as one voice when leading scientists on its panel contradict its official position...

Read on: <http://townhall.com/Common/PrintPage.aspx?g=fd2c09c6-a3f7-46c5-bc8f-ddc5016b93af&t=c>

Obama's Numbers Don't Add Up

by Donald Lambro, 25 May 2009

Not long after President Obama was sworn into office, he faced a monstrous \$1.8 trillion budget deficit that analysts said would force him to sharply curtail his big-spending agenda. But Mr. Obama saw the economic recession he inherited as another Great Depression (which it's not) that demands enactment of a long list of new social programs, the costs of which will drive total federal spending to more than \$3.7 trillion in 2010 and add more than \$9 trillion to total government debts over the coming decade.

Deficits or no deficits, debts or no debts, Mr. Obama sees no reason to cut back on his ambitious agenda despite the news that an additional tsunami debt wave is about to come crashing down on his presidency. The Social Security trustees announced this month that the program will begin running out of money in just seven years, and the Medicare trustees said Medicare's Part A hospital fund will be insolvent one year later.

Saving these programs from financial collapse would be a major task in and of itself. Mr. Obama, however, wants to do it all—including bail out the economy; create a government health care system; pour billions more into education, including a new college-tuition program; and end the nation's reliance on fossil fuels. And that's just for starters.

However, analysts, including Democrats, have begun asking whether his wish list involves more spending than a debt-ridden, weakened economy can handle without falling deeper into a financial hole...

Continue: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/may/25/obamas-ambitious-agenda/>



It's Memorial Day Weekend. Now, what is it we're supposed to remember?

Mansions of the Lord

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_WDrbtaO0E

America's Honor

The stories behind Memorial Day.

by Peter Collier, 28 May 2007

<http://www.opinionjournal.com/extra/?id=110010133>

Making cars the feds think we should want

Higher mileage standards mean higher prices and traffic deaths, negligible environmental gains.

Orange County Register editorial, 22 May 2009

...Then there's the safety factor. The most obvious way to increase gasoline mileage is to make cars smaller and lighter. Smaller and lighter cars are more dangerous in accidents than larger, heavier vehicles. When the first government-mandated fuel-economy standards went into effect in the 1970s, cars got smaller and lighter, and traffic fatalities increased. The National Research Council estimated that the CAFE standards contributed to about 2,000 additional deaths per year. If these tighter standards lead to a similar increase in traffic deaths, that could mean more Americans killed each year due to President Obama's new CAFÉ standards than have been killed during the Iraq war...

Read the rest: <http://www.ocregister.com/articles/cars-standards-new-2423838-cafe-government>

An Overleveraged Presidency

Barack Obama's risky initiatives.

by Fred Barnes, 23 May 2009 (June 1 issue)

...The difficulty is that some of his policies are likely to hinder others. Tax hikes, increased energy costs, and new regulations work against the economic recovery that soaring spending and peacetime deficits at historic highs are supposed (by Obama at least) to spur. A more likely result: stagflation, a simultaneous surge in inflation and interest rates...

...Obama has set "energy independence" as a goal. But his policies make that goal harder to achieve. His administration has refused to open new areas in the United States and offshore for oil exploration and production. It favors lavish subsidies for renewable energy (wind, solar) that will do little in the foreseeable future to make up for the shortfall in domestic production of gasoline. As the demand for gasoline increases, as it almost certainly will, there will be only one place to turn: foreign oil.

His takeover of the Big 2 in Detroit, General Motors and Chrysler, poses another risk: downright failure. The auto

companies are a money pit, requiring tens of billions in federal subsidies just to stay alive. The public opposes the continued bailout of the auto companies, but Obama is stuck with it. And the chance that either company will soon return to profitability is slim.

Taken together, Obama's policies on energy, health care, and financial institutions are risky for still another reason. They require more government control of the economy, which leads inevitably to a less dynamic and innovative economy and to less growth...

More: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/541ixtmi.asp?pg=1>

Statism the Only Thing Being Stimulated

We're spending trillions we don't have to create government programs to spend even more trillions we don't have.

by Mark Steyn, 22 May 2009

...The critical stimulus-promotion industry, stimulus-coordination industry and stimulus-supplementary-funding industry are growing at an unprecedented rate...I don't want to give the impression that every job funded by the stimulus is a job coordinating the public awareness of programs for grant applications to coordinate the funding of public awareness coordination programs funded by the stimulus...

...SEVCA serves two rural counties with a combined total of a little over 40,000 households. If you wanted to stimulate the economy, you'd take every dime allocated to Windsor and Windham counties under ARRA and divide it between those households. But, if you want to stimulate bureaucracy, dependency and the metastasization of approved quasi-governmental interest-group monopolies as the defining features of American life, then ARRA is the way to go. Oh, you scoff: ARRA, go on, you're only joking. I wish I were. We're spending trillions we don't have to create government programs to coordinate the application for funds to create more programs to spend even more trillions we don't have...

Complete column: <http://www.ocreger.com/articles/job-program-stimulus-2425198-arra-readiness>

Peter Robinson, who collaborated with Ronald Reagan on the "Tear Down This Wall" speech and several others, had a recent **column** about Clifford Asness, a businessman brave enough to speak out against Obama's dictatorial policies. This is the essay that Mr. Asness circulated to friends and investors earlier this month.

Unafraid In Greenwich Connecticut

by Clifford S. Asness, 5 May 2009

...The President's attempted diktat takes money from bondholders and gives it to a labor union that delivers money and votes for him. Why is he not calling on his party to "sacrifice" some campaign contributions, and votes, for the greater good? Shaking down lenders for the benefit of political donors is recycled corruption and abuse of power.

Let's also mention only in passing the irony of this same President begging hedge funds to borrow more to purchase other troubled securities. That he expects them to do so when he has already shown what happens if they ask for their money to be repaid fairly would be amusing if not so dangerous. That hedge funds might not participate in these programs because of fear of getting sucked into some toxic demagoguery that ends in arbitrary punishment for trying to work with the Treasury is distressing. Some useful programs, like those designed to help finance consumer loans, won't work because of this irresponsible hectoring.

Last but not least, the President screaming that the hedge funds are looking for an unjustified taxpayer-funded bailout is the big lie writ large. Find me a hedge fund that has been bailed out. Find me a hedge fund, even a failed one, that has asked for one. In fact, it was only because hedge funds have not taken government funds that they could stand up to this bullying. The TARP recipients had no choice but to go along. The hedge funds were singled out only because they are unpopular, not because they behaved any differently from any other ethical manager of other people's money. The President's comments here are backwards and libelous. Yet, somehow I don't think the hedge funds will be following ACORN's lead and trucking in a bunch of paid professional protesters soon. Hedge funds really need a community organizer...

More: http://www.stumblingontruth.com/articles/Unafraid_In_Greenwich_Connecticut.pdf

Allow me to introduce the next President of the United States...

Butler University Commencement

Remarks by Governor Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.

Hinkle Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, 9 May 2009

... We Boomers were the children that the Second World War was fought for. Parents who had endured both war and the Great Depression devoted themselves sacrificially to ensuring us a better life than they had. We were pampered in ways no children in human history would recognize. With minor exceptions, we have lived in blissfully fortunate times. The numbers of us who perished in plagues, in famine, or in combat were tiny in comparison to previous generations of Americans, to say nothing of humanity elsewhere...

...As a generation, we did tend to live for today. We have spent more and saved less than any previous Americans. Year after year, regardless which party we picked to lead the country, we ran up deficits that have multiplied the debt you and your children will be paying off your entire working lives. Far more burdensome to you mathematically, we voted ourselves increasing levels of Social Security pensions and Medicare health care benefits, but never summoned the political maturity to put those programs on anything resembling a sound actuarial footing.

In sum, our parents scrimped and saved to provide us a better living standard than theirs; we borrowed and splurged and will leave you a staggering pile of bills to pay. It's been a blast; good luck cleaning up after us...

...What I mean to suggest is that you take into the world the values written on the locker room wall at Hinkle, which are not much at all like those associated with the Baby Boom. That you live for others, not just yourselves. For fulfillment, not just pleasure and material gain. For tomorrow, and the Americans who will reside there, not just for today. That song I mentioned ends with the refrain, "And don't worry 'bout tomorrow, hey, hey, hey." When it comes on oldies radio, please, tune it out. Do worry 'bout tomorrow, in a way your elders often failed to do.

And please, just to revise another current practice, *be judgmental*. Whatever they claim, people always are, anyway—consider the healthy stigmatization of racist comments or sexist attitudes or cigarette smoking...

...Honesty about shortcomings is not handwringing. Again, this is a blessed land, in every way. Amidst the worst recession in a long time, we still are wealthier than any society in history. We are safer, from injury, disease, and each other than any humans that ever lived. Best of all, we are free...

Full text: http://www.in.gov/portal/news_events/38894.htm

Video/part 1: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsMUXcy_-Os

Video/part 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXvVZTEi30w&NR=1>

Just a couple of short excerpts provide all you need to know about Obama's nefarious plans.

The Obamacare to Come

Dems' health-care plans do not provide the reform most Americans seek.

by Michael Tanner, 21 May 2009

Drip by painful drip, the details of the Democratic health-care-reform plan have been leaking out. And from what we can see so far, it looks like bad news for American taxpayers, health-care providers, and, most important, patients...

...This means the oft-repeated promise that "if you are happy with your current insurance, you can keep it" is untrue. Millions of Americans who are currently satisfied with their coverage will have to give it up and purchase the insurance the government wants them to have, even if the new insurance is more expensive or covers benefits the buyer does not want...

...President Obama himself has said that if he were designing a health-care system from scratch, his preference would be a single-payer system "managed like Canada's." He has also said that, while his proposal is a less radical approach, "it may be that we end up transitioning to such a system."...

More: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=MzkwMmM4ZGU2MzljYjQzYTdiNzJhN2QyZTIOTI2M2I=>

Obama and the 'Real' Catholics

The president inserts himself into a religious debate.

by George Weigel, 18 May 2009

...The late archbishop of Chicago was best known publicly for his advocacy of a "consistent ethic of life," in which the abortion issue was linked to the abolition of capital punishment and nuclear arms control. And whatever Bernardin's intentions in formulating what came to be known popularly as the "seamless garment" approach to public policy, the net effect of the consistent ethic of life was to validate politically the intellectual mischief of Mario Cuomo's notorious 1984 Notre Dame speech and to give two generations of Catholic politicians a virtual pass on the abortion question by allowing them to argue that, hey, I'm batting .667 on the consistent ethic of life.

The U.S. bishops abandoned the "seamless garment" metaphor in 1998, substituting the image of the "foundations of the house of freedom" to explain the priority to be given the life issues in the Church's address to public policy — and in

the consciences of Catholic politicians. The foundations of the house of freedom, the bishops argued, are the moral truths about the human person that we can know by reason. Those truths are embodied in law in what we call civil rights. Thus, the life issues are the great civil-rights issues of the moment...

...So the "seamless garment" went underground for a decade, only to be dusted off by Douglas Kmiec and others in the 2008 campaign; there, a variant form of the consistent ethic was used to argue that Barack Obama was the real pro-life candidate on offer. As casuistry, this was risible. But it worked well enough that Catholic Obama-supporters on the Notre Dame board saw their chances and took 'em, arranging for the president to come to Notre Dame to complete the seamless garment's dust-off and give it a new lease on life...

...The president of the United States decided that he would define what it means to be a real Catholic in 21st-century America...He, President Obama, would settle the decades-long intra-Catholic culture war in favor of one faction — the faction that had supported his candidacy and that had spent the first months of his administration defending his policies...Rather like Napoleon taking the diadem out of the hands of Pope Pius VII and crowning himself emperor, President Obama has, wittingly or not, declared himself the Primate of American Catholicism...

More: <http://article.nationalreview.com/print/?q=YzNhZDI1MDAyMjcwNTFhMDM3NDZkOGQ5ZWZhOGUzNWl=>

The speech was a gem from start to finish. This excerpt is only one of several outstanding passages.

The United States Has Never Lost Its Moral Bearings

speech by Richard B. Cheney, 21 May 2009 at American Enterprise Institute, Washington D.C.

...Maybe you've heard that when we captured KSM, he said he would talk as soon as he got to New York City and saw his lawyer. But like many critics of interrogations, he clearly misunderstood the business at hand. American personnel were not there to commence an elaborate legal proceeding, but to extract information from him before al-Qaeda could strike again and kill more of our people.

In public discussion of these matters, there has been a strange and sometimes willful attempt to conflate what happened at Abu Ghraib prison with the top secret program of enhanced interrogations. At Abu Ghraib, a few sadistic prison guards abused inmates in violation of American law, military regulations, and simple decency. For the harm they did, to Iraqi prisoners and to America's cause, they deserved and received Army justice. And it takes a deeply unfair cast of mind to equate the disgraces of Abu Ghraib with the lawful, skillful, and entirely honorable work of CIA personnel trained to deal with a few malevolent men.

Even before the interrogation program began, and throughout its operation, it was closely reviewed to ensure that every method used was in full compliance with the Constitution, statutes, and treaty obligations. On numerous occasions, leading members of Congress, including the current speaker of the House, were briefed on the program and on the methods.

Yet for all these exacting efforts to do a hard and necessary job and to do it right, we hear from some quarters nothing but feigned outrage based on a false narrative. In my long experience in Washington, few matters have inspired so much contrived indignation and phony moralizing as the interrogation methods applied to a few captured terrorists.

I might add that people who consistently distort the truth in this way are in no position to lecture anyone about "values." Intelligence officers of the United States were not trying to rough up some terrorists simply to avenge the dead of 9/11. We know the difference in this country between justice and vengeance. Intelligence officers were not trying to get terrorists to confess to past killings; they were trying to prevent future killings. From the beginning of the program, there was only one focused and all-important purpose. We sought, and we in fact obtained, specific information on terrorist plans...

The full speech: <http://www.aei.org/speech/100050>

Bush's Gitmo Vindication

Wall Street Journal, 22 May 2009

...Yet for all of his attacks on the Bush Administration, which he accused of making "decisions based upon fear rather than foresight," Mr. Obama stuck with his predecessor's support for military commissions, adding some procedural bells and whistles as political cover to justify his past opposition. For the record: Both the left and right, from the ACLU to Dick Cheney, now agree that the President has all but embraced the Bush policy.

Mr. Obama also pledged to release at least 50 detainees to other countries—about one-tenth the number released under President Bush—and added that the Administration was in "ongoing discussions" to transfer them. Good luck with that: The Europeans who were so robustly against Gitmo in the Bush years have suddenly discovered its detainees are dangerous. Meanwhile, the countries that might take them, such as Yemen, can't be trusted to prevent them from returning

to the battlefield, where they can kill Americans again...

...Mr. Obama's most remarkable Gitmo sleight-of-hand was on the matter of how to handle the hard cases, those who Mr. Obama said "cannot be prosecuted yet who pose a clear danger to the American people." After acknowledging this was "the toughest issue we will face" and pledging that he would not "release individuals who endanger the American people," the President proposed...well, he didn't really say what he'd do, except that whatever it is must be "defensible and lawful."...

More: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124294739252745239.html>

Peace isn't Arab goal

by Jeff Jacoby, 20 May 2009

...The consensus, it would seem, is overwhelming. As Henri Guaino, a senior adviser to French President Nicolas Sarkozy, put it on Sunday: "Everyone wants peace. **The whole world wants a Palestinian state.**"

It isn't going to happen.

International consensus or no, the two-state solution is a chimera. Peace will not be achieved by granting sovereignty to the Palestinians, because Palestinian sovereignty has never been the Arabs' goal. Time and time again, a two-state solution has been proposed. Time and time again, the Arabs have turned it down.

In 1936, when Palestine was still under British rule, a **royal commission** headed by Lord Peel was sent to investigate the steadily worsening Arab violence. After a detailed inquiry, the Peel Commission **concluded** that "an irrepressible conflict has arisen between two national communities within the narrow bounds of one small country." It recommended a two-state solution—a partition of the land into separate Arab and Jewish states. "**Partition offers a chance of ultimate peace,**" the commission reported. "No other plan does."

But the Arab leaders, more intent on preventing Jewish sovereignty in Palestine than in achieving a state for themselves, rejected the Peel plan out of hand. The foremost Palestinian leader, Haj Amin al-Husseini, actively supported the Nazi regime in Germany. In return, **Husseini wrote in his memoirs**, Hitler promised him "a free hand to eradicate every last Jew from Palestine and the Arab world."...

More: http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/05/20/peace_isnt_arab_goal/

Obama at the Auto Buffet

With no resistance, he ate the whole thing.

by Holman W. Jenkins Jr., 21 May 2009

...So far, the Obama administration has yet to lay out its magical thinking on how the homegrown auto makers are to become "viable" when required to subordinate every auto attribute that consumers find desirable in favor of achieving a passenger-car average of 39 miles per gallon by 2016. Nonetheless the answer has quietly seeped out: Taxpayers will write \$5,000 or \$7,000 rebate checks to other taxpayers to bribe them to buy hybrids and plug-ins at a price that lets Detroit claim it's earning a "profit" on its Obamamobiles.

Mr. Obama was supposed to be smart. His administration was supposed to be a smart administration. But the policy coming out has not been smart. It has been a brute shifting of power to the president's political allies, justified by the shibboleths of copybook liberalism (though Mr. Obama is clever enough to know that nothing he's done will have a meaningful effect on atmospheric carbon or climate change or the country's need for oil imports)...

Full column: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124277581459836917.html>

Car Crazy

Bankrupt companies making 39 mpg autos. Are we nuts?

Wall Street Journal editorial, 21 May 2009

...All that's left to arrive at the President's new destination for the American way of driving are huge, unanswered questions about technology, financing and the marketability of cars that will be small and expensive.

Start with technology. The President's proposed standards would raise fuel economy goals higher and faster than even the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration believes is practical. Last year, NHTSA issued a proposed rule making that would have raised fuel economy to 32.2 mpg by 2015 for cars and light trucks combined. Its 376-page report notes that "the resources used to meet overly stringent CAFE standards . . . would better be allocated to other uses

such as technology research and development, or improvements in vehicle safety."...

... We wish these folks luck "working together" with the Obama auto-design team. One thing seems certain by 2016: Taxpayers will be paying Detroit to make the cars Americans don't want, and then they will pay again either through (trust us) a gas tax or with a purchase subsidy. Even the French must think we're nuts.

Read the rest: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124277482650736747.html>

How Washington Rations

ObamaCare omen: a case study in 'cost-control.'

Wall Street Journal, 19 May 2009

... Medicare is already the country's largest purchaser of health care. Private carriers generally adopt its rates and policies, and the virtual colonoscopy decision may run this technology out of the marketplace. Now multiply that by the new "public option" that Democrats favor, which would transfer millions of patients to a new insurance program managed by the federal government. Washington's utilitarian judgments about costs would reshape the practice of medicine.

Initially, the open-ended style of American care will barely be touched, if only for political self-preservation. Health planners will adjust at the margins, as with virtual colonoscopy. But scarcity forces choices. As the Medicare trustees note in their report, the tax increases necessary to fund merely the current benefit schedule for the elderly would cripple the economy. The far more expensive public option will not turn into a pumpkin when cost savings do not materialize. At that point, government will clamp down with price controls in the form of lines and rock-bottom reimbursement rates...

More: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124268737705832167.html>

I'm Pro-Life Because I Recycle!

by David French, 20 May 2009

... Does she have a shred of evidence to support these claims? Does she know anything at all about the individual protesters? Some variation of this leftist talking point has been repeated so often that even pro-lifers internalize the critique, wringing their hands and exclaiming, "Yes, yes, we need to love the living more." But what about the evidence? Has it ever been the case that pro-life Christians care more about the unborn than the born?

Of course not. In fact, religious conservatives are among the **most generous** — if not the most generous — Americans when it comes to giving their money or their time. And are they giving all that money to pro-life causes? Hardly. I work at perhaps the **largest pro-life religious conservative legal organization** in the world, but our budget is less than 3 percent of that of one of the **largest Christian relief organizations**. It has *never* been the case that pro-life Christians only care for unborn children. To say otherwise is slander...

... Ahh yes, you're against abortion, but it's just as important to fight illiteracy, oppose waterboarding, increase the minimum wage, recycle, and compost your garbage. This is precisely how the religious Left loses its moral voice; when everything is a life issue, the very act of abortion itself recedes into the background. There is no sense of priority, no understanding that perhaps you can't learn to read and choose paper over plastic if you're not alive...

More: <http://phibetacons.nationalreview.com/post/?q=OWRIODE2ZTNIYzExMTRkOGZhMGQ2NWE5MjhhMTIxNjQ=>

A Little Battle for Notre Dame

President Obama and the soul of a Catholic University.

by David Freddoso, 18 May 2009

... Several professors, including priests of Notre Dame's Holy Cross order, became active in promoting and arguing for the students' cause. "This is not an academic-freedom matter," said Rev. William Miscamble, a professor of history. "If President Obama wanted to come to Notre Dame and engage in a genuine exchange on life questions, that would be all to the good. But of course, that's not the event we're going to experience at commencement. He's coming to this privileged forum, he's going to receive an honorary doctorate of laws. And by this action, Notre Dame is saying that we don't really think that these questions — such as abortion, such as the stem-cell issue — matter that much."...

... The steadfast objections by all of these university stakeholders gave the lie to any idea that this controversy was merely an obsession of outside agitators carrying pictures of aborted fetuses. ND Response members, although relatively small in number, had a loud voice and public support from senior university officials and tenured faculty, and dozens of bishops repeated their message. As Bishop D'Arcy put it on Saturday night, a good number of people associated with Notre

Dame see the same problem he does with Obama's appearance. "If there's a rift, it's more between the administration and the Church, not between Notre Dame and the Church," D'Arcy said, pointing to those who had come to pray. "You see Holy Cross priests here. You see lay people who are faculty members. You see students."...

More: <http://article.nationalreview.com/print/?q=MDJhNTE3N2YxMTdjNmIwYmVIMWE5ZDhmM2QwMTI0OGI=>

A wonderful and accurate explanation of why Obama is so shallow, cynical, and intellectually bankrupt. Many of those he duped last year have come to view his presidential style with growing horror. But for those of us who recognized his character from the start, it confirms and amplifies what we knew all along. As Mr. Geraghty says, it's all about **POWER**.

The Alinsky Administration

Today, reading *Rules for Radicals* is illuminating and worrisome.

by Jim Geraghty, 14 May 2009

...As conservatives size up their new foe, they ought to remember: It's not about liberalism. It's about power. Obama will jettison anything that costs him power, and do anything that enhances it — including invite Rick Warren to give the benediction at his inauguration, dine with conservative columnists, and dismiss an appointee at the White House Military Office to ensure the perception of accountability.

Alinsky's influence goes well beyond Obama, obviously. There are many wonderful Democrats in this world, but evidence suggests that rising in that party's political hierarchy requires some adoption of a variation of the Alinsky philosophy: Power comes first. Few Democrats are expressing outrage over Nancy Pelosi's ever-shifting explanation of what she knew about waterboarding. Those who screamed bloody murder about Jack Abramoff's crimes avert their eyes from John Murtha. The anti-war movement that opposed the surge in Iraq remains silent about sending additional troops to Afghanistan. Obama will never get as much grief for his gay-marriage views as Miss California.

It's not about the policies or the politics, and it's certainly not about the principles. It's about power, and it has been for a long time.

Full article: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=MTY5ZTA5NmEwMGY4MTFhNDg2ZDg4NjU2MDkxOGYyYTE=>

(Hat tip: Dick Link)

The Future of Iraq, Part I

by Michael Totten, 12 May 2009

During my last trip to Baghdad I tried to figure out if the worst in Iraq is over or if the dramatic reduction in violence is just a long lull. Half the Iraqis and half the Americans I spoke to were optimistic. The other half think Iraq is probably doomed. I have no idea who's right, and neither does anyone else. This is the first in a four-part series where I'll present both cases and let you decide what to think for yourself. We'll start with the good news...

Read it all. Lots of photos, too. Sure looks different from a couple of years ago:

<http://www.michaeltotten.com/archives/2009/05/the-future-of-i.php>

Mr. Totten is one of the top 3 or 4 war correspondents in the world. But he's funded entirely by appreciative readers like you and me. As he says at the end: "You tip waiters in restaurants, right? I can't go all the way to Iraq and write these dispatches for free. Travel in the Middle East is expensive, and I have to pay my own way. If you haven't donated in the past, please consider contributing now."

So don't be a freeloader. Give him some dough.

—Don John

The opening line of the Joe Klein entry in this website's "Leftists and Other Lunatics" page reads: *Time* magazine's pompous epitome of self-congratulatory MSM hauteur. But even by that standard, he's outdone himself this time.

A Small Man

by John Podhoretz, 20 May 2009

...Is it conceivable that Joe Klein is saying a man in a wheelchair is incapable of understanding the nuances of Iraq and the war on terror because he can't get on a plane and go there like Joe Klein can? Is it possible, in this day and age, for someone seriously to argue such a thing? We cannot go back in time and visit the battlefields of the Civil War, or

Agincourt, or the Peloponneses—are we therefore incapable of seeing their nuances? FDR was in a wheelchair and did not visit the battlefields of World War II—were its nuances beyond him as well?

The self-infatuation this quote reveals about Klein's own celebration of his own passport stamps—the words of a lesser author and thinker about one who so surpasses him in clarity and insight that a wiser Klein would have been better off just admitting that he can't hold a candle to Krauthammer and let it go at that—is striking enough. But let's face it. This is simply disgusting, no matter how you slice it. Perhaps men and women in wheelchairs, or who are blind, or deaf, or have other infirmities that make their ability to get on a plane and go to Iraq should simply forbear any sort of opinion about such things. They should, instead, be left to Joe Klein...

The rest: <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/blogs/index.php/jpodhoretz/66662>

California is Liberalism's "Canary in the Coal Mine"

by Carol Platt Liebau, 19 May 2009

...California is in desperate fiscal straits because it has become a place where government works for only two constituencies: Those who need public assistance, and unions. Sacramento is so busy responding to the needs of the one and the demands of the other that the legitimate expectations of regular, taxpaying citizens have been completely ignored...

...If one is an illegal alien or in need of public aid, California works well, offering a panoply of health and other welfare services with few questions asked. Just last week, in fact, Democrats in the state legislature opposed requiring welfare recipients who failed to complete a drug treatment program to take random drug tests in order to continue receiving benefits. And California spends in excess of \$5 billion per year on illegal immigrants and their families, offering a menu of health care services that includes non-emergency care, long-term nursing home care, and abortions.

To pay for all of this, California has the highest top personal income tax rate and the highest sales tax rate in the country. Corporate taxes are high, too. And yet regular taxpayers have little to show for the exorbitant sums extracted from them by state government.

How times change. Forty years ago [**when Ronald Reagan was governor**], California's roads and schools were the envy of the country. Now, of course, highways are jammed, and schools languish near the bottom of nationwide rankings. Hospitals are overcrowded, as are prisons. And contrary to the claims of those on the left, the problem isn't inadequate "investment," i.e., spending. Forty years ago, the state spent \$1240 for every man, woman and child in the state, in today's inflation-adjusted dollars. Now, it spends more than double that amount—\$3200 per person—even as ordinary citizens' quality of life has plummeted. No wonder voters are poised to reject the politicians' propositions, which would require another \$16 billion in tax increases!...

Read the rest: http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/05/19/we_can_learn_from_californias_debacle_96544.html

People who love freedom disagree—vehemently—with the set of economic notions that came to be known as Keynesianism. But like Stanley Fish (below), Lord Keynes was a smart and well-intentioned man with many good ideas. Sadly, he had a naïve belief that government could be counted upon to (a) know what's in the public interest and (b) do it.

The cultural contradictions of J. M. Keynes

On the insights & limitations of the influential economist.

by James Piereson, May 2009

5,000 very readable words: <http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/The-cultural-contradictions-of-J—M—Keynes-4074>

Stanley Fish is a renowned educator, and he has a lot of good ideas. He's also a certified leftist. One example: his **pathetic attempt** in April 2008 to minimize the evil of William Ayers and Bernadine Dohrn, and Barack Obama's connection with them. But back to the good stuff. He's had two recent columns presenting a strong defense of religion against the vanities of atheism. The **first** was chiefly an exegesis of the British critic Terry Eagleton's book *Reason, Faith and Revolution*. The second was in response to his readers' loud protests; it's no surprise that NYT readers are overwhelmingly atheist. He reports their objections, and then refutes them with blinding intellectual brilliance.

God Talk, Part 2

by Stanley Fish, 17 May 2009

<http://fish.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/05/17/god-talk-part-2/>

Soak the Rich, Lose the Rich

Americans know how to use the moving van to escape high taxes

by Arthur B. Laffer & Stephen Moore, 18 May 2009

...Over the period 2002-2005, in each of these states the "soak the rich" tax hike was followed by a significant reduction in the number of rich people paying taxes in these states relative to the national average. Amazingly, these three states ranked 46th, 49th and 50th among all states in the percentage increase in wealthy tax filers in the years after they tried to soak the rich. This result was all the more remarkable given that these were years when the stock market boomed and Wall Street gains were in the trillions of dollars...

We believe there are three unintended consequences from states raising tax rates on the rich. First, some rich residents sell their homes and leave the state; second, those who stay in the state report less taxable income on their tax returns; and third, some rich people choose not to locate in a high-tax state. Since many rich people also tend to be successful business owners, jobs leave with them or they never arrive in the first place. This is why high income-tax states have such a tough time creating net new jobs for low-income residents and college graduates.

Those who disapprove of tax competition complain that lower state taxes only create a zero-sum competition where states "race to the bottom" and cut services to the poor as taxes fall to zero. They say that tax cutting inevitably means lower quality schools and police protection as lower tax rates mean starvation of public services.

They're wrong, and New Hampshire is our favorite illustration. The Live Free or Die State has no income or sales tax, yet it has high-quality schools and excellent public services. Students in New Hampshire public schools achieve the fourth-highest test scores in the nation—even though the state spends about \$1,000 a year less per resident on state and local government than the average state and, incredibly, \$5,000 less per person than New York. And on the other side of the ledger, California in 2007 had the highest-paid classroom teachers in the nation, and yet the Golden State had the second-lowest test scores...

Read the whole thing: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124260067214828295.html>

Cheney might be unpopular, but he's winning the debate

by Stephen F. Hayes, 18 May 2009 (May 25 issue)

...Equally important is that the views of the American public on national security are much closer to Cheney's than Maureen Dowd's. Democrats have made the assumption that because Cheney is personally unpopular, the policies he has advocated are, too. Obama did not become president because voters supported his positions on national security and the war on terror. They don't.

In a widely overlooked Pew poll on "torture" released late last month, respondents were asked: "Do you think the use of torture against suspected terrorists in order to gain important information can often be justified, sometimes be justified, rarely be justified, or never be justified?" (Cheney would no doubt object to the wording of the question, insisting that the policies used by the Bush administration were not "torture.") If Cheney is batty because of his views on interrogation, what must Maureen Dowd think of the American public?

A stunning 71 percent of those surveyed said that the use of torture could be justified—with 15 percent saying it is "often" justified, 34 percent saying it is "sometimes" justified, and 22 percent saying it is "rarely" justified. Independents fall decisively in what most journalists might characterize as the "pro-torture" camp. More than three-quarters of independents—77 percent—said that torture could be justified: with 19 percent saying it is "often" justified, 35 percent saying it is "sometimes" justified, and 23 percent saying it is "rarely" justified. The phrasing of the question also likely resulted in underreporting the support for what Cheney calls "enhanced interrogation," since some of the respondents might be hesitant to admit to a random telephone caller that they favor "torture."...

The rest: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/512pqdzy.asp?pg=1>

The answer to the burning question in everyone's mind: How can Nancy Pelosi stand there and tell the most obvious and convoluted lies, and expect people to believe them?

Why Liberals Never Lie

by Kevin McCullough, 17 May 2009

...Like the definition of "is," liberals don't know things objectively, rather only what they are told, what they choose to believe, and what they intended for things to mean. Actual substance, definitions of words, indisputable facts are all

things that can be explained away, understood to be something, anything other than what they actually are.

It actually stems from a very sad reality for them all, a lack of belief in absolute truth. If nothing can be seen, understood, or intended to be absolutely true—than nothing is true, everything is subjective, and the only person who gets to decide what is what is the person speaking at the moment.

This is how liberals operate. Abortion is not taking the life of an innocent human being. Adultery is not engaging in oral sex with someone who is not your spouse. Marriage is not the sanctified union of a man and woman. Tax cuts can be given to people who do not pay taxes. Water-boarding is torture though it leaves no scars nor permanent damage. Nationalizing the banks, car companies, and mortgage industries is not socialism. Increasing gun control is not taking away second amendment rights of citizens. Closing Gitmo doesn't mean shutting it down. And for this president especially, letting born children starve to death in soiled hospital utility closets is just allowing a woman the right to choose.

Nancy rose through the ranks under the President that did this the best. He even wagged his finger at the American people, looked them straight in the eye and told whoppers. But when liberals do it, it's not lying...

Read the whole thing: <http://townhall.com/Common/PrintPage.aspx?g=6af434b3-9e6e-4bfc-b688-57a4c8f8999c&t=c>

Support Our Troops

They're still fighting for us.

Soldiers' Angels

Marine Defense Fund

Wounded Warrior Project

Fisher House: help military families

America Supports You

Don't miss these superb essays:

Live Free or Die by Mark Steyn

Demographics & Depression by David P. Goldman

Bound to Burn by Peter W. Huber

And here's what a trillion dollars looks like.

Critics Still Haven't Read the 'Torture' Memos

The CIA proposed the methods. The Justice Department gave its advice.

by Victoria Toensing, 16 May 2009

...The European Court of Human Rights in the case of *Ireland v. United Kingdom* (1978) specifically found that wall standing (to produce muscle fatigue), hooding, and sleep and food deprivation were not torture.

The U.N. treaty defined torture as "severe pain and suffering." The Justice Department witness for the Senate treaty hearings testified that "[t]orture is understood to be barbaric cruelty...the mere mention of which sends chills down one's spine." He gave examples of "the needle under the fingernail, the application of electrical shock to the genital area, the piercing of eyeballs..." Mental torture was an act "designed to damage and destroy the human personality."

The treaty had a specific provision stating that nothing, not even war, justifies torture. Congress removed that provision when drafting the 1994 law against torture, thereby permitting someone accused of violating the statute to invoke the long-established defense of necessity...

...But now, safe in ivory towers eight years removed from 9/11, critics demand criminalization of the techniques and the prosecution or disbarment of the lawyers who advised the CIA. Contrary to columnist Frank Rich's uninformed accusation in the New York Times that the lawyers "proposed using" the techniques, they did no such thing. They were asked to provide legal guidance on whether the CIA's proposed methods violated the law.

Then there is Washington Post columnist Eugene Robinson, who declared that "waterboarding will almost certainly be deemed illegal if put under judicial scrutiny," depending on which "of several possibly applicable legal standards" apply. Does he know the Senate rejected a bill in 2006 to make waterboarding illegal? That fact alone negates criminalization of the act...

Read the rest: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124243020964825531.html>

"Every measure which establishes legal charity on a permanent basis and gives to it an administrative form creates thereby a class unproductive and idle, living at the expense of the class which is industrious and given to work.."

—Alexis de Tocqueville, *Memoir on Pauperism*, 1835.

Socialism and Secularism Suck Vitality Out of Society

by Dennis Prager, 14 May 2009

...The issues that preoccupy most Europeans are overwhelmingly material ones: How many hours per week will I have to work? How much annual vacation time will I have? How many social benefits can I preserve (or increase)? How can my country avoid fighting against anyone or for anyone?

Why has this happened?

There are two reasons: secularism and socialism (a.k.a. the welfare state). Either one alone sucks much of the life out of society. Together they are likely to be lethal...

...Secularism drains all this out of life. No one made us. Death is the end. We are no more significant than any other creatures. We are all the results of mere coincidence. Make up your own meaning (existentialism) because life has none. Good and evil are merely euphemisms for "I like" and "I dislike." Thus, when religion dies in a country, creativity wanes...

...The state sucks out creativity and dynamism just as much as secularism does. Why do anything for yourself when the state will do it for you? Why take care of others when the state will do it for you? Why have ambition when the state is there to ensure that few or no individuals are rewarded more than others?

America has been the center of energy and creativity in almost every area of life because it has remained far more religious than any other industrialized Western democracy and because it has rejected the welfare state social model.

Which is why so many are so worried about President Barack Obama and the Democratic Party's desire to transform—in their apt wording—America into a secular welfare state. The greatest engine of moral, religious, economic, scientific, and industrial dynamism is being starved of its fuel. The bigger the state, the smaller its people.

Entire essay: <http://frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=34775>

Beware the 'Public Option'

by Sen. Jim DeMint, 15 May 2009

...Kennedy says the best way to guarantee universal access to quality care is "by giving Americans the option of enrolling in a public health-insurance plan, *where coverage is provided in the public interest*" (emphasis added).

There's only one problem: Health care isn't public; it's personal and private. It can't be provided in the public interest for the simple reason that no doctor has ever cared for "the public." Doctors care for patients. And health care, under any recognizable definition, can be provided only in the patient's interest. Any law that empowers government to provide individual coverage in the public interest implicitly empowers government to deny individual coverage for the same reason...

...The government is the *reason* that health-care costs are spiraling out of control. Government now covers 100 million Americans. Medicare dominates the market, stifles competition, and sets arbitrary and unfair pricing standards that force Americans with private health insurance to pay more and more of the costs. Yet the plan favored by President Obama and the Democrats purports to control health-care costs by doubling the size of government health-care programs...

...Government never competes in a private market; it takes the market over... The Lewin study estimated that of the 130 million Americans likely to enroll in the public option, 118 million will do so after losing their employer-sponsored plans. Add those 130 million to the 100 million now covered by Medicare, Medicaid, and other government programs, and we will have three-quarters of the American people dependent on the government for their medical care.

It is at this moment, in the very near and plausible future, that the tyranny of "coverage... provided in the public interest" will bare its teeth... Every country with government-run health care rations that care. Patients wait weeks to see a doctor, months to see a specialist, and years to have routine procedures — all while they suffer with chronic illness, acute pain, and even metastasizing cancer. Unlucky patients who die on these waiting lists may be mourned by their families, but not necessarily by the depersonalized system of bureaucrats that politicians create primarily to control costs...

Full column: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=M2JiZW5NDc0MGI4MjlmZjczYTI2NjgwYjNjZThiZDQ=>

Indiana Says 'No Thanks' to Cap and Trade

No honest person thinks this will make a dent in climate change

by Gov. Mitch Daniels, 15 May 2009

...Quite simply, it looks like imperialism. This bill would impose enormous taxes and restrictions on free commerce by wealthy but faltering powers—California, Massachusetts and New York—seeking to exploit politically weaker colonies

in order to prop up their own decaying economies. Because proceeds from their new taxes, levied mostly on us, will be spent on their social programs while negatively impacting our economy, we Hoosiers decline to submit meekly.

The Waxman-Markey legislation would more than double electricity bills in Indiana. Years of reform in taxation, regulation and infrastructure-building would be largely erased at a stroke. In recent years, Indiana has led the nation in capturing international investment, repatriating dollars spent on foreign goods or oil and employing Americans with them. Waxman-Markey seems designed to reverse that flow. "Closed: Gone to China" signs would cover Indiana's stores and factories.

Our state's share of national income has been slipping for decades, but it is offset in part by living costs some 8% lower than the national average. Doubled utility bills for low-income Hoosiers would be an especially cruel consequence of the Waxman bill. Forgive us for not being impressed at danglings of welfare-like repayments to some of those still employed, with some fraction of the dollars extracted from our state.

And for what? No honest estimate pretends to suggest that a U.S. cap-and-trade regime will move the world's thermometer by so much as a tenth of a degree a half century from now. My fellow citizens are being ordered to accept impoverishment for a policy that won't save a single polar bear.

We are told that although China, India and others show no signs of joining in this dismal process, we will eventually induce their participation by "setting an example." Watching the impending indigence of the Midwest, and the flow of jobs from our shores to theirs, our friends in Asia and the Third World are far more likely to choose any other path but ours...

Read the rest: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB12423484478222081.html>

Today, May 17, Notre Dame is going to bestow an honorary law degree on the pro-abortion Barack Obama. Millions of Catholics are appalled, including John D'Arcy (the bishop of South Bend) and Harvard Law professor Mary Ann Glendon. But most Catholic "educators," like John Jenkins of Notre Dame and Kenneth Himes of Boston College, haven't the foggiest notion that it's wrong to honor an abortionist. Yes, Obama is an abortionist. His policies allow U.S. taxpayers' dollars to enable abortions all over the world. He might as well be murdering the babies himself.

God and Obama at Notre Dame

The clash between Catholic culture and Catholic colleges.

by *Joseph Bottum*, 10 May 2009 (May 18 issue)

...As it happens, they're wrong. Politics has very little to do with the mess. This isn't a fight about who won the last presidential election and how he's going to deal with abortion. It's a fight about culture—the culture of American Catholicism, and how Notre Dame, still living in a 1970s Catholic world, has suddenly awakened to find itself out of date.

The role of culture is what Fr. Jenkins at Notre Dame and many other presidents of Catholic colleges don't quite get, and their lack of culture is what makes them sometimes seem so un-Catholic—though the charge befuddles them whenever it is made. As perhaps it ought. They know very well that they are Catholics: They go to Mass, and they pray, and their faith is real, and their theology is sophisticated, and what right has a bunch of other Catholics to run around accusing them of failing to be Catholic?

But, in fact, they live in a different world from most American Catholics. Opposition to abortion doesn't stand at the center of Catholic theology. It doesn't even stand at the center of Catholic faith. It does stand, however, at the center of Catholic culture in this country. Opposition to abortion is the signpost at the intersection of Catholicism and American public life. And those who—by inclination or politics—fail to grasp this fact will all eventually find themselves in the situation that Fr. Jenkins has now created for himself. Culturally out of touch, they rail that the antagonism must derive from politics. But it doesn't. It derives from the sense of the faithful that abortion is important. It derives from the feeling of many ordinary Catholics that the Church ought to stand for something in public life—and that something is opposition to abortion...

Read the whole thing: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/482btmli.asp?pg=1>

"For the first time," that is, since the dark day when it became socially acceptable to advocate infanticide.

More Americans 'Pro-Life' Than 'Pro-Choice' for First Time

Also, fewer think abortion should be legal "under any circumstances."

by *Lydia Saad*, 15 May 2009

A new Gallup Poll, conducted May 7-10, finds 51% of Americans calling themselves "pro-life" on the issue of abortion and 42% "pro-choice." This is the first time a majority of U.S. adults have identified themselves as pro-life since Gallup began asking this question in 1995...

Lots more: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/118399/More-Americans-Pro-Life-Than-Pro-Choice-First-Time.aspx>

Obama's 'Public' Health Plan Will Bankrupt the Nation

by Lawrence Kudlow, 14 May 2009

Does anybody really believe that adding 50 million people to the public health-care rolls will not cost the government more money? About \$1.5 trillion to \$2 trillion more? At least. So let's be serious when evaluating President Obama's goal of universal health care, and the idea that it's a cost-cutter. Can't happen. Won't happen. Costs are going to *explode*.

Think of it: Can anyone name a federal program that ever cut costs for *anything*? Let's not forget that the existing Medicare system is roughly *\$80 trillion* in the hole. And does anybody believe Obama's new "public" health-insurance plan isn't really a bridge to single-payer government-run health care? And does anyone think this plan won't produce a government gatekeeper that will allocate health services *and* control prices *and* therefore crowd-out the private-insurance doctor-hospital system?...

...Sen. Max Baucus (D-Montana) proposes to solve health care by limiting employer tax breaks. He's on to something, but he's only got half the story. All the tax breaks for health care should go to individuals and small businesses. Let them shop around for the best health deal wherever they can find it with essentially pre-tax dollars...

...Private enterprise can coexist with public health care and not be crowded out by the heavy-handed overreach of government. But the Obama Democrats are determined to force through a state-run system that will bankrupt the country...

Full column: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=MjIyMGEwZGM5YTdmOGU0MDEzNGU3ZDk5NjRlNzdmNzA=>

One great conservative lawyer deserves (to be reviewed by) another.

The Work of Generations.

On *Liberty and Tyranny: A Conservative Manifesto*, by Mark R. Levin.

reviewed by Andrew C. McCarthy, May 2009

...Like freedom of conscience, property is part of liberty's irreducible core, and is thus exalted in our founding law. So, like religion, it is forever in the statist's cross-hairs as he seeks to micromanage every vestige of autonomy from employment to healthcare to the type of cars we drive.

To carry out such intrusions requires two essential ingredients. The first is a welfare state, the ever more staggering dimensions of which play to the strength of the technocrat. With Ponzi math and junk science swaddled in the rhetoric of good intentions, the expert cons bewildered citizens about what government can do (the public hears "world peace" and "ending poverty" but never seems to think "post office"), while the statist converts them into irrational dependents—such that demands resulting in tens of trillions in unfunded liabilities for schemes like Social Security and Medicare would inevitably demolish the economy even if there were no credit default swaps.

The second is the statist's infiltration of government's faceless bureaucratic sprawl. Levin recounts story upon jaw-dropping story of radicals at the helm: the Social Security Administration's adoption of Henry Rogers Seager's socialist rant against the "creed of individualism," calling for "an aggressive program of governmental control and regulation" to enforce "the common welfare"; the National Park Service ecologist David M. Graber's declaration that the human beings are a "plague upon the earth" engaged in an "orgy of fossil-energy consumption" which caused him to conclude that "until such time as Homo sapiens should decide to rejoin nature, some of us can only hope for the right virus to come along"; and so on. The utopia they promise is a conveyor belt of misery, rolling out millions of deaths when enviro-statists banned the use of DDT, and thousands more (to say nothing of an industry destroyed), when mandated fuel-economy standards made American cars less safe...

Read it all: <http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/The-work-of-generations-4086>

Mr. Taylor elucidates some fascinating ruminations (as he so often does).

Should Justice Be Driven By 'Empathy'?

by Stuart Taylor Jr., 15 May 2009

<http://ninthjustice.nationaljournal.com/2009/05/should-justice-be-driven.php>

The Pope and Islam

Washington Times editorial, 13 May 2009

Pope Benedict XVI's outreach tour of the Middle East this week failed to placate critics still smarting from his riot-inciting comments in a 2006 speech at Germany's Regensburg University. The pontiff at that time quoted 15th-century Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Paleologus who said: "Show me just what Muhammad brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached."

The pope said he regrets any hurt feelings, but some Muslims want more contrition. Sheik Yusef Abu Hussein, mufti of Karak in Jordan, said, "We wanted him to clearly apologize. What the pope said about the prophet Muhammad is untrue. Islam did not spread through the power of sword. It's a religion of tolerance and faith." A recent post on a jihadist Web site took a somewhat different tone, denouncing "this cursed Pope" and calling on its readers to "strive to kill him, strive to slaughter him." That Muslim poster must have missed the sermon on tolerance and faith.

Paleologus, the Byzantine emperor, was something of an authority on Muslim military power. He spent much of his reign defending his hard-pressed realm from the predatory Ottoman Empire...

Continue: <http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/may/13/the-pope-and-islam/>

The Cap-and-Trade Racket

by David Frum, 14 May 2009

Who says Democrats wish to take from the poor to give to the rich? In practice, they much prefer to take from everyone to give to their friends! ... Democrats are determined to make their plan so complicated that taxpayers will not notice the flocks of dollars migrating from the middle of the country to the coasts...

... Cap-and-trade legislation will not only be contorted to favor the Democrats' regional loyalties. In addition, it will be skewed to favor the preferred energy sources of the Obama administration—wind and solar. These two sources face daunting technological hurdles and unforgiving economics on their own. Consequently, the measures to promote them must be hidden from sight, since no Congress would pass the taxes otherwise necessary to make them viable.

Waxman's committee looks likely to include a straightforward quota for wind, solar and other renewable power. Utilities will ultimately be required to derive up to 25 percent of their power from these sources—without regard to cost or the existence of cheaper, non-carbon emitting alternatives. The massive extra cost will be spread across power bills in ways that consumers will never see.

If the Obama administration wants to move off coal, the economically rational thing to do is to focus first on conservation, then on the next-cheapest sources of power, which include hydro imported from undeveloped sites in Canada and nuclear. A clean and simple carbon tax could incentivize such a shift. But that's not on the agenda. Why not? Because this isn't environmentalism. It's a racket.

Read the whole thing: http://www.theweek.com/article/index/96470/The_capandtrade_racket

FACT CHECK: Data belie Biden stimulus anecdotes

by Matt Apuzzo, 13 May 2009

WASHINGTON (AP) — In his first quarterly report on the nation's stimulus package, Vice President Joe Biden uses anecdotes to paint a glowing picture of an economy on the rebound. In reality, the picture is incomplete and the colors far more muted...

... Many of the claims the White House is making are based on anecdotes selected to fit the Obama administration's message. For instance, the report cites a newspaper article about workers being rehired at a factory in Chicago. That account is true, but is no more an accurate snapshot of the nation's economy than a story, not cited in the report, about a Roanoke, Va., railcar factory closing.

Capturing the full effect of the stimulus at this early stage is difficult, but the administration has set high bars for success. In championing those successes, however, the White House plays a little loose with the facts...

Much more: http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gII_eXwpVyrwITxM1gouPdCc—RgD985HVI00

Demographics & Depression

by David P. Goldman

This essay, which we first linked to on April 23, seems to have been removed from the **First Things** website a couple of weeks ago. That's too bad, because it's an outstanding and very important work. We're making it available **here**.

The Death of American Health Care

by Dick Morris, 14 May 2009

...Forty-four percent of the drugs approved by the Canadian health authorities for use in their country are not allowed by the healthcare system due to their high cost. As a result, death rates from cancer are 16 percent higher in Canada than in the United States...

...The Canadian experience indicates that when government—or its satellite private insurance providers—ration healthcare, they cut preventive care first. In Canada, colonoscopies are so rationed that the colon cancer rate is 25 percent higher than in the U.S...

...Obama's pretension that nobody will find changes in his or her current health insurance plans except for a magical reduction in their cost by \$2,500 a year is a fool's proposition...

...The other radical changes Obama is bringing about in our nation can always be reversed. New taxes can be repealed or lowered. That which was nationalized can be privatized. Government which has grown can be cut. But once the healthcare system is extended to cover everyone, with no commensurate increase in the resources available, the change will be forever. The vicious cycle of cuts in medical resources and in the number of doctors and nurses will doom healthcare in this country. This wanton destruction will not be reversible by any bill or program. **A crucial part of our quality of life—the best health care in the world—will be gone forever...**

Read the rest: <http://www.creators.com/opinion/dick-morris/the-death-of-american-health-care.html>

Obama Gets Tax Policy Backwards

by Steven Malanga, 13 May 2009

...Instead, "the rapid decline of manufacturing employment in the late 1990s and early 2000s might well best be understood as marking the exit of purely domestic, low-productivity players rather than the displacement of domestic activity abroad by multinational firms," Desai writes.

This shouldn't be surprising. It's a difficult and risky leap to go from a domestic company to an international one, and for the most part companies that succeed at it are our strongest firms. In a global marketplace, they are the firms most likely to face down new foreign competitors entering the country. Short of high tariffs to punish foreign products and make them uncompetitive here, it is our multinationals that give us our biggest edge.

But for many politicians, the Lucas Paradox doesn't exist. To them, the world is simple: Jobs that U.S. firms create overseas are jobs that they are not creating here. We shouldn't reward firms for doing that with tax breaks.

And so, instead of cutting our corporate tax rate, the second highest among developed countries, to bring it in line with the rest of the world, or treating overseas profits in the same manner as most other developed nations which generally don't tax overseas earnings, the Obama administration will make our corporate tax code more onerous. One result, the research suggests, will be less job growth here as some U.S. firms contemplating going international decline to do so because we've further reduced the returns from setting up foreign operations and increased the risks...

...For a president confronting a world that doesn't conform to popular opinion, the options are clear. He can attempt to set the country on the policy path that makes the most sense and do his best to explain why. **Or he can simply give people a policy that corresponds to their misconceptions.** On corporate taxes, we know what course Obama is taking.

Complete column: http://www.realclearmarkets.com/articles/2009/05/obama_gets_tax_policy_backward.html

Social Security and Medicare: Apocalypse When?

Investor's Business Daily editorial, 13 May 2009

A report on Social Security and Medicare holds some grim news: Not only are the programs going bust, but they'll run out of money sooner than expected. The crisis we've been warned about for years is here. Baby boomers—that 70-million-strong population lump—begin officially retiring this year. That means the government's bill for retirees' pensions and health care has no where to go but up, for decades to come.

Everyone knew this day would come. And virtually every economist and actuary who had run the numbers could tell

you, within a few years' certainty, the system was going bankrupt. But all this seemed to happen in the distant future. Last year, both political parties virtually ignored the topic during their presidential campaigns. It became a non-issue issue.

Well, thanks to a profligate federal government, which will double the national debt to \$11.5 trillion in just four years, and a recession that has weakened federal tax revenues, we can no longer ignore the problem. The day of reckoning is at hand...

...With all due respect, a little hysteria might be the best strategy right now. Fact is, the long-term outlook is made much worse by the recession. And the problems of Social Security and Medicare are structural—requiring a massive, root-and-branch reform that Washington seems unwilling to do...

More: <http://www.ibdeditorials.com/IBDArticles.aspx?id=327020388104180>

Big Labor's Investment in Obama Pays Off

by Michelle Malkin, 13 May 2009

"We spent a fortune to elect Barack Obama—\$60.7 million to be exact—and we're proud of it," boasted Andy Stern, president of the Service Employees International Union, to the Las Vegas Sun this week...

...Through a series of local chapter takeovers and bully campaigns to destroy the reputation of executives who refuse to submit to their will, Stern and his scandal-plagued lieutenants have consolidated low-skill service workers to create a 21st century labor empire. The ubiquitous Stern now enjoys a prominent seat at the table of every major policy discussion at the White House, including economic recovery and health care radicalization.

Obama champions the SEIU's top legislative priorities: expansive government health care (paid for with regressive sin taxes) and the "Employee Free Choice Act" to do away with private-ballot union elections in the workplace. He has SEIU-blessed bureaucrats installed in every corner of his administration to carry out the agenda.

The SEIU scored not one but two Cabinet appointees: Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and Labor Secretary Hilda Solis. Former SEIU chief lobbyist Patrick Gaspard served as the Obama campaign's national political director and transition deputy director of personnel... Under Gaspard's tenure at ACT, the get-out-the-vote group employed convicted felons as canvassers and committed campaign finance violations that led to a \$775,000 fine by the Federal Election Commission. Gaspard was appointed White House political director shortly after Election Day 2008...

...The payoffs keep coming. Last week Obama slashed the Labor Department's funding to investigate union corruption—a welcome move for Stern, who has seen three of his handpicked deputies resign in 2008-2009 over financial scandals involving cronyism, nepotism and embezzlement...

Read the rest: <http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=31856>

'Thought Crimes' Bill Advances

by Nat Hentoff, 11 May 2009

...This bill would make it a federal crime to willfully cause bodily injury (or try to) because of the victim's actual or perceived "race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability"—as explained on the White House Web site, signaling the president's approval. A defendant convicted on these grounds would be charged with a "hate crime" in addition to the original crime, and would get extra prison time.

The extra punishment applies only to these "protected classes." As Denver criminal defense lawyer Robert J Corry Jr. asked (Denver Post April 28): "Isn't every criminal act that harms another person a 'hate crime'?" Then, regarding a Colorado "hate crime" law, one of 45 such state laws, Corry wrote: "When a Colorado gang engaged in an initiation ritual of specifically seeking out a 'white woman' to rape, the Boulder prosecutor declined to pursue 'hate crime' charges." She was not enough of one of its protected classes.

Corey adds that the state "hate crime" law—like the newly expanded House of Representatives federal bill—"does not apply equally" (as the 14th Amendment requires), essentially instead "criminalizing only politically incorrect thoughts directed against politically incorrect victim categories."

Whether you're a Republican or Democrat, think hard about what Corry adds: "A government powerful enough to pick and choose which thoughts to prosecute is a government too powerful."

But James Madison, who initially introduced the First Amendment to the Constitution, had previously written to Thomas Jefferson on the passage of the Virginia Statute on Religious Freedom: "We have in this country extinguished forever ... making laws for the human mind." No American, he emphasized later, would be punished for his "thoughts."...

Read the rest: http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=10188

Chrysler and the Rule of Law

The Founders put the contracts clause in the Constitution for a reason.

by Todd Zywicki, 13 May 2009

The rule of law, not of men—an ideal tracing back to the ancient Greeks and well-known to our Founding Fathers—is the animating principle of the American experiment. While the rest of the world in 1787 was governed by the whims of kings and dukes, the U.S. Constitution was established to circumscribe arbitrary government power. It would do so by establishing clear rules, equally applied to the powerful and the weak.

Fleeing lenders to pay off politically powerful interests, or governmental threats to reputation and business from a failure to toe a political line? We might expect this behavior from a Hugo Chávez. But it would never happen here, right?

Until Chrysler.

The close relationship between the rule of law and the enforceability of contracts, especially credit contracts, was well understood by the Framers of the U.S. Constitution...

...The Obama administration's behavior in the Chrysler bankruptcy is a profound challenge to the rule of law. Secured creditors—entitled to first priority payment under the "absolute priority rule"—have been browbeaten by an American president into accepting only 30 cents on the dollar of their claims. Meanwhile, the United Auto Workers union, holding junior creditor claims, will get about 50 cents on the dollar...

Read on: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124217356836613091.html>

Poison Photo-Drop

President Obama's decision to release photographs of prisoner abuse will imperil our nation and its defenders.

by Andrew C. McCarthy, 12 May 2009

... Instead, Obama and congressional Democrats are choosing to release the photos. They are making that choice fully aware that it will cost lives...

...It was not by reading news reports about prisoner abuse that "we saw what happened at Abu Ghraib." It was by viewing the graphic photos: the images broadcast incessantly throughout the world, used simultaneously by al-Qaeda and by the anti-war Left to condemn the United States military, the United States government, and the American people themselves for the aberrational depravity of an unrepresentative handful of rogue prison guards.

Obama has always been very much a part of the anti-war Left. That's why he can make the risible assertion that "humiliating people" was anyone's "strategy to battle terrorism."...

...Obama doesn't have the political nerve to end the war. But he is slowly (or, as he'd no doubt put it, pragmatically) strangling the war effort. A critical part of the antiwar project is to make Americans feel ashamed of defending ourselves... the bipartisan 2004 Schlessinger Panel, in rejecting claims of systematic prisoner abuse, reported that **less than one-tenth of 1 percent of 50,000 detainees in the War on Terror had viable abuse claims, an extraordinarily low percentage by historical standards...**

...We could have no photos and still have widespread abuse, or a million photos and still have relatively little. The Left knows this quite well, and that explains why the mainstream media stopped broadcasting video of the 9/11 attacks (and other terrorist strikes) for fear of tarring all Muslims with the acts of a few. The photos at issue won't tell us anything significant about prisoner abuse, and they may very well serve to distort reality...

...Thus, if President Obama wanted to keep these photos from being exploited by America's enemies, all he would need to do is issue an executive order sealing them, based on a finding (which could be drawn from public statements he has already made) that their release would imperil the national defense — as well as frustrate ongoing American foreign-policy efforts in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, the Palestinian territories, and elsewhere in the Muslim Middle East.

Some will say that the president won't do that because he does not want to anger the anti-war Left, a significant part of his base. In truth, the president IS the anti-war Left...

Read it all: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=YzKxYTE3ODI4YjAyOWY2YTUyMmJkOTAxZGZlOWZmMjg=>

Copenhagen: Already dead?

by Terence Corcoran, 12 May 2009

...In Washington, without whose support no UN climate control scheme will get off the ground, President Obama

faces an uphill battle to get his own Democratic Party on side. Reports yesterday said Congressional lawmakers would be meeting today to water down the existing Waxman-Markey draft legislation. The target for U. S. carbon reduction, now set at a mandatory cut of 20% below 2005 levels by 2020, could get trimmed back.

Last week, the U. S. Chamber of Commerce released an economic study projecting lost jobs, slower growth, higher energy costs and damaged vital energy sectors of the U. S. economy. Also coming under fire is the cap-and-trade energy pricing system proposed by President Obama. Charlie Munger, CEO of Warren Buffet's Berkshire Hathaway, called the plan "monstrously stupid." In an interview with CNBC, Mr. Munger said: "It would be a huge shock to the economy and it wouldn't accomplish very much given the fact that the vast majority of the pollution, or rather the CO₂, is coming from a place like China. And so I think it would be almost demented if we would rush into cap-and-trade right now in the middle of this economic crisis."...

...The more Americans learn of the proposed carbon control and pricing regimes, the less they like it...

Some issues have yet to be fully aired, including the missing motivating element in climate policy: the explicit objective of moving money from rich countries to poor countries. Connie Hedegaard, Denmark's Climate and Energy Minister, said last week that prosperous nations must be ready to transfer large quantities of cash to the less-prosperous if a new climate accord is to be signed.

The idea of shipping vast sums from rich to poor has a long history in the climate debate. Maurice Strong once said that the main objective, the "overall goal," of climate policy is to create a "new economic basis for flows of money to the developing countries." How much enthusiasm will there be for cap-and-trade carbon taxes when energy consumers find out that their money will be shipped to promote investment and consumption around the world?

Full story: <http://www.nationalpost.com/opinion/columnists/story.html?id=9a089edf-afa8-4635-bcee-8a0ae950725d>

When it comes to confiscating money from Americans and giving it to feckless foreigners, our motto should always be "F.T.P." (see [Don John's Essays](#))

Comments from a man who's lived in Canada, Britain, and America.

The Last Ditch

...If you provide government health care, then suddenly all the elections, they're not fought about war and foreign policy, or even big economic questions. They're suddenly fought about government services, and the level of government services, and that's all they're about, because once you get government health care, the citizens' dependency on government as provider is so fundamentally changed that in effect, every election is fought on left-wing terms. And for the Democratic Party, that is a huge, transformative advantage...

...Government health care is really the ditch you want to fight in, because once you surrender that, I think it's very difficult to have genuine self-reliant citizenry every again. It really fundamentally changes the equation...

—Mark Steyn, on the *Hugh Hewitt Show*, 7 May 2009

<http://hughhewitt.townhall.com/talkradio/transcripts/Transcript.aspx?ContentGuid=0c81fc87-0ed8-4925-9ae5-e9e2c5381be5>

Flawed Logic

by Brian Wesbury & Robert Stein, 12 May 2009

Both Robert Kuttner, a long-time critic of free markets, and Richard Posner, a long-time supporter of free markets, recently made the same argument.

Kuttner said "markets are not self-correcting. If they were, [then] Wall Street would not be lined up for trillions of dollars in government handouts." Posner, in a recent *Wall Street Journal* editorial, said capitalism is "not inherently stable." He argued that the seriousness of the downturn—which he says it is the worst since the 1930s—is proved "by the dizzying array of programs the government is deploying and the staggering amounts of money it is spending."

This if-then argument—"if the government is spending lots of money, then the economy must really be bad and markets don't work"—has been made by many analysts in recent months. But just because it is being used in prominent places does not mean it is right. In fact, these statements of logic are deeply flawed and mistaken...

Read the rest: <http://www.forbes.com/2009/05/11/mark-to-market-regulation-laissez-faire-opinions-columnists-government.html>

This goes into a file saved up for a day when the economy has somehow recovered appreciably (despite Democrat efforts to

destroy it), and Obama claims the credit.

What About Jobs?

Investor's Business Daily editorial, 11 May 2009

The new White House economic forecast contains more than one stunning revelation. Tops on our list is that no net new jobs are expected this year, even as the economy recovers...

...We understand that jobs are a lagging, not leading, indicator of economic strength. And this time will be no different. Yet, in the near term, we're actually more optimistic than the White House. Not because we think what's been sold to the American people as "stimulus" is any great shakes, but because private-sector economic activity and global stock markets appear to have hit bottom and are ready to resume growth later this year...

...Once a rebound occurs, we'll be hearing the all-hails and hallelujahs for the \$787 billion stimulus package that Congress wrote and President Obama signed into law. But remember: The coming recovery will have little if anything to do with stimulus.

Facts are facts. As of May 1, just \$29 billion in stimulus spending, or about 3.7% of the total, had gone out. In a \$14 trillion economy, that's nothing. So if the economy bottoms this quarter or next, as seems likely, it can't be due to stimulus spending — though that's what Democrats in Congress and the White House will no doubt claim...

More: <http://www.ibdeditorials.com/IBDArticles.aspx?id=326933960257860>

The great mortgage meltdown of 2008 wasn't a unique event. It was only the latest in a series of disastrous Federal housing market interferences that started in the 1920s. It was the largest, to be sure. That's because each government-caused disaster tends to exceed the previous one of its type. When the meddling doesn't provide the desired effect (and it never does, for long), Washington do-gooders tend to double down, and come back within a few years (or even months) with a new and more lunatic plan. The villain in the early stages of this 5500-word narrative is Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover. The more recent villains include Henry Cisneros, Bill Clinton, Maxine Waters, Angelo Mozilo, Joe Baca, ACORN, and of course the Banking Queen, Barney Frank.

Obsessive Housing Disorder

by Steven Malanga, May 2009

http://www.city-journal.org/2009/19_2_homeownership.html

Tax Dodge Myths

Are multinationals not paying their fair share?

by Robert Samuelson, 11 May 2009

...Listen to President Obama, and the status quo seems a cesspool. Pervasive "loopholes" engineered by "well-connected lobbyists" allow U.S. multinationals to skirt American taxes and outsource jobs to low-tax countries. So the president proposes plugging loopholes. Some jobs will return to the United States, and U.S. tax coffers will grow by \$210 billion over the next decade.

Sounds great—and that's how the story played. "Obama Targets Overseas Tax Dodge," headlined The Washington Post. But the reality is murkier; the president's accusatory rhetoric perpetuates many myths.

Myth: Aided by those overpaid lobbyists, American multinationals are taxed lightly—less so than their foreign counterparts. Reality: Just the opposite. Most countries don't tax the foreign profits of their multinational firms at all...

Myth: When U.S. multinationals invest abroad, they destroy American jobs. Reality: Not so. Sure, many U.S. firms have shut American factories and opened plants elsewhere. But most overseas investments by U.S. multinationals serve local markets. Only 10 percent of their foreign output is exported back to the United States...

Myth: Plugging overseas corporate tax loopholes will dramatically improve the budget outlook as multinationals pay their "fair" share. Reality: Dream on. The estimated \$210 billion revenue gain over 10 years—money already included in Obama's budget—represents only six-tenths of 1 percent of the decade's tax revenues of \$32 trillion, as projected by the Congressional Budget Office. Worse, the CBO reckons that Obama's endless deficits over the decade will total a gut-wrenching \$9.3 trillion...

More: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/196530>

Mr. Steele was my favorite candidate for RNC Chairman, based largely on his appearances as a guest and guest-host on

talk radio. But in his brief time in office, he's made a number of shocking mistakes—nearly all because he fails to understand that a party chairman simply cannot speak and behave like a radio talker. He should be replaced by **someone who does understand**.

It's Time for Michael Steele To Resign

by Jay Cost, 10 May 2009

...For a pundit or radio personality, being a "free spirit" and "saying what he thinks" are assets. However, they are liabilities in an RNC Chairman. Ideally speaking, the chairman of a national committee should be boring, bland, and say only what will maximize contributions. There is a reason why your average party chairman is a lousy television guest who rarely strays from the talking points: *that is what's good for the party*.

Comments like Steele's do not help the Republican Party in any way, shape, manner, or form. The only effect they can possibly have is negative. And if said in the wrong place at the wrong time, they *will* have a negative effect. I think it is a great thing for a political party to have somebody who calls it like he sees it, even if those opinions don't sit well with his own side. My favorite political book of all time is John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, so I'm well versed in the value of freewheeling, open debate. However, it's no good for the party chairman to be a controversialist. Considering that he said what he said on Friday *after* all the controversy he has generated—it's pretty clear that he can't help himself...

Read the rest: http://www.realclearpolitics.com/horseraceblog/2009/05/its_time_for_michael_steele_to.html

Not funny: Barack Obama laughs at Wanda Sykes "joke" about wanting Rush Limbaugh dead

by Toby Harnden, 10 May 2009

What was Wanda Sykes thinking? Perhaps more to the point, what was President Barack Obama thinking when he laughed and smiled as the comedienne wished Rush Limbaugh dead?...

...There's not much room for differing interpretations of what Sykes said. She called Limbaugh a terrorist and a traitor, suggested that he be tortured and wished him dead.

What was his crime? Hoping that Obama's policies—which he views as socialist—**will fail**.

That's way, way beyond reasoned debate or comedy and Obama's reaction to it was astonishing.

Imagine if a comedian "joked" that Obama was a terrorist who was guilty of treason and should be tortured and allowed to die. There would justifiably be an outcry.

But when the "joke" comes from a liberal, Obama-supporting comedienne and the target is a right-winger then the likes of **Hilary Rosen** and **Donna Brazile** are on CNN saying it's just comedy and Limbaugh is "fair game."

And Obama laughing when someone wishes Limbaugh dead? Hard to take from the man who promised a new era of civility and elevated debate in Washington...

http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/toby_harnden/blog/2009/05/10/not_funny_barack_obamaLaughs_at_wanda_sykes_joke_about_wanting_rush_limbaugh_dead

Lady Justice's blindfold

by Jeff Jacoby, 10 May 2009

...Without judicial restraint there is no rule of law. We live under "a government of laws and not of men" only so long as judges stick to neutrally resolving the disputes before them, applying the law, and upholding the Constitution even when doing so leads to results they personally dislike. That is why the judicial oath is so adamant about impartiality. That is why Lady Justice is so frequently depicted—as on the **sculpted lampposts** outside the US Supreme Court—wearing a blindfold and carrying balanced scales. And that is why President Obama's "empathy" standard is so disturbing, and has generated so much comment...

...If Obama means what he says, he wants judges who will violate their oath of office. "We need somebody who's got the heart—the empathy—to recognize what it's like to be a young teenage mom," **he told a Planned Parenthood conference** in 2007. "The empathy to understand what it's like to be poor or African-American or gay or disabled or old. And that's the criteria by which I'm going to be selecting my judges."

With such criteria, what would remain of the rule of law? What would happen to "**Equal Justice Under Law**," which is carved above the Supreme Court's entrance? What would be left of the 14th Amendment's guarantee of "equal protection of the laws" to every citizen?

Lady Justice wears a blindfold not because she has no empathy for certain litigants or groups of people, but because there is no role for such empathy in a courtroom...

Read it all: http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/05/10/lady_justices_blindfold/

This not only explains all the many drawbacks of the Democrat plan, but actually puts forth a very good Republican alternative.

Stop ObamaCare

by James C. Capretta & Yuval Levin, 9 May 2009 (May 18 issue)

<http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/476phyyl.asp?pg=1>

Sports Heroes Turn Up in the Unlikeliest Places

10 May 2009

CBS Sports golf analyst David Feherty apologized Sunday to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid for a morbid joke that went bad in a Dallas magazine.

Feherty, one of the most popular golf analysts for his sharp wit and self-deprecating humor, was among five Dallas residents who wrote for "D Magazine" on former President George W. Bush moving to Dallas.

"From my own experience visiting the troops in the Middle East, I can tell you this though," Feherty wrote toward the end of his column.

"Despite how the conflict has been portrayed by our glorious media, if you gave any U.S. soldier a gun with two bullets in it, and he found himself in an elevator with Nancy Pelosi, Harry Reid and Osama bin Laden, there's a good chance that Nancy Pelosi would get shot twice, and Harry Reid and bin Laden would be strangled to death."

Feherty, a former Ryder Cup player who grew up in Northern Ireland, has gone to Iraq over Thanksgiving the past two years to visit with U.S. troops, and he created a foundation to help wounded soldiers...

More: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2009/05/10/golf-analyst-feherty-sorry-pelosi-joke-dallas-magazine/>

Cupid Stunt of the Week: Wanda Sykes

10 May 2009

This moronic, mumbling bitch willfully misquotes Rush Limbaugh, and then equates his wanting Obama to fail with a desire for America to fail—the complete opposite of Limbaugh's stated (and oft-repeated) meaning. The Dissembler In Chief is on the dais, and shows his approval of her stupid, lame jokes: "I hope his kidneys fail...I think Rush Limbaugh was the 20th hijacker, but he was so strung out on Oxycontin he missed his flight."

Video: <http://www.breitbart.tv/html/336173.html>

The Big Business of Big Labor

by Timothy P. Carney, 8 May 2009

Imagine if President George W. Bush used strong-arm tactics to bend the law to favor a politically connected company with \$1.2 billion in assets, including a private golf course. What if that company's political action committee had spent \$13 million in the previous election, including more than \$4 million to elect him?

Barack Obama has done just that. The company is called the United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America International Union—or the UAW for short.

...Compare the UAW's political activity to that of the most notorious companies that were cozy with the Bush administration. The autoworker union's political action committee spent \$13.1 million on the 2008 election.

If you take the PACs of Exxon, Halliburton, Peabody Coal, and Lockheed Martin, combine their 2008-cycle political spending, *and multiply it by four*, you get just over \$13.1 million. The UAW's expenditures on the 2008 presidential contest alone exceed the total House, Senate, and White House expenditures of those four companies.

And even Exxon Mobil gave 11 percent of its donations to Democrats. The UAW gave less than 1 percent of its money to Republicans. The auto workers' union is far more wedded to the Democratic Party than any company is to the Republican Party...

More: <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columns/TimothyCarney/The-Big-Business-of-Big-Labor-44580672.html>

Sunbeams From Cucumbers

by George Will, 7 May 2009

Gulliver's travels took him to the Academy of Lagado, where "professors contrive new rules and methods" for *everything*: "One man shall do the work of ten; a palace may be built in a week, of materials so durable as to last forever without repairing. All the fruits of the earth shall come to maturity at whatever season we think fit to choose, and increase a hundredfold more than they do at present." There was, however, the "inconvenience" that "none of these projects" had yet come to fruition and "the whole country lies miserably waste." But "instead of being discouraged," people were "fifty times more violently bent upon prosecuting their schemes," which included "extracting sunbeams out of cucumbers."

At the Academy of Obama, professors and others devise plans for extracting a new and improved automobile industry from a semi-sort-of-bankruptcy arrangement...

...The president has chosen to blame "speculators"—aka investors; anyone who buys a share of a company's stock is speculating about the company's future—for Chrysler's bankruptcy and the dubious legality of his proposal. Yet he simultaneously says he hopes that private investors will begin supplanting government as a source of capital for the companies. Breathes there an investor/speculator with such a stunted sense of risk that he or she would go into business with this capricious government?...

More: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/06/AR2009050603320.html>

Demographic Death-Spiral

"As the population shrinks, so does the culture."

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-3X5hIFXYU>

(Hat tip: Gina and Chris)

It's chilling. The welfare state leads to irresponsibility, short-sightedness, and selfishness. As P.J. O'Rourke said in response to Hillary Clinton's it-takes-a-village-to-raise-a-child canard: "The government is the village. You're the child." Why would children want to reproduce?

Also: most European countries haven't been responsible for their own defense since World War II (or earlier, in some cases). That completes their infantilization. Their inhabitants—we can't really call them *citizens*—aren't ultimately responsible for making a living, caring for themselves, or even their own self-defense. Why would such people feel a responsibility to create progeny for their society, their country, their culture? All incentive has been removed.

And Barack Obama wants to bring the wonders of Europe's civilizational death-spiral right here to America.

Whatever one may say about Muslims (and who doesn't?), at least they're proud of their culture and they believe in a sort of god. **The West really needs to rekindle both instincts—rapidly, before the rest of it falls below the 1.9 birthrate!**

—Don John, 10 May 2009

Israel today, the West tomorrow

by Mark Steyn, May 2009

...One day the U.N. Secretary General proposes that, in the interest of global peace and harmony, the world's soccer players should come together and form one United Nations global soccer team.

"Great idea," says his deputy. "Er, but who would we play?"

"Israel, of course."

Ha-ha. It always had a grain of truth, now it's the whole loaf.

...One Saturday afternoon a few weeks ago, a group wearing "BOYCOTT ISRAEL" T-shirts entered a French branch of Carrefour, the world's largest supermarket chain, and announced themselves. They then systematically advanced down every aisle examining every product, seizing all the items made in Israel and piling them into carts to take away and destroy. Judging from the video they made, the protesters were mostly Muslim immigrants and a few French leftists. But more relevant was the passivity of everyone else in the store, both staff and shoppers, all of whom stood idly by as private property was ransacked and smashed, and many of whom when invited to comment expressed support for the destruction. "South Africa started to shake once all countries started to boycott their products," one elderly lady customer said. "So what you're doing, I find it good."

Others may find Germany in the '30s the more instructive comparison...

...The prevailing mood in much of the world makes Israel an easy sacrifice. Long before Muslims are a statistical majority, there will be three permanent members of the Security Council—Britain, France, Russia—for whom the accommodation of Islam is a domestic political imperative...

...You would think the deluded multi-culti progressives would understand: In the end, this isn't about Gaza, this isn't about the Middle East; it's about them. It may be some consolation to an ever-lonelier Israel that, in one of history's bleaker jests, in the coming Europe the Europeans will be the new Jews.

Full article: <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/viewarticle.cfm/israel-today—the-west-tomorrow-15134>

The lies just keep on coming!

Obama and the 9/11 Families

The president isn't sincere about 'swift and certain' justice for terrorists.

by *Debra Burlingame*, 8 May 2009

...The phrase "swift and certain justice" had been used by top presidential adviser David Axelrod in an interview prior to our meeting with the president. "Swift and certain justice" figured prominently in the White House press release issued before we had time to surrender our White House security passes. "At best, he manipulated the families," Kirk Lippold, commanding officer of the USS Cole at the time of the attack and the leader of the Cole families group, told me recently. "At worst, he misrepresented his true intentions."...

...Given all the developments since our meeting with the president, it is now evident that his words to us bore no relation to his intended actions on national security policy and detainee issues. But the narrative about Mr. Obama's successful meeting with 9/11 and Cole families has been written, and the press has moved on.

The Obama team has established a pattern that should be plain for all to see. When controversy erupts or legitimate policy differences are presented by well-meaning people, send out the celebrity president to flatter and charm...

Read it all: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124174154190098941.html>

The Center-Right Trap

The limits of ideology in politics.

by *Gary Andres*, 7 May 2009

...The 2008 ANES survey also asked Americans to rank Barack Obama, John McCain, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party on the same scale. Guess what? John McCain (4.98) was viewed as ideologically *closer* to the average American than Barack Obama (2.96). And the Democratic Party (3.03) was viewed as *more distant* from the average American than the Republican Party (5.10).

In other words, Republicans did not lose the 2008 election because they were out of step ideologically with average Americans. So it's unclear if "moving to the center" ideologically will make any difference from an electoral perspective. Thinking about political strategy only in this single left-right dimension is a trap, not because this view is wrong—it's just incomplete. Many voters don't fit this stereotype; instead they make electoral decisions based on criteria other than just ideology...

More: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/470gymcc.asp>

Obama's Health Care Quackery

Countries with universal health coverage are economically worse off than the U.S.

by *Shikha Dalmia*, 7 May 2009

...The one remaining economic argument for universal health insurance in the United States is that it will help rein in medical costs. The rap against America is that it spends over 15 percent of its GDP on health care—more than any other industrialized country—and yet leaves upwards of 45 million people uninsured. If it had universal coverage, the theory goes, uninsured folks would get care sooner—not wait till they have a medical emergency—saving the system a ton of money.

It is a nice theory, but there is no evidence that it is true. Although America's per capita health care spending soared in the 1980s, a 2007 study by Kaiser Family Foundation found that it slowed considerably in subsequent years. Indeed, between 1990 and 2003, the rate of growth of America's per capita spending was 3.6 percent, only a little bit higher than

France, Germany and Japan's—but significantly lower than England's 4.2 percent. That's striking given that England engages in the most aggressive rationing known to the free world, routinely delaying care to patients unless they are critically ill.

However, Canada, which too indirectly rations care for many specialized treatments by putting patients in queues, has succeeded in limiting per capita spending to 2.4 percent. At best, then, universal coverage has a mixed record in controlling health care spending increases, even after resorting to rationing.

All in all, there is no major industrialized economy with universal coverage that has performed as well—let alone better—than the United States in the last decade. Universal coverage might not be the cause of their inferior performance. But the crucial point is that there is zero evidence that it has put them on a more solid footing. Before applying this exotic therapy to America, Obama needs to offer more than mere hunches that it will work. He needs to offer actual evidence. ...

Full essay: <http://www.reason.com/news/show/133344.html>

The scumbag law firm that helps the Democrat Party steal elections.

When Dems Don't Have the Votes, Perkins Coie Finds Them

by John Romano, 7 May 2009

<http://bighollywood.breitbart.com/jromano/2009/05/07/perkins-coie/>

For a guy who was backed by all the "Bush Lied" hyenas, President Obama sure does a lot of lying.

The Obama Lexicon

by David Harsanyi, 8 May 2009

... This week, we learned a bit more about what the terms "sacrifice" (do what *we* want, you filthy, unpatriotic swine), "era of responsibility" (double the "sacrifice," half the prosperity) and "investments" (we squander money so you don't have to) really mean. "Transparency" is when Barack Obama promises that the enterprising citizen will be able to track "every dime" of the \$787 billion forever-government stimulus bill via a nifty Web site, called Recovery.gov (sic).

Reality is when that much-heralded site won't be complete until next spring, when half the stimulus money will have been wasted and, well, it probably won't be especially helpful. ...

... In the "new era of responsibility," Obama vowed during his campaign that his administration scrupulously would pore over the federal budget "line by line" to extract savings, eradicate waste and find inefficiencies. After teeing up a record-breaking \$3.4 trillion budget—on top of bailouts, deficits, stimulus packages and other goodies for special friends—we know that's bunk.

But watching Obama engage in his act of false heroics this week—claiming that "we" were going to make tough budget cuts by trimming programs no one in this galaxy cares about in an effort to slice a subatomic fraction from the budget that no one will notice—well, that was a special treat.

When it comes to "investments," the general idea is this: Every unproductive and superfluous job or project that an army of pencil pushers and special interest groups have conjured up needs someone to fund it. And because you won't do it voluntarily, the administration will do it for you in the name of "community." ...

The rest: http://www.denverpost.com/opinion/ci_12320748

Republicans and ObamaCare

The sound of silence is deafening.

by Kimberley A. Strassel, 8 May 2009

Listen. That sound of silence? That's what's known as the united Republican response to President Barack Obama's drive to socialize health care.

The president has a plan, and he's laid it on the table. The industry groups that once helped Republicans beat HillaryCare are today sitting at that table. Unions are mobilized. A liberal umbrella group, Health Care for American Now, is spending \$40 million to get a "public option," a new federal entitlement that would kill off private insurance. Democrats passed a budget blueprint that will allow them to cram through that "public option" with just 51 votes. Republicans? They're trying to figure out what they think.

Well, not all of them. Earlier this week I ended up in the office of Oklahoma Sen. Tom Coburn, where the doctor was hosting North Carolina Sen. Richard Burr. The duo is, for the second time, crafting a comprehensive reform that would

lower costs, cover the uninsured, and put Americans in control of their health care. And while the senators decline to talk GOP politics, their bill raises the multitrillion-dollar question: Will the party have the nerve or sense to coalesce behind some such conservative alternative to the Democratic product?

They'd better, because the days of Republicans winning these battles solely by spooking Americans are over...

Continue: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124173977440798743.html>

Watching MSNBC is Torture

by Ann Coulter, 6 May 2009

...To claim that the Japanese—architects of the Bataan Death March—were prosecuted for "waterboarding" would be like saying Ted Bundy was executed for engaging in sexual harassment.

What the Japanese did to their POWs made even the Nazis blanch. The Japanese routinely beheaded and bayoneted prisoners; forced prisoners to dig their own graves and then buried them alive; amputated prisoners' healthy arms and legs, one by one, for sport; force-fed prisoners dry rice and then filled their stomachs with water until their bowels exploded; and injected them with chemical weapons in order to observe, time and record their death throes before dumping them in mass graves.

While only 4 percent of British and American troops captured by German or Italian forces died in captivity, 27 percent of British and American POWs captured by the Japanese died in captivity. Japanese war crimes were so atrocious that even rape was treated as only a secondary war crime in the Tokyo trial, similar to what happens during an R. Kelly trial.

The Japanese "water cure" was to "waterboarding" as practiced at Guantanamo what rape at knifepoint is to calling your secretary "honey." The Japanese version of "waterboarding" was to fill the prisoner's stomach with water until his stomach was distended—and then pound on his stomach, causing the prisoner to vomit. Or they would jam a stick into the prisoner's nose so he could breathe only through his mouth and then pour water in his mouth so he would choke to death. Or they would "waterboard" the prisoner with saltwater, which would kill him...

...One of the earliest entries in the "waterboarding as war crimes" myth must be this October 2006 article in The Washington Post, citing a case raised by Sen. Teddy Kennedy—and heaven knows Kennedy understands the horrors of a near-drowning...

...What Americans need to understand is that under liberals' own "laws of war," they will invent apocryphal incidents from history in order to give aid and comfort to America's enemies and to undermine those who kept us safe for the past eight years.

Read the rest: <http://www.anncoulter.org/cgi-local/article.cgi?article=311>

"We do not write these things and do these things because we think that we will ultimately be able to persuade the other side; we do them because we know that when the other side fails and finally there are no other options left, we will be there with the solutions that are true and that will work."

—Milton Friedman (1912-2006)

Democrats should reform Medicare, not universalize it

by Morton Kondracke, 8 May 2009

If President Barack Obama really is a pragmatic problem solver and not a liberal ideologue, he will stop pushing for a government-run insurance plan as part of health care reform.

And Democrats in Congress, instead of trying to drive all Americans into a Medicare-style, single-payer health plan, should first figure out how to reform Medicare itself, which is rapidly going broke while failing to serve all the medical needs of seniors.

As several studies show, if health reform includes a "public" insurance plan to "compete" with private insurance, it will mean the end of private insurance in America—all at once or gradually, depending on the design. If the model is Medicare, as pushed by liberals like Reps. Pete Stark (D-Calif.) and Henry Waxman (D-Calif.), it will also lead to the bankruptcy of major U.S. hospitals, including some of the biggest in Waxman and Stark's home state...

Read on. It's brilliant: <http://www.rollcall.com/issues/kondracke/>

The Price of the King's Shilling

Special deals for the government's special friends.

by *Megan McArdle*, 6 May 2009

...the worry many of us had at the time of the bank bailouts has come true: the government is using its intervention in the banking system to pressure banks to give special deals to the government's special friends...

...Countries that use their banking systems this way don't get good results....

...We are hardly Zimbabwe, or even Venezuela. But if we keep using TARP to create a sort of "Most Favored Borrower" status, we'll erode the safeguards that keep election to office in America from being the kind of giant spoils system that's common in much of the world. What the bankruptcy judge did was entirely right and proper—it's his job to allocate losses among creditors. And it's always true that some of the creditors won't like the deal they get. On the other hand, what the administration did really wasn't. It got its pet majority stakeholders to screw both their own shareholders, and the other creditors, in order to give a powerful union a sweetheart deal...

...This move has shown potential partners that government funds are dangerous, and potential lenders that union firms are risky bets; both have probably cost American citizens more than they saved. So why did the government risk so much for so little gain?...

Read the rest: http://meganmcardle.theatlantic.com/archives/2009/05/the_price_of_the_kings_shillin.php

Gangsta Government

White House Puts UAW Ahead of Property Rights.

by *Michael Barone*, 7 May 2007

...But my sadness turned to anger later when I heard what bankruptcy lawyer Tom Lauria said on a WJR talk show that morning. "One of my clients," Lauria told host Frank Beckmann, "was directly threatened by the White House and in essence compelled to withdraw its opposition to the deal under threat that the full force of the White House press corps would destroy its reputation if it continued to fight."

Lauria represented one of the bondholder firms, Perella Weinberg, which initially rejected the Obama deal that would give the bondholders about 33 cents on the dollar for their secured debts while giving the United Auto Workers retirees about 50 cents on the dollar for their unsecured debts....

...Think carefully about what's happening here. The White House, presumably car czar Steven Rattner and deputy Ron Bloom, is seeking to transfer the property of one group of people to another group that is politically favored. In the process it is setting aside basic property rights in favor of rewarding the United Auto Workers for the support the union has given the Democratic Party. The only possible limit on the White House's power is the bankruptcy judge, who might not go along...

...We have just seen an episode of Gangster Government. It is likely to be part of a continuing series.

More: <http://www.creators.com/opinion/michael-barone/white-house-puts-uaw-ahead-of-property-rights.html>

New Allegations Of White House Threats Over Chrysler

by *John Carney*, 5 May 2009

...The sources, who represent creditors to Chrysler, say they were taken aback by the hardball tactics that the Obama administration employed to cajole them into acquiescing to plans to restructure Chrysler. One person described the administration as the most shocking "end justifies the means" group they have ever encountered. Another characterized Obama as "the most dangerous smooth talker on the planet—and I knew Kissinger." Both were voters for Obama in the last election.

One participant in negotiations said that the administration's tactic was to present what one described as a "madman theory of the presidency" in which the President is someone to be feared because he was willing to do anything to get his way. The person said this threat was taken very seriously by his firm...

More: <http://www.businessinsider.com/new-allegations-of-white-house-threats-over-chrysler-2009-5>

New Study: America's Most Liberal States Rank Least Free

by *Warner Todd Huston*, 6 May 2009

... It is striking that some of the most Republican states are the most free and all the least free are Democrat states, isn't it? ([2008 Election Map](#))

In keeping with the institute's namesake, American founder George Mason, the rankings are based on some supremely American concepts. Rankings were determined by measuring the personal and economic freedoms of the citizens of the various states coupled with the size and cost of government, education regulations, Second Amendment restrictions, as well as the amount of interference via regulations and police agencies on the populace.

"We develop and justify our ratings," the paper's summary reads, "and aggregation procedure on explicitly normative criteria, defining individual freedom as the ability to dispose of one's own life, liberty, and justly acquired property however one sees fit, so long as one does not coercively infringe on another individual's ability to do the same."...

...A PDF document of the study can be downloaded at the [Mercatus Center site](#)...

More: <http://www.thenextright.com/warner-todd-huston/new-study-americas-most-liberal-states-rank-least-free>

Obama Should Listen to Leviticus: Don't Confuse Justice and Charity

by Michael Medved, 6 May 2009

...The text declares (in the best modern translation): "You shall not commit a perversion of justice; you shall not favor the poor and you shall not honor the great; with righteousness shall you judge your fellow."

The unmistakable commandment to avoid favoring the poor comes as something of a shock: doesn't the Bible, and especially the New Testament, repeatedly remind us to deal generously with the less fortunate, and to care for widows, orphans and paupers in general?

The truth is that the Bible—both Old and New Testament—views compassion as a personal obligation rather than a public priority for governmental or judicial policy. The all important warning against tilting the scales of justice toward the poor appears just three verses before the most famous single injunction in all of Scripture: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Leviticus, 19:18). The juxtaposition of God's directives makes it clear that not even love for your neighbor can allow "perversion of justice." Justice and charity must remain distinct—not just separate, but in some ways opposite polarities...

More: http://townhall.com/Columnists/MichaelMedved/2009/05/06/obama_should_listen_to_leviticus_dont_confuse_justice_and_charity

House bypasses governor's veto to claim Oklahoma's sovereignty

by Michael McNutt, 6 May 2009

...Rep. Charles Key (R-Oklahoma City) said HCR 1028, which, if passed, would be sent to Democratic President Barack Obama and the Democratic-controlled Congress, would not jeopardize federal funds but would tell Congress to "get back into their proper constitutional role." The resolution states the federal government should "cease and desist" mandates that are beyond the scope of its powers.

Key said many federal laws violate the 10th Amendment, which says powers not delegated to the U.S. government "are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people." The Constitution lists about 20 duties required of the U.S. government, he said.

Congress should not be providing bailouts to financial institutions and automakers, he said. "We give all this money to all these different entities, including automakers, and now they're talking about, 'Well maybe it's better to let them go bankrupt,'" Key said.

<http://www.newsok.com/house-bypasses-governors-veto-to-claim-oklahomas-sovereignty/article/3366762>

On the May 6 *Laura Ingraham Show*, Bishop Jackson explained the black community's opposition to the DC Council's decision to recognize same-sex marriages. He also addressed President Obama's likely sell-out to the gay-marriage lobby. "My sense is—and I'm trying to be as supportive as I possibly can of this new president—but I'm thinking that he has sold out to the radical gay agenda, and that he would definitely not sign a veto against this. And so he's an African-American, but his values thus far, on all things moral, are on the opposite page from Bible-believing Christians."

The Battle For Marriage Continues

Bishop Harry R. Jackson Jr., 4 May 2009

<http://townhall.com/Common/PrintPage.aspx?g=42bd0937-76c3-4bb9-8cea-aa4fbe03f5f5&t=c>

Keith Olbermann vs. Miss California's 'Boob Job'

30 Apr 2009

Keith Olbermann and Michael Musto (a snotty homosexual from *The Village Voice*) savage Carrie Prejean, Miss California, who was bold enough to admit, in response to a question at the Miss USA pageant, that she believes in normal marriage only. Lame, childish, and misogynistic comments about "fake boobs" and "they also paid for Carrie to cut off her penis...now he's a babe who needs a brain implant."

Olbie and Musto simply ooze haughty, presumptuous liberal *attitude*, and don't come within a mile of any rational comment about the actual issue of homosexual marriage. This is typical of all the preening, self-congratulating liberals who piously proclaim "Hate is not a family value." Apparently, according to these two jerkbags, hate IS a homosexual value.

Watch: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xWdelybsXw>

Trickle-Down Corruption

by Jonah Goldberg, 6 May 2009

Some days you have to ask yourself, my God, what if these people were Republicans?...

...William Jefferson... Eliot Spitzer...Charles Rangel...Christopher Dodd...John Murtha...Nancy Pelosi...John Edwards...Rod Blagojevich...Jesse Jackson Jr...

...But you know what? We ain't seen nothing yet. For starters, the real corruption isn't what the media are ignoring or downplaying as isolated incidents. It's what the media are hailing as bold, inspirational leadership. **The White House, as a matter of policy, is rewriting legal contracts, picking winners (mostly labor unions and mortgage defaulters) and singling out losers (evil "speculators") while much of the media continue to ponder whether Obama is better than FDR.**

If a Republican administration, staffed with cronies from Goldman Sachs and Citibank, was cutting special deals for its political allies, I suspect we'd be hearing fewer FDR analogies and more nouns ending with the suffix "gate."

Take Obama's "car czar," Steven Rattner. According to ABC's Jake Tapper, Rattner is accused of threatening to use the White House to smear a Chrysler creditor if it refused to back the administration's bankruptcy plan. He's also connected to a massive pension fund scandal involving the investment firm he used to run. One allegation is that conspirators used investments in the low-budget movie "Chooch" to expedite their alleged chicanery. Chooch, by the way, is Italian slang for "jackass," which just happens to be the Democrats' mascot...

Read it all: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=NzYzNzQ4NDM5MmEyY2I4YTc2NThiZDBkY2VjMTQ1MTM=>

Beware of Mandatory Arbitration in Card Check

by Michael Barone, 4 May 2009

...But the unions may have a fallback position: Forget about the secret ballot, and try to pass a bill with **mandatory federal arbitration**. This might be easier to defend. Every American knows what the secret ballot is; few Americans know what mandatory arbitration means.

Mandatory arbitration would be a major, massive change in American labor law. Currently, unions are free to strike, but employers are free to resist their demands as long as they want. The card check bill would require, after only 120 days of bargaining, a federal arbitrator to step in and impose a settlement. A centralized bureaucrat, not responsible to shareholders (or to union leaders), would determine wages, fringe benefits and working conditions. There would evidently be no appeal...

...How would this affect the economy? We have a test case before us, highlighted by recent headlines, which gives us some answers: the auto industry...

...The card check bill's mandatory arbitration provisions are a recipe for doing to very large parts of the private sector what the UAW did to GM, Ford and Chrysler...

More: <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/politics/Beware-of-mandatory-arbitration-in-Card-Check-44192497.html>

Ha! Ha! Ha!

The Law of Unintended Consequences

by Sean Trende, 6 May 2009

In theory, the switch made perfect sense. Arlen Specter would switch parties, have the primary field cleared for him, romp over Pat Toomey in the general election, then continue his Senate career as before. What could possibly go wrong?

Well, to start with, it increasingly **looks as though** Specter will have a serious primary opponent. While polling shows Specter is **likely to win** that matchup, it means he will (i) face the *risk* of losing, (ii) have to raise and spend money for the primary, and (iii) probably have to tack to the left to maintain his primary lead.

Then, speculation increased that former Republican Governor **Tom Ridge would get into the race**. The same polling linked to above shows Ridge thumping Pat Toomey in the primary, and then beating Specter in the general election (other polling shows the general election race quite close).

Now it appears that Harry Reid was unable to keep his promise to award Specter his seniority. According to CNN, a resolution today **prevented Specter from retaining his seniority**. This is a double blow for Specter. First, he can no longer argue to Pennsylvanians that his seniority is a benefit to the state. This makes problem one and two above harder to overcome, as he loses one of the major arguments for his candidacy. Second, Specter does not strike me as a man with a small ego, yet he has dropped from being the twelfth most senior senator to coming in right below Kirsten Gillibrand, who was in diapers when Specter was starting his political career. I would imagine that isn't easy to take. To make matters worse, there isn't much he can do about it; what can he do, switch parties back?

So far, Specter's best day as a Democrat was his first day.

<http://realclearpolitics.blogs.time.com/2009/05/06/the-law-of-unindented-consequences/>



Mrs T's unassailable legacy

Thirty years to the day since Margaret Thatcher became prime minister, the mayor of London salutes the woman who changed politics forever.

by Boris Johnson, 3 May 2009

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/politics/margaret-thatcher/5268850/Blond-on-blonde-Mrs-Ts-unassailable-legacy.html>

Video of Mrs. Thatcher's 1979 victory: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZzcfmlaPHg>

The administration wanted cover for its feckless anti-terror policies. They thought that a sham conference on detainees would help, if it included a few conservatives. Andrew McCarthy, who successfully prosecuted the 1993 World Trade Center bombers, was having none of it. Rush Limbaugh read the whole letter on his May 1 show.

Letter to the Attorney General

sent by Andrew C. McCarthy, 1 May 2009

...The invitation email (of April 14) indicates that the meeting is part of an ongoing effort to identify lawful policies on the detention and disposition of alien enemy combatants—or what the Department now calls "individuals captured or apprehended in connection with armed conflicts and counterterrorism operations." I admire the lawyers of the

Counterterrorism Division, and I do not question their good faith. Nevertheless, it is quite clear—most recently, from your provocative remarks on Wednesday in Germany—that the Obama administration has already settled on a policy of releasing trained jihadists (including releasing some of them into the United States). Whatever the good intentions of the organizers, the meeting will obviously be used by the administration to claim that its policy was arrived at in consultation with current and former government officials experienced in terrorism cases and national security issues. I deeply disagree with this policy, which I believe is a violation of federal law and a betrayal of the president's first obligation to protect the American people. Under the circumstances, I think the better course is to register my dissent, rather than be used as a prop.

Moreover, in light of public statements by both you and the President, it is dismayingly clear that, under your leadership, the Justice Department takes the position that a lawyer who in good faith offers legal advice to government policy makers—like the government lawyers who offered good faith advice on interrogation policy—may be subject to investigation and prosecution for the content of that advice, in addition to empty but professionally damaging accusations of ethical misconduct. Given that stance, any prudent lawyer would have to hesitate before offering advice to the government...

Read the entire letter: http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2009/05/1993_world_trade_prosecutor_ca.html

The first of Baron Bodissey's posts features a Saudi intellectual, Ibrahim Al-Buleihi, who proclaims the value and importance of Western civilization. The second is about an Algerian author, Anwar Malek, who is willing to speak the truth about the decline and degradation of Arab culture.

Why Does it Take a Saudi to Recognize the Value of Western Civilization?

by Baron Bodissey, 1 May 2009

<http://gatesofvienna.blogspot.com/2009/05/why-does-it-take-saudi-to-recognize.html>

A Discourse of Conspiracy

by Baron Bodissey, 4 May 2009

<http://gatesofvienna.blogspot.com/2009/05/discourse-of-conspiracy.html#readfurther>

No More California Dreaming

California as liberalism's laboratory.

by George Will, 3 May 2009

...If, since 1990, state spending increases had been held to the inflation rate plus population growth, the state would have a *\$15 billion surplus* instead of a \$42 billion budget deficit, which is larger than the *budgets* of all but 10 states. Since 1990, the number of state employees has increased by more than a third. In Schwarzenegger's less than six years as governor, per capita government spending, adjusted for inflation, has increased nearly 20 percent.

Liberal orthodoxy has made the state dependent on a volatile source of revenues—high income tax rates on the wealthy. In 2006, the top 1 percent of earners paid 48 percent of the income taxes. California's income and sales taxes are among the nation's highest, its business conditions among the worst, as measured by 16 variables directly influenced by the Legislature. Unemployment, the nation's fourth highest, is 11.2 percent.

Required by law to balance the budget, the Legislature has "solved" the problem by, among other things, increasing the income, sales, gas and vehicle taxes. This, although one rationale for the federal government's gargantuan "stimulus" was to spare states the need to raise taxes which, in California, will more than vitiate the stimulus...

...California teachers—the nation's highest paid, with salaries about 25 percent above the national average—are emblematic of the grip government employees unions have on the state, where 57 percent of government workers are unionized (the national average is 37 percent)...

...But what actually ails California is centrist evasions. The state's crisis has been *caused* by "moderation," understood as splitting the difference between extreme liberalism and hyperliberalism, a "reasonableness" that merely moderates the speed at which the ever-expanding public sector suffocates the private sector.

California has become liberalism's laboratory, in which the case for fiscal conservatism is being confirmed...

More: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/01/AR2009050102825.html>

Green Policies = Economic Decline

by Vaclav Klaus, 1 May 2009

...With the global financial crisis and the sudden economic downturn, two things are becoming clear. First, it will be difficult to afford these expensive new sources of energy. Second, energy rationing policies, like cap-and-trade, will be a permanent drag on economic activity. Ironically, emissions have not decreased as a result of these policies, but are doing so now as the world economy moves into recession.

This is not a surprise to someone like me, having been actively involved in my country's transition from communism to a free society and market economy. The old, outmoded heavy industries that were the pride of our Communist regime were shut down—practically overnight—because they could not survive the opening of the economy. The result was a dramatic decline in CO2 emissions.

The secret behind the cut in emissions was economic decline. As the economies of the Czech Republic and other Central and Eastern European countries were rebuilt and began to grow again, emissions have naturally started to increase. It should be clear to everyone that there is a very strong correlation between economic growth and energy use.

So I am amazed to see people going along with the currently fashionable political argument that policies like cap-and-trade, government mandates and subsidies for renewable energy can actually benefit an economy. It is claimed that the government, working together with business, will create "a new energy economy," that the businesses involved will profit and that everyone will be better off.

This is a fantasy. Cap-and-trade can only work by raising energy prices. Consumers who are forced to pay higher prices for energy will have less money to spend on other things. While the individual companies that provide the higher-priced "green" energy may do well, the net economic effect will be negative.

It is necessary to look at the bigger picture....

More: <http://www2.canada.com/montrealgazette/features/viewpoints/story.html?id=ca2e5f40-69e3-4008-8624-04fe0e487188>

Clifford May schools Jon Stewart (and his moronic audience) on the Geneva Conventions, torture, and terrorists—even getting Stewart to admit that by his standards, President Truman was a war criminal:

Video: http://www.weeklystandard.com/weblogs/TWSFP/2009/04/jon_stewart_truman_was_a_war_c_1.asp

'Sometimes dead is better'

Chrysler is alive—and scary.

by Sherman Frederick, 3 May 2009

It was a mistake to put Chrysler on life support with bailout money. It wasted precious cash. It's a bigger mistake to put the corpse of Chrysler in the grave of a government-guided bankruptcy and reanimate it as a company owned primarily by the Obama administration and big labor. That's worse than death, because just as Stephen King's "Church" the cat emerged just "a little dead," so will Chrysler. It will have the competitive instincts of the Department of Motor Vehicles instead of the good sense that can be learned only by business risk.

You can already see the signs. Chrysler no longer hears the voice of the marketplace. Chrysler hears the voice of its new politically correct masters. And what do those voices whisper? Well, the mad scientists at the White House already claim Chrysler will build super-green cars, not because Americans necessarily "want" greener Chryslers, but because Americans "need" them.

And to heighten the drama, the United Auto Workers (because, as unions always say, workers and their dues have already sacrificed too much) will make sure Chrysler's cost structure in no way adjusts to the market by lowering worker costs.

So, Chrysler will build cars you don't want at a price you won't pay. But fear not. When that inevitability becomes apparent, the Obama administration will bribe consumers with increased "green" tax incentives. At that point the horror show will be complete.

The whole column: <http://www.lvrj.com/opinion/44256112.html>

Nearly 3,000 words, but a very easy read.

God is back: How Ned Flanders won the evangelical crusade

The media may portray evangelicals, such as Ned Flanders, as losers, but U.S.-style Christianity has gone global.

by *John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, 2 May 2009*

There are few more easily ridiculed characters in TV-land than Ned Flanders, the cartoon character who has the misfortune to live next door to Homer Simpson. He has a silly moustache! He wears jumpers! His first name is Nedward! No wonder we all smile with approval as Homer subjects him to one humiliation after another.

The most risible thing about Flanders, of course, is his bulletproof Christian faith...

...The great battle has to do with religion and modernity. Ever since the Enlightenment, intellectuals have predicted that religion—and particularly the effusive brand of religion now practised by evangelicals—would be doomed by modernity... The founders of modern sociology, Max Weber and Émile Durkheim, predicted the secularisation of the world. Ned's fellow moustache-wearer, Friedrich Nietzsche, loudly announced God's death. Marx cursed the opium of the people. Freud saw religion as a mere neurosis. Ever since Darwin, educated European thought has viewed religion as a dying cult...

...The land of Ned and Homer, of course, has always been different. While the French slaughtered priests during their revolution, seeing religion as a bulwark of the *ancien régime*, America's Founding Fathers separated Church from State, in large part to protect the former from the latter. The First Amendment set off a fierce competition between America's "multiplicity of sects," with a succession of evangelising religions vying for people's attentions: the Methodists converted an eighth of the country within a generation of the revolution. While Europe's state-sponsored religions shrivelled, America's free market kept faith alive. That has not stopped most American intellectuals continuing to bet that eventually their country would give in to the same acids of modernity as Europe...

More: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/faith/article6204239.ece>

Neither a Souter Nor a Specter Be

Don't despair, Republicans.

by *William Kristol, 2 May 2009 (May 11 issue)*

...Souter may have been the worst Supreme Court justice ever appointed by a Republican president...As for Specter, his departure perfectly became him: It was entirely opportunistic...

...With 60 Democrats in the Senate, it's Obama's Congress now. Republican obstructionism goes away as an issue and as a political talking point. Obama and the Democrats will be unambiguously in charge. Within a year, it will be Obama's and the Democrats' bailouts, Obama's and the Democrats' deficits, Obama's and the Democrats' tax hikes, and Obama's and the Democrats' domestic overreach...

...Whomever Obama nominates to replace Souter (Second Circuit judge Sonia Sotomayor is the betting favorite) will almost certainly be confirmed...The conservative critique of ACLU-like court decisions and left-wing Justice Department briefs and actions, in areas ranging from national security to social issues, will remind lots of Americans about aspects of modern liberalism they, quite correctly, dislike...

...The Obama White House thinks it had a good week: Specter, Souter, and media fawning over the enchantment of Obama's first 100 days. But to us, this looks like irrational exuberance. This could prove the most bloated moment of the Obama bubble. The Obama administration took a wrong turn in the war on terror and is continuing down the road of disarmament in that war (the anti-torture memos and their fallout). It overreached with respect to the private sector (mishandling the attempted Chrysler bailout). And it continues to make a spectacle of its self-indulgence and narcissism (the Air Force One flyover of Manhattan and Joe Biden's swine flu comments)...

More: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/449ketww.asp>

Specter of Change

Lessons from a defection.

by *Noemie Emery, 2 May 2009 (May 11 issue)*

...The Republican party is the vehicle for the center-right of the American polity, a group that includes the conservative movement, but is not quite of it, and includes many people who touch the conservative movement with different degrees of intensity, or only lightly, or on only a limited number of points.

Permutations are endless: Rudy Giuliani, right on defense, crime, and tax-cutting, but wrong (in the movement's view) on gays and abortion; George W. Bush, a hawk, tax-cutter, and social conservative, but a bleeding heart and big spender;

John McCain, a strong defense and fiscal conservative, but a maverick on many things else. All are considered as grave disappointments by the purists of the conservative movement, who also give failing grades to every Republican president since Coolidge, with the exception of Reagan, and sometimes even to him. The movement seems in a permanent funk over the party's unworthy leaders and often looks down on the party itself as being a drag on the movement's aspirations and prospects. The only problem is that the movement, if it is to be anything more than a really interesting reading group, needs the party if it wants to succeed...

...Olympia Snowe doesn't owe her seat to conservative activists, but to the people of Maine, who elected her and presumably like what she's doing. If conservatives can't make their case to the people of Maine, it's a problem for them, not for Snowe and her voters. The alternative to her is not some idealized conservative activist. It's someone who never votes with them at all...

...What can conservatives do, if they want to extend their dominion? They might stop holding up Ronald Reagan as a shield and an icon and look instead at what Reagan did. He was a movement conservative and a movement leader, but he was also a politician, and a builder of party, who understood how a movement fit into a party, and how a party could move a movement ahead. Coalition destruction was not on his agenda...

All of it: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/450mnzei.asp>

Necessary 'Shortcuts'

Obama gets it wrong on Churchill and torture.

by Jonah Goldberg, 1 May 2009

...Typically, Sullivan's emotions are getting ahead of his facts. Churchill's preference for humane treatment of German POWs under the Geneva Conventions had more to do with ensuring reciprocity from enemy armies. Al-Qaeda isn't a signatory and isn't interested in such reciprocity.

One reason Churchill might have eschewed putting the screws to detainees in 1942 is that he already knew what they could tell him about the bombings. The Allies knew where the airbases were and had cracked German codes years before.

Regardless, Churchill and Great Britain didn't quite take the firm stand against "torture" that Obama and Sullivan suggest. During the war, the Brits ran an interrogation center, "the Cage," in one of London's fanciest neighborhoods, where they worked over 3,573 captured Germans, sometimes brutally. The Free French movement, headquartered in London, savagely beat detainees under the nose of British authorities. From 1945 to 1947, Colonel Stephens himself ran the Bad Nenndorf prison near Hanover, Germany, where Soviet and Nazi prisoners were treated far more brutally than those at Guantanamo Bay. Stephens was court-martialed, and cleared, for some of the alleged atrocities.

Of course, none of this remotely made Britain "equivalent" to Nazi Germany...

Complete column: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=MTZhZjVIMmJhYzBjMWJjZDVIMDk3ZjM0NGRiMTEwNjg=>

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