

These are the same people who seethed for months after the president of Harvard had the audacity to suggest that there might be some mental differences between men and women. But when it comes to actual, brutal, systematic societal repression of women, they spring to the defense of any religion that isn't Christianity or Judaism.

Liberal critics stone Soraya

by Christian Toto, 26 June 2009

How dare a filmmaker shed light on an atrocity committed in an Islamic country?

Don't they understand how the system works? You can make the U.S. military the bad guy, or a redneck, or a Bible thumper, but you simply do not cast blame on people of Muslim faith.

Even if it's all based on a true story...

Read on: <http://whatwouldtotowatch.com/2009/06/26/liberal-critics-stone-soraya/>

Politicians Bankrupted California, Not Prop. 13

by Carol Platt Liebau, 29 June 2009

...At the real root of California's fiscal misery is the profligacy of arrogant, big-spending, left-wing legislators, who have treated taxpayers as if they exist only to support the government. Their attitude was exemplified in a recent statement from state assemblywoman Noreen Evans (D-Santa Rosa), chairman of the state Budget Conference Committee, repudiating the governor's call for the state to "live within its means":

Well, there is this mantra out there—"live within our means"—and while that sounds really nice . . . and it sounds really responsible, it's meaningless. Our means are completely within our control . . . We have just given away huge corporate subsidies in February; we have given away other tax reductions over many, many years; we've created tax loopholes; in good times, we routinely give away taxes, and then in lean times we never replace those tax deductions or close those loopholes. . . . So "live within our means" doesn't mean anything. The fact is, we have a state with a population that have needs that we have a moral obligation to provide.

Her assertions—and the obnoxious sense of entitlement underlying them—defy credulity. For politicians like Evans (and the legislature is full of them!), when the hardworking or productive keep more of what they have earned, it's only because politicians have been "giving away" the tax revenues that purportedly belong to them. In this mindset, meeting the "needs" of a greedy, ever-expanding government is the only imperative; taxpayers are nothing more than cash cows, commanded to provide the fodder that allows Evans and those like her to meet their "moral obligations" with other people's money...

...Ultimately, any honest assessment of California's plight must assign responsibility for the state's fiscal crisis—not to the taxpayers who voted for Prop. 13 three decades ago—but to the politicians who have subsequently exploited them without mercy. Indeed, if spending had simply reflected average population growth plus the average increase in the cost of living since 1991, there would now be a \$15 billion *surplus*. After adjusting for inflation, the state now spends nearly 20% more per capita than it did 18 years ago; even as California's tax revenues increased by 167% during that period, state spending exploded by 189%...

Read it all: <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/2281759/posts>

Persistent Myths in Feminist Scholarship

by Christina Hoff Sommers, 29 June 2009

...Consider *The Penguin Atlas of Women in the World* (2008), by the feminist scholar Joni Seager, chair of the Hunter College geography department. Now in its fourth edition, Seager's atlas was named "reference book of the year" by the American Library Association when it was published. "Nobody should be without this book," says the feminist icon Gloria Steinem. "A wealth of fascinating information," enthuses *The Washington Post*. Fascinating, maybe. But the information is misleading and, at least in one instance, flat-out false.

One color-coded map illustrates how women are kept "in their place" by restrictions on their mobility, dress, and behavior. Somehow the United States comes out looking as bad in this respect as Somalia, Uganda, Yemen, Niger, and Libya. All are coded with the same shade of green to indicate places where "patriarchal assumptions" operate in "potent combination with fundamentalist religious interpretations." Seager's logic? She notes that in parts of Uganda, a man can claim an unmarried woman as his wife by raping her. The United States gets the same low rating on Seager's charts because, she notes, "State legislators enacted 301 anti-abortion measures between 1995 and 2001." Never mind that the Ugandan practice is barbaric, that U.S. abortion law is exceptionally liberal among the nations of the world, and that the activism and controversy surrounding the issue of abortion in the United States is a sign of a vigorous free democracy

working out its disagreements.

On another map, the United States gets the same rating for domestic violence as Uganda and Haiti. Seager backs up that verdict with that erroneous and ubiquitous emergency-room factoid: "22 percent-35 percent of women who visit a hospital emergency room do so because of domestic violence."

The critical work of 21st-century feminism will be to help women in the developing world, especially in Muslim societies, in their struggle for basic rights. False depictions of the United States as an oppressive "patriarchy" are a ludicrous distraction. If American women are as oppressed as Ugandan women, then American feminists would be right to focus on their domestic travails and let the Ugandan women fend for themselves...

The rest: <http://chronicle.com/free/v55/i40/40sommers.htm>

Ideologue-in-Chief

by Caroline Glick, 29 June 2009

...Rather than speak of liberties and freedoms, Clinton and Obama have waxed poetic about social justice and diminishing the gaps between rich and poor. In a recent interview with the El Salvadoran media, Clinton said, "Some might say President Obama is left-of-center. And of course that means we are going to work well with countries that share our commitment to improving and enhancing the human potential."

But not, apparently, enhancing human freedoms. From Iran to Venezuela to Cuba, from Myanmar to North Korea to China, from Sudan to Afghanistan to Iraq to Russia to Syria to Saudi Arabia, the Obama administration has systematically taken human rights and democracy promotion off America's agenda. In their place, it has advocated "improving America's image," multilateralism and a moral relativism that either sees no distinction between dictators and their victims or deems the distinctions immaterial to the advancement of US interests.

While Obama's supporters champion his "realist" policies as a welcome departure from the "cowboy diplomacy" of the Bush years, the fact of the matter is that in country after country, Obama's supposedly pragmatic and nonideological policy has either already failed—as it has in North Korea—or is in the process of failing...

...So if Obama's foreign policy has already failed or is in the process of failing throughout the world, why is he refusing to reassess it? Why, with blood running through the streets of Iran, is he still interested in appeasing the mullahs? Why, with Venezuela threatening to invade Honduras for Zelaya, is he siding with Zelaya against Honduran democrats? Why, with the Palestinians refusing to accept the Jewish people's right to self-determination, is he seeking to expel some 500,000 Jews from their homes in the interest of appeasing the Palestinians? Why, with North Korea threatening to attack the US with ballistic missiles, is he refusing to order the USS John McCain to interdict the suspected North Korean missile ship it has been trailing for the past two weeks? Why, when the Sudanese government continues to sponsor the murder of Darfuris, is the administration claiming that the genocide in Darfur has ended?

The only reasonable answer to all of these questions is that far from being nonideological, Obama's foreign policy is the most ideologically driven since Carter's tenure in office. If when Obama came into office there was a question about whether he was a foreign policy pragmatist or an ideologue, his behavior in his first six months in office has dispelled all doubt. Obama is moved by a radical, anti-American ideology that motivates him to dismiss the importance of democracy and side with anti-American dictators against US allies...

Full column: <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1246296529986&pagename=JPost%2FJPostArticle%2FPrinter>

Basilica bones belong to apostle St. Paul

CNN, 29 June 2009

Scientific tests prove bones housed in the Basilica of St. Paul in Rome are those of the apostle St. Paul himself, according to Pope Benedict XVI.

"Tiny fragments of bone" in the sarcophagus were subjected to carbon dating, showing they "belong to someone who lived in the first or second century," the pope said in a homily carried on Italian television. "This seems to confirm the unanimous and undisputed tradition that these are the mortal remains of the Apostle St. Paul," Benedict said in Sunday's announcement. The tomb also holds "traces of a precious linen cloth, purple in color and laminated with pure gold, and a blue colored textile with linen filaments," the pope said...

More: http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/europe/06/29/vatican.st.paul.bones/index.html?section=cnn_latest

1 Corinthians, chapter 13.

Go ahead, read it. It's short. And famous. And beautiful.

A Debt The Founders Wouldn't Believe

by Sen. Judd Gregg, 26 June 2009

...What would Thomas Jefferson think today, as the Obama administration puts this generation on a path to drive the debt sky-high, effectively leaving our children and grandchildren to foot the bill?

Over the past 40 years, U.S. debt has averaged 36% of our gross domestic product...By the end of this fiscal year, our publicly-held debt will be about 57% of GDP. This is not a good situation, but a temporary spike in debt can be managed, just as it was in the past when we were facing the crises of World Wars I and II, the Civil War and the War of Independence. In those instances, debt was rapidly paid off during the postwar periods.

Under President Obama's budget plan for the nation, this debt will not be rapidly paid off once the recession ends. Instead, it will continue to mushroom, driven by the president's new proposed spending that we cannot afford, which comes on top of looming entitlement spending we are already facing as the baby boom generation moves into retirement. Because of this spending, we will have budget shortfalls, or deficits, averaging \$1 trillion each year for the next 10 years.

Since the president's budget does not propose to ask Americans today to pay for that additional spending through taxes, the only way for the U.S. government to get that money is to borrow it, which means adding to, not reducing, the debt. By the end of the budget period as proposed by the president, the debt will have skyrocketed to 82% of GDP, which is simply not sustainable.

Interest payments on that debt will soon be the largest single item in the federal budget — more than \$800 billion per year in 10 years' time. That will eclipse what we will spend on national security, and is four times as much as we will spend on education, energy and transportation combined.

These are not abstract numbers, either — the debt will have an effect on every American. In 2019, under the president's plan, each U.S. household's share of the federal debt held by the public will be \$133,000 — more than many Americans owe on their mortgage.

Read the rest: <http://www.ibdeditorial.com/IBDArticles.aspx?id=330912782903148>

Waxman-Markey Flunks Math

by Rich Karlgaard, 29 June 2009

...In the U.S., electricity is produced from these sources...48.9% coal, 20.0% natural gas, 19.3% nuclear, 1.6% petroleum. Got that? A tick over 88% of U.S. electricity comes from three sources: coal, gas and nuclear. Petroleum brings the contribution of so-called "evil" energy—that is, energy that is carbon- or uranium-based—to almost 90%. The remaining sources of U.S. electricity, the renewables, are, by comparison, tiny players: 7.1% hydroelectric, 2.4% other renewables, 0.7% other.

Hydroelectric accounts for 70% of renewable energy in America. But, of course, hydro is mostly tapped out. Almost every dam that could be built *has* been built. Ironically enough, political opposition to building more dams comes from the same crowd of tree huggers who oppose coal, gas and uranium.

Do you see where I'm going? The Waxman-Markey bill that passed the House on Friday by a 219-212 margin will punitively tax energy sources that contribute 90% of current U.S. electricity (or 71% if you want to leave out nuclear). The taxes will be used to subsidize the 10% renewable contributors (but really just 3% after you leave out hydro).

In other words, Waxman-Markey is betting the future of U.S. electricity production on sources that now contribute 3% or supply 10 million Americans with electricity. That's enough juice for the people in Waxman's Los Angeles County. Or, if you prefer, for Nancy Pelosi's metro San Francisco plus Markey's metro Boston.

Well, what about electricity for the other 295 million? You can't get there from here with Waxman-Markey. At very best, solar, wind and cellulosic ethanol will make 20% contributions by 2025. The smart money would bet on 10%.

Renewable dreamers, such as *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, believe this magical 3% is somehow different than the 97%. Different in the way the silicon chip is different than the Eniac computer. In other words, they believe the 3% will see Moore's Law exponential gains that will grow mightily in a decade...

...Bottom line: There is no way the U.S. economy can enjoy future prosperity without the big three electrical energy sources of clean coal, natural gas and nuclear.

Complete column: <http://blogs.forbes.com/digitalrules/2009/06/waxmanmarkey-flunks-math.html>

Four excellent columns on yesterday's *Ricci v. DeStefano* decision:

Firefighter Justice

The Supremes, Sotomayor, and Racial Jurisprudence

Wall Street Journal editorial, 30 June 2009

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124631901145470941.html>

Left Dodges Moral Debate on Ricci Case

by David Paul Kuhn, 30 June 2009

http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/06/30/left_dodges_moral_debate_on_ricci_case.html

On Race, the Slog Goes On

by George F. Will, 30 June 2009

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/29/AR2009062903382.html>

Justices reject Sotomayor position 9-0—but bigger battles loom

by Stuart Taylor Jr., 30 June 2009

<http://ninthjustice.nationaljournal.com/2009/06/justices-reject-sotomayor-posi.php>

Obama—naïve and ignorant as usual—**insists** that Zelaya was right and his ouster was illegal.

Honduras Defends Its Democracy

Fidel Castro, Hillary Clinton, Hugo Chavez, Barack Obama, and Daniel Ortega object.

by Mary Anastasia O'Grady, 30 June 2009

...That Mr. Zelaya acted as if he were above the law, there is no doubt. While Honduran law allows for a constitutional rewrite, the power to open that door does not lie with the president. A constituent assembly can only be called through a national referendum approved by its Congress.

But Mr. Zelaya declared the vote on his own and had Mr. Chávez ship him the necessary ballots from Venezuela. The Supreme Court ruled his referendum unconstitutional, and it instructed the military not to carry out the logistics of the vote as it normally would do.

The top military commander, Gen. Romeo Vásquez Velásquez, told the president that he would have to comply. Mr. Zelaya promptly fired him. The Supreme Court ordered him reinstated. Mr. Zelaya refused.

Calculating that some critical mass of Hondurans would take his side, the president decided he would run the referendum himself. So on Thursday he led a mob that broke into the military installation where the ballots from Venezuela were being stored and then had his supporters distribute them in defiance of the Supreme Court's order.

The attorney general had already made clear that the referendum was illegal, and he further announced that he would prosecute anyone involved in carrying it out. Yesterday, Mr. Zelaya was arrested by the military and is now in exile in Costa Rica...

More: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124623220955866301.html>

Obama's EPA Quashes Climate Change Science

by John Hinderaker, 28 June 2009

The Competitive Enterprise Institute has obtained an EPA study of the "endangerment" to human well-being ostensibly caused by carbon dioxide emissions, together with a set of EPA emails indicating that the study, which concludes that carbon dioxide is not a significant cause of climate change, was suppressed by the EPA for political reasons.

You can read the comments that the CEI submitted to the EPA on EPA's proposed endangerment finding [here](#), along with the emails. The censored report, by Alan Carlin and John Davidson, is [here](#).

In their report, Carlin and Davidson point out that the EPA has not done its own evaluation of the global warming theory. Rather, it has relied on analyses by others, mostly the U.N.'s IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)

report. That report, however, was a political document, not a scientific one. Knowing that current scientific research disproves the anthropogenic global warming theory, the U.N. ordered that *no* recent research be considered in the IPCC report. This is a scandal of which too few people are aware. As science, the U.N. report is a bad joke.

Carlin and Davidson go on to recite the scientific work that shows rather clearly that human activity is a minor factor, at most, in climate change—which has, of course, been occurring from the beginning of Earth's history to the present. Their report is a useful summary of the evidence for those who are not familiar with it.

If the Obama administration gets its way, Americans will not become aware of the scientific evidence: Obama's EPA suppressed the Carlin/Davidson report and tried to keep it secret for political reasons. The emails obtained by the CEI are revealing...

Check them out: <http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2009/06/023915.php>

U.S. Supreme Court Overturns Judge Sotomayor in *Ricci v. DeStefano*

New Haven firefighters were victims of reverse discrimination. Miss "wise Latina woman" not so wise after all.
29 June 2009

http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=CNG.c545704d1398608e5c73eba0d62d6831.261&show_article=1&catnum=1

Will *The Stoning Of Soraya M.* Get An Oscar Nod?

by John T. Simpson, 29 June 2009

Just when I thought I was out, they pull me back in.

Returning once again to the land beneath the Big Hollywood sign for a most important poll question. *The Stoning of Soraya M.* has received powerful rave reviews across the political spectrum. The buzz is hot. From the leftie pundits at HuffPo (who only seem to be discovering the true human rights horrorshow nature of that regime now, most curious) to the Righties at Big Hollywood and elsewhere, SORAYA M. is a must-see movie that will linger with you long after you've left the theater.

Strangely enough, Amnesty International's Elise Auerbach doesn't like it. Because stonings in Iran are so rare, don't you know. No suspension of disbelief for Ms. Elsie. I'm sorry, what's her job again? Oh yeah, Iran Specialist for Amnesty International. Go figure. Personally, I happen to think one stoning is one too many. And it wasn't the only one, not by a country mile! But that's just me. I'm not an Iran specialist for AI. Like, say, Ms. Auerbach. Nice work if you can get it, huh, Ms. Elsie?...

Read on: <http://bighollywood.breitbart.com/jtsimpson/2009/06/29/poll-question-will-soraya-m-get-an-oscar-nod/>

Video: Iranian Demonstrators Blow Up Basij Headquarters

20 June 2009

A number of Basijis (Iranian government goons) locked themselves inside their headquarters in eastern Tehran. Demonstrators set fire to the building's natural gas lines, and BOOM! the whole thing blew up (0:05 into the video, on the right of the screen). At least five Basiji goons were killed. Other fires are visible in the distance.

Watch: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGyZo2jOOYY>



Oriana Fallaci (June 29, 1929—September 15, 2006)

Biography

Rage and Pride 30 Sept 2001

Rage, Pride, and Doubt 13 March 2003

Prophet of Decline interview by Tunku Varadarajan, 23 June 2005

The Enemy We Treat Like A Friend 23 July 2005

Oriana Fallaci and the War Against Islamofascism speech by David Horowitz, 29 Nov 2005

"Government prohibitions do always more mischief than had been calculated; and it is not without much hesitation that a statesman should hazard to regulate the concerns of individuals as if he could do it better than themselves."

—Albert Gallatin to Thomas Jefferson, 1807

A Health 'Reform' To Regret

by *George Will*, 28 June 2009

...Most Americans do want different health care: They want 2009 medicine at 1960 prices. Americans spent much less on health care in 1960 (5 percent of GDP as opposed to 18 percent now). They also spent much less—nothing, in fact—on computers, cell phones and cable and satellite television.

Your next car can cost less if you forgo GPS, satellite radio, antilock brakes, power steering, power windows and air conditioning. You can shop for such a car at your local Studebaker, Hudson, Nash, Packard and DeSoto dealers.

The president says his health plan is responsive "to all those families who now spend more on health care than housing or food." Well. The Hudson Institute's Betsy McCaughey, writing in *The American Spectator*, says that in 1960 the average American household spent 53 percent of its disposable income on food, housing, energy and health care. Today the portion of income consumed by those four has barely changed—55 percent. But the health care component has increased while the other three combined have decreased. This is partly because as societies become richer, they spend more on health care—and symphonies, universities, museums, etc.

It is also because health care is increasingly competent. When the first baby boomers, whose aging is driving health care spending, were born in 1946, many American hospitals' principal expense was clean linen. This was long before MRIs, CAT scans and the rest of the diagnostic and therapeutic arsenal that modern medicine deploys...

...As market enthusiasts, conservatives should stop warning that the president's reforms will result in health care "rationing." Every product, from a jelly doughnut to a jumbo jet, is rationed—by price or by politics. The conservative's

task is to explain why price is preferable. The answer is that prices produce a rational allocation of scarce resources...

Read the rest: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/26/AR2009062603457.html>

Declaring War on the American Economy

by John Steele Gordon, 27 June 2009

...If it's enacted in its present form, what the cap-and-trade bill will certainly do is:

1) Massively increase federal power not only over the economy but over daily life as well. Building codes have always been the province of the states, but this bill, according to **one blogger**, would require federally mandated energy audits before you could change a window in your home and specifies the number and location of electrical outlets to be permitted;

2) Start a trade war with India and China by slapping tariffs on goods from countries that don't conform to US standards on carbon emissions;

3) Act like the governor on a steam engine, increasingly slowing down the economy through energy taxes whenever the economy accelerates. In other words, its virtually guarantees economic stagnation at best. And most economists who are not working for liberals think it will be far more economically pernicious than that...

Full column: <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/blogs/index.php/gordon/71621>

An outstanding discourse on the nature—and future—of democracy.

Converting Manna to Gall

by Baron Bodissey, 27 June 2009

...As I write this, the U.S. House of Representatives has just passed the "American Clean Energy And Security Act of 2009", a.k.a. "Waxman-Markey", a.k.a. "Cap-and-Trade" — and which also might as well be known as the "Economic Destruction of America Act".

This bill is not popular with the American people. Its alleged long-term benefits are far outweighed by the massive economic damage it will do to our country within the next few years. In the short term it will benefit no one except the already bloated federal government and its parasitic private entities. No major business stands to make a killing from it. No congressman who voted for it enhanced his chances of re-election by doing so.

So why in the world was such a monstrosity ever passed? Why would democratically elected representatives come out so strongly against our national well-being, our commercial interests, and public opinion?

Cap-and-Trade is hardly an isolated instance. Politicians all across the West are jostling one another to see who can be first to leap over the nearest available precipice, whether the issue is political correctness, mass immigration, capitulation to Islam, ruinous levels of taxation, or environmental orthodoxy.

Rather than examine the particular debacle that was just passed by the House of Representatives, I'd like to examine a more general question: **Does democracy carry within it a poison pill that guarantees its own eventual destruction?...**

Read it all: <http://gatesofvienna.blogspot.com/2009/06/converting-manna-to-gall.html#readfurther>

Gang rape: Is it a race issue?

A high proportion of such attacks appears to be carried out by young black men, according to Metropolitan Police statistics.

by Sorious Samura, 21 June 2009

In 1999 I witnessed a gang rape in Sierra Leone. I was forced to watch a group of rebel soldiers taking it in turns to rape a young girl in front of an audience of jeering men. It was the height of the civil conflict and rape had become a devastating weapon of war. When I moved to Britain I believed I had escaped such horrific sexual violence. As my Dispatches investigation tomorrow night shows, I was mistaken. Gang rape is happening here—and what I have found most disturbing as an African is that a disproportionate number of these attacks are being carried out by black or mixed-race young men...

Continue: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/gang-rape-is-it-a-race-issue-1711381.html>

Busting The Administrative Cost Benefit Myth

by Tom Bevan, 27 June 2009

...This statistic about Medicare's low administrative costs has become one of the linchpins in the argument for a "public option" on health care. The only problem, not surprisingly, is that it's hogwash.

The explanation is really quite simple, and it's provided here by **Robert Book** of the Heritage Foundation. The statistic cited by Alter and Krugman uses administrative costs calculated as *a percentage of total health care costs* (For Medicare it's roughly 3 percent and for private insurers it's roughly 12 percent).

But here's the catch: because Medicare is devoted to serving a population that is elderly, and therefore in need of greater levels of medical care, it generates significantly higher expenditures than private insurance plans, thus making administrative costs smaller as a percentage of total costs. This creates the *appearance* that Medicare is a model of administrative efficiency. What Jon Alter sees as a "miracle" is really just a statistical sleight of hand.

Furthermore, Book notes that private insurers have a number of additional expenditures which fall into the category of "administrative costs" (like state health insurance premium taxes of 2-4%, marketing costs, etc) that Medicare does not have, further inflating the apparent differences in cost.

But, as you might expect, when you compare administrative costs on a per-person basis, Medicare is dramatically less efficient than private insurance plans. As you can see [here](#), between 2001-2005, Medicare's administrative costs on a per-person basis were 24.8% higher, on average, than private insurers.

So, contrary to claims of Alter, Krugman, and President Obama, moving tens of millions of Americans into a government run health care option won't generate any costs savings through lower administrative costs. Just the opposite.

This confirms two things most Americans already know: 1) government is rarely, if ever, more efficient than the private sector, and 2) if something sounds too good to be true, it almost always is.

More: http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/06/27/the_administrative_cost_benefit_myth_97193.html

Obama's Conflicting Signals

With Iran and North Korea testing missiles, why is Obama cutting missile defense?

by Rep. Eric Cantor, 26 June 2009

...President Obama has appropriately described North Korea as "a grave threat" to the world. With Pyongyang eager to build on its test of a long-range missile in April, the administration has activated our missile-defense system and moved additional radars and shoot-down systems closer to Hawaii. Defense Secretary Robert Gates has stated that our ground-based interceptor missiles in Alaska and California are "clearly in a position to take action." Meanwhile, Marine Gen. James Cartwright, the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said he was 90 percent certain we could interdict a North Korean missile.

Sadly, this kind of forthrightness from President Obama on the threat is the exception rather than the rule. On the legislative front, the administration has gutted \$1.2 billion from missile-defense funding. This, even as its exorbitant \$3.6 trillion fiscal year 2010 budget request cranks up spending for seemingly everything else...

Read the rest: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=MTczNmYzYmYyMTVjYjA5YzJlMjU1NTY0YWRkNTQxMjM=>

Iraq on the Knife's Edge

by Peter Feaver, 26 June 2009

...These attacks may simply be **what Secretary Clinton has called** "a signal that the rejectionists fear Iraq is going in the right direction." This sounds eerily like **the much-derided claim by Vice President Cheney** that similar attacks back in 2006 were a sign of "desperation" on the part of terrorists. It may have been a sign of desperation, but, at least in 2006, the terrorists were able to use them to seize the initiative. We must hope that they are not able to do that again today.

Starting this week, the parade of critical junctures in Iraq will accelerate. If the Iraqis go ahead with **plans** to put the SoFA to a national referendum, the parade could become a stampede. When even skeptical war critics like Fareed Zakaria are penning articles about "**Victory in Iraq**" that read almost like a Bush valedictory speech on the topic, the opportunity for a decent outcome in Iraq seems tantalizingly close. I hope we are not jeopardizing that outcome with a premature withdrawal.

Complete column: http://shadow.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/06/26/iraq_on_the_knives_edge

High Tech's Great Leap Backward

by L. Gordon Crovitz, 22 June 2009

Will the world's computer makers kowtow to the Thought Police in Beijing?...

...Beijing recently announced that starting on July 1, all computers sold in China must come installed with government-designed software to block pornography. Testing by Internet experts shows that the software, called Green Dam-Youth Escort, also is designed to censor political and religious Web sites, disable programs when people input sensitive words, monitor personal communications, and track where Chinese citizens go on the Web.

In essence, bureaucrats in China want the world's computer makers to make it easier for their Thought Police to block access to news and information from the outside world, and to punish citizens for the sites they visit and the views they express online...

More: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124563025130035875.htm>

You owe it to yourself, and the good people of Iran, to see this remarkable film.

The Stoning of Soraya M.

Based on a true story of life in Iran.

Starring Shohreh Aghdashloo (*House of Sand and Fog*)

Jim Caviezel (*The Passion of the Christ, I Am David*)

Mozhan Marn

and Navid Negahban

Opened 26 June 2009.

Movie website, with clips and background info:

<http://thestoning.com/>

Directory of theatres:

<http://www.thestoning.com/theaters/>

Iran: Desperately Seeking Yeltsin

by Charles Krauthammer, 26 June 2009

...This second Iranian revolution is on the defensive, even in retreat. To recover, it needs mass, because every dictatorship fears the moment when it gives the order to the gunmen to shoot at the crowd. If they do (Tiananmen), the regime survives; if they don't (Romania's Ceausescu), the dictators die like dogs. The opposition needs a general strike and major rallies in the major cities—but this time with someone who stands up and points out the road ahead. Desperately seeking Yeltsin. Does this revolution have one? Or to put it another way, can Mousavi become Yeltsin?...

...While Mousavi himself was originally only a few inches to Ahmadinejad's left on the political spectrum—being hand-picked by the ruling establishment precisely for his ideological reliability—Mousavi's support was not restricted to those whose views matched his. He would have been the electoral choice of everyone to his left, a massive national constituency—liberals, liberalizers, secularists, monarchists, radicals and visceral opponents of the entire regime—that dwarfs those who shared his positions, as originally held.

Moreover, Mousavi's positions have changed, just as he has. He is far different today from the Mousavi who began this electoral campaign. Revolutions are dynamic, fluid. It is true that two months ago there was little difference between Ahmadinejad and Mousavi. But that day is long gone. Revolutions outrun their origins. And they transform their leaders...

...In the 1980s, Mousavi was Ayatollah Khomeini's prime minister, a brutal enforcer of orthodox Islamism. Twenty years later, he started out running for president advocating little more than cosmetic moderation. But then the revolutionary dynamic began: The millions who rallied to his cause—millions far to his left—began to radicalize him. The stolen election radicalized him even more. Finally, the bloody suppression of his followers led him to make statements just short of challenging the legitimacy of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and the very foundations of the regime. The dynamic continues: The regime is preparing the basis for Mousavi's indictment (for sedition), arrest, even possible execution. The prospect of hanging radicalizes further.

As Mousavi hovers between Gorbachev and Yeltsin, between reformer and revolutionary, between figurehead and leader, the revolution hangs in the balance...

More: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/25/AR2009062503361.html>

The Climate Change Climate Change

The number of skeptics is swelling everywhere.

by Kimberley Strassel, 26 June 2009

...Among the many reasons President Barack Obama and the Democratic majority are so intent on quickly jamming a cap-and-trade system through Congress is because the global warming tide is again shifting. It turns out Al Gore and the United Nations (with an assist from the media), did a little too vociferous a job smearing anyone who disagreed with them as "deniers." The backlash has brought the scientific debate roaring back to life in Australia, Europe, Japan and even, if less reported, the U.S...

...The number of skeptics, far from shrinking, is swelling. Oklahoma Sen. Jim Inhofe now counts more than 700 scientists who disagree with the U.N.—13 times the number who authored the U.N.'s 2007 climate summary for policymakers. Joanne Simpson, the world's first woman to receive a Ph.D. in meteorology, expressed relief upon her retirement last year that she was finally free to speak "frankly" of her nonbelief. Dr. Kiminori Itoh, a Japanese environmental physical chemist who contributed to a U.N. climate report, dubs man-made warming "the worst scientific scandal in history." Norway's Ivar Giaever, Nobel Prize winner for physics, decries it as the "new religion." A group of 54 noted physicists, led by Princeton's Will Happer, is demanding the American Physical Society revise its position that the science is settled. (Both Nature and Science magazines have refused to run the physicists' open letter.)

The collapse of the "consensus" has been driven by reality. The inconvenient truth is that the earth's temperatures have flat-lined since 2001, despite growing concentrations of CO2. Peer-reviewed research has debunked doomsday scenarios about the polar ice caps, hurricanes, malaria, extinctions, rising oceans. A global financial crisis has politicians taking a harder look at the science that would require them to hamstring their economies to rein in carbon...

More: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124597505076157449.html>

Hugh Hewitt Show 17 June 2009 hour 2

Dr. Richard Muller of UC Berkeley and his new book, *Physics For Future Presidents*. This hour covers many aspects of global warming.

Listen: <http://hughhewitt.townhall.com/TalkRadio/Show.aspx?RadioShowID=5&ContentGuid=0294137c-ee62-408f-97bb-53d103951f5e>

Hugh Hewitt Show 17 June 2009 hour 3

More physics with Dr. Richard Muller. Topics: terrorists, oil, "resource wars," nuclear power, Yucca Mountain, space exploration, asteroids hitting Earth, volcanoes, H1N1 virus, species extinction.

Listen: <http://hughhewitt.townhall.com/TalkRadio/Show.aspx?RadioShowID=5&ContentGuid=32bdeb3a-f440-498f-b81d-7bbe41c08d35>

ABC ObamaCare Special Turns Into Presidential Filibuster

President Obama uses network primetime special and overtime 'Nightline' coverage to talk for more than 45 minutes of combined 75-minute programs, revealing nothing new.

by Jeff Poor, 25 June 2009

<http://www.businessandmedia.org/articles/2009/20090625043708.aspx>

Bravo Jake Tapper: Pushing President Obama On His Absurd Assurances About "Keeping Your Plan"

by Hugh Hewitt, 24 June 2009

...Tapper was trying to raise the most obvious question of all: The president has promised the American people over and over again that they can keep their health insurance if they like it, but it is quite simply enormously and purposely deceptive of him to do so.

The president has to change the subject, has to dissemble and deflect, because the truth, if understood by Americans, will doom the centerpiece of his takeover of American medicine.

Tapper pointed out that employers provide insurance to most Americans, and if the federal government offers employers a cheaper way to provide health insurance, vast numbers of those employers will dump their employees into that government system.

The government won't force the employers to switch, but employers will switch, and the president's promise will be as bogus as a three dollar bill. When this massive disruption occurs, President Obama will stand back and say he had nothing to do with it—that employers made the switch.

Even if Americans then see through this giant bait-and-switch and blame the president, it will be too late. Once leveled the health insurance industry will be too crippled to reconstitute itself as a competitor to the government option/public plan. Millions of Americans and their premiums will have been transferred by their employers to the government rolls, including millions of Americans in the public sector whose local governments will not be able to resist the lure of the savings that comes from off-loading the teachers, cops and firefighters onto the federal plan.

This is not what federal employees and Congress have right now, by the way—another practiced bit of deceptive rhetoric regularly rolled out by the president. What they have is the FEHB—the Federal Employees Health Benefits system, which is a very nice fringe benefit but which is definitely not a government insurance plan but rather a collective of hundreds of private sector plans from which federal employees can chose. This crucial distinction is apparently lost on the MSM which never questions this sleight of hand either...

More: <http://townhall.com/Common/PrintPage.aspx?g=96358f02-4fd7-4bdf-b4c6-66f48cfc4318&t=c>

A Weak American President

by Anne Bayefsky, 23 June 2009

...This is a man who embodies the opposite of the courage to act. His appalling ignorance of history prompted him to claim at his press conference that "the Iranian people ... aren't paying a lot of attention to what's being said ... here." On the contrary, from their jail cells in the Gulag, Soviet dissidents took heart from what was being said here—as all dissidents dream that the leader of the free world will be prepared to speak and act in their defense...

...Instead of denouncing the fake election, President Obama now tells Iranians who are dying for the real thing "the United States respects the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran." Whose sovereignty is that? The Hobbesian sovereign thugs running the place? Sovereignty to do what? To deny rights and freedoms to their own people? In a state so bereft of minimal protections for human dignity, why should the sovereignty of such a government be paramount?

But President Obama didn't want to dwell on the daily reality of sovereign Iran: A criminal code that permits stoning women to death for alleged adultery and hanging homosexuals for the crime of existing. Instead, he repeatedly invoked "respect" for "their traditions and their culture."

This is the same mantra he espoused to the Islamic world in Cairo when three times he spoke of the "rights" of Muslim women to cover up their bodies. Knowing full well that women in the Muslim world face the contrary problem of surviving after refusing to cover up their bodies, he never once dared to mention that this was also a human right. What part of cultural relativism and traditional oppression does President Obama not know how it plays out?...

...This Iranian government has told us in deeds, as well as in words, exactly what path it has chosen. President Obama has told us his path also: pandering to Islamic radicals and empty posturing. Ironically, the rest of the world claimed they wanted a weak American president whose foreign policy would read "apologize, capitulate and stand down." Now that they have what they asked for, real human rights victims are being forced to pay the piper.

More: <http://www.forbes.com/2009/06/23/obama-iran-press-conference-elections-opinions-contributors-bayefsky.html>

The Adolescent Angst of Barack Obama

by Michael Barone, 25 June 2009

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/politics/48934402.html>

The Astroturf Drive For Obamacare

How to buy 'grass-roots support'.

by Michelle Malkin, 24 June 2009

If you believe the White House, 30 million Americans support a government health-care takeover. But if you look at the funding behind the ObamaCare campaign, it's the same few leftist billionaires, union bosses and partisan community

organizers pushing the socialized medicine agenda. Let's connect the dots...

...Pike is the same philanthropist who assisted ACORN founder Wade Rathke after his brother, Dale, was caught embezzling nearly \$1 million from the group. Wade Rathke sits on the Tides Foundation board of directors. Following Dale Rathke's theft of funds, Pike agreed to buy a promissory note worth \$800,000 to cover the debt. These are the populist do-gooders supposedly looking out for you and your health.

Why do they want ObamaCare? An internal 2008 ACORN memo I obtained makes the motives clear. Wrote ACORN Philadelphia regional director Craig Robbins: "Increasingly, ACORN offices around the country are doing work on health care." The goal: "Building ACORN Power."...

Read it all: http://www.nypost.com/seven/06242009/postopinion/opedcolumnists/the_astroturf_drive_for_obamacare_175748.htm

Well, well, well. Some members of the press corps are finally waking up.

And our Dear Leader doesn't like it. Not one little bit.

A More Contentious Obama Press Conference

by Brian Montopoli, 23 June 2009

<http://www.cbsnews.com/blogs/2009/06/23/politics/politicalhotsheet/entry5106892.shtml>

Senator Embarrassment, D-Calif

by Dennis Prager, 23 June 2009

...Why did Boxer fail to think that way? The answer is not only because she happens to act foolishly and childish. The reason is deeper. Liberalism has lowered expectations of behavior for everyone in America except white Christian heterosexual males. They are the only Americans from whom dignified and mature conduct is always expected. Liberals treat women, blacks, Hispanics, gays, and many non-Christians, with what is known as the soft bigotry of low expectations. Many liberal women, blacks, Hispanics, and gays know that and use it to get away with conduct and speech that no WASP heterosexual male could. People rise or descend to the level of behavior expected of them.

That is why those 17 seconds in the U.S. Senate were so revealing and worthy of attention. They encapsulated the way in which modern liberalism has lowered the bar of civility for so many in America. And they revealed—yet another time—why this particular senator from California is an embarrassment to her colleagues, her state, and the U.S. military. It was not, unfortunately, an embarrassment to Barbara Boxer.

Read it all: <http://jewishworldreview.com/0609/prager062309.php3>

The Big Chill

Congress shouldn't fight global warming by freezing the economy.

by Pete Du Pont, 19 June 2009

...The benefits of Waxman-Markey would not be much. Historical data show that the average rate of warming in the 30 years from 1977 to 2007 was just 0.32 degree Fahrenheit per decade. The expected warming in the next hundred years is estimated to be about 0.50 degree Fahrenheit per decade, and the new bill is estimated to lower global temperatures by about 0.18 degree Fahrenheit by 2100. Manzi estimates the additional economic costs of the bill would be 0.8% of gross domestic product, while the economic benefits would be just 0.08%—so the costs would be 10 times the benefits.

The cost of reducing emissions turns out to be greater than the cost they impose on societies. According to a 1999 Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas estimate, the emissions cuts the Kyoto Protocol would have required in 2010 were likely to reduce America's GDP by \$275 billion to \$468 billion, or \$921 to \$1,565 per person, and of course Kyoto does not apply to fast-growing developing countries such as China and India.

An April study by Charles River Associates tells us that if the Obama proposal to reduce CO2 emissions becomes law, it will have a serious impact on the availability and cost of energy. By 2025, just 16 years from now, the cost of natural gas would rise 56%, electricity 44% and motor fuel 19%. Annual household purchasing power would annually decline by an average of \$1,827. And America will lose 3.2 million jobs.

There are alternatives. Earlier this month the National Center for Policy Analysis (for which I serve as policy chairman) issued a global warming analysis titled "[10 Cool Global Warming Policies](#)." Among them: eliminating energy subsidies and barriers to nuclear power, establishing biotech crops, reducing automobile pollution and developing new technology.

More: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124529064317626263.html>

What 2 Watch 4: Damage Control

As his agenda collapses on Capitol Hill, Obama hopes for press conference Hail Mary today.

23 June 2009

<http://www.gop.com/News/NewsRead.aspx?GUID=4a15a160-2ecb-443e-ac27-8f65751f6f5c>

Obamacare: Kiss Your Access Goodbye

by Scott Atlas, 23 June 2009

President Obama and the Democratic Congress repeat a mantra so often that it has become a truism: America's health care system is a scandalous failure, and it is absolutely *urgent* that we fix it now. The mainstream media nod their agreement, and yet, the polls tell us something else: Eighty percent of Americans say they are satisfied with the quality of their health care. In fact, the overwhelming majority of Americans, about three-fourths, are happy with their current health care coverage...

...So why, then, does a savvy politician like Barack Obama believe he has room to push for a radical overhaul of health care? The polls also show that the same majority of Americans who rate their own health care consistently join the critics when questioned about the "quality of the system" as an abstract whole. It is this unacknowledged inconsistency of American opinion that gives President Obama the opening he needs to push for what is, at heart, a plan for government-run health care. Perhaps it would concentrate our minds wonderfully, then, if we paused to consider the greatest consequence of ObamaCare: Rationed or restricted access to doctors, therapies and care. To see why, you need look no further than other nations with government-centralized health systems that our President and Congress are intent on emulating. With ObamaCare, access is sure to be reduced in six major ways.

Number 1: Less access to timely health care, especially by trained specialists...Number 2: Less access to state-of-the-art drugs that are proven to cure serious diseases, like cancer...Number 3: Less access to modern medical technologies that lead to earlier diagnoses, safer treatments, and better outcomes...Number 4: Less access to choice of doctor and choice of treatments for patients and families...Number 5: Less access to choice of health insurance coverage...Number 6: Less access to the leading innovators and innovations in health care...

Details: http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/06/23/obamacare_kiss_your_access_goodbye_97122.html

Happy Fourth, Iranian Religious Psycho-killers, (signed) US State Department

by Roger L. Simon, 22 June 2009

Break out the Dodger Dogs, Mahmoud! Americans who spent the past week transfixed by the brutal shooting of **Neda Soltan** and related horrifying events in Iran may be astonished to learn the **following**:

The United States said Monday its invitations were still standing for Iranian diplomats to attend July 4 celebrations at US embassies despite the crackdown on opposition supporters. President Barack Obama's administration said earlier this month it would invite Iran to US embassy barbecues for the national holiday for the first time since the two nations severed relations following the 1979 Islamic revolution.

"There's no thought to rescinding the invitations to Iranian diplomats," State Department spokesman Ian Kelly told reporters. "We have made a strategic decision to engage on a number of fronts with Iran," Kelly said. "We tried many years of isolation, and we're pursuing a different path now."

More: <http://pajamasmedia.com/rogersimon/2009/06/22/happy-fourth-iranian-religious-psycho-killers-signed-us-state-department/>

High Praise for FDR's New Deal

This year, Democrats have been trying hard to institute a new New Deal. Here's some high praise for the original New Deal, from leaders of other countries. President Obama'velt, after all, keeps telling us that we're supposed to care so much about what people in Other Countries think of us.

"The appeal to the decisiveness and masculine sobriety of the nation's youth with which Roosevelt calls his readers to

battle is reminiscent of the ways and means by which Fascism awakened the Italian people." (Benito Mussolini, 1934, on FDR's book *Looking Forward*)

"These moral demands which the President places before every individual citizen of the United States are also the quintessence of the German state philosophy, which finds its expression in the slogan 'The public weal transcends the interest of the individual.'" (Adolf Hitler, 1934)

No Country for Burly Men

How feminist groups skewed the Obama stimulus plan towards women's jobs.

by *Christina Hoff Sommers*, 22 June 2009 (*June 29 issue*)

...Men are bearing the brunt of the current economic crisis because they predominate in manufacturing and construction, the hardest-hit sectors, which have lost more than 3 million jobs since December 2007. Women, by contrast, are a majority in recession-resistant fields such as education and health care, which gained 588,000 jobs during the same period. Rescuing hundreds of thousands of unemployed crane operators, welders, production line managers, and machine setters was never going to be easy. But the concerted opposition of several powerful women's groups has made it all but impossible. Consider what just happened with the \$787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009...

...A Washington feminist establishment that celebrates the "happily-ever-after" story of its victory over burly men cannot represent the views and interests of many women. Those men are fathers, sons, brothers, husbands, and friends; if they are in serious trouble, so are the women who care about them and in many cases depend on them. But NOW and its sister organizations see the world differently. They see the workplace as a battlefield in a zero-sum struggle between men and women, where it is their job to side with women. Unless the Obama administration and Congress find the temerity to distance themselves from the new feminist lobby, the "man-cession" will deepen and further mischief will ensue.

The full story: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/659dkrod.asp>

IRAN: THE BLOODY REVOLUTION MARCHES ON—Attacking Protesters, Islamic Ruling Murderers Calling Victims Murderers

by *Pamela Geller*, 22 June 2009



A screen grab posted on YouTube (L) of Neda Agha Soltan, along with undated pictures of her.

Reports, videos, photographs: http://atlashrugs2000.typepad.com/atlas_shrugs/2009/06/iran-the-bloody-revolution-marches-on-attacking-protesters-islamic-ruling-murderers-calling-victims-.html

Welfare in a Bad Way

by *Robert Samuelson*, 22 June 2009

...What most Americans identify as government "welfare" are payments to single mothers, food stamps and (perhaps) Medicaid, the federal-state health insurance program for the poor. But that's not the half of it. Since 1960, government has changed radically. Then, 52 percent of federal spending went for defense, 26 percent for "payments for individuals"—the welfare state. By 2008, 61 percent consisted of "payments for individuals," 21 percent for defense...

...Any sober examination of figures like these suggests that the system has promised more than it can realistically deliver. We are borrowing not to finance investment in the future but to pay for today's welfare—present consumption. Sooner or later, the huge debt will weaken the economy. Nor would paying for all promised benefits with higher taxes be

desirable. Big increases in either debt or taxes risk depressing economic growth, making it harder yet to pay promised benefits.

The U.S. welfare state is weakening; insecurity is rising. The sensible thing would be to decide which forms of public welfare are needed to protect the vulnerable and to begin paring others. Our inaction poses another dreary parallel with GM. It was obvious a quarter-century ago that GM the auto company could not support GM the welfare state. But the union wouldn't surrender benefits, and the company acquiesced. Inertia prevailed, and the reckoning came. The same cycle, repeated on a national scale with sums many multiples higher, would be correspondingly more fearsome.

More: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/21/AR2009062101792.html?hpid=opinionsbox1>

Dodge Facts, Skip Details, Govern Chicago-Style

by Michael Barone, 20 June 2009

We pundits like to analyze our presidents and so, as Barack Obama deals with difficult problems ranging from health care legislation to upheaval in Iran, let me offer my Three Rules of Obama.

First, Obama likes to execute long-range strategies but suffers from cognitive dissonance when new facts render them inappropriate...Second, he does not seem to care much about the details of policy...The result is incoherent public policy: indefensible pork barrel projects, a carbon emissions bill that doesn't limit carbon emissions from politically connected industries, and a health care program priced by the Congressional Budget Office at a fiscally unfeasible \$1,600,000,000,000...

...Third, he does business Chicago-style. His first political ambition was to be mayor of Chicago, the boss of all he surveyed; he has had to settle for the broader but less complete hegemony of the presidency. From Chicago, he brings the assumption that there will always be a bounteous private sector that can be plundered endlessly on behalf of political favorites...

...Chicago-style, he has kept the Republicans out of serious policy negotiations but has allowed left-wing Democrats to veto a measure upholding his own decision not to release interrogation photos. While promising a politics of mutual respect, he peppers both his speeches and impromptu responses with jabs at his predecessor. Basking in the adulation of nearly the entire press corps, he whines about his coverage on Fox News. Those who stand in the way, like the Chrysler secured creditors, are told that their reputations will be destroyed. Those who expose wrongdoing by political allies, like the AmeriCorps inspector general, are fired...

More: http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/politics/Dodge-facts-skip-details-govern-Chicago-style_06_21-48680137.html

Atlas Shrugs continues to present a stunning aggregation of Iran news, photos, and videos.

Iran Protests: Live

by Pamela Geller, 21 June 2009

http://atlasshrugs2000.typepad.com/atlas_shrugs/2009/06/iran-update.html

The Stealth Single-Payer Agenda

by George Will, 21 June 2009

...The puzzle is: Why does the president, who says that were America "starting from scratch" he would favor a "single-payer"—government-run—system, insist that health care reform include a government insurance plan that competes with private insurers? The simplest answer is that such a plan will lead to a single-payer system.

Conservatives say that a government program will have the *intended* consequence of crowding private insurers out of the market, encouraging employers to stop providing coverage and luring employees from private insurance to the cheaper government option...

...Assurances that the government plan would play by the rules that private insurers play by are implausible. Government is incapable of behaving like market-disciplined private insurers. Competition from the public option *must* be unfair because government does not need to make a profit and has enormous pricing and negotiating powers. Besides, unless the *point* of a government plan is to be cheaper, it is pointless: If the public option conforms to the imperatives that regulations and competition impose on private insurers, there is no reason for it.

The president characteristically denies that he is doing what he is doing—putting the nation on a path to an outcome

he considers desirable—just as he denies any intention of running General Motors. Nevertheless, the unifying constant of his domestic policies—their connecting thread—is that they advance the Democrats' dependency agenda. The party of government aims to make Americans more equal by making them equally dependent on government for more and more things...

Read the rest: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/19/AR2009061902334.html>

No surprise to see ABC give platform to Obama — but not to his critics

by Ron Smith, 19 June 2009

...There's much buzz this week about the decision of ABC News to air a special edition of its World News program June 24 from the White House. Charlie Gibson will anchor the news from the Blue Room in a program described by the network as a special town hall meeting on health care. Republicans (remember them?) are very upset about this, maybe because their views on health care reform (whatever they might be) are being left out of this telecast. They think having the president's views amplified on television without opposition is pretty chilling...

...That ABC thinks it kosher to broadcast a program from the White House of teleprompted comments from Barack Obama and vetted questions from a handpicked audience and to exclude opposite views speaks volumes about media bias. To those of us on the political right, this comes as no great surprise. We're used to being defamed, decried, ignored and belittled by the mainstream media that we despise in return because of their bias against our "retrograde" beliefs and against us.

But we are outraged. We oppose the direction of our government toward ever more control over our lives. We know that Barack Obama is not The One but rather an ambitious, charismatic politician who won the big prize. We know that society is not perfectible. We know that we have spent ourselves into bankruptcy. We worry about the future facing our children and their children.

Unlike the people at ABC, we are not in a slobbering love affair with our current White House Occupant and are suspicious of all who hold great power.

Full column: <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bal-op.smith19jun19,0,4170415.column>

Atlas Shrugs is all over the protests in Iran: videos, photographs, reports.

Defying Islamic terror regime, fierce clashes on Tehran streets, Iranians protesters are met with tear gas, batons, water cannons

by Pamela Geller, 20 June 2009

http://atlasshrugs2000.typepad.com/atlas_shrugs/2009/06/defying-islamic-terror-regime-fierce-clashes-on-tehran-streets-iranians-protesters-are-met-with-tear.html

Finally!

Under Pressure, Obama Calls on Iran to End Violence, 'Unjust' Actions

In a statement that appeared to answer his critics who wanted him to speak out more forcefully, President Obama called on Iran to stop the violence and unjust actions against its people.

Fox News, 20 June 2009

President Obama on Saturday called on the Iranian government to "stop all violent and unjust actions against its own people" amid calls for the White House to go further in showing support for the Iranian people after the country's disputed elections.

Republicans, in particular, have pressed Obama to speak out more forcefully, as protesters and authorities clashed Saturday in Tehran during a government crackdown.

"The universal rights to assembly and free speech must be respected and the United States stands with all who seek to exercise those rights," Obama said in a written statement.

Obama referenced his speech this month to the Muslim world, saying "suppressing ideas never succeeds in making them go away. The Iranian people will ultimately judge the actions of their own government. If the Iranian government seeks the respect of the international community, it must respect the dignity of its own people and govern through consent, not coercion."

Obama also cited the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s, famous quote: "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

"I believe that," Obama said. "The international community believes that. And right now, we are bearing witness to the Iranian peoples' belief in that truth, and we will continue to bear witness."...

Full story: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2009/06/20/republicans-pressure-obama-support-iranian-protesters/>

Extreme makeover

Obama rushing health care plan with sinister agenda

Las Vegas Review-Journal editorial, 19 June 2009

..."The disconnect in the president's speech to the American Medical Association was remarkable," Mr. Moffit replied. "He reiterated the key elements of his health policy agenda: a new *government*-run health plan to compete with private health plans in a *government*-run national health insurance exchange. It would include a *government* mandate on employers to offer *government*-approved coverage, as well as a *government* mandate on individuals to buy *government*-approved insurance.

"Yet the president warned the doctors about the unnamed 'naysayers' who claim he's trying to bring about '*government*-run' health care. Gee, where would they get that idea?"

What President Obama is trying to do is to slip in a vastly expensive health care "reform" that will lead inevitably to a government-run, socialized system for everyone—complete with rationing to decide who gets care and who does not, based on such factors as life expectancy and lifestyle choices (whether the patient deserves treatment for conditions resulting from smoking, drinking, riding a motorcycle, etc.)—while dressing up the scheme with lipstick and a wig to prevent anyone from pointing out there's a pig under there...

Read the rest: <http://www.lvrj.com/opinion/48598622.html>

Global warming fuel rules put freeze on automakers

by Eric Peters, 19 June 2009

...Ironically, the emissions Obama's car team wants to control are not carbon monoxide or unburned hydrocarbons or other harmful chemical compounds that make it hard to breath and clouds the skies with tawny-looking smog.

Those emissions are a non-problem—or very close to it. After 40 years of work inventing and improving emissions control equipment, a modern passenger car engine's exhaust stream is better than 98 percent "clean." About 2 percent of what exits the pipe is other than harmless water vapor and carbon dioxide, an inert gas.

But there's the rub. The old school definition of "emission" is being broadened to include carbon dioxide, the essence of life that allows humans, animals and plants to breathe and flourish.

The Obama administration misguidedly wants to filter out the tiny amount of CO₂ wafting into the atmosphere from automotive tailpipes and factory smokestacks. It believes that CO₂—not the sun—is the cause of apocalyptic global warming, and it wants to raise tax-revenues and reward its friends by allowing businesses that emit little of it to sell carbon cap-and-trade credits to businesses that emit lots of it. That includes every form of transportation, electric utilities and almost all manufacturers.

And unlike traditional exhaust emissions—which can be and have been lowered by making engines burn fuel more efficiently and by chemically scrubbing their exhaust—the only currently known/practical way to reduce the amount of CO₂ produced by burning a gallon of gasoline is to burn less gasoline.

That, in turn, will mean that new cars will become smaller—whether that's what consumers want or not. Thus, America's ailing automakers will be forced to junk billions of dollars in tooling as well as vehicle platforms and write-off an entire class of large vehicles like large sedans, minivans, SUVs and pick-ups. Foreign competitors, who already specialize in smaller cars, will be given another government-ordered advantage over U.S. industry...

More: <http://detnews.com/article/20090619/OPINION01/906190339/1008/OPINION01/Global-warming-fuel-rules-put-freeze-on-automakers>

Reams of op-eds have been written in the past week, full of conjecture about the demonstrations in Iran. These two are *by far* the most coherent ones I've seen.

Hope and Change—but Not for Iran

by Charles Krauthammer, 19 June 2009

Millions of Iranians take to the streets to defy a theocratic dictatorship that, among its other finer qualities, is a self-declared enemy of America and the tolerance and liberties it represents. The demonstrators are fighting on their own, but they await just a word that America is on their side.

And what do they hear from the president of the United States? Silence. Then, worse. Three days in, the president makes clear his policy: continued "dialogue" with their clerical masters.

Dialogue with a regime that is breaking heads, shooting demonstrators, expelling journalists, arresting activists. Engagement with—which inevitably confers legitimacy upon—leaders elected in a process that begins as a sham (only four handpicked candidates permitted out of 476) and ends in overt rigging.

Then, after treating this popular revolution as an inconvenience to the real business of Obama-Khamaneh negotiations, the president speaks favorably of "some initial reaction from the Supreme Leader that indicates he understands the Iranian people have deep concerns about the election."

Where to begin? "Supreme Leader"? Note the abject solicitousness with which the American president confers this honorific on a clerical dictator...

More: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/18/AR2009061803495.html>

Obama's Fantastical Realism

by Rich Lowry, 19 June 2009

...Obama says he wants to avoid stoking a nationalist backlash. A legitimate, but overblown, concern. Iranians surely can understand the difference between the U.S. sending CIA operatives into the country to help stage an anti-democratic coup—as Obama constantly reminds the world we did in the 1950s—and speaking up against repression. Without undue "meddling," Obama could note that governments in Lebanon, Iraq, and Afghanistan honor election results, and exhort Iran to lead the democratic wave rather than resist it.

Obama's timidity speaks to a guilty conscience. At some level, he buys the post-colonial critique of the West as the root of the developing world's troubles, and thinks we lack the moral standing to judge non-Western governments that resent and envy us. Obama is perfectly capable of launching moralistic broadsides—just at his own country, especially under his predecessor. Who are we to condemn the abuse of peaceful demonstrators when we waterboarded three terrorists? ...

...Obama is putting human rights behind stability, in the ultimate cause of a prospective bargain with the mullahs. This isn't really "realism," but a stubborn commitment to an illusory belief in the power of talks with an ill-intentioned, reform-resistant dictatorship. Beneath the veneer of its hardheaded distancing from the protesters, Obama's policy has a goopy, naïve heart...

More: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=ODJiODQzZWVmZTY2YzQ0OWRhOGIxYTk1ZmJmMTQwNTM=>

How Safeway Stores reduced health care costs by using free-market principles instead of bureaucratic dictates.

Mr. Burd Goes to Washington

Business will pay for government health care.

by Kimberley Strassel, 19 June 2009

...The Safeway plan has two main parts that work in tandem. The first involves giving employees a financial stake in the system. Safeway demolished the traditional PPOs and HMOs that encourage consumers to be cavalier about costs. The company today fully pays for an array of primary and preventive visits and tests. But beyond that, employees have skin in the game. The company deposits \$1,000 each year into a "health reimbursement account," which workers can use to pay for care. The next \$1,000 in expenses is the employee's responsibility. After that, employees pay 20% of costs up to a \$4,000 maximum.

Safeway workers these days treat that first \$1,000 carefully, since anything beyond it comes out of their pockets. The company is alive with stories of people who no longer visit the emergency room for routine care but instead call around to doctors to ask prices, and swap information with colleagues. Safeway is doing its part to improve price transparency, by having its care administrator, Cigna, analyze claims information. One discovery was that within 30 minutes of its California headquarters routine colonoscopy prices ranged from \$700 to \$7,000. By the end of the year, employees will be able to go on a Web site, punch in a zip code, and get a list of providers and costs.

The second part of Safeway's plan was an embrace of the obvious: Healthy people cost less...

More: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB12453672252229323.html>

Freedom Can't Be Rationed

by Rep. Mike Pence, June 2009 issue

...President Obama and Democrats in Congress have proposed a government-run health care plan that would "compete" against private health coverage. Estimates have suggested that such "competition" would encourage employers to reduce costs by eliminating their health benefits for employees. As a result, as many as 119 million Americans will lose their coverage, forcing most of them into the government-run plan. In his budget, the president proposed nearly \$1 trillion in new spending as a mere "down payment" to fund this "free" health care gimmick.

The truth is, government-run health insurance takes away citizens' freedom, forcing them to accept a government decree about intensely personal health decisions. At a time when Medicare faces unfunded obligations of nearly \$86 trillion, dumping more than half of all Americans with private coverage into a government program will dramatically jeopardize our fiscal future. To make matters worse, it will take away citizens' freedom to choose their doctors—and the freedom to choose, with their doctors, the treatment option that best meets their health needs...

...Peter Orszag, President Obama's new budget director, was candid about the impact of government control on health care when he cited studies in a 2007 report noting that "patients who might benefit from more expensive treatments might be made worse off" if the government rations access to costly—but potentially life saving—care. In other words, the true cost of "free" government-run health insurance will be a loss of freedom for millions of Americans who will be forced to give up their freedom to choose medical treatments that will actually work for them.

Here's how one Michigan mother expressed her exasperation with the government-run Medicaid program: "You feel so helpless thinking, something's wrong with this child and I can't even get her into a doctor... When we had real insurance, we would call and come in at the drop of a hat." This mother's helplessness in a vast government bureaucracy is the antithesis of freedom—lack of freedom to choose one's doctor resulting in a lack of access to care...

Read the rest: <http://spectator.org/archives/2009/06/18/freedom-cant-be-rationed>

Roger Kimball **points out** that although the Mayor of London's comments are tailored to the situation in Britain, they apply equally to the United States.

Public Spending Begins With Private Enterprise

Where is the call for wealth creation amid the squabbling about cuts and investment?

by Boris Johnson, 15 June 2009

...It's all about Labour spending versus Tory cuts. It's about a series of obscurantist irregular verbs that will be familiar to all listeners of the *Today* programme. I make sensible efficiencies, you make deep cuts, he slashes vital public services. I invest wisely, you have generous spending programmes, he wastes billions of taxpayers' money. It is all a great gamble about which kind of words and attitudes the electorate will find most reassuring...

...So before we are all engulfed in an orgy of mutual misrepresentation between two sides who know perfectly well that public spending will need to be cut, can I enter one small, sheep-like cough of protest? This whole debate is back to front. We are putting the cart before the horse. Every time you hear a politician stand forth and invite your good opinion by offering to "cut" this or "invest in" that, ask yourself the prior question: just how did the politicians come by this money? Who created it? And what are we doing to help them create more?

This is taxpayers' money, amigos. It was produced by the sweat upon the brow of the 23.6 million private-sector employees, and by the hundreds of thousands of British businesses—80 per cent of them with five employees or fewer—that are struggling on in spite of the recession...

...I want to hear politicians talk less about themselves and their priorities and more about the entrepreneurs, the people who get up at 5am to organise their business or cut deals with the other side of the world. Every time you hear politicians swanking about what they are going to do with public funds, remember that wealth was ultimately created by private enterprise; and, if they don't help the wealth creators, they won't have any money to spend.

Complete column:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/borisjohnson/5538007/Public-spending-begins-with-private-enterprise.html>

It's an annoying task, but someone must occasionally counter the ravings of the New York Times Know-it-alls.

Announcing the Save Frank Rich Society

by Roger Kimball, 18 June 2009

<http://pajamasmedia.com/rogerkimball/2009/06/18/announcing-the-save-frank-rich-society/>

The Obama administration admits that its proposed deficit spending programs will total at least \$9 trillion. That's 2 ½ times the cost of World War II and 18 times the cost of the Iraq War. Rather than question this ridiculous waste, ABC and NBC are devoting hour after hour of air-time to help sell the American people on socialized medicine.

Media's Mask Is Slipping As Deficits Surge

by L. Brent Bozell, 17 June 2009

...ABC News has announced plans to put Barack Obama in prime time again from the White House to push his health-nationalizing agenda for an hour — and then another half-hour on "Nightline." ABC will broadcast live from the White House for "World News" and "Good Morning America," interviewing both Barack and Michelle Obama.

It's bad enough that NBC News just gave Obama two hours of fluffy promotion in prime time (followed quickly by two hours of prime-time fluff reruns)...

...Forget participation. ABC isn't allowing time even for any official Republican rebuttal. Republicans will have to hope they find a spot or two in the audience ABC News selects with the promise of "divergent opinions in this historic debate." ABC also promises the participation of its medical correspondent Dr. Tim Johnson, who's been a blatant cheerleader for a European-style "right" to health care. ...Skepticism is warranted when ABC promises "divergent opinions," which probably means a debate between leftists, that people who want a single-payer socialist system will be granted the floor.

...More conservative White Houses have not been awarded a supportive network platform. Does anyone remember that ABC prime-time special that allowed President Bush to sell Social Security privatization in 2005? Or the two-hour, 2006 prime-time Bush White House special promoting the War on Terror? Try not to laugh too hard at the impossibility of such a concept. You can just hear the protests, can't you? "Why, we can't do that! We're journalists!"...

More: <http://www.ibdeditorials.com/IBDArticles.aspx?id=330130725124804>

And a reminder of what a trillion looks like: <http://www.pagetutor.com/trillion/index.html>

'Public Option': Son of Medicaid

Lard atop lard that only a politician or bureaucrat could love.

by Daniel Henninger, 18 June 2009

...The reform known as Medicaid is worth our attention now because Mr. Obama is more or less demanding that the nation accept another reform, his "optional" federalized health insurance program. He suggested several times before the AMA that opposition to it will consist of "scare tactics" and "fear mongering."

Whatever Medicaid's merits, this federal health-care program more than any other factor has put California and New York on the brink of fiscal catastrophe. I'd even call it scary.

Spending on health and welfare, largely under Medicaid, makes up one-third of California's budget of some \$100 billion. In New York Gov. David Paterson's budget message, he notes that "New York spends more per capital (\$2,283) on Medicaid than any other state in the country."

After 45 years, the health-care reform called Medicaid has crushed state budgets. A study by the National Governors Association said a decade ago that because of "new requirements" imposed by federal law—meaning Congress—"Medicaid has evolved into a program whose size, cost and significance are far beyond the original vision of its creators."

In his speeches, Mr. Obama makes the original vision of his "public option" insurance plan sound about as simple as driving through toll booths with an electronic pass on your windshield. It's going to be all about "best practices" with patients "reimbursed in a thoughtful way," as if the federal government is about to become just another big Google...

...The list of add-ons is endless, and there's little about it that is thoughtful. Why shouldn't one think that, as with Medicare and Medicaid, the Obama Public Option in time will become an impossible fog for patients to navigate? But unto eternity the program's administrative complexity will provide work for bureaucrats, Members of Congress, their staffs, lobbyist spouses and the "health-care" establishment of foundations and economists...

More: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124528251402125409.html>

A 3800-word journey through the tall grass of literary criticism and exegesis of two stories: "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"

by Jorge Luis Borges, and "The Poet" by Isak Dinesen (Karen Blixen). And it's well worth it, because at the end Mr. Bertonneau ties it all in with current American politics—in a very big way.

Literature and Ideology: Jorge Luis Borges and Karen Blixen

by Thomas F. Bertonneau, 12 June 2009

...Taken together, "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" and *The Poet* constitute an allegory of the actual modern catastrophe. They illustrate Voegelin's paradoxical insight, from *The New Science of Politics*, that: "A civilization can, indeed, advance and decline at the same time—but not forever. There is a limit toward which this ambiguous process moves," and a society reaches this limit when "an activist sect that represents the Gnostic truth organizes the civilization into an empire under its rule."

As Voegelin writes, "Totalitarianism, defined as the existential rule of Gnostic activists, is the end form of progressive civilization."

The entire concatenation of themes from Borges, Blixen, and Voegelin appears in the current disposition of the West, in Europe and North America. A counterintuitive—one might as well say, Gnostic—economic theory, while permitting politicians to regard themselves as saviors of the people, has, after the tipping point late last year, rapidly destroyed wealth and productive capacity. Journalists casually refer to the sitting President of the United States as a god, as *Newsweek* editor Evan Thomas recently did...

Read the whole thing: <http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/3966>

Support Our Troops

They're still fighting for us.

Soldiers' Angels

Wounded Warrior Project

Fisher House: help military families

Our Military

Be sure to read these superb pieces:

Just Make Stuff Up by Victor Davis Hanson

100 Stimulus Projects: A Second Opinion by Sen. Tom Coburn

The State Despot by Mark Steyn

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

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

Major Papers Expunge Obama's Comment: 'I'll Be Honest, There Are Countries Where a Single-Payer System Works Pretty Well'

by Terence P. Jeffrey, 16 June 2009

<http://www.cnsnews.com/public/content/article.aspx?RsrcID=49625>

This report contains more than forty pages of reports, charts, and priceless photographs showing massive waste and corruption throughout Obama's "stimulus" programs. These programs are stimulating nothing but greed, because all Obama does is lazily, cluelessly turn hundreds of billions of dollars over to scumbag politicians and cronies throughout the country.

100 Stimulus Projects: A Second Opinion

by Senator Tom Coburn, M.D., 16 June 2009

http://coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=59af3ebd-7bf9-4933-8279-8091b533464f

Health Reform Is All Downside For Most Americans

by Douglas O'Brien, 16 June 2009

...Many Democrats are demanding a "public option" as part of the brave new world of health care. Essentially creating a government health insurance policy with broad guaranteed benefits that anyone can buy into if they want, which will be affordable, fair, honest, loyal and true. Democrats claim that this government insurance product will keep the private plans honest and force them to keep premiums down and benefits up. Now, let us ignore for a moment the fact that the hundreds of health insurance companies in America compete tooth and nail for business right now using prices, benefits and other innovative features to attract customers away from their competitors. What impact will the public option have? It will have only one of two impacts.

One is that it will sputter along, unable to innovate and with bureaucratic inefficiency and burdensome requirements, and it will prove unattractive to consumers (see Postal Service versus FedEx). It will end up as the insurer of last resort for those with illnesses and who make poor lifestyle choices and result in a vastly expensive health care plan vacuuming up untold billions in tax dollars because its business model is unsustainable. In other words, it will be a much bigger Medicare and Medicaid.

The other potential for the public option is that it will undercut the private insurers on price using tax dollars to subsidize premiums. Employers will eliminate health care benefits and the accompanying costly overhead and encourage workers to join the public plan. The government will continue to layer new and expensive regulations on private insurers, further crippling their ability to compete with the feds, and, ultimately, it will dry up the private insurance market.

In the end, the president is offering Americans a deal. The upside for those who already have health insurance is almost nil, other than relieving the guilt one feels over the existence of the uninsured. Most people get nothing but the guarantee of more government spending. The potential downside is the crippling of health care under government control, where costs are contained by restricting access to care, shifting the burden to the private sector and reducing innovation and new technology. It is a picture of overall mediocrity, guaranteed for all...

More: http://www.americanthinker.com/2009/06/health_reform_is_all_downside.html



John Enoch Powell MBE (June 16, 1912—February 8, 1998)

Biography

Like the Roman, I seem to see the River Tiber foaming with much blood. speech, 20 Apr 1968

Churchill from the Dimension of Time speech, 22 Oct 1988

Enoch Was Right (video of speeches, etc.): [Part 1](#) [Part 2](#) [Part 3](#)

The president is in this up to his famously prominent ears.

Gerald Walpin speaks: The inside story of the AmeriCorps firing

Dispute that resulted in firing involved stimulus money.

by Byron York, 14 June 2009

Also: See UPDATE below; Senator Grassley protests, demands information, including any role of First Lady

The White House's decision to fire AmeriCorps inspector general Gerald Walpin came amid politically-charged tensions inside the Corporation for National and Community Service, the organization that runs AmeriCorps. Top executives at the Corporation, Walpin explained in an hour-long interview Saturday, were unhappy with his investigation into the misuse of AmeriCorps funds by Kevin Johnson, the former NBA star who is now mayor of Sacramento, California and a prominent supporter of President Obama. Walpin's investigation also sparked conflict with the acting U.S. attorney in Sacramento amid fears that the probe—which could have resulted in Johnson being barred from ever winning another federal grant—might stand in the way of the city receiving its part of billions of dollars in federal stimulus money. After

weeks of standoff, Walpin, whose position as inspector general is supposed to be protected from influence by political appointees and the White House, was fired...

MUCH more: <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/blogs/beltway-confidential/Gerald-Walpin-speaks-the-inside-story-of-the-AmeriCorps-firing-48030697.html>

Mark Sanford the governor of South Carolina. Dr. Scott W. Atlas is a professor at Stanford University Medical Center.

Alternatives to government health takeover

by Mark Sanford and Scott Atlas, 15 June 2009

... Whether it's four-year waiting lines for major surgeries in Canada or four-hour wait times for emergency care in Britain, in practice, government-run health systems by and large fail the very patients they were created to protect. In these systems, access to doctors, surgeries and new lifesaving treatments are severely limited. Innovation is discouraged, and medical technologies are deficient, forcing patients to undergo more invasive and dangerous care. Patient outcomes are worse, and costs keep escalating...

... We would offer that medically sound and financially responsible alternatives are available to a government takeover of health care, keeping in mind the following principles.

We believe there's benefit to decoupling employment from health insurance coverage by ridding the system of tax preferences for health care... We think it's critical that power shifts to the American consumer and away from government, employers and insurers, as evidence shows medical care prices come down when patients pay directly... Government can lower the price of health insurance and increase choice for Americans shopping for their own coverage by breaking down arbitrary barriers such as state lines and reducing costly and unnecessary coverage mandates... We believe it's imperative that we fix our medical liability system... Finally, an estimated 80 percent of all the health care innovation in the world springs from American individuals, companies and universities. It is vital that government support an atmosphere that enhances such innovation and discovery rather than restrict it by overregulation...

... Our proposals are based on trusting Americans to use their own money and make their own decisions wisely instead of forcing people to transfer their hard-earned income and health care decision-making to the government. We believe that trust is essential to improving already what is—despite what we're often told—the best health care system in the world.

Read the rest: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/jun/15/raise-quality-further/>

Don't Call What Happened in Iran Last Week an Election

It was a crudely stage-managed insult to everyone involved.

by Christopher Hitchens, 14 June 2009

For a flavor of the political atmosphere in Tehran, Iran, last week, I quote from a young Iranian comrade who furnishes me with regular updates: "I went to the last major Ahmadinejad rally and got the whiff of what I imagine fascism to have been all about. Lots of splotchy boys who can't get a date are given guns and told they're special."

It's hard to better this, either as an evocation of the rancid sexual repression that lies at the nasty core of the "Islamic republic" or as a description of the reserve strength that the Iranian para-state, or state within a state, can bring to bear if it ever feels itself even slightly challenged. There is a theoretical reason why the events of the last month in Iran (I am sorry, but I resolutely decline to refer to them as *elections*) were a crudely stage-managed insult to those who took part in them and those who observed them. And then there is a practical reason. The theoretical reason, though less immediately dramatic and exciting, is the much more interesting and important one.

Iran and its citizens are considered by the Shiite theocracy to be the private property of the anointed mullahs. This totalitarian idea was originally based on a piece of religious quackery promulgated by the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and known as *velayat-e faqui*. Under the terms of this edict—which originally placed the clerics in charge of the lives and property of orphans, the indigent, and the insane—the entire population is now declared to be a childlike ward of the black-robed state...

Continue: <http://www.slate.com/id/2220520/>

The Democrats are rapidly regaining their traditional status as the Party of Corruption.

This time, it's another of President Obama's Chicago cronies.

Durbin Cashed Out During Big Stock Collapse

Asset sales came after meeting with Fed, Treasury chiefs.

June 13, 2009

<http://www.suntimes.com/news/1620776,CST-NWS-durbin13.article#>

"Liberals want us to be victims so they can have a job and they can pimp us."

—Ben Chavis of American Indian Public Charter School (to Laura Ingraham), 2 June 2009. He's not to be confused with Benjamin Chavis Muhammad, who's a conventional black liberal and co-chairman of the Hip-Hop Action Network.

Spitting in the eye of mainstream education

Three no-frills charter schools in Oakland mock liberal orthodoxy, teach strictly to the test—and produce some of the state's top scores.

by Mitchell Landsberg, 31 May 2009

Not many schools in California recruit teachers with language like this: "We are looking for hard working people who believe in free market capitalism...Multicultural specialists, ultra liberal zealots and college-tainted oppression liberators need not apply."

That, it turns out, is just the beginning of the ways in which American Indian Public Charter and its two sibling schools spit in the eye of mainstream education. These small, no-frills, independent public schools in the hardscrabble flats of Oakland sometimes seem like creations of television's "Colbert Report." They mock liberal orthodoxy with such zeal that it can seem like a parody...

Read on: <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-charter31-2009may31,0,6518091,full.story>

Just Make Stuff Up

President Obama's war on the truth.

by Victor Davis Hanson, 12 June 2009

...What is stunning about Obama's hostile demagoguery about Bush's War on Terror is not that he has now contradicted himself on one or two particulars. Instead, he has reversed himself on every major issue...

...The people around Obama knew before Sotomayor was nominated that she has reiterated such racialist sentiments repeatedly over many years.

Obama complained that his deficits were largely inherited — even though his newly projected annual deficit and aggregate increase in the national debt may well, if they are not circumvented, equal all the deficit spending compiled by all previous administrations combined...His promise that 95 percent of Americans will receive an Obama "tax cut" is impossible. Remember, almost 40 percent of households currently pay no income taxes at all — and the \$1.7-trillion annual deficit will necessitate a broad array of taxes well beyond those assessed on incomes above \$250,000. Obama talks about cutting federal outlays by eliminating \$17 billion in expenditures — one-half of one percent of a \$3.4-trillion budget. Here the gap between rhetoric and reality is already so wide that it simply makes no difference whether one goes completely beyond the limits of belief...

...On matters of history, we now know that much of what President Obama says is either not factual or at least misleading...In the Cairo speech, nearly every historical allusion was nonfactual or inexact...Here we see the omnipotent influence of Obama's multicultural creed: Western civilization is unexceptional in comparison with other cultures, and history must be the story of an ecumenical, global shared brotherhood...To placate critical hosts, he evokes the American dropping of the bomb. But he is silent about the impossible choices for the Allies — after Japanese atrocities in Manchuria, Korea, the Philippines, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa — facing the necessity of stopping a Japanese imperial killing machine, determined to fight to the death...When he cites European colonialism's pernicious role in the Middle East, does he mention nearly 400 years of Ottoman Muslim colonial rule in the Arab-speaking world? Or the Muslim world's own role in sending several million sub-Saharan Africans to the Middle East as slaves?...

...Obama is a postmodernist. He believes that all truth is relative, and that assertions gain or lose credibility depending on the race, class, and gender of the speaker. In Obama's case, his misleading narrative is intended for higher purposes. Thus it is truthful in a way that accurate facts offered by someone of a different, more privileged class and race might not be...

Full column: <http://article.nationalreview.com/print/?q=OTAYnzFjMmMwOWJjYmFmMTA2ODdjODZmZmQ0MWE1Mzg=>

A truly marvelous oration. How much of it will be reported in the Western media?

Speech at the Begin-Sadat Center at Bar-Ilan University

by Benjamin Netanyahu, 14 June 2009

...I turn to you, our Palestinian neighbors, led by the Palestinian Authority, and I say: Let's begin negotiations immediately without preconditions. Israel is obligated by its international commitments and expects all parties to keep their commitments.

We want to live with you in peace, as good neighbors. We want our children and your children to never again experience war: that parents, brothers and sisters will never again know the agony of losing loved ones in battle; that our children will be able to dream of a better future and realize that dream; and that together we will invest our energies in plowshares and pruning hooks, not swords and spears.

I know the face of war. I have experienced battle. I lost close friends, I lost a brother. I have seen the pain of bereaved families. I do not want war. No one in Israel wants war.

If we join hands and work together for peace, there is no limit to the development and prosperity we can achieve for our two peoples—in the economy, agriculture, trade, tourism and education—most importantly, in providing our youth a better world in which to live, a life full of tranquility, creativity, opportunity and hope...

...Even as we look toward the horizon, we must be firmly connected to reality, to the truth. And the simple truth is that the root of the conflict was, and remains, the refusal to recognize the right of the Jewish people to a state of their own, in their historic homeland.

In 1947, when the United Nations proposed the partition plan of a Jewish state and an Arab state, the entire Arab world rejected the resolution. The Jewish community, by contrast, welcomed it by dancing and rejoicing. The Arabs rejected any Jewish state, in any borders.

Those who think that the continued enmity toward Israel is a product of our presence in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, is confusing cause and consequence.

The attacks against us began in the 1920s, escalated into a comprehensive attack in 1948 with the declaration of Israel's independence, continued with the fedayeen attacks in the 1950s, and climaxed in 1967, on the eve of the six-day war, in an attempt to tighten a noose around the neck of the State of Israel. All this occurred during the fifty years before a single Israeli soldier ever set foot in Judea and Samaria...

The full speech: <http://www.forzionssake.net/2009/06/transcript-of-netanyahus-speech.html>

Appeasing Outlaws

by Oliver North, 12 June 2009

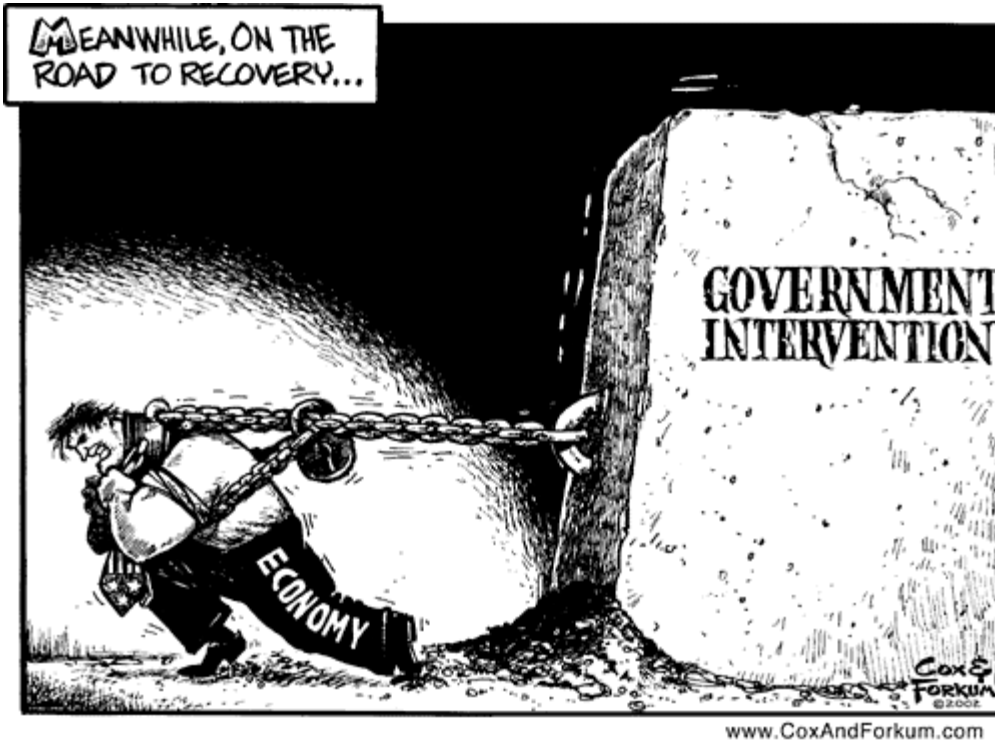
...The unwillingness to deal forcefully with the North Korean regime in 1968 set a precedent from which neither the West in general nor the U.S. in particular ever has recovered. North Korean leaders, emboldened by the West's flaccid response, stepped up their campaign of terror.

Intelligence operatives and military units dispatched by Pyongyang have kidnapped hundreds of South Korean and Japanese mariners, fishermen and even civilian women and children. North Korean terrorists have made no fewer than three additional attempts to assassinate South Korean leaders. One of them, a 1983 bombing in Rangoon, killed 17 diplomats and members of South Korean President Chun Doo-hwan's security detail. In 1987, a bomb placed aboard Korean Airlines Flight 858 killed all 115 aboard, including four Americans.

Over the course of the two decades since, little has changed except that North Korea has acquired nuclear weapons and the means of delivering them. In 1994, after North Korea's "Great Leader," Kim Il Sung, died of a heart attack at the age of 82, the Clinton administration opened the door to direct negotiations with his son and successor, Kim Jong Il. An "Agreed Framework" for dismantling North Korea's nuclear weapons program was negotiated, and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright went to Pyongyang to dance at the anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of Korea. She famously proclaimed a "new beginning" for U.S. relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea...

...Despite Western deliveries of massive amounts of humanitarian food aid and fuel oil to ease starvation, the North Koreans accelerated their nuclear and ballistic weapons programs, while the West vacillated. Now the Obama administration is repeating the same mistakes. And Mr. Obama—having vowed to "meet without preconditions" with brutal despots, such as Kim Jong Il—runs the grave risk of making things even worse...

Lots more: <http://www.creators.com/conservative/oliver-north/appeasing-outlaws.html>



Wealth Creation Under Attack

by Francis Cianfrocca, June 2009

...In the view of the Obamaites, private wealth is not a bad thing, but neither is it a good thing; it is only good if it can be used in furtherance of large-scale public goals.

But this understanding is deeply flawed, because it fails to take into account the factors that **motivate** the generation of wealth. Those who work to get rich are not doing so because they are seeking to provide enhanced tax receipts for the government, or to make it easier for government to do what elected officials and unelected bureaucrats think is best. They are, rather, fulfilling basic human desires—to excel, to succeed, to best the other person, to show the old man. Those desires provide the drive. The drive provides the wealth. The wealth provides the ancillary benefit for others. And the act of wealth creation itself creates opportunities for others. Americans pursue business and wealth for their own reasons, and we should be deeply hesitant to throw those out with the proverbial bathwater. The unintended consequences of such action could be catastrophic...

...The dispersion of power into what political scientists call "mediating institutions" is one of the hallmarks of American society. The weakening of this sector is perilous because it allows government to arrogate even more authority to itself without having to answer for it...

...An extraordinary uncertainty has been created when the most powerful man in the world can rewrite contracts and choose winners and losers in private negotiations as he sees fit. Since this is an unquantifiable uncertainty, and not a quantifiable risk, its effect on business and investor confidence will be large and unpredictable. As in the 1930s, a time when government also cavalierly rewrote private contracts, the prudent approach for business will be to invest minimally and wait for another administration. The deleterious effects on wealth creation will be unambiguous.

The net effect of Obama's alterations in the financial atmosphere will be to create an extraordinary and needless drag on private wealth creation...

...The United States under Barack Obama may be taking a hatchet to a pillar of the American social contract, which is that Americans should be free of encumbrance in their pursuit of private wealth. The pursuit of prosperity made America the most prosperous nation on earth. The excessive pursuit of fairness at the expense of wealth creation will not make America fairer. It will, however, make America poorer—and less free.

More: <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/viewarticle.cfm/wealth-creation-under-attack-15158>

Firefighters Case: What Really Happened

The more you examine the New Haven affirmative-action case, the more indefensible it looks.

by Stuart Taylor, 13 June 2009

...Close study of her most famous case only enhances my concern. That's the 2008 decision in which a panel composed of Sotomayor and two Appeals Court colleagues upheld New Haven's race-based denial of promotions to white (and two Hispanic) fire-fighters because too few African-Americans had done well on the qualifying exams.

The panel's decision to adopt as its own U.S. District Judge Janet Arterton's opinion in the case looks much less defensible up close than it does in most media accounts. One reason is that the detailed factual record strongly suggests that—contrary to Sotomayor's position—the Connecticut city's decision to kill the promotions was driven less by its purported legal concerns than by raw racial politics.

Whichever way the Supreme Court rules in the case later this month, I will be surprised if a single justice explicitly approves the specific, quota-friendly logic of the Sotomayor-endorsed Arterton opinion...

The ugly details: http://www.nationaljournal.com/njmagazine/print_friendly.php?ID=or_20090613_4064

A Silly Game of Connect-the-Dots

Painting the Right as an undifferentiated blob of evil.

by Jonah Goldberg, 12 June 2009

...Pretty much the entire media establishment is comfortable labeling von Brunn as a member of the "far right." Putting aside other objections to that nomenclature, if von Brunn is a member of the far right, then it would be helpful and journalistically responsible if the press would start calling Rush Limbaugh, Newt Gingrich, Sean Hannity, et al., moderates and centrists. That won't happen, because the whole point of these exercises is to paint the Right as an undifferentiated blob of evil.

Never mind that von Brunn isn't a member of the far right. Nor is he a member of the far left, as some on the right are claiming. He's not a member of anything other than the crazy caucus. Von Brunn's True North is conspiratorial anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. He's not a member of the Christian Right. In fact, he denounces Christianity—just as Hitler did—as a Jewish plot against paganism and Western vigor. Nor is he a capitalist. Again, just as Hitler did, he hails socialism as the solution to the West's problems...

...For years, mainstream liberalism and other outposts of paranoid Bush hatred have portrayed neoconservatives—usually code for conservative Jews and other supporters of Israel—as an alien, pernicious cabal. "They have penetrated the culture at nearly every level from the halls of academia to the halls of the Pentagon," observed the New York Times. "They've accumulated the wherewithal financially [and] professionally to broadcast what they think over the airwaves to the masses or over cocktails to those at the highest levels of government."

...Maniacs like von Brunn connect dots that aren't there because that's what paranoid anti-Semites do. What's the Left's excuse?

More: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=YmM1MwY2NTIjNWQwNjUzYzFjMGI3YTIwNTE0NDc1ODE=>

A book of photographs of the ruins of Communist Rumania reveals the spiritual devastation that socialism wreaks on a country and its people.

Always in the Wrong Place

by Anthony Daniels, June 2009

...As I write this, there is a laudatory exhibition in London dedicated to the work of the greatest architectural criminal in history, Le Corbusier. The main difference between his schemes of destruction and Ceausescu's is that the latter was able to a large extent to put them into practice. Otherwise they were very similar—both were infuriated by their mediocrity in everything except ambition. For what are Le Corbusier's designs but of mediocrity made grandiose, and of a destructive rage that he should not be able to do better than, say, the jobbing builders of a hundred provincial towns in England or France of the eighteenth century? That he remains a hero to European architects is a sign that destructive construction is still their underlying motive; and that, objectively speaking (to use a Stalinist turn of phrase), Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu are to them heroes also.

Doctor Johnson said that a man who had never been a soldier or a sailor was always aware of his inferiority when in the company of such. What he meant by this was that the civilian never knew how he would behave in conditions of danger, whereas soldiers and sailors did. I confess to a similar feeling when I meet intellectuals from the former eastern bloc. For them, culture was not an adornment to human existence, but almost its deepest meaning, and certainly the necessary condition of their psychological survival. This gives to their culture a depth ours all too frequently does not have. It is the experience of the Golden Era of Romania under Ceausescu that gives Kombinat its moral passion and seriousness. If I were a teacher of political philosophy in a university, I would use it to provoke my students to think.

Full essay: <http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/Always-in-the-wrong-place-4112>

Dear David Letterman

by Michelle Malkin, 12 June 2009

Will you teach your son to talk about women and girls the way you talk about Sarah Palin and her daughters?

You called the married 45-year-old mother, grandmother and Alaska governor a "slutty flight attendant" on your national TV talk show because she happens to be a tall, beautiful and dynamic public figure who doesn't look, walk or talk the way you think she should...

...Tell us, great comic genius, how tacking on four years to the target daughter makes it funny? We unenlightened dim bulbs who live outside of Manhattan's boundaries don't get the joke.

Will you be able to explain it to your son?

Face it: David Letterman, late-night entertainer turned partisan hack and hit man, has a deranged obsession with Palin and her family that has crossed into rank bigotry and hatred. If the CBS network cares about basic standards of decency on public airwaves and if it cares at all about bolstering its shrinking audience, the network honchos will get Letterman a therapist pronto.

Over the past year, Letterman has displayed his sexist, elitist stripes in jibe after jibe aimed at Palin. Taken cumulatively, Letterman's mockery is about much more than expressing contempt for the popular GOP governor. It's a handy device to deride a broad class of working-class and middle-class women he holds in contempt...

Read the whole thing: <http://michellemalkin.com/2009/06/12/david-letterman-perv/>

What's behind Obama's sudden attempt to fire the AmeriCorps inspector general?

by Byron York, 11 June 2009

There are a number of unanswered questions today about President Obama's abrupt decision to fire the inspector general of the AmeriCorps program, Gerald Walpin. Obama sent letters to House and Senate leaders yesterday informing them that he was firing Walpin, effective 30 days from the date of the letters...

...There are two big questions about the president's actions. One, why did he decide to fire Walpin? And two, did he abide by the law that he himself co-sponsored?...

...The bottom line is that the AmeriCorps IG accused a prominent Obama supporter of misusing AmeriCorps grant money. After an investigation, the prominent Obama supporter had to pay back more than \$400,000 of that grant money. And Obama fired the AmeriCorps IG.

Details: <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/blogs/beltway-confidential/Whats-behind-Obamas-sudden-firing-of-the-AmeriCorps-inspector-general-47877797.html>

Abortion distortion

by Christine M. Flowers, 12 June 2009

I didn't kill George Tiller. Neither did Bill O'Reilly, Randall Terry, Pope Benedict or the little old lady praying the rosary outside Planned Parenthood.

So to all of the pro-choice advocates and their sympathizers in the media, drop the collective guilt trip, OK? Because the myth that the pro-life movement bears any responsibility for Tiller's death is on par with the fairy tale that most abortions are performed to protect a woman's health...

Read on:

http://www.philly.com/dailynews/opinion/20090612_Christine_M_Flowers__Abortion_distortion.html?submit=Vote&47915502=Y&oid=2&mr=1&cid=8500281&pid=47915502

Obama Hovers From on High

by Charles Krauthammer, 12 June 2009

...Well, yes. On the one hand, there certainly is some American university where the women's softball team has received insufficient Title IX funds—while, on the other hand, Saudi women showing ankle are beaten in the street, Afghan

school girls have acid thrown in their faces, and Iranian women are publicly stoned to death for adultery. (Gays, as well—but then again we have Prop 8.) We all have our shortcomings, our national foibles. Who's to judge?

That's the problem with Obama's transcultural evenhandedness. It gives the veneer of professorial sophistication to the most simple-minded observation: Of course there are rights and wrongs in all human affairs. Our species is a fallen one. But that doesn't mean that these rights and wrongs are of equal weight.

A CIA rent-a-mob in a coup 56 years ago does not balance the hostage-takings, throat-slittings, terror bombings and wanton slaughters perpetrated for 30 years by a thug regime in Teheran (and its surrogates) that our own State Department calls the world's "most active state sponsor of terrorism."...

...Obama undoubtedly thinks he is demonstrating historical magnanimity with all these moral equivalencies and self-flagellating apologetics. On the contrary. He's showing cheap condescension, an unseemly hunger for applause and a willingness to distort history for political effect.

Distorting history is not truth-telling, but the telling of soft lies. Creating false equivalencies is not moral leadership, but moral abdication. And hovering above it all, above country and history, is a sign not of transcendence but of a disturbing ambivalence toward one's own country.

Complete column: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/11/AR2009061103129.html>

Combatants who are (a) non-uniformed and (b) not under the command of any entity which is a signatory to the Geneva Conventions—essentially HAVE NO RIGHTS. Since they refuse to abide by international rules, they're not entitled to the protection of those rules. When they capture our people, they do as they please with them, including torture and beheading. When we capture them, we're entitled to do as we please: shoot them dead, interrogate them very roughly, put them up in a luxury room at Guantanamo, or some combination of those options and others. When the next terrorist attack on U.S. soil happens (and now, it surely will), the blame will clearly belong to the feckless Democrats who believe in civil rights for terrorists—but not for unwanted babies. That's a very bad Democrat habit: protecting the guilty and punishing the innocent.

—Don John

Not Right

The Obama administration grants Miranda rights to detainees in Afghanistan.

by Stephen F. Hayes, 10 June 2009

...The Obama Justice Department has quietly ordered FBI agents to read Miranda rights to high value detainees captured and held at U.S. detention facilities in Afghanistan, according a senior Republican on the House Intelligence Committee. "The administration has decided to change the focus to law enforcement. Here's the problem. You have foreign fighters who are targeting US troops today—foreign fighters who go to another country to kill Americans. We capture them and they're reading them their rights—Mirandizing these foreign fighters," says Representative Mike Rogers, who recently met with military, intelligence and law enforcement officials on a fact-finding trip to Afghanistan...

...Republicans on Capitol Hill are not happy. "When they mirandize a suspect, the first thing they do is warn them that they have the 'right to remain silent,'" says Representative Pete Hoekstra, the ranking Republican on the House Intelligence Committee. "It would seem the last thing we want is Khalid Sheikh Mohammed or any other al-Qaeda terrorist to remain silent. Our focus should be on preventing the next attack, not giving radical jihadists a new tactic to resist interrogation—lawyering up."...

...One thing is clear, though. A detainee who is not talking cannot provide information about future attacks. Had Khalid Sheikh Mohammad had a lawyer, Tenet wrote, "I am confident that we would have obtained none of the information he had in his head about imminent threats against the American people."

Read it all: <http://weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/605iidws.asp?pg=1>

Obama's Health Cost Illusion

The President's main case for reform is rooted in false claims and little evidence.

Wall Street Journal, 9 June 2009

The main White House argument for health-care reform goes something like this: If we spend now on a hugely expensive new insurance program for the middle class, we can save later by reducing overall U.S. health spending. This "tastes great, less filling" theory could stand some scrutiny, not least because it is being used to rush through the greatest social spending program in American history.

What if this particular theory turns out to be a political illusion? What if the speculative cost savings never report for

duty, while the federal balance sheet is still swamped with new social obligations that will be impossible to repeal? The only possible outcome will be the nationalization of U.S. health markets, which will mean that almost all care will be rationed by politics...

...Medicare reflects the entire practice of medicine only as a funhouse mirror...Above all, Medicare is an ocean of money surrounded by people who want some. It is not only an entitlement to beneficiaries, but a de facto revenue entitlement to hospitals, physicians, nursing homes, durable medical equipment suppliers and the rest. Even a tweak to the Medicare fee schedule is the small-scale equivalent of closing a military base or trimming farm subsidies. The system will never be as rational as Mr. Orszag desires unless it is severed from politics...

...Yet the entire Obama agenda is about increasing political, rather than individual, control of the health markets. Ted Kennedy's draft health-care bill offers insurance subsidies up to 500% of the poverty line—for a family of four, that's \$110,250. In that kind of world, all costs will climb even higher as people use far more "free" care and federal spending will reach epic levels. Bureaucrats watching the bottom line will try to ration care while simultaneously locked in a death match with interest groups guarding their turf. Congress will join the fray and make things worse, as it always does. Caught in the political crossfire will be patients, as they always are...

Lots more: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124442772329993085.html>

Obama Tells American Businesses to Drop Dead

by Kevin Hassett, 8 June 2009

...If there were a power ranking of U.S. companies, like the ones compiled by football writers for National Football League teams, Microsoft would surely be first or second to Google. But last week, Microsoft Chief Executive Officer Steve Ballmer came to Washington to announce what Microsoft would do if Obama's multinational tax policy is enacted.

"It makes U.S. jobs more expensive," Ballmer said, "We're better off taking lots of people and moving them out of the U.S." If Microsoft, perhaps our most competitive company, has to abandon the U.S. in order to continue to thrive, who exactly is going to stay?

At issue is Obama's policy to end the deferral of multinational taxation.

The U.S. now has about the highest combined corporate tax rate, second only to Japan among industrialized countries. That rate is so high that U.S. firms have an enormous disadvantage versus competitors. The average corporate tax rate for the major developed countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in 2008 was about 27 percent, more than 10 percentage points lower than the U.S. rate.

U.S. firms have nonetheless prospered because our tax code allows a business to set up a subsidiary in a low-tax country. When that subsidiary earns profits, they are taxed at the rate of that country, and don't face U.S. tax until the money is mailed home.

The economically illiterate partisan Democratic view is that this practice is unpatriotic and bleeds jobs from the U.S. The economic reality is that American companies use this approach to acquire market share overseas. The alternative is losing the business to foreign competitors.

More: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=washingtonstory&sid=aaaBdVMkjPnU>

The average liberal's analysis of the Middle East

by Don John, 7 June 2009

Please note that this is not an abbreviated or capsulized version.

This represents the sum total of their thinking on the subject:

"Look at all the little brown victims! Did the big bad Jews hurt you? Awwww!"

And these are the people who think they're going to create the world's first successful system of socialized medicine!

From the author of *White Guilt*, a man of mixed race himself who is America's leading analyst of racial politics.

Sotomayor and the Politics of Race

by *Shelby Steele*, 9 June 2009

...The Sotomayor nomination commits the cardinal sin of identity politics: It seeks to elevate people more for the political currency of their gender and ethnicity than for their individual merit. (Here, too, is the ugly faithlessness in minority merit that always underlies such maneuverings.) Mr. Obama is promising one thing and practicing another, using his interracial background to suggest an America delivered from racial corruption even as he practices a crude form of racial patronage. From America's first black president, and a man promising the "new," we get a Supreme Court nomination that is both unoriginal and hackneyed.

This contradiction has always been at the heart of the Obama story. On the one hand there was the 2004 Democratic Convention speech proclaiming "only one America." And on the other hand there was the race-baiting of Rev. Jeremiah Wright. Does this most powerful man on earth know himself well enough to resolve this contradiction and point the way to a genuinely post-racial America?

The Sotomayor nomination suggests not. Throughout her career Judge Sotomayor has demonstrated a Hispanic chauvinism so extreme that it sometimes crosses into outright claims of racial supremacy, as in 2001 when she said in a lecture at the University of California, Berkeley, "a wise Latina woman... would more often than not reach a better conclusion [as a judge] than a white male."

The White House acknowledges that this now famous statement—both racist and dim-witted—was turned up in the vetting process. So we can only assume that the president was aware of it...

The rest: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124442662679393077.html>

This article is only four pages long, but it's loaded with important ideas about freedom: Montesquieu, Tocqueville, Paul Rahe's new book *Soft Despotism, Democracy's Drift*—and, at the end, a wonderful story about a certain bridge in New Hampshire that is not to be missed.

The State Despot

by *Mark Steyn*, June 2009 issue

...The all-pervasive micro-regulatory state "enervates," but nicely, gradually, so after a while you don't even notice. And in exchange for liberty it offers security: the "right" to health care; the "right" to housing; the "right" to a job—although who needs that once you've got all the others? The proposed European Constitution extends the laundry list: the constitutional right to clean water and environmental protection. Every right you could ever want, except the right to be free from undue intrusions by the state...

...Thus, Tocqueville's great insight—that what prevents the "state popular" from declining into a "state despotic" is the strength of the intermediary institutions between the sovereign and the individual... Today, very little stands between the individual and the sovereign, which is why schoolgirls in Dillon, South Carolina think it entirely normal to beseech Good King Barack the Hopechanger to do something about classroom maintenance...

...Would it even be possible to hold the American revolution today? The Boston Tea Party? Imagine if George III had been able to sit in his palace across the ocean, look at the security-camera footage, press a button, and freeze the bank accounts of everyone there. Oh, well, we won't be needing another revolt, will we? But the consequence of funding the metastasization of government through the confiscation of the fruits of the citizen's labor is the remorseless shriveling of liberty...

...The story of the Western world since 1945 is that, invited to choose between freedom and government "security," large numbers of people vote to dump freedom every time—the freedom to make their own decisions about health care, education, property rights, and eventually (as we already see in Europe, Canada, American campuses, and the disgusting U.N. Human Rights Council) what you're permitted to say and think...

Read it all: <http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/The-state-despotic-4096>

Waterboarding Could Have Solved This Mystery Long Ago

Would it be wrong to waterboard a convicted child molester for information on other cases?

The slippery slope argument would seem beside the point.

The "rights" of a proven scumbag are nothing compared to the parents' right to know.

<http://abcnews.go.com/2020/story?id=7698696&page=1>

U.N. environment chief urges global ban on plastic bags

by Grace Chung, 8 June 2009

... "Single use plastic bags which choke marine life, should be banned or phased out rapidly everywhere. There is simply zero justification for manufacturing them anymore, anywhere," said Achim Steiner, executive director of the U.N. Environment Programme. His office advises U.N. member states on environmental policies...

More: <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/251/story/69691.html>

To which Don John sez:

Mr. Steiner, stop interfering in the lives of free people. G.F.Y. !

'A Wise Latina Woman'

The context shows that Judge Sotomayor meant what she said.

by Jennifer Rubin, 7 June 2009 (June 15 issue)

... The sentence that set off a furious round of spin by supporters and of criticism by opponents of Sotomayor's nomination reads as follows: "I would hope 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 sort of ethnic condescension is routinely bandied about among academics and those who style themselves "civil rights" advocates. But in general public parlance it is problematic in the extreme. As a political analyst confided privately, the sentence in question "is utterly absurd, and I say that as someone who believes that diversity is a good thing in Court appointments and just about everything else... No one's gender or ethnicity bestows an edge in wisdom. What a fatuous concept." ...

... While not styling his comments as a rebuttal to Sotomayor, Judge Richard Paez of the Ninth Circuit spoke in the same venue the following day and did in effect rebut Sotomayor's views. Paez also declared that he would like more Latinos on the bench. Plainly this is a man who is proud of his heritage and would like more Latinos to rise to prominent positions. But his is the commonplace sort of ethnic pride that has permeated much American history. His purpose, as he explains, is *not* to insure some Latino brand of justice:

"[T]here is something about our own personal life experience that makes each of us different. I used to tell jurors when they entered the courtroom and took their oaths as jurors, 'You walk into the courtroom with a lifetime of experiences, and we don't ask you to suddenly forget all that experience, to ignore that experience.' I asked them if they could judge fairly the case that they were about to hear. I explained, 'As jurors, recognize that you might have some bias, or prejudice. Recognize that it exists, and determine whether you can control it so that you can judge the case fairly. Because if you cannot—if you cannot set aside those prejudices, biases and passions—then you should not sit on the case.'

"The same principle applies to judges. We take an oath of office. At the federal level, it is a very interesting oath. It says, in part, that you promise or swear to do justice to both the poor and the rich. The first time I heard this oath, I was startled by its significance. I have my oath hanging on the wall in my office to remind me of my obligations. And so, although I am a Latino judge and there is no question about that—I am viewed as a Latino judge—as I judge cases, I try to judge them fairly. I try to remain faithful to my oath." ...

... Paez offers, in contrast to Sotomayor's celebration of ethnicity, an affirmation of the principle of equal justice. ...

Full article: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/587tzqjm.asp>

The Democrats need a bigger shovel.

Con Games and Stimulus Cash

Las Vegas Review-Journal editorial, 7 June 2009

... More recently, remember how all those billions in "stimulus" money allocated in Washington last year were reserved for "shovel-ready" projects, creating new construction jobs and additionally re-building our infrastructure—roads, piers, bridges, stuff like that?

Well, let the man in the plaid sport coat and the white Corfam shoes explain it all to you, Mr. and Ms. Voter. Turns out you didn't want a bunch of crummy infrastructure, after all. Instead, they found something much better to spend your money on, if you'll just step this way.

As it turns out, most of that money is going where government always puts most of its money—into fat paychecks for

social service bureaucrats...

More: <http://www.lvrj.com/opinion/47141292.html>

Kofi Annan and his Global Humanitarian Forum (nice moonbat name) have come out with a report on climate change that's embarrassingly wrong and full of falsehoods, even by the long-established standards of global warming hysteria. But then, what can we expect from the corrupt Third World kleptocrat who gave us the Oil For Food scandal?

Worse Than Fiction

Wall Street Journal editorial, 6 June 2009

<http://www.climatechange fraud.com/editorials/4231-worse-than-fiction->

Green With Guilt

by George Will, 4 June 2009

...In the history of developed democracies with literate publics served by mass media, there is no precedent for today's media enlistment in the crusade to promote global warming "awareness." Concerning this, journalism, which fancies itself skeptical and nonconforming, is neither.

The incessant hectoring by the media-political complex's "consciousness-raising" campaign has provoked a comic riposte in the form of *The Goode Family*, an animated ABC entertainment program on Wednesdays at 9 p.m. Eastern time. Cartoons seem, alas, to be the most effective means of seizing a mass audience's attention. Still, the program is welcome evidence of the bursting of what has been called "the green bubble."...

...The New York Times television critic disapproves. The show "feels aggressively off-kilter with the current mood, as if it had been incubated in the early to mid-'90s, when it was possible to find global-warming skeptics among even the reasonable and informed." That is a perfect (because completely complacent) sample of the grating smugness of the planet-savers, delivered by an entertainment writer: Reasonable dissent is *impossible*...

More: <http://m.ny post.com/ms/p/nyp/nyp/view.m?id=23772&storyid=172430>

Obama's Message of Weakness

A superpower that feeds on mediocrity cannot survive for long on leftovers from the past.

by Mark Steyn, 5 June 2009

...Overseas, the coolest president in history was giving a speech. Or, as the official press release headlined it on the State Department Web site, "President Obama Speaks To The Muslim World From Cairo."

Let's pause right there: It's interesting how easily the words "the Muslim world" roll off the tongues of liberal secular progressives who'd choke on any equivalent reference to "the Christian world." When such hyperalert policemen of the perimeter between church and state endorse the former but not the latter, they're implicitly acknowledging that Islam is not merely a faith but a political project, too. There is an "Organization of the Islamic Conference," which is already the largest single voting bloc at the United Nations and is still adding new members. Imagine if someone proposed an "Organization of the Christian Conference" that would hold summits attended by prime ministers and Presidents, and vote as a bloc in transnational bodies...

...I suppose the benign interpretation is that, as head of state of the last superpower, Obama is indulging in a little harmless condescension. In his Cairo speech, he congratulated Muslims on inventing algebra and quoted approvingly one of the less-bloodcurdling sections of the Quran...

...Once Obama moved on from the more generalized Islamoschmoozing to the details, the subtext—the absence of American will—became explicit. He used the cover of multilateralism and moral equivalence to communicate, consistently, American weakness: "No single nation should pick and choose which nations hold nuclear weapons."...

...On the other hand, a "single nation" certainly has the right to tell another nation anything it wants if that nation happens to be the Zionist Entity... The administration has embraced "the Muslim world's" commitment to one-way multiculturalism, whereby Islam expands in the West but Christianity and Judaism shrivel remorselessly in the Middle East...

Read it all: <http://www.o cregister.com/articles/world-muslim-president-2446787-obama-one>

What We Fight For

by David Warren, 4 June 2009

...The Second World War ended in split decision. There was victory in the West, and nominal victory in the East, but as Churchill said, an Iron Curtain fell, and those to the east of it were abandoned to a Communist tyranny little different from the daily Nazi tyranny that had preceded the war; indeed, worse for being prolonged. Two generations were condemned to slavery: whole lives passed under the twitching thumbs of party apparatchiks, with only the briefest respites, in Berlin, in Warsaw, in Budapest, in Prague. And each of those respites, bloody.

It was a mixed result also within the West, for it seems today that we learned nothing, and the principles for which men and women once died have been progressively abandoned in our public life. Yes we have democracy, of a sort: mass democracy, and rule in the name of numbers. But the numbers have been used to establish Nanny States that deeply impinge our freedom, and to advance the very cause of atheist materialism that once marked Nazi, Fascist, and Communist regimes as exceptional.

The people of China are now passing out of the third generation of Communist tyranny. Outwardly, it has eased. The Red Chinese state has relaxed its controls over minor arrangements in everyday life, to the extent of permitting the kind of "capitalist" consumerism that can enhance its own power.

We have been left with less to choose than we think, between the two systems, for we now have centrally-administered materialism in both East and West.

The soldiers who fell in Normandy were not fighting for swimming pools and home entertainment centres. They had before them a view of the dignity of man: of things worth more than life itself. The students who stood in Tiananmen Square—who raised the home-made statue of Lady Liberty—did not die for the sake of cellphones, and skyscrapers in Shanghai. They faced the tanks and bullets of the "People's Revolutionary Army" with something more substantial in their hearts.

Yet the generation after them, there as here, has been largely bought off with the false promise of material prosperity. There, as here, we have agreed to become a kind of indentured labour, on the promise that we will be taken care of, cradle to grave. Let us at least celebrate, for a moment in time, men and women who were better than we are.

More: <http://www.davidwarrenonline.com/index.php?id=1005>

The PVV (Party for Freedom) has won four seats in the Euro Parliament. That party, and other like-minded Euro-patriots, mean to take their continent back from the forces of statism and the intolerant, criminal invaders. Godspeed!

"D-Day" in the Netherlands

by Baron Bodissey, 4 June 2009

At an election meeting in The Hague last night, Geert Wilders gave his response to the preliminary results of European elections. The following is the text of the speech that he gave there:

"Friends!

"The preliminary results are in and are stunning. For the first time the PVV joins these elections, and right away the first strike is a blow. It is not the official results, however, but a forecast. But the beginning is here: FOUR SEATS!

"This is great news for the Netherlands. This is great news for people who are sick and tired of the European superstate, who are tired of this Balkenende/Bos government. People who get nothing for nothing, ordinary Dutch people who have to work hard for their money. They want their children to grow up in a Dutch Netherlands. And this is good news for all those Europeans who love Europe — but horrified of Eurabia and horrified by the European superstate that costs us billions a year.

"It is also good news for the Party for Freedom. The first time we have participated, and then this result. It seems that we have become the second party of the Netherlands and larger than the PvdA [Socialists, government party] and larger than the VVD [center-right]. Folks, in one word: Super! Super, also for the Netherlands.

"But it would even be better for the Netherlands if the Balkenende/Bos cabinet draws the conclusion it should, and that is to resign, leave, and never come back again. (according to *De Telegraaf*, Geert Wilders did not have to finish this sentence. The audience yelled spontaneously: "Get out!")...

More: <http://gatesofvienna.blogspot.com/2009/06/d-day-in-netherlands.html#readfurther>

Obama's Age of Moral Equivalence

by Jonathan Tobin, 4 June 2009

...The problem with this conflict is not that both sides won't listen to each other or give peace a chance. That might have been a good point to make prior to the signing of the Oslo peace accords in 1993 when Israel recognized the legitimacy of Palestinian aspirations and began the process of handing over large portions of the area reserved by the League of Nations for the creation of a Jewish National Home for the creation of a Palestinian equivalent. But Israel offered these same Palestinians a state in virtually all of the West Bank and Gaza as well as part of Jerusalem in 2000 and again in negotiations conducted by the government of Ehud Olmert just last year. So, the problem is not that the Israelis don't want the two state solution that Obama endorsed in Cairo. Rather, it is, as Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said in Washington only a week ago, that the Palestinians aren't interested in negotiating with Israel.

Even more obnoxious than this refusal to see that the truth about the conflict isn't to be found through an even-handed "plague on both your houses" approach is his comparison of the Palestinians' plight to that of African-Americans in the United States before the civil rights era. Israelis have not enslaved Palestinians. The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians rests on the latter's unwillingness to come to terms with the former's existence. The plight of Palestinians in Gaza is terrible but it is a direct result of their own decision to choose war over peace, not a lack of understanding on the part of the Jews...

...Nowhere did he say plainly that Iran must stop its nuclear program or call upon other nations to join the effort to restrain Tehran. That was a major blunder and a missed opportunity to rally the Arab world that fears Iranian nukes as much as the Israelis, to step up on the issue before it is too late.

Though he made a number of important points about fighting terror, religious tolerance and women's rights and democracy, the speech was constructed and delivered as a series of moral equivalencies that undermine both the search for peace as well as the equally necessary drive to reform the Islamic world. As a statement of philosophy as well as a proclamation of American values it was as morally unserious a speech as an American president has ever made.

Read the rest: <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/blogs/index.php/tobin/68492>

Don't take our word for it. Listen to what his *friends* say.

Venezuela's Chavez says 'Comrade' Obama more left-wing

2 June 2009

CARACAS (Reuters)—Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez said on Tuesday that he and Cuban ally Fidel Castro risk being more conservative than U.S. President Barack Obama as Washington prepares to take control of General Motors Corp.

During one of Chavez's customary lectures on the "curse" of capitalism and the bonanzas of socialism, the Venezuelan leader made reference to GM's bankruptcy filing, which is expected to give the U.S. government a 60 percent stake in the 100-year-old former symbol of American might.

"Hey, Obama has just nationalized nothing more and nothing less than General Motors. Comrade Obama! Fidel, careful or we are going to end up to his right," Chavez joked on a live television broadcast.

During a decade in government, Chavez has nationalized most of Venezuela's key economic sectors, including multibillion dollar oil projects, often via joint ventures with the private sector that give the state a 60 percent controlling stake.

Obama has vowed to quickly sell off General Motors once the auto giant is back on its feet, but the government will initially control the company after a \$30 billion injection of taxpayer funds.

Chavez, a vehement critic of the U.S. "empire," has toned down his rhetoric since Obama took office in January and the two men shook hands during a summit in Trinidad and Tobago in April.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/ObamaEconomy/idUSTRE5520GX20090603?feedType=RSS&feedName=ObamaEconomy&virtualBrandChannel=10441>

Yes, Carter did have some courage. And yes, Mr. Jenkins' acid pen rips Obama Flim-Flama most elegantly.

If Obama Had Carter's Courage...

Lessons from setting the freight railroads free.

by Holman Jenkins, 4 June 2009

...In his message to Congress, Mr. Carter warned of a "catastrophic series of bankruptcies" and "massive federal expenditure" unless deregulation was allowed to "overhaul our nation's rail system, leading to higher labor productivity and more efficient use of plant and equipment." Involving Congress meant the plan had to be explained and rationally

coherent—features missing from Mr. Obama's contradictory auto policies. In 1980, Congress passed the Staggers Act, ending a century of federal regulation and leading to the railroad industry's renaissance...

...We're still waiting for the brave, original thinking that we were told Mr. Obama represented. Like Washington circa 1978, he has landed for once in a situation where something more than symbolism is required of him. He has finally glided into the land of the real, where the key measurable outcome is no longer whether an audience is glowing with self-approval when he leaves the room...

...It took 103 years after the Interstate Commerce Act for Congress to junk the regulatory apparatus that destroyed the railroads. To get rid of CAFE after only 34 years would be some kind of record—if Mr. Obama had Mr. Carter's courage...

...Unfortunately, Mr. Obama, that freethinker, took to the CAFE fraud like a bat to a belfry...

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124398447730679113.html>

This is what *actual* repression and torture look like.

The Patriot Act and the treatment of the guests at Club Gitmo aren't even in the same universe.

China's 'socialist road' to misery

by Jeff Jacoby, 3 June 2009

http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/06/03/chinas_socialist_road_to_misery/

Yuval, you poor innocent lad. These aren't serious people we're talking about. These are the acolytes of the Flim-Flam Man, a guy who can spout nonsense all day with a straight face (or perhaps an occasional smirk). He does have one big poker tell, though. "As I've always said..." is always the preface to a GREAT BIG SWERVE.

Leading with Health-Care Costs

by Yuval Levin, 2 June 2009

There has been something very odd about the logic of the Democrats' case on health-care reform the past few months. Rather than focus on access and the uninsured, as they have usually done and as Obama did during the campaign, they're talking about their massive expansion of the government's role in American health insurance as a way to save money, and focusing a lot of attention on the (unquestionably pressing) need to control health care costs. The trouble is, they don't actually have any plan to control health-care costs...

...It would be especially difficult if you put the federal government in charge of doing it. As we have seen with Medicare for decades, a program that can be constantly "fine-tuned" by HHS and the Congress in response to the various pressures they face is not likely to be a model of efficiency and effectiveness. And without competitive pressures to bring down costs, the only real way to do so is by rationing care, which will likely be too unpopular in practice for politicians to really stomach.

Most bizarre of all, the administration talks about all this as a way to bring the broader entitlement problem under control. How exactly? The notion that entitlement costs will be brought under control by the creation of a vast new entitlement just doesn't add up...

More: <http://corner.nationalreview.com/post/?q=ZjRhZjlmNzk5YjNIODg5NWYwMmI3NzliMDIyZjVIZWU=>

Are some murders more equal than others?

The murder last Sunday of the abortionist George Tiller brings the total to eight abortionists killed in 36 years. A deplorable act, and a sin against God. So, of course, are the murders of 40 million innocent babies. Still, spokesmen from all corners of the pro-life (anti-abortion) movement have decried the murder and offered condolences to Mr. Tiller's family.

The very next day, an idiot Black Muslim with the pretentious monicker of Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad murdered an American soldier and seriously injured another at a recruiting center in Little Rock. That was two days ago. We are still waiting to hear from the military-hating nutballs of Code Pink, International ANSWER, and their ilk. We are not holding our breaths.

—Don John, 3 June 2009

Thoughts From An Ex-Fetus

by George Jonas, 3 June 2009

...Living in an epoch that is selfish as well as matriarchal, our lifeboats are no longer marked "women and children first," only "women first." We invent euphemisms, such as "choice" for killing, and sophomoric dilemmas, such as pretending not to know when life begins, to ensure that nothing hinders Virginia's quest for Santa Claus. No obstacle must interfere with her goal of self-fulfillment...

...My quarrel is with those who would oppose abortion if they thought it amounted to killing. I've no problem with abortion, but they do. They've a whacking big problem. First (as I've repeated ad nauseam over the years) they must pretend not to know when life begins. They must pretend not to realize that life is an autonomous process, a continuum from zygote to old-age pension, a self-elaborating force that begins when it begins and keeps growing unless it's vacuumed out first. They must pretend not to recognize something that a cat recognizes: the difference between things alive or dead, animate or inanimate. They must pretend not to see that if a fetus were not alive, it wouldn't have to be killed...

More: <http://www.nationalpost.com/opinion/columnists/story.html?id=8b3d16b8-4e61-4fa3-a039-84a9cb7d7a34>

This speech is a marvelous compendium of real history—going back in some cases to Biblical times, but concentrating heavily on 1948, 1967, and today—with a number of salient facts that the terrorist-loving, Jew-hating leftist media would never tell you in a million years. Did you know, for instance, that Jews had re-established themselves as a majority of Jerusalem's population by 1850? The media would have us believe that they all came over from Europe in 1948 and stole the land from the poor little brown victims, the "Palestinians."

Ms. Glick makes no excuses about Israel's hard-won rights. Her passion and patriotism are truly bracing. Would that everyone in the West were as loyal and devoted to their countries as Israelis are to theirs.

Jerusalem, the Eternal Frontline

Caroline Glick, Senior Middle East Fellow at the Center for Security Policy, gave the following address on her acceptance of the Ingeborg Rennert Foundation's 2009 Guardian of Zion Award, in Jerusalem on 1 June 2009.

<http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/p18078.xml>

Dunce Cap-and-Trade

The Waxman-Markey global-warming bill cannot survive cost-benefit analysis.

by Jim Manzi, 8 June 2009 issue

...The expected benefits of emissions mitigation do not cover its expected costs. This is the root reason that proposals to mitigate emissions have such a hard time justifying themselves economically...

...The Obama administration expects to sell ration cards, bringing the government \$80 billion a year in revenue over the next decade. This revenue represents a cost increase for more or less any company that uses lots of fossil-fuel energy in one way or another (i.e., most of the economy). Like all raw-material cost increases, these will be passed along to consumers in the form of higher prices. So in reality this is a backdoor tax on energy that conscripts private companies into being collection agents...

...The costs would be more than ten times the benefits, even under extremely unrealistic assumptions of low costs and high benefits. More realistic assumptions would make for a comparison far less favorable to the bill...

...Along with putting all that carbon dioxide in the air, the West invented the polio vaccine, the limited-liability corporation, the high-efficiency power turbine, and so on. It invented, that is, the tools for creating wealth that successful parts of the developing world are now using to escape poverty — and, incidentally, to emit more carbon dioxide. It is less than obvious why we should put a special burden on the West to make reparations for carbon-dioxide emissions while ignoring the fact that the net global effect of the system that created these emissions has been extremely positive...

...Clarity about costs and benefits is the enemy of the Waxman-Markey proposal. To get drawn into the details of tweaking allowance schedules or emissions limits, in the hope of avoiding the appearance of obstructionism, is a sucker play. No amount of tinkering is going to change the fundamental reality that even a perfect implementation of the Waxman-Markey concept is a very poor economic deal for Americans. The alternative should not be tax-based or rationing-based efforts to make energy more expensive, but a targeted research program to provide insurance against unanticipated and unpredictable consequences. At the other extreme, to make this an argument about climate science by attacking the global scientific establishment, or to engage in a debate about worldviews and socialism — that is, to operate on a high rhetorical plane — is also a sucker play, because it allows advocates of Waxman-Markey to continue to avoid the hard issue of costs and benefits. We should keep coming back to one practical question: What do we pay, and what do we get?

Full analysis: <http://nrd.nationalreview.com/article/?q=ZDU1OGMyZjkwYWWM1ZTBkZTVmMTA3MzVhZTE4ZjcxYTE=>

Mankiw & Rogoff: Why We Don't Need Economists

by John Tamny, 2 June 2009

...Inflation does help debtors as Mankiw and Rogoff suggest, but sadly, that's only the seen. The unseen is the certain truth that lenders don't sit idly by when central banks devalue the unit of account which they lend. Instead, they demand a higher rate of interest on money borrowed to account for the devaluation of the currency.

Rogoff thinks 6 percent inflation is the answer, but what he fails to acknowledge is that 6 percent inflation would double the admittedly worthless price level in twelve years. Put more simply, inflation always steals the benefits of devaluation because the cost of goods must rise to account for the weaker currency. Economists love to talk up devaluation, but their advocacy is naïve. The owners of my apartment could redefine what a square foot is tomorrow and my apartment would double in size, but I would still be cramped in the same apartment. Why economists don't think this applies to money and the cost of goods will remain one of life's enduring mysteries.

In the real world, however, devaluation *does* once again increase the cost of goods, so while Americans might be more eager to move up their spending in the near-term, longer term the value of their paychecks would shrink in concert with higher prices across the board...

...Sadly, the true ravages of inflation don't end there. Indeed, when investors consider committing capital to anything, assumptions about inflation play a big role. They must, due to the simple truth that inflation erodes the value of investment returns. If it's assumed that the money they're committing will be reduced in value by **governmental mischief**, it's a certainty that they'll invest the capital in a place where it will be treated better...

More: http://www.realclearmarkets.com/articles/2009/06/mankiw_rogoff_remind_us_why_we.html

Very clever, these Chinese...

Geithner tells China its dollar assets are safe

by Glenn Somerville, 1 June 2009

BEIJING (Reuters)—U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner on Monday reassured the Chinese government that its huge holdings of dollar assets are safe and reaffirmed his faith in a strong U.S. currency.

A major goal of Geithner's maiden visit to China as Treasury chief is to allay concerns that Washington's bulging budget deficit and ultra-loose monetary policy will fan inflation, undermining both the dollar and U.S. bonds.

China is the biggest foreign owner of U.S. Treasury bonds. U.S. data shows that it held \$768 billion in Treasuries as of March, but some analysts believe China's total U.S. dollar-denominated investments could be twice as high.

"Chinese assets are very safe," Geithner said in response to a question after a speech at Peking University, where he studied Chinese as a student in the 1980s. **His answer drew loud laughter from his student audience...**

More: <http://finance.yahoo.com/news/Geithner-tells-China-its-rb-15396905.html?.v=2>

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