



# FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE NEWSLETTER #185 — JULY 19, 2012

*Welcome to always lively political discussion and whatever else comes up.*  
<http://www.FriendsOfTheMiddle.org> [FriendsOfTheMiddle@hotmail.com](mailto:FriendsOfTheMiddle@hotmail.com)

**INDEX: Click here.**

## 'Hairball' or 'Slimeball'?

(posted by Steven W. Baker / SteveB, July 19, 2012)

This is a very interesting article, told mostly from the Republican side. The only thing I think I can argue with is that R0mney is not so much a 'hairball' as he is a 'slimeball' Maybe there was a typographical error...the terms are very similar...maybe there was some cornfusion...

"Mitt Romney Taxes Controversy Shows He's Still A Tough Sell" by Howard Fineman, Huffington Post

July 18, 2012, ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/18/mitt-romney-taxes-tough-sell-hairball\\_n\\_1681636.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/18/mitt-romney-taxes-tough-sell-hairball_n_1681636.html))

(The storm over Mitt Romney's refusal to release more of his federal tax returns intensifies.)

### Myths from Around the World



The Romanian "Vampire"



The South American "Chupacabra"



Scotland's "Loch Ness Monster"



The European "Werewolf"



The Himalayan "Yeti"



The North American "Job Creator"

Facebook: Ayn Rand collected Social Security

(WASHINGTON) Months after he mathematically locked up the Republican presidential nomination, Mitt Romney remains a political hairball that GOP insiders -- conservative and otherwise -- wish they could cough up before the convention in Tampa, Fla., next month.

The likelihood of their doing so is slim to none, party sources said. But that doesn't mean that they are happy to have Mitt atop the ticket.

That is the real, unspoken political meaning behind the remarkable, rising chorus of voices calling on the presumptive party nominee to release more of his federal tax returns to the public.

"The fact is, no one likes the guy or believes in him," said the campaign manager for a former Romney rival, who declined to be quoted by name because his former boss is on record supporting Romney's campaign against incumbent President Barack Obama.

"Look back at our 2008 primaries," he said. **"Who did all the other candidates dislike? Romney.** Look at this year. **Who did all the other candidates dislike? Romney.** No one wants Obama to win, but no one likes the guy who is running against him."

**Republican leaders, especially conservatives, see Romney as a malleable, cynical power-grabber without principle or compass.** They warned voters that Romney would be unable to take the fight to Obama on health care because he had fostered a similar program as governor of Massachusetts, and they argued that a wealthy, well-connected son of privilege was not a good spokesman for selling free-market ideas to the middle-class.

Over the last week, a disparate array of Republican and conservative leaders have called on Romney to do what he is clearly loathe to do: release several years if not a decade or more of his federal tax returns. It is an unspoken form of payback.

The list is not only a veritable who's who of the party, but a not-so-subtle roster of people who opposed Romney for the presidential nomination. That they have not fallen in line behind Romney's stonewalling is a telling sign.

Among those who have called on Romney to disclose are figures tied to the candidates who opposed Romney in the Republican primaries, and who are clearly not willing to do him any favors now. They include Rick Tyler, a close and longtime adviser to former House Speaker Newt Gingrich; John Weaver, who served in a similar capacity in the campaign of former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman; former GOP candidate Rep. Ron Paul of Texas; Gov. Rick Perry of Texas (who said that ALL candidates should disclose their returns); and conservative pundit William Kristol, who is close to former Sen. Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania, among other former candidates.

Normally, defeated primary rivals quickly fall in line behind the strategy and message of the winning candidate. In this crucial case, Romney's former rivals have done just the opposite on what Romney has made clear is a crucial issue.

Equally noteworthy are the party leaders and pundits who have left the Romney Alamo. They include former party chairs Haley Barbour and Michael Steele, and pundits George Will, David Frum, the editors of *National Review* and, to a degree, the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*.

As if to add insult to injury, the GOP's 2008 standard-bearer, Sen. John McCain, said on Tuesday that he had picked former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin as his running mate because she was the best candidate for the job -- a sock to the jaw to Romney, who had been on McCain's veep list.

Even before the tax return issue had come to dominate the campaign, News Corp. boss Rupert Murdoch had complained about what he regarded as the ineptitude and lack of focus of the Romney team.

And Congressional Republicans were upset with Romney's insistence that his health care plan in Massachusetts was based on "penalties," not taxes. The GOP wants to run against the president on the notion that his version of health care -- similar to Romney's -- is a "massive tax increase." Mitt muddled the message.

"Romney threw them under the bus and they aren't going to stand for it," said Hogan Gidley, media director for Santorum's campaign. "The idea that Obama health care is a tax increase is a key to the whole Republican campaign."

Seen as arrogant and aloof by his rivals, Romney is said to have few friends or ties among his former challengers or elsewhere in the GOP and conservative ranks. He has money and a tight and loyal cadre of operatives, but they find themselves without many allies as they try to argue that their boss should be allowed to keep his business dealings and taxes private.

"There are those of us who think that Romney is destined to lose, and they are behaving accordingly," said the former manager of another campaign, who also declined to be quoted because his boss has endorsed Romney.

"Everybody's looking ahead to the next round. They won't say it, but they are."

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Isn't it interesting that despite all this dislike of Romney the Republicans couldn't come up with another, more salable candidate? Why was Romney so inevitable? Maybe because the whole field was so awful, in which case it makes you wonder if there are ANY Republicans out there who could have been viable. The whole party seems sunk in the mire of bad economic policy and screwed up priorities. I read an article in Mark's Stanford alumni magazine about a scientist from there who has figured out how to get us off fossil fuels and onto wind, sun, and hydro in 30 years and make energy cheaper to boot. The technology is there, but the political will is lacking. These are dark days for America.

[20120718-11](#) 16:07 SteveG Re: 'Hairball' or 'Slimeball'? (reply to Pam, above)

Lack of political will plus lobbyist will plus PAC will plus lack of supply methods and nothing will happen.

Tea party plus no tax mentality makes a lack of viable candidates – PAC's will try to make anyone viable.

[20120718-15](#) 16:16 Art Re: 'Hairball' or 'Slimeball'? (reply to SteveG, above)

This whole tax thing might just explode and cost Romney the nomination. There is something really ugly here methinks. Think about that.

[20120718-16](#) 16:19 SteveG Re: 'Hairball' or 'Slimeball'? (reply to Art, above)

He made \$24 or so million in 2010 and reportedly when his 2011 returns are available it will indicate an income of \$43 million – give or take a little. Hiding something in the previous years – damn straight!

[20120718-19](#) 17:12 Tom Re: 'Hairball' or 'Slimeball'? (reply to Art, above)

Yes, me also!

At least we know where Romney was Born, "The Planet Krypton!" ;-)

Progressives like (1) Socialists/Marxist.

Conservatives have no choice given to them (-0) Banker/Broker- Globalists!

[20120718-01](#) 06:57 MarthH "Five Reasons the Super-Rich Need Government More Than the Rest of Us"

Published on Monday, July 16, 2012 by Common Dreams

"Five Reasons the Super-Rich Need Government More Than the Rest of Us" by Paul Buchheit, Common Dreams

July 16, 2012, (<http://www.commondreams.org/view/2012/07/16-1>)

Wealthy individuals and corporations want us to believe they've made it on their own, without the help of government or the American people. Billionaire financier Sanford Weill blustered, "We didn't rely on somebody else to build what we built." He was echoing the words of his famous predecessor, the formidable financier J. P. Morgan, who spouted, "I owe the public nothing."

That's the bull of Wall Street. There are at least five good reasons why the wealthiest Americans need government as much as the rest of us, and probably more.

## 1. Security

In his *People's History*, Howard Zinn described colonial opposition to inequality in 1765: "A shoemaker named Ebenezer Macintosh led a mob in destroying the house of a rich Boston merchant named Andrew Oliver. Two weeks later, the crowd turned to the home of Thomas Hutchinson, symbol of the rich elite who ruled the colonies in the name of England. They smashed up his house with axes, drank the wine in his wine cellar, and looted the house of its furniture and other objects. A report by colony officials to England said that this was part of a larger scheme in which the houses of fifteen rich people were to be destroyed, as part of 'a war of plunder, of general levelling and taking away the distinction of rich and poor.'"

That doesn't happen much anymore. Of course, the super-rich aren't taking any chances, with panic shelters and James Bond cars and personal surveillance drones. But the U.S. government will be helping them by spending \$55 billion on Homeland Security next year, in addition to \$673 billion for the military. The police, emergency services, and National Guard are trained to focus on crimes against wealth.

In the cities, business interests keep the police focused on the homeless and unemployed. And on drug users. A "Broken Windows" mentality, which promotes quick fixes of minor damage to discourage large-scale destruction, is being applied to human beings. Wealthy Americans can rest better at night knowing that the police are "stopping and frisking" in the streets of the poor neighborhoods.

## 2. Laws and Deregulations

The wealthiest Americans are the main beneficiaries of tax laws, property rights, zoning rules, patent and copyright provisions, trade pacts, antitrust legislation, and contract regulations. Tax loopholes allow them to store over \$1 trillion in assets overseas.

Their companies benefit, despite any publicly voiced objections to regulatory agencies, from SBA and SEC guidelines that generally favor business, and from FDA and USDA quality control measures that minimize consumer complaints and product recalls.

The growing numbers of financial industry executives have profited from 30 years of deregulation, most notably the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act. Lobbying by the financial industry has prolonged the absurdity of a zero sales tax on financial transactions.

Big advantages accrue for multinational corporations from trade agreements like NAFTA, with international disputes resolved by the business-friendly World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organization. Federal judicial law protects our biggest companies from foreign infringement. The proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership would put governments around the world at the mercy of corporate decision-makers.

The euphemistically named JOBS Act further empowers business, exempting startups from regulatory accounting requirements.

There are even anti-antitrust measures, such as the licensing rules that allow the American Medical Association to restrict the number of doctors in the U.S., thereby keeping doctor salaries artificially high. Can't have a free market if it hurts business.

## 3. Research and Infrastructure

A publicly supported communications infrastructure allows the richest 10% of Americans to manipulate their 80% share of the stock market. CEOs rely on roads and seaports and airports to ship their products, the FAA and TSA and Coast Guard and Department of Transportation to safeguard them, a nationwide energy grid to power their factories, and communications towers and satellites to conduct online business. Private jets use 16 percent of air traffic control resources while paying only 3% of the bill.

Perhaps most important to business, even as it focuses on short-term profits, is the long-term basic research that is largely conducted with government money. Especially for the tech industry. Taxpayer-

funded research at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (the Internet) and the National Science Foundation (the Digital Library Initiative) has laid a half-century foundation for technological product development. Well into the 1980s, as companies like Apple and Google and Microsoft and Oracle and Cisco profited from the fastest-growing product revolution in American history, the U.S. Government was still providing half the research funds. Even today 60% of university research is government-supported.

Public schools have helped to train the chemists, physicists, chip designers, programmers, engineers, production line workers, market analysts, and testers who create modern technological devices. They, in turn, can't succeed without public layers of medical support and security. All of them contribute to the final product.

As the super-rich ride in their military-designed armored cars to a financial center globally connected by public fiber optics networks to make a trade guided by publicly funded data mining and artificial intelligence software, they might stop and re-think the old Horatio Alger myth.

#### 4. Subsidies

The traditional image of 'welfare' pales in comparison to corporate welfare and millionaire welfare. Whereas over 90% of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families goes to the elderly, the disabled, or working households, most of the annual \$1.3 trillion in "tax expenditures" (tax subsidies from special deductions, exemptions, exclusions, credits, and loopholes) goes to the top quintile of taxpayers. One estimate is \$250 billion a year just to the richest 1%.

Senator Tom Coburn's website reports that mortgage interest and rental expense deductions alone return almost \$100 billion a year to millionaires.

The most profitable corporations get the biggest subsidies. The Federal Reserve provided more than \$16 trillion in financial assistance to financial institutions and corporations. According to Citizens for Tax Justice, 280 profitable Fortune 500 companies, which together paid only half of the maximum 35 percent corporate tax rate, received \$223 billion in tax subsidies.

Even the conservative Cato Institute admitted that the U.S. federal government spent \$92 billion on corporate welfare during fiscal year 2006. Recipients included Boeing, Xerox, IBM, Motorola, Dow Chemical, and General Electric.

In agriculture, most of the funding for commodity programs goes to large agribusiness corporations such as Archer Daniels Midland. For the oil industry, estimates of subsidy payments range from \$10 to \$50 billion per year.

#### 5. Disaster Costs

Exxon spokesperson Ken Cohen once said: "Any claim we don't pay taxes is absurd...ExxonMobil is a leading U.S. taxpayer." Added Chevron CEO John Watson: "The oil and gas industry pays its fair share in taxes" But SEC documents show that Exxon paid 2% in U.S. federal taxes from 2008 to 2010, Chevron 4.8%.

As if to double up on the insult, the petroleum industry readily takes public money for oil spills. Cleanups cost much more than the fines imposed on the companies. Government costs can run into the billions, or even tens of billions, of dollars.

Another disaster-prone industry is finance, from which came the encouraging words of Goldman Sachs chairman Lloyd Blankfein: "Everybody should be, frankly, happy...the financial system led us into the crisis and it will lead us out."

Estimates for bailout funds from the Treasury and the Federal Reserve range between \$3 trillion and \$5 trillion. That's enough to pay off both the deficit and next year's entitlement costs. All because of the irresponsibility of the super-salaried CEOs of our most profitable corporations.

## Common Sense

Patriotic Millionaires recently addressed the President and Congress: "Given the dire state of our economy, it is absurd that one-quarter of all millionaires pay a lower tax rate than millions of working, middle-class American families...Please do the right thing for our country. Raise our taxes."

It's good to know somebody gets it right. Taxes, for the most part, are not unfair. They represent payment for society's many benefits, which get bigger and better as people get richer.

<a href="#">20120718-32</a>	23:23	SteveB	Re: "Five Reasons the Super-Rich Need Government More Than the Rest of Us" (reply to MarthaH, above)
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Really good article, Martha. Thank you! I hope you have had some rain there at home.

When I was in high school and read Ayn Rand (well...they were very thick so I liked the challenge and they contained a little sex), I can remember thinking that John Galt (and all of today's 1%) certainly owe society and even their mommies and daddies a huge debt that can never truly be repaid. This article spells out the literal ways this is so. Society is certainly owed more than its destruction at the hands of the super-rich. Ayn Rand must have come from a highly dysfunctional family!

<a href="#">20120718-02</a>	10:05	SteveM	Fw: Best Bartender Joke Ever
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A puppet, a black guy, an illegal alien, a Muslim and a Communist walk into a bar.

Bartender asks...

"What'll it be, Mr. President?"

<a href="#">20120718-03</a>	10:56	SteveM	Fw: A Lesson in Irony
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The Food Stamp Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is proud to be distributing the greatest amount of free meals and food stamps ever.

Meanwhile, the National Park Service, administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior, asks us to "Please Do Not Feed the Animals."

Their stated reason for the policy is because the animals will grow dependent on handouts and will not learn to take care of themselves.

This ends today's lesson.

<a href="#">20120718-04</a>	13:58	SteveB	Strange Animated GIF's
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<http://www.mymodernmet.com/profiles/blogs/rrrrrrroll-animated-gifs>

<a href="#">20120718-05</a>	14:49	Ben	Re: Strange Animated GIF's (reply to SteveB, above)
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Very cool!

There was a decent system in place and Daniels tried to privatize the program – didn't work too well. Add this lost money to the cuts in social programs, the miscalculation of corporate tax money just sitting in a bank account and we all can give thanks that he is not running for president or vice president. Just watch out Purdue!!!!

"Judge Rules Indiana Owes IBM \$12M Over Botched Welfare Program" by Mary Beth Schneider, *Indianapolis Star*

July 18, 2012, (<http://www.indystar.com/article/20120718/NEWS05/207180332/Judge-Taxpayers-losers-IBM-Indiana-case?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|IndyStar.com>)

Even as Gov. Mitch Daniels vowed to appeal a judge's decision Wednesday awarding \$52 million to IBM, the governor defiantly said that all the money and struggles to fix what was one of the nation's worst welfare systems has been worth it.

Others question both the human and financial costs.

Marion County Judge David Dreyer, who ruled against the state in its lawsuit with IBM, called taxpayers the losers in a "misguided" privatization experiment. It began with the state hiring IBM in 2006 to overhaul welfare and ended with IBM fired in 2009 after hundreds of millions of dollars were spent only for performance to get worse.

Social service advocates point to the human toll the effort extracted. Even if the state now has the right formula for helping a welfare clientele that is poor, sick or elderly, they say improvements could have been achieved without the pain and without the nearly \$10 million spent on attorneys.

"In the end, I think everybody agrees that the best thing for needy individuals is that the best system possible is in place," said David Sklar, president of the Indiana Coalition of Human Services. "We probably could have staved off a lot of these problems if the administration had been more willing to work with those involved in the system and those advocating on behalf of those (welfare) clients to put a better system in place from the get-go."

Daniels argued that Indiana was right to try something dramatic to turn around what had been among the worst-performing welfare systems in the nation but also right to fire IBM, even though it led to the state and IBM suing each other.

He pointed to the numbers: 93 percent of applications now are processed in a timely manner, up from 65.6 percent in 2009 before the \$1.3 billion IBM contract was ditched; error rates for people incorrectly denied assistance is below the national average, at 5.64 percent compared with 13.68 percent under IBM; and the error rate for payment accuracy has been cut nearly in half.

Indiana, he said, "now has its most timely, most accurate, most cost-effective and fraud-free system ever."

U.S. Department of Agriculture rankings show Indiana ranks 16th best in the nation for its error rate on public assistance, though that is down from being 10th in the nation in 2010.

Sen. Vaneta Becker, an Evansville Republican, was among the first to raise concerns about the privatization. Soon after the contract with IBM was signed and the state began rolling out the new system in some counties, constituents bombarded her with horror stories of lost paperwork and benefits wrongly denied.

One woman lost her Medicaid, food stamps and transportation because she missed an appointment. The reason? The woman was in the hospital. The benefits, with Becker's help, were restored — the day after the woman died.

Becker agrees that things have improved under the hybrid public-private system now in place.

But, she said, "the change that made things work down here was bringing back caseworkers that they had originally let go." "The human touch was what was necessary to make it work."

"The whole thing could have been avoided if the state from the beginning had just provided new computers and additional training to caseworkers," she said. "A lot of this could have been avoided and a lot of costs."

In Dreyer's ruling, IBM gets \$12 million, mostly for equipment the state kept after canceling the contract, on top of the \$40 million that he had ordered the state to pay IBM earlier. The state also will have to pay 8 percent interest on that money for the period leading up to the judgment.

That is far short of the \$113 million IBM wanted.

The state, which had been trying to recoup more than \$150 million of the \$437 million it had paid IBM before scrapping the deal, got nothing. Dreyer found that IBM did not breach its contract and that IBM had, in fact, laid the groundwork for the current success.

And he cited trial evidence that showed the state, even while publicly praising IBM, was trying to cancel the contract because it would cost additional money the state didn't have to adjust what had been a flawed plan.

So far, the state has paid Barnes & Thornburg, the Indianapolis law firm who handled the lawsuit, \$9.6 million. Attorney Peter Rusthoven said that represents two years of work leading up to a five-week trial. The cost of an appeal, he said, would probably not exceed \$250,000.

Daniels said that even if the appeals challenging the IBM reward fail, it will have "zero" impact on the state's \$2 billion surplus that will allow taxpayers a rebate of about \$100 each on their next tax bill.

He and Budget Director Adam Horst said the state has a contingency fund for lawsuits that will cover the costs.

Clint Roswell, a spokesman for IBM, said the company was reviewing its own legal options but seemed surprised the state planned to continue the legal fight.

"We had hoped this decision would mark the end of the state's costly efforts to avoid its contract obligations and pursue unsupported and now rejected claims against IBM," he said.

Daniels argued that even if the state eventually has to pay IBM, "the dollars are so tiny compared to the savings we're achieving."

He said the new "post-IBM" hybrid system is saving something like \$60 million-plus a year now."

Daniels stressed, though, that what is important is not the dollars but the improved services for those Hoosiers who need welfare assistance.

John Cardwell, chairman of the Indiana Home Care Task Force, agreed that people should be the priority. But, he said, that is why the state's privatization plan was so wrong from the beginning.

He laid the blame as much on ACS, the subcontractor that the state kept after firing IBM, and noted that when the decision to launch the privatization plan was made, the head of the Family and Social Services Administration was a former ACS executive, Mitch Roob.

"ACS benefitted far more than IBM from welfare privatization and was involved in the actions at the local level that harmed senior citizens, persons with disabilities and families," Cardwell said.

He called for the legislature and Congress to demand an independent audit of Indiana's welfare system "to determine who is benefitting from those programs: citizens that need medical care, food and shelter or private companies."

Rep. Gail Riecken, an Evansville Democrat, said Indiana's welfare privatization experiment, which the state plunged into even though a similar effort in Texas had failed, should be a cautionary tale about privatization of public services.

She tried and failed in 2009, after the IBM contract was canceled, to pass legislation that would prevent welfare from ever being put in the hands of private, for-profit companies.

Under Daniels, the state has privatized one prison as well as prison food and medical services and the Indiana Toll Road. An attempt to privatize the Hoosier Lottery to raise money for higher education flopped, though the state is now seeking proposals from private companies for a 10-year contract to assist in running the lottery to improve its bottom line.

Riecken said the state needs to think long and hard about putting public jobs in private hands.

"When you turn (government duties) over to a private concern, you have to be concerned about user fees and quality because their main core is to make a profit," she said.

The state's current hybrid system is now in all 92 counties after a long rollout.

It wasn't Dreyer's job to judge the merits of privatization in general. But he was critical of Indiana's experience with welfare.

"Neither party deserves to win this case," he wrote in his 65-page ruling. **"This story represents a 'perfect storm' of misguided government policy and overzealous corporate ambition. Overall, both parties are to blame, and Indiana's taxpayers are left as apparent losers."**

(*Star* reporter Jon Murray contributed to this story.)

<a href="#">20120718-08</a>	15:39	Pam	Re: "Judge Rules Indiana Owes IBM \$12M Over Botched Welfare Program" (reply to SteveG, above)
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Good Lord! I gather from your remark, Steve, that Daniels is going to head up Purdue. Isn't that special? (said in Dana Carvey mode.)

<a href="#">20120718-14</a>	16:14	SteveG	Re: "Judge Rules Indiana Owes IBM \$12M Over Botched Welfare Program" (reply to Pam, above)
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Daniels appointed 8 of Purdue's 10 trustees. Those 8 contributed to his campaigns. All ten voted for him to be the next president of Purdue when his term as governor expires. The 10 trustees also determine his salary which will be about 6 times higher than the governor's salary.

<a href="#">20120718-18</a>	16:30	Pam	Re: "Judge Rules Indiana Owes IBM \$12M Over Botched Welfare Program" (reply to SteveG, above)
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Think of something nasty, and pretend I said it.

<a href="#">20120718-20</a>	18:15	Beth	Re: "Judge Rules Indiana Owes IBM \$12M Over Botched Welfare Program" (reply to Pam, above)
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What a great guy. No wonder he wasn't interested in running for president.

[20120718-22](#) 18:50 SteveB Re: "Judge Rules Indiana Owes IBM \$12M Over Botched Welfare Program"  
(reply to all, above)

I hear all you guys complain about Daniels, but (good grief!) Purdue's my alma mater! ...and Dale's and GaryC, SteveBA, GaryF, and David and more FotM members. [Beth, for instance. -SteveB]

I have a feeling that the education of Purdue students will suffer, just as the education of Indiana's public K12 students has suffered.

Beth, you're so right about how lucky we are Mr. Zero is running for Prez instead of Mitch. I guess...

[20120718-26](#) 19:24 Beth Re: "Judge Rules Indiana Owes IBM \$12M Over Botched Welfare Program"  
(reply to SteveB, above)

I am also a Purdue alum as is my ex. College presidents make way too much money. They have been successful in convincing their corporate executive board members that they are CEO's.

[20120718-24](#) 19:04 Art Re: "Judge Rules Indiana Owes IBM \$12M Over Botched Welfare Program"  
(reply to all, above)

Is anyone else bothered by the fact that once again we have the president of a (OK middle sized) university making more money than the President of the United States or the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. There is just something fundamentally wrong with our whole system.

[20120718-25](#) 19:22 SteveG Re: "Judge Rules Indiana Owes IBM \$12M Over Botched Welfare Program"  
(reply to Art, above)

Not to mention collegiate football and basketball coaches.

[20120718-09](#) 15:44 Art Fw: The B\*tch Needs Bucks!

See what you get [great fascist emails -SteveB] when you run in the right circles. I can't decide if this is just laughable or extremely sad.

from Michele Bachmann:

Dear Fellow Conservative,

I will get straight to the point because I know your time is incredibly valuable.

Sunday night was the deadline for candidates to file their fundraising report with the Federal Election Commission -- and the news proved my wealthy opponent is prepared to buy this election. In fact, he is his best donor.

My Democrat opponent has raised over \$500,000 -- but what is worse -- he has loaned his campaign \$250,000. Unfortunately, I'm afraid this is just the beginning. Because as you know, my opponent is worth up to \$111 million.

[Crybaby! -SteveB]

There is no doubt that liberals are going to continue to pour millions into their campaign to defeat me and I need your immediate help. Can I count on you to contribute \$25, \$50, \$100 or more today?

Since becoming a Member of Congress in 2007, I have worked overtime to take our fiscally conservative message of limited government and individual responsibility to the American public. Time and again, I've gone head-to-head against some of the most dedicated deficit-spending liberals on the campaign trail, on national television, and on the House floor.

I've made it a top priority to create jobs, fight for individual liberty and to keep our country safe. But in order to do this we must ensure Barack Obama is a one-term President and we must completely repeal the big-government monstrosity known as "Obamacare."

Of course, being such a vocal proponent of constitutional conservatism and an opponent of President Obama and his disastrous policies has made me a top target for defeat this year. That's why the liberals have gone so far as to recruit and nominate a liberal multi-millionaire from Minneapolis with the ability to pour millions of personal wealth into the campaign to defeat me.

That's why I need your immediate and continued support.

Will you follow this link to make an immediate donation to my campaign today?

Make no mistake, they're putting everything they have directly into my race and it's absolutely critical that I'm not outspent in this race!

Sincerely, Michele Bachmann

P.S. Your steadfast support will not only allow us to fight leftist Democrats like Nancy Pelosi in Congress, but also enable me to continue taking our message of limited Constitutional government and personal responsibility into the homes of millions of Americans. Please follow this link to make a donation to my campaign today. Thanks.

[20120718-10](#) 15:56 Pam Re: The B\*tch Needs Bucks! (reply to Art, above)

Art (above): "I can't decide if this is just laughable or extremely sad."

Evil and stupid, I'd say.

[20120718-12](#) 16:10 SteveG Re: The B\*tch Needs Bucks! (reply to Art, above)

Laughable and a sad commentary on the state of America.

[20120718-13](#) 16:13 Art Re: The B\*tch Needs Bucks! (reply to SteveG, above)

We are entering the Age of Stupid.

[20120718-17](#) 16:24 Mark Video: "VW Passat 78.5 MPG in the U.K."

[http://video.staged.com/localshops/vw\\_passat\\_785\\_mpg\\_in\\_the\\_uk](http://video.staged.com/localshops/vw_passat_785_mpg_in_the_uk)

[20120718-33](#) 23:33 SteveB Re: Video: "VW Passat 78.5 MPG in the U.K." (reply to Mark, above)

Thanks for this. Hope you're getting some rain there!

Well...this sounds good...and I'm all for 70-some MPG cars...in the U.S. and everywhere, but this video is very dishonest.

Just for starters, I don't know if you've ever been to the U.K., but the British gallon is larger than the U.S. gallon!  
For the rest, see:

<http://www.snopes.com/politics/business/passat.asp>.

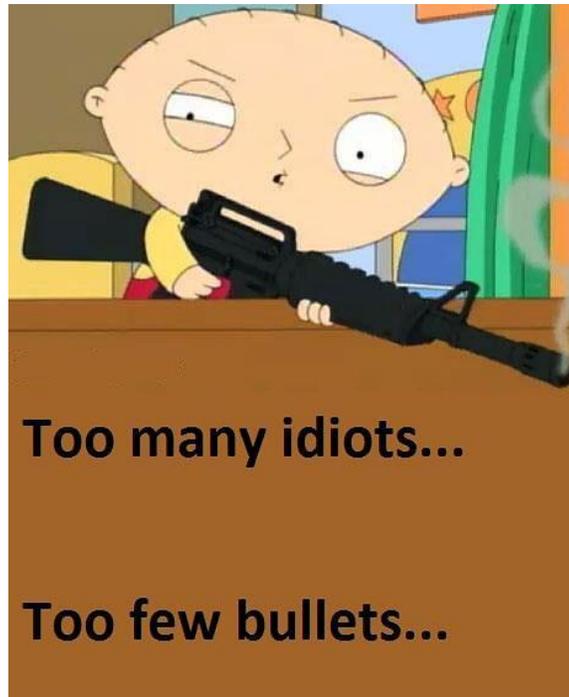
I wish the people spending all their time generating destructive diatribes against government, taxes, the President, etc., etc., etc., would spend their time doing something constructive, like seeking comprehensive, collective solutions to our many problems. We live in perilous times, my friend.

20120718-21

18:51 SteveG

Fw: Photo: 'Dinner with Veggies': Delicious-Looking Bloody Mary [from Jim Reeves, gracias!]





Obama vs. Obama:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Czo5Vf8KZs>

The Ineptocracy continues to add one failure on top of another failure, and we will pay for it...

"TSA Let 25 Illegal Aliens Attend Flight School Owned by Illegal Alien" by Edwin Mora, CNSNews

July 18, 2012, (<http://cnsnews.com/news/article/tsa-let-25-illegal-aliens-attend-flight-school-owned-illegal-alien>)

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) approved flight training for 25 illegal aliens at a Boston-area flight school that was owned by yet another illegal alien, according to the Government Accountability Office.

The illegal-alien flight-school attendees included eight who had entered the country illegally and 17 who had overstayed their allowed period of admission into the United States, according to an audit by the GAO.

Six of the illegal aliens were actually able to get pilot's licenses.

Discovery of the trouble at the flight school began when local police--not federal authorities--pulled over the owner of the school on a traffic violation and were able to determine that he was an illegal alien.

Rep. Mike Rogers (R.-Ala.), chairman of the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Transportation Security, said he found the GAO's findings "amazing."

"We have cancer patients, Iraq War veterans and Nobel Prize winners all forced to undergo rigorous security checks before getting on an airplane," said Rogers, "and at the same time, ten years after 9/11, there are foreign nationals in the United States trained to fly just like Mohammed Atta and the other 9/11 hijackers did, and not all of them are necessarily getting a security background check."

Stephen Lord, who is the GAO's director of Homeland Security and Justice Issues, testified about the matter Wednesday in Rogers' subcommittee. Rogers asked him: "Isn't it true that, based on your report, the Transportation Security Administration cannot assure the American people that foreign terrorists are not in this country learning how to fly airplanes, yes or no?"

Lord responded: "At this time, no."

Although the illegal alien who owned the Massachusetts flight school had not undergone a required TSA security threat assessment and had not been approved for flight training by the agency, he nonetheless held two Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) pilot licenses, also known as FAA certificates.

The GAO report, released today, is entitled General Aviation Security: TSA's Process for Ensuring Foreign Flight Students Do Not Pose a Security Risk Has Weaknesses.

In response to the September 11, 2001 attacks on the U.S. homeland perpetrated by terrorists who learned how to pilot aircraft at flight schools in Florida, Arizona, and Minnesota, the TSA, a component of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), developed the "Alien Flight Student Program (AFSP) to help determine whether foreign students enrolling at flight schools pose a security threat," said the GAO's Stephen Lord in written testimony prepared for Wednesday's hearing in the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Transportation Security.

According to the 911 Commission Report, four of the Sept. 11 hijackers who entered the United States with legal visas had overstayed their authorized period of admission.

Under the Alien Flight Student Program, foreign nationals are supposed to be subjected to a TSA security threat assessment prior to receiving flight training to determine whether they pose a security threat to the United States.

"According to TSA regulations, an individual poses a security threat when the individual is suspected of posing, or is known to pose, a threat to transportation or national security, a threat of air piracy or terrorism, a threat to airline or passenger security, or a threat to civil aviation security," Lord said in his written testimony.

"According to TSA officials, when a foreign national applies to AFSP to obtain flight training, TSA uses information submitted by the foreign national--such as name, date of birth, and passport information--to conduct a criminal history records check, a review of the Terrorist Screening Database, and a review of the Department of Homeland Security's TECS [anti-terrorism] system," Lord testified.

However, a "weakness" in TSA's Alien Flight Student Program, noted by GAO, is that it does not check for immigration status.

"AFSP is not designed to determine whether a foreign flight student entered the country legally; thus, a foreign national can be approved for training through AFSP after entering the country illegally," stated the GAO in its report. "In March 2010, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) investigated a Boston-area flight school after local police stopped the flight school owner for a traffic violation and discovered that he was in the country illegally. In response to this incident, ICE launched a broader investigation of the students enrolled at the flight school."

"ICE found that 25 of the foreign nationals at this flight school had applied to AFSP and had been approved by TSA to begin flight training after their security threat assessment had been completed; however," reads the GAO report, "the ICE investigation and our subsequent inquiries revealed the following issues, among other things:

- "Eight of the 25 foreign nationals who received approval by TSA to begin flight training were in 'entry without inspection' status, meaning they had entered the country illegally. Three of these had obtained FAA

airman certificates [pilot's license]: 2 held FAA private pilot certificates and 1 held an FAA commercial pilot certificate.

- "Seventeen of the 25 foreign nationals who received approval by the TSA to begin flight training were in 'overstay' status, meaning they had overstayed their authorized period of admission into the United States.
- "In addition, the flight school owner held two FAA airman certificates. Specifically, he was a certified Airline Transport Pilot (cargo pilot) and a Certified Flight Instructor. However, he had never received a TSA security threat assessment or been approved by TSA to obtain flight training. He had registered with TSA as a flight training provider under AFSP."

A GAO official told CNSNews.com that, based on their names, none of the 25 illegal aliens who attended the flight school appeared to be from Muslim countries. Instead, they had Latin American names.

The GAO found that, "From January 2006 through September 2011, 25,599 foreign nationals had applied for FAA airman certificates, indicating they had completed flight training." That information is placed on the FAA airmen registry.

The GAO provided information from the FAA's airmen registry to TSA "so that the agency could conduct a matching process to determine whether the foreign nationals in the FAA airmen registry were in TSA's AFSP database and the extent to which they had been successfully vetted through the AFSP database."

The GAO found that not everyone in the FAA registry had been vetted properly.

"TSA's analysis indicated that some of the 25,599 foreign nationals in the FAA airmen registry were not in the TSA AFSP database, indicating that these individuals had not applied to the AFSP or been vetted by TSA before taking flight training and receiving an FAA airman certificate," stated the GAO.

The GAO continued, "TSA's analysis indicated that an additional number of the 25,599 foreign nationals in the FAA airmen registry were also in the TSA AFSP database but had not been successfully vetted, meaning that they had received an FAA airman certificate but had not been successfully vetted or received permission from TSA to begin flight training."

The GAO did not provide the full number of individuals who were not properly vetted.

The GAO's Stephen Lord, in his prepared remarks, told lawmakers that the TSA does not screen new and existing FAA pilot license holders against the Terrorist Screening Database until after the foreign national has completed flight training.

"Thus, foreign nationals obtaining flight training with the intent to do harm, such as three of the pilots and leaders of the September 11 terrorist attacks, could have already obtained the training needed to operate an aircraft before they received any type of vetting," warned the GAO.

The TSA and ICE are working on a pilot program for vetting the names of foreign nationals against immigration databases.

However, the GAO noted that the two agencies "have not specified desired outcomes and time frames, or assigned individuals with responsibility for fully instituting the program."

The GAO further stated, "We recommended that TSA and ICE develop a plan, with time frames, and assign individuals with responsibility and accountability for assessing the results of their pilot program to check TSA AFSP data against information DHS has on applicants' admissibility status to help detect and identify violations, such as overstays and entries without inspection, by foreign flight students, and institute that pilot program if it is found to be effective."

"DHS concurred with this recommendation and stated that TSA will prepare a plan by December 2012 to assess the results of the pilot program with ICE to determine the lawful status of the active AFSP population," said the GAO.

[20120718-29](#) 22:04 Tom Photo: My Kinda Team!



When President Obama's Security Team arrived they were greeted with this sign:



[Source of original email unknown. –SteveB]

Anagram: "The reordering of letters in a word or phrase to create a totally different word or phrase."

Whoever did this must be "deadly" at Scrabble! Wait till you see the last one!

PRESBYTERIAN — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

BEST IN PRAYER

ASTRONOMER — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

MOON STARER

DESPERATION — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

A ROPE ENDS IT

THE EYES — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

THEY SEE

GEORGE BUSH — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

HE BUGS GORE

THE MORSE CODE — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

HERE COME DOTS

DORMITORY — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

DIRTY ROOM

SLOT MACHINES — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

CASH LOST IN ME

ANIMOSITY — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

IS NO AMITY

ELECTION RESULTS — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

LIES - LET'S RECOUNT

SNOOZE ALARMS — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

ALAS! NO MORE Z 'S

A DECIMAL POINT — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

I'M A DOT IN PLACE

THE EARTHQUAKES — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

THAT QUEER SHAKE

ELEVEN PLUS TWO — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

TWELVE PLUS ONE

MOTHER-IN-LAW — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

WOMAN HITLER

AND FINALLY...THE COUP De GRACE:

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA — Rearrange the letters, it reads:

STRUGGLING INCOMPETENT LIAR

The first 15 anagrams took great skill to envision, but the last one should be evident to every American citizen.

<http://projects.cerias.purdue.edu/IFIPTM/>



—Friends of the Middle,  
Steven W. Baker (SteveB), Editor/Moderator

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