



FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE NEWSLETTER #202 — AUG. 13, 2012

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[INDEX: Click here.](#)

R0mney's VP Pick: Paul Ryan

(posted by Steven W. Baker / SteveB, Aug. 13, 2012)

Boy, the Obama-Biden 2012 Campaign must be licking its chops!

Headlines: R0mney commits biggest "gaffe" of all! Misunderstands the American people completely!

What I love about R0mney's poor choice (for him) is that it's a good choice for the country. This election will provide a clear litmus test for Republican lies and hypocrisy and, should President Obama (and the rest of us) be so fortunate as to win, the death knell of the GOP as we know it.



I say what we do is, this fall, we take the country back permanently from these morally bankrupt A-holes!

Here's the *sentence of the century* (so far) from the article below ("How Grover Norquist Hypnotized the GOP"):

"It is now clear that the Republican strategy is to drive America to the brink of fiscal ruin and then argue that the only way out is to cut spending for the powerless."

"Paul Ryan? Seriously?" by John Nichols, *The Nation*/OpEdNews

Aug. 10, 2012, (<http://www.opednews.com/articles/Paul-Ryan-Seriously-by-John-Nichols-120810-852.html>)

Of course Paul Ryan wants to be Mitt Romney's vice presidential running mate.

The hyper-ambitious political careerist -- who has spent his entire adult life as a Congressional aide, think-tank hanger-on and House member -- is looking for a road up. And he is sly enough to recognize that, like Dick Cheney with George Bush, he could be more than just a vice president in the administration of so bumbling a character as Romney.

Ryan figured Romney out months ago.

The two men bonded during the Wisconsin presidential primary campaign in late March and early April. They got on so well that Ryan was playing April Fool's Day jokes on the Republican front-runner -- giving Romney a rousing introduction before the candidate came from behind a curtain to find the room where he had expected to be greeted by a crowd of supporters was empty.

Romney loves the prep-school fraternity that he has with Ryan, and every indication is that the former governor would be delighted to add the House Budget Committee chairman to his ticket.

The conversations have occurred. The vetting has been completed. It could happen. And, indeed, as the time for choosing nears, the Ryan buzz has been amplified -- mainly by the Wisconsin congressman's friends at *The Weekly Standard*, which has editorialized enthusiastically on behalf of his selection, and other conservative media outlets. But, now, even ABC's "Veep Beat" headlines "Paul Ryan's Rising Momentum."

There's just one problem.

Vice presidential nominees are supposed to help tickets, not hurt them.

Romney clearly needs help. Just back from a disastrous trip to Europe and the Middle East, mired in controversies about the "vulture capitalism" he practiced at Bain Capital and his refusal to release tax returns that his dad -- former Michigan governor and 1968 Republican presidential contender George Romney -- said contenders for the Oval Office had a responsibility to share with the voters, Romney could use a boost.

But Ryan would be a burden, not a booster, for a Romney-led ticket.

Like Romney, Ryan is a son of privilege who has little real-world experience or understanding. He presents well on Sunday morning talk shows and in the rarified confines of Washington think tanks and dinners with his constituents -- the Masters of the Universe on Wall Street -- but his record in Congress and the policies he now promotes are political albatrosses.

Some Republicans, perhaps even Romney, do not get this.

But the Obama campaign recognized, correctly, that Ryan's positioning of himself as the point man on behalf of an austerity that would remake America as a dramatically weaker and more dysfunctional country makes him the most vulnerable of prominent Republicans.

Ryan scares people who live outside the "bubble" of a modern conservative movement that thinks the wealthiest country in the world is "broke" and that Ayn Rand is an literary and economic seer.

The House Budget Committee chairman imagines himself as a high priest speaking unfortunate truths about debts and deficits, the unforgiving foe of social spending who would gladly sacrifice Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid on the altar of debt reduction. Ryan has branded himself well within Republican circles, so well that he has parlayed himself into contention for the vice presidential nod. To get that nomination, however, Ryan must count on the prospect that the party that takes as its symbol the memory-rich elephant will suddenly suffer a spell of forgetfulness. That's because **the Republican congressman from Wisconsin, for all his bluster, is anything but a consistent advocate for fiscal responsibility and balanced budgets. He is, in fact, a hypocrite.**

Or, to be more precise, a hypocritical big spender -- at least when Wall Street, the insurance industry and the military-industrial complex call.

Ryan has been a steady voter for unwise bailouts of big banks, unfunded mandates and unnecessary wars. Few members of Congress have run up such very big tabs while doing so little to figure out how to pay the piper. How has Ryan gotten away with his fool-most-of-the-people-most-of-the-time politics?

For the most part, he has until recently flown under the radar -- dazzling fellow Republicans with fiscal fancy footwork, while dancing around weak Democratic opposition in his home district.

But no more. This year, Ryan is being called out by an able challenger with actual experience in the private sector, as well as local government. Rob Zerban, the congressman's Democratic challenger, is not fooled by Ryan's budgetary blathering.

Zerban is familiar with Ryan's record. And he has been calling the budget committee chairman out on his "faux fiscal credentials."

"Congressman Paul Ryan can grandstand about the debt all he wants, but at the end of the day, Ryan is a root cause of many of the financial issues our country faces today," says Zerban. "From supporting two unfunded wars, to dumping millions of senior citizens into the Medicare Part D 'donut hole' while tying the hands of the government to negotiate prescription drug prices, and from fighting for subsidies for Big Oil that his family personally benefits from, to supporting the unfunded Bush tax cuts for his wealthiest campaign contributors, Paul Ryan's hypocrisy is astounding."

Even as national Republicans "vet" Ryan as a potential running mate for Mitt Romney, Zerban has been revealing the reality of a congressman who may talk the talk but who has never walked the walk. "Congressman Ryan fell down on the job, and is now trying to push the blame for his bad policy decisions onto President Obama," says Zerban. "Congressman Ryan had ten years in Congress -- almost all with a House Republican majority -- to reduce the deficit, prior to President Obama's election. He did nothing."

That's right.

If, by some chance, Paul Ryan were to become the Republican nominee for vice president, the whole country would be talking about his duplicity when it comes to the balancing of budgets.

Ryan's first vulnerability would be the legitimate concern about his willingness to rip apart the social safety net, under the guise of "reforms" that would undermine and eventually destroy Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

But under the serious scrutiny to which he would finally be subjected, Ryan would be revealed as something worse than a fiscal fabulist.

He would be revealed as a hypocrite of the highest order. Americans can handle hard truths and bold ideas. But they're not so good with hypocrisy.

And they wouldn't be so good with Paul Ryan.

FotM NEWSLETTER #202 (Aug. 13, 2012)—HYPERTEXT INDEX

<u>DATE-ID</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>SUBJECT/TITLE</u>
<u>20120813-00</u>		SteveB	R0mney's VP Pick: Paul Ryan by Steven W. Baker / SteveB ("Paul Ryan? Seriously?")
<u>20120811-03</u>	09:13	FotM	Re: R0mney's VP Pick: Paul Ryan (reply to SteveB, above & FotM Group Discussion)
<u>20120810-01</u>	04:56	Dick	Fw: The Night Watchman
<u>20120810-02</u>	05:14	SteveB	Re: The Night Watchman (reply to Dick, above)
<u>20120810-03</u>	09:33	Dick	Re: The Night Watchman (reply to SteveB, above)
<u>20120810-04</u>	12:29	SteveB	Fw: MoveOn Action: Share R0mney's Creepy Story!
<u>20120810-05</u>	18:24	SteveB	"Mitt Romney & the Return of the Repressed"
<u>20120810-06</u>	18:30	SteveB	"The Justice Department Seems Incapable of Making Cases Against Wall Street"
<u>20120811-01</u>	06:38	SteveB	"If Mitt Romney Is Going to Lose, He's Going to Lose Ugly"
<u>20120811-02</u>	07:40	SteveB	Video: "Florida Ex-GOP Chair: Voter Suppression Strategies Go Beyond Voter ID Laws"
<u>20120811-04</u>	12:41	SteveB	"America's Deficit Attention Disorder"
<u>20120811-05</u>	12:41	SteveG & SteveB	"The Tim McCarver Show — George Will" (Subject: Baseball, Mainly)
<u>20120811-06</u>	13:02	SteveB	Fw: Daily Kos Action: Donate \$5 to Our 'Upgrade the Senate' Project!
<u>20120811-07</u>	14:08	Tom	Fw: Warning on Deceptive Bible Translations
<u>20120811-09</u>	14:24	SteveB	Re: Warning on Deceptive Bible Translations (reply to Tom, above)
<u>20120811-08</u>	14:10	SteveG	"Dragging America into Court: Law of the Sea & Global Litigation"
<u>20120811-10</u>	15:08	SteveB	Fw: MoveOn Action: Chip in \$5 to Help America Learn the Truth About Paul Ryan!
<u>20120811-11</u>	15:21	SteveB	Cartoon: 'The World Is Just...'
<u>20120811-12</u>	15:24	SteveG	Re: Cartoon: 'The World Is Just...' (reply to SteveB, above)
<u>20120811-13</u>	15:33	SteveG	"How Grover Norquist Hypnotized the GOP"
<u>20120811-14</u>	18:42	SteveG	Republicans Will Destroy the USA to keep It GOP
<u>20120811-17</u>	18:52	Art	Re: Republicans Will Destroy the USA to keep It GOP (reply to SteveG, above)
<u>20120811-15</u>	18:50	SteveG	"12 Things You Should Know About Vice Presidential Candidate Paul Ryan"
<u>20120811-16</u>	18:51	SteveG	"Glenn's Soulmate?" (Interview with Paul Ryan)
<u>20120811-18</u>	20:26	SteveB	Re: "Glenn's Soulmate?" (reply to SteveG, above)
<u>20120811-19</u>	20:41	SteveB	Photo: REPUBLICAN CANNIBALS!
<u>20120812-07</u>	10:01	SteveBA	Re: REPUBLICAN CANNIBALS! (reply to SteveB, above)
<u>20120812-08</u>	10:49	SteveB	Re: REPUBLICAN CANNIBALS! (reply to SteveBA, above)
<u>20120812-10</u>	15:33	Art	Re: REPUBLICAN CANNIBALS! (reply to SteveBA, above)
<u>20120811-20</u>	20:53	SteveB	Graphic: 'Hand Me the Vaginal Probe, Rick.'
<u>20120811-21</u>	21:35	SteveG	"How Noodling Works"
<u>20120811-22</u>	22:13	Tom	Fw: Mitt R0mney Action: Send Me \$15 NOW!
<u>20120812-02</u>	06:21	SteveB	Re: Mitt R0mney Action: Send Me \$15 NOW! (reply to Tom, above)
<u>20120812-01</u>	00:15	Tom	Fw: Ann R0mney Action: Donate \$5 for a Bumper Stcker NOW!
<u>20120812-03</u>	06:32	SteveB	Re: Ann R0mney Action: Donate \$5 for a Bumper Stcker NOW! (reply to Tom, above)
<u>20120812-04</u>	06:57	SteveB	"Mitt Romney: Paul Ryan Budget Is Not His, Candidate 'Putting Together His Own'"
<u>20120812-12</u>	16:12	Art	Re: "Mitt Romney: Paul Ryan Budget Is Not His, Candidate 'Putting Together His Own'" (reply to SteveB, above)
<u>20120812-05</u>	07:31	MarthaH	Art's Birthday Tomorrow!
<u>20120812-06</u>	09:43	SteveB	The Blatant Truth
<u>20120812-11</u>	16:09	Beth	Re: The Blatant Truth (reply to SteveB, above)
<u>20120812-15</u>	23:58	Art	Re: The Blatant Truth (reply to SteveB, above)

DATE-ID	TIME	FROM	SUBJECT/TITLE
20120812-09	12:33	SteveB	"The Ryan Choice"
20120812-13	18:36	Tom	Movie: <i>Gray State</i>
20120812-14	22:26	Tom	Cartoon: Peers into the Future
20120812-16	23:59	SteveB	Photo: "The Gates of Hell Have Opened in Guatemala"

20120811-03	09:13	FotM	Re: R0mney's VP Pick: Paul Ryan (reply to SteveB, above & FotM Group Discussion)
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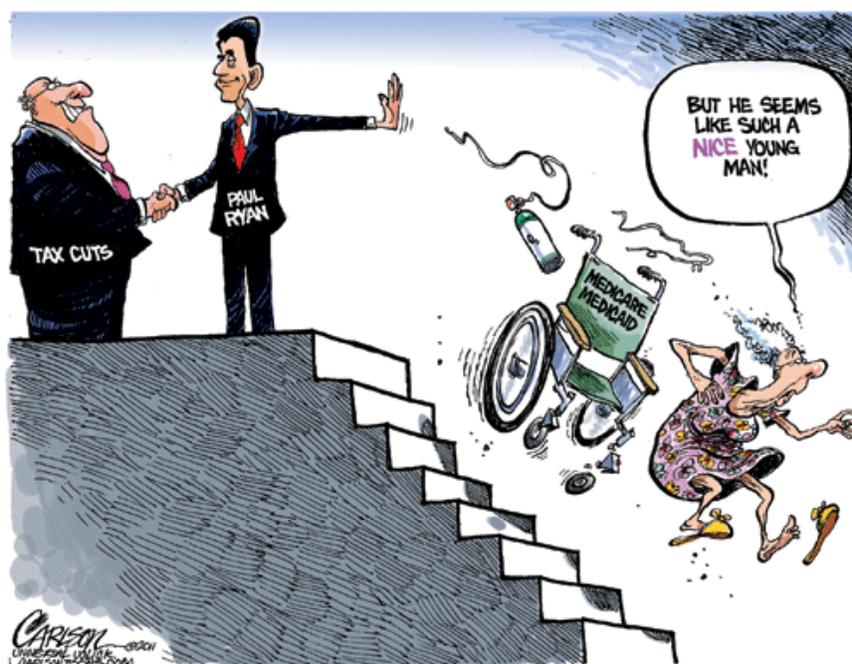
Amazing similarity!



Pam: Paul Ryan!!!!!! He is the devil. Absolute evil. If these b*stards win, we are doomed. If you wait for it, I'll tell you how I REALLY feel.

SteveB: It's funny you say he's the Devil, Pam. I was gazing at his photos this morning and my mind was full of a murky vision of some future flaming hell, lorded over by a man who turned out to be the reincarnation of some creature beyond Hitler's wildest dreams—Paul Ryan! Very seriously! Great minds... haha. Welcome back, my Pam! Now, how do you really feel? ;-)

SteveG: Neither one understands how it is to work for a living; neither understands the lives, concerns, worries, wants of the American people; politics is a game to them. I have noticed, since Reagan, Republicans having a common facial expression – a smirk. Rmoney and Ryan both have the redub smirk.



SteveB: Very weird, SteveG, I hadn't thought about it, but you are so right about that **smirk!** Is that something they indoctrinate them with, along with the talking points and bogus, contradictory philosophy? Notice, Mitt got kind of a botched indoctrination job. It comes across as robotic and, well...**botched!** Ryan was sent in to try to shore things up. Luckily, he got an almost perfect indoctrination job! THE WORLD IS SAVED!

SteveG: Back in the fifties I think my parents were Republicans, Eisenhower Republicans. After WWII, who could blame anyone. As President, he handled foreign policy and LBJ, through the Senate, handled domestic issues. Not certain what Nixon did. I didn't really start paying attention to politics until LBJ. Tim Russet really got me involved a few years ago. Interesting those smirks.

Tom: SteveB, you said: "Boy, the Obama-Biden 2012 Campaign must be licking its chops!" Don't worry Steve, the NWO Globalists control both BHO & Mittens Romney! "We The People" have NO Choice.

SteveB: Unfortunately, Tom, too often, that seems to be the case...



Clark: My favorite description of Paul Ryan is "zombie eyed granny starver," courtesy of Charles Pierce from esquire.com.

Bill: Anyway, whether or not he's the devil incarnate, he uses the same hair oil as Reagan, and that's not a good sign.

SteveG: Thank you, Bill.



SteveG: Damned scary!

20120810-01 04:56 Dick Fw: The Night Watchman

[Source of original email unknown. –SteveB]

Once upon a time the government had a vast scrap yard in the middle of a desert.

Congress said, "Someone may steal from it at night."

So they created a night watchman position and hired a person for the job.

Then Congress said, "How does the watchman do his job without instruction?"

So they created a planning department and hired two people, one person to write the instructions, and one person to do time studies.

Then Congress said, "How will we know the night watchman is doing the tasks correctly?"

So they created a Quality Control department and hired two people. One was to do the studies and one was to write the reports.

Then Congress said, "How are these people going to get paid?"

So they created two positions: a time keeper and a payroll officer then hired two people.

Then Congress said, "Who will be accountable for all of these people?"

So they created an administrative section and hired three people, an Administrative Officer, Assistant Administrative Officer, and a Legal Secretary.

Then Congress said, "We have had this command in operation for one year and we are \$918,000 over budget, we must cut back."

So they laid-off the night watchman.

NOW slowly, let it sink in.

Quietly, we go like sheep to slaughter. Does anybody remember the reason given for the establishment of the DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY during the Carter administration?

Anybody?

Anything?

No?

Didn't think so!

Bottom line is, we've spent several hundred billion dollars in support of an agency, the reason for which very few people who read this can remember!

Ready??

It was very simple... and at the time, everybody thought it very appropriate.

The Department of Energy was instituted on 8/04/1977, TO LESSEN OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL.

Hey, pretty efficient, huh???

AND NOW IT'S 2012 -- 35 YEARS LATER -- AND THE BUDGET FOR THIS "NECESSARY" DEPARTMENT IS AT \$24.2 BILLION A YEAR. IT HAS 16,000 FEDERAL EMPLOYEES AND APPROXIMATELY 100,000 CONTRACT EMPLOYEES; AND LOOK AT THE JOB IT HAS DONE!

(THIS IS WHERE YOU SLAP YOUR FOREHEAD AND SAY, "WHAT WERE THEY THINKING?")

34 years ago 30% of our oil consumption was foreign imports. Today 70% of our oil consumption is foreign imports.

Ah, yes -- good old Federal bureaucracy.

NOW, WE HAVE TURNED OVER THE BANKING SYSTEM, HEALTH CARE, AND THE AUTO INDUSTRY TO THE SAME GOVERNMENT?

Hello!! Anybody Home?

Signed....The Night Watchman

[20120810-02](#) 05:14 SteveB Re: The Night Watchman (reply to Dick, above)

You know, not that it has anything to do with you, personally, but I think the kind of negativity in this email is one of the biggest problems facing America.

How can we, as a nation, keep believing in ourselves when we're constantly bombarded with this cr*p?

Don't believe the lies. The government is essential and performs many invaluable services. Sure it could do better, but not as long as the corruption persists—the corruption that at least one party fights tooth and nail to maintain. It is in the interest of those out of power to breed as much discontent with the government as possible. It's an evil, destructive tactic, but that's the level to which they've descended.

You know what I mean?

Take care and I hope you keep sending me your thoughts.

20120810-03 09:33 Dick Re: The Night Watchman (reply to SteveB, above)

Don't think for a minute that I believe everything I get via email. I know a lot of the truth gets twisted and misrepresented by both sides. It is all political posturing by "BOTH SIDES" and sadly to say, I have become very cynical viewing our government today because of the inherent corruption that lives in the beltway. They need to take the big PAC money out of Washington, but I know that will never happen because they are all drinking the kool aid down there.

I am an Independent voter and I did vote for Obama in the last election and probably will vote for him again, but if I was out of work, had lost my house, and had five mouths to feed, it would be a different story. What is the answer? We need to reform our tax system, either lowering the corporate taxes, close the loopholes, or go to a consumption tax. That will never happen because the country is run by lawyers and accountants...

20120810-04 12:29 SteveB Fw: MoveOn Action: Share R0mney's Creepy Story!

from MoveOn:

Mitt Romney has a creepy hand. We mean that literally--and we made an ad you're not gonna forget that shows his hand creeping into OUR pockets.

Because to pay for tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, he's going to take it right from the middle class.

Incredibly, Mitt's tax plan would actually cost up to \$2,000 for middle class families while giving a \$87,000 tax cut to rich people like him.¹ Taking that money away would not only harm a lot of struggling families, it could drive us into another recession.²

Too many people think Republicans want to cut taxes for them, when all Romney wants to do is give more tax breaks to the rich. So we've got to get the word out about Mitt sticking his hand into middle-class pockets.

Share this ad with your friends and spread the word about Mitt's creepy hand:

<http://front.moveon.org/warning-mitt-romneys-a-pickpocket/>.

Thanks for all you do. --Justin, Steven, Ryan, Joan, and the rest of the team

P.S. MoveOn members are sharing their stories of what a \$2,000 Romney tax hike would take from them. Click here to add your photo message to our growing Tumblr:

<http://mytwothousanddollars.tumblr.com/>.

Sources:

¹"New Analysis Shows Romney Tax Plan Would Raise Taxes On Middle Class Families By More Than \$2,000," ThinkProgress, Aug. 1, 2012, <http://www.moveon.org/r?r=278200&id=&t=6&id=48486-20195165-wNbFqAx&t=10>.

"Study: Romney tax plan would result in cuts for rich, higher burden for others," *The Washington Post*, August 1, 2012, <http://www.moveon.org/r?r=278241&id=&t=7&id=48486-20195165-wNbFqAx&t=11>.

²"Romney's "Recovery Plan" Could Bring On Another Recession," *The New Yorker*, August 2, 2012, <http://www.moveon.org/r?r=278435&id=48486-20195165-wNbFqAx&t=13>.

"Mitt Romney and the Return of the Repressed" by Joan Walsh, Salon

Aug. 10, 2012, (http://www.salon.com/2012/08/10/return_of_the_repressed/)

(Not even the Mittness protection program to hide his past can keep Romney and team from sometimes telling the truth.)

At a certain point, you have to feel sorry for Mitt Romney. He's so determined to hide his Massachusetts moderate past, to deny his years as governor there, that he's gone into his own self-created Mittness protection program. Now he wears a brand-new identity, "severely conservative," as he tries to court the GOP's ultra-right Tea Party base.

Except every once in a while, though, Romney or the folks closest to him trip up. Something makes them tell, well, something like the truth. A month ago, after days of Romney hitting President Obama for the "massive tax increase" allegedly represented by Obamacare, Romney advisor Eric Fehrstrom famously defended the fine levied on those who refused to buy insurance as a penalty not a tax, because his boss had done the same thing in Massachusetts.

This week Andrea Saul has unleashed the hounds of hell trying to defend her boss from a pro-Obama super PAC ad, in which a steelworker laid off in a Bain Capital buyout alleges his wife died because she lost her health insurance thanks to Romney. Amazingly, Saul resorted to touting Romneycare, insisting "if people had been in Massachusetts, under Gov. Romney's health care plan, they would have had health care." The right immediately exploded with rage: How dare Saul invoke her boss's signature accomplishment as governor, which he's spent the entire campaign running away from? Have you no decency, madam?

RedState.com editor Erick Erickson headlined his post "The Moment All the Doubts About Romney Resurfaced on the Right." Rush Limbaugh called the remarks "a goldmine for Obama supporters." And Ann Coulter lost it completely with Sean Hannity, shrieking that Saul, whom she calls a "moron," should be fired:

Anyone who donates to Mitt Romney, and I mean the big donors, ought to say if Andrea Saul isn't fired and off the campaign tomorrow, they are not giving another dime, because it is not worth fighting for this man if this is the kind of spokesman he has...

There's no point in you doing your show, there's no point in going to the convention and pushing for this man if he's employing morons like this. This ad is the turning point and she has nearly snatched victory from the jaws of defeat! She should be off the campaign.

(Two tiny things: I think Coulter meant to say "snatched defeat from the jaws of victory," but she was upset. And it's nice to hear her announce that the whole point of Hannity's show is "pushing for this man" Romney.)

These Romney campaign "gaffes," for lack of a better word, make me think of Freud's concept of "the return of the repressed," in which the tension involved in suppressing an uncomfortable truth occasionally becomes just too much, and the truth rises up, either in what Freud called "neurotic symptoms" or on the campaign trail as "gaffes." You don't have to be a Freudian to believe that Team Romney's trouble avoiding their candidate's actual record reflects the Herculean – and perhaps impossible – effort such deception requires.

It's not just his record as Massachusetts governor that Romney is repressing. He doesn't like to talk about any of "the three Ms," as Joe Scarborough tweeted Thursday: Massachusetts, Mormonism or money.

When *Bloomberg Businessweek's* Josh Tyrangiel did a recent interview, he gently asked Romney about his religion, pointing to the many Mormons in politics, business and sports and wondering "what about Mormonism creates leaders?" But the candidate replied with "an elegant dodge," Tyrangiel told Scarborough on "Morning Joe" Thursday. The Republican no longer talks about his Bain Capital "job creating" years, either, given the controversy

over Bain's job destruction. And he's never liked discussing his vast wealth, first inherited from his father and then dramatically engorged by his own private equity success.

I think the energy required to suppress the truth on those three fronts is part of what forces Romney to behave like a robot and speak in bizarre faux-platitudes. Trying to avoid anything remotely controversial, he praises Michigan's trees for being "the right height." Lemonade becomes "Lemon. Wet. Good." A chocolate doughnut becomes "one of those chocolate, um, chocolate goodies." The exhausting effort to hide the advantages that come along with a lifetime of wealth results in head-scratching screw-ups like talking about Ann Romney's two Cadillacs or his NASCAR-team owning friends, offering to make a \$10,000 bet with Rick Perry, or making bizarre "jokes" about being unemployed when talking to unemployed voters. The repressed inevitably returns, and often at the worst moment.

But another way Romney copes with his inauthenticity is being absolutely brazen in his lying. Just this week, he bashed Obama for granting welfare-reform waivers he himself sought as governor. But since he doesn't even admit he was ever Massachusetts governor, safe within his Mittness protection program, he doesn't have to take any responsibility for what he did then. Now, even Rick Santorum and Newt Gingrich are acknowledging the Romney lie was a little bit too bald-faced, and that the presumptive GOP nominee went too far in claiming that the president relaxed work requirements. Gingrich admitted "we have no proof" the waivers did that, and said if anyone asked him his opinion about the ad's claims, he "would have said this makes it possible." Santorum likewise acknowledged Romney's falsehood, saying on a conference call that Obama could only "potentially gut" welfare reform at some point in the future.

Of course, that's less the return of the repressed than the return of the GOP primary rivalry. It's safe to say that after the truckload of manure Romney dropped on his GOP confreres, nobody likes this man. (His 2008 rivals hated him too.) Santorum actually chuckled Thursday when asked to comment on Saul's remarks. He chuckled! He's got to love the fact that his famous warning – "Mitt Romney is the worst Republican in the country to put up against Barack Obama" — has become a routine sound bite in this campaign.

But wait, there's more: Romney's welfare lie displayed another of his signature forms of brazen dishonesty: citing an "expert" who allegedly agrees with you, when said expert in fact disagrees with you. Former President Bill Clinton, whose welfare reform law Obama allegedly unraveled, released a statement rebuking the Romney ad and supporting Obama's moves. The very same day, the Washington Post's Ezra Klein found that every economist cited in a Romney economic policy paper disagreed with the way the campaign had used their research. Only last week, author Jared Diamond wrote a New York Times Op-Ed to refute Romney's claim that his book "Guns, Germs and Steel" provided a basis for Romney's racist claims about Palestinian "culture."

Then there are the Romney lies that don't even bother pretending to be based on expert opinion or fact. I never got over the very early campaign ad that featured a clip of Obama saying "if we keep talking about the economy, we're going to lose" — which was in fact a 2008 clip of Obama quoting an aide to John McCain. Just last week we enjoyed his bald-faced lie that the Justice Department's efforts to secure early voting for all Ohio voters was an "outrage" that would disenfranchise military voters. (Please note I'm not even listing Romney's claim that Obama told business owners, "You didn't build that," since you could at least argue Obama himself left the door open to misinterpretation by not adding the word "alone," though he means, everybody gets help from government infrastructure, education and military investment.)

I was tempted to go off on my standard rant about the media's failure to fact-check Romney's outrageous claims — except you know what? By and large reporters have been pretty good about debunking Romney's lies. Ohio papers immediately made clear there was no basis for Romney's military-voter lie. Journalists quickly discovered and reported that Romney himself asked for the welfare waivers he criticized Obama for granting. The hypocrisy in Andrea Saul's Romneycare remarks became immediate news.

And while it sometimes feels like Romney lies with impunity, maybe voters are picking up on his utter inauthenticity — about "the 3 Ms," and maybe more. In the latest *Washington Post*/ABC News poll, Romney's favorability ratings are at an all-time low, at 40 percent; 49 percent of all voters view him unfavorably, including 50 percent of independents. The Saul controversy reminded the party's right-wing base that they don't trust him, but neither do

most of the rest of the voters, apparently. Romney has turned his back on his past and revised his political beliefs so thoroughly he almost seems willing to sell his soul to be president. But what if nobody's buying it?

20120810-06	18:30	SteveB	"The Justice Department Seems Incapable of Making Cases Against Wall Street"
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"The Justice Department Seems Incapable of Making Cases Against Wall Street" by Eliot Spitzer, Slate

Aug. 10, 2012,

(http://www.slate.com/blogs/spitzer/2012/08/10/goldman_sachs_prosecution_fails_why_cant_the_justice_department_fight_wall_street.html)

How do we make sense of this? Goldman Sachs emails call their own investments "junk" and "crap," and Goldman Sachs salespeople refer to clients as "muppets" and "elephants." Yet the Justice Department says there is not enough evidence to bring a case on behalf of Goldman Sachs investors who lost vast sums of money.

First, a caveat: As a former prosecutor and New York attorney general, I feel constrained not to judge cases where I have not been able to review all the evidence. And in this nation we believe, as we should, that the weight of government prosecution—the enormous force of the government's investigative and prosecutorial powers—should be brought down on individuals or entities only when a very high burden of proof can be met.

Now that that's out of the way, I can say what we are all thinking: Really? Are you kidding me? Wall Street continues to get away scot-free? The Justice Department prosecutes Roger Clemens for perjury—spends countless resources, hours, and energy worrying about steroids in baseball—yet seems incapable of making cases against the big Wall Street firms that engineered the greatest lies, frauds, and scams in our economic history. I am as outraged, disappointed, and furious as you are. Have they no backbone, shame, or sense of what justice is all about? It does nothing for my already waning faith in this Justice Department.

So what do we do? First, let's go back to basics. Wall Street failed us because of greed run amok in a welter of conflicts of interest, a lack of dedication to integrity, failed regulatory systems, horrendous management, and a total absence of loyalty to fiduciary duties. We can and should demand of Congress that it enact bills already proposed by Sen. Sherrod Brown and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse to break up the big banks.

If the Justice Department won't prosecute, we at least can let Wall Street know we don't trust them. The self-important titans of Wall Street fundamentally violated their side of the contract with the public. They were given the keys to the kingdom, in return for which we expected some serious leadership and thoughtfulness in their guiding of our economic system. They utterly failed us, and they still deserve our disdain and scorn.

20120811-01	06:38	SteveB	"If Mitt Romney Is Going to Lose, He's Going to Lose Ugly"
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"If Mitt Romney Is Going to Lose, He's Going to Lose Ugly" by @LOLGOP, *The National Memo*

July 19, 2012, (<http://www.nationalmemo.com/if-mitt-romney-is-going-to-lose-hes-going-to-lose-ugly/>)

Just imagine Mitt Romney's inner monologue on the day he signed RomneyCare. There's his old nemesis Ted Kennedy standing next to him, smiling that Kennedy smile. Finally the Heritage Foundation's conservative alternative to single payer health care will get a chance in the nation's most liberal state. This is how you become president, Ol' Mitty, he must have thought. Just play it down the middle.

We know Mitt is a malleable guy, to say the least. For years, he pretended to be sincerely pro-choice. Now he pretends to be severely anti-abortion rights. But he's always been, as Kennedy quipped, "multiple choice. What Mitt never expected back then was that a Democratic president would appropriate his signature achievement – and that it would then become the most hated thing in Fox Nation since Jimmy Carter.

So Mitt's campaign has devolved into a charade where he is trying to become the lovechild of Limbaugh and Reagan — even more conservative than the nation's foremost fundamentalist, Rick Santorum. He wanted to project strength, but somehow his contrail stank of weakness.

As former George W. Bush speechwriter David Frum explains:

For the past year, we have watched him be pushed around by the radical GOP fringe. He's been forced to abjure his most important achievement as governor, his healthcare plan. In December, he was compelled to sign onto the Ryan budget plan after months of squirming to avoid it. Last fall he released an elaborate economic plan. On the eve of the Michigan primary, he ripped it up and instead accepted a huge new tax cut — to a top rate of 28 per cent — that has never been costed (and that he now tries to avoid mentioning whenever he can). Romney has acknowledged in interviews that he understands that big rapid cuts in government spending could push the US economy back into recession. Yet he campaigns anyway on the Tea Party's false promise that it's the deficit that causes the depression, rather than (as he well knows) the other way around.

Mitt's business and financial record, shrouded in secrecy, has been turned into a battering ram by the Obama campaign. No longer does the press corps swallow the idea that Mitt and Bain Capital created jobs. Instead, more and more, Bain is associated with a malignant force in our economy: gamblers who play with other people's money, raking in big gains while socializing their losses.

Thus Mitt's true weakness is revealed: He can't get a grip his on his own narrative.

Mitt says he wants to drive the debate back to the economy. According to the conventional wisdom, if Mitt talks about the economy, he will win. What goes unsaid, however, is that 68 percent of Americans blame George W. Bush for the troubles we face today. You can't mention the economy without conjuring Bush's mess or asking, "What would Romney do differently?" As Bill Clinton says, Mitt is "Bush on steroids."

So the Romney team has now been busily trying to change the discussion from demanding apologies to Condoleezza Rice to favors for campaign donors to "Fast and Furious" to inventing things the President supposedly said about the economy.

None of that is working, which provoked Romney surrogate John Sununu into calling the President "un-American" and snarking about the president's admitted use of drugs as a student. When the immediate backlash hit, Sununu went on TV with an "apology" nearly as vile as his original insults.

Now Mitt's campaign is spouting crazed right-wing conspiracy and invective that only make sense to people who would much rather vote for Sarah Palin. Mitt has forgotten what he learned in Massachusetts: Elections tend to be won in the middle.

Suburban moms in Philadelphia and Cincinnati will choose our next president. They may find the secrecy of a big businessman willing to pander to the far right by taking extreme stands on women's health rather upsetting. Images of the extreme right battering a president over invented conspiracies will, I predict, work against Mitt among independents, as his campaign literally threatens to descend deeper and deeper into Breitbartism, which is like Clinton Derangement Syndrome on steroids.

Because all the far right does — and all they want to do — is to make the middle, where elections are won, uninhabitable for politicians

[20120811-02](#)

07:40

SteveB

Video: "Florida Ex-GOP Chair: Voter Suppression Strategies Go Beyond Voter ID Laws"

Video (Aug. 10, 2012): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYEp-i4BnKk&feature=player_embedded.

Al Sharpton's PoliticsNation featured shocking public confirmations regarding the Florida Republican Party and its new voter ID laws push. Former GOP party Chairman Jim Greer (in sworn testimony) confirmed that party strategists met on voter registration strategies with the full intent to suppress Blacks, Latinos, and other minorities from voting in Florida come Nov. Former Florida GOP Chairman Greer said -- live on air:

There's no doubt that what the Republican led legislature in Florida and Governor Scott are trying to do is make sure the Republican party has an advantage in this upcoming election by reducing early voting and putting roadblocks up for potential voters, Latinos, African Americans to register and then to exercise their right to vote. There's no doubt. I was in the room. It's part of the strategy.

20120811-04	12:41	SteveB	"America's Deficit Attention Disorder"
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Great name for it: "DEFICIT ATTENTION DISORDER"!

"America's Deficit Attention Disorder" by David Korten, *Yes!* Magazine/NationofChange

<http://www.nationofchange.org/america-s-deficit-attention-disorder-1344691501>

The political debate in the United States and Europe has focused attention on public financial deficits and how best to resolve them. Tragically, the debate largely ignores the deficits that most endanger our future.

In the United States, as Republican deficit hawks tell the story, "America is broke. We must cut government spending on social programs we cannot afford. And we must lower taxes on Wall Street job creators so they can invest to get the economy growing, create new jobs, increase total tax revenues, and eliminate the deficit."

Democrats respond, "Yes, we're pretty broke, but the answer is to raise taxes on Wall Street looters to pay for government spending that primes the economic pump by putting people to work building critical infrastructure and performing essential public services. This puts money in people's pockets to spend on private sector goods and services and is our best hope to grow the economy."

Democrats have the better side of the argument, but both sides have it wrong on two key points.

- First, both focus on growing GDP, ignoring the reality that under the regime of Wall Street rule, the benefits of GDP growth over the past several decades have gone almost exclusively to the 1 percent—with dire consequences for democracy and the health of the social and natural capital on which true prosperity depends.
- Second, both focus on financial deficits, which can be resolved with relative ease if we are truly serious about it; and ignore far more dangerous and difficult-to-resolve social and environmental deficits. I call it a case of deficit attention disorder.

To achieve the ideal of a world that secures health and prosperity for all people for generations to come, we must reframe the public debate about the choices we face as a nation and as a species. We must measure economic performance against the outcomes we really want, give life priority over money, and recognize that money is a means, not an end.

What We Borrow from Each Other

To realistically address the nature of the public financial deficits at the center of the current political debate, it is crucial to understand the nature of money and debt. Money is just a number, a system of accounting useful in facilitating economic exchange. A deficit occurs when expenditures exceed income. If, as a result, financial liabilities come to exceed financial assets, we go into debt. It is all basic accounting.

The key point, which the deficit debates rarely address, is that one person or entity's financial debt is another person or entity's financial asset. We can only borrow money from each other. The idea that we borrow money from the future is an illusion.

From a societal perspective, total debts and assets are always in balance. Consequently, if we say that one person or entity has excessive financial debt, we in effect say that another has excessive financial assets. Reducing the aggregate financial debt of debtors necessarily requires reducing the aggregate financial assets of the creditors.

In theory, we could instantly wipe away all financial debts through a universal forgiveness, a modern equivalent of the ancient institution of the Jubilee. The ancients recognized the significance of such action to restore the balance essential to the healthy function of the human community.

The deficit-hawks recoil in horror and assure us that we can reduce government debt while leaving the financial assets of the rich untouched. It makes perfect sense in the fantasy world of pure finance in which profits and the financial assets of the rich grow perpetually even as growing inequality and wasteful material consumption deplete the social capital of community and the natural capital of Earth's biosphere.

A viable human future, however, must be based on living world realities rather than financial world fantasies.

What We Steal from Future Generations

Any normally intelligent 12-year-old is fully capable of understanding the distinction between a living forest or fishery and a system of financial accounts that exists only as electronic traces on a computer hard drive. Unfortunately, this simple distinction seems to be beyond the comprehension of the economists, pundits, and politicians who frame the public debate on economic policy. By referring to financial assets as "capital" and treating them as if they had some intrinsic worth beyond their value as a token of exchange, they sustain the deception that Wall Street is creating wealth rather than manipulating the financial system to accumulate accounting claims against wealth it had no part in creating.

Real capital assets have productive value in their own right and cannot be created with a computer key stroke. The most essential forms of real capital are social capital (the bonds of trust and caring essential to healthy community function) and biosystem capital (the living systems essential to Earth's capacity to support life). We are depleting both with reckless abandon.

- Social capital is the foundation of our human capacity to innovate, produce, engage in cooperative problem solving, manage Earth's available natural wealth to meet the needs of all, and live together in peace and shared prosperity. Social capital is depleted as individualistic greed becomes the prevailing moral standard and the governing institutions of society deprive all but a privileged minority of access to a secure and dignified means of living. Once it is depleted, social capital can take generations to restore.
- Biosystem capital provides a continuing supply of breathable air, drinkable water, soils to grow our food, forests to produce our timber, oceans teeming with fish, grassland that feed our livestock, sun, wind, and geothermal to provide our energy, climate stability, and much else essential to human survival, health, and happiness. It is depleted when soils are degraded, oceans are overfished, rivers and lakes are polluted, forests cut down, aquifers contaminated and depleted, and climate stabilization systems disrupted. These natural systems can take thousands, even millions of years to restore. Species extinction is forever.

According to the World Wildlife Federation's *2012 Living Planet Report*, at the current rate of consumption, "it is taking 1.5 years for the Earth to fully regenerate the renewable resources that people are using in a single year. Instead of living off the interest, we are eating into our natural capital." This is a path to never-never land. Unlike with financial deficits, simple debt forgiveness is not an option.

When we deplete Earth's bio-capacity—its capacity to support life in its many varied forms—we are not borrowing from the future; we are stealing from the future. Even though it is the most serious of all human-caused deficits, it rarely receives mention in current political debates.

When we assess economic performance by growth in GDP and stock price indices, we in effect manage the economy to make the most money for people who have the most money. This leads us to the fanciful belief that as a society we are getting richer. In fact, we are impoverishing both current and future generations by creating an unconscionable concentration of economic power, depriving billions of people of a secure and dignified means of living, and destroying the social and biosystem capital on which our real well-being depends.

With proper care and respect, biosystem capital can provide essential services in perpetuity. The reckless devastation of productive lands and waters for a quick profit, a few temporary jobs, and a one-time energy fix from Earth's non-renewable fossil energy resources represent truly stupid and morally reprehensible deficit spending. Evident current examples include tar sand oil extraction, deep sea oil drilling, hydraulic fracturing to extract natural gas, and mountaintop removal coal mining. The fact that we thereby deepen human dependence on finite nonrenewable fossil energy reserves and accelerate climate disruption make such actions all the more stupid and immoral.

Financial system logic, which rests on the illusion that money is wealth, tells us we are making intelligent choices. Living systems logic tells us our current choices are insane and a crime against future human generations and creation itself.

From Built-to-Loot to Built-to-Serve

The economy of a just and sustainable society needs a proper system of money creation and allocation that:

1. Supports the health and productive function of social and biosystem capital and allocates the sustainable generative output of both to optimize the long-term health and well-being of all; and
2. Rewards individuals with financial credits in proportion to their actual productive contribution to living system health and prosperity.

The current U.S. money system does exactly the opposite. It celebrates and rewards the destruction of living capital to grow the financial assets of Wall Street looters at the expense of Main Street producers—thus concentrating economic and political power in the hands of those most likely to abuse it for a purely individualist short-term gain.

Wall Street operates as a criminal syndicate devoted to the theft of that to which it has no rightful claim. It then bribes politicians to shield the looters from taxes on their ill-gotten gains and to eliminate social programs that cushion the blow to those they have deprived of a secure and meaningful means of livelihood. This brings us back to the real source and consequence of excess financial debt.

Masters and Debt Slaves

In the big picture, the Wall Street 1 percent has divided society into a looter class that controls access to money and a producer class forced into perpetual debt slavery—an ancient institution that for millennia has allowed the few to rule the many [See inset: "Wall Street and the Ultimate Tyranny"]. The immense burden imposed on the 99 percent by public debt, consumer debt, mortgage debt, and student debt is an outcome of a Wall Street assault on justice and democracy.

The resulting desperation and loss of social trust account for the many current symptoms of social disintegration and decline in ethical standards. These include growth in family breakdown, suicide, forced migration, physical violence, crime, drug use, and prison populations.

Equality as a Crucial Variable

I grew up in America during a time when we took pride in being a middle-class society without extremes of wealth and poverty. In part, we were living an illusion. Large concentrations of private wealth were intact and systemic discrimination excluded large segments of the population—particularly people of color—from participation in the general prosperity. The underlying concept that the good society is an equitable society, however, was and still is valid. And from the 1950s to the 1970s the middle class expanded.

Complete equality is neither possible nor desirable. Modest inequality creates essential incentives for productive contribution to the well-being of the community. Extreme inequality, as exemplified by current U.S. society, is both a source and an indicator of serious institutional failure and social pathology.

British epidemiologist Richard Wilkinson has compiled an impressive body of research that demonstrates beyond any reasonable doubt that economic and social inequality is detrimental to human physical and mental health and happiness—even for the very rich. Relatively equal societies are healthier on virtually every indicator of individual and social health and well-being.

In highly unequal societies, the very rich are prone to seek affirmation of their personal worth through extravagant displays of excess. They easily lose sight of the true sources of human happiness, sacrifice authentic relationships, and deny their responsibility to the larger society—at the expense of their essential humanity. At the other extreme, the desperate are prone to manipulation by political demagogues who offer simplistic analyses and self-serving solutions that in the end further deepen their misery. Governing institutions lose legitimacy. Democracy becomes a charade. Moral standards decline. Civic responsibility gives way to extreme individualism and disregard for the rights and well-being of others.

To achieve true prosperity, we must create economies grounded in a living systems logic that recognizes three fundamental truths:

- The economy's only valid purpose is to serve life.
- Equality is foundational to healthy human communities and a healthy human relationship to Earth's biosphere.
- Money is a means, not an end.

A New Political Narrative and Agenda

Runaway public deficits are but one symptom of a profound system failure. They can easily be resolved by taxing the unearned spoils of the Wall Street looters, eliminating corporate subsidies and tax havens, and cutting military expenditures on pointless wars that undermine our security.

Joblessness can easily be eliminated by putting the unemployed and underemployed to work meeting a vast range of unmet human needs from rebuilding and greening our physical infrastructure to providing essential human services, eliminating dependence on fossil fuels, and converting to systems of local organic food production. If the primary constraint is money, the Federal Reserve can be directed to create it and channel it to priority projects through a national infrastructure bank—a move that avoids enriching the bankers and does not create more debt.

In addition, we must:

1. Break up concentrations of unaccountable power.
2. Shift the economic priority from making money to serving life by replacing financial indicators with living wealth indicators as the basis for evaluating economic performance.
3. Eliminate extremes of wealth and poverty to create a true middle-class society.
4. Build a culture of mutual trust and caring.
5. Create a system of economic incentives that reward those who do productive work and penalize predatory financial speculation.
6. Restructure the global economy into a planetary system of networked bioregional economies that share information and technology and organize to live within their respective environmental means.

Within a political debate defined by the logic of living systems, such measures are simple common sense. Within a political debate defined by conventional financial logic, however, they are easily dismissed as dangerous and illogical threats to progress and prosperity.

So long as money frames the debate, money is the winner and life is the loser. To score a political victory for life, the debate must be reframed around a narrative based on an understanding of the true sources of human well-being and happiness and a shift from money to life as the defining value.

A promising new frame is emerging from controversies surrounding the recent United Nation's Rio+20 environmental conference. Wall Street interests argued that the best way to save Earth's biosystems is to put a price on them and sell them to wealthy global investors to manage for a private return. Rather than concede the underlying frame to Wall Street and debate the price and terms of the sale, indigenous leaders and environmental groups drew on the ancient wisdom of indigenous peoples to challenge the underlying frame. They declared that as the source of life, Earth's living systems are sacred and beyond price. They issued a global call to recognize the rights of nature.

Thus framed, the Rio+20 debate highlights **a foundational and inherent conflict between the rights of nature, human rights, property rights, and corporate rights.**

In current practice, based on the same financial logic that leads us to treat financial deficits as more important than social and environmental deficits, we give corporate rights precedence over the property rights of individuals. We give property rights precedence over the human rights of those without property. And we give human rights precedence over the rights of nature.

We will continue to pay a terrible price for so long as we allow the deeply flawed logic of pure finance to define our values and frame the political debate.

There is no magic bullet quick fix. We must reframe the debate by bringing life values and living systems logic to the fore and turning the prevailing rights hierarchy on its head. The rights of nature must come first, because without nature, humans do not exist. As living beings, our rights are derivative of and ultimately subordinate to the rights of Earth's living systems.

Human rights come, in turn, before property rights, because property rights are a human creation. They have no existence without humans and no purpose other than to serve the human and natural interest. Corporations are a form of property and any rights we may choose to grant to them are derivative of individual property rights and therefore properly subordinate to them.

The step to a prosperous human future requires that we acknowledge life, not money, as our defining value, accept our responsibilities to and for one another and nature, and bring to the fore of the debate the social and bio-system deficits that are the true threat to the human future.

Replacing cultures and institutions that value money more than life with cultures and institutions that value life more than money is a daunting challenge. Fortunately, it is also an invigorating and hopeful challenge because it reconnects us with our true nature as living beings and offers a win-win alternative to the no-win status quo.

20120811-05	12:41	SteveG & SteveB	"The Tim McCarver Show — George Will" (Subject: Baseball, Mainly)
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SteveG: This is better if you can find the video, but still worth a read.

"The Tim McCarver Show — George Will" Aug. 2, 2009,
(http://www.livedash.com/transcript/the_tim_mccarver_show%28george_will%29/408/KRON/Sunday_August_2_2009/73831/)

SteveB: If you love baseball ya gotta love this interview. The Greencastle we grew up in was like Champagne, IL – half Cubs fans and half Cardinals fans and, usually, neither too happy. (You know, George Will and Michael Moore are both FotM Newsletter subscribers, though I've never heard from either of them otherwise.)

SteveG: Scattered around here and there was a Reds fan and most of the Sox fans didn't admit it. Do know some people that had access to a rail pass and would take the train to St. Louis, watch a game, and return home in the same day. Back in the days of the gas house gang in St. Louis, they stopped in Greencastle and played an exhibition game against DPU – of course that was way before our time. Oertles 92 was the big sponsor of the Reds game – never drank that.

SteveB: I remember seeing Stan Musial in St. Louis, though my Dad was a Cubs and White Sox fan...or whoever was an underdog or playing against the Yankees. But I loved the Yankees and he could never understand that! I'd forgotten about those Cincy fans. You're right, "scattered about...". I never drank that beer either and always thought Schlitz sucked. I believe both are now long dead.

SteveG: Wait till next year...gotta be a Cubbies fan. They always seemed to have 1 really outstanding player and that was it. The Bears used to have a dominant linebacker, a good running back, and a good tight end and that was it. Miss the Midwest and its closeness. Indianapolis Indians – great and cheap seats; three hours to Cincy, St. Louis, or Chicago.

SteveB: ROCKY CALAVITO!

SteveG: He was a Clevelander. How about Ryne Sandberg?

SteveB: Cubbies! Calavito was with Indy for a while. Sandberg: in Indy any or just for the Cubs? Good player.

SteveG: Didn't know Sandberg was in Indy. Did you know that Wayne Gretzky played professional hockey in Indy for the Ice? Since we started, for some reason, talking about baseball, I would love to be able to go back in time and watch the Negro League players – can you imagine – Satchel and the rest.

SteveB: I was asking if you were saying Sandberg ever played in Indy. I guess not...at least that I know of...but then I'm not exactly a font of baseball knowledge... I meant Rocky played there in Indy a little... Didn't know about Gretzky.

I'm not sure about watching the Negro league...they would have spent so much time celebrating and dancing...just kidding. It's amazing that people were treated so unfairly and it was invisible to most others...

SteveG: I think I will go back and watch Ken Burns' documentary on baseball. How is the cookie store?

SteveB: Cookies: We're stuck for a while waiting for the gas line in the street to be tapped. Working on packaging and oven exhaust in the meantime. Hoping to have gas by the end of this next week. Then we can really go to town. We keep inventing new cookies. The latest: coca-lemon! (Partly BillB's idea...the coca part!) Have a great weekend, Steve.

20120811-06	13:02	SteveB	Fw: Daily Kos Action: Donate \$5 to Our 'Upgrade the Senate' Project!
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Yes, Romney just announced his VP pick. And yes, it's never over until it's over, and we have to fight all the way through Election Day. But the fact is, we are winning.

Mitt Romney is a disaster for Republicans, the first GOP nominee in modern history to have higher negatives than positives. His every interaction with regular Americans (and heads of state, for that matter) has ended in an insult. He was a bully when he was younger, and he's a bully now. Even conservatives don't like him.

The numbers are starting to show this. Two different national polls released this week show President Obama ahead by 7 points. A third national poll—from Fox News!—puts Obama up by 9 points. Add up all the national polls, and Obama leads by almost six points. Further, swing state polls show him with 332 electoral votes compared to only 206 for Mitt Romney.

Republicans thought that the *Citizens United* decision and their rich billionaires would give them a leg up, but after \$100 million already spent attacking Obama, the president is still kicking Romney's butt. We are poised to hold firm in the Senate and even the House is coming into play where, worse case scenario, we significantly chop that Republican majority down.

The best way to protect our lead is by going on the attack. When Peyton Manning is winning a football game, he goes on the attack, runs up the score, demoralizes his opposition. The GOP did that to us in 2010. Now it's our turn.

Pile on by donating \$5 to our Upgrade the Senate project. We're working to elect five great Democrats who will make the U.S. Senate a much better place: Elizabeth Warren in Massachusetts, Chris Murphy in Connecticut, Tammy Baldwin in Wisconsin, Martin Heinrich in New Mexico, and Mazie Hirono in Hawaii. Even a \$5 contribution, or \$1 to each of these five excellent candidates, will go a long way toward making sure Republicans continue to spiral downward.

We're winning, and while we do the work needed to seal the deal, we've got to own it. Please contribute \$5 to our Upgrade the Senate project, or \$1 for each of our five top-notch Senate candidates:

https://secure.actblue.com/contribute/page/upgradethesenate?refcode=08_11_em5.

Keep fighting, Markos Moulitsas, Publisher, Daily Kos

20120811-07 14:08 Tom Fw: Warning on Deceptive Bible Translations

from Dion Jackson (via Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/dion.jackson.96/posts/395645690500890>)

For those of you who don't believe that scripture has not been watered down by way of the thousands of different versions. Take a look at these two scriptures and see if you can tell the difference

For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. —Hebrews Chapter 2:16 (New International Version)

For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. (King James Version)

Now.....tell me which one is more deceiving, let's see if you're spiritual eyes are open...

20120811-09 14:24 SteveB Re: Warning on Deceptive Bible Translations (reply to Tom, above)

Good point. The Bible is still being written, daily, as we speak...by a committee...in fact, by multiple committees. They will probably never finish.

Here's something about what you mentioned the other day, Obamainfo (transcripts):

Video: http://live.wsj.com/video/opinion-obama-transcript/2D0D6C19-8A1C-4193-90B8-09E9314EEF2C.html?mod=wsj_article_tboleft#!2D0D6C19-8A1C-4193-90B8-09E9314EEF2C

20120811-08 14:10 SteveG "Dragging America into Court: Law of the Sea & Global Litigation"

Interesting article on climate change...

"Dragging America into Court: Law of the Sea and Global Litigation" by Doug Bandow, *Forbes*

Mar. 19, 2012, (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/dougbandow/2012/03/19/dragging-america-into-court-law-of-the-sea-and-global-litigation/2/>)

They might not be practicing the world's oldest profession, but lawyers have been always with us. In America political losers increasingly go to court, hoping to convince judges to trump the democratic process. The result has been a rise in dubious judge-made "rights" which infringe on the basic liberties of the rest of us.

The same trend threatens on the world scene. The latest vehicle for potential litigation is the Law of the Sea Treaty (LOST), which the U.N.'s Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea explained "is not...a static instrument, but rather a dynamic and evolving body of law that must be vigorously safeguarded and its implementation aggressively advanced."

Three decades ago President Ronald Reagan rejected LOST, an omnibus agreement which would have redistributed wealth from Western industrialized democracies to Third World dictatorships. The so-called G-77, or developing state lobby, hoped to create a new International Seabed Authority (ISA) to control seabed resources and multilateral private mining operations.

Then the larger push for a "New International Economic Order" collapsed as the Soviet Union and its allied "socialist bloc" headed toward history's trashbin. Even Third World governments came to admit that President Reagan had been right about LOST.

Washington should have pushed to sever the seabed regulations from more broadly supported treaty provisions governing navigation and other issues. However, treaties attract State Department diplomats like flames attract moths. The Bush and Clinton administrations decided to "fix" the seabed provisions by renegotiating LOST. The resulting compromise eliminated some of the convention's most obnoxious rules but preserved the overall Rube Goldberg structure of organizations, committees, commissions, chambers, and more unchanged.

Worse, the revised text left regulatory landmines buried throughout. For instance, one of LOST's biggest failings was the mandatory transfer of proprietary technology to Third World states as well as the Enterprise, which was to mine the seabed for the Third World-controlled ISA. The LOST "fix" only deleted one of two sections governing technology transfer.

Left intact was the requirement that the Authority "promote and encourage the transfer to developing States of such technology and scientific knowledge." The Authority and member governments also were directed to "initiate and promote" programs "for the transfer of technology to the Enterprise and to developing states," including "facilitating the access of the Enterprise and of developing States to the relevant technology."

The revised text even added a new requirement: "If the Enterprise or developing States are unable to obtain deep seabed mining technology, the Authority may request all or any of the contractors and their respective sponsoring State or States to cooperate with it in facilitating the acquisition of deep seabed mining technology." The Authority could use this language to recreate the mandatory technology transfer requirement.

Other regulatory ghosts haunt the revised text. The original treaty perversely limited mineral production; ambiguous language in the new version could yield the same outcome, despite claims that the accord now is market-friendly. Such controversies could end up in international court.

Although LOST focuses on the high seas, it includes language covering domestic pollution. The provisions are surprisingly expansive, or "stunning in their breadth and depth," as Steven Groves of the Heritage Foundation observed in a new study. A decade ago Ireland relied on LOST to sue Great Britain over the commissioning of a mixed oxide plant because of the latter's alleged impact on the Irish Sea. The plant had been approved not only by

Britain, but also the European Union (EU). Ireland dropped the suit, but only because the EU sued Ireland for not filing its case in the European Court of Justice.

Many environmentalists believe that LOST could be used against the U.S. in the same way. A few years ago an environmental activist mistakenly sent me an email after our debate on the treaty. He acknowledged that it might be difficult to convince Americans that the treaty would not similarly bind America when the World Wildlife Federation and Citizens for Global Solutions were promoting LOST by claiming that the convention would stop Russia from polluting the Arctic. He worried that this inconsistency suggested that the treaty was in fact "some kind of green Trojan Horse."

It is. Groves noted that "Some environmental activist groups have already demonstrated a propensity for supporting, participating in, and in some cases actually filing climate change lawsuits against U.S. targets, as well as taking other legal actions relating to the marine environment in U.S. courts and international forums."

LOST also incorporates the so-called "no harm" rule, which obligates countries to regulate activities in order to avoid negatively impacting neighboring states. The duty makes sense as a guiding principle in designing domestic regulations and undertaking specific international obligations. But, warned Groves, approving LOST would transform "a sensible principle to regulate conduct between two neighboring countries into a seemingly unconstrained doctrine to impute global liability for alleged acts of atmospheric pollution." Unaccountable international legal forums then would enforce the rule.

Worse, the debate over climate change has opened up grand new litigation vistas. And treaty enthusiasts are anxious to take advantage. William C.G. Burns of the Monterey Institute of International Studies exulted that LOST "may prove to be one of the primary battlegrounds for climate change issues in the future."

He pointed to the Treaty's expansive definition of marine pollution: "the potential impacts of rising sea surface temperatures, rising sea levels, and changes in ocean pH as a consequence of rising levels of carbon dioxide in sea water" all could "give rise to actions under the Convention's marine pollution provisions." Even if the litigation did not succeed, he suggested that "the specter of litigation may help to deepen the commitment of States" to legislate on the issue.

Two decades ago environmental lawyers Durwood Zaelke and James Cameron wrote about the possibility of low-lying islands suing industrialized states over rising sea levels. Unfortunately, the prospect of international lawsuits is more than the gleam of an academic's eye.

The Pacific island state of Palau announced last September that it would seek a ruling from the International Court of Justice barring nations from allowing emissions from their territory to cause climate change affecting other countries. Palau indicated that it would rely on LOST as well as the Kyoto Protocol. A decade ago Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, and Tuvalu, also Pacific islands, threatened to sue under LOST, though as yet have not filed. Groves suggested that mountainous nations could similarly sue over shrinking glaciers. One could imagine other states claiming damages based on drought, desertification, or other alleged consequences of global warming.

The issue of climate change is extraordinarily complex. The best evidence is that the planet is warming, but the role of human activity and impact on the environment are far less certain and remain highly controverted. Nor is it possible to demonstrate causation between any particular emission and any particular consequence. There may be good political reasons to mitigate the distress of island countries, but such matters belong in international negotiations, not international courts.

However, as Groves warned, acceding to the treaty "would expose the U.S. to lawsuits on virtually any maritime activity, such as alleged pollution of the marine environment from a land-based source or even through the atmosphere. Regardless of the case's merits, the U.S. would be forced to defend itself against every such lawsuit at great expense."

Litigation could occur in several venues: the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, the International Court of Justice, an arbitral tribunal, and a "special" arbitral tribunal. There would be no appeals and all suffer from political

elements which would interfere with the delivery of genuine "justice." Indeed, noted Groves, the U.S. "has suffered adverse judgments in high-profile international lawsuits in the past."

LOST would reinforce the litigation danger by creating obligations directly enforceable by U.S. courts. Annex III, Article 21(2) of the treaty states that tribunal decisions "shall be enforceable in the territory of each State Party." In a 2008 case Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens contrasted another treaty with LOST, which, he wrote, did "incorporate international judgments into international law." As a result, U.S. judges would become international enforcers.

There is a role for international litigation, but not for resolving important and complicated policy issues. Domestic politics and international diplomacy are messy and imperfect, but remain the proper forums. Ultimately environmental issues are too important to debate without involving those who would do the paying.

Treaty advocates recognize that the American people aren't likely to favor buying a pig in a poke. So treaty negotiator Bernard Oxman suggested silence. Back in 1996 he admitted that the text "is amply endowed with indeterminate principles, mind-numbing cross-references, institutional redundancies, exasperating opacity and inelegant drafting." Thus, he recommended "restraint in speculating on the meaning of the convention." After all, he added, "it is essential to measure what we say in terms of its effect on the goal. Experienced international lawyers know where many of the sensitive nerve endings of governments are. Where possible, they should try to avoid irritating them."

What should irritate Americans even more, however, is the knowledge that LOST proponents are attempting to hide their ambitions.

LOST is a complicated issue, far more so than proponents publicly acknowledge. Perhaps the treaty's most dangerous aspect is creating a "dynamic and evolving body of law." America already is paying the price for far too much and too expansive litigation domestically. The U.S. Senate should say no to LOST.

20120811-10	15:08	SteveB	Fw: MoveOn Action: Chip in \$5 to Help America Learn the Truth About Paul Ryan!
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from MoveOn:

Breaking news: Mitt Romney just picked tea party hero Paul Ryan as his running mate. And Romney may have just committed political suicide.

Paul Ryan is the author of the most extreme right-wing budget ever proposed in Congress. He wants to dismantle Medicare, privatize Social Security, and cut taxes for millionaires while raising taxes on the middle class.¹ Simply put, the policies Paul Ryan stands for are politically toxic.

But here's the thing: Paul Ryan isn't just an extremist—he's young, smart, and charming. The media constantly describe him as looking like "the boy next door." He's the ultimate wolf in sheep's clothing.

The next ten days are crucial to make sure the American people understand the truth about Paul Ryan. We're launching an emergency "Paul Ryan Is Wrong for America" campaign, but we need to raise \$200,000 to make it happen.

Here's the plan:

- We'll hold protests everywhere Romney and Ryan go this week, and we've got an ambitious plan to hand out over 1 million pink slips to voters to show how many jobs the Romney-Ryan ticket would cost us.
- We're going to share stories from Paul Ryan's actual constituents who know best what he's all about—including one woman who was unemployed, facing large medical bills, and literally camped out for a week in front of Paul Ryan's office because he refused to meet with her. She's still waiting for her meeting.

- We're putting together a wave of super-sharable videos, photos, and Facebook posts that we can use to tell people about Paul Ryan via social media. For starters there's an unbelievable clip of Glenn Beck calling Paul Ryan his "soul mate."²

I'm so excited to put this plan into action. If we can pull it off, this could hurt the Romney campaign the way the Sarah Palin debacle hurt John McCain. But we can't do it unless we can raise \$200,000 this weekend.

Chip in \$5 to help make sure America knows the truth about Paul Ryan:

https://pol.moveon.org/donate/romney_ryan.html.

The next ten days are crucial for the future of America. Every day this week, Mitt Romney will be making appearances with Paul Ryan at diners, town squares, factories—all to create the false impression that he and Paul Ryan understand the concerns of people like you and me.

The Republicans are trying to do exactly what they did with George W. Bush—convince people that he's someone you'd like to have a beer with, and then ram through a far-right agenda that screws the middle class. We can't count on the media to tell the truth. It's up to us to set the record straight.

Thanks for all you do. –Justin, Tate, Laura, Julia, and the rest of the team

Sources:

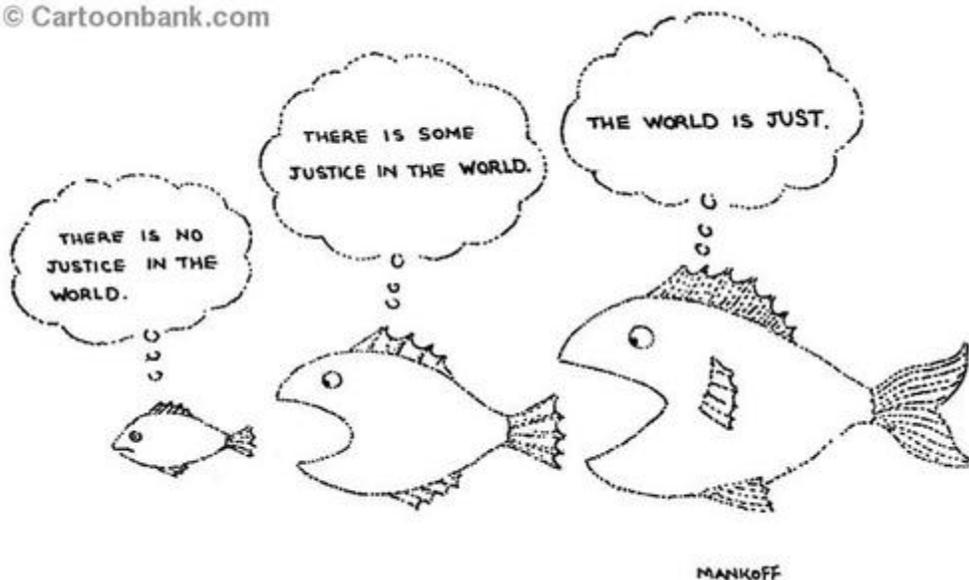
¹"12 Things You Should Know About Vice Presidential Candidate Paul Ryan," Think Progress, August 11, 2012, <http://www.moveon.org/r?r=278662&id=48569-20195165-hCEdgKx&t=5>.

²"Glenn's Soulmate?" GlennBeck.com, April 12, 2010, <http://www.glennbeck.com/content/articles/article/196/39068/>.

20120811-11	15:21	SteveB	Cartoon: 'The World Is Just...'
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I think this says a lot about why some have different opinions:

© Cartoonbank.com



20120811-12	15:24	SteveG	Re: Cartoon: 'The World Is Just...' (reply to SteveB, above)
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Good one.

20120811-13 15:33 SteveG "How Grover Norquist Hypnotized the GOP"

"How Grover Norquist Hypnotized the GOP" by Deval Patrick, *The Washington Post*

June 30, 2011, (http://www.washingtonpost.com/how-grover-norquist-hypnotized-the-gop/2011/06/30/AGYOUIsH_story.html)

At our 25th college reunion in 2003, Grover Norquist — the brain and able spokesman for the radical right — and I, along with other classmates who had been in public or political life, participated in a lively panel discussion about politics. During his presentation, Norquist explained why he believed that there would be a permanent Republican majority in America.

One person interrupted, as I recall, and said, "C'mon, Grover, surely one day a Democrat will win the White House."

Norquist immediately replied: **"We will make it so that a Democrat cannot govern as a Democrat."**

In a way, Republicans have accomplished that. This spring, in an effort to reduce the deficit, a Democratic president proposed to cut \$2 trillion in spending, much of it from domestic programs Democrats have long championed. Last week, Republican leaders withdrew from talks with the vice president on a bipartisan plan to reduce the deficit because, as another part of the solution and like every bipartisan budget deal for decades, the president proposed to raise revenue. Specifically, he proposed to raise \$1 in new revenue (through closing loopholes or ending the Bush tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans) for every \$2 in spending cuts. In response to that modest proposal, Republican leaders walked out.

It is now clear that the Republican strategy is to drive America to the brink of fiscal ruin and then argue that the only way out is to cut spending for the powerless. Taxes — a dirty word thanks to Norquist's "no new taxes" gimmick — are made to seem beyond the pale, even as the burden of paying for our society shifts disproportionately to the middle class and working poor. It is the height of fiscal folly. It is also not who we are as a country.

For nearly a decade, our federal government paid for two wars and a costly prescription drug benefit with borrowed money. Our government paid for the Bush tax cuts with borrowed money. Now, after exhausting the budget surplus left by the Clinton administration, the only spending Republicans are willing to discuss cutting is spending that helps the poor and vulnerable — meaning anything that does not touch the interests of large corporations and the very rich. Last December, Republican hard-liners held hostage benefits for people out of work in exchange for an agreement to extend the Bush tax cuts for those who make a million dollars or more a year. Last month, many of the same lawmakers rallied to protect special tax benefits for oil companies that have made record profits on high gas prices.

Meanwhile, some mom-and-pop stores and college students pay more in taxes than some of our largest corporations. Still, taxes are sin to the hard-liners, though they have difficulty demonstrating a correlation over the past decade between tax cuts and economic growth.

Everyone knows that we have to reduce the deficit. Everyone also knows that reducing government spending and addressing revenue shortfalls have to be a part of the plan. This isn't partisan; it's pragmatic. Some might even call it conservative. But Norquist and the rest of the radical right have so hypnotized the Republican leadership that they can't come out and say it. For them, maintaining their rhetoric about spending cuts is more important than preserving the civic investments that make America stand out from the rest of the world.

That political calculus has consequences for the rest of us.

If the deficit is reduced by spending cuts alone and there is no deal to raise the debt ceiling, here's a sampling of what happens: We stop paying our soldiers or supporting our veterans. We stop feeding the neediest children and

families. We stop providing nursing-home care to seniors. We stop inoculating schoolchildren. We stop helping young people go to college. The unemployed are on their own. Roads and bridges continue to crumble. And we jeopardize the creditworthiness of our economy at one of the most fragile moments in history. All to protect the marginal benefits of the most fortunate and the political purity of the radical right.

I remember sitting in the Dunster House dining hall at Harvard with Norquist when we were sophomores or juniors in college, while he explained his view of government, or lack thereof. It sounded logical — the notion that we could live independently of each other, making our own decisions in our own self-interest. But then who puts out the fires? Who answers the calls to 911? Who educates poor children? Who helps people with disabilities?

I'd like to think that the most prosperous nation in human history can have both freedom and security. I think we have reached a point where my personal success is not threatened by a program to help our parents retire with dignity. Voters are smart enough to see that taxes are one of the ways we get those things. They are the price we pay for civilization.

(The writer, a Democrat, is governor of Massachusetts.)

20120811-14	18:42	SteveG	Republicans Will Destroy the USA to keep It GOP
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Registered to vote yesterday.

Not certain voting will be enough given the way the voting laws are being changed all over the place. How can Ohio have different voting hours in different precincts? Federal elections should be uniform rather than each state being able to set their own rules to meet their individual state party in power agendas! Oh yeah, there I go stepping all over state rights.

20120811-17	18:52	Art	Re: Republicans Will Destroy the USA to keep It GOP (reply to SteveG, above)
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This a pretty good summary when you look back at the past few years.

"We will make it so that a Democrat cannot govern as a Democrat."

That's pretty much been the theme.

20120811-15	18:50	SteveG	"12 Things You Should Know About Vice Presidential Candidate Paul Ryan"
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"12 Things You Should Know About Vice Presidential Candidate Paul Ryan" by Igor Volsky, ThinkProgress

Aug. 11, 2012, (<http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2012/08/11/677171/12-things-you-should-know-about-vice-presidential-candidate-paul-ryan/?mobile=nc>)

Mitt Romney has picked as his running mate 42 year-old Republican Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI), the architect of the GOP budget, which the *New York Times* has described as "the most extreme budget plan passed by a house of Congress in modern times."

Below are 12 things you should know about Ryan and his policies:

1. Ryan embraces the extreme philosophy of Ayn Rand.

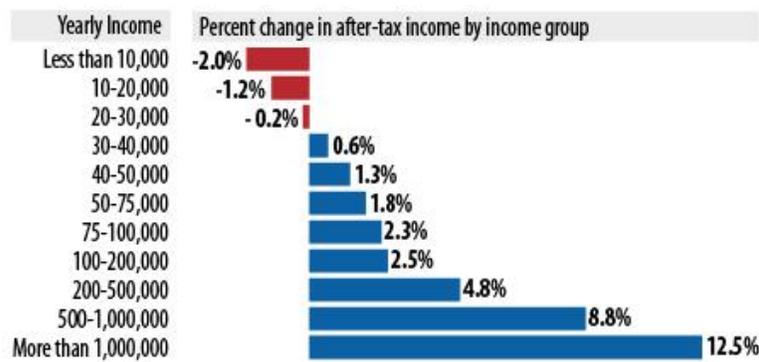
Ryan heaped praise on Ayn Rand, a 20th-century libertarian novelist best known for her philosophy that centered on the idea that selfishness is "virtue." Rand described altruism as "evil," condemned Christianity

for advocating compassion for the poor, viewed the feminist movement as “phony,” and called Arabs “almost totally primitive savages. Though he publicly rejected “her philosophy” in 2012, Ryan had professed himself a strong devotee. “The reason I got involved in public service, by and large, if I had to credit one thinker, one person, it would be Ayn Rand,” he said at a D.C. gathering honoring the author of *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead*. “I give out *Atlas Shrugged* as Christmas presents, and I make all my interns read it. Well... I try to make my interns read it.”

2. Ryan wants to raises taxes on the middle class, cut them for millionaires.

Paul Ryan’s infamous budget — which Romney embraced — replaces “the current tax structure with two brackets — 25 percent and 10 percent — and cut the top rate from 35 percent.” Federal tax collections would fall “by about \$4.5 trillion over the next decade” as a result and to avoid increasing the national debt, the budget proposes massive cuts in social programs and “special-interest loopholes and tax shelters that litter the code.” But 62 percent of the savings would come from programs that benefit the lower- and middle-classes, who would also experience a tax increase. That’s because while Ryan “would extend the Bush tax cuts, which are due to expire at the end of this year, he would not extend President Obama’s tax cuts for those with the lowest incomes, which will expire at the same time.” Households “earning more than \$1 million a year, meanwhile, could see a net tax cut of about \$300,000 annually.” Audiences have booed Ryan for the unfair distribution.

Ryan Plan Would Cut Taxes Deeply at the Top, Raise Them at the Bottom



Note: Compared to current policy; does not include plan’s reductions in unspecified tax expenditures.
Source: Urban Brookings Tax Policy Center, Table T12-0126

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities | cbpp.org

3. Ryan wants to end Medicare, replace it with a voucher system.

Ryan’s latest budget transforms the existing version of Medicare, in which government provides seniors with a guaranteed benefit, into a “premium support” system. All future retirees would receive a government contribution to purchase insurance from an exchange of private plans or traditional fee-for-service Medicare. But since the premium support voucher does not keep up with increasing health care costs, the Congressional Budget Offices estimates that new beneficiaries could pay up to \$1,200 more by 2030 and more than \$5,900 more by 2050. A recent study also found that had the plan been implemented in 2009, 24 million beneficiaries enrolled in the program would have paid higher premiums to maintain their choice of plan and doctors. Ryan would also raise Medicare’s age of eligibility to 67.

4. Ryan thinks Social Security is a “ponzi scheme.”

In September of 2011, Ryan agreed with Rick Perry’s characterization of Social Security as a “Ponzi scheme” and since 2005 has advocated for privatizing the retirement benefit and investing it in stocks and bonds. Conservatives claim that this would “outperform the current formula based on wages earned and overall wage appreciation,” but the economic crisis of 2008 should serve as a wake-up call for policymakers who seek to hinge Americans’ retirement on the stock market. In fact, “a person with a private Social Security account similar to what President George W. Bush proposed in 2005” would have lost much of their retirement savings.

5. Ryan's budget would result in 4.1 million lost jobs in 2 years.

Ryan's budget calls for massive reductions in government spending. He has proposed cutting discretionary programs by about \$120 billion over the next two years and mandatory programs by \$284 billion, which, the Economic Policy Institute estimates, would suck demand out of the economy and "reduce employment by 1.3 million jobs in fiscal 2013 and 2.8 million jobs in fiscal 2014, relative to current budget policies."

6. Ryan wants to eliminate Pell Grants for more than 1 million students.

Ryan's budget claims both that rising financial aid is driving college tuition costs upward, and that Pell Grants, which help cover tuition costs for low-income Americans, don't go to the "truly needy." So he cuts the Pell Grant program by \$200 billion, which could "ultimately knock more than one million students off" the program over the next 10 years.

7. Ryan supports \$40 billion in subsidies for big oil.

In 2011, Ryan joined all House Republicans and 13 Democrats in his vote to keep Big Oil tax loopholes as part of the FY 2011 spending bill. His budget would retain a decade's worth of oil tax breaks worth \$40 billion, while cutting "billions of dollars from investments to develop alternative fuels and clean energy technologies that would serve as substitutes for oil." For instance, it "calls for a \$3 billion cut in energy programs in FY 2013 alone" and would spend only \$150 million over five years — or 20 percent of what was invested in 2012 — on energy programs.

8. Ryan has ownership stakes in companies that benefit from oil subsidies.

Ryan "and his wife, Janna, own stakes in four family companies that lease land in Texas and Oklahoma to the very energy companies that benefit from the tax subsidies in Ryan's budget plan," the Daily Beast reported in June of 2011. "Ryan's father-in-law, Daniel Little, who runs the companies, told Newsweek and The Daily Beast that the family companies are currently leasing the land for mining and drilling to energy giants such as Chesapeake Energy, Devon, and XTO Energy, a recently acquired subsidiary of ExxonMobil."

9. Ryan claimed Romneycare has led to "rationing and benefit cuts."

"I'm not a fan of [Romney's health care reform] system," Ryan told C-SPAN in 2010. He argued that government is rationing care in the state and claimed that people are "seeing the system bursting by the seams, they're seeing premium increases, rationing and benefit cuts." He called the system "a fatal conceit" and "unsustainable."

10. Ryan believes that Romneycare is "not that dissimilar to Obamacare."

Though Romney has gone to great lengths to distinguish his Massachusetts health care law from Obamacare, Ryan doesn't see the difference. "It's not that dissimilar to Obamacare, and you probably know I'm not a big fan of Obamacare," Ryan said at a breakfast meeting sponsored by the American Spectator in March of 2011. "I just don't think the mandates work ... all the regulation they've put on it...I think it's beginning to death spiral. They're beginning to have to look at rationing decisions."

11. Ryan accused generals of lying about their support for Obama's military budget.

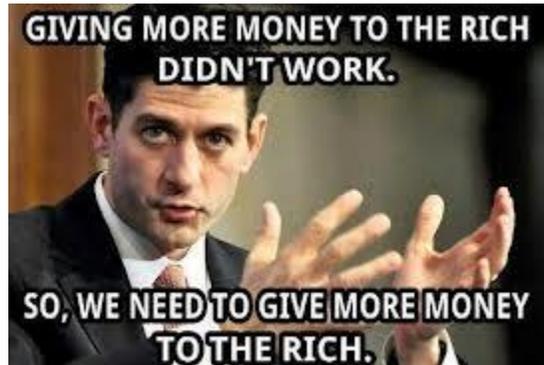
In March, Ryan couldn't believe that Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey supports Obama's Pentagon budget, which incorporates \$487 billion in cuts over 10 years. "We don't think the generals are giving us their true advice," Ryan said at a policy summit hosted by the *National Journal*. "We don't think the generals believe that their budget is really the right budget." He later apologized for the implication.

12. Ryan co-sponsored a "personhood" amendment, an extreme anti-abortion measure.

Ryan joined 62 other Republicans in co-sponsoring the Sanctity of Human Life Act, which declares that a fertilized egg "shall have all the legal and constitutional attributes and privileges of personhood." This would outlaw abortion, some forms of contraception and invitro fertilization.

20120811-16 18:51 SteveG "Glenn's Soulmate?" (Interview with Paul Ryan)

Get scared, get really scared, get pi*sed, get pi*sed off!



"Glenn's Soulmate?" (<http://www.glennbeck.com/content/articles/article/196/39068/>)

GLENN BECK: One name that I hear an awful lot about and, you know, it's strange. I'm getting a lot of heat now from this article that was in *Forbes* magazine called Beck, Inc. It was on the cover. I think it's ought on newsstands today, the cover. And it starts with the opening line of, I could give a flying crap about politics. I care about principles. I don't care about the process at all. And there's a follow-up story in *Forbes* now on that because so many people misunderstood it. Or they are using it to smear me. I don't follow the people day to day in Washington, but when I hear names over and over again, I look into them. Paul Ryan is a name I keep hearing of just, you know, he's a god among conservatives. So I asked Stu, I don't know, about a week ago. I said, Stu, can you look into Paul Ryan, found out what you can about him. He found a speech that I read to you or portions of that he gave in Oklahoma, and it appeared to me that he was standing up for progressivism which doesn't really sit well with me. We heard from Paul Ryan's office as soon as the show was over and they said, no, you've got that all wrong. If I get it wrong, I don't care what political party it's in; I will correct the record. Heritage.org has corrected the record today and the guy who wrote the article is a guy who I know hates progressives because he's one of our researchers on the progressive movement. And the best guy to do it is Paul Ryan. So he joins us now. Hello, congressman, how are you, sir?

PAUL RYAN: Hey, nice to meet you.

GLENN: Nice to meet you, sir. Tell me, tell me your thoughts on progressivism.

PAUL RYAN: Right. What I have been trying to do, and if you read the entire Oklahoma speech or read my speech to Hillsdale College that they put in there on *Primus Magazine*, you can get them on my Facebook page, what I've been trying to do is indict the entire vision of progressivism because I see progressivism as the source, the intellectual source for the big government problems that are plaguing us today and so to me it's really important to flush progressives out into the field of open debate.

GLENN: I love you.

PAUL RYAN: So people can actually see what this ideology means and where it's going to lead us and how it attacks the American idea.

GLENN: Okay. Hang on just a second. I -- did you see my speech at CPAC?

PAUL RYAN: I've read it. I didn't see it. I've read it, a transcript of it.

GLENN: And I think we're saying the same thing. I call it --

PAUL RYAN: We are saying the same thing.

GLENN: It's a cancer.

PAUL RYAN: Exactly. Look, I come from -- I'm calling you from Janesville, Wisconsin where I'm born and raised.

GLENN: Holy cow.

PAUL RYAN: Where we raise our family, 35 miles from Madison. I grew up hearing about this stuff. This stuff came from these German intellectuals to Madison-University of Wisconsin and sort of out there from the beginning of the last century. So this is something we are familiar with where I come from. It never sat right with me. And as I grew up, I learned more about the founders and reading the Austrians and others that this is really a cancer because it basically takes the notion that our rights come from God and nature and turns it on its head and says, no, no, no, no, no, they come from government, and we here in government are here to give you your rights and therefore ration, redistribute and regulate your rights. It's a complete affront of the whole idea of this country and that is to me what we as conservatives, or classical liberals if you want to get technical.

GLENN: Thank you.

PAUL RYAN: -- ought to be doing to flush this out. So what I was simply trying to do in that speech was simply saying those first versions, those first progressives, they tried to use populism and popular ideas as a means to getting -- detaching people from the Constitution and founding principles to pave the way for the centralized bureaucratic welfare state.

GLENN: Okay. So you and I have -- wait, wait, hang on just a second. You and I agree because -- the way it was worded.

PAUL RYAN: Yeah.

GLENN: It sounded like you thought that Woodrow Wilson and Teddy Roosevelt and their progressivism was good and that's --

PAUL RYAN: Yeah. There was one blog which I think you cited that completely misinterpreted my remarks.

GLENN: Thank you.

PAUL RYAN: All the other blogs that wrote about my speech I think got it accurately. What I probably should have done was added a couple more sentences. I cut the thing back for time.

GLENN: No, no, that's fine.

PAUL RYAN: I should have just added a couple more sentences. What I was basically saying is the progressives we have now who are the people we have run our government, they don't even try to do that. They don't even try to pretend to be advancing a popular agenda. They try to cram through their agenda as fast as they can while they have the power that they have in order to get this stuff in place. So that is basically what I was saying is the kinds of progressives we have today, you know, aren't even pretending to do what people want for the country.

GLENN: Paul, how is it that you and I have never met?

PAUL RYAN: You know, I don't -- it's a really good question. You don't go to Washington much, do you?

GLENN: No, I avoid it like the plague.

PAUL RYAN: I go to Washington and Wisconsin every week and I don't really go anywhere in between, except for Oklahoma where my in-laws live.

GLENN: Do you watch or ever listen to the show? Are you familiar with what I've been saying?

PAUL RYAN: I'm familiar with it but you are on at a time of day that I just can't get to a television. You are on too early. So I just haven't had a chance to watch. I've watched you on O'Reilly and you've been replayed on Greta. So obviously I'm familiar with you.

GLENN: I'm just --

PAUL RYAN: And I know you've been going after progressivism which is exactly what I've been trying to do as well.

GLENN: I mean, I'm just surprised that, I mean because it sounds like you're on exactly the same --

PAUL RYAN: Yes.

GLENN: -- road that I'm on, and I have been feeling, and I imagine you are, too, feeling wildly alone on this because most people don't even understand progressivism.

PAUL RYAN: Right.

GLENN: So many dopes out in America are just like, yeah, well, I'm for progress.

PAUL RYAN: That's right.

GLENN: Jeez, it's not about progress. It's not even about the Constitution. I just gave a talk this weekend where we were talking about, you know, we're fundamental -- the president of the United States is saying we're going to fundamentally transform the country.

PAUL RYAN: Right.

GLENN: Into what? We're going to make progress to where?

PAUL RYAN: Right.

GLENN: What are we progressing to?

PAUL RYAN: If you read the entire Oklahoma speech, that's exactly what I'm talking about. That's what I'm saying, here's what this means --

GLENN: My fault, my fault.

PAUL RYAN: They are leading us to a social welfare state, cradle-to-grave society where they create a culture of dependency on the government, not on oneself. It is meant to replace the American idea. And the reason I'm doing a lot of these speeches -- the reason I'm talking about Hegel and Faber and Bismarck, you know, and what those people stood for and what they did and said and all their disciples, you know, in America is because I really believe we've got to have a debate and a political realignment fast because we will win the debate now. We are a center-right country. But if they succeed in moving us faster down the tipping point where more Americans are dependent on the government than upon themselves, where a debt crisis sparked money entitlement explosion brings us to, you know, a really tough fiscal situation, then down the road we may not win that referendum and so that is why I'm trying to, you know, do what I can from my position in congress to sound the alarm bells on what this agenda really means, what this philosophy's all about and how we need to have a referendum in America in real elections to untangle this mess they created and prevent us from reaching this tipping point where we are a

social welfare state, cradle-to-grave society, dependent on the government that lulls us into lies of complicity and dependency versus the America idea of, you know, making the most of your life, equal opportunity, equal natural rights. You know, those are the things that got us where we are and that's why I put this roadmap plan out there. I introduced it three years ago. I put a new version out in January. You can go to my website, Americanroadmap.org. It is a very specific economic and fiscal plan. It's a piece of legislation that says there is an alternative to this progressivist vision for America. There is a way to reapply and reclaim the founding principles in America and still get America back and make this century another American Century appeared that's why I've been, you know, speaking from the hilltop. It's not popular and it's -- and for my party, we can't afford to screw up again. But we've got to get people to stop being worried or afraid of taking on this debate and that's what I'm simply trying to do.

GLENN: Oh, my gosh. Oh, my gosh. I mean, I don't think I've heard a politician, really, I'm looking at my producers. Have we had a politician on this show since when, when we first met Santorum maybe, maybe. DeMint is really, really good but I don't know anybody, not even Santorum, I don't think I've ever heard anybody -- I need to find out more about you, Paul. I don't think I've ever heard anybody --

PAT: Nobody's articulated progressivism like that.

GLENN: --that is articulating the problem in this country and knows what the root is like you have.

PAUL RYAN: Look, I grew up in the orbit of Madison, Wisconsin. I know who these people are, I know what they think, I know what they believe. And so I would just encourage you, go to my roadmap website, read the roadmap.

GLENN: Give me the website.

PAUL RYAN: Americanroadmap.org. Read the full text of the Oklahoma speech, read my in Primus Hillsdale speech on progressivism and healthcare. Those three things right there, I mean, I could go on and on but those three things tell you what I've been trying to lay out and do just from my perch, you know, in congress.

GLENN: Paul, tonight and for the next five nights I am going to be softening the ground. I am laying out an idea of cutting the budget, doing what we did in 1920 after the first progressive --

PAUL RYAN: Yeah, Calvin Coolidge, sure.

GLENN: And I'm going to cut the -- show America that the budget can be cut by 50%. It's going to cause pain, but it has to. It has to be cut or we die. And show a way that we can reduce taxes to be -- do what Georgia did to Russia. Just keep lowering the taxes.

PAUL RYAN: Right.

GLENN: So they could survive. We need to do that. And I'm telling you that it's -- I've been telling the audience it's going to be wildly unpopular. You are going to hate me by the end of the week because everybody will experience pain. But man, I've got to tell ya, I'm not running for anything. If you can get people in Washington to actually stand up and say, I mean, I'll soften the ground and show people why it has to be cut, but we've got to cut this and we need somebody with a spine in Washington that will stand up. I'm -- boy, I hope I don't find out -- you are not like a dirt bag, are you?

PAUL RYAN: Yeah, right.

GLENN: I just don't want to find out, oh, jeez.

PAUL RYAN: Look, I --

GLENN: You don't know Eliot Spitzer --

PAUL RYAN: No.

GLENN: Or anything like that, right?

PAUL RYAN: I'm not running for president. I'm not trying to be somebody else. I'm not trying to be somebody I'm not. I'm not running for president. I'm a ranking member of the budget committee. You know, my background is in economics. That's my aptitude. If you read my roadmap, it is basically a plan that lays out how to relimit government, how to turn these entitlements into individual ownership programs where you are not dependent on the government for all these things, where you are more independent. And how you can basically reclaim the 21st century for the American idea instead of -- and we are very quickly approaching this tipping point in this country.

GLENN: I know.

CALLER: Where I mean, 60% of our fellow citizens right now get more benefits from the federal government in dollar value than they pay back in taxes. So we're already very quickly going down this path. Throw healthcare on top and then cap and trade and implement this Obama budget and you are way down that path.

GLENN: Well, we won't survive that.

PAUL RYAN: So and that's what I lay out on my roadmap. I show you using Congressional Budget Office numbers just how we are going to implode. We have an economic implosion on the horizon. Everybody knows this but nobody's doing anything about it. And that's why I've decided to put this plan out there --

GLENN: God bless you.

PAUL RYAN: -- that has been certified by the CBO as doing what I say it does.

GLENN: Okay.

PAUL RYAN: So I encourage you to take a look at it.

GLENN: I will. Paul, and I would like to stay in touch with you. I appreciate your correcting my error and I apologize for that.

PAUL RYAN: Look, that one blog really misinterpreted what I was trying to say and you know, as you just mentioned in your lead-in, you get misinterpreted sometimes.

GLENN: Well, I'm glad we've cleared it up and we'll stay in touch. Paul Ryan, thank you very much, sir.

PAUL RYAN: Sounds good.

GLENN: Appreciate it. You bet. Bye-bye. Oh, my gosh.

PAT: You weren't already married, I think you would have proposed to him.

GLENN: Oh, my gosh.

PAT: I think you would have proposed to him then. I saw the look in your eye.

GLENN: You know what it is? You know what it is? Hope, why, because someone knows the truth and knows how to articulate it.

PAT: He really does and did. That was really good.

GLENN: Let me ask you something. Let me ask you something. I said that my time would be done when I found somebody else that would articulate it.

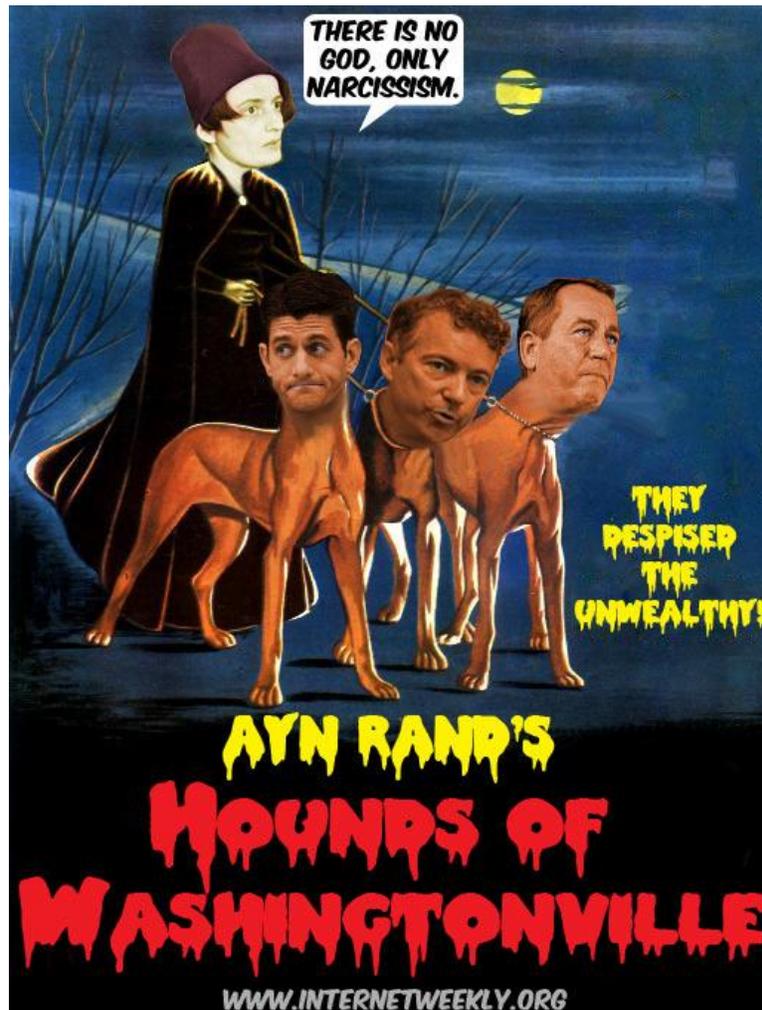
PAT: I think you are in the clear.

GLENN: Can I go home now? Can I go home?

[20120811-18](#) 20:26 SteveB Re: "Glenn's Soulmate?" (reply to SteveG, above)

WOW!

If Glenn Beck loves him, I hate him.



[20120811-19](#) 20:41 SteveB Photo: REPUBLICAN CANNIBALS!

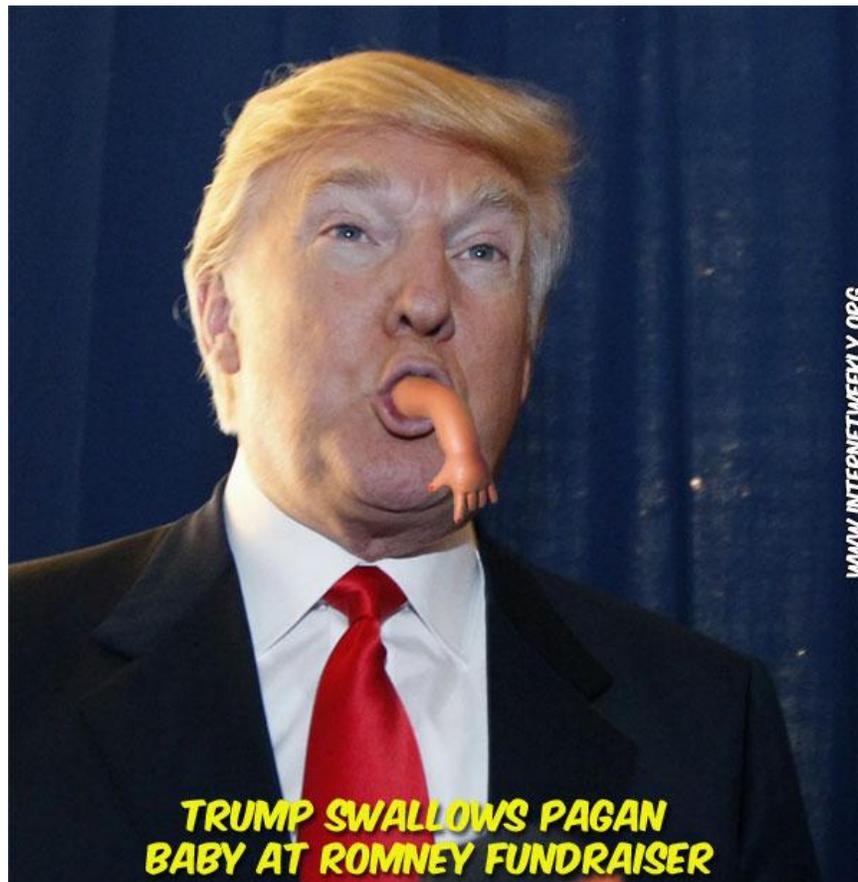
Republican cannibals eat live babies!

I think this is going way too far. These right-wing radicals must be stopped before they eat all the babies!

R0mney is in on it! Hell, he's the baby eater in chief of the GOP!

This is serious! Please pass this on to everyone you know who is not a baby eater. Please! Before it's too late!

I knew those Mormons were up to no good! Disappearing gold plates indeed!



[20120812-07](#) 10:01 SteveBA Re: REPUBLICAN CANNIBALS! (reply to SteveB, above)

So much for intelligent discourse from the crazed hermit of Bolivia.

[20120812-08](#) 10:49 SteveB Re: REPUBLICAN CANNIBALS! (reply to SteveBA, above)

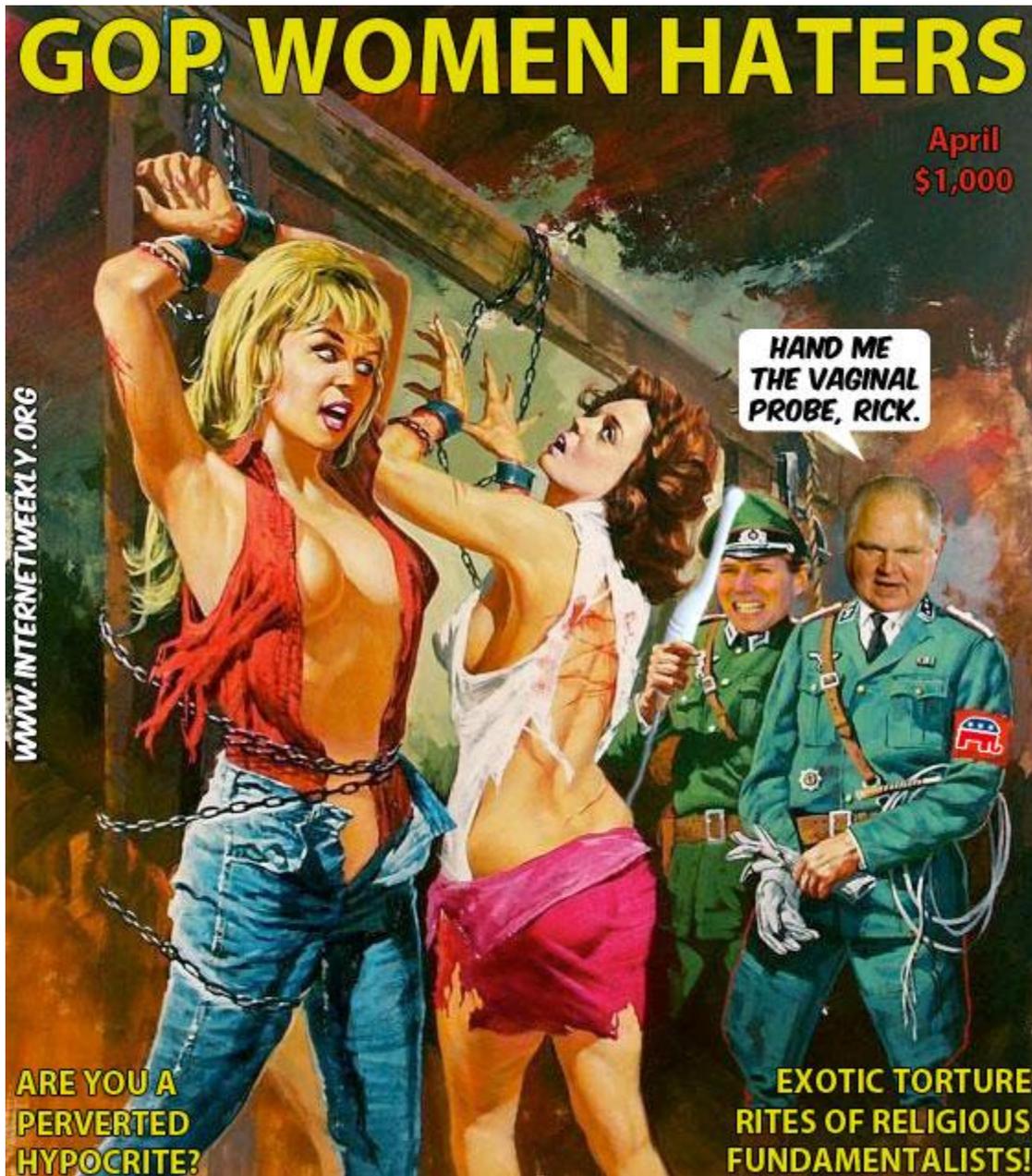
From commenter on NBC: **"Cuts in benefits simultaneous with tax breaks for highest incomes will just not fly, and that's that. It's over."**

Good to hear from you, SteveBA.

[20120812-10](#) 15:33 Art Re: REPUBLICAN CANNIBALS! (reply to SteveBA, above)

Well, I will say that is one for Romney and about 50 for the President at about this level. I think maybe irony may be in play here.

I liked this one too...



One of Paul Ryan's sports – does at his ranch on the border of Texas and Oklahoma.

from (<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=noodling>):

A form of fishing in which a crazy person runs into a lake and searches for holes on the bottom with his foot. Then he inserts his finger into the hole and lets something bite it. Hopefully, it's a catfish. If so, he wrestles the catfish to the surface and drags it to shore. If its not a catfish, he may lose his finger to a snapping turtle or his life to a water moccasin. Believe it or not, noodling is illegal in many states.

"How Noodling Works" by Debra Ronca, HowStuffWorks

no date, (<http://adventure.howstuffworks.com/outdoor-activities/water-sports/noodling.htm>)

When most people go fishing, they hop in a boat with a rod and a reel. They spend a relaxing day with their buddies and a cooler of ice-cold drinks, lazily casting out and reeling in.

The fishing technique known as noodling is something completely different. There's no fishing rod. In fact, there's not even a boat. A noodler wades into the muddy water, feels around for a hole and waits for a fish to lurch out and sink its teeth into his hand.

Yep, people voluntarily do this. Noodling sounds easy enough -- stick your hand in the water, pull up a fish. But it's actually quite difficult and dangerous. And, you can't noodle for just any fish. (Noodling for piranhas? Probably a bad idea.) A noodler's fish is the flathead catfish. Since catfish nest in holes or under brush in the water, they're relatively easy to find. The noodler jams a hand into a catfish hole and wiggles his or her fingers, which causes the fish to swim forward and attack the hand by latching on with its teeth. That's when the noodler starts pulling the fish to the surface. For safety reasons, most noodling is done in shallow water; a particularly strong fish could pull a noodler under. It's never wise- to noodle alone.



20120811-22 22:13 Tom Fw: Mitt R0mney Action: Send Me \$15 NOW!

SteveB, look what just started showing up in my e-mail in-box. You can send a donation. ;-)

from Mitt R0mney:

Paul Ryan is a strong conservative leader, and I am proud to have him as my running mate.

He is widely respected for his leadership skills and his intellect, and for his ability to tackle serious issues.

Together, we understand that a limited government and fiscal responsibility will unleash prosperity for all Americans.

Donate \$15 today to help restore America's greatness and build a stronger middle class:

<https://www.mittromney.com/donate>.

Thanks, Mitt R0mney

[Funny, his plans all seem to weaken the middle-class... --SteveB]



Smirking...

[20120812-02](#) 06:21 SteveB Re: Mitt R0mney Action: Send Me \$15 NOW! (reply to Tom, above)

Tom, WOW! The Democrats only ask for \$5! Sometimes \$3! \$15 is way too rich for my blood!

[20120812-01](#) 00:15 Tom Fw: Ann R0mney Action: Donate \$5 for a Bumper Stcker NOW!

Here we go again... Strange I haven't gotten a single e-mail until now! Our FoTM group calls me a Sexual Act done mostly in the Gay community, (Tea Strainer? or something) ;-(((

Romney calls me a just another dumb campaign contributor.

from Ann R0mney:

Dear Fellow Conservative,

What an exciting day! Mitt and I are so thrilled to have Paul Ryan and his wonderful family join America's Comeback Team.

I hope you will display your support for the Romney-Ryan ticket with this bumper sticker. Let your friends and neighbors know that you support the team that will take back America.

Like Mitt said, today is a great day in America, and there are better days ahead. Together, we will ensure a better America for our children and grandchildren:

<http://mi.tt/RR12Sticker>.

Thank you for your support, Ann Romney

[20120812-03](#) 06:32 SteveB Re: Ann R0mney Action: Donate \$5 for a Bumper Stcker NOW! (reply to Tom, above)

Qué?

What do you mean "our FotM group calls" you something? A sex act?

I think you're a little right of me, Tom, :-)) but I don't even know if you're a Teabagger or a Tea Strainer, so I hope you're kidding.

I have a feeling you wouldn't be extremely bothered by anyone calling you anything, but you're part of my team and I will jump into the fight.

I believe everyone should be judged by who they are, not by some name someone else wants to give them or wants to believe is them. I get called lots of things myself in this group and I tend not to like it. It seems to me like a coward's way out of an argument and I'm sure you agree.

At the same time, I reserve the right to call any politician anything I want and grant you the same privilege.

Hope you're having a great weekend. Say hello to Ann for me

20120812-04	06:57	SteveB	"Mitt Romney: Paul Ryan Budget Is Not His, Candidate 'Putting Together His Own'"
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Can R0mney ever stop lying? Now he doesn't support Ryan's budget? Then why did he say so many times that he does, then pick Ryan for VP? Is this dude completely insane?

I'm telling you Republicans, the people simply will not stand for this. This pair of frauds is going down in November. Let's make a bet. You think people are stupid enough to elect these two. I'll bet you \$10,000 they are not that stupid!

We're going to keep Medicare, Social Security, and Obamacare, thank you. We're going to tax the rich more. We're going to regulate big business and elections. We'll put an end to this "grand" Republican experiment and make America thrive again.

"Mitt Romney: Paul Ryan Budget Is Not His, Candidate 'Putting Together His Own'" by Sam Stein, Huffington Post

Aug. 11, 2012, (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/11/mitt-romney-paul-ryan-budget_n_1767765.html)

Within minutes of tapping Paul Ryan as his vice presidential nominee, presumptive Republican nominee Mitt Romney was distancing himself from the congressman's controversial budget, which includes steep cuts to government programs and changing Medicare into a voucher-like program.

The Romney campaign sent out talking points on Saturday that made the case that he was his own man on matters of Medicare and Social Security and that he wouldn't be tied to a document he insisted he'd sign into law and once called "marvelous."

The main talking points are below:

Questions and Answers About The Romney/Ryan Ticket:

1. Does this mean Mitt Romney is adopting the Paul Ryan plan?

Gov. Romney applauds Paul Ryan for going in the right direction with his budget, and as president he will be putting together his own plan for cutting the deficit and putting the budget on a path to balance.

Romney's administration will go through the budget line by line and ask two questions: Can we afford it? And, if not, should we borrow money from China to pay for it?

Mitt Romney will start with the easiest cut of all: Obamacare, a trillion-dollar entitlement we don't want and can't afford.

Mitt Romney also laid out commonsense reforms that will make good on our promises to today's seniors and save Social Security and Medicare for future generations.

2. Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan have different views on some policy areas -- like Medicare spending, entitlement reform, labor, etc. -- do you think those differences are going to hurt or help?

Of course they aren't going to have the same view on every issue. But they both share the view that this election is a choice about two fundamentally different paths for this country. President Obama has taken America down a path of debt and decline. Romney and Ryan believe in a path for America that leads to more jobs, less debt and smaller government. So, while you might find an issue or two where they might not agree, they are in complete agreement on the direction that they want to lead America.

Distancing himself from the Ryan budget may be an act of political necessity for Romney, as the proposals -- mainly those for entitlement programs -- have proven unpopular in various congressional district races and public opinion polls.

But it won't be easy, as Romney is on record praising the Ryan budget on multiple occasions.

"I think it'd be marvelous if the Senate were to pick up Paul Ryan's budget and to adopt it and pass it along to the president," he said this March.

Elsewhere, he added: "I spent a good deal of time with Congressman Ryan. When his plan came out, I applauded it as an important step," he said. "We're going to have to make changes like the ones Paul Ryan proposed."

In a Fox News Sunday interview in December 2011, meanwhile, Romney was asked about the Ryan budget as if it were his own plan and responded by arguing the merits of Ryan's approach.

And as pointed out by the Obama campaign, Romney said in an interview with a Milwaukee radio station in March 2012 that he and Ryan had been working "over the last several months" in collaboration on plans "for a tax policy and spending, as well as Medicare reform." Ryan's "proposals and the ones I've outlined in my campaign are very much on the same page," Romney added.

Ryan, for his part, seemed to agree, telling CBS in March that Romney would enact the major parts of his budget as president.

"I'm not expecting everybody to enact every little piece of this," Ryan said. "But, yes, he -- and the other candidates running for president -- have embraced these kinds of reforms because we know it's the best way to save and strengthen the Medicare guarantee, save Medicaid."



[20120812-12](#)

16:12 Art

Re: "Mitt Romney: Paul Ryan Budget Is Not His, Candidate 'Putting Together His Own'" (reply to SteveB, above)

But how do you really feel?

[20120812-05](#)

07:31

MarthaH

Art's Birthday Tomorrow!

Tomorrow [Monday] is Art's birthday... says the little birdie! Just thought others should know, :-))))

[20120812-06](#)

09:43

SteveB

The Blatant Truth

I believe that, in this coming election, we will either vote a resounding NO to the further destruction of our economy by the few...

Or...the policies Republicans said would bring prosperity via capitalism operating under the very "business optimal" conditions they, themselves (under Bush or Clinton) created and, nearly four years later under President Obama, are still fully in effect because of Republicans in Congress...

1. Low taxes (especially for the rich).
2. Big defense spending.
3. Union busting.
4. Slashing education and social programs.
5. Low interest and inflation rates.
6. Huge federal, state, and local deficits.
7. The opposite of prosperity except for the very few very rich.

...will, and I shudder, continue unabated, with the stamp of approval of the electorate.

But, sorry, I don't think the majority of the American people are stupid enough to believe the blatant, hypocritical lie that our dismal economy is all Mr. Obama's fault!

[20120812-11](#) 16:09 Beth Re: The Blatant Truth (reply to SteveB, above)

I agree completely!

[20120812-15](#) 23:58 Art Re: The Blatant Truth (reply to SteveB, above)

Hope you're right but I'm not so sure. There are a lot of really stupid people out there.

[20120812-09](#) 12:33 SteveB "The Ryan Choice"

"The Ryan Choice" by Robert Reich, ChangeofChange

Aug. 12, 2012, (<http://www.nationofchange.org/ryan-choice-1344777565>)

Paul Ryan is the reverse of Sarah Palin. She was all right-wing flash without much substance. He's all right-wing substance without much flash.

Ryan is not a firebrand. He's not smarmy. He doesn't ooze contempt for opponents or ridicule those who disagree with him. In style and tone, he doesn't even sound like an ideologue – until you listen to what he has to say.

It's here — in Ryan's views and policy judgments — we find the true ideologue. More than any other politician today, Paul Ryan exemplifies the social Darwinism at the core of today's Republican Party: Reward the rich, penalize the poor, let everyone else fend for themselves. Dog eat dog.

Ryan's views are crystallized in the budget he produced for House Republicans last March as chairman of the House Budget committee. That budget would cut \$3.3 trillion from low-income programs over the next decade. The biggest cuts would be in Medicaid, which provides healthcare for the nation's poor – forcing states to drop coverage for an estimated 14 million to 28 million low-income people, according to the non-partisan Center for Budget and Policy Priorities.

Ryan's budget would also reduce food stamps for poor families by 17 percent (\$135 billion) over the decade, leading to a significant increase in hunger – particularly among children. It would also reduce housing assistance, job training, and Pell grants for college tuition.

In all, 62 percent of the budget cuts proposed by Ryan would come from low-income programs.

The Ryan plan would also turn Medicare into vouchers whose value won't possibly keep up with rising health-care costs – thereby shifting those costs on to seniors.

At the same time, Ryan would provide a substantial tax cut to the very rich – who are already taking home an almost unprecedented share of the nation's total income. Today's 400 richest Americans have more wealth than the bottom 150 million of us put together.

Ryan's views are pure social Darwinism. As William Graham Sumner, the progenitor of social Darwinism in America, put it in the 1880s: "Civilization has a simple choice." It's either "liberty, inequality, survival of the fittest" or "not-liberty, equality, survival of the unfittest. The former carries society forward and favors all its best members; the latter carries society downwards and favors all its worst members."

Is this Mitt Romney's view as well?

Some believe Romney chose Ryan solely in order to drum up enthusiasm on the right. Since most Americans have already made up their minds about whom they'll vote for, and the polls show Americans highly polarized – with an almost equal number supporting Romney as Obama — the winner will be determined by how many on either side take the trouble to vote. So in picking Ryan, Romney is motivating his rightwing base to get to the polls, and pull everyone else they can along with them.

But there's reason to believe Romney also agrees with Ryan's social Darwinism. Romney accuses President Obama of creating an "entitlement society" and thinks government shouldn't help distressed homeowners but instead let the market "hit the bottom." And although Romney has carefully avoided specifics in his own economic plan, he has said he's "very supportive" of Ryan's budget plan. "It's a bold and exciting effort, an excellent piece of work, very much needed ... very consistent with what I put out earlier."

Romney hasn't put out much but the budget he's proposed would, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, throw ten million low-income people off the benefits rolls for food stamps or cut benefits by thousands of dollars a year, or both.

At the same time, Romney wants to permanently extend the Bush tax cuts to the wealthy, reduce corporate income taxes, and eliminate the estate tax. These tax reductions would increase the incomes of people earning more than \$1 million a year by an average of \$295,874 annually, according to the non-partisan Tax Policy Center.

Oh, did I say that Romney and Ryan also want to repeal President Obama's healthcare law, thereby leaving fifty million Americans without health insurance?

Social Darwinism offered a moral justification for the wild inequities and social cruelties of the late nineteenth century. It allowed John D. Rockefeller, for example, to claim the fortune he accumulated through his giant Standard Oil Trust was "merely a survival of the fittest... the working out of a law of nature and of God."

The social Darwinism of that era also undermined all efforts to build a more broadly based prosperity and rescue our democracy from the tight grip of a very few at the top. It was used by the privileged and powerful to convince everyone else that government shouldn't do much of anything.

Not until the twentieth century did America reject social Darwinism. We created a large middle class that became the engine of our economy and our democracy. We built safety nets to catch Americans who fell downward, often through no fault of their own.

We designed regulations to protect against the inevitable excesses of free-market greed. We taxed the rich and invested in public goods – public schools, public universities, public transportation, public parks, public health – that made us all better off.

In short, we rejected the notion that each of us is on our own in a competitive contest for survival.

But choosing Ryan, Romney has raised for the nation the starkest of choices: Do we want to return to that earlier time, or are we willing and able to move forward — toward a democracy and an economy that works for us all?

20120812-13	18:36	Tom	Movie: <i>Gray State</i>
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<http://youtu.be/Gy7FVXERKFE>

<https://vimeo.com/46700540>

Aug 7, 2012 by [GrayStateMovie](#)

This is an independently produced concept trailer. Please support the film and help it get made into a commercially viable feature film by contributing at <http://www.indiegogo.com/graystatemovie>.

GRAY STATE SYNOPSIS

The world reels with the turmoil of war, geological disaster, and economic collapse, while Americans continue to submerge themselves in illusions of safety and immunity. While rights are sold for security, the federal government, swollen with power, begins a systematic takeover of liberty in order to bring about a New World Order.

Americans, quarantined to militarized districts, become a population ripe for tyrannical control.

Fearmongering, terrorism, police state, martial law, war, arrest, internment, hunger, oppression, violence, resistance -- these are the new terms by which Americans define their existence. Neighbor is turned against neighbor as the value of the dollar plunges to zero, food supplies are depleted, and everyone is a terror suspect. There are arrests. Disappearances. Bio attacks. Public executions of those even suspected of dissent. Even rumors of concentration camps on American soil.

This is the backdrop to an unfolding story of resistance. American militias prepare for guerilla warfare. There are mass defections from the military as true Patriots attempt to rally around the Constitution and defend liberty, preparing a national insurgency against federal forces, knowing full well this will be the last time in history the oppressed will be capable of organized resistance.

It is a time of transition, of shifting alliance, of mass awakening and mass execution. It is an impending storm, an iron-gray morning that puts into effect decades of over-comfort and complacency, and Americans wake up to an occupied homeland. It is a time of lists -- black list, white list, and those still caught in the middle, those who risk physical death for their free will and those who sell their souls to maintain their idle thoughts and easy comforts. It is in this Gray State that the perpetuation of human freedom will be contested, or crushed.

Is it the near future, or is it the present? The Gray State is coming - by consent or conquest. This is battlefield USA.

Watch in 720HD for best quality.

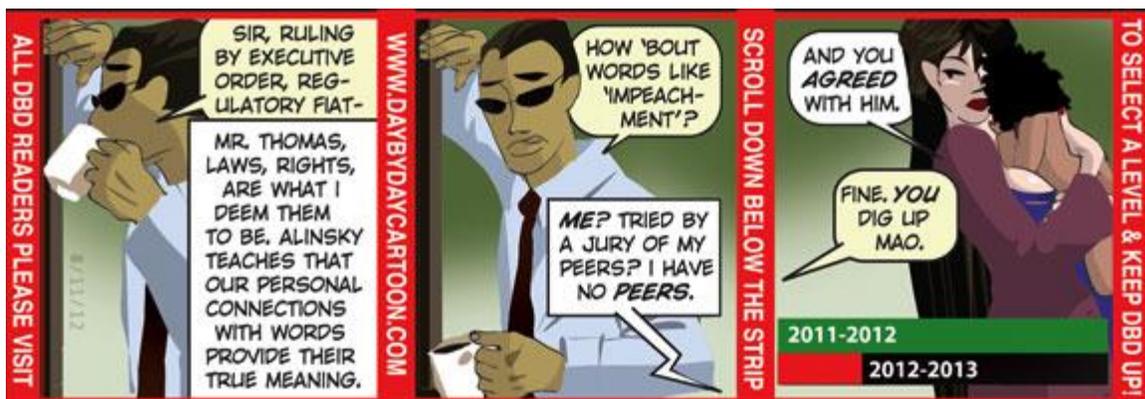
Watch a higher quality version of this trailer at Vimeo at <https://vimeo.com/46700540>.

<http://www.graystatemovie.com>

<http://www.facebook.com/graystatemovie>

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20120812-14 22:26 Tom Cartoon: Peers into the Future



<http://gizmodo.com/5551916/the-gates-of-hell-just-opened-in-guatemala>



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

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