



THE FOUNDATION

“Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle.” --Thomas Jefferson

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Rumble in the Swamp: Gingrich vs. Ryan

When Newt Gingrich launched his bid for the GOP presidential nomination last week, we knew there would be some *Sturm und Drang* added to the race. Newt’s brain is always running, but sometimes his mouth runs even faster. That became painfully obvious just four days later.

During a discussion on NBC’s “Meet the Press” Sunday about Paul Ryan’s Medicare reform plan, Gingrich declared that such reforms were “too big a jump.” If he had stopped there, we may never have heard about it. Instead, he proceeded, “I’m against ObamaCare, which is imposing radical change. And I would be against a conservative imposing radical change.” Furthermore, “I don’t think right-wing social engineering is any more desirable than left-wing social engineering.”

And that’s when the fight started.

Some wondered for which party’s nomination he’s running, while others simply declared his campaign toast. Dick Arme, now the chairman of FreedomWorks, but a co-writer of the “Contract with America” made famous by Newt, said he doesn’t understand why Gingrich thought “he helps himself by attacking the one guy [Ryan] that [conservatives] see as being courageous” about getting “government spending under control.” Brendan Steinhauser, director of Federal and State Campaigns for FreedomWorks, says the Tea Partiers he’s talked to are “irate” at Gingrich, because “For them, this is the fourth or fifth time he’s done something that has made them mad.” In fact, Steinhauser concluded, “I never met a single Tea Party activist that supported Newt Gingrich for president.” Ryan himself laughed it off, saying, “With allies like that, who needs the Left?”

At first, Gingrich dug in and argued that his “establishment cocktail party” critics were taking his remarks out of context. Then he signed a pledge to repeal ObamaCare if elected. Tuesday, he cried uncle and called Ryan to apolo-

gize. But then he jumped the shark, saying, “It was not a reference to Paul Ryan. There was no reference to Paul Ryan in that answer,” and he only apologized because “it was interpreted in a way which was causing trouble which he doesn’t need or deserve.” Has he been taking lessons from John Kerry? Gingrich has spent the better part of his first week on the campaign trail mopping up a mess that he should’ve known better than to make in the first place.

Medicare is one of the biggest pieces to the federal spending puzzle. If we are ever to solve the debt crisis (more on that below), we *must* address Medicare. Ryan’s proposal, which includes moving future recipients (age 55 and under) to a “premium support” model for Medicare, will be debated by conservatives, savaged by liberals and ultimately modified -- though it’s doubtful it will be any better for it. It isn’t gospel, and it isn’t the test by which all candidates must be measured, but criticism by fellow Republicans should at least be accompanied by better ideas. As National Review’s Jonah Goldberg put it, “Newt’s immediate policy proposals on Meet the Press were twofold: attack fraud and ‘start a conversation.’”

“Mr. Ideas” is going to have to do a lot better than assaulting Ryan’s plan and sitting on a love seat with Nancy Pelosi to win the GOP nomination. Better yet, he could just “keep up the good work” and lose the nomination.

Gingrich vs. Gingrich

“I agree that all of us have a responsibility to help pay for health care. And I think that there are ways to do it that make most libertarians relatively happy. I’ve said consistently, where there’s some requirement you either have health insurance or you post a bond or in some way you indicate you’re going to be held accountable.” --Newt Gingrich on “Meet the Press” Sunday

“I am completely opposed to the ObamaCare mandate on individuals. I fought it for two and a half years. ... I am against any effort to impose a mandate on anyone because I believe it is fundamentally wrong and unconstitutional.” -- Newt Gingrich in a campaign video Monday

Thanks for clearing that up, Newt.

(Hat tip: Wall Street Journal Political Diary)

Quote of the Week

“Debating the issues is perfectly fine. It’s the *way* Gingrich talks about things that is so awful. He is incapable of disagreeing on any matter about anything without creating a whirlpool of negativity that ends up sucking in his own conferees while leaving his partisan and ideological antagonists amazingly untouched. In the end, then, no matter the issue, Gingrich somehow manages to turn the conversation away from the topic at hand and focuses it squarely on *him* -- what he said, what he meant, what he was doing, why he did it, what’s the matter with him. The Ryan apology just added to the psychodrama of the last few days with Gingrich. The havoc generated by his narcissism will not abate. It can’t. Alas.” --columnist John Podhoretz

From the ‘Non Compos Mentis’ File

Just when you thought you’d seen it all, well ... you haven’t. An ad by The Agenda Project depicts what liberal minds claim Rep. Paul Ryan’s Medicare proposal would do to seniors. Apparently, throwing old women off a cliff is the new Republican agenda. Just imagine if the shoe were on the other foot...

Also, no word on whether Newt Gingrich supported this message.

See the video and comment [here](#).

News From the Swamp: Debt Limit Reached

The U.S. government officially hit the \$14.294 trillion debt ceiling this week, and politicians in Washington are no closer to an agreement on raising that ceiling than they were weeks ago. In an attempt to delay a default and buy some time for negotiations, the Treasury Department will stop issuing and reinvesting in federal pension plans, but White House and Democrat leaders in Congress have yet to offer any tangible solutions.

Barack Obama and Treasury Secretary Timothy “Tax Cheat” Geithner insist on a “clean” bill that simply raises the debt ceiling without attaching any restrictions on federal spending or altering rapidly failing programs such as Medicare and Social Security. Their so-called plan for avoiding default relies heavily on demonizing Republican efforts to change the fiscal attitude in Washington, claiming that the GOP wants to end these popular entitlements “as we know it.” What Obama, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) won’t admit is that, thanks to bloated federal spending and a refusal to address the problem, these entitlements are going to come to an end regardless.

In 2010, Social Security’s payments exceeded receipts by \$49 billion. That shortfall will only expand in the coming years, with the boomer generation retiring and deficits growing exponentially over time. Projected shortfalls will reach \$81.5 billion in 2020, \$288 billion in 2030, and \$343 billion by 2035, when the fund will be completely exhausted. The shortfall in Social Security is so great that in order to keep the program solvent through 2085, the government would have to immediately invest \$9.1 trillion to pay all promised benefits.

Democrats refuse, however, to consider allowing younger workers to invest in secure private retirement accounts, because they believe that this will reduce the amount of money in the current fund. They counter that a modest payroll tax increase will do the trick, but any such tax increase will merely be absorbed by the ballooning deficits we’re already witnessing.

The liberal orthodoxy of taxing our way out of debt does not work. The problem of maintaining government solvency is far beyond a simple tax increase. Obama claims that Republicans are threatening to harm America’s fiscal standing in the world by not following his lead on raising the debt ceiling without conditions. He should consider what the rest of the world’s markets will think of the U.S. if we don’t make significant changes to our spending habits.

Hope ‘n’ Change: More and More Waivers

The latest round of temporary waivers for businesses looking to avoid the pain of ObamaCare includes 38 government dispensations in Nancy Pelosi’s San Francisco district. This amounts to one in five of the 204 waivers issued in April by the Department of Health and Human Services. Posh eateries that sell \$59 steaks, trendy nightclubs and hotels were among the recipients in Pelosi’s district, but her office maintains she had no influence in the matter. Who could think such a thing?

Flex-Plan Services, a California-based company that filed the waivers, also claims that Pelosi played no role in the matter, but when first asked for comment, a co-owner of Flex-Plan Services claimed that the company didn’t file any waiver requests at all. These mixed signals, along with Pelosi’s well-documented ramming of ObamaCare through the House during her tenure as speaker, don’t help her hands-off claim. Meanwhile, Harry Reid’s entire home state of Nevada also secured a partial waiver, becoming the third state to be exempted from some of the law’s requirements.

Republicans are sure to use these and other waivers on the campaign trail as one of many reasons why ObamaCare doesn't work. Indeed, if ObamaCare is so great, why do so many businesses within the jurisdictions of two of its most vocal supporters need to be allowed to opt out of the program?

Two additional tidbits in ObamaCare news: First, a new report from consulting firm PwC's Health Research Institute projects that medical costs will increase 8.5 percent in 2012, which is up from an 8 percent increase this year. We can't quite put our finger on why that would be...

Second, recently revealed documents indicate that Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan helped craft ObamaCare's legal defense. We guarantee this won't be enough to prompt her to recuse herself when the case comes before the Court.

On Cross-Examination

"[The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act] created/saved approximately 450 thousand state and local government jobs and destroyed/forestalled roughly one million private sector jobs. State and local government jobs were saved because ARRA funds were largely used to offset state revenue shortfalls and Medicaid increases rather than boost private sector employment. The majority of destroyed/forestalled jobs were in growth industries including health, education, professional and business services." --economists Timothy Conley and Bill Dupor

NATIONAL SECURITY

Obama's Big Speech

Barack Obama's teleprompter read another big speech on the Middle East Thursday. In the speech were various prescriptions for how to achieve lasting peace in the region, including largely adopting the Bush Doctrine of spreading democratic governments as a key U.S. objective. "It will be the policy of the United States to promote reform across the region, and to support transitions to democracy," Obama said. He has made a habit over the last two years of adopting -- if never explicitly so -- George W. Bush's policies on this, holding terrorists at Guantanamo Bay, the surge in Afghanistan, etc. Being commander in chief entails making tougher decisions than being a community organizer.

The speech contained one bombshell, however. For the first time, a U.S. president took the stated position that "the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines, with mutually agreed swaps, so that secure

and recognized borders are established for both states." This was U.S. policy during the Clinton years, though the Israelis at least acted surprised by Obama's remarks. Perhaps that's because in 2004 Bush said that returning to those borders wouldn't be possible "in light of new realities on the ground."

Obama added, "The Palestinian must have the right to govern themselves and reach their potential in sovereign and contiguous state." But he qualified that by saying that no peace agreement should jeopardize Israel's security, because, "Our commitment to Israel's security is unshakable." How reassuring. Especially considering that Obama also said, "As for security, every state has the right to self-defense, and Israel must be able to defend itself -- by itself -- against any threat." What's that "by itself" caveat in there for?

Conservative analyst Charles Krauthammer points out two major flaws in Obama's position. First, "Even more alarming to Israel is Obama's omission of previous American assurances to recognize 'realities on the ground' in adjusting the 1967 border, meaning U.S. agreement that Israel would incorporate the thickly populated, close-in settlements in any land swap. By omitting this, Obama leaves the impression of indifference to the fate of these settlements. This would be a significant change in U.S. policy and a heavy blow to the Israeli national consensus."

Second, "How do you get contiguity with Gaza? Does Obama's map force Israel to give up a corridor of territory connecting the West Bank and Gaza? This is an old Palestinian demand which would cut *Israel* in two. Is this simply an oversight? Or a new slicing up of Israel?" Once again, Obama has some 'splainin' to do.

Armed Forces Day

Armed Forces Day is Saturday, May 21. We remain the proud and the free because these Patriots -- American Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coastguardsmen -- have stood bravely in harm's way and remain on post today. For this, we, the American people, offer our heartfelt thanks and prayers for you and your families.

The Patriot Post is proud to be one of the nation's leading advocates for our Armed Forces and their mission -- not only by providing countless Americans with the right perspective on that mission and the demanding tasks our military personnel have carried out with unfailing courage and professionalism, but also through efforts such as our Support and Defend pages, Operation Shield of Strength

and The Patriot Shop, which carries an extensive collection of products bearing official military insignia, the proceeds of which support our mission of service to our Armed Forces.

TSA Body-Scanner Funding Cut, but How Many Pat Downs Are There?

Last week, the Transportation Security Administration saw its plans to expand the controversial body-scanner program, or virtual strip search, slapped down by the Republican-led House Appropriations Committee. The 2012 Department of Homeland Security budget that was released last week established a budget for the TSA of \$7.8 billion, an increase of \$125 million over current levels, but still \$293 million less than the Obama regime wanted.

Notably, the committee denied the Obama regime's request to grant the T&A, er, TSA \$76 million in order to buy 275 more body scanners. Those scanners would require another 535 TSA agents to operate. And as Obama himself has noted, there is "nothing more important than working on behalf of [or was that working over?] the American people."

Since additional scanners are not in the offing, the TSA gropings euphemistically known as pat downs will continue. But how many people actually suffer the indignity of having their TSA masters getting to know them intimately? Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano says, "Well, actually, very, very, very few people get a pat down." So what does Napolitano's "very, very, very few" add up to in reality? The group PolitiFact Georgia took real-life TSA figures, did some math and concluded that over the course of a month, roughly 1.8 million people, the population of a large city, receive a TSA pat down. They conclude, "That doesn't sound like 'very, very, very' few people to us." The good secretary must be using the same dictionary Bill Clinton used for his definition of "is."

Iran and Venezuela Team Up on Missiles

In the latest version of a story that's floated around for the last five years, the German journal Die Welt reports Iran and Venezuela are moving ahead with plans for a rocket base on the Paraganá Peninsula, the northern-most point in Venezuela. Die Welt names a construction company owned by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, whose members have supposedly visited Venezuela to study the site and provide technical advice. The Guard Corps owns Iran's ballistic missile force, much of which is hidden in tunnels carved out under dozens of meters of solid rock. Presumably it is this experience in building

deep, survivable underground facilities that Venezuela wants to borrow.

It strains credulity to imagine that Hugo Chavez is crazy enough to fire missiles at the United States in support of his Iranian friend, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, as suggested in the article. What is not hard to imagine, however, is Iranian know-how in building hardened underground missile facilities allowing Chavez one day to wield a deterrent against the U.S. by threatening Miami, New Orleans, Atlanta, Charleston, et al, with missile attacks. A 1,000-mile missile would reach any of those cities, while a 1,500-mile missile could reach New York and Washington. If that sounds far-fetched, consider that Iran itself has made enormous progress in just the last two years with multi-stage, solid-fuel missiles, or that North Korea, one of the poorest nations on earth, has tested a missile with an estimated 1,500-mile range. Chavez and Ahmadinejad are birds of a feather, and this issue will bear careful watching in the coming years.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Regulatory Commissars:

Drill Here, Drill Now -- But Not Really

The good news is that after feeling the pressure of \$4-a-gallon gas at the pump, Barack Obama has decreed that we indeed should "drill here, drill now," meaning that domestic drilling for oil should face fewer restrictions. The bad news is that his lips were moving.

Apparently, what he really meant to say is that he *opposes* three Republican-brokered House bills that would expand and accelerate offshore drilling. Additionally, he renewed his call to eliminate \$4.4 billion in "subsidies" -- a.k.a., tax relief to oil industries for exploration. White House mouthpieces also claim that the Republican bills would "undercut safety reviews" and open environmentally sensitive areas to new drilling. It's clear that everywhere is "sensitive" to the Left, so even drilling in totally uninhabited areas rich in oil and natural gas is out.

The president's call really only entails extending existing leases rather than allowing new drilling. He appears to be clumsily attempting to emulate his Demo predecessor by "triangulating" the mess he's put the country in by *appearing* to meet Republicans "half way" on the critical issue of addressing America's energy needs. Still, as with everything he has done, he keeps digging us deeper into a hole.

Meanwhile, Senate Democrats Claire McCaskill (D-MO) and Chuck Schumer (D-NY) have sponsored a bill call-

ing for investigations into gas “price-fixing” in response to the American people’s outcry against high gas prices. Fortunately, the proposed bill is very likely to go down in flames. Even Senate *Democrats* think the bill doesn’t pass the laugh test. Unfortunately, a Senate bill to expand offshore drilling was also defeated Wednesday.

What is really needed is a public referendum on the Demos’ plans to make filling America’s energy needs ever more difficult, versus genuine attempts to protect our energy-related national interests. Unfortunately, that referendum will not occur until November 2012 -- from a Patriot’s perspective, however, that date can’t come soon enough.

Around the Nation:

The South Rises Again ... in Business-Friendliness

Five hundred business CEOs can’t be wrong, can they? In their annual survey of the business climate presented by the several states, states in the South rose to the top once again -- the top five in the Chief Executive magazine survey of corporate heads were Texas, North Carolina, Florida, Tennessee and Georgia.

The biggest trendsetter was Wisconsin, thanks to the policies and attitudes expressed by newly elected Governor Scott Walker and his legislative leaders. The historic home of the progressive movement and former bottom-feeder among states surged 17 spots upward to 24th place. While the Badger State’s policies haven’t changed all that much in some key areas, the biggest difference was a change in the rules “that make it hard, if not impossible, to separate from a non-productive employee [and] make companies fearful to hire or locate in a state,” as one CEO put it. In shorthand, Big Labor’s job-killing influence has waned.

On the other end of the scale, states with heavy union influence and/or regressive tax rates remained at the bottom: Michigan, New Jersey, Illinois, New York and California round out the cellar dwellers. Of those, Michigan and New Jersey stand the best chance for future improvement thanks to reform-minded Republican governors, while the others will likely bring up the rear for years to come.

Trouble at the IMF

International Monetary Fund (IMF) managing director Dominique Strauss-Kahn, a French Socialist, resigned Wednesday as he stands accused of a number of criminal charges stemming from his alleged rape of a housekeeper at a Manhattan hotel. All the while, members of his own French political party call him a “libertine” and fret about the “puritanical” American culture.

Plucked off a France-bound flight moments before take-off, DSK (as he’s known in France) has been in hot water before. The revelation of an affair with a married subordinate in 2008 nearly cost him the IMF gig. In the wake of these most recent charges, a French journalist has stepped forward with allegations of a similar incident back in 2002.

Since Strauss-Kahn was in his final days as IMF head, his absence won’t necessarily affect its day-to-day operations. However, he was a leading advocate behind the Greek bailout last year and was discussing how to more involve European nations in the effort. DSK was also considering a run against Nicolas Sarkozy for the presidency of France, with polls suggesting he would be the most formidable Socialist candidate. All that matters little now as Strauss-Kahn has far more important things to worry about.

Yet the whiff of scandal may be what prompts Americans to look more closely at the operations of the IMF. The U.S. owns about one-sixth of the IMF’s shares and guarantees around \$100 billion of loans from the “lender of last resort” for developing nations that can receive credit nowhere else. When the headlines get lurid, people take notice, and, thanks to DSK’s debauchery, more questions will arise about the disastrous policies of the IMF as a whole.

CULTURE & POLICY

Second Amendment: California Dreaming

U.S. District Court Judge Morrison England Jr., nominated by George W. Bush, ruled in Sacramento Monday that there is not a constitutional right to carry a concealed firearm in public. Apparently, he’s never read the Second Amendment. Oddly enough, it was the country of his surname that prompted the writing of the Second Amendment in the first place.

England ruled in favor of Yolo County Sheriff Ed Prieto, who says that applicants for concealed carry permits must have a good reason, such as a safety threat, in order to secure said permit. Prieto was sued by plaintiffs claiming that, as long as an applicant isn’t mentally ill and doesn’t have a criminal background, a permit should be granted.

The judge didn’t buy it, countering that California law already allows gun owners to carry an *unloaded* weapon (otherwise known as a paper weight) that supposedly can be loaded quickly and used in self-defense if necessary. Try telling that to the mugger next time: “Hold on; I’ve got to load my gun first.”

The ruling is more laughable still because, as the Associ-

ated Press reports, “Meanwhile, the California state Assembly approved a bill Monday by Assemblyman Anthony Portantino, D-La Canada Flintridge, which would ban openly carrying unloaded handguns in public. Portantino introduced the measure after some gun rights activists carried unloaded weapons in public as a political statement.”

Oh, well, never mind then.

Mississippi Rising

With the mighty Mississippi River cresting after powering through communities and threatening livelihoods and commerce, the water-weary residents of the Deep South now face the long road to recovery. This past week, The Army Corps of Engineers opened floodgates in the Morganza Spillway north of Baton Rouge -- a move that alleviated the water flow into New Orleans and Baton Rouge while sending more water spilling into the Atchafalaya River Basin, home to approximately 25,000 people. The cleanup effort will far outlast the flood’s front-page shelf life, and the residents of the South now join countless others around the globe recovering from natural disasters. These floods are only the latest such calamity. Just last month, tornadoes ripped through the South, killing more than 300 people and causing billions of dollars of damage. In March, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake hit Japan, triggering a tsunami and leaving thousands dead. Last year’s earthquake in Haiti killed more than 220,000. And the list goes on.

The Wall Street Journal notes, “The damage done by the many, recent natural catastrophes -- earthquakes, tornadoes, floods -- argues for assessing the exposures of vulnerable population centers.” Indeed, this argument has merit. While it’s impossible to predict where every disaster will hit, governments will nevertheless spend billions trying. Meanwhile, others will say the disasters signal the end of the world is near. Given government’s track record of success, the latter group probably has the better chance of being right.

Village Academic Curriculum: Green Ribbon Schools’

One thing we have learned in the past two years is that the Obama administration will stop at nothing to get what it wants, whether the American people like it or not. In the face of its failure to pass cap-n-tax, the administration plans to push its eco-fascist policies onto the schools to ensure that future generations might be more willing to drink the Kool-Aid.

The administration recently unveiled its plans for a

“Green Ribbon Schools” program, which will encourage schools to create “healthy and sustainable learning environments” and teach “environmental literacy.” These terms, of course, are nothing but leftist buzz words, and the program is a quick and dirty way to indoctrinate our children with the eco-religionist’s dogma: most notably, that humans -- by virtue of their very existence -- are responsible for global climate change and the general defilement of Mother Earth.

The program, said EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, “will help kids connect what they’re learning in science class with the world around them, allowing them to envision solutions to tomorrow’s challenges while living healthier lives today.” Despite the inconvenient truth that climate change “science” has been shown to be as full of holes as a piece of Swiss cheese, schoolchildren will be fed this bunk and likely grow up to vote for these policies. Jackson even used the Obama slogan “win the future” when touting the program’s alleged benefit to our children and our world.

The program’s 50 winners will be announced on Earth Day 2012. The criteria for the contest -- as well as the prize -- remain a mystery, but they will be developed jointly by the U.S. Department of Education, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Council for Environmental Quality. Given these players, one can only imagine the curriculum. Needless to say, we shouldn’t be surprised if a bunch of first-graders protest the use of air conditioning or refuse to get on the gas-guzzling school bus.

There is, however, one piece of good news here, and that is the fact that parents have been put on notice. All too often, we have no idea what’s being drummed into our kids’ heads at school, but at least in this instance, parents will have a chance to mitigate the damage.

And Last...

“The Bible guarantees the end of the world will begin with Judgment Day May 21, 2011.” So says an ad in Reader’s Digest placed by Harold Camping, the 89-year-old leader of Family Radio Worldwide. This isn’t the first time he’s made such a foolhardy prediction, either. He first predicted that he and his followers would be raptured to heaven on Sept. 6, 1994. But *this* time, he means it. According to his latest mathematical formula of biblical prophecy interpretation, “Beyond the shadow of a doubt, May 21 will be the date of the rapture and the day of judgment.” Color us skeptical, but all the same, we hope our readers will understand if we miss our deadline on Monday.

In related news, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is warning of a zombie apocalypse. It's all in good fun to help people "prepare for a *real* emergency," but if Camping and his brain-dead legions are still here on May 22, CDC may be on to something.

Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus et Fidelis! *The Patriot Post*
Editorial Team

Veritas vos Liberabit -- Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus, et Fidelis! Mark Alexander, Publisher, for *The Patriot Post's* editors and staff. Read online at <http://patriotpost.us>

(Please pray for our Armed Forces standing in harm's way around the world, and for their families -- especially families of those fallen Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, who granted their lives in defense of American liberty.)