



UN GUN TREATY ON HOLD, BUT DEMOCRATS PERSIST

"Guard with jealous attention the public liberty. Suspect every one who approaches that jewel. Unfortunately, nothing will preserve it but downright force. Whenever you give up that force, you are inevitably ruined." --Patrick Henry

Throughout July, the United Nations worked to hammer out the details of its [Arms Trade Treaty \(ATT\)](#). We and many other liberty-loving organizations oppose the document because it threatens the Second Amendment rights of American citizens. It's



cloaked in the feel-good language of preventing illicit arms trade, but its solution is, essentially, to register all guns with the UN. The good news is that the UN failed to adopt the treaty. The bad news is that's not the end of it.

Action was indefinitely suspended after the United States and a few other countries asked for more time to consider it. However, when the UN General Assembly reconvenes in September, it could renew a negotiation schedule for the treaty, or it could declare it open for signature. The UK, France, Germany and 87 other nations argue that the treaty is ready, saying the "compromises" reached had "overwhelming support of the international community," and they all but blamed Barack Obama and the U.S. for its failure.

Suzanne Nossel, executive director of Amnesty International USA, blasted the White House, saying, "This was stunning cowardice by the Obama

administration, which at the last minute did an about-face and scuttled progress toward a global arms treaty, just as it reached the finish line." The truth is, as Obama told then-Russian President Dmitri Medvedev earlier this year on missile defense, the president hopes to have more "flexibility" after his re-election.

If Obama signed the treaty now, it would fail in the Senate because 51 senators already signed [a letter](#) opposing ratification. Democrats are extremely unlikely to add to their Senate majority in November - in fact, they're more likely to *lose* it. So what's Obama's end-game?

Simple: He's [reset his sights](#) on the Second Amendment. The groundwork for his desired assault was laid in Operation Fast and Furious, a now well-known charade concocted to bolster the false claim that American weapons were the cause of Mexican drug-gang violence and, therefore, needed to be more tightly regulated.

Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA), chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA), ranking member of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, released their [first of three reports](#) on Fast and Furious this week. The report implicated three Justice Department officials and five ATF agents. William Hoover, No. 2 at ATF, is no longer employed there. Two more final reports will highlight "the devastating failure of supervision and leadership" at the Obama Justice Department, as well as an "unprecedented obstruction of the [congressional] investigation by the highest levels of the Justice Department, including the attorney general himself."

Meanwhile, Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) used the Aurora, Colorado, shooting as an excuse to introduce legislation that would effectively outlaw the online

purchase of ammunition. The Stop Online Ammunition Sales Act would live up to its name by requiring that ammo buyers who aren't dealers must present photo ID at the time of purchase. Several Democrat senators likewise attached an amendment to an unrelated bill banning magazines with a capacity of more than 10 rounds.

Make no mistake, the Left will take every opportunity, employing any and every excuse, to take away our Second Amendment rights. Remember *that* when you go to the polls in November.

Government and Politics

News From the Swamp: Democrats Aim to Raise Taxes

Senate and House leaders reached a deal this week to avert a government shutdown before the November elections. The agreement provides for a six-month continuing resolution that will fund the federal government through March 2013. Democrats in both chambers largely accepted the \$1.047 trillion spending plan, but some House Republicans were disappointed with the deal. They had hoped to wait until the end of the year to gain leverage in the debate over expiring tax cuts. The Republican Study Committee, which had until recently pushed for deeper spending cuts, went along with the continuing resolution, counting on the opportunity to renegotiate if the GOP wins the White House and the Senate on Nov. 6. Other members of Congress on both sides of the aisle openly lamented the good old days when Congress followed the regular appropriations process so that spending could be more closely scrutinized without the needless drama of shutdown threats and partisan stalemates.

Congressional leaders patted themselves on the back for forging the spending deal, but the battle over impending tax increases continues. This week, the Senate passed a Democrat plan to raise taxes on all families earning over \$250,000 a year. The proposal, which passed 51-48, keeps in place the current tax rates for earners under that threshold, but would raise taxes on close to one million small business owners -- and result in higher unemployment. Senate

Republicans put a plan on the floor to hold all taxes at the current rates, but it was defeated 45-54. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) agreed to Democrat demands to hold simple majority votes on both proposals rather than attempting a filibuster, saying, "By setting these votes at a 50-vote threshold, nobody on the other side can hide behind a procedural vote while letting their views on the actual bill itself be a mystery."

The Senate Finance Committee was also at work this week on a deal to provide yet another short term fix to the Alternative Minimum Tax, which will expand to hit tens of thousands of additional taxpayers if the current patch is allowed to expire on Dec. 31. They are also considering extensions to close to 50 business and individual tax breaks that will otherwise go away at the end of the year.

The House likewise voted on GOP and Democrat tax proposals this week. The GOP plan, which is virtually identical to the Senate version, passed mostly along party lines, 256-171, with the help of 19 Democrats. The Democrats' bill, which mirrors the Senate plan, failed 170-257.

From the 'Non Compos Mentis' File

"They have tried to sell us this trickle-down tax cut fairy dust before." --Barack Obama



Hope 'n' Change: Religious Freedom Officially Takes a Hit

Thanks to ObamaCare, as of Aug. 1, 2012, employers must now amend employee health insurance plans upon renewal to include abortion services, contraception and sterilization services or face a steep potential fine of \$100 per employee per day. The rules disregard religious beliefs or individual conscience despite Democrats' prior characterization of the procedures as generally voluntary.

But there is hope that the judiciary will recognize constitutional limits on ObamaCare. Last Friday, federal District Court Judge John L. Kane (appointed by Jimmy Carter) granted a preliminary injunction barring the Department of Health and Human Services from forcing Hercules Industries, a family-owned manufacturer of air-conditioning products, to provide coverage for the objectionable services.

Without the injunction, had Hercules refused to comply, it would have been fined for each of its 265 employees for a total of nearly \$10 million a year. Were Hercules to simply drop its health plan to avoid forced violation of its owner's beliefs, thereby pushing its employees into a government-run exchange, Hercules' fine of approximately \$2,000 per employee would run about \$530,000 a year -- a \$9.5 million "savings" to the company.

Ironically, Aug. 1 also saw the release of the State Department's [International Religious Freedom Report for 2011](#). In the *first paragraph*, the Obama administration laments that "too many people live under governments that abuse or restrict freedom of religion." The shamelessness of such a statement in light of the administration's own actions is stunning.

Campaign Trail: DNC Hype

The Democratic National Convention is still a month away, but three bits of advertising hit the news this week. Bill Clinton, the *first* black president, will officially nominate Barack Obama for a second term. "There is no better validator for the Obama middle-class economic policies than President Clinton," cooed Democrat strategist and Clintonista Paul

Begala. "He can make the case for President Obama in a powerful, persuasive fashion." Actually, the former two-term president could very well overshadow his successor.

Democrat Massachusetts Senate candidate Elizabeth "1/32 Cherokee" Warren will speak immediately before Clinton at the convention, notable because Warren preceded Obama's "you didn't build that" sentiment of Leftist governance: "There is nobody in this country who got rich on his own. Nobody," she [said last year](#).

This week saw her unfavorably compare the U.S. with China over -- you guessed it -- infrastructure. "We've got bridges and roads in need of repair and thousands of people in need of work. Why aren't we rebuilding America?" asks Warren. "Our competitors are putting people to work, building a future. China invests 9 percent of its GDP in infrastructure. America? We're at just 2.4 percent. We can do better." For the U.S. to spend 9 percent of GDP on infrastructure would cost another \$1 trillion a year, almost a third of the already bloated federal budget. Building infrastructure might be easier if we cut entitlements.

Finally, Democrats are adding support for same-sex marriage to their party platform. Ironically, the platform will be adopted in North Carolina, which earlier this year overwhelmingly passed a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman. The people of North Carolina may have spoken, but the Democrats certainly aren't listening to them.

This Week's 'Alpha Jackass' Award

"So the word's out that [Mitt Romney] hasn't paid any taxes for 10 years. Let him prove that he has paid taxes, because he hasn't." --Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) still harping on Romney to release more tax returns by making unsubstantiated allegations against the GOP presidential nominee

Responding to questions about his allegations, Reid, who has never released his own tax returns, had this to say: "I am not basing this on some figment of my

imagination. I have had a number of people tell me that." But he refused to elaborate on those sources, saying, "[T]hat's the best you're going to get from me," and adding, "I don't think the burden should be on me. The burden should be on him. He's the one I've alleged has not paid any taxes."

In related news, we've heard that Harry Reid moonlights as an Elvis impersonator, and, in Reid's world, the burden is on him to prove otherwise.

Texas Senate Race Goes to Tea Party

Ted Cruz, the Tea Party-endorsed Senate candidate, handily won the Texas Republican primary runoff this week, beating Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst. Dewhurst beat Cruz by 11 points in the May 29 primary, but he didn't reach the required 50 percent to clinch the nomination, despite support from Gov. Rick Perry and much of the Texas GOP establishment. The two candidates engaged in a fierce campaign in the weeks leading up to the runoff, but neither anticipated the rush of Tea Party support that flowed Cruz's way as the runoff approached.

Cruz's campaign style may have upset traditional Republicans, but grassroots supporters understood him. Voter appeared to believe that Cruz would be a welcome reformer in the U.S. Senate. He has a proven track record as a sincere conservative thinker who is capable of putting principle before party, a quality rarely seen in Washington, and his clerkship under former Chief Justice William Rehnquist will come in handy when it comes time to vet future Supreme Court nominees. Cruz is figured to win the Senate seat vacated by retiring Kay Bailey Hutchison in the November general election, but he may want to take some time between now and Nov. 6 to ensure that, like Richard Mourdock's defeat of Sen. Dick Lugar in Indiana, the bruising battle against Dewhurst doesn't leave any lasting scars within the Texas GOP.

Economy

Obamanomics Continue to Decimate the Economy

Last week, we found out that [GDP slowed to just 1.5 percent growth](#). This morning, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that, while the economy did add

163,000 new jobs, the headline unemployment rate rose a tenth of a point to 8.3 percent. The numbers mark the 42nd consecutive month of headline unemployment remaining above 8 percent. U-6 unemployment, which measures those who have stopped looking for work or are underemployed, is just under 15 percent. Some 12.8 million Americans are out of work -- 5.2 million for at least six months. Just wait until Obama and Co. raise taxes on the job creators.

Not to worry. As Obama told us last week, "[W]e've tried our plan, and it worked."



Around the Nation: Upcoming Medical Device Tax Kills Jobs, Exhibit A

Washington bean counters needed to devise a way to "pay" for ObamaCare to make it appear not overly expensive. One nifty move they made was to adopt an excise tax of 2.3 percent of sales on medical devices beginning in 2013 -- a tax they calculated would raise nearly \$3 billion per year. Yet the green-eyeshade crowd may have forgotten a basic fact: Money doesn't grow on trees, and reaction from medical device makers -- many of which are the small businesses Obama doesn't believe the owners built -- has been to furlough employees or cancel future expansion plans.

Indiana-based Cook Medical won't be opening five new manufacturing plants around the Midwest because the company faces between \$20 million and \$30 million in new excise taxes. Instead, overseas

workers will get the new jobs. A year ago Cook Medical reopened a shuttered Canton, Illinois, manufacturing facility and re-created 300 jobs in that community, but now other possible sites have been eliminated. While the House has voted to repeal the tax, the Democrat-led Senate has taken no action. Naturally.

Income Redistribution: \$460 Million in Food Stamps for Ineligible Recipients

An entirely unsurprising Government Accountability Office (GAO) study revealed that 473,000 households received food stamp benefits they were ineligible for because they were already on other government assistance. Clearly, our nation's culture of dependency is growing out of control. These households were awarded the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits because several states assumed that a family eligible for one assistance program made them eligible for others, and the states just skipped basic steps like checking assets or whether recipients' income from other programs made them ineligible for SNAP.

An interesting sidebar to the GAO study was this encouragement for staying on the dole: "[R]ules for reporting changes in household circumstances now differ by household income level and may leave higher income households without reporting requirements for several months." In other words, they can still get while the getting is good, and states have no incentive to check their eligibility. While the USDA is in agreement with the GAO findings, the question is how quickly the wheels of bureaucracy will turn to revamp the program and save taxpayers nearly a half-billion dollars a year. Don't hope for that change with this administration.

From the Left: Out of Touch

While the Obama administration works overtime to spread the poverty as joblessness persists and the anemic "recovery" stumbles on, Michelle Obama did her part to boost economic growth with a recent purchase. The first lady attended an Olympics reception at Buckingham Palace for heads of state, and she sported a jacket that cost a whopping \$6,800,

easily more than the average American earns in a month.

The Leftmedia was outraged when Ann Romney wore a \$990 T-shirt earlier this year. The Washington Post called her "tone-deaf," but Michelle? Well, the Post [lauded her choice](#) because she "has been criticized for not dressing up enough for Queen Elizabeth II, so she stepped up her game." Good to see them hold her to a high standard.

Regulatory Commissars: Southern End of Keystone XL Might Be a Go

TransCanada Corporation, the company that has waited months for the federal government to approve environmental permits to build the Keystone XL pipeline, may have finally won a small part of their battle. The company announced last week that they received the last of three necessary permits from the Army Corps of Engineers at Fort Worth, Texas. Yet there are still federal permits from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to pursue, and the ever-present threat of legal action from environmentalist groups who have stopped at nothing to thwart this multi-billion dollar project at every turn (including the latest effort to [save the American burying beetle](#)), with the assistance of the Obama administration. In short, it's no done deal yet.

The section of pipeline in question would extend the current Keystone system southward to the Gulf of Mexico, working from its present terminus in Cushing, Oklahoma, to refineries near the Texas cities of Port Arthur and Houston. The 485-mile project is expected to cost \$2.3 billion and put 4,000 people to work on its construction. Canada will sell the oil whether or not the pipeline is built -- either to us or to China.

USPS Defaults, Congress Yawns

This week the U.S. Postal Service announced that it would not make a current \$5.5 billion payment to its retirement fund nor would it make the \$5.6 billion required in September. If a private employer made a similar announcement, you can bet that the entire alphabet soup of federal agencies would wrestle

control of the company from its management and ownership immediately. But the rules of true private enterprise simply don't apply to wasteful government-sponsored enterprises (GSE) such as the Postal Service, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

The USPS is guilty of mismanagement in its failure to respond to changing market conditions. Its revenue has steadily declined over the last 20 years due to the growing popularity of other forms of communication delivery. All blame can't be laid at the feet of management, however. In 1970, Congress created the USPS to replace the politically oriented Post Office Department. Congress mandated that the USPS be self-sustaining, receive no public funding but be subject to congressional oversight. To raise rates, for example, the USPS must obtain congressional approval. A year ago, the USPS proposed closing 4,300 rural post offices, but the resulting outcry prompted Congress to flex its muscle. Ultimately, the plan was modified to restrict the hours of 13,000 locations. Other proposed reforms such as ending Saturday delivery met a similar response from Congress.

The truly prescient citizen may see a parallel in the travails of the USPS, for this is what we'll see in health care under government management. The provider cannot adjust its revenue points and is proscribed from curtailing ineffective services while politicians shout about how it's available to all citizens with no consideration as to how services will be delivered. What could possibly go wrong?

Security

Department of Military Readiness: Sequestration Politics

Congress is currently holding hearings on how or whether to implement roughly \$500 billion in cuts to the defense budget, known as sequestration, mandated by last year's debt ceiling deal. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta warned that such cuts would be "disastrous." Indeed, [according to The Heritage Foundation](#), the cuts mean the military will be left with "the smallest Air Force in its history, the smallest Navy since before World War I, and a Marine Corps

that will be unable to fulfill its requirement of operating two Marine Expeditionary Brigades."

Given the economic affect the cuts will have on defense contractors, the White House signaled to those companies that it would be fantastic if they waited until *after* the election to hand out pink slips, or even warn about possible layoffs. The Labor Department said that, because "efforts are being made to avoid sequestration," defense contractors could postpone layoffs -- until a more politically convenient time, anyway.

Unintentionally highlighting budget cuts, Barack Obama's official campaign aircraft, Air Force One, landed at the Mansfield Lahm Regional Airport in Ohio this week. Mansfield stands to lose almost 1,000 jobs if additional cuts are made to the C-27J program -- a program Obama specifically cited as "unnecessary." Smooth move.

Warfront With Jihadistan: Afghanistan Unready

When a military strategy turns from defeating an enemy to building a nation, results are often mixed. Nowhere is this better exemplified than in the current situation in Afghanistan. After quickly routing al-Qa'ida and their Taliban enablers in Afghanistan, the U.S. then attempted with numerous advisers and billions of dollars to drag the backward nation out of the 7th century. But now, with U.S. combat forces expected to be withdrawn from Afghanistan by the end of 2014, the results are underwhelming.

According to a report from the inspector general for Afghan reconstruction, a U.S. plan that spent hundreds of millions of dollars on construction projects, sold as a vital tool in the fight against the Taliban, is so far behind schedule that it will yield few, if any, benefits before U.S. forces leave. The report also concludes that the Afghan government will have neither the money nor the skills needed to maintain the projects, creating an "expectations gap" among the Afghan people that could threaten stability and that "may be counterproductive." Ironically, the news of this underwhelming infrastructure initiative

comes after Obama's infamous "you didn't build that" remark.

Meanwhile, the Department of Defense reports that less than 10 percent of the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF), composed of both army and police units, is able to operate at the highest-rated capability level, known as "independent with advisers." A unit rated at that level is supposed to be "capable of executing its mission and can call for coalition forces when necessary." From 2002 to 2011, the U.S. spent over \$40 billion to build and equip the ANSF, with an additional \$11 billion appropriated for this year. Yet the gains are meager, at best. Whether these investments can truly help prevent Afghanistan from falling back under the control of fanatical, anti-West jihadis is a question that remains unanswered.

Drone Use on Civilian Upheld in Court

"A North Dakota court has preliminarily upheld the first-ever use of an unmanned drone to assist in the arrest of an American citizen," [reports U.S. News](#). District Judge Joel Medd denied a request to dismiss charges against a man arrested after a 16-hour standoff with police at his North Dakota ranch. The defendant's lawyer challenged the "warrantless use of unmanned military-like surveillance aircraft" in the case, but Judge Medd decided that "there was no improper use" of the aircraft, and that the drone "had no bearing" on the charges brought.

Coast Guard Birthday

On Aug. 4, 1790, the U.S. Coast Guard was created by Congress, which authorized Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton to build a small fleet of 10 cutters to protect the coast. The Coast Guard continues to serve a critical role under the Department of Homeland Security, and we at *The Patriot Post* offer our thanks for a job well done. Happy Birthday and Semper Paratus! Please visit the [Patriot Post Shop](#) for a great selection of items bearing the Coast Guard's insignia.

Culture

Village Academic Curriculum: Unions Against Education

Find a group of kids who don't want to learn and you have an anomaly. Find a group of teachers who don't want kids to learn and you have a union. The misnomered Louisiana Association of Educators, one of the state's major teachers unions, recently threatened approximately 100 private and parochial schools with lawsuits should the schools participate in the state's newly created voucher program. The program, signed into law in April by Republican Governor Bobby Jindal, provides public funds for low-income families to send their children to private or parochial schools. [The Wall Street Journal reports](#), "Demand for vouchers has been overwhelming: There were 10,300 applications for 5,600 slots."

However, instead of celebrating the opportunity for students to receive a quality education in a state where 44 percent of government schools earned a "D" or "F" by state standards, the union called in its lawyers, who told the schools that unless they refuse to accept voucher students, "we will have no alternative other than to institute litigation." This is typical of teachers unions that care more about maintaining power than about educating kids. As the [Heritage Foundation notes](#), these latest shenanigans only prove true the words of the late free-market economist Milton Friedman, who would have turned 100 this past week: "There is no respect in which inhabitants of a low-income neighborhood are so disadvantaged as in the kind of schooling they can get for their children." Unfortunately, instead of working to rectify the problem, so-called "educators" in Louisiana are doing everything they can to perpetuate it.

Climate Change This Week: Warming Data Doused With Cold Water

In a [revealing new study](#) by well-known climate change skeptic and meteorologist Anthony Watts comes evidence that data compiled by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is significantly flawed. The discussion paper was co-authored by climate scientist Dr. John R. Christy of the University of Alabama at Huntsville, Toronto

mathematician Stephen McIntyre and New York's Evan Jones. The group used new temperature collection standards issued by the World Meteorological Organization in 2010, which "more accurately characterizes the quality of the location in terms of monitoring long-term spatially representative surface temperature trends."

After five years, the group found that the "reported 1979-2008 U.S. temperature trends are spuriously doubled, with 92% of that over-estimation resulting from erroneous NOAA adjustments of well-sited stations upward." In other words, half of the "global warming" trend recorded in the U.S. was artificial -- thanks to "erroneous" adjustments perpetrated by NOAA.

This study strikes a major blow to recent "skeptical" convert Dr. Richard A. Muller, physics professor at the University of California at Berkeley, who [wrote for the New York Times](#) that his study of the Berkeley Earth Surface Temperature project proved that "[h]umans are almost entirely the cause" of global warming. Well, entirely the cause of perpetuating bad data, at least. All ecofascists are "proving" is that man-made global warming is caused by their own hot air. Reality is much cooler.

Judicial Benchmarks Meets Faith and Family

On Monday, U.S. District Judge James Teilborg ruled that Arizona's ban on most abortions beginning at 20 weeks of pregnancy is constitutional. On Wednesday, a three-judge panel of the far-left Ninth Circuit Court overruled him and temporarily prohibited Arizona from enforcing the law. Arizona, along with many other states, ban abortions at viability, generally considered to be 24 weeks. However, new studies on fetal pain have led to efforts in several states to enact bans as early as 20 weeks gestation, including Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Nebraska and Oklahoma. The Ninth Circuit's ruling also affects Idaho's law.

Meanwhile, U.S. District Judge Vanessa Bryant ruled in Connecticut that the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act violates the Fifth Amendment. The Obama administration chose not to defend the law any longer, leaving the task to Congress, and homosexual activists have launched numerous lawsuits in recent months.

It's Not Just About Chick-fil-A

Join us in supporting the executives, franchise owners and more than 61,000 employees of Chick-fil-A for their Christian business practices, as well as their stated support for traditional American family values. The restaurant chain reported a "record-setting day" on Wednesday, as customers nationwide lined up at their local franchises, but they face a nationwide protest by homosexual activists today. So [sign the letter](#) of support today!

And Last...

Many folks have Olympic fever these days. After all, American swimmer Michael Phelps just secured his record-extending 20th medal Thursday, and as of this morning the U.S. leads the overall medal count with 37, including 18 gold. Our friends Across the Pond, the British, are certainly enjoying hosting the events -- some perhaps a little too much. London Mayor Boris Johnson took particular offense at Mitt Romney's suggestion that the city might experience problems during the Olympics. Little did Johnson know how prescient Romney would prove to be. Johnson opted for a grand entrance to Victoria Park by flying down a zip line while wearing a black suit and a hard hat and waving two Union Jacks. The mayor is no James Bond, however, and he got stuck thanks to a "lack of momentum." Hanging helplessly, he pleaded for a rope to pull himself down. There's just something about a politician left hanging while pleading with citizens for a rope that makes for an Olympic Gold moment.

Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus et Fidelis!

Nate Jackson for *The Patriot Post* Editorial Team