



### THE TRUTH ABOUT GOVERNMENT AMMO PURCHASES

"There is but one straight course, and that is to seek truth and pursue it steadily." -- George Washington

The last few months have seen troubling news of massive government purchases of ammunition. Agencies from the Social Security Administration to the Department of Agriculture to the



Department of Homeland Security have purchased millions of rounds. But is the whole thing more hype than substance?

Ever since Barack Obama was first elected in 2008, he has been selling guns and ammunition at a faster clip than any gun salesman could hope for. And since his re-election, citizens have been faced with severe shortages of both. This can only be exacerbated by large government purchases. The Social Security Administration (SSA), for example, purchased 174,000 rounds and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) bought 320,000 rounds. More understandable in purpose but also perhaps more staggering in scale, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) put in a request for 450 *million* rounds, while the FBI intends to purchase 100 million.

The headlines are ominous, but some of the hype can be put in perspective by doing a little math. National Review's [Charles C. W. Cooke does just that](#). The SSA's request for 174,000 rounds amounts to just 590 rounds for each of its 295 inspector general agents "who investigate Social Security fraud and other crimes." Some of us might go through 590 rounds in

an afternoon at the range. As for the USDA, 320,000 is enough to provide the same number of rounds for 542 agents, and, through the Forest Service, those agents have an area the size of Pakistan to cover.

When it comes to the bigger orders, Cooke writes, "The FBI and DHS's apparently vast orders are deceptively presented by the conspiracy theorists. It is true that in 2011, the FBI ordered up to 100 million bullets for its 13,913 special agents (which works out to 7,187 per agent). And, yes, the Department of Homeland Security -- a composite department that oversees USCIS, Customs and Border Protection, FEMA, ICE, the TSA, the Coast Guard, the Secret Service, and the National Protection Directorate -- placed a request for up to 450 million rounds for its 65,000 armed personnel (which works out to 6,923 per agent). But in the real world, ammunition is not divided up and handed out on such a basis. What is bought is stockpiled and then allocated on the basis of need. The DHS's order is expected to last for at least five years, and it was placed up front primarily as a cost-saving measure." Indeed, DHS is not even bound to buy that much; they merely have a tab on which to order more rounds as needed.

That certainly doesn't mean there aren't questions or that we should simply shrug and look the other way. For starters, the Department of Education recently placed an order for "27 Remington Brand Model 870 police 12-gauge shotguns." This might lead any reasonable person to ask, as Cooke does, "Whether it is in possession of one bullet or 1 million bullets, should the federal Department of Education be armed in the first place? If so, why?" We would add, should there even *be* a Department of Education? But that's a topic for another day. The DoE has been known to [botch raids](#) when it was the wrong enforcement vehicle from the start.

The same questions could be asked of any number of bureaucracies. Does the Social Security Administration really need an armed enforcement division? We've known some unruly seniors in our day, but that seems to be overkill.

Then there's the information that's just plain false. Reports have been circulating that DHS has procured 2,717 Mine Resistant Armor Protected (MRAP) vehicles. The truth is, DHS has had retrofitted MRAPs since 2008, and now has [16 of them](#) for serving "high-risk warrants." The figure of 2,717 comes from a delivery to the Marine Corps, not DHS. None of that, however, takes away from the problem that these are more properly military vehicles for war zones, not law enforcement tools. The militarization of law enforcement is undeniably troublesome. Furthermore, DHS is the same bureaucracy that claims [right-wing extremists](#) pose a threat, and it's run by an administration that thinks that "weapons of war" shouldn't be on our streets. Unless they're the ones driving them, apparently.

There are certainly troubling trends here and very real threats to our Liberty, but we must be careful not to exaggerate. While readers know that we never minimize the outrageous growth of government beyond its constitutional bounds, it also doesn't seem to us that the government is, as some have put it, "stockpiling bullets in case of civil unrest." Questions about procurements and functions? Absolutely. Apocalypse? Not yet.

### **Government and Politics** **News From the Swamp: Government by Perpetual Crisis**

The House passed a continuing resolution this week by a vote of 267-151 to fund the federal government for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2013. The bill staves off a potential government shutdown on March 27 and it makes no attempts to reverse the sequestration cuts that [went into effect on March 1](#). It sets the spending level at \$982 billion, \$61 billion less than last year. The bill also allows the Pentagon a degree of flexibility in how its funds can be spent, in one instance cutting money from research and

development to increase operations and maintenance. It extends the federal employee pay freeze currently in effect, which runs counter to Barack Obama's executive order calling for a 0.5 percent hike.

The bill now goes to the Senate, where Democrats may attempt to change the funding scheme, but are reticent to reverse sequester cuts for fear of risking a government shutdown.

The CR clears the decks for the next major budget fight, yet again increasing the debt ceiling. The House and Senate GOP leadership remains steadfast in their opposition to more tax hikes with House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) saying, "The president got \$650 billion of higher taxes on the American people on January the 1st. How much more does he want? When is the president going to address the spending side of this?" We all -- including Boehner -- know the answer to that question already.

Barack Obama has begun a new outreach effort, however, taking several Republican senators to dinner Wednesday to work toward fiscal deals, including a not-too-late sequester replacement. No surprise, it includes [\$680 billion in tax increases | <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323494504578340181878017820.html>]. Of course, he needed a 20-car motorcade to drive six blocks to dinner, so the sequester didn't hurt all *that* much.

### **Sequester Politics**

In [Obama's 'Republican Sequester' 2014 Endgame](#), Mark Alexander wrote, "Republicans and pundits should hit all the sequester softballs Obama is throwing their way, out of the park!"

"For example, Obama's civilian budgeteers at DoD have cancelled all high profile appearances of military precision flying teams at air show events for the remainder of 2013. Fact is, those events are key recruiting tools for the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corp, and every hour of flight is a training hour for the pilots.

"In response, Republicans should very publicly demand that Obama cancel all political and recreational junkets on Air Force One, including his upcoming Martha's Vineyard golfing vacation. Each of these vacations and political junkets cost millions of dollars -- a huge and unnecessary expense. Additionally they should demand that all senior administration officials use commercial transportation for official business rather than the large expensive fleet Boeing executive jets. All savings should be reallocated to offset sequester cuts to vital national security operations.

"Air Force One is Obama's biggest political platform, and no news organizations or commentators have associated the military cuts with the wasteful use of AF1."



### From the 'Non Compos Mentis' File

Members of the Congressional Black Caucus are doing what they usually do -- seeking out imaginary racism in every crack and crevice. Lo and behold, they've found racism lurking in the [Republican Sequester](#).

"Sequestration will impact everyone," said Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA), "but it will have a particularly harmful effect on communities of color who were hit first and worst by the great recession, and have yet to significantly feel the effects of the recovery. Federal budget cuts under sequestration would quickly mean cuts to federal, state and local public-sector jobs,

which disproportionately employ women and African-Americans."

Del. Donna Christensen (D-Virgin Islands) chimed in, saying, "African-Americans are more likely to work in the public sector, where the jobs are going to be cut. We already have the highest unemployment, and will be severely hurt by the reduction in unemployment benefits."

Look no further than the failed socialist policies of Barack Obama and his leftist congressional brethren. When Obama took office in 2009, the unemployment rate for blacks was 12.7 percent. It's now hovering around 14 percent. As for the black teen jobless rate, it's near *40 percent*. If black Americans would re-examine their 9:1 voting preference for Democrats, Republicans might actually be able to alleviate this soul-crushing joblessness.

### Gun Grabbers on the Move

Four pieces of civilian disarmament legislation made it to the Senate Judiciary Committee Thursday. While Sen. Dianne Feinstein's (D-CA) "assault weapons" ban was included in the final package, it faces tough odds of getting anywhere in Congress. Democrats instead chose a piecemeal approach, the reasons being twofold: It increases the likelihood that *something* gets passed, and if a major overhaul fails, Republicans will face the backlash when Democrats cry wolf.

One of the bills being considered is a bipartisan proposal "that would for the first time create specific federal prohibitions on gun trafficking and the straw purchasing of firearms," according to the Associated Press. Recall that these were the same tactics used by the ATF in the infamously (and tragically) botched Fast and Furious sting operation. We're glad to see Congress agrees that the feds shouldn't be trafficking firearms to Mexico.

In related news, "States with the most gun control laws have the fewest gun-related deaths," trumpeted the Associated Press this week, citing a [study](#) by Dr. Eric Flegler of Boston and published in JAMA Internal Medicine. However, Flegler is an anti-gun



activist and used data from the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence, one of the most anti-gun organizations in the country. Also, though he considered all 50 states, he excluded the District of Columbia. The Brady Center did their own calculations based on findings in a dozen states and came to the conclusion that -- surprise -- we need more gun control. The inconvenient truth is that the "gun-related deaths" prevented by tougher gun laws are suicides, not homicides. In fact, the homicide rate was slightly *higher* in the 10 states with the most regulation. DC's rate is nearly four times that of the rest of the country.

The Brady Center wasn't the only leftist group promoted by the press either. USA Today placed a piece on an anti-gun study by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) front-and-center of Tuesday's edition. PIRE's study purports to show that gun violence cost \$12 billion annually. Not surprisingly, financial help is given to the institute through a company tied to none other than far-left billionaire investor George Soros.

**The New Cabinet: Even Further Left Than Before**  
Barack Obama announced three new cabinet nominees this week, and each of them is seeking to aid in the president's goal of "fundamentally transforming the United States of America." Gina McCarthy is on tap to run the EPA, and she's fully prepared to continue pushing the president's global warming agenda. McCarthy, currently head of the EPA's air and radiation division, has been behind the agency's draconian carbon emissions policies, which are responsible for bringing the coal industry to its knees. Her fingerprints are on the moratorium on new coal-fired power plants and forcing the shutdown of older plants. When McCarthy rises to the top spot, she will likely go in for the kill, forcing utilities to continue shutting down coal plants in turn for receiving so-called credits that could be sold to other coal plant operators so they can stay in business a little longer. All this amounts to an end run around Congress to install the "cap and tax" plan that died during Obama's first term.

The war on the energy industry will continue on a second front with Obama's nominee for energy secretary, MIT physicist Ernest Moniz. Moniz participated in writing a 2010 report for the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, calling for \$16 billion in annual taxpayer funding for renewable energy. It was this mentality that gave us Solyndra and other untested, unreliable and unsatisfactory renewable boondoggles during Obama's first term. Moniz is also a proponent of "energy demand management," a euphemism for the government's arbitrarily setting energy rates to drive customers toward particular energy suppliers and away from "undesirable" sources. And although Moniz has demonstrated support for natural gas in the past, he has recently come around to the radical environmental view on the evils of fracking. Those fears are largely unfounded, of course, but that won't stop the new energy secretary from standing in the way of smart energy policy.

Sylvia Mathews Burwell, the president's nominee to head the Office of Management and Budget, is currently the deputy at OMB. Burwell served in the Treasury Department and the White House budget office during the Clinton administration. She also has experience running philanthropic efforts for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Walmart Foundation. This hefty resumé may not mean much in the long run though. We're not sure why Obama has need of a budget director when he has no budget to direct.

### **Economy Jobs Numbers Are (Mostly) Positive**

News of the sequester reached the private sector in February, which embraced the paltry reduction of government growth by creating 236,000 new jobs. The headline unemployment rate fell for the first time to a pre-Obama level of 7.7 percent. Real unemployment, including those who have given up looking for work, also edged lower to 14.3 percent. Other economic news is good as well -- the Dow closed at nominal record highs for three straight days this week, surpassing 14,300 and beating records set in 2007. "On the other hand," as [The Wall Street](#)

[Journal points out](#), "the Dow would need to rise another 8% or so to reach its previous high in inflation-adjusted terms."

All is not well in the jobs market, either. Another 296,000 Americans left the labor force entirely in February, bringing the participation rate to a 32-year low of 63.5 percent. And if March's numbers decline at all, look for Obama to blame the "Republican Sequester." Overall, the U.S. economy is remarkably resilient, pressing ahead despite four years of crushing economic policy, and now \$600 billion in tax hikes.



### Income Redistribution: A New Peak

While the argument over who caused the sequester continues to dominate the media, a scarcely noted sidebar is that the bean counters at the Congressional Budget Office are predicting 2013 will be a record year for federal revenue, finally surpassing the pre-recession record of \$2.6 trillion set in 2007. All told, in 2013 the federal government is expected to take in \$2.7 trillion for the first time. Of course, they will spend more than \$3.5 trillion in that same time frame, sequester included.

While federal revenues are finally returning to those before the 2008 financial crisis, there is a growing inequality in taxation -- a disparity that Barack Obama made all the worse by his tax increases on couples earning more than \$450,000 a year or single filers who eclipse the \$400,000 mark. An [Associated Press report](#) found that wealthy taxpayers are paying a share

of the tax burden rarely seen since 1979, the point when the AP chose to begin its research. As expected, those in the lowest quintile of income pay a negative tax burden; in other words, via the "Earned" Income Tax Credit, they're net *takers* from actual taxpayers.

Yet the fact the government is living large these days doesn't seem to dissuade the NeoComs in Washington from wanting to tax the rich even more as Obama's rhetoric and Senate Democrats' efforts to stop the sequester proved again. Socialists will always run out of other people's money, as Margaret Thatcher famously said, but Washington Democrats seem determined to quicken the pace.

### Regulatory Commissars: ObamaCare Exchange Regulations Finalized

While some states are still debating whether to succumb to the siren song of "free" federal money for Medicaid expansion, and while Republicans in the House are shirking their promise to defund ObamaCare, bureaucrats are behind the scenes writing the regulations that will dictate how insurance companies will operate in the brave new world of the so-called Affordable Care Act. Last week, in another trademark Friday afternoon news dump, the White House dropped some 700 pages of new regulations on an unsuspecting public. Three of the four rules dropped by HHS are final rules, while the fourth, concerning the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) slated to start in 2015, is a proposed rule, with comments being accepted for 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

Nancy Pelosi told us that we had to [pass the bill to find out what was in it](#). She was right -- the ACA delegated much of its authority to an unelected cadre of Beltway bureaucrats to write new mandates like these that will only take full effect once insurance exchanges become operational next year. These regulations will "help to ensure every American has access to high-quality, affordable health insurance," claims the Department of Health and Human Services. We may not have access to a doctor, and the insurance may not pay for certain procedures once we're deemed

unworthy of treatment -- but at least we'll have access to health insurance.

### **Around the Nation: State Department Weighs in on Keystone**

"We don't need this dirty oil." This preposterous statement was made by California Democrat Henry Waxman regarding the proposed Keystone XL pipeline. The 1,700-mile pipeline would bring oil into the U.S. from Canada, a friend and ally. If the U.S. rejects Keystone, the oil will go to China. Still, Waxman and others on the Left claim it will harm the environment. The State Department disagrees. Last Friday, it issued a 2,000-page report outlining the "minimal environmental impact" Keystone would have on fish, water, vegetation, soil and endangered species. State put out a similar report in 2011. Yet neither report received much comment from the Obama administration or coverage from the Leftmedia.

While the Obama administration would never make such an overt comment against Keystone, they have been no more supportive of the venture than Waxman. Obama has been dragging his heels for over three years, despite the fact that Keystone would bring between 700,000 and 830,000 barrels of oil to the U.S. each day as well as create 179,000 much-needed jobs. In the meantime, TransCanada and other equally perplexed Canadians wait for the green light. Eventually, if the delays persist, then Canada will move on to a more willing buyer, exactly as the administration is hoping. Since the Left is so opposed to fossil fuels, someone should get them to share the unicorn dust they use to heat *their* homes.

### **Security Drones and Filibusters**

The use of drones to take out terrorists overseas has become the hallmark of Barack Obama's war strategy, but the possible use of drones over U.S. soil may have reached the boiling point this week. During hearings on the subject, Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) asked Attorney General Eric "Fast and Furious" Holder directly: Is it a violation of due process to fire a missile at a guy on American soil if he's not engaged at the moment in

carrying out a terrorist attack? The question was prompted by a letter Holder issued Tuesday claiming that drone strikes are legal in the U.S., but that the administration has "no intention" of doing so. Cruz finally got Holder to shift from saying such drone use wouldn't be "appropriate," with all that word implies, to plainly saying that the federal government does not have constitutional authority to use lethal force against a U.S. citizen on U.S. soil unless that citizen poses an imminent threat.

The fight continued when, on Tuesday, the Senate Intelligence Committee voted 12-3 in favor of White House counterterrorism adviser John O. Brennan becoming the next CIA director. The vote came only after the Obama regime agreed to give Congress access to Justice Department memos that lay out Obama's legal reasoning for using drone strikes overseas to kill U.S. citizens accused of working with al-Qa'ida and other terrorists.

On Thursday, Brennan won confirmation from the full Senate, 63-34, despite concerns over his record and his support of the regime's drone policy. But that came only after Wednesday's impressive 13-hour filibuster by Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY), who was determined to force the administration to provide a written answer on drone strikes of American citizens. The filibuster drew eight other senators, including one Democrat, Oregon's Ron Wyden, onto the Senate floor. Paul wryly noted, "Barack Obama, in 2007, would be down here with me arguing against this [drone policy]. It amazes me and disappoints me how much he's changed."

Paul eventually got an official answer: "Does the president have the authority to use a weaponized drone to kill an American not engaged in combat on an American soil?" Holder wrote. "The answer to that question is no." Still, Sens. Paul and Cruz are working on a bill to spell it all out.

### **North Korean Saber Rattling**

On Thursday the UN Security Council unanimously approved new sanctions against North Korea, following Pyongyang's detonation of a nuclear

weapon in February. The sanctions will primarily target North Korea's financial dealings, including international money transfers and the supply of luxury goods for the regime. Still, it's doubtful that new sanctions will sway the minds of a regime that has systematically starved its own people for 60 years, kept its border with South Korea an armed tinderbox, sunk a South Korean warship and launched ballistic missiles over Japan. North Korea didn't help its own cause by threatening a nuclear attack against the United States just as the UNSC was settling in for the vote on sanctions. They have also now declared an end to the non-aggression pact with South Korea. China holds the trump card in any issue involving North Korea by virtue of their shared border, meaning only China can truly stop money and goods from entering or leaving. And even the Chinese appear to have run out of patience with the lunatics next door.

Elsewhere along the Axis of Evil, Secretary of State John Kerry demonstrated his deep mastery of the obvious on Tuesday when he acknowledged Iran has moved closer to achieving nuclear capability over the past year. Excuse us if we [don't act surprised](#). After the Europeans tried to reason with Iran from 2003-2005, and after the UNSC tried from 2005-2008, and after Barack Obama himself tried since taking office in 2009, suddenly he recognizes the threat and *really means to do something about it*. Joe Biden assured the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee on Monday that the president "is not bluffing" and "all options, including military force, are on the table." This claim might be more reassuring if given by a man known for something other than comic relief.

On a related note, two Iranian warships entered the Chinese port of Zhanjiang this week for a goodwill visit, a remarkable voyage of nearly 5,000 miles for a navy whose ships all predate the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Readers will recall the December visit by two Russian warships to Iran's main naval base at Bandar Abbas. This latest visit sends the same signal of friendship as that expressed by the Russian Navy. Considering Chinese and Russian veto power at the

UNSC, these goodwill visits don't bode well for the White House's attempt to sway Iran's behavior.

### **Hugo Chavez Is Dead**

Venezuelan socialist thug-dictator Hugo Chavez died Tuesday after a two-year bout with cancer, leaving a degree of political uncertainty in the South American nation. There is poetic justice in noting that Chavez died the same day as Joseph Stalin 60 years earlier. Vice President Nicolas Maduro, who accused the U.S. of poisoning Chavez with cancer, will now take the helm until elections are held within 30 days.

Chavez was a former tank commander who first tried to take power through a coup in 1992. After serving prison time for the attempt, he ran for election in 1998 and held power through political intimidation and punishment, as well as skillfully exploiting Venezuela's oil reserves and churning up anti-American passions by posing as David against Goliath. He was hardly the man of "democracy" that Useful Idiots of the Left [claim him to be](#), and Jimmy Carter had far nicer things to say of Chavez than he ever dreamed of saying when Ronald Reagan died in 2004. We'd link to Carter's fawning statement on his website but were alerted to malware on the page. How appropriate.

Chavez claimed to fight for the poor, and that endeared him to Hollywood leftists such as Sean Penn and Oliver Stone, and deluded Democrats such as former Rep. Joseph Kennedy. Yet as with all socialists who secure power, he used it primarily for his own gain. His family fortune is estimated to be about \$2 billion. Man of the people, indeed.

On a final note, Chavez once took the podium at the UN after George W. Bush and smugly declared, "The devil came here yesterday, and it smells of sulfur still." Yet Chavez, who claimed to be Christian, reportedly uttered the last words, "I don't want to die. Please don't let me die." Perhaps he knew he was, in fact, about to smell sulfur again.





### The Website Ahead Contains Malware!

Google Chrome has blocked access to  
www.cartercenter.org for now.

Even if you have visited this website safely in the past, visiting it now is very likely to infect your Mac with malware.

Malware is malicious software that causes things like identity theft, financial loss, and permanent file deletion. [Learn more](#)



Go back

Advanced

Warning -- don't go to Jimmy Carter's website!

### What Sequester?

The dreaded sequester has the federal government cutting everything from employee hours to White House tours. But some things are important enough that money for them *can* be found. The Obama administration awarded \$37 million in foreign aid to Pakistan this week, despite a disturbing anti-American trend in that nation. On Sunday, Secretary of State John Kerry announced that Egypt would be receiving another \$250 million in foreign aid, with that much again to follow in the near future. The world's largest Arab nation is now under the control of the Muslim Brotherhood, which at best is unsympathetic to U.S. interests in the region, if not (yet) outright hostile. It's not likely that our money will win us friends and influence terrorists.

In related news, 100,000 Christians have fled Egypt since the Brotherhood's takeover.

Speaking of Egypt, John Kerry and Michelle Obama were set to personally award the International Women of Courage Award to Samira Ibrahim of Egypt until it was discovered that she celebrated 9/11 and the death of Jews. The award has now been postponed.

### Culture

#### Village Academic Curriculum: Battling Insanity

On the "education" lunacy front, a 16-year old Florida high schooler was [suspended last week](#) due to an "incident" with a weapon. His involvement? He wrestled a loaded gun away from a would-be shooter aiming it at another student. The school called it an

"emergency suspension." According to a school spokesman, "If there is a potentially dangerous situation, Florida law allows the principal to suspend a student immediately pending a hearing." Apparently, the school administrators don't have enough sense to distinguish between a potentially dangerous situation and *ending* a potentially dangerous situation.

Meanwhile, a seven-year-old Maryland second-grader was slapped with a [two-day suspension](#) for allegedly biting his breakfast pastry into the shape of a gun. Actually, the boy wanted to form a mountain but misfired, er, mis-chewed. School officials deemed the boy's breakfast to be loaded and dangerous, and thereby suspended him. Ludicrously, they then even offered counseling for other students troubled by the incident. (Of course, guilt by angular association means a number of things are [taboo](#).)

With the insane running the educational asylum, it's no wonder school choice is gaining ground. Last week, Alabama [became the 22nd state](#) (plus Washington, DC) to offer school choice, either via vouchers, tax credits, scholarships, or education savings accounts. The move by the state legislature marked Alabama's first foray into private-school choice. Unfortunately, Circuit Judge Charles Price blocked the governor from signing the bill until hearings are held later this month.

### And Last...

Some things in this world are stranger than fiction. Such was the case in a story from Independence, Oregon, where a 19-year-old on his way to visit family decided to stop for a rest -- and burglarize a farm. He stole several things, which he hid behind a barn before fleeing on foot. He then stole a pickup, also on the farm, returned to the house, and loaded up his spoils. Before leaving, he added a shotgun and an AR-15 to his take. While he drove across a field to make his escape, however, he hit a bump, causing a part of the shotgun caught in the trigger area of the AR-15 to shift and depress the trigger. The AR fired once, striking and killing the burglar. Early reports are that the shotgun had indeed failed a background check. Either way, someone should alert Joe Biden.



Despite his sage advice, when this shotgun needed to defend itself, it went for the AR-15.

Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus et Fidelis!

Nate Jackson for *The Patriot Post* Editorial Team