

LIBERTY WATCH

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POLITICS. BUSINESS. LIBERTY.

REBUILDING THE NEVADA REPUBLICAN PARTY



**CAN SOMEONE EARN \$1-MILLION
IN A YEAR HONESTLY?**

Ron Knecht

GET OFF MY PROPERTY!

John Stossel

**FIGHT LEFT-WING LIES
WITH ... FACTS**

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LIBERTIES SAFE?**

Judge Andrew P. Napolitano

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

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OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.
THIS IS GOING TO COST AMERICA.**

Grover Norquist

**BOOMS DON'T REPEAT,
BUT THEY RHYME**

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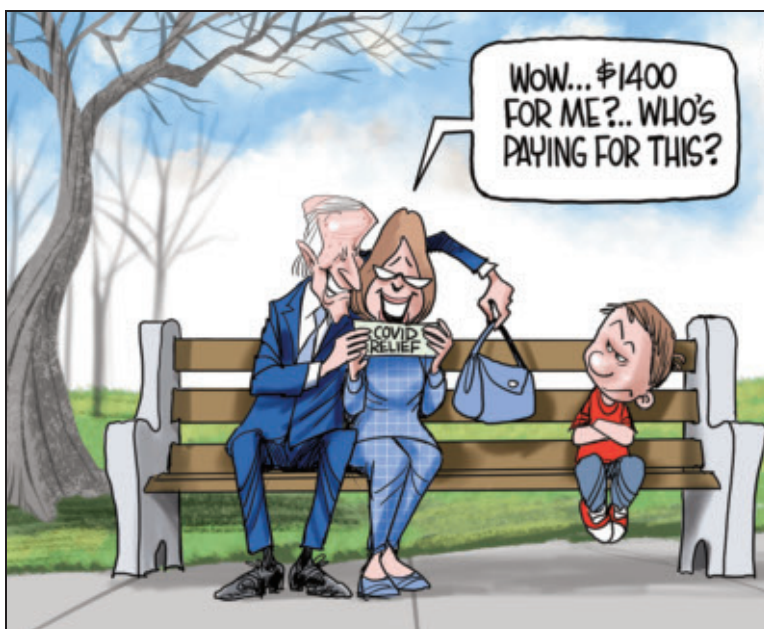
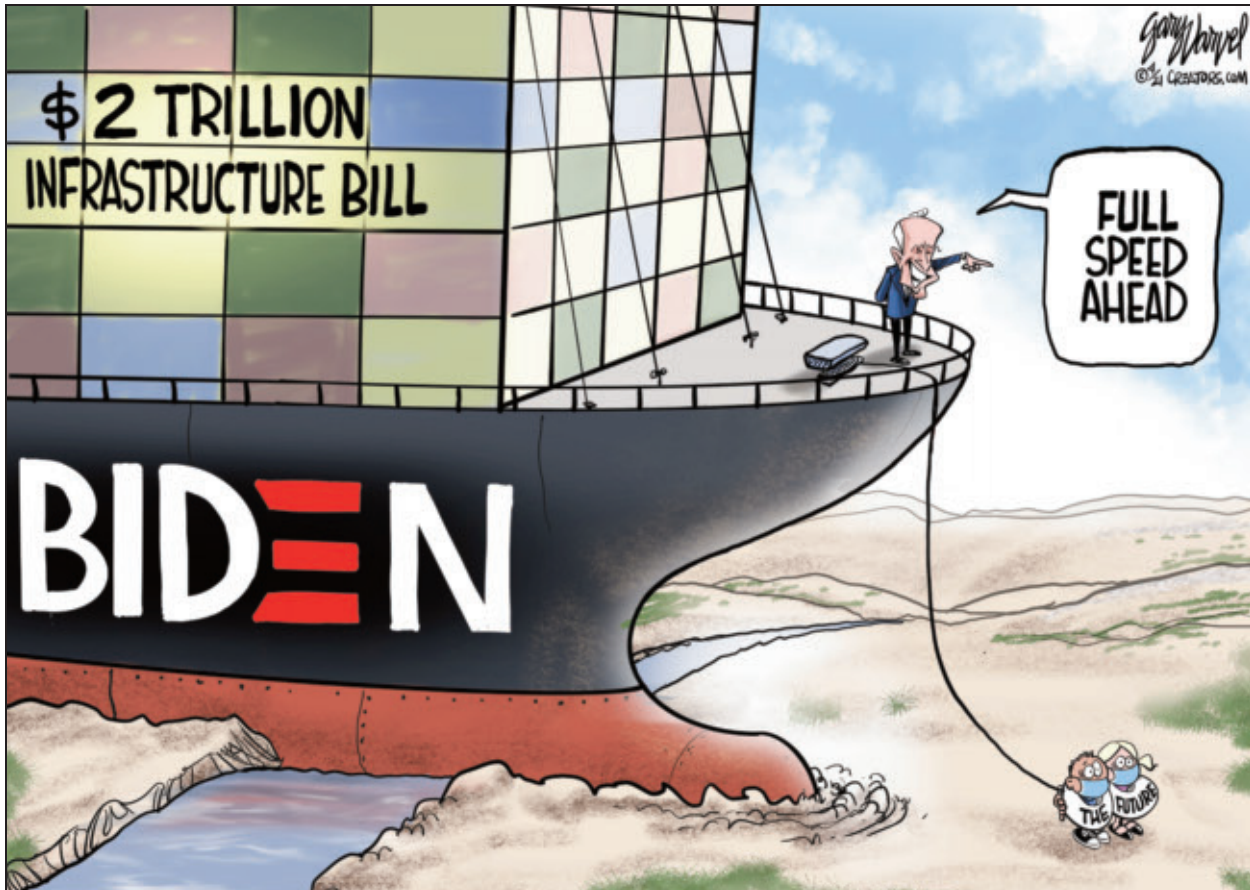
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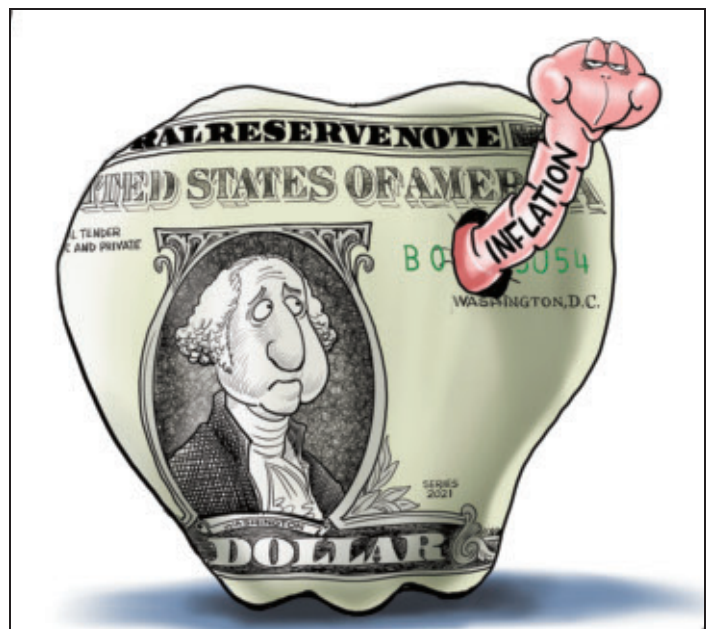
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NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

Democrat Ineptness Versus Voter Registration.



Politics at its core is a numbers game. Party leadership must register people to not only vote, but sign up voters as Republicans or Democrats. Beyond the two primary parties, people can register as non-partisan, Libertarian, Independent American Party, and other.

Nevada was once a reliably red or Republican state. Now, with newcomers flooding into Clark and Washoe Counties, the Battle Born state has blown by purple into the wild blue yonder. The latest numbers reflect the trends. As of February, 2021, Democrats led with 654,649, while Republicans trail with 574,164. Surprisingly, non-partisan registrants totaled 442,357. IP, other, and libertarians total 134,384.

I'll do the math for you. Non-Partisan plus the wee three leads Republican registration by a couple thousand voters. While Rs and Ds are deadlocked in registrations in Washoe, in Clark, D's are blowing R's away, 500,098 to 353,732. You might wonder who is spearheading the drive to register Republican voters. That would be the Republican party chairman, Michael McDonald.

Total Nevada registration was 1,805,554 in February, all but 223,103 registrants live in Washoe

and Clark counties. Please remember this number if you are running in a state-wide race. There are almost no voters in the rural counties and they will vote Republican no matter what.

Mike Murphy said on his "Hacks on Tap" podcast, "Republicans are treating elections like the catalog business, trying to make our voters happy," Murphy claims. "We're now treating our base voters like swing voters, like they're fickle. Base voters will vote for a box of hammers with an R on it." Murphy doesn't think Republican voters will run if they don't necessarily hear what they want from a candidate.

Democrats are close to overplaying their hand. It's not class but culture. Republican and swing voters hate hearing Democrats moralizing and telling Republicans what's good for them. It used to be as simple as lower taxes versus higher taxes. Now, the COVID response has become politicized as have restroom use, the increasing numbers of gender identities, and immigration.

The fact is, Democrats should get off their high horses. History is not on their side. Traditionally, a White House win means losing the House and Senate in the mid-term. Here in Nevada the Democrats control Carson City and have shut down the state over COVID fears. If Republicans can't beat the most hated governor in the state's history next year, perhaps a re-branding will be in order.

Speaking of branding, Murphy's guest, Republican pollster, Tony Fabrizio, polled Republicans for a recent report taking stock in what the Republican party looks like. Instead of the factions being divided by policies, the tribes are divided as to their closeness to Donald Trump.

“Trump in the midterms is Godzilla in the rear view mirror,” said Murphy, but he isn’t sure whether Trump, in a year and a half, could be 90 percent effective, 120 percent effective due to immigration concerns, or only 50 percent with a new galaxy of stars.” While politics is forever changing. Trump has changed the party to America First.

Fabrizio identifies five tribes within the Republicans (nationally). First, there are the Never Trumpers, who make up only 15 percent of the party. At the other end of the spectrum are Die-Hard Trumpers who make up 27 percent of the party. These folks will walk through a wall for Trump. Next are Trump Boosters who liked Trump’s policies but are not as committed. They make up 28 percent of the party. Post-Trumpers are 20 percent. They like him, but are looking for someone else to lead. Finally, Fabrizio refers to the last 10 percent of the party as Info-Wars GOP. These folks get their news from OAN and Fox, are supportive of Trump, and believed at least five of six of the conspiracy theories they were asked about (for instance, Angela Merkel is Hitler’s granddaughter).

When asked if Trump’s legal troubles will tarnish Trump’s popularity with his base, Fabrizio said, “Two impeachments and numerous investigations have made no dent in Trump’s popularity.”

Meanwhile, it’s been somewhat quiet in Carson City this session. Parents will understand when I say the quietness makes me nervous, like when you can’t hear the kids in the other room. Legislators must be up to no good. **LW**



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THE 2020 ELECTIONS GAVE THE DEMOCRATS FULL CONTROL OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. THIS IS GOING TO COST AMERICA.

First, the \$1.9 trillion spending spree advertised as a COVID bill passed without a single Republican vote.

Only one percent of the bill was vaccine-related and less than 10 percent has anything to do with fighting COVID.

Stuck in the bill was a \$67 billion tax hike limiting when companies can deduct business losses. This is foreshadowing, as this “small” tax hike is NOT limited to those earning less than \$400,000 as Biden promised repeatedly in his campaign. They made no effort to protect those earning under \$400,000.

The spending bill targets federal cash to blue states by sending bigger checks to those states whose governors kneecapped their own economies with harsh shutdowns. The more destructive a state’s tax policy and shutdown policy—the higher its unemployment rate—the more cash is siphoned from low-tax, lower-unemployment red states.

Democrats also decided to bring back the discredited “earmarks” -- the currency of corruption in Washington, D.C. For the next two years Democrat congressmen can shower your tax dollars on their favorite campaign contributors.

Next up is the promised/threatened Biden tax increases that are expected in legislation that will also include funding for “infrastructure.” For Democrats, “infrastructure” is a French word for

“everything except roads.” Old Democrats built roads, New Democrats build bike paths and windmills instead of roads.

Hiking the corporate income tax: a tax on workers’ pay.

As a candidate Biden repeatedly said he would “eliminate” the entire Republican tax cut enacted in 2017. That would raise the corporate rate back to 35 percent. His staff sometimes says he “only” wants to hike the rate to 28 percent. Either would increase the American tax on businesses above China’s 25 percent. Investment would tend to flow to China rather than the U.S. as their socialist state would take less of your earnings than America.

A higher corporate rate will increase the cost of utility bills (water, gas, electricity). This is because state laws require any federal tax cut or tax hike to be passed through directly to consumers. The Trump corporate tax cut resulted in lower utility bills in all 50 states and the Biden corporate tax hike will increase your utility bills. Every year in the future.

Worse for working Americans, a Tax Foundation study found that 70 percent of corporate taxation comes out of the pockets of workers in lower wages. We saw this in reverse when the Trump tax

cut drove up the median family income by 6.8 percent in that one year, 2019. An annual gain of \$4,440. Why? Because companies with higher after-tax income invest in making workers more productive and they are worth every penny of the pay hike. Now those gains are at risk.

And while ownership of shares of corporate stock was once the realm of Rockefellers and Kennedys, today, thanks to mutual funds and 401Ks and individual retirement accounts fully 53 percent of American households own stocks through their defined contribution retirement accounts. A corporate tax hike reduces after-tax earnings and therefore the value of all stocks. Biden intends to reduce the life savings of 100 million American families.

The Carbon Tax: a gas tax on steroids

Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, Janet Yellen, John Kerry, Pete Buttigieg and many other top appointees want to impose a “carbon” tax. Any carbon tax would hit every single American household and business. Higher cost of gasoline at the pump, more expensive to heat and cool your home, more expensive products.

A carbon tax is so radical that even Hillary Clinton’s 2016 campaign abandoned any talk of a carbon tax pronouncing that all the polling on the subject “sucks” and that it would devastate poor households. Biden’s Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg publicly stated that the Biden administration would not support a gas tax as it was obviously a tax on middle class voters. But so is the carbon tax. Just bigger. Buttigieg is also toying with the idea of imposing a vehicle miles traveled tax.

Any energy tax would hit the entire economy. It is viewed as the gateway drug to a Value Added Tax—simply extend the tax from the energy sector to all sectors and the United States looks a great deal like Europe. The average VAT in Europe is about 20 percent.

What can be done?

First, we have to stop the bleeding by winning back the majorities in the House and/or Senate.

Both would be better. One stops new damage.

We have two examples of how this can be done.

Bill Clinton won in 1992 with strong majorities in the House (258 to 176) and Senate (57 to 43.) He raised taxes, even after promising he would only tax the rich, he did “stimulus” spending, he even tried an early version of a carbon tax known as the “BTU tax” which had little support in the Senate but the House passed the BTU/energy tax and left dozens of its vulnerable members hanging with a bad vote that cost them seats.

In 1994 he lost 54 seats in the House and eight seats in the Senate giving control of congress to the Republicans and during the next six years when he was forced to sign a capital gains tax cut and welfare reform.

Barack Obama won the presidency in 2008 and Democrats won strong majorities in the Senate 60-40 and House (256-178). Obama did an \$800 billion “stimulus” spending bill and raised taxes even on the middle class in violation of his campaign’s “firm pledge” against any form of tax increase on anyone making less than \$250,000. He imposed Obamacare and its 20 new or higher taxes. He tried to impose “card check” at the behest of union bosses in order to scrap private ballot union elections and intimidate employees into signing a union card and paying “dues.” (This year the Democrats in the house have already voted for the PRO Act which includes “card check” and ending right to work in 27 states, killing millions of gig economy/freelance/independent contractor jobs and giving Union bosses the home addresses of all workers to be unionized.)

And then he lost 63 seats in the House and six seats in the Senate giving Republicans control of the House and in 2014, the Republicans won control of the Senate.

Biden has already spent too much, threatened massive tax hikes, energy tax hikes and forcing workers to pay union bosses union dues. He is following down the path of Clinton and Obama.

We have done this before. Let’s do it again.



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BOOMS DON'T REPEAT, BUT THEY RHYME

Back in the wild west days of the housing boom, say 2004-2005, there was a mortgage loan officer who used to pitch an idea to us he called wealthbuilder.

He would trot out a spreadsheet and plug in a person's mortgage amount, and assume a variable rate loan with the low teaser rates that were being marketed at the time.

He then would subtract that minimum payment by the then going rate for a conventional 30-year fully amortizing loan payment. What to do with the monthly savings? Invest it in the stock market that was then roaring. The mortgage man would then assume that stocks appreciate 10 percent a year. At the end of the spreadsheet, voila, you would have built lots of wealth.

Don't worry about the debt, he'd claim, pay as little toward principle as possible, because, first of all, houses never fall in value and the stock market always goes up. In hindsight, that sounds crazy, but many financial pros were pitching the same idea. Chapter 5 of my book "Walk Away" is entitled, "Building Wealth by Never Paying Off Your Mortgage" where I mention numerous books and strategies published during that boom urging home owners to pay as little as possible towards their homes.

For instance, "The authors of Untapped Riches: Never Pay Off Your Mortgage— and Other Surprising Secrets for Building Wealth, Susan and Anthony Cutaia with Robert Slater claimed in their book that the fixed rate mortgage was the worst mortgage in history."

"KEEP YOUR MONEY OUT OF THE BANK'S HANDS," was the wealth-building strategy #3 from the husband and wife team. "NEVER PAY OFF YOUR MORTGAGE—NEVER!"

From the Journal of Financial Planning, September 2004, came this nugget, "The popular press, following conventional wisdom, frequently advises that eliminating mortgage debt is a desirable goal. We show that this advice is often wrong . . . mortgage debt is valuable to many individuals."

Ric Edelman, listed as one of the top 100

financial advisors in Barron's from 2006-2010 advised "Never own your home outright. Instead, get a big 30-year mortgage, and never pay it off (assuming you can afford to make the payments on the mortgage)."

Again, the assumption was home values never fall and stock values always rise.

What's the use of this walk down bad memory lane? MicroStrategy's Michael Saylor appeared with Dr. Saifedean Ammous on The Bitcoin Standard Podcast recently and essentially made the same case for Bitcoin hodlrs.

Speaking to corporate financial officers, Saylor said eventually no one will ever sell their Bitcoins, because it would be irrational to do so. Bitcoin will continue to appreciate while any U.S. dollar debt incurred will be depreciated away by the Fed's money printing.

Saylor sees Bitcoin becoming the equivalent of Apple stock, the S & P 500, or 30-year treasury bonds, all stores of wealth. If cash is needed, borrow against your Bitcoin. He offered no instruction on where to find such a loan. But, it's coming, he says.

Important to his thesis is that Bitcoin will double in value every couple years and that the top-shelf cryptocurrency brand will never see \$10,000, \$20,000, \$30,000 or even \$40,000 ever again. Meanwhile, the U.S. dollar is headed for the trash bin.

In one of Saylor's "Bitcoin Corporate Strategy" podcasts he illustrates his point with a story about an Argentinian farmer converting all assets and cash flows to U.S. dollars, while borrowing in pesos. After all, the peso, in his example, goes from 1 to 1 with the dollar to 80 to 1.

It all sounds good on paper.

But, sometimes, reality bites.

Ex-Federal Reserve Chairman and current Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is no fan, saying,



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STOP THE CARTOONISH EXCUSES FOR COVID RESTRICTIONS

Although I enjoyed the study of economics much more than I enjoyed the study of law, I've always been happy with my decision to earn a law degree on top of my degree in economics.

By exposing me to real-world details that I'd otherwise have missed, studying law greatly improved my ability to evaluate economic processes and policies.

Some economists, somehow, grasp these crucial details without having studied law formally. These impressive scholars include Armen Alchian, Terry Anderson, Ronald Coase, Harold Demsetz, Thomas Sowell, and Bruce Yandle. But far too many economists miss these details. The result is often policy analysis that's mistaken, and policy advice that's unrealistic and counterproductive.

This poor analysis and advice are especially prevalent when economists write about so-called "externalities." Externalities are third-party effects, such as when Steve and Sarah's actions have an impact on Silas's welfare, with Silas not being consulted by either Steve or Sarah.

If this impact improves Silas's welfare we call it a "positive externality" – such as if Sarah pays Steve to renovate her house, thereby raising the market value of next-door neighbor Silas's house. If this impact worsens Silas's welfare we call it a "negative externality" – such as if Steve, while working to renovate Sarah's house, creates loud noises that distract Silas as he does yoga or as he is Zooming into an important meeting.

When economists encounter examples such as these, their first instinct is to bemoan the fact that

both Sarah and Steve ignore the impacts of their actions on Silas. Their second instinct is to describe government interventions that would cause Steve and Sarah to take account of these impacts. A typical recommendation might be to tax people for any annoying noise caused by their home-renovation projects.

Economists recognize that the administrative costs of carrying out such policies are sometimes so high as to make such policies unwise. But at least in principle, too many economists are prone to conclude, the lack of taxation of loud noises from construction workers causes too much noise to be emitted.

The Subtle Genius of the Law

The law, however, often takes effects such as these into account in ways that economists miss. The most important of these ways lies in the specific manner in which the law creates – and refuses to create – property rights. The resulting, detailed pattern of property rights is important.

In Anglo-American law, a person is entitled to compensation only if he or she transferred title to valuable property with no intention of giving a gift, or suffered the loss of some property interest as a result of the actions of someone who violated his or her property rights. Therefore, the mere fact that Sarah's action improves Silas's well-being is insufficient to create an obligation that someone

pay Sarah for her ‘positive’ action. Likewise, the mere fact that Silas suffers some harm from Steve’s construction activities is insufficient to justify imposing a tax on Steve for his noisy construction activities.

The law refuses to impose obligations in circumstances such as these because the law recognizes a feature of reality to which economists are often blind. While both economics and law understand that people, being gregarious creatures, are forever having impacts on strangers, the law – unlike the all-too-common careless economist – recognizes that people often repeatedly interact with each other through time in ways that cause the costs and benefits of “external” effects to tend to balance out for each person.

The law, in effect, recognizes that costs that Silas suffers today from Steve’s noisy construction on Sarah’s home are offset by other benefits that Silas will enjoy tomorrow, such as his own ability to emit noise that will annoy Sarah if and when he, Silas, chooses to renovate his home.

In other words, where careless economists see “externalities” – and, hence, “market failure” – the law often sees parties compensating each other in the form of in-kind activities. Silas is compensated to endure the construction noise from Sarah’s house with his own right to inflict such noise on Sarah if and when he has construction done on his house.

The law recognizes another feature of this in-kind compensation that takes place over time: such compensation is embedded in community members’ reasonable expectations. If Sarah confines construction on her home to the daylight hours, the law recognizes no right of Silas to be free of such noise. Silas is correctly treated as if he should expect to suffer such noise during the daylight hours. Likewise, Sarah and home-remodeler Steve are treated as if they should expect to be able to inflict such noise on nearby homeowners during the daylight hours.

Matters differ for the nighttime. If noise from Steve’s midnight hammering keeps Silas awake, the law will back Silas’s quest to prevent Steve from doing such hammering. People reasonably expect that their neighbors will not emit loud

noises at night.

Identify the Property Rights

People’s reasonable expectations give rise to property rights. No property right of Silas is violated by Steve’s loud hammering at noontime; a very real property right of Silas is violated by Steve’s loud hammering at midnight.

This distinction should be, but frequently isn’t, recognized by economists. What this distinction means is that a genuine externality exists only when there is a violation of someone’s property rights. If you walk within eye-shot of me wearing a polka-dotted shirt, any discomfort that I might experience because I dislike polka dots is not an externality, even if I can objectively prove that my anguish at the sight of your shirt is intense. Because you have a right to wear polka-dotted shirts in public, and because I should reasonably expect to encounter people from time to time wearing polka-dotted clothing, you have not harmed me in any legal, economic, or ethical way.

Put differently, despite my aversion to polka dots, your wearing a polka-dotted shirt in public does not violate what libertarians call “the non-aggression principle.” (The non-aggression principle says that individuals should be free to do whatever they choose as long as they don’t aggress against non-aggressive others.) The fact that the law protects only property interests from third-party effects means that one cannot immediately go from “Sarah’s actions negatively affect third-party Silas!” to the conclusion that “Therefore, Silas has the ethical right, and should also have the legal right, to use coercion, if necessary, to prevent Sarah from negatively affecting him!”

Is Breathing Unmasked in Public Aggression Against Innocent Third-Parties?

The relevance of the distinction between third-party effects that violate someone else’s property rights and third-party effects that don’t is especially crucial today. Many economists defend lockdowns, mask mandates, and other Covid-19 restrictions as scientifically ‘objective’ means of dealing with externalities. Similarly, some libertarians justify lockdowns and other restrictions as being not only consistent with, but demanded by, the non-aggression principle.

Yet the relevant question is not: “Does Sarah’s breathing unmasked in public physically or psychologically affect third-party Silas?” Instead, the relevant question is: “Does Sarah’s breathing unmasked in public violate any of Silas’s property rights?” The answer to the first question is irrelevant; the answer to the second question is what matters. Only if the answer to this second question is ‘yes’ should an economist conclude that an externality is afoot; only if the answer to this second question is ‘yes’ should a libertarian conclude that Sarah is aggressing against Silas.

So what about Covid? Until March 2020 no American had a property right in being free of the risk of exposure to pathogens carried by asymptomatic individuals going about their normal ways of life. Because each of us has always, unavoidably, emitted into the air we breathe bacteria and viruses that potentially harm – and sometimes kill – others, life as we know it could never exist if each of us had a property right in being free of such bacteria and viruses spread by others.

No one expected to be free of such exposure. No one had the right to be free of such exposure.

And so there ought at least have been a presumption that this same rule holds for SARS-CoV-2. There ought at least have been a presumption that each of us continues to enjoy the legal and ethical right to go about our affairs publicly and without a mask despite the physical fact that, in doing so, we risk transmitting the virus to other people.

Perhaps this presumption is, as lawyers say, “rebuttable.” If I try very hard I can imagine there arising a pathogen so contagious and so lethal across all age groups, and one that also can be relatively successfully evaded by a couple of weeks of massive lockdowns, that a plausible case can be made against the ancient and strong presumption that no one’s property interests are violated by strangers breathing-out air in public.

But not only did knowledgeable people learn early on that the severity of SARS-CoV-2 hardly rises to a level justifying such a major change in law and ethics, there was never as much as recognition of the longstanding rule that no one’s property interests are violated by the breathing of

other people going about their normal lives. All of a sudden, starting one year ago, the hysterical fear of Covid – and the irresponsible stoking of this fear by politicians and the media – caused people simply to forget that no one has an enforceable right to be free of air breathed-out by others.

Pro-lockdown economists faux scientifically chant “Reduce externalities!” Libertarians with a weak commitment to liberty self-righteously claim to be the true upholders of liberty by repeating nonstop “We must honor the non-aggression principle!” But neither these economists nor these libertarians take the time to consider the complex real-world details from which individuals’ rights emerge and in which these rights are rooted and defined.

In free societies, Sarah’s potential negative impact on the welfare of third-party Silas has never been held to be a sufficient reason to coercively prevent Sarah from acting in ways that are thought to give rise to that negative impact. Any such rule would have ground society to a halt the moment it was adopted.

Unfortunately, such a rule was adopted – or, actually, imposed with jackboots – in 2020. I fear that this destructive rule will remain with us for a long time.



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NATIONAL MAGA DAY – JUNE 14TH PRESIDENT TRUMP’S BIRTHDAY

Nearly 75 million people voted for President Trump, the most of any sitting President in American history.

In fact, Trump increased his vote from 2016 by eleven million votes by putting together an incredible coalition of voters of all colors and sexual orientations, hard - working people, small business owners, who were pro-life, pro-family, pro-faith, pro-flag, pro-law and order, pro-military, pro-Energy Independence, pro-fair trade, pro-Bill of Rights and most of all pro-country. In addition to voting for Trump, what people really voted for was his Make America Great Again - America First Movement. Trump's election was a repudiation of the Deep State Establishment that has made a mess of our country and the world.

We were endorsing the policies of President Trump that achieved the greatest economy and job growth in American history. Trump did this by cutting taxes and getting rid of burdensome regulations that were killing jobs. In addition, in relation to foreign policy, the Abraham Accords that brought Israel and Sunni Arab countries to the peace table was an incredible accomplishment. In the process, Iran the biggest state sponsor of terrorism was further isolated in the region. Trump demanded that our allies pay their fair share for their national defense for the first time in the history of NATO.

Trump put an end to NAFTA, which killed jobs in the US to forge a new trade deal with Mexico and Canada to protect American jobs. And finally, President Trump was the first President to confront China demanding fair trade and an end to their intellectual theft. Unfair trade practices tolerated by both Socialist and Republican Presidents resulted in 70,000 factories closed in the US and 5 million jobs shipped overseas, or to

Mexico thanks to the largest global companies in the US seeking higher profits, lower taxes and regulations by moving jobs out of the US.

When the history books are written, hopefully with some objectivity 50 years from now, President Trump will go down as one of the most successful, greatest Presidents in American history. The National Socialist, Fake News, RINO and Deep State persecution of Trump will be seen for what it was, a political attack by Swamp Lizards, with Trump Derangement Syndrome that hated the fact that Trump could not be bought and that he was draining the swamp. Those feeding at the trough for decades were threatened both by Trump voters and Trump himself because he was attempting to stop the corruption that is rampant in Washington DC.

So now we need to celebrate President Trump's accomplishments every year by implementing a National MAGA Day on June 14th, Trump's birthday both in Washington DC and around the country. Of course, this will terrify the National Socialists who no doubt will call out the National Guard as thousands descend on Washington DC and perhaps other cities in the US. That's fine. The Guard can celebrate with us. Most important, this will be an opportunity for presumably Republican candidates for office that support Trump's MAGA - America First Movement to be speakers at this love fest. It could become a rite of passage for candidates who recognize that the Republican Party is no longer the country club Establishment Party; but rather the party of hard - working people demanding our freedoms. **LW**



Ben Shapiro

FOR THE LEFT, BIGOTRY IS A TOOL

This week, a white man shot to death eight people in Atlanta-area spas, six of them Asian American.

According to Atlanta police, the man said he was targeting brothels and blamed the women for his alleged sex addiction. The gunman stated that he had visited two of the spas before and had planned to drive to Florida and target the pornography industry. So far, there is no evidence that the shooter was motivated by anti-Asian animus, making hate-crime charges unlikely at this point.

Nonetheless, the establishment media and Democratic politicians quickly began reflecting the lie that the shooting was an anti-Asian hate crime, the latest outgrowth of a major uptick in anti-Asian hate crimes -- all driven supposedly by "white supremacy." White House press secretary Jen Psaki connected the alleged increase in anti-Asian sentiment to former President Trump, stating that his "calling COVID 'the Wuhan virus' ... led ... to perceptions of the Asian American community that are inaccurate, unfair." Racial grifter Ibram X. Kendi tweeted: "Locking arms with Asian Americans facing this lethal wave of anti-Asian terror. Their struggle is my struggle. Our struggle is against racism and White supremacist domestic terror." Nikole Hannah-Jones, pseudo-journalist and de facto editor-in-chief at The New York Times, tweeted in solidarity: "I stand with my Asian-American brothers and sisters, just as so many of you have stood with us. I grieve. We must own all of this history -- ALL OF IT -- and determine to fight for a truly multiracial democracy where we all can be free."

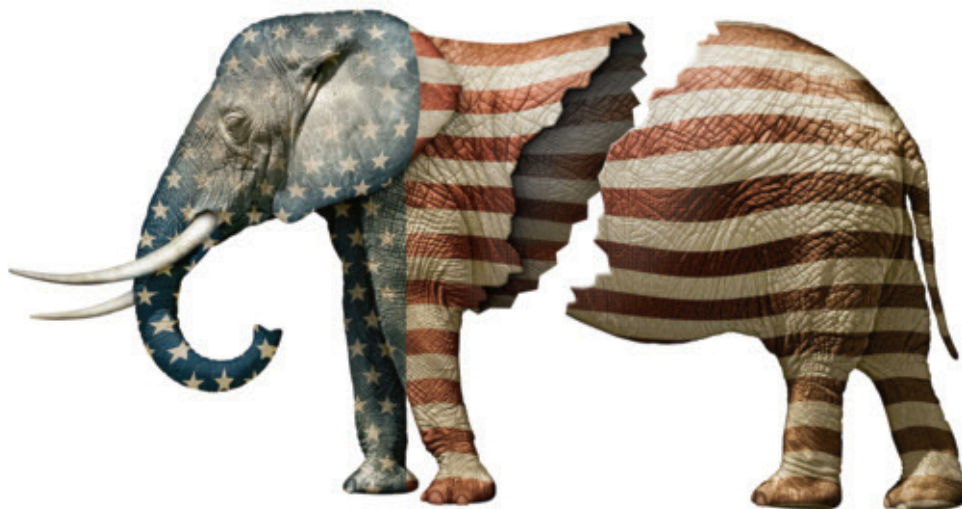
This is cynical politicking at best.

The same sources decrying anti-Asian sentiment have spent years expressing anti-Asian animus in the form of discriminatory college admissions standards: President Biden's administration dropped a discrimination case against Yale University just a month ago, clearly thanks to the administration's position that affirmative action for black students outweighs Asian American success in a pure meritocracy. The same people

blaming "white supremacy" for anti-Asian hate crimes have militantly ignored the location of the crimes -- largely major metropolitan areas, with a large number of such crimes coming not from white Americans but from black Americans (a plurality of overall violent crimes targeting Asian Americans, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, were committed by black Americans in 2018). The same establishment media sources blaming Trump for anti-Asian hate cheer on the active closing of merit-based magnet schools in New York and San Francisco, thanks to those schools' disproportionate Asian American attendance: Hannah-Jones tweeted last year that it was "disingenuous" to talk about "specialized high schools being majority POC" (people of color) when referring to Asian Americans.

Here, then, is how the narrative works, according to the left: No matter the antecedent to any statement, the conclusion must be that America is systemically racist. When we are discussing Asian American economic success, Asian Americans must be treated as beneficiaries of a white supremacist system; when we are talking about hate crimes against Asian Americans, Asian Americans must be treated as people of color victimized by a white supremacist system. When a white person harms Asian Americans, as Trevor Noah explained, intent doesn't matter -- animus can be assumed. When a black person harms Asian Americans, as NBC News reported, "experts say it's important to evaluate each case individually."

All of this is morally base. Anti-Asian animus is anti-Asian animus, whether it comes from woke school administrators or street criminals. To treat such animus differently based solely on the identity of the offender is to make obvious that you simply don't care about anti-Asian animus. For the left, it's just the latest club to wield against the broader American system, facts be damned.



REBUILDING THE NEVADA REPUBLICAN PARTY

Let's face it, the 2020 election was a head-shaker at best and a disaster at its worst.

But when you get right down to it, here in Nevada, the last three election cycles have been a disaster for every God, Country, and Constitution-loving Republican.

While we can continue to spend hours discussing the unfathomable outcome of the last election, it's time to focus on what we need to do to successfully move forward. As the old saying goes, "Those who fail to plan, plan to fail." And I don't know about you, but my plans include successful outcomes in 2022 and beyond.

To that end, our goals should include fixing our state Party, creating a process to select strong candidates who truly believe that our state and our nation are worth fighting for, and when necessary, providing them with the skills not only to successfully defend the policies and positions upon which our country was founded, but also to eloquently state our vision for the future. When we achieve the first two, our most difficult goal will be to develop and implement a messaging campaign to remove the malignant tentacles of lies, deceit, and manipulation liberals have used for years to brainwash low-information voters.

So, let's start with **Goal #1: The State Party and how to fix it:** A lot of folks want to blame the state

Chairman Michael J. McDonald, others want to blame the Clark County Chairman David Sajak and his Vice Chairman Stephen Silberkraus. Fair enough. Where were they and what did they accomplish outside of bringing in consultants and lobbyists and allowing them to run rampant?

First, let me acknowledge that while Covid had us locked down for the large majority of 2020, we weren't prevented from using the Internet, the media, Social media, newspapers, and more. To that end, was there a robust voter registration drive? Did the Clark County office develop a vast volunteer base? Did they think of looking outside of the Central Committee for volunteers and make an effort to do so? Fifteen years ago, Clark County had a volunteer base of close to 1,000 people, ready and willing to serve at a moment's notice. Does any community outreach exist?

Was there an active messaging campaign to educate and inform voters? Nope. There was a total failure of messaging statewide, no defense of President Trump's myriad accomplishments including all of the benefits everyday Americans received because of his America First agenda, nor any information or defense about his rapid response starting in January 2020 to confront

Covid, his creation of the Covid Task Force, his massive and skillful negotiating that brought various companies together to create PPE and ventilators in record time, the retrofitting of Navy ships and creation of field hospitals to help the sick, not to mention Operation Warp Speed that developed effective vaccines in record time, plus the fact that in July 2020, President Trump ordered and paid for 800 million doses of a potential vaccine from the top four producers. Again just silence from Republican leaders, which allowed the Dems to spew obfuscations, outright lies, and paint a phony picture of a failed presidency, which in effect signaled that Republicans can't be trusted, weren't successful, et cetera.

The lobbyists and consultants raked in the dough, though, while achieving zero for our state. No ROI there, but heh, we'll get back to them later.

Goal #1a: Identifying the Party's structural issues in order to address the weaknesses and how to fix them:

1. Structure: The structural make-up of the state Party is flawed by its own membership; it's too bloated, with the exact thing that Republicans complain about every day ... **BUREAUCRACY!** Our organization needs to be quick and nimble in order to respond quickly to issues as well as confront misinformation. Walmart, Amazon and Apple are arguably the three largest organizations on the planet. And somehow, they each manage their companies with boards of directors no larger than 12 people. Conversely, Nevada is composed of 17 counties, the three largest are Clark, Washoe, and Carson, with the balance made up of the Rural counties, each having its own Party structure.

At the State and Clark County Party levels, their boards of directors are so large the managing leadership can't successfully function or operate the organization because their directors involve themselves in every aspect of the daily operations, which is like throwing a giant cog in the wheel of progress! This definitely needs to change, and quickly.

1. Leadership: Rural Nevada's 14 counties are each led by very competent, effective and results-oriented individuals who continually ensure the successful election of Republicans in their counties. In Washoe County and Carson County, for example:

The Washoe County Republican Party is led by Michael Kadenacy, a vibrant 80-year-old, and his

Vice-Chairman is Michael Jack, both of whom know how to get the job done and have so for years. The Carson County Republican Party is led by Paul Strasser, another very effective leader who has a great track record of getting Republicans elected. And, as previously stated, the same holds true for the other 12 Nevada counties.

Unfortunately, that trail of successful leadership no longer applies to the Republican Party in Clark County (CCRP), the county that encompasses 74 percent of the state's population, and the epicenter of Nevada Republican politics. As such, and with such high stakes for our state, you'd think the CCRP would be led by people who are highly effective, forward-thinking, knowledgeable and proven leaders who can and do "get the job done." Sadly, and for whatever reason, that ship sailed years ago. The current leaders of the CCRP are Chairman David Sajdak and his hand-picked Vice-Chairman Stephen Silberkraus, arguably the two most **incompetent** leaders in the State Republican apparatus.

Although Sajdak has told various sources he's leaving Nevada soon, he made it clear that he wants Silberkraus to become his successor. But why should his leadership be trusted with the future of our state and country at further risk? If you look at his track record, Silberkraus is a former one-term State Assemblyman whose background includes voting for the largest tax increase in Nevada State history, running a failed campaign for University Regent, and then somehow, and without being a member of the Clark County Central Committee, getting appointed — not elected — to Vice Chairman by Sajdak alone. No discussion. End of story.

Now, I don't want to paint the entire CCRP leadership team with the same brush. It's important to note that the majority of this team has some very effective and hard-working people involved who have been stifled by Sajdak. They include Treasurer Lynn Armanino, Secretary Diana Gomez, Precinct Director Lois Choate and various other board members from Sam and Melissa Peters, to Linda Buckardt, and Barbara Altman. With a more effective and highly skilled chairman and vice chairman in the top positions, this team has the ability to soar in future elections. Today, however, the top two are just millstones around the Party's neck.

Moving on to the State level, we'd be negligent if we didn't discuss the Nevada Republican State Party Chairman Michael J. McDonald, a great guy, loyal, a good friend to people and dogs alike, but a terrible leader. Mike's the guy you want at your house for Monday night football, but he lacks the talent and foresight of an effective leader. That's tough to say because he's got all the heart in the world, but having a good heart doesn't win games let alone elections. And in any field, if you're not winning, you're losing, and the end result is generally the unemployment line. It's just a fact, and we need a win if we want our state to thrive.

Goal #2: Selecting and Grooming Qualified Candidates: The first area to focus on and somehow resolve is how to deal with lobbyists, consultants and the control they have over our elected officials. Ever wonder what happened to your dream candidate and how they managed to go off the rails after they were elected? Just look at any contributions and expenses report, available for review at the Secretary of State's office (www.nvsos.gov), and you'll be able to track whose money may now be steering a candidate's position on issues.

Part of this problem is that [we] Republicans have allowed it to happen instead of holding our elected officials' feet to the fire whenever they veer off course. The other part is that once elected, politicians become very happy with their power, influence, and money, and very insecure when it comes to maintaining that status. In essence, their desire to stay in office makes them vulnerable to outside benefactors who encourage them to forgo their once strong philosophical compass for large amounts of cash. Unfortunately, by exchanging their original values for money and power, they not only harm themselves, but they also help kill the Republican brand.

If you need some examples of how strong the relationship is between lobbyists and politicians, just take a look at these three Assembly members: Melissa Hardy raised just under a \$100,000, 89 percent of all her contributions came from lobbyists; Glen Leavitt raised just under \$100,000, 85 percent of which came from lobbyists, plus a whopping \$347 from his own re-election campaign; and then there's Jill Tolles who raised more than \$100,000 for her race, 95 percent of all monies from ... you guessed it, LOBBYISTS!

So, how do we effectively reduce this influence? Well, I'd suggest demanding that our elected officials actively participate in our central committee meetings so that they continue to represent our views. To date, the only time Assembly and Senate members are seen at committee meetings is during the election cycle and that has to stop. And perhaps we should take a more active role with them while they are in office. Yes, they have paid staff but they can always use a volunteer here and there. It's one way to ensure that they know we're still around.

Goal #3: Selecting, Grooming, Supporting Candidates: As Republicans, we need to first look in the mirror. As leaders, are we taking real action to find and, if necessary, groom qualified candidates who cannot only win elections, but who can carry our policies forward? Are we taking the time to create a plan, work the plan, find qualified candidates who believe in our Constitution, and our country? Do they believe as we do that having the fortitude to withstand the slings and arrows from the cancel culture warriors of today must be a priority if we hope to save our nation? Look, it's impossible to change someone's behavior if they were just a paper tiger from the start, and that failure falls on each of us. If we want other people to take an active role, we must first lead by example. Being a couch potato while blaming others, accomplishes nothing.

Secondly, to offset the control of lobbyists and consultants, we should encourage our professional members to volunteer some of their time to teach presentation skills, and media relations, provide talking points, assistance with informational brochures and whatever else they need to get key messages out to the voters. As a statewide team, why not work together to network with publishers like the Epoch Times, Liberty Watch and others who can provide copies of articles that could be handed out at campaign events — the Epoch Times had a great timeline on Covid 19 that would have easily countered the false information coming from the Left. Pooling our financial resources when needed could help get our messages out, increase public knowledge, offset misinformation, and blunt the control of outside influences.

Wouldn't this be a better use of our money? In addition, if you really want to support a candidate, tell them you'll pay for a mailer or signs and then

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pay the vendor directly so that your money won't be flushed down the drain.

Consultants: What can we say, they are a necessary evil, but they have to be managed. New candidates aren't always informed that consultants take a commission on every mail piece printed, and every commercial aired, so on top of receiving a monthly retainer, these added costs can suck the campaign dry quickly. Again, we can help candidates by educating them on this process and how to control their expenditures. And while it's a candidate's responsibility to do their due diligence and review every bill that comes across their desk, Party leadership needs to ensure that the consultants aren't fleecing the campaigns.

Finally, the Party has to take back the reins from the consultants. If the Central Committee members tell the candidates that they won't get the Party endorsement unless they follow precepts of the Party and if the consultants push back on that, then the members need to block those consultants at every turn. There's an old saying, "there are two emotions in life, love and fear, and fear lasts a hell of a lot longer."

As such, it's time for the Central Committee members to let candidates and consultants know that we are going to hold their feet to the fire and hold them accountable in regard to their campaigns, determine how effective they are in getting Republicans elected, and that our professional members will be available to provide their services either free of charge or at minimal charge when asked. Fear in this case, cuts both ways.

Ultimately it's up to every one of us to take action. We all have a role to play and it starts with installing highly qualified leaders at the local and State Party level, formulating a plan, putting that plan into action, creating targeted messaging and sticking to that message, scouting for exceptional and willing political candidates, and then doing our part to help them through the entire process. Time's a wasting. Are you ready to play a role? **LW**

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Douglas French writes from Las Vegas, providing commentary on the Vegas economy, financial markets, and book reviews. He earned his Master's in economics at UNLV under the direction of Murray Rothbard and Hans Hoppe.

LITTLE “ORPHAN ANNIE” BLACK

On the 2nd of March, Assemblywoman Annie Black did something spectacular and brave, something her fellow Republicans would dare not do because of their fear of retribution from the Democrats and the Far Left.



What caused the Left’s meltdown toward Annie Black?

It’s simple. Annie had the unmitigated gall to ask the Democrat Speaker to reopen the legislative buildings to the people of Nevada, after the Democrats closed them during the previous special session due to the “emergency of the pandemic.” In reality, the closure had nothing to do with public safety, and everything to do with the fact that the Democrat leadership wanted the freedom to shove various pieces of legislation through the special sessions without any input from the public, nor did they want to face any retribution from their constituents. Most egregiously, and under the cloak of darkness, they changed, not only the rules on how we vote, but they also changed the ballot harvesting statute from a felony to standard operating procedure in Nevada, which allows for widespread voter fraud. Again, without any input from Nevada voters.

Annie had spoken out for months on how the

Democrats were putting in the FIX for upcoming elections because she knows that nothing good comes from doing the people’s business behind closed doors in smoke-filled rooms. So, Annie did something unprecedented on Tuesday during the legislative floor session, when she rose up and said “Mr. Speaker, it is hypocritical for us to have this building closed but allow businesses in Nevada to be open; either it is safe, or it is unsafe to allow people into buildings. The Legislature should either close all businesses or OPEN OUR DOORS.”

Outraged by her courage to shine a spotlight on their shady attempt to destroy our free and fair election process, the Speaker called the legislature into immediate recess. While not exactly like the recess in kindergarten, where the Democrats would go outside to play in the dirt, this legislative process is just as dirty. Why? Because a legislative recess allows the leadership to temporarily suspend the people’s business, thus killing any motions currently on the floor! As a result, and after the short recess ended, the Speaker refused to recognize Assemblywoman Black’s motion.

But that wasn’t enough for the Democrats. Because they can’t afford to have anyone questioning their agenda, they will try to destroy Ms. Black any way they can. They’ll question her reputation, generate false rumors against her, create a narrative to stain her achievements and come up with cutesy nicknames, and they’ll do it all with help from their friends in the media.

Take this recent “Opinion” column by the Review-Journal’s Steve Sebelius, the Left’s go-to guy. In his article, Sebelius was outraged by Black’s audacity to call for the “People’s House” to be open. He pulled everything out of his political assassination toolbox. In the first sentence of his column, he accused Black of “Political Performance Art” then he went on to say how several lawmakers battled COVID-19, and then he quotes the director of the Center for Disease Control: “If things open

COUNTERPUNCH

up, if we're not really cautious, we could end up with a post-spring break surge;" "We could see much more death." Really? If anyone is guilty of Political Performance Art, it's "Big Stevo" Sebelius and the Left. Creating fear is their go-to action step because their failed policies suck. So when they create fear, uninformed people vote for them.

Is COVID-19 the most horrible thing that's happened to our world? Yes. But to use it to further a political agenda is just disgusting! We need political leadership, Annie Black is a leader; she understands that we have to get back to a normal environment and we can't do that by putting our heads in the sand.

Sebelius is a sanctimonious, Left-Wing opinion writer, that's it! He has no business background; he's never signed the front of a paycheck and has no understanding of how an economy works. He's a political hitman for the Democrats, which is why he went after Annie with all the theatrics. Is the world going to end if we open up the "People's House" to the people? I don't think so and I certainly don't think Sebelius thinks so either. So the question is why? Why attack Annie Black?

It's the long game folks. The Democrats can't afford to have the Republicans speaking out, or exposing the truth to our citizens. But Republicans better wake up, stand up, and join with Annie Black. If they don't they are guaranteed to stay in the minority.

I will credit Steve for his obsequious attempt at shining the shoes of his political handlers. First, I'm sure it took him all day to come up with such a "clever" nickname for a woman who towers above him both ethically and intellectually, "Political Orphan Annie," a nickname I find both ridiculous and disrespectful but par for the course with Sebelius. And he had the nerve to question her reputation. Pot/kettle much Steve? Well, it shows you what the Left really thinks of women. And while the Left loves to use political performance art to obfuscate the truth and mask their failed policies, his Sunday Opinion Column masquerading as his off-off-off-off-off Broadway moment, won't be winning any awards soon. **LW**



GOVERNMENT GONE WILD

Zoom, Zoom

Meetings via Zoom are ripe for mistakes. Just ask CNN's Jeffrey Toobin. At least he wasn't a public servant, unlike the board members of the Oakley Union Elementary School District (OUESD) in California. Recently, the board began to deliberate, thinking their mics were muted.

The board arguably was selected to represent children and their parents as to the running of that school district. Board member Kim Beede can be heard asking "Are we alone?", in a viral video that was afterwards shared online.

It turns out a parent made a comment about Ms. Beede on social media and the scorned board member, thinking the members were muted, said, "Bitch, if you're gonna call me out, I'm gonna f**k you up. Sorry! That's just me."

Lisa Brizendine, the school board president, stood by her fellow board member Beede and blamed the parent, saying parents "forget that there's real people on the other side of those letters that they're writing."

It sounds like the Board is who is forgetting about real people, like parents. "It's very unfortunate that they want to pick on us because they want their babysitters back," Ms Brizendine added. So, at least in one school district in California, the board, the people in charge, believe teachers are merely babysitters.

The idle chit-chat amongst the area's elitist board continued with member Richie Masadas, who suggested some parents wanted schools to return so they could smoke marijuana in their homes without being bothered.

The red-faced Board of Education issued a statement, "As trustees, we realise it is our responsibility to model the conduct that we expect of our students and staff, and it is our obligation to build confidence in District leadership; our comments failed you in both regards, and for this we offer our sincerest apology."

In other words, gosh, we're sorry we didn't find the mute button. **LW**

Wokeness Leads to Ruin

Portland is a lovely city, so full of wokeness, that a TV show was made about it, "Portlandia." Everyone is portrayed to be so nice that in one scene, four cars at a four-way stop remained in place, waiting and waiting, for someone to make

the first move into the intersection.

The city attracted more college-educated 25-39 year olds than any place in the country. Nancy Rommelmann writes with tongue-in-cheek for Reason.com, "New residents built the city they wanted to live in: farm-to-table restaurants and 40 million brewpubs and too many bike paths and aggressively progressive politics. When then-Illinois Sen. Barack Obama swung through on the campaign trail in 2008, more than 75,000 people lined Portland's waterfront to see him."

"I sometimes think we're the scatterbrained generation," a 26-year-old barista with a degree in anthropology told me for a 2010 article [Rommelmann] wrote called "Is Portland the New Neverland?" "You have so many choices, and you know what you end up doing? Nothing. You become the D.J.-fashion-designing-knitting-coffee-maker."

What was that saying about the idle hands and the devil? The city has had three failed mayors in a row and become a riot city. The young people who moved there thinking the city to be green nirvana are disillusioned. An anonymous writer wrote to a local alt-weekly, "I've been here for 20 years. I have watched it change. Portland is now a soulless amusement park for the entitled and wealthy. I hate what this city is becoming and I blame ['Portlandia']!"

The city's housing policies have virtually obliterated affordable housing and commercial rents. Ms. Rommelmann's husband opened a coffee shop in 2005 with rent of \$425 a month. Ten years later rents for similar space were ten times as much. Service jobs vanished.

Rioting became something to do. Charges were dropped against 1,000 protesters, "at the behest of Multnomah County District Attorney Mike Schmidt, who upon assuming office in August announced he would decline to prosecute the 'breaking windows of businesses, lighting things on fire, stealing from those stores in the protest environment.'"

Adding to that, the City Council voted to cut \$15 million from the Portland Police Bureau's budget, well short of the \$50 million cut activists called for, and passed a resolution forbidding Portland police from communicating with or providing support to federal forces. In other words, power was taken away from law enforcement and put in the hands of the protesters.

After the election activists kept marching

nightly, swarming the house of a newly elected city commissioner because he'd voted against defunding the police. Protesters vandalized 27 businesses along a six-block strip in Northeast Portland. On New Year's Eve, they threw Molotov cocktails and other high-powered incendiary devices, causing tens of thousands of dollars in damage downtown.

As for investment in Portland, "I'm divesting from Portland," Jessie Burke told Rommelmann. "Because of the new renters' rights law, she'd just had to pay \$4,500 to renters to vacate one of her properties; none of it made any sense."

Wokeness turns senseless. **LW**

Authoritarianism Doesn't Beat Covid

Government isn't good at much. Once every 100 years governments at all levels get a chance to tackle a pandemic. We know how it's going this time. Depression and poverty on the individual level. Bankruptcy on the business level. Having a patch-work of shutdowns via government fiat has not killed the virus, but may yet kill our human spirit.

Instead of giving the market a chance, governments followed the Rahm Emmanuel dictum, "never let a crisis go to waste." Public health experts engaged in a panic-stricken effort to stop the virus's spread through the force of law. So how has that worked out?

"A new Pew Research Center analysis finds that the global middle class encompassed 54 million fewer people in 2020 than the number projected prior to the onset of the pandemic," the organization announced. "Meanwhile, the number of poor is estimated to have been 131 million higher because of the recession."

If the folks at Pew can't convince you, the World Bank reports, "COVID-19 caused a global recession whose depth was surpassed only by the two World Wars and the Great Depression over the past century and a half," the report notes. "The pandemic has caused a severe loss of life, is tipping millions into extreme poverty, and is expected to inflict lasting scars that push activity and income well below their pre-pandemic trend for a prolonged period."

Poverty levels were falling drastically prior to the COVID lockdowns. Alexander Hammond of

Britain's Institute of Economic Affairs cites the World Bank report, "the global poverty rate, defined as the share of world's population living below the [international poverty line], has dropped from 35.9 percent in 1990 to 10 percent in 2015."

But, while the poverty level is headed the wrong way, conditions can be turned around. The Global Economic Prospects Report, "encourage[s] private sector investment and innovation by establishing secure and enforceable property rights, minimizing expropriation risk, creating a stable and confidence-inspiring policy environment, lowering the costs of doing business, and encouraging participation in the formal sector where productivity tends to be higher."

Meanwhile, Nevada operates at 50 percent occupancy, not because of market demand, but because the governor says so. **LW**

Luv Guv Part 3

Readers of this space know we keep a keen eye on the doings of New York governor Andrew Cuomo, dubbed the Luv Guv by his CNN talking-head brother, Chris.

As I write, eight women have come forward accusing Cuomo of being...well..a little too lovey dovey. Alyssa McGrath, 33, who currently serves as an administrative assistant in Cuomo's office, told the New York Times that Cuomo "looked down her shirt, quizzed her about her marital status, and told her she was beautiful, using an Italian phrase she had to ask her parents to interpret."

We can assume it wasn't "When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie, that's amore." **LW**

Luv Guv Part 3.5 Charity Begins at Home

Speaking of Chris Cuomo, he famously continued to host his show "Cuomo Prime Time" while suffering from COVID, and was somehow captured by a photographer naked in his backyard. The New York Times reports "Among those who benefited from the special treatment was the governor's brother, the CNN anchor Chris Cuomo, and his family, who were tested several times in the pandemic's early phase, this person said. The governor's mother, Matilda Cuomo, and at least one of his sisters were also able to take advantage

GOVERNMENT GONE WILD

of the state-administered tests.”

Well-connected New Yorkers were allowed to cut the line for tests and vaccines.

“This virus is the great equalizer. My brother, Chris, is positive for coronavirus. Found out this morning,” the governor said, without mentioning the preferential treatment the samples received. “But there’s a lesson in this. He’s an essential worker, a member of the press, so he’s been out there.”

Chris Cuomo, essential? Who knew.

Calls from Democratic leadership for him to resign have been ignored. The Luv Guv wants an investigation.

So do we. **LW**

Governor Trapper Misses Class

Imagine, you have the license and you’re the Governor of your state. You trap and kill a wolf. What could go wrong? Gov. Greg Gianforte of Montana found out. You see he didn’t take the mandated trapper training course. Since the Governor seemed to get the job done, despite missing the training, you’d think the state would let this one pass, he is the Governor after all.

No chance. “We’ve treated this as we would anybody” in a similar situation, Greg Lemon, a spokesman for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks said. “It’s important to us the integrity of our process, no matter who we’re dealing with, is maintained.”

Referring to the governor, Mr. Lemon said, “Everything had been done the way it was supposed to,” except for completing the wolf-trapper certification class.

“Trapping is part of our Montana way of life,” Mr. Gianforte said when running for the Governor’s seat with the support of the state’s trapper association. “Make no mistake, the effort to stop trapping in Montana is an attack on our heritage,” he said.

Why pick on the governor? Maybe because twenty years ago Mr. Gianforte illegally killed an elk and was issued a \$70 ticket by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Or, perhaps it was his assault on a reporter, leading to being sentenced to 40 hours of community service and 20 hours of anger management classes in 2017.

Paperwork, Governor. No paperwork, no

trapping, even in Montana. **LW**

My Cousin Sidney

Not really, of course. The ex-President would have done much better with the Joe Peci character from what is the favorite legal comedy for many lawyers. Counselor Powell stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the combusting Rudy Giuliani claiming over and over that voter fraud was rampant during the 2020 election. They offered no evidence with hopes, presumably, that some would show up. Alas, no evidence arrived.

Dominion Voting Systems, the voting machine company that Powell called out for fraud, has subsequently sued La Powell for some crazy number like \$1.3 billion. No doubt her malpractice coverage carrier is hard to reach at the moment.

The Bulwark reports, “Appearing on Newsmax on November 17, Powell said she had a video showing Dominion founder John Poulos bragging that ‘I can change a million votes, no problem at all.’ The video did not exist.”

Powell’s story got weirder from there. She said Dominion was “created in Venezuela by Hugo Chávez to make sure he never lost an election.” She claimed the machines had a secret algorithm that flipped votes, and George Soros’s “number-two person” was “one of the leaders of the Dominion project.”

When first sued, she claimed, “I have the evidence.” Now, Powell has hired attorneys to plead her case and for an “outside the box” defense, her counsel gets a C, for creative.

Powell’s reply to the Dominion suit acknowledges, she said “Democrats were attempting to steal the election and had developed a computer system to alter votes electronically.” Of course she said that the 2020 election was the “greatest crime of the century if not the history of the world.” But, here’s Sidney Powell’s legal defense, wait for it... “no reasonable person would conclude that the statements were truly statements of fact.”

That’s it, if you believed Sidney Powell’s claims, or still do, she now admits, with her future on the line, essentially, no one with any brains or common sense could have believed that her “statements were truly statements of fact.”

Sidney case rests on, I’m innocent, it was all a joke.

Good luck Sidney. **LW**

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CAN SOMEONE EARN \$1-MILLION IN A YEAR HONESTLY?

With the Fighting Illini launching March Madness Friday with a blow-out, I was all set to watch Saturday and Sunday as they led the Big 10 dominance through the tournament.

You can take the boy out of the Midwest but you can't take the Midwest out of the boy.

Of course, they blew the first game Saturday, leading a memorable Big 10 collapse leaving just two of its mighty nine qualifiers standing at the end of Sunday. It wasn't much compensation that my other conference, the Pac-12, won its first five games – especially because my grad school alma mater Stanford didn't even make the party.

What's a young man to do?

The good news is Sunday afternoon the History Channel featured four parts in six hours of their great 2012 docudrama, "The Men Who Built America." These episodes cover the late 19th and early 20th centuries and the entrepreneurs, inventors, investors and power-brokers whose truly exciting stories demonstrate the essence of America and capitalism.

Cornelius Vanderbilt in railroads. Andrew Carnegie in iron and steel. Thomas Edison and George Westinghouse in direct-current electricity. John D. Rockefeller in oil and natural gas. Nikola Tesla and J.P. Morgan in alternating-current electricity. Henry Ford and the auto.

Many remember them as robber barons and ruthless predatory monopolists. But they were also men of great courage and vision who were the ultimate benefactors of America and the modern world they wrought.

Without them or their equivalents, we and the whole modern world would be much poorer today.

They and their successors made today's poor live better than monarchs of old and helped open to today's well-off folks previously unimaginable vistas of knowledge, experience and human flourishing.

Really, Ron? ... Really.

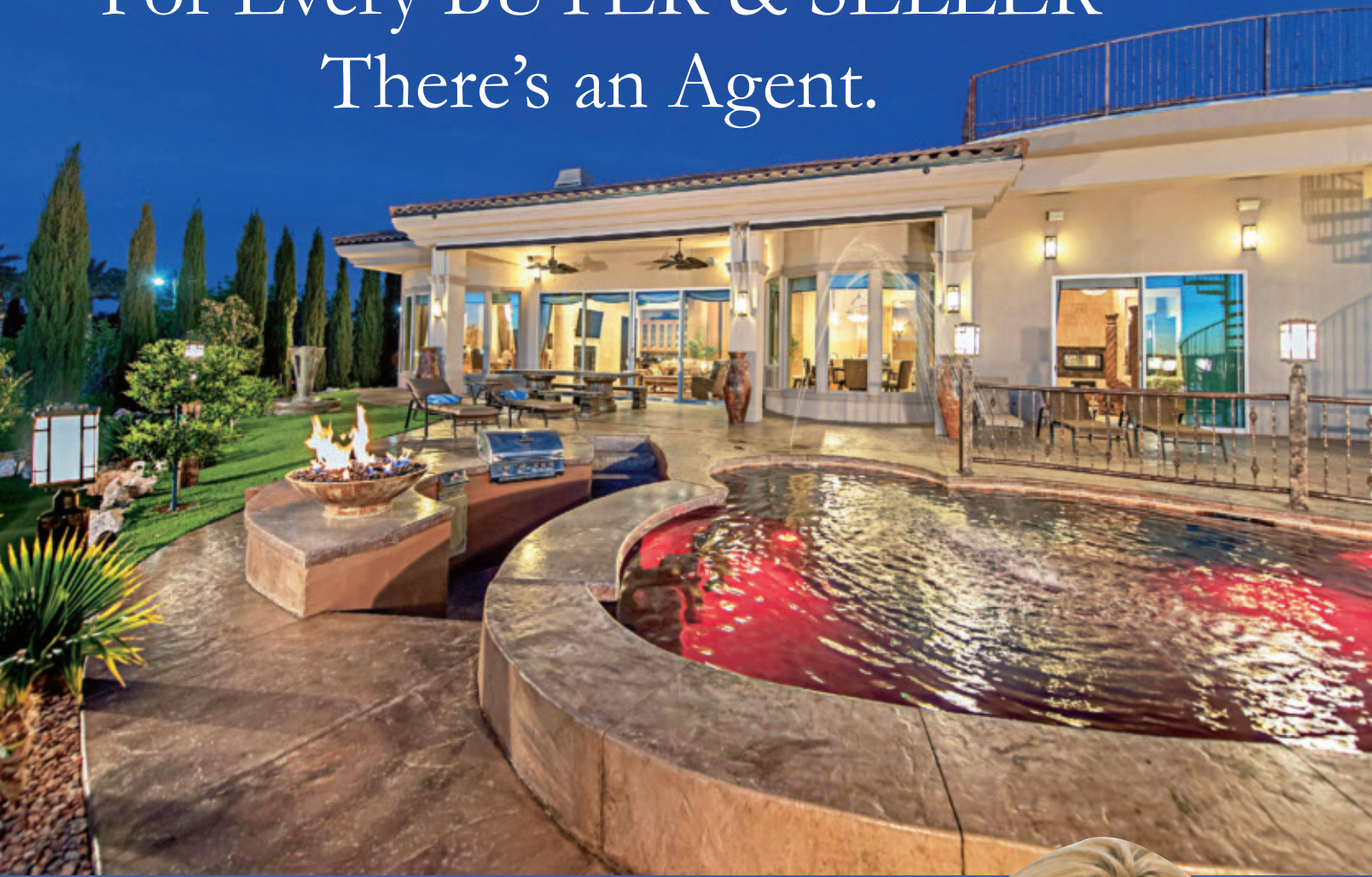
Of course, their ruthlessness and winner-take-all motif damaged more than benefitted some folks at the time, and thus engendered bitter enemies, opponents and some legitimate criticism. But it also raised much resentment-based illegitimate criticism and political opposition. Most notable, quotable and threatening of their political opponents was Democrat William Jennings Bryan.

The southern-Illinois-born prairie populist orator, a leading progressive of his day, a/k/a The Great Commoner, ran for president in 1896, 1900 and 1908, coming closest in 1896. At the 1896 nominating convention, he made his most famous speech, speaking in favor of free silver and declaring of the eastern moneyed interests, "They shall not nail us to a cross of gold!!!"

But he was also famous for the assertion he made while on the first whistle-stop presidential campaign tour that, "No man can honestly make \$1-million dollars in a year." A claim the documentary highlights. And the most significant point in understanding the men who built America and modern capitalism.

Bryan's claim completely misunderstands the nature of markets. He argues essentially there is a

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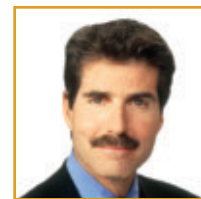
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John Stossel
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GET OFF MY PROPERTY!

Before dawn, dozens of union activists invaded a strawberry farm, shouting through bullhorns.

This frightened workers and infuriated the farm's owner, Mike Fahner, who thought that in America, owning property means you have a right to control access to that property -- your home is your castle, and all that.

Not in California, where politicians allow union organizers to raid farms.

"If I didn't allow them, I'm the one going to jail," says an outraged Fahner in my new video. "That is asinine."

The property invasion law's supporters say the United Farm Workers union deserves the exception to property rules because rich farmers abuse migrant workers.

I threw their argument at Fahner, who replied that it's absurd to say he abuses workers, because they keep coming back: "450 people travel 400 miles. ... Why in the world, if they were being abused, would they continue to return year after year?"

Because they don't know they have other options, says the union. They also don't know about their right to unionize, so unions must come onto farms to tell them about union benefits.

The union's predawn farm invasion didn't win over many of Fahner's employees. Fewer than 10% joined the union. Fahner already pays almost double California's minimum wage.

But the protests themselves impose a cost. He only has six weeks to harvest, pack, ship and process his strawberry plants. "If we miss that window, you destroy the fields."

In response to the farmers' complaints, California Deputy Attorney General Matthew Wise claimed, "Any access to the property is brief, unobtrusive..."

But the law allows union organizers to enter a farm three hours a day, up to 120 days a year. That's hardly "brief" or "unobtrusive."

This week, Fahner and another business, Fowler Packing, challenged the law at the Supreme Court. I hope the Court sends a strong message to California's union-owned politicians: Get off people's private property!

In earlier court battles, Wise said the exception to private property rules is justified because "workers remain isolated ... from the flow of information that is characteristic of modern society."

But that's not true. Maybe it was true in 1975 when the law passed, but now there's the internet. And cellphones.

"Every person has a cellphone in their pocket," says Fahner

"All have phones?" I ask.

"Yes," Fahner replies. "They know how to communicate through Facebook and through Twitter, much better than most!"

Even if they didn't, the union could always approach workers after work at their motels.

"All those union people had access to (the motel rooms). They could knock on their door and talk to them about their agenda."

Plus, the union has two radio stations.

But it's much more fun to intimidate businesses with predawn protests.

California officials now argue that this Supreme Court case "threatens ... public health." Leftist media like Vox quickly agrees, claiming that denying access to farms "could endanger government functions like fire inspection and workplace safety."

But that's not true, says Fahner's pro-bono attorney from the Pacific Legal Foundation, Joshua Thompson. He points out that "Those types of routine government inspections are searching in a reasonable manner. What happened here is the government is taking our property... just giving that to a third party to come on to proselytize. To use bullhorns to intimidate."

I asked the United Farm Workers union for their side of the story. They didn't respond.

So, in my video, Fahner gets the last word.

He uses it well, saying, "This is trespassing. You should be going to jail for doing this."



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FIGHT LEFT-WING LIES WITH ... FACTS

A couple of years ago, I gave a speech before a conservative, predominantly white audience.

I couldn't help but notice a tall, heavyset Black man, arms folded, standing in the back. From time to time, I would look at him, only to see him frown and shake his head, I assumed disapprovingly, when I made what I considered important points.

After the speech, he came up to me. "I am angry," he said. "Not at you -- at myself. I thought I was well informed. I read the news. I watch the news. I now see I've been manipulated by the party that I voted for all my life."

He then ticked off some of the points I made in my speech that he said surprised or even shocked him.

He said he had no idea that (according to a 2004 Thomas B. Fordham Institute study) 44% of Philadelphia public school teachers send their own school-age kids to private school. Yet the Democratic Party adamantly opposes school vouchers, which would give K-12 children of urban parents a chance at a better school.

He did not know that Democrats, including President Barack Obama, tried to end the Washington, D.C., Opportunity Scholarship Program. It is a lottery that allows fortunate parents to opt out of their local public school for a better private school. The program is so popular that there are far more parents who want to participate than there are seats. "What's more important," he asked me, "than making sure are kids are well educated?"

He did not know that, in 1965, 25% of Black kids

were born outside of wedlock, versus 70% today, a phenomenon that cannot be attributed to slavery and Jim Crow. He did not know that Barack Obama once said, "Children who grow up without a father are five times more likely to live in poverty and commit crime; nine times more likely to drop out of schools and 20 times more likely to end up in prison."

He said he was unaware that out of the approximately 390,000 slave owners in 1860, no more than a "handful" were Republican, according to conservative Dinesh D'Souza.

He did not know that more Republicans, as a percentage of their party, voted for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 than did Democrats. Nor did he know that more Republicans, as a percentage of their party, voted for the Voting Rights Act of 1965 than did Democrats. He did not know that Democrats founded the Ku Klux Klan and that one of its goals was to stop the spread of the Republican Party.

He said he was unaware that, before 1938, when the first federal minimum wage law was enacted, a Black teenager was *more* likely to be employed than a white teenager.

He did not know that, according to Harvard economist George Borjas, illegal immigration creates winners and losers. But the big losers are low- and unskilled American workers of color who compete against low- and unskilled illegal immigrant workers -- who place downward

pressure on the wages of the native-born.

The man did not know that, according to The Washington Post, in recent years, more unarmed whites have been killed by the police than unarmed Blacks. He was unaware of studies, including one by a Black Harvard economist, that found the police more hesitant, more reluctant, to pull the trigger on a Black suspect than on a white suspect. He did not know that, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, police killings of Blacks declined almost 80% from the late '60s through the 2010s, while police killings of whites have flatlined.

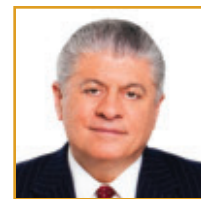
He did not know that, about racism, then-Sen. Barack Obama said: "The previous generation, the Moses generation, pointed the way. They took us 90% of the way there. We still got that 10% in order to cross over to the other side." This would be the same Obama who, when he became president, said: "The legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, discrimination in almost every institution of our lives -- you know, that casts a long shadow. And that's still part of our DNA that's passed on. We're not cured of it."

According to MSNBC political analyst Steve Kornacki, 43,000 votes in just three states would have switched the winner from Joe Biden to Donald Trump. This means all Republicans need to do is change the minds of a small percentage of the electorate.

The man at my speech proves this is more than doable.



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Judge Andrew P. Napolitano
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WHO WILL KEEP OUR LIBERTIES SAFE?

What if liberty and democracy are opposites?

What if the principle underlying liberty is to restrain the government to maximize individual autonomy? What if the principle underlying democracy is to unleash the government to give the people whatever they want?

What if personal liberty is an individual birthright because we are created in the image and likeness of God? What if just as God is perfectly free, we are perfectly free? What if our personal liberties are integral to our humanity? What if personal freedom -- which we are free to abuse -- is God's greatest gift, after life itself? What if, without freedom, we would not be fully human but subservient to whomever or whatever took our freedoms away or persuaded us to surrender them?

What if government is essentially the negation of liberty? What if some liberties should be negated? What if those liberties that should be negated consist of the liberty to violate the natural rights of others by taking their lives, liberties and properties? What if government does this every day because it wants to tell us how to live? What if no one consented to a government that takes property and freedom from the people it governs?

What if the right to worship or not, to think as you wish, say what you think, to publish what you say, to associate -- or not -- with whomever you choose, to defend yourself using the same means as the government and bad guys, to enjoy the right to privacy, to keep the government off your property and back and out of your face, to travel wherever and whenever, to engage in commercial intercourse on private property freely and without the need for government permission are natural, personal rights that no government -- whether by edict, legislation or referendum -- can morally dismiss or discard?

What if democracy offers the government tools to take our personal liberty and private property? What if, under a democracy, the government grows and liberty shrinks? What if that's because

the democratic government desperately wants to stay in power, and in order to do so, it takes wealth from some and gives it to others? What if those from whom it takes wealth never consented to the takings?

What if, in a democracy, the public treasury has turned into a public trough? What if, in a democracy, those in power find ways around laws intended to limit their power? What if the government is essentially the judge of its own powers? What if no matter which party is in power, the government acts as if it can right any wrong, regulate any behavior, tax any event, and insinuate itself into any controversy -- whether authorized by the Constitution or not?

What if the Constitution is the supreme law of the land? What if it was written to establish the government and to limit it? What if its amendments expressly guarantee that the government shall not interfere with the exercise of natural rights? What if the government does so anyway?

What if the government's excuse is always emergency or safety? What if it promises during "an emergency" that it will bring safety in return for a surrender of liberty? What if the Ninth Amendment commands that the government may not deny or disparage natural rights, no matter the emergency?

What if this liberty-for-safety-in-an-emergency offer is the Devil's bargain? What if surrendering liberty does not lead to safety but only more government?

What if -- since liberty is a personal birthright -- you can surrender your own liberty but you cannot your neighbor's? What if the government takes liberty whether voluntarily surrendered or not?

What if the theory of the Constitution is that the states voluntarily surrendered some of their sovereign powers to the federal government so that it can address federal issues that are spelled out in the Constitution? What if the theory of

the law
AMERICA'S JUDGE

state sovereignty is that the people in each state voluntarily surrendered some personal liberty in return for the protection of natural rights? What if the only liberty surrendered is the liberty to impair the natural rights of others?

What if no rational person has surrendered to government the liberty to walk the streets, to go to work, to operate and patronize lawful businesses and to control absolutely one's own face? What if the Fifth Amendment commands that the government cannot take property rights without paying the owner their fair market value?

What if the government and its friends in the media have scared the daylights out of hundreds of millions of Americans so that they will peacefully surrender their rights and livelihoods during the government's emergency, and thus bring about the government's version of safety?

What if there are no emergency powers in the Constitution? What if, during the War Between the States, the Supreme Court later ruled there was no emergency power to deny basic civil liberties? What if state legislatures are utterly without power to interfere with our daily choices in the name of emergency and safety? What if those same state legislatures cannot give to governors powers that they do not have?

What if all the COVID-19 restrictions on personal autonomy directly defy the Constitution? What if the government doesn't care? What if millions who lost personal autonomy don't care because they have accepted the Devil's bargain that somehow voluntary servitude will bring them temporary health and safety?

What if they have forgotten about the safety of their personal liberties? What if democracy and liberty can only co-exist when the government is faithful to the Constitution? What if the history of American government is its infidelity to the Constitution? What if liberty taken or surrendered is not returned? What will we do about it?

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RED STATES SHOULD REVOLT AGAINST THE 'BLUE-STATE BAILOUT'

Congressional Democrats are a runaway train with a drunk-on-power conductor in House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

No matter how much evidence pours in that the economy doesn't need \$1.9 trillion more in debt spending, the Pelosi locomotive keeps crashing down the track toward the financial cliff. Generations will have to pay for the joyride.

One of the worst features of the bill is the "blue-state bailout." Twenty-one Republican governors and one Democrat are protesting the "biased" formula for allocating some \$400 billion to the states. South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster complained that the bill "punishes" states that did the right thing by keeping their economies and businesses open during the pandemic.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said the bill "loots" the red states to pay for Democratic governors who have locked down their economies.

DeSantis has good reason to complain. Florida has a slightly higher population than New York, but New York gets \$2,799 per person, or twice as much money as the \$1,355 per person that Florida receives. In other words: Floridians are paying for New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's incompetence. That is precisely what is happening because the main factor in determining how much money each state gets is not its population but how high its unemployment rate has risen.

The three states that get the most significant share of the money are New York, California and New Jersey. These are three of the most liberal states with Democratic governors. That's not a coincidence.

Blue Pennsylvania gets more per person than red Ohio. Blue Massachusetts and red Tennessee are about the same size, but somehow, Massachusetts receives \$1.5 billion more in handouts. Connecticut gets twice as much bailout money as Utah, despite the fact that they are about the same size in population.

The governors' joint statement declares: "A state's ability to keep businesses open and people employed should not be a penalizing factor when distributing funds. If Congress is going to provide aid to states, it should be on an equitable population basis."

But it isn't. The way Congress passes out money is akin to assigning the highest performing students an F and the lowest performers an A. Maybe this is what the left means by "equity." The last shall be first.

Most red states have already balanced their budgets. So how will Republican governors use their free money?

Here's a better idea: Rather than squander the money with more bureaucratic spending and the risk of inflating a financial bubble in their state budgets in the years ahead, devote every penny of these funds to finance tax reform and relief. Eight states have no state income tax. Those states are Alaska, Nevada, South Dakota, Washington, Florida, Wyoming, Tennessee and Texas.

It would be rough justice for the blue-state bailout. If Democrats take the red states' money, Republican governors should make their states income-tax-free havens and steal the blue states' families and businesses. The states without income taxes create twice as many jobs as the high-tax blue states.

If you think California, Illinois, New Jersey and New York are melting down now, wait until they have to compete against regions of the country in the South and the mountain states with no income taxes.

Will the last person in New York please turn out the lights?



Froma Harrop
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BIDEN NEEDS TO TALK TOUGH ON IMMIGRATION -- FAST

Undocumented immigrants have been surging to the U.S. border, some wearing T-shirts with the Biden campaign logo and the words "Please let us in!" What gave them the idea that they could just show up and come on in?

President Joe Biden did.

Oh, Biden didn't exactly say that. He said to not come now, as we rebuild the immigration system. But that isn't the same as saying they can't come illegally later. And since it implies that later on, whoever wants to come can, the migrants can reasonably assume that an arrival now without papers will eventually be overlooked.

Adding to that impression, Biden made a show on his first day in office of ditching five of the Trump administration's immigration policies. Sure enough, human smugglers began telling desperate Central Americans that Biden opened the door and the smugglers will get them through it for \$6,000.

What did Biden think would happen? Officials at U.S. Customs and Border Protection warned the incoming administration of building pressure at the southern border. Fed by worsening poverty and gang violence in Central America and an improving U.S. economy, the rush had already begun in Donald Trump's last months.

It took until this weekend for Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to firmly say the border of the United States "is closed." Roberta Jacobson, White House coordinator for the southern border, got still more specific. "The message isn't 'Don't come now,'" she said. "It's 'Don't come in this way, ever.'"

The earlier sloppy rhetoric handed Republicans a political bomb they are throwing at Democrats. Not that they've entirely earned the right. Trump's card trick was to hurl insults at undocumented immigrants while looking the other way when American businesses employed them as low-cost labor. When Trump was asked whether he supported a national requirement to use E-Verify -- a database that would confirm a new hire's right to work in this country -- he said no. Asked why

not, he used the bull argument that farmers don't have computers. Turning off the job magnet is the only way to cut the flow of illegal workers.

That is also missing from Biden's proposal for comprehensive immigration reform. He would confer legal status to most of the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants. He would offer \$4 billion in aid aimed at making life in some Central American countries less terrible. And he would reform the U.S. refugee and asylum systems. All good things.

But a plan that doesn't seriously stop Americans from employing people who entered illegally or overstayed their visas is not going to secure the border. Not any more than Trump's dramatics over a border wall.

Politicians of both parties should know where the public stands on these matters. A Gallup poll last summer found that for the first time, Americans want more, not less, immigration. Also, nearly 8 in 10 Americans think immigration is good for the country, with some Republicans in agreement.

In a 2019 poll, 65 percent thought the situation at the border to be a major or important problem. And 75 percent favored hiring significantly more Border Patrol agents.

What we see is that Americans support a large immigration program but want it kept legal. Canada and Australia do both. How sensible of them.

An experienced politician who wants to retain public support for a humane immigration program should know by now that an orderly border is essential -- and that given the pressures, any show of laxness is a guarantee of disorder. On this issue, Biden can't be a nice guy without also being a tough guy.

He needs to show resolve and show it now.



Nicole Maroe
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1031 TIPS

You've heard the term 1031 exchange.

Maybe you own a rental house or two or more. You've owned the home(s) for a while, earned some great rental income, and you just looked, the appreciated value is incredible. Maybe it's time to roll that money into another property. But, you don't want to pay the taxes on that appreciation.

That's what 1031 exchanges are for. Remember, taxes paid later are the next best thing to not paying Uncle Sam at all.

First, 1031 exchanges are not for houses you live in, or residences. Homes in a 1031 exchange must be investment properties. Next, you benefit from a 1031 exchange only when the property you buy is of equal or greater value than the one you're selling—in other words, you're trading up.

It's a tax law, so there are rules you have to follow and the IRS doesn't provide any leeway when you are avoiding paying them. The rules are:

- 1) 1031 exchanges must be done with like-kind properties. Luckily, the definition of like-kind was dramatically expanded in 1984. You can use almost any property in the United States for a 1031 exchange.
- 2) You can identify up to three potential properties to buy as long as you close on at least one of them.
- 3) The properties eventual combined fair market value isn't more than 200% of your relinquished property.
- 4) You can ignore the 200% rule and identify any number of potential replacement properties for any amount as long as you buy 95% of the aggregate value of those properties. So you can identify properties five times the value of the property you are selling and thus break the 200% rule, but, you must then buy 95% of the combined values.
- 5) You must either close on or identify and report on the potential replacement property within 45 days of selling the original property. This time period includes weekends and holidays.
- 6) Then the clock ticks again. Once the replacement property is selected, the investor has 180 days from the date the original property was sold to close on the replacement property.
- 7) A general rule of thumb is that you can't use a 1031 exchange property if you lived in it for at least two of the past five years.
- 8) A fix and flip kind of property is regarded as property held for sale and doesn't qualify for a 1031 exchange.
- 9) A 1031 exchange can include build-to-suit exchanges, but the construction and property improvements must be completed by the 180-day time limit.

I didn't say it was easy, but, this is your money we're talking about. You'd rather have your price appreciation be invested in another property than

funding the U.S. government. It doesn't take much imagination to realize that rolling profits forward, tax-free, will build wealth in a hurry.

So, first decide you're going to do a 1031 exchange. Next, list your property for sale and include language in the listing paperwork saying you want to do a 1031 exchange. Then, start looking for that replacement property. You must formally identify one by day 45 after the relinquished property is sold. By the way, time flies in a 1031.

Next, choose a qualified intermediary. The IRS explicitly states you are not allowed to use your own attorney, employee, accountant, real estate agent, or a relative as the qualified intermediary. Be careful here. If you've lived in town a while you may remember Southwest Exchange, a "qualified" company that bilked \$97 million from real estate investors in the mid-2000s boom.

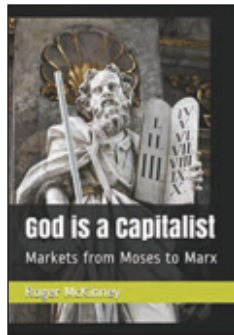
Complete the sale, with the buyer signing a purchase agreement which must clearly state that a 1031 exchange is taking place, because it affects a number of disclosures. Identify up to three replacement properties in 45 days. By identifying several replacement properties you ensure you remain within the rules if your first choice falls through.

Sign a contract for your identified properties, with contingencies in the agreement. Close on the replacement property. The intermediary will send your money to the seller's attorney or their title company. The closing process will then proceed like any other. Yet you've avoided the associated capital gains taxes. **LW**

Have that property appreciation work for you, not the IRS. Call me Nicole Maroe, Simply Vegas, Broker/Salesperson, at 702-303-8243 about 1031 exchanges or any other real estate questions. #BS.0145075



Doug French
douglasinvegas@gmail.com



IS GOD A CAPITALIST?

Popes normally stick to their bailiwick,
faith and worship.

But, Pope Francis' criticisms of capitalism came early and often, escalating since the beginning of the COVID pandemic. The pontiff describes free market thinking as "magic theories."

"The fragility of world systems in the face of the pandemic has demonstrated that not everything can be resolved by market freedom," Francis wrote in his encyclical late last year. "It is imperative to have a proactive economic policy directed at 'promoting an economy that favours productive diversity and business creativity' and makes it possible for jobs to be created, and not cut."

Roger McKinney doesn't see eye-to-eye with the pope. In his book "God is a Capitalist: Markets from Moses to Marx," McKinney "shows how Biblical economic principles answer the most vexing problems the world faces today, such as poverty, inequality and pollution."

While Pope Francis stumps for socialism, McKinney points out that the system Francis fancies has given us millions of deaths from the likes of Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia and Castro's Cuba.

McKinney's intellectual journey started with the so-called "father of capitalism" Adam Smith and Smith's "The Wealth of Nations." However, Smith didn't address where capitalism came from and the author discovered the work of the theologians at the University of Salamanca, Spain. He learned what Chinese intellectuals knew three centuries before: "God is a capitalist."

As he gives away in the subtitle, McKinney couches the book in good versus evil, capitalism versus Marxism framework. That debate, in McKinney's view, started with Moses in 1500 BC, writing "Moses was one of the world's most vigorous proponents of free markets while pharaoh was an early Marxist."

The author describes himself as a conservative evangelical when it comes to theology and a proponent of the Austrian school on economic issues. He leans heavily on Hayek, Mises, and other Austrians to support the capitalist argument. McKinney used the Austrian Business Cycle Theory to great effect in his 2014 book on stock market investing, "Financial Bull Riding."

An interesting inclusion is Hemult Schoeck and his book "Envy: A Theory of Social Behavior." McKinney writes, "Schoeck argued that Christianity catalyzed economic development and capitalism by finding a way to suppress envy without eliminating it."

In McKinney's meatiest chapter, entitled "Christian Capitalism," the author returns to the School of Salamanca to remind us that it was theologians who provided the initial insights into economics. The aforementioned Adam Smith taught moral philosophy, not economics.

McKinney says in the chapter that Murray Rothbard, "Mr. Libertarian," based his political views on sound economics, and had he stopped there, "he would have carved a place for himself in history and found good company with his teacher, Ludwig von Mises, and another great student of

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(CAN SOMEONE EARN \$1-MILLION IN A YEAR HONESTLY?)

continued from page 30)

labor or similar externally-imposed standard of value that should prevail in commerce; and using that standard, no one could work enough hours in a year to earn anywhere near \$1-million.

But an externally imposed earnings standard is not how the world works, nor should it. To promote maximum aggregate human well-being and fairness in a society, labor and everything else should transact at some mix of the values placed on it by its buyers and sellers. And that's what market systems do: find the market price between those two values that maximizes economic output in the society and thus aggregate human wellbeing and fairness.

When an exchange of goods or services takes place, the price is below the buyer's willingness to pay and above the seller's willingness to accept. Otherwise, one side or the other will not make the deal.

The bargaining that takes place in markets determines from the supply and demand for the item being valued what its social value is, and that's the sale price. It provides a consumer surplus, the difference between the consumer's willingness to pay and the price; and a producer surplus, the difference between the seller's willingness to accept and the price.

A person digging a ditch with a pick may work very hard and produce very little value. An inventor, entrepreneur, investor, etc. may, on the other hand, produce huge value for others and thereby honestly earn that \$1-million a year. **LW**

(BOOMS DON'T REPEAT, BUT THEY RHYME

continued from page 12)

"To the extent it is used I fear it's often for illicit finance. It's an extremely inefficient way of conducting transactions, and the amount of energy that's consumed in processing those transactions is staggering."

Be that as it may, traders Moritz Seibert and Jason Shapiro agree "clearly, the risk of not owning Bitcoin is higher and greater than the risk of owning Bitcoin."

They said own, not leverage. **LW**

(IS GOD A CAPITALIST?)

continued from page 44)

Mises', Hayek. But Rothbard was an atheist and that emboldened him to join forces for a while with another atheist, Ayn Rand, who promoted a variation on the theme of libertarianism. Rothbard thought it necessary to construct an atheist system of morality and considered himself capable of creating one."

A few lines later, McKinney writes, "Obviously, Christians should never take their morals from atheists." From conversations with Murray, I remember him as more of an agnostic than atheist. My memory is supported by Murray's friend David Gordon, who told Jeff Deist, "Well, I think he was an atheist, not out of hostility to religion. It was more that he didn't find the arguments for the existence of God very convincing. Now toward the end of his life, I think he just said something like "if there is a God, it would be a being that we really can't know anything about or would be completely different to anything we would understand."

Gordon continued, "But I don't think that — say, like the Randians would say, if you're not an atheist, you're really irrational. He would not take that view. He was very tolerant, whatever people thought. That was just his understanding. One of his great friends was the Jesuit libertarian Father James Sadowsky and certainly Sadowsky, being a Jesuit, it never affected their friendship and I think that the existence of God or atheism wasn't really a central issue for Rothbard."

It's hard to imagine that McKinney doesn't believe Murray Rothbard is in the same company as Mises and Hayek. History says otherwise. Besides this misstep, McKinney has written an fascinating book which asks and answers an intriguing question. **LW**

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FIXING POST OFFICE MESS

There is likely no more loathsome federal bureaucrat than the aptly-named Louis DeJoy, who, despite supposedly being a successful businessman, has the sure-fire winner of a business plan to resurrect the US Postal Service (USPS)--raise prices and slow service. Sounds perfect.

DeJoy (translated as 'lose happiness') plans among other things to raise stamp and shipping prices and wants to have up to five days to deliver first-class letters, instead of having a goal to deliver them nationwide in one to three days, the Wall Street Journal reports. The USPS has a monopoly on first class delivery, so like all monopolists DeJoy wants higher prices and awful

service. All in the name of saving the USPS.

Using the same logic as shooting a hole in the barn and then painting the target around it to determine marksmanship accuracy, the USPS is trying to achieve its goals by gaming the metrics. "Last year, first-class mail hit its service target 89.7% on average, well below its 96% goal," write Jennifer Smith and Paul Ziobro for the WSJ.

There are 30,000 USPS locations and DeJoy assures us he doesn't plan to close a bunch of them but, "The plan does call for consolidating an unspecified number of low-traffic stations and city Post Office branches with other nearby locations," according to Smith and Ziobro.

You may have heard that The U.S. Constitution, in 1789, authorized Congress to establish "Post Offices and post Roads." But, as James I. Campbell wrote in his book "The Last Monopoly" the 1792 postal act limited the postal monopoly to "letter or letters, packet or packets, other than newspapers."

"Until the Postal Act of 1863," Campbell wrote, "intercity letters were either held at the destination post office for collection or delivered by a 'letter carrier' who acted as independent contractor and charged the addressee two cents, one of which went to the Post Office." The Postal Code of 1872 extended the postal monopoly to the delivery of local letters.

The USPS lost money in each of the past 14 years. For its latest fiscal year the post office lost \$9.2 billion.

Prior to the 2020 election, the Brookings Institute detailed Donald Trump's attempt to shutdown the USPS for his political advantage. Trump stated, "They [Democrats] want 25 billion dollars—billion—for the post office. Now, they need that money in order to have the post office work so it can take all of these millions and millions of ballots. But if they don't get those two items, that means you can't have universal mail-in voting because they're not equipped to have it."

Rashwan Ray called Trump's ham-handedness, "not only an attack on fair and equitable voting and the democratic process. It is also an attack on the Constitution, U.S. veterans, and racial equality."

There was a time the post office was in the censorship business. Eric Longley wrote in "Mencken vs. The Post Office," the following,

"Mencken's willingness to do battle with the Post Office, once the battle was forced on him, can be explained, not only by his self-interest, but by his hostility toward 'Comstockery' and toward Post Office censorship."

"Comstockery" was, apparently, coined by George Bernard Shaw and adopted by Mencken and others to describe the antics of vice-crusader Anthony Comstock, founder of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice.

The Post Office deemed Mencken's magazine The American Mercury as obscene based on objections from the Watch and Ward Society. The offending piece was Herbert Asbury's story "Hatrack" featuring a small-town prostitute who serviced Catholic men in the Protestant cemetery and Protestant men in the Catholic cemetery.

She "sought forgiveness, and might have been reformed if this had been granted. However, the self-righteous towns people refused to forgive, and shunned her when she came into church on Sunday."

Longley wrote, "Mencken called the Post Office ruling 'purely gratuitous and malicious,' since the magazine had already been sent through the mail. Mencken, however, was determined to fight the Post Office's decision that the Mercury was obscene."

While Mencken won his case against the Watch and Ward Society, Longley described the court's ruling in his case against the Post Office as "an unmemorable opinion from the Second Circuit Court."

So, should DeJoy fix the USPS by making it worse? Maybe there is another way. Lew Rockwell wrote in 2009 for mises.org, "Writing in The State and Revolution in 1917, Vladimir Lenin summed up the economic aim of socialism as follows: "To organize the whole economy on the lines of the postal service...."

Competitive capitalism is the answer. **LW**

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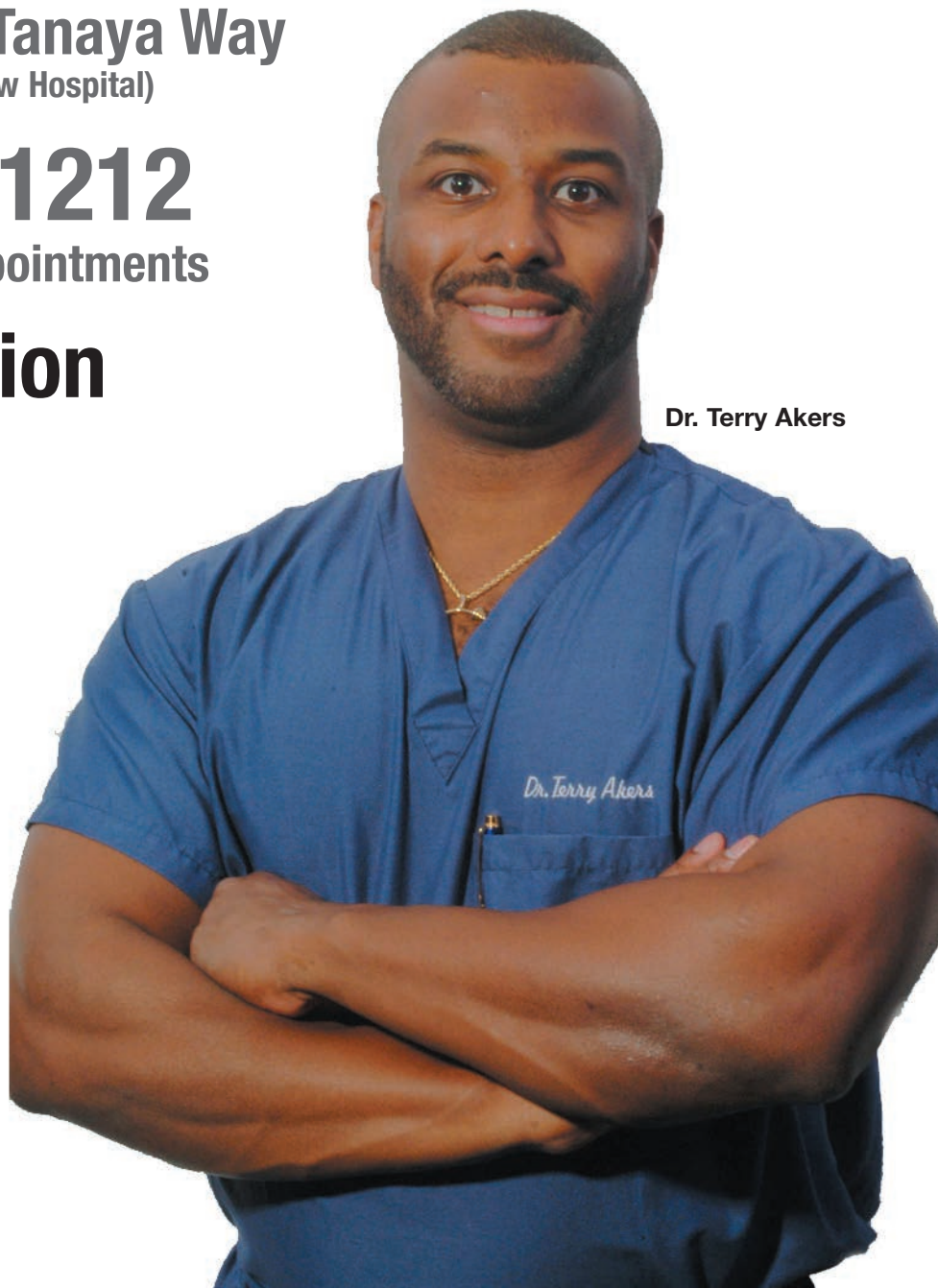
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