

November 23, 2011

Thomas Sowell on Alice in Liberal Land.

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If Alice could visit the world of liberal rhetoric and assumptions today, she might find similarly illogical and bizarre thinking. But people suffering in the current economy might not find it nearly as entertaining as "Alice in Wonderland."

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the world envisioned by today's liberals is that it is a world where other people just passively accept whatever "change" liberals impose. In the world of Liberal Land, you can just take for granted all the benefits of the existing society, and then simply tack on your new, wonderful ideas that will make things better.

For example, if the economy is going along well and you happen to take a notion that there ought to be more home ownership, especially among the poor and minorities, then you simply have the government decree that lenders have to lend to more low-income people and minorities who want mortgages, ending finicky mortgage standards about down payments, income and credit histories.

That sounds like a fine idea in the world of Liberal Land. Unfortunately, in the ugly world of reality, it turned out to be a financial disaster, from which the economy has still not yet recovered. Nor have the poor and minorities. ...

Peter Ferrara says there is no excuse for Obamanomics.

The history of America's recessions is provided at the website of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). Before this last recession, since the Great Depression recessions in America have lasted an average of 10 months, with the longest previously lasting 16 months. Yet here we are 47 months after the last recession started, and we still have no real recovery.

Instead, unemployment has been stuck at 9% or above for the longest period since the Great Depression. Unemployment for blacks has remained over 15% for over 2 years, with Hispanic unemployment stuck well into double digits over that time as well. Teenage unemployment has persisted at nearly 25%, with black teenage unemployment still nearly 40%.

The U6 unemployment rate, reflecting all of the unemployed still wanting work and the underemployed who can't get full time work, is still 16.2%. That includes an army of the unemployed or underemployed of over 26 million Americans. And that still doesn't fully count the millions of Americans who have given up and dropped out of the work force altogether.

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Yes, I know NBER declared the recession technically over in June, 2009, still the longest recession on record since the Depression. But the point is next month will be 4 years since the recession started, and there is still no sustained real recovery. Or as economist John Lott has emphasized, Obamanomics has produced the worst recovery since the Great Depression. ...

Victor Davis Hanson calls it economic quackery.

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Borrowing over \$4 trillion terrified investors and business owners — especially given campaign promises that Obama would not be so “unpatriotic” as to match in three years the debt that Bush had piled up in eight. After all, no one could accuse the Bush administration of having left the economy moribund by slashing government, running balanced or surplus budgets, reducing the national debt, and in tight-fisted fashion denying federal bailouts to reckless banks and Wall Street firms. Apparently, Barack Obama saw the Bush administration’s economic transgressions not as warnings, but as a green light to borrow and spend even more on a predetermined redistributive agenda (“Never let a crisis go to waste”) — as if once a Republican administration had trespassed, conservatives could hardly throw stones at even greater sinners. ...

It's not just the GOP that see he's a loser, **two Dem pollsters say it is time for Hillary.**

When Harry Truman and Lyndon Johnson accepted the reality that they could not effectively govern the nation if they sought re-election to the White House, both men took the moral high ground and decided against running for a new term as president. President Obama is facing a similar reality—and he must reach the same conclusion.

He should abandon his candidacy for re-election in favor of a clear alternative, one capable not only of saving the Democratic Party, but more important, of governing effectively and in a way that preserves the most important of the president's accomplishments. He should step aside for

the one candidate who would become, by acclamation, the nominee of the Democratic Party: Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Never before has there been such an obvious potential successor—one who has been a loyal and effective member of the president's administration, who has the stature to take on the office, and who is the only leader capable of uniting the country around a bipartisan economic and foreign policy.

Certainly, Mr. Obama could still win re-election in 2012. Even with his all-time low job approval ratings (and even worse ratings on handling the economy) the president could eke out a victory in November. But the kind of campaign required for the president's political survival would make it almost impossible for him to govern—not only during the campaign, but throughout a second term. ...

Since he feels free to weigh in on just about any topic, [Peter Wehner](#) wonders why Obama has nothing to say about Occupy violence. *I'm puzzled.*

Given all of the violence, the lawlessness, the bigotry and the ugliness the Occupy Wall Street movement (and its off-spring) represent, why hasn't the president spoken out—in a clear, forceful voice – against it?

It can't be because he thinks it's none of his business. This is a man, after all, who injected his thoughts on the arrest of Professor Henry Louis Gates and in the process accused the Cambridge police of acting "stupidly." Obama has spoken out about the location of the Ground Zero mosque and the 2016 Olympic Games; the reaction of Republican audiences at GOP debates; and the Penn State child rape scandal. He's suggested that racism is a driving force in the Tea Party movement. He gives sermons on civility in public discourse. And he's made his picks for the NCAA Final Four on ESPN. Obama talks all the time, on almost every issue under the sun. And yet when it comes to the actions of protesters at the various Occupy movements around America, he suddenly goes practically mute. ...

Occupy returns the favor with a member asking for a moment of silence for the White House shooter. [Wehner](#) with the story.

Here is a [clip](#), courtesy of The Daily Caller, in which a protester from Occupy San Diego told his fellow protesters, "I think we should have a moment of silence in solidarity for the person they said was from the Washington, D.C. Occupy. Maybe, why did he feel the need to shoot the White House window today? So I think we should have a moment in solidarity for the White House, and for the guy that shot at the White House today. I don't know if you heard, but someone shot at the White House window today."

Can you imagine the round-the-clock (negative) media coverage if (a) a person from a Tea Party rally was arrested for shooting at the White House and (b) if a Tea Party member from

another city had asked for a “moment of silence in solidarity” with the alleged shooter? It would produce days of front page, above-the-fold coverage in the New York Times and spawn a thousand editorial and columns from liberals, to say nothing of providing MSNBC and CNN with several months worth of programming, hand-wringing, and sermonizing.

I persist in my belief that the media double standard as it relates to coverage of the Tea Party v. Occupy Wall Street (and its progeny) illustrates, in ways few other recent stories have, the widespread bias that exists in large sectors of the media. As I’ve argued before, many reporters and anchors undoubtedly believe they’re objective, detached, and applying a single standard to both movements, which in some respects makes the problem worse. The layers of delusion and self-delusion are astonishing.

Peter Wehner also laid out the unwatchable Mika Brzezinski in a Contentions post he later apologized for. But, it's still fun.

If you want to see a revealing look at the emotional, and not simply political, investment liberals have in the Occupy Wall Street Movement, [watch](#) Mika Brzezinski and Jeffrey Sachs respond to Newt Gingrich’s comments over the weekend that the protesters should get a job and take a bath. Their rage is uncontained, almost tear-inducing, and comical. The whole crew and conversation, with one liberal egging on the other, is a fantastic window into the dominant mindset of modern-day liberal journalists.

One can see that without Joe Scarborough’s presence, the show is essentially the morning version of the shows hosted by [Ed Schultz](#) and Rachel Maddow (though Maddow is a good deal more intelligent and informed than Brzezinski). Speaking of which: One of her colleagues would do Brzezinski a huge favor if they pulled her aside and explained to her the difference between “literal” and “figurative.” During this short segment Brzezinski claims Gingrich was “literally” standing on his “high horse” and his words “literally made my skin crawl.”

Actually, neither was “literally” true. There was no horse on the stage where Gingrich appeared, and Mika’s skin wasn’t crawling, at least from what we can tell. Then again, what would you expect from a woman who, in mocking Sarah Palin, [named](#) Abraham Lincoln as one of her favorite founders?

Jewish World Review

Alice in Liberal Land

by Thomas Sowell

"Alice in Wonderland" was written by a professor who also wrote a book on symbolic logic. So it is not surprising that Alice encountered not only strange behavior in Wonderland, but also strange and illogical reasoning — of a sort too often found in the real world, and which a logician would be very much aware of.

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For example, if the economy is going along well and you happen to take a notion that there ought to be more home ownership, especially among the poor and minorities, then you simply have the government decree that lenders have to lend to more low-income people and minorities who want mortgages, ending finicky mortgage standards about down payments, income and credit histories.

That sounds like a fine idea in the world of Liberal Land. Unfortunately, in the ugly world of reality, it turned out to be a financial disaster, from which the economy has still not yet recovered. Nor have the poor and minorities.

Apparently you cannot just tack on your pet notions to whatever already exists, without repercussions spreading throughout the whole economy. That's what happens in the ugly world of reality, as distinguished from the beautiful world of Liberal Land.

The strange and bizarre characters found in "Alice in Wonderland" have counterparts in the political vision of Liberal Land today. Among the most interesting of these characters are those elites who are convinced that they are so much smarter than the rest of us that they feel both a right and a duty to take all sorts of decisions out of our incompetent hands — for our own good.

In San Francisco, which is Liberal Land personified, there have been attempts to ban the circumcision of newborn baby boys. Fortunately, that was nipped in the bud. But it shows how widely the self-anointed saviors of Liberal Land feel entitled to take decisions out of the hands of mere ordinary citizens.

Secretary of the Treasury Timothy Geithner says, "We're facing a very consequential debate about some fundamental choices as a country." People talk that way in Liberal Land. Moreover, such statements pass muster with those who simply take in the words, decide whether they sound nice to them, and then move on.

But, if you take words seriously, the more fundamental question is whether individuals are to remain free to make their own choices, as distinguished from having collectivized choices, "as a country" — which is to say, having choices made by government officials and imposed on the rest of us.

The history of the 20th century is a painful lesson on what happens when collective choices replace individual choices. Even leaving aside the chilling history of totalitarianism in the 20th century, the history of economic central planning shows it to have been such a widely recognized disaster that even communist and socialist governments were abandoning it as the century ended.

Making choices "as a country" cannot be avoided in some cases, such as elections or referenda. But that is very different from saying that decisions in general should be made "as a country" — which boils down to having people like Timothy Geithner taking more and more decisions out of our own hands and imposing their will on the rest of us. That way lies madness exceeding anything done by the Mad Hatter in "Alice in Wonderland."

That way lie unfunded mandates, nanny state interventions in people's lives, such as banning circumcision — and the ultimate nanny state monstrosity, ObamaCare.

The world of reality has its problems, so it is understandable that some people want to escape to a different world, where you can talk lofty talk and forget about ugly realities like costs and repercussions. The world of reality is not nearly as lovely as the world of Liberal Land. No wonder so many people want to go there.

Forbes

[There Are No Longer Any Excuses For Obamanomics](#)

by Peter Ferrara

The history of America's recessions is provided at the website of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). Before this last recession, since the Great Depression recessions in America have lasted an average of 10 months, with the longest previously lasting 16 months. Yet here we are *47 months* after the last recession started, and we still have no real recovery.

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recession started, and there is still no sustained real recovery. Or as economist John Lott has emphasized, Obamanomics has produced the worst recovery since the Great Depression.

Obama apologists can't continue to blame the depths of the previous recession, and they can't because the historical record makes plain that the worse the recession, the stronger the recovery. Based on that historical record, we should be completing the second year of a booming economy by now.

In the second year of the Reagan recovery, real economic growth boomed by 6.8%, the highest in 50 years. In the first two years of that recovery, 7.6 million new jobs were created, on the way to 20 million jobs created during the first 7 years. Presently, we are still 6 million jobs below the peak before the last recession, *four years ago*.

The chief excuse of the Obama apologists is "this time is different," citing the book of that title, *This Time Is Different: Eight Centuries of Financial Folly*, by Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth S. Rogoff. But the theme of that book is exactly the opposite of what it is cited for here – that "this time is different" is never true.

The apologists cite the book to argue that what we have suffered this time was not just a recession, but a financial crisis, and the data in the book shows, they argue, that recovery from a financial crisis takes a lot longer than recovery from a recession.

But that is not the experience of the American, free market, capitalist economy. The experience of the American economy is reported in full at the National Bureau of Economic Research, as cited above – recessions since the Great Depression previously have lasted an average of 10 months, with the longest previously 16 months, and the deeper the recession the stronger the recovery. That is the standard by which the performance of Obamanomics is to be judged. Which of those American recessions were a "financial crisis" that breaks the pattern?

The data discussed in the book, by contrast, "covers sixty-six countries over nearly eight centuries." It "goes back as far as twelfth century China and medieval Europe." The data "come from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America, and Oceania." The experience from 12th century China, medieval Europe, spendthrift demagogues and socialist economies from Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia, do not set the standard of expectations for post depression, free market, capitalist America over the last 70 years, the most powerful economic engine in the history of the world.

The data in the book is marshaled instead to explain the fundamental principles common to the data, and why, in fact, "this time is different" is actually always wrong. Seizing upon the data in the book to try to give some sort of pass to Obamanomics for failing the economic performance standards of American history is just political propaganda.

Moreover, the concept of a recession is well-defined. It is two consecutive quarters or more of negative GDP growth. By that standard, we can rigorously define when a recession starts and when it ends. But trying to label a recession as a "financial crisis," for the purposes of giving policymakers a free pass on their performance, is not similarly so well-defined. Again, which of the postdepression recessions in America was a "financial crisis" that shows a break in the pattern?

The only previous American economic performance, at least within the last 100 years, that begins to look like the results of Obamanomics is the 1930s, which makes sense because that is when America followed similar policies to Obamanomics. That is when Obama's unreconstructed, naïve, Rip Van Winkle, Keynesian economics first arose. It failed then for the same obvious reasons it has failed now.

Increasing government spending, deficits and debt does not promote economic growth and prosperity, as Obama and ineducable Democrats to this day believe. What promotes economic growth and prosperity is incentives for increased production, as Reaganomics proved 30 years ago for anyone sentient who was paying attention.

Moreover, as I argue in my new publication, *Obama and the Crash of 2013*, unless the policies of Obamanomics are changed, the result will be another severe recession in 2013 that will make the results overall of the Obama years look similar to the 1930s. That should not be a surprise, because Obama is modeling his Administration and its policies and political strategies on the Franklin Roosevelt years.

Most people do not know that already enacted in current law for 2013 are increases in the top tax rates of virtually every major federal tax. That is because the tax increases of Obamacare become effective that year, and the Bush tax cuts expire, which Obama has refused to renew for the nation's small businesses, job creators and investors.

As a result, if the Bush tax cuts expire just for singles making over \$200,000 per year, and couples making over \$250,000, in 2013 the top two income tax rates will jump nearly 20%, the capital gains tax rate will soar by nearly 60%, the tax on corporate dividends will nearly triple, and the Medicare payroll tax will leap by 62% for those disfavored taxpayers.

This is on top of the U.S. corporate income tax rate, which is virtually the highest in the industrialized world. Yet under President Obama there is no relief in sight. Instead he continually proposes still further tax increases on American business. Indeed, President Obama is already campaigning all over America for still further tax increases, on top of his 2013 increases.

In addition, the blizzard of new regulatory costs and barriers imposed by the Obama Administration will be building to a crescendo by 2013 as well. The EPA is effectively imposing cap and trade by administrative regulation under the Clean Air Act, without Congressional approval. EPA is joining with the Interior Department to leash the private sector from traditional American energy production. The new regulatory burdens from Dodd-Frank are scheduled to flow, as are the regulatory burdens of Obamacare, including the employer mandate, which is already massacring jobs.

Then there is the Fed and the effects of its monetary policy. When the Fed follows a typical pattern of cutting off its monetary crack right after the election to forestall inflation, that will be contractionary as well.

Art Laffer predicted the Coming Crash of 2011 on the basis of the expiration of the Bush tax cuts on the upper income earners alone. Those tax rate increases were extended to 2013 in December, 2010 out of fear that prediction was right. But now, in 2013, in addition to those tax rate increases, we have all of the tax increases of Obamacare, the further exploding costs of

Obama's building regulatory blizzard, and the contractionary effect of the Fed's monetary policies, all at the same time.

Unless we reverse course, the result will be one big, bad crash in 2013, quite analogous to the double dip of 1937.

National Review

Obama's Economic Quackery

Obama has learned how to turn a natural recovery into a serial slowdown.

by Victor Davis Hanson

Sometimes the wrong medicine can make a struggling patient far sicker than he would have been had he been allowed to recover naturally. Western medicine began with the premise that the physician either must know how to cure the patient or simply leave him alone — but above all not make him worse through harmful treatment.

As 2011 ends, we have discovered how to turn a natural recovery from a near-record recession into a serial slowdown. Almost every haphazard, ad hoc attempt by Barack Obama to jumpstart the economy has only further stalled it. The president has never articulated a diagnosis of why the economy was stalled, never outlined a coherent treatment plan, and so cannot offer a prognosis. If we have a sick budget, a Byzantine tax code, bankrupting entitlements and long-term debt burden, and a costly imported-oil bill, one would never know all that from the president, who has never offered any sort of plan for addressing these crises.

Borrowing over \$4 trillion terrified investors and business owners — especially given campaign promises that Obama would not be so “unpatriotic” as to match in three years the debt that Bush had piled up in eight. After all, no one could accuse the Bush administration of having left the economy moribund by slashing government, running balanced or surplus budgets, reducing the national debt, and in tight-fisted fashion denying federal bailouts to reckless banks and Wall Street firms. Apparently, Barack Obama saw the Bush administration's economic transgressions not as warnings, but as a green light to borrow and spend even more on a predetermined redistributive agenda (“Never let a crisis go to waste”) — as if once a Republican administration had trespassed, conservatives could hardly throw stones at even greater sinners.

Government's “shovel-ready” projects proved chimaeras — as if anyone could ever believe that tenured bureaucrats could spend such vast borrowed sums as efficiently as millions of private individuals responsible for their own success or failure. The irony is that drilling for more American gas and oil would, in fact, both be shovel-ready job stimulus and cost the government almost nothing; however, this was unacceptable given the opposition of the green insiders and the likelihood that corporations would profit.

Extending food stamps and unemployment benefits to record levels might in theory have sounded humane, but it eroded incentives, depressed the dependent recipients, and created no new jobs. Such gargantuan new expenditures were about as effective in combatting unemployment as prescribing a third round of antibiotics for a resistant strain of infection. A theme in many of Obama's vast new spending schemes is that we are all supposed to believe

publicly that the new largesse is the right thing to do, even if we privately shrug that it inevitably ensures quite the opposite result, given unchanging human nature.

Blaming sluggish growth on everything from ATM machines, tsunamis, and the Europeans to private-jet owners and the top 1 percent of taxpayers only reminded the general public how little those in charge knew what was going on, and reminded the particular targets why they were smart to hoard cash, not buy, and not hire — in fear of new taxes, new regulations, new costs like Obamacare, and a new antagonism from an accusatory commander-in-chief himself. Blaming the patient — uncompetitive, soft, lazy — is the worst thing a doctor can do.

If one were trying to dream up a way for the Energy Department to ensure fewer jobs, less energy, and higher costs, it would be hard to match the record of Secretary Chu. We have spent billions subsidizing inefficient solar- and wind-power companies with political connections; the results have been little or no new energy, but lots more federal debt. Thanks to Obama, the “alternative energy” industry is now discredited, as “millions of green jobs” have been downgraded to the status of “stimulus” and “investments.” Apparently, when crony capitalists and insider con men put the word “green” in front of their schemes, we are supposed to suspend moral judgment, as if they purchased medieval indulgences exempting them from scrutiny

Stopping offshore oil exploration, curbing drilling in Alaska and the continental United States, and postponing a proposed oil pipeline from Canada are the sorts of luxuries that cash-laden, energy-rich postmodern societies can enjoy. But for now, unfortunately, we remain a nation of 150 million drivers, \$15 trillion in debt, with an annual imported-oil tab of well over half a trillion dollars.

So far, no one in this administration can explain to the public how and why “Cash for Clunkers,” Obamacare, buying into GM, threatening Boeing, the second stimulus, or new regulations on business were supposed to create more jobs or economic growth. The common denominator in all these failed efforts is the assumption that a technocrat with an Ivy League certificate knows far more about business than those who conduct it. Usually the more suspect the doctor, the more framed degrees on the waiting-room wall.

In a psychological sense, it certainly confused the public to demonize Wall Street and the top income earners, while engaging in crony-capitalist insider deals with them — not to mention hosting these demonized fat cats in hopes of snaring their contributions. Was Obama a fiery populist, a Bill Clinton starstruck corporate wannabe, or a complete cynic who assured a select few donors and supporters on Wall Street that all his fiery bombast did not apply to a Jeffrey Immelt, Warren Buffett, George Soros, or Bill Gates? When millions of small contractors and professionals were lumped in with hyper-rich insiders such as Jon Corzine and Hank Paulson as the suspect “millionaires and billionaires” who were not paying “their fair share,” are we surprised that many in the private sector are sitting this recovery out?

Dr. Obama faults his patients for losing their old industriousness and competitiveness — as if we were deliberately failing to make enough money for our more enlightened doctor to redistribute to more deserving others. And he thinks that such lackadaisicalness is at the heart of the present slowdown. But if that is true, our collective sloth may well have come about because Obama’s own policies encourage just those traits that apparently so bother him. After three years, we can fairly summarize that Obama has been anti-empirical: He came in with an agenda to redistribute income, expand government, raise taxes, emphasize class divisions, and deflate

the American profile abroad — and he quickly turned petulant when all that worsened an economy that was never to be his main interest but was necessary to fund his fantasies.

“Do no harm” is the first commandment for any good physician. In contrast, daily poisoning the ill patient with a medicine chest of toxic pills is the work of a quack.

WSJ

The Hillary Moment

President Obama can't win by running a constructive campaign, and he won't be able to govern if he does win a second term.

by Patrick Caddell and Douglas Schoen

When Harry Truman and Lyndon Johnson accepted the reality that they could not effectively govern the nation if they sought re-election to the White House, both men took the moral high ground and decided against running for a new term as president. President Obama is facing a similar reality—and he must reach the same conclusion.

He should abandon his candidacy for re-election in favor of a clear alternative, one capable not only of saving the Democratic Party, but more important, of governing effectively and in a way that preserves the most important of the president's accomplishments. He should step aside for the one candidate who would become, by acclamation, the nominee of the Democratic Party: Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Never before has there been such an obvious potential successor—one who has been a loyal and effective member of the president's administration, who has the stature to take on the office, and who is the only leader capable of uniting the country around a bipartisan economic and foreign policy.

Certainly, Mr. Obama could still win re-election in 2012. Even with his all-time low job approval ratings (and even worse ratings on handling the economy) the president could eke out a victory in November. But the kind of campaign required for the president's political survival would make it almost impossible for him to govern—not only during the campaign, but throughout a second term.

Put simply, it seems that the White House has concluded that if the president cannot run on his record, he will need to wage the most negative campaign in history to stand any chance. With his job approval ratings below 45% overall and below 40% on the economy, the president cannot affirmatively make the case that voters are better off now than they were four years ago. He—like everyone else—knows that they are worse off.

President Obama is now neck and neck with a generic Republican challenger in the latest Real Clear Politics 2012 General Election Average (43.8%-43.8%). Meanwhile, voters disapprove of the president's performance 49%-41% in the most recent Gallup survey, and 63% of voters disapprove of his handling of the economy, according to the most recent CNN/ORC poll.

Consequently, he has to make the case that the Republicans, who have garnered even lower ratings in the polls for their unwillingness to compromise and settle for gridlock, represent a more risky and dangerous choice than the current administration—an argument he's clearly begun to articulate.

One year ago in these pages, we warned that if President Obama continued down his overly partisan road, the nation would be "guaranteed two years of political gridlock at a time when we can ill afford it." The result has been exactly as we predicted: stalemate in Washington, fights over the debt ceiling, an inability to tackle the debt and deficit, and paralysis exacerbating market turmoil and economic decline.

If President Obama were to withdraw, he would put great pressure on the Republicans to come to the table and negotiate—especially if the president singularly focused in the way we have suggested on the economy, job creation, and debt and deficit reduction. By taking himself out of the campaign, he would change the dynamic from who is more to blame—George W. Bush or Barack Obama?—to a more constructive dialogue about our nation's future.

Even though Mrs. Clinton has expressed no interest in running, and we have no information to suggest that she is running any sort of stealth campaign, it is clear that she commands majority support throughout the country. A CNN/ORC poll released in late September had Mrs. Clinton's approval rating at an all-time high of 69%—even better than when she was the nation's first lady. Meanwhile, a Time Magazine poll shows that Mrs. Clinton is favored over former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney by 17 points (55%-38%), and Texas Gov. Rick Perry by 26 points (58%-32%).

But this is about more than electoral politics. Not only is Mrs. Clinton better positioned to win in 2012 than Mr. Obama, but she is better positioned to govern if she does. Given her strong public support, she has the ability to step above partisan politics, reach out to Republicans, change the dialogue, and break the gridlock in Washington.

President Bill Clinton reached a historic agreement with the Republicans in 1997 that led to a balanced budget. Were Mrs. Clinton to become the Democratic nominee, her argument would almost certainly have to be about reconciliation and about an overarching deal to rein in the federal deficit. She will understand implicitly the need to draw up a bipartisan plan with elements similar to her husband's in the mid-to-late '90s—entitlement reform, reform of the Defense Department, reining in spending, all the while working to preserve the country's social safety net.

Having unique experience in government as first lady, senator and now as Secretary of State, Mrs. Clinton is more qualified than any presidential candidate in recent memory, including her husband. Her election would arguably be as historic an event as the election of President Obama in 2008.

By going down the re-election road and into partisan mode, the president has effectively guaranteed that the remainder of his term will be marred by the resentment and division that have eroded our national identity, common purpose, and most of all, our economic strength. If he continues on this course it is certain that the 2012 campaign will exacerbate the divisions in our country and weaken our national identity to such a degree that the scorched-earth campaign that President George W. Bush ran in the 2002 midterms and the 2004 presidential election will pale in comparison.

We write as patriots and Democrats—concerned about the fate of our party and, most of all, our country. We do not write as people who have been in contact with Mrs. Clinton or her political operation. Nor would we expect to be directly involved in any Clinton campaign.

If President Obama is not willing to seize the moral high ground and step aside, then the two Democratic leaders in Congress, Sen. Harry Reid and Rep. Nancy Pelosi, must urge the president not to seek re-election—for the good of the party and most of all for the good of the country. And they must present the only clear alternative—Hillary Clinton.

Mr. Caddell served as a pollster for President Jimmy Carter. Mr. Schoen, who served as a pollster for President Bill Clinton, is author of "Hopelessly Divided: The New Crisis in American Politics and What It Means for 2012 and Beyond," forthcoming from Rowman and Littlefield.

Contentions

Obama, OWS and Occam's Razor

by Peter Wehner

I'm puzzled.

Given all of the violence, the lawlessness, the bigotry and the ugliness the Occupy Wall Street movement (and its off-spring) represent, why hasn't the president spoken out—in a clear, forceful voice—against it?

It can't be because he thinks it's none of his business. This is a man, after all, who injected his thoughts on the arrest of Professor Henry Louis Gates and in the process accused the Cambridge police of acting "stupidly." Obama has spoken out about the location of the Ground Zero mosque and the 2016 Olympic Games; the reaction of Republican audiences at GOP debates; and the Penn State child rape scandal. He's suggested that racism is a driving force in the Tea Party movement. He gives sermons on civility in public discourse. And he's made his picks for the NCAA Final Four on ESPN. Obama talks all the time, on almost every issue under the sun. And yet when it comes to the actions of protesters at the various Occupy movements around America, he suddenly goes practically mute.

To the degree Obama has spoken out about the Occupy movements in cities all across America, his words have been sympathetic ones. He has issued no forceful condemnations of the rapes, the arson, the drug dealing, the anti-Semitism, and all the other things that have marked, and marred, the Occupy protests.

It could be the president believes there's a political interest in siding with OWS. But perhaps there's something else, and something deeper, at play here. Perhaps the former community organizer and academic has found himself in deep, natural sympathy with OWS and its aims. Perhaps he sees in the protesters his younger self. Perhaps he sees in them his philosophy, unconstrained by political considerations. Perhaps its agenda is, in many important respects, his.

If that's not the case, then what explains Obama's unwillingness to condemn the disgraceful and disgusting things we've seen and heard? Why is a man who loves to comment on unfolding events decided to turn a blind eye to a (largely) lawless, and in some respects anarchistic, movement that his own words have helped inspire? I'm open to other possibilities. But for now, Occam's Razor applies. The president is sympathetic to and supportive of OWS. We see in it what Obama sees in himself—and ominously what he hopes to soon see, on a large scale, in America.

Contentions

Occupy's Moment of Silence for the White House Shooter

by Peter Wehner

Here is a [clip](#), courtesy of The Daily Caller, in which a protester from Occupy San Diego told his fellow protesters, "I think we should have a moment of silence in solidarity for the person they said was from the Washington, D.C. Occupy. Maybe, why did he feel the need to shoot the White House window today? So I think we should have a moment in solidarity for the White House, and for the guy that shot at the White House today. I don't know if you heard, but someone shot at the White House window today."

Can you imagine the round-the-clock (negative) media coverage if (a) a person from a Tea Party rally was arrested for shooting at the White House and (b) if a Tea Party member from another city had asked for a "moment of silence in solidarity" with the alleged shooter? It would produce days of front page, above-the-fold coverage in the [New York Times](#) and spawn a thousand editorial and columns from liberals, to say nothing of providing MSNBC and CNN with several months worth of programming, hand-wringing, and sermonizing.

I persist in my belief that the media double standard as it relates to coverage of the Tea Party v. Occupy Wall Street (and its progeny) illustrates, in ways few other recent stories have, the widespread bias that exists in large sectors of the media. As I've argued before, many reporters and anchors undoubtedly believe they're objective, detached, and applying a single standard to both movements, which in some respects makes the problem worse. The layers of delusion and self-delusion are astonishing.

Contentions

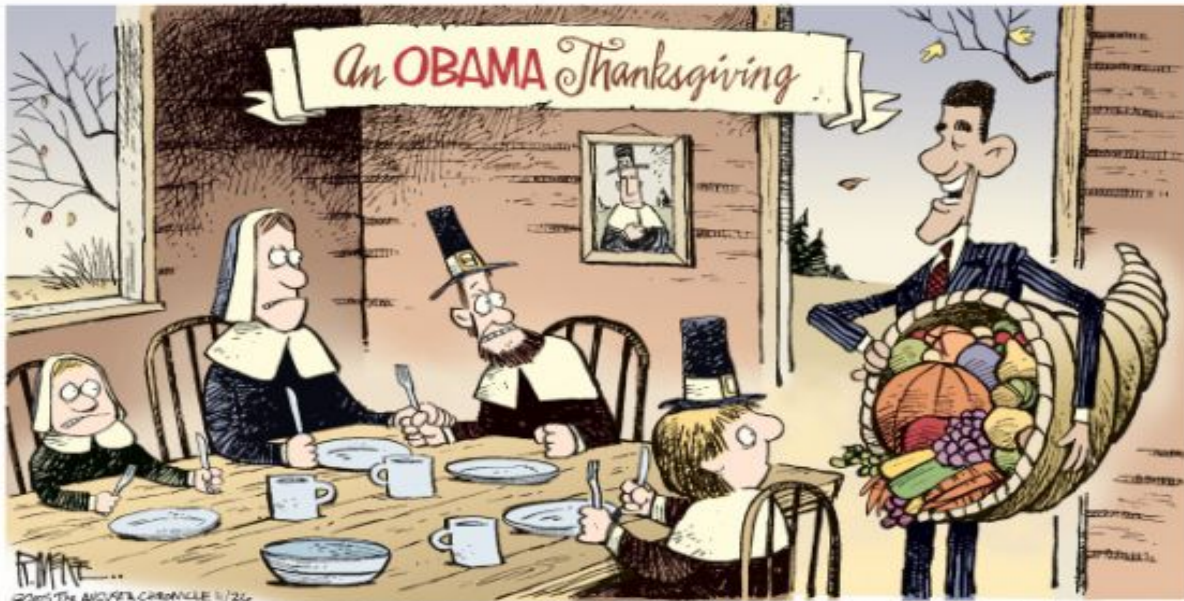
The Media's Emotional Investment in OWS

by Peter Wehner

If you want to see a revealing look at the emotional, and not simply political, investment liberals have in the Occupy Wall Street Movement, [watch](#) Mika Brzezinski and Jeffrey Sachs respond to Newt Gingrich's comments over the weekend that the protesters should get a job and take a bath. Their rage is uncontained, almost tear-inducing, and comical. The whole crew and conversation, with one liberal egging on the other, is a fantastic window into the dominant mindset of modern-day liberal journalists.

One can see that without Joe Scarborough's presence, the show is essentially the morning version of the shows hosted by [Ed Schultz](#) and Rachel Maddow (though Maddow is a good deal more intelligent and informed than Brzezinski). Speaking of which: One of her colleagues would do Brzezinski a huge favor if they pulled her aside and explained to her the difference between "literal" and "figurative." During this short segment Brzezinski claims Gingrich was "literally" standing on his "high horse" and his words "literally made my skin crawl."

Actually, neither was "literally" true. There was no horse on the stage where Gingrich appeared, and Mika's skin wasn't crawling, at least from what we can tell. Then again, what would you expect from a woman who, in mocking Sarah Palin, [named](#) Abraham Lincoln as one of her favorite founders?



"WE'D LIKE TO GIVE THANK FOR THE BOUNTIFUL HARVEST THAT THIS FAMILY HAS WORKED SO HARD FOR ALL YEAR LONG. NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'M GOING TO GO REDISTRIBUTE IT."



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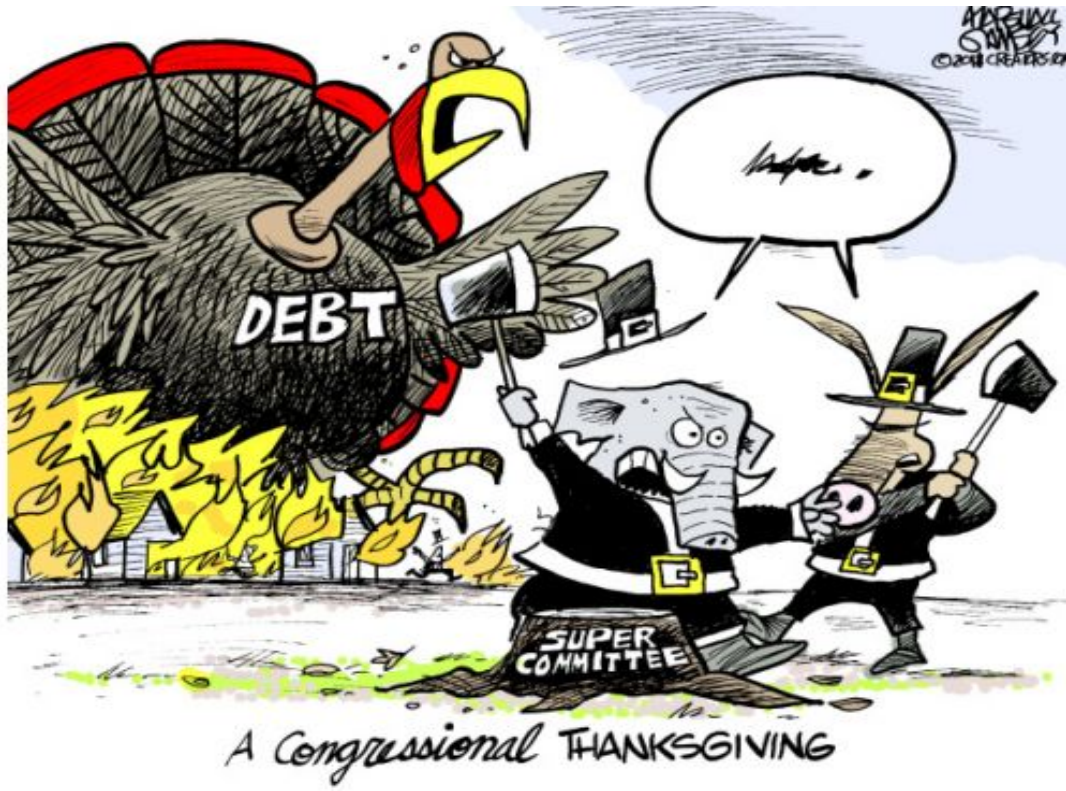


I WONDER IF
THEY LIKE TO GAMBLE
AND SEE RETRO LOUNGE
ACTS?

LET US
GIVE
THANKS.

FIRE UP
THE SLOTS!





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