

December 20, 2011

[Caroline Glick](#) writes on Tom Friedman.

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*US. While it is important to remain on guard against radicals like Friedman and Rosenberg and their fellow travelers on campuses, it is also important to recognize that despite their powerful positions, they remain marginal voices in both Israel and the US.*

Six and a half years ago George Bush spoke the truth about North Korea.

[Christopher Hitchens](#) paid tribute to him in a May 2005 column for Slate.

*How extraordinary it is, when you give it a moment's thought, that it was only last week that an American president officially spoke the obvious truth about North Korea. In point of fact, Mr. Bush rather understated matters when he said that Kim Jong-il's government runs "concentration camps." It would be truer to say that the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea, as it calls itself, is a concentration camp. It would be even more accurate to say, in American idiom, that North Korea is a slave state.*

*This way of phrasing it would not have the legal implication that the use of the word "genocide" has. To call a set of actions "genocidal," as in the case of Darfur, is to invoke legal consequences that are entailed by the U.N.'s genocide convention, to which we are signatories. However, to call a country a slave state is to set another process in motion: that strange business that we might call the working of the American conscience.*

*It was rhetorically possible, in past epochs of ideological confrontation, for politicians to shout about the "slavery" of Nazism and of communism, and indeed of nations that were themselves "captive." The element of exaggeration was pardonable, in that both systems used forced labor and also the threat of forced labor to coerce or to terrify others. But not even in the lowest moments of the Third Reich, or of the gulag, or of Mao's "Great Leap Forward," was there a time when all the subjects of the system were actually enslaved.*

*In North Korea, every person is property and is owned by a small and mad family with hereditary power. ...*

[James Pethokoukis](#) wonders what a Korean unification might cost.

*The death of Kim Jong-il, the monstrous, madman dictator of hostage nation North Korea, creates tremendous uncertainty and risk for the region. Yet one scenario, however optimistic, would be that somehow this event puts North and South on the road to reunification. What might that cost? Well, Germany has paid some \$2 trillion over two decades to reunify East and West. But keep in mind that East Germany was only a fourth the size of North Korea. And much richer, relatively. In 1989, East German per capita income was a third of the West's. The situation in Korea is much different, as this analysis from the Atlantic Council sums up: ...*

[Nile Gardiner](#) writes on the president's \$4,000,000 Christmas vacation.

*Around \$4 million (£2.6 million) – the expected total cost to the US taxpayer of the Obama Christmas family vacation to Hawaii according to the Hawaii Reporter (hat tip: Rob Bluey at The Foundry). This is an astonishing amount of public money to be spending in an age of austerity – when the president is supposed to be leading efforts to cut the US budget deficit, the largest since World War Two, and a towering \$15 trillion national debt:*

*Hawaii Reporter research shows the total cost for the President's visit for taxpayers far exceeded \$1.5 million in 2010 – but is even more costly this year because he extended his vacation by three days and the cost for Air Force One travel has jumped since last assessed in 2000. In addition, Hawaii Reporter was able to obtain more specifics about the executive expenditures.*

*The total cost (based on what is known) for the 17-day vacation roundtrip vacation to Hawaii for the President, his family and staff has climbed to more than \$4 million.*

*This \$4 million figure is nearly 100 times the average annual salary of an American worker, which currently stands at \$41,673. The Hawaii Reporter calculates that travel costs alone for the president and his entourage via Air Force One (plus a separate trip for Michelle Obama who has traveled in advance), in addition to a United States Air Force C-17 cargo aircraft to transport "the presidential limos, helicopters and other support equipment", amounts to a whopping \$3,629,622. Housing for security staff costs an estimated \$151,200, and luxurious hotel rooms for the president's 24-strong staff a further \$72,216. Based on these figures the total cost to the federal US taxpayer (and the additional burden on the national debt) is a staggering \$3,853,038. If you add in local taxpayer costs of \$260,000 (including police overtime and city ambulances), the total public expense is \$4,113,038. ...*

**Andrew Malcolm** has late night humor.

*Conan: Newt Gingrich has issued a statement promising that he will not cheat on his wife. Even better, he said he wouldn't cheat on his next wife either.*

*Leno: Obama says he didn't know how bad the economy was when he took office. If it doesn't improve soon, the next president will be saying the same thing.*

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**Jewish World Review**

**Tom Friedman's losing battle**

by Caroline B. Glick

New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman balanced his substantively anti-Israel positions with repeated protestations of love for Israel.

His balancing act ended last week when he employed traditional anti-Semitic slurs to dismiss the authenticity of substantive American support for Israel.

Channeling the longstanding anti-Semitic charge that Jewish money buys support for power-hungry Jews best expressed in the forged 19th century *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and in John Mearshimer's and Stephen Walt's 2007 book *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy*, Friedman denied the significance of the US Congress's overwhelming support for Israel.

As he put it, "I sure hope that Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, understands that the standing ovation he got in Congress this year was not for his politics. That ovation was bought and paid for by the Israel lobby."

It would be nice if Friedman is forced to pay some sort of price for finally coming out of the closet as a dyed-in-the-wool Israel hater. But he probably won't. As he made clear in his column, he isn't writing for the general public, but for a very small, select group of elitist leftists. These are the only people who matter to Friedman. And they matter to him because they share his opinions and his goal of indoctrinating young people to adopt his pathologically hostile views about Israel and his contempt for the American public that supports it.

It doesn't matter to Friedman that overwhelming survey evidence, amassed over decades, show that the vast majority of the American public and the American Jewish community support Israel. It doesn't matter to him that the support shown to Netanyahu in Congress last May was a reflection of that support.

As he put it, "The real test is what would happen if Bibi tried to speak at, let's say, the University of Wisconsin. My guess is that many students would boycott him and many Jewish students would stay away."

Embedded in this statement are two key points. First, Friedman assesses that the prevailing view on US college campuses are his own radical views. And he is convinced that college students share his views.

As he sees it, if college students share his views, then it doesn't matter that Congress supports Israel today. Through the youth, he and his anti-Israel colleagues will own the future.

THE KEY question then is is Friedman right? Do he and his friends on the Israel bashing Left own the future? Are their efforts to convince young Americans in places like University of Wisconsin to embrace leftist dogmas, including rejection of Israel's rights working? Is support for Israel diminishing? A plethora of data indicates that while the picture is mixed, the dominant trends do not favor Friedman's views. This is true not only in the US but in Israel as well.

For instance, last week the Washington Examiner's senior political commentator Michael Barone noted a massive deterioration of US President Barack Obama' support levels among voters under 30 years old. Whereas Obama won this demographic in the 2008 elections by a 2-1 margin, two recent surveys show that if elections were held today, he would receive the support of just over a third of young voters.

Barone hypothesized that young Americans' disenchantment has to do with their generational individualism bred of their limitless ability to express themselves through technology. This individualism has nothing in common with Obama's economic and foreign policy collectivism.

As for young American Jews, according to a study published in August 2010 by Brandeis University's Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, the ratio of young American Jews who feel attached to Israel — while lower than that of older Jews -- has remained constant over the past twenty years. Moreover, Brandeis's researchers told the Forward that "Every generation goes through a normal 'lifecycle,' in which attachment to Israel grows as people get older."

Even more notable than the consistency of support levels over time is the fact that researchers

discerned no difference in levels of support for Israel across the political spectrum. As the study reported, "We found that conservatives were no more likely than liberals to feel connected to Israel or regard Israel as central to their Jewish identities. These findings are remarkable given that liberalism is associated with reduced support for Israel in the broader American population."

So not only have Friedman and his colleagues on the far Left failed to convince the general public to give up support for Israel, they have failed to get young American Jews to give up support for Israel.

THE FAILURE of Friedman's fellow radicals to convince university students to abandon support for Israel or to water it down to the point of meaninglessness was demonstrated last month by Berkeley's Jewish Student Union.

In recent years, Berkeley's Hillel has come under withering criticism from pro- Israel activists on campus and countrywide for its leadership's willingness to accept anti-Israel groups as members of its community of sponsored organizations.

Hillel-sponsored groups like Keshet Enoshim have welcomed the virulently anti-Israel Jewish Voices for Peace group into the Hillel tent. Hillel groups have participated in Israel Apartheid Week activities and supported university divestment from Israeli-owned firms. So too, Hillel's leadership has held dances on Memorial Day for Fallen Israeli Soldiers, published fliers demeaning observant Jews and discouraged students from flying Israel's flag at demonstrations.

Last month, Berkeley's Jewish students took a step to regain control over their community from the anti-Israel radicals running Hillel. On November 16, Berkeley's JSU voted to deny membership to J Street U, the college wing of the anti-Israel lobby J Street.

Speaking to the local Jewish paper *j.weekly*, Jacob Lewis, co-president of the pro-Israel student group Tikvah explained, "J Street is not pro-Israel but an anti-Israel organization that, as part of the mainstream Jewish community, I could not support."

Hillel's leadership is up in arms. Rather than respect the decision of the JSU, Hillel's professional "grown-ups" are urging them to reconsider.

In a letter to Haaretz and to the *j. weekly*, Berkeley Hillel's board president Barbara Davis and its executive director Rabbi Adam Naftalin-Kelman wrote, "We respect the right of the Jewish Student Union to make its own decisions, but we encourage JSU to reconsider its vote and include J Street U as a member." The two then pledged that despite the verdict of Berkeley's Jewish students, Hillel will continue to fund J Street U's programming.

THE SITUATION on Israeli college campuses is similar. Here too, Israeli students are in revolt against post-Zionist and anti- Zionist academics. Here too, the best efforts of radical professors to convince their students to abandon Zionism seem to be faltering. A poll of young Israelis taken last year by Dahaf for the German Friedrich Ebert Foundation indicated that young Israelis are far more politically conservative than their baby boomer parents and professors. And this disparity is apparent on university campuses.

Last year the Im Tirtzu student group published a report on the state of Political Science studies in Israeli universities. In a follow-on report, it placed a spotlight on the situation at Ben Gurion

University's Politics and Government Department.

Both reports were attacked by the media and by the professoriate as cheap, academically shoddy attempts to harm academic freedom.

Im Tirtzu's reports were based on an analysis of course syllabi at all university departments and they concluded that there was a clear far left ideological bias inherent in course materials. Pro-Israel and non-hostile books and research were almost entirely absent from the curricula, they alleged.

As for Ben Gurion University's Politics and Government Department, the Im Tirtzu report claimed that aside from political bias reflected in the course curricula, the department's faculty is dominated by anti-Zionists. It charged that nine out of 11 permanent faculty members were involved in "radical left-wing" political activities and that six signed a letter supporting refusal to serve in the IDF.

While the media and the professoriate pilloried their reports, the group's charges caused the Council for Higher Education to form a blue ribbon committee last November comprised of seven political scientists — three from Israel and four from abroad -- to conduct a study of all of the political science departments in Israeli universities. Last month the committee presented its conclusions to the CHE. And they were devastating.

The committee's general recommendations involved requiring professors at all universities to make a differentiation in their classrooms between facts and their political opinions. It also called for a more theoretical approach to political science with emphasis on research methods rather than activism and ideology. University departments were urged to use more politically balanced curricula.

As to Ben Gurion University, the commission said the Politics and Government Department needs to clean up its act or be shut down. Not only is it giving short shrift to the academic foundations of the discipline in favor of activism, its instructors use the classrooms to indoctrinate students.

So too, due to the department's academic inadequacy, the committee claimed its master's program's "value is doubtful," and said that the faculty could not adequately educate doctoral students.

On November 29, the CHE unanimously adopted the committee's findings and recommendations.

It gave Ben Gurion University until April to enact the required changes in its Politics and Government Department or shut its doors.

It will be interesting to see how events progress at Ben Gurion in the coming months, but one thing is clear enough, like Friedman and the Berkeley Hillel, its professors will no longer be able to pretend that they are fair and balanced professionals.

Their bluff was called.

On December 7 Politico's Ben Smith published a detailed report about how two of the

Democratic Party's core institutions, the Center for American Progress and Media Matters are waging a concerted, continuous campaign to diminish left wing Democratic support for Israel. Media Matters official M.J. Rosenberg acknowledged that given the depth of popular support for Israel in the US, chances are remote that their efforts will pay off in Congress today. He explained that his goal is to shift the Democratic Party's position on Israel through its younger generation.

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Happily, to date, they are losing the long game as well as the short game both in Israel and the US. While it is important to remain on guard against radicals like Friedman and Rosenberg and their fellow travelers on campuses, it is also important to recognize that despite their powerful positions, they remain marginal voices in both Israel and the US.

**Slate**

**Worse Than 1984**

***North Korea, slave state.***

by Christopher Hitchens

How extraordinary it is, when you give it a moment's thought, that it was only last week that an American president officially spoke the obvious truth about North Korea. In point of fact, Mr. Bush rather understated matters when he said that Kim Jong-il's government runs "concentration camps." It would be truer to say that the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea, as it calls itself, *is* a concentration camp. It would be even more accurate to say, in American idiom, that North Korea is a slave state.

This way of phrasing it would not have the legal implication that the use of the word "genocide" has. To call a set of actions "genocidal," as in the case of Darfur, is to invoke legal consequences that are entailed by the U.N.'s genocide convention, to which we are signatories. However, to call a country a slave state is to set another process in motion: that strange business that we might call the working of the American conscience.

It was rhetorically possible, in past epochs of ideological confrontation, for politicians to shout about the "slavery" of Nazism and of communism, and indeed of nations that were themselves "captive." The element of exaggeration was pardonable, in that both systems used forced labor and also the threat of forced labor to coerce or to terrify others. But not even in the lowest moments of the Third Reich, or of the gulag, or of Mao's "Great Leap Forward," was there a time when all the subjects of the system were actually enslaved.

In North Korea, every person is property and is owned by a small and mad family with hereditary power. Every minute of every day, as far as regimentation can assure the fact, is spent in absolute subjection and serfdom. The private life has been entirely abolished. One tries to avoid cliché, and I did my best on a visit to this terrifying country in the year 2000, but George Orwell's *1984* was published at about the time that Kim Il Sung set up his system, and it really is as if he got hold of an early copy of the novel and used it as a blueprint. ("Hmmm ... good book. Let's see if we can make it work.")



Actually, North Korea is rather worse than Orwell's dystopia. There would be no way, in the capital city of Pyongyang, to wander off and get lost in the slums, let alone to rent an off-the-record love nest in a room over a shop. Everybody in the city has to be at home and in bed by curfew time, when all the lights go off (if they haven't already failed). A recent nighttime [photograph of the Korean peninsula](#) from outer space shows something that no "free-world" propaganda could invent: a blaze of electric light all over the southern half, stopping exactly at the demilitarized zone and becoming an area of darkness in the north.

Concealed in that pitch-black night is an imploding state where the only things that work are the police and the armed forces. The situation is actually slightly worse than indentured servitude. The slave owner historically promises, in effect, at least to keep his slaves fed. In North Korea, this compact has been broken. It is a famine state as well as a slave state. Partly because of the end of favorable trade relations with, and subsidies from, the former USSR, but mainly because of the lunacy of its command economy, North Korea broke down in the 1990s and lost an unguessable number of people to sheer starvation. The survivors, especially the children, have been stunted and malformed. Even on a tightly controlled tour of the place—North Korea is almost as hard to visit as it is to leave—my robotic guides couldn't prevent me from seeing people drinking from sewers and picking up individual grains of food from barren fields. (I was reduced to eating a dog, and I was a privileged "guest.") Film shot from over the Chinese border shows whole towns ruined and abandoned, with their few factories idle and cannibalized. It seems that the mines in the north of the country have been flooded beyond repair.

In consequence of this, and for the first time since the founding of Kim Il Sung's state, large numbers of people have begun to take the appalling risk of running away. If they make it, they make it across the river into China, where there is a Korean-speaking area in the remote adjoining province. There they live under the constant threat of being forcibly repatriated. The fate of the fugitive slave is not pretty: North Korea does indeed operate a system of camps, most memorably described in a book—*The Aquariums of Pyongyang*, by Kang Chol-Hwan—that ought to be much more famous than it is. Given what everyday life in North Korea is like, I don't have sufficient imagination to guess what life in its prison system must be, but this book gives one a hint.

It seems to me imperative that the human rights movement, hitherto unpardonably tongue-tied about all this, should insistently take up the case of North Korea and demand that an underground railway, or perhaps even an overground one, be established. Any Korean slave who can get out should be welcomed, fed, protected, and assisted to move to South Korea. Other countries, including our own, should announce that they will take specified numbers of refugees, in case the current steady trickle should suddenly become an inundation. The Chinese obviously cannot be expected to take millions of North Koreans all at once, which is why they engage in their otherwise criminal policy of propping up Kim Jong-il, but if international guarantees for runaway slaves could be established, this problem could be anticipated.

Kim Jong-il and his fellow slave masters are trying to dictate the pace of events by setting a timetable of nuclearization, based on a crash program wrung from their human property. But why should it be assumed that their failed state and society are permanent? Another timeline, oriented to liberation and regime change, is what the dynasty most fears. It should start to fear it more. Bravo to President Bush, anyway, for his bluntness.



**American.com**

## **North Korea's horrific economy and the cost of reunification**

by James Pethokoukis

The [death of Kim Jong-il](#), the [monstrous, madman dictator](#) of hostage nation North Korea, creates tremendous uncertainty and risk for the region. Yet one scenario, however optimistic, would be that somehow this event puts North and South on the road to reunification. What might that cost? Well, Germany has paid some \$2 trillion over two decades to reunify East and West. But keep in mind that East Germany was only a fourth the size of North Korea. And much richer, relatively. In 1989, East German per capita income was a third of the West's. The situation in Korea is much different, as this analysis from the [Atlantic Council](#) sums up:

North Korea's per capita income is less than 5 percent of the South's. Each year the dollar value of South Korea's GDP expansion equals the entire North Korean economy. The North's population is half the South's and rising thanks to a high birth rate. North and South also barely trade with each other.

And what would it cost to raise the living standards of the South?

More than a dozen reports by governments, academics and investment banks in recent years have attempted to estimate the cost of Korean unification. At the low end, the Rand Corporation estimates \$50 billion. But that assumes only a doubling of Northern incomes from current levels, which would leave incomes in the North at less than 10% of the South.

At the high end, Credit Suisse estimated last year that unification would cost \$1.5 trillion, but with North Korean incomes rising to only 60% of those in the South. I estimate that raising Northern incomes to 80% of Southern levels—which would likely be a political necessity—would cost anywhere from \$2 trillion to \$5 trillion, spread out over 30 years. That would work out to at least \$40,000 per capita if distributed solely among South Koreans.

And [this 2004 paper](#) makes another estimate, keeping in mind South Korea's GDP is around \$1 trillion:

Our estimate of the reconstruction cost is 10 percent of the GDP of South Korea for 20 years after reunification. In the base case, we assume that 50 percent of the reconstruction cost is paid by the government and the other half by the private sector. Therefore, government expenditure on the reconstruction of the North Korean economy amounts to 5 percent of South Korean GDP for 20 years after reunification.

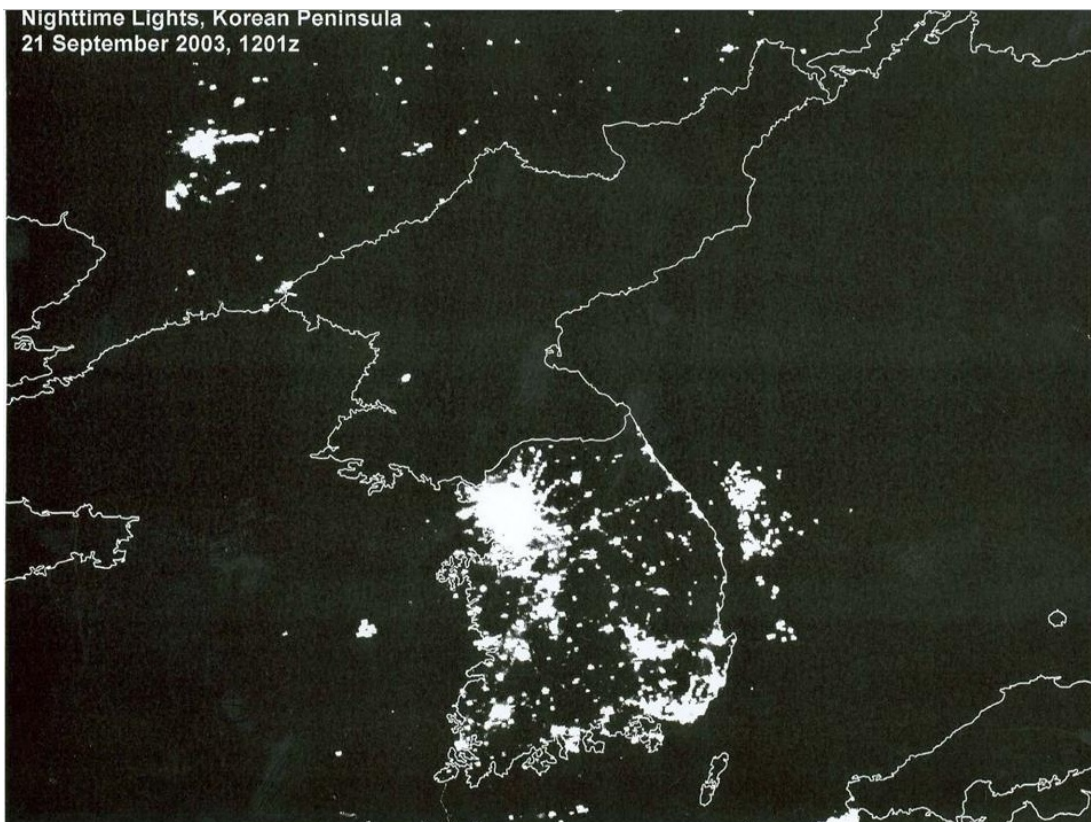
Fun fact: Around the time of Mao Zedong's death in 1976, [notes AEI's Nick Eberstadt](#), North Korea was more educated, more productive and (by the measure of international trade per capita) much more open than China. Around that same time, in fact, per capita output in North Korea and South Korea may have been quite similar. Today, North Korea has the awful distinction of being the only literate and urbanized society in human history to suffer mass famine in peacetime.

So why is the economy so horrible?

1. Closer inspection strongly suggests that North Korea's long-term economic failure is directly related to the policies and practices embraced and championed by the Pyongyang government. North Korea's current "own style of socialism" [or Urisik Sahoejuui] is a grotesquely deformed mutation of the initial DPRK command planning system, from which it fatefully and increasingly devolved over time.

2. North Korea is still in principle a planned Soviet-type economy: but for almost two decades it has in reality been engaged in "planning without facts", and even in "planning without plans" (in the memorable phrase of Japanese economist Kimura Mitsuhiro). In and of itself, this would be enough to consign the North Korean economy to trouble. But to make matters worse, North Korean leadership has insisted on saddling the economy with a monstrous military burden under its campaign of "military-first politics" [Songun Chongchi]. Further, in contradistinction to virtually all other contemporary economies, North Korean trade policy for almost two generations has systematically throttled the import of productive and relatively inexpensive foreign machinery and equipment, thereby guaranteeing that the national economy would be saddled with a low-productivity, high-cost industrial infrastructure of its own making.

3. Add to this North Korea's unrelenting war against its own consumers (no other modern economy has ever seen such a low ratio of consumer spending to national income, even at the height of Maoism or Stalinism) and Pyongyang's stubborn, longstanding policy of "reverse comparative advantage" via a *juche* food policy that attempts to devote no more funds to overseas cereal purchases than foreigners pay for North Korean agricultural products in a country where cropland is scarce and growing seasons are short, and one begins to see how North Korean leadership engineered the country's remarkable Great Leap Backward—and eventually, even a famine.



## Telegraph Blogs, UK

### [Barack Obama's big government vacation: the president adds nearly \\$4 million to the national debt with his lavish Hawaiian holiday](#)

by Nile Gardiner



*The beachside house the Obamas stayed in on a previous visit to Hawaii*

Around \$4 million (£2.6 million) – the expected total cost to the US taxpayer of the Obama Christmas family vacation to Hawaii [according to the Hawaii Reporter](#) (hat tip: [Rob Bluey at The Foundry](#)). This is an astonishing amount of public money to be spending in an age of austerity – when the president is supposed to be leading efforts to cut the US budget deficit, [the largest since World War Two](#), and a towering [\\$15 trillion national debt](#):

Hawaii Reporter research shows the total cost for the President's visit for taxpayers far exceeded \$1.5 million in 2010 – but is even more costly this year because he extended his vacation by three days and the cost for Air Force One travel has jumped since last assessed in 2000. In addition, Hawaii Reporter was able to obtain more specifics about the executive expenditures.

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This \$4 million figure is nearly 100 times [the average annual salary](#) of an American worker, which currently stands at \$41,673. [The Hawaii Reporter calculates](#) that travel costs alone for the president and his entourage via Air Force One (plus a separate trip for Michelle Obama who has traveled in advance), in addition to a United States Air Force C-17 cargo aircraft to transport "the presidential limos, helicopters and other support equipment", amounts to a whopping \$3,629,622. [Housing for security staff](#) costs an estimated \$151,200, and luxurious hotel rooms for the president's 24-strong staff a further \$72,216. Based on these figures the total cost to the federal US taxpayer (and the additional burden on the national debt) is a staggering \$3,853,038. If you add in [local taxpayer costs of \\$260,000](#) (including police overtime and city ambulances), the total public expense is \$4,113,038.

The story has of course been ignored by the liberal-dominated mainstream media, which inevitably turns a blind eye to abuses of power by the Obama presidency. You can imagine the outrage that would have greeted George W Bush if had tried this kind of stunt during his time in office. He would probably have been burned at the stake on the pages of The New York Times and endlessly condemned on network television.

Like the vast majority of Americans, Barack Obama should be prepared to make sacrifices, not least when he's spending other people's money. Is it too much to ask the president to vacation at Camp David in Maryland instead of flying nearly 5,000 miles to Hawaii? Once again he is displaying a let-them-eat-cake attitude, at a time of mass unemployment, stagnant housing markets, and growing poverty.

For President Obama even his vacations have become a vulgar symbol of big government excess and over-spending – let's also not forget [his grand summer holiday at Martha's Vineyard](#). While tens of millions of Americans struggle this Christmas to pay the mortgage and put food on the table for their families, the leader of the free world will be enjoying a fortnight of luxury – heavily subsidised at their expense. It is a further demonstration of an out-of-touch presidency with an entitlement mentality, one that treats American taxpayers as a money-printing machine. It is little wonder that over 70 per cent of Americans believe their country is moving down the wrong track ([according to RealClear Politics](#)), presided over by a liberal elite that runs up mountains of debt for future generations to bear.

**Investor's.com**  
**[Late-night Humor](#)**  
by Andrew Malcolm

Conan: A New Hampshire man was caught running around a mall smashing things with a hammer. The man was charged with "feeling like we all do in a mall around Christmastime."

Letterman: Busiest online shopping day of the year. I was on the WalMart site. And I got pepper-sprayed.

Conan: Newt Gingrich has issued a statement promising that he will not cheat on his wife. Even better, he said he wouldn't cheat on his next wife either.

Conan: A new survey finds some people are waiting until after Christmas to do their holiday shopping. These people are known as "men."

Conan: Someone threw a pair of shoes at Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Iran has captured the shoes and is studying their technology.

Letterman: Lindsay Lohan's purse was stolen on her vacation. Vacation? Vacation from what, for the love of God?

Conan: Only a few shopping days left. This year, if you want to give a gift that definitely won't be returned, try giving a U.S. spy drone.



Letterman: Have you been out shopping? The city is packed this time of year. I was at Macy's, had to go standby on the escalator.

Letterman: Look at this, only mid-December and Lindsay Lohan has already finished her Christmas shoplifting.

Letterman: Lindsay Lohan has been at the L.A. County Courthouse so often this year, not only did the cafeteria name a sandwich after her, but now they put her hands in cement.

Conan: In Florida, a woman got a new kidney after posting an ad on Craigslist. The weird thing is, she was only looking for a used futon.

Leno: Obama says he didn't know how bad the economy was when he took office. If it doesn't improve soon, the next president will be saying the same thing.

Tweet of the Week: @NathanWurtzel -- Orville and Wilbur Wright made the first airplane flight 108 years ago this weekend. Their luggage arrived today.



KIM JONG IL DEAD...

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SORRY, BUT  
YOU CAN'T  
TAKE IT  
WITH YOU...



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