

May 16, 2012

[Bill McGurn](#) contrasts Jerry Brown and Chris Christie.

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In his own inaugural address back in January 2010, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie also spoke of making tough choices for the people of his state. For his first full budget, Mr. Christie faced a deficit of \$10.7 billion—one-third of projected revenues. Not only did Mr. Christie close that deficit without raising taxes, he is now plumping for a 10% across-the-board tax cut.

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Amid the turmoil—Democratic legislators fled the state to prevent a vote, while union-backed protesters occupied the Capitol—Mr. Walker looked weakened. Now he has taken the lead in polls. More than that, voters have taken the lesson: A recent Marquette University Law School poll showed only 12% of Wisconsin voters listing "restoring collective bargaining rights for public employees" as their priority. ...

Since McGurn brought up Wisconsin, let's have an extended look at the campaign that will culminate on June 5th. **[Ed Morrissey](#)** reports on recent polls.

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Jonathan Tobin.

The labor movement and its left-wing allies in the Democratic Party thought they were doing something extremely clever when they reacted to their defeats at the hands of Scott Walker in the Wisconsin legislature by starting a recall campaign. The recall enabled the losers of the 2010 election where Walker and the GOP swept to power in the state to, in effect, get a do-over in which they could act as if the previous result didn't really count. But as the latest polls from Wisconsin show, they are on the eve of a catastrophic loss that will not only leave Walker in power and stronger than ever but also deal the Democrats a crucial loss that may be a harbinger of more setbacks in the fall. ...

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David Weigel has [a great piece](#) on the Walker phenomenon over at Slate. As Weigel points out, Walker has built an extraordinary political following in the state, pulling together all the disparate elements in today's Republican universe from tea party activists to megadonors. The result is a formidable political force that dominates the airwaves and inspires the grassroots.

It's not clear who will win in June; as Weigel notes, Walker currently leads in the polls, but the race is still unpredictable. However, those who rely on the New York Times for their Wisconsin news won't have any idea about some of the factors shaping this race; Weigel's piece provides a healthy reality check for them. ...

Here's [Weigel's piece from Slate](#) which gives a good feel for local attitudes.

If you get bored in Wisconsin, play a game. Drive a few miles through any neighborhood. Count the signs that read "We Stand With Scott Walker," or "I Stand With Scott Walker," or "Scott Walker: Believe in Wisconsin." Try and figure out what the houses have in common.

You won't. There are pieces of Walkerian flair outside of barns on Highway 41, near working-class ranch homes in Appleton, and in the tony part of Oshkosh that Sen. Ron Johnson calls home. On one stretch of Highway 26, somebody's propped up an unused toilet with a sign reading, "Deposit recall petitions here." Next to that, a Walker sign that crosses out half of the phrase "for governor" and adds "president."

The public displays of affection for Walker can put you in mind of October 2008, when placing a HOPE poster or Shepard Fairey print in your window told neighbors about your politics and taste. The Walker gear is easily attained at one of the 20 "victory centers" promoted by the campaign. I stopped by half a dozen of them—local Republican offices temporarily converted to the cause. In the front of the Winnebago County office, a digital sign counted down the days to the June 5 recall. A cardboard Walker stand-up faced visitors from behind a podium. ...

... Walker's supporters agree with a vehemence you rarely find in state elections. On Tuesday, as Walker—surprisingly—[got nearly as many votes as the Democrats running against him](#), I visited a few polling places and met the people toting the free signs. Scott Perzentka, who runs a pier-building business, voted for Walker in Oshkosh, then headed back to his truck with Walker and biker's-rights signs. [Perzentka survived](#) a horrific motorcycle crash in 2003. The experience made him a kind of activist. As he rebuilt his life, it also reinforced his belief that people had to earn what they had, and that unions existed to puff up the salaries of people who didn't work.

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[Shikha Dalmia](#) from Reason.

... what exactly has Walker done to deserve a backlash that, if successful, will make him only the third governor in the history of the nation ever to be recalled?

He confronted a \$3.6 billion biennial deficit when he assumed office last year. Raising taxes was not an option: Wisconsin already has the 45th-worst overall business tax climate in the country, according to the nonpartisan Tax Foundation.

So Walker did what a responsible bookkeeper would do: tackle the biggest driver of the fiscal crisis, public employee costs. ...

Time for humor. **[Walter Jacobson](#)** blogs on the Boston Globe finally getting the story straight on Liz Warren's lily white ancestors. She's a red all right, just not an Indian. ... *As you know, that Boston Globe story created a legend which lives on in the media despite having been [thoroughly](#) and [repeatedly](#) debunked at every level, and one from which even NEHGS [has walked away](#).*

The Globe finally gets around to correcting the story, but buries it in the "[For the Record](#)" correction section today:

Correction: Because of a reporting error, a story in the May 1 Metro section and the accompanying headline incorrectly described the 1894 document that was purported to list Elizabeth Warren's great-great-great grandmother as a Cherokee. The document, alluded to in a family newsletter found by the New England Historic Genealogical Society, was an application for a marriage license, not the license itself. Neither the society nor the Globe has seen the primary document, whose existence has not been proven.

(Note: The correction references an article on May 1 which repeated the story; the correction now is appended at the end of the original online version.)

That's it? After all the trouble The Globe caused, necessitating countless hours by lowly bloggers to correct the falsehood. ...

More fun as **[Politico](#)** finds a piece from Fordham University that describes Warren as a "woman of color."

[Elizabeth Warren](#) has pushed back hard on questions about a Harvard Crimson piece in 1996 that described her as [Native American](#), saying she had no idea the school where she taught law was billing her that way and saying it never came up during her hiring a year earlier, which others have backed up.

But a 1997 Fordham Law Review piece described her as Harvard Law School's "first woman of color," based, according to the notes at the bottom of the story, on a "telephone interview with Michael Chmura, News Director, Harvard Law (Aug. 6, 1996)."

The mention was in the middle of a lengthy and heavily-annotated Fordham piece on diversity and affirmative action and women. The title of the piece, by Laura Padilla, was "Intersectionality and positionality: Situating women of color in the affirmative action dialogue."

"There are few women of color who hold important positions in the academy, Fortune 500 companies, or other prominent fields or industries," the piece says. "This is not inconsequential. Diversifying these arenas, in part by adding qualified women of color to their ranks, remains important for many reasons. For one, there are scant women of color as role models. In my three years at Stanford Law School, there were no professors who were women of color. Harvard Law School hired its first woman of color, Elizabeth Warren, in 1995." ...

Andrew Malcolm has a "Narcissism Alert."

It was probably to be expected from a monstrous political ego that considers himself among the top two presidents of the 21st century.

But faced with the apparently frightening possibility of losing his reelection bid, Barack Obama has inserted himself into the online White House bios of almost every president in the last nine decades. To somehow share and compare their achievements. At one point Obama even draws his wife into the biographical additions.

It would be funny if it wasn't so hilarious. Remember the grandiose but short-lived little party hats that Richard Nixon designed for his special presidential guard unit?

Imagine the emotional insecurities of a grown man who would have henchman find and gratuitously insert [even the faintest link](#) between this 44th president and almost every president back to Calvin Coolidge --"On Feb. 22, 1924 Calvin Coolidge became the first president to make a public radio address to the American people.....President Obama became the first president to hold virtual gatherings and town halls."

Franklin D. Roosevelt -- "On August 14, 1935, President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act. Today the Obama Administration continues to protect seniors and ensure Social Security will be there for future generations." ...

WSJ

Jerry Brown vs. Chris Christie

More states are realizing that the road to fiscal hell is paved with progressive intentions.

by William McGurn

In his January 2011 inaugural address, California Gov. Jerry Brown declared it a "time to honestly assess our financial condition and make the tough choices." Plainly the choices weren't tough enough: Mr. Brown has just announced that he faces a state budget deficit of \$16 billion—nearly twice the \$9.2 billion he predicted in January. In Sacramento Monday, he coupled a new round of spending cuts with a call for some hefty new tax hikes.

In his own inaugural address back in January 2010, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie also spoke of making tough choices for the people of his state. For his first full budget, Mr. Christie faced a deficit of \$10.7 billion—one-third of projected revenues. Not only did Mr. Christie close that deficit without raising taxes, he is now plumping for a 10% across-the-board tax cut.

It's not just looks that make Mr. Brown Laurel to Mr. Christie's Hardy. It's also their political choices.

When the Obama administration's Transportation Department called on California to cough up billions for a high-speed bullet train or lose federal dollars, Mr. Brown went along. In sharp contrast, when the feds delivered a similar ultimatum to Mr. Christie over a proposed commuter rail tunnel between New York and New Jersey, he nixed the project, saying his state just couldn't afford it.

On the "millionaire's" tax, Mr. Brown says that California desperately needs to approve one if the state is to recover. The one on California's November ballot kicks in at income of \$250,000 and would raise the top rate to 13.3% from 10.3% on incomes above \$1 million. Again in sharp contrast, when New Jersey Democrats attempted to embarrass Mr. Christie by sending a millionaire's tax to his desk, he called their bluff and promptly vetoed it.

On public-employee unions, Mr. Brown can talk a good game—at Monday's press conference, he announced a 5% pay cut for state workers, and he has proposed pension reform. Yet for all his pull with unions (the last time he was governor, he gave California's public-sector unions collective-bargaining rights), Gov. Brown, a Democrat, has not been able to accomplish what Republican Gov. Christie has: persuade a Democratic legislature to require government workers to kick in more for their health care and pensions.

Now, no one will confuse New Jersey with free-market Hong Kong. Still, because the challenges facing the Golden and Garden States are so similar, the different paths taken by their respective governors are all the more striking. And these two men are by no means alone.

Our states today are conducting a profound and contentious rethink about the right level of taxes, spending and government. Most obvious is the battle for Wisconsin. There Republican Gov. Scott Walker finds himself pitted against public-sector unions that successfully forced a recall election for June 5 after the legislature adopted the governor's package of labor reforms last spring.

Amid the turmoil—Democratic legislators fled the state to prevent a vote, while union-backed protesters occupied the Capitol—Mr. Walker looked weakened. Now he has taken the lead in polls. More than that, voters have taken the lesson: A recent Marquette University Law School poll showed only 12% of Wisconsin voters listing "restoring collective bargaining rights for public employees" as their priority.

Indeed, the American Midwest today is home to some of the biggest experiments in government. Republicans now hold both the governorships and the legislatures in Michigan, Indiana and Ohio, and in Wisconsin they control all but the Senate. In each they are pushing for smaller, more accountable government. The outlier is Illinois, where Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn and his Democratic legislature pushed through a tax increase on their heavily indebted state.

Now ask yourself this. Can anyone look at Illinois and say to himself: I have seen the future and it works?

Indiana's Mitch Daniels, a Republican, is probably the only governor who can truly claim to have turned around a failing state. That may change if we get eight years of Mr. Christie in New Jersey. Louisiana's Bobby Jindal, also a Republican, may be another challenger for the title, having just succeeded in pushing through arguably the most far-reaching reform of any state public-school system in America.

Hard economic times bring their own lessons. Though few have been spared the ravages of the last recession and the sluggish recovery, those in states where taxes are light, government lives within its means, and the climate is friendly to investment have learned the value of the arrangement they have. They are not likely to give it up.

Meanwhile, leaders in some struggling states have taken notice. They know the road to fiscal hell is paved with progressive intentions. The question regarding the sensible ones is whether they have the will and wherewithal to impose the reforms they know their states need on the interest groups whose political and economic clout is so closely tied with the public purse.

Mr. Brown's remarks Monday suggest the answer to this question is no.

Hot Air

[Poll puts Walker up nine in recall fight; Update: WI Dems “furious” with DNC over lack of support](#)

by Ed Morrissey

Now that Democrats have ended their divisive recall primary in Wisconsin, one would expect the polling to show their nominee to be gaining some traction against sitting Governor Scott Walker. Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett was considered the stronger of the Democrats challenging Walker in the unusual recall election, and polls just after the recall showed him [nearly within the margin of error of the incumbent](#). This week, however, a new poll from [We Ask America](#) of over 1200 likely voters puts Walker on top by nine, 52/43:

While other polls also show Walker in the lead, no one is suggesting that this race is anywhere near over. Walker only leads among self-described Independent voters by 47.6%-44.6%, and the underlying numbers seem fluid. Still, some of Walker's detractors have been vocal about the fact that Walker was duly elected in 2010 and in most states would not be able to be challenged with a recall without greater cause. And a whopping 95% of those called said they plan to vote in the June 5th election which will have the national spotlight on it.

The election takes place on June 5th, so if this is an accurate look at the race as it stands now, Barrett is in big trouble. An incumbent with 52% three weeks before the election is going to be hard to beat under any circumstances, especially in a race with this kind of exposure. It has drawn national attention for more than a year, which means that there won't be many who already support Walker who will suddenly discover a reason to switch. The same can't be said for Barrett, who has only re-emerged into the spotlight after losing to Walker in 2010.

Since then, there are a few points about Barrett that Walker and his huge campaign warchest will make clear in the next three weeks. On Friday, the Walker campaign released this 30-second spot, with music pointedly from Milli Vanilli:

The Walker campaign has the resources to bury Barrett's message in reminders about how Barrett hiked fees, taxes, and spending in Milwaukee, leaving the city in worse financial shape than when he arrived. In response, Barrett will have to explain how he would have [balanced the budget differently than Walker did](#), without raising taxes or fees, and he's got three weeks to explain. It's not impossible — nothing's impossible in politics — but it's starting to look pretty unlikely that Barrett can make that sale.

Update: [Greg Sargent](#) reports that Wisconsin Democrats are going public with their anger over a lack of support from the DNC:

"We are frustrated by the lack of support from the Democratic National Committee and the Democratic Governors Association," a top Wisconsin Democratic Party official tells me. "Scott Walker has the full support and backing of the Republican Party and all its tentacles. We are not getting similar support."

"Considering that Scott Walker has already spent \$30 million and we're even in the polls, this is a winnable race," the Wisconsin Dem continues. "We can get outspent two to one or five to one. We can't get spent 20 to one."

According to the Wisconsin Dem, the party has asked the DNC for \$500,000 to help with its massive field operation. While the DNC has made generally supportive noises, the money has not been forthcoming, the official says — with less than a month until the June 5th recall election. The DNC did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

It apparently doesn't look winnable to the DNC, which tells you all you need to know about the polls on which WI Democrats rely.

Contentions

[Labor Headed for Wisconsin Catastrophe](#)

by Jonathan S. Tobin

The labor movement and its left-wing allies in the Democratic Party thought they were doing something extremely clever when they reacted to their defeats at the hands of Scott Walker in the Wisconsin legislature by starting a recall campaign. The recall enabled the losers of the 2010 election where Walker and the GOP swept to power in the state to, in effect, get a do-over in which they could act as if the previous result didn't really count. But as the latest polls from Wisconsin show, they are on the eve of a catastrophic loss that will not only leave Walker in power and stronger than ever but also deal the Democrats a crucial loss that may be a harbinger of more setbacks in the fall.

The latest [We Ask America poll](#) in Wisconsin shows Walker expanding his lead over the Democratic alternative, Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett. Walker, who was shown in [previous polls](#) to have a smaller advantage, now is ahead by a decisive 52-43 margin. With Walker going over

the 50 percent mark for the first time in this race, this is a devastating result as it was assumed that once the Democrats picked their candidate the race would get closer. Instead, Barrett's victory in the Democratic primary over a candidate preferred by the unions seems to have reminded Wisconsin voters that they already had a choice between Walker and Barrett in 2010 and picked the former.

A victory in a recall would not only humiliate Walker and discourage conservatives around the country in advance of the presidential election. It would also legitimize the unions' thuggish obstructionism in 2011. The unions sought by means of intimidation and extra-legal efforts to stop the legislature from voting to prevent Walker from fulfilling his campaign promises about enacting a fundamental reform of the budget process.

Walker stood his ground last year and passed measures that will prevent municipal and state worker unions from holding the state hostage and bringing it to the edge of bankruptcy. His effort to remove some — though not all — of their collective bargaining rights led to his demonization in the press and a vicious campaign aimed at making it impossible for Walker to govern.

But rather than making an example out of him and showing that any challenge to union domination of state government will be punished, the recall may turn out to have the opposite effect. It may not only elevate Walker to a figure of national stature. It could effectively demonstrate that the power of the union movement is finished.

With three weeks to go before the June 5 recall, the Democrats and unions will pull out all the stops in their quest to defeat Walker. But with the GOP governor already holding a large lead, President Obama — to whom the unions once looked for help in this struggle — would be well advised to stay out of Wisconsin until after the vote. He doesn't want any of the taint of what may well be a catastrophe for the left to be attached to his re-election campaign.

American Interest

[News You Won't Find At The New York Times](#)

by Walter Russell Mead

David Weigel has [a great piece](#) on the Walker phenomenon over at Slate. As Weigel points out, Walker has built an extraordinary political following in the state, pulling together all the disparate elements in today's Republican universe from tea party activists to megadonors. The result is a formidable political force that dominates the airwaves and inspires the grassroots.

It's not clear who will win in June; as Weigel notes, Walker currently leads in the polls, but the race is still unpredictable. However, those who rely on the *New York Times* for their Wisconsin news won't have any idea about some of the factors shaping this race; Weigel's piece provides a healthy reality check for them.

A few things Times readers ought to know but likely don't:

- An unprecedented turnout in the essentially uncontested GOP primary shows Walker with extremely high and energized support; Walker got more votes than the two leading Democratic contenders
- Public weariness with the incessant political wars in Wisconsin is working against Democrats more than the GOP at this point, with many voters blaming the unions for endlessly prolonging the struggle
- Walker's labor reforms are generally seen as successful.

In the *Times* cocoon, a grass roots mobilization of feisty, democracy-loving Wisconsinites is rising in rebellion against the hated Walker business and big donor lobby. In the actual Wisconsin, there are two grass roots movements opposing each other. The anti-union populists may end up with more energy, more unity and more votes than the pro-union organizers. The labor mobilization against the Walker reforms has been lovingly and carefully covered by the *Times* and its brethren since Day One: nothing like that level of analysis has been deployed on Walker's grass roots support.

Weigel sums up the stakes in this race pretty well:

It [labor] beats Walker or it's hobbled, probably for good, in power and in reputation.

We'll be watching this one through June 5 and we'll do our best to understand and analyze the key forces at work on both sides of one of the most important state elections in many years. I don't know how well we succeed, but unlike some publications at *Via Meadia* we think it's important that our readers get information that allows them to form an accurate impression about what is going on — even if some of what is going on makes for disquieting reading.

Slate

[Welcome to Walkerland](#)

Gov. Scott Walker's dominant position in Wisconsin is a thing of wonder.

by David Weigel

OSHKOSH, Wis.—If you get bored in Wisconsin, play a game. Drive a few miles through any neighborhood. Count the signs that read “We Stand With Scott Walker,” or “I Stand With Scott Walker,” or “Scott Walker: Believe in Wisconsin.” Try and figure out what the houses have in common.

You won't. There are pieces of Walkerian flair outside of barns on Highway 41, near working-class ranch homes in Appleton, and in the tony part of Oshkosh that Sen. Ron Johnson calls home. On one stretch of Highway 26, somebody's propped up an unused toilet with a sign reading, “Deposit recall petitions here.” Next to that, a Walker sign that crosses out half of the phrase “for governor” and adds “president.”

The public displays of affection for Walker can put you in mind of October 2008, when placing a HOPE poster or Shepard Fairey print in your window told neighbors about your politics and taste. The Walker gear is easily attained at one of the 20 “victory centers” promoted by the campaign. I stopped by half a dozen of them—local Republican offices temporarily converted to the cause. In the front of the Winnebago County office, a digital sign counted down the days to

the June 5 recall. A cardboard Walker stand-up faced visitors from behind a podium. A handmade sign portrayed two cartoon burglars looking around as they hauled bags of pilfered goods

*Your Governor Walker Vote Was STOLEN
Reclaim Your Property!*

Inside, a 61-year-old grandmother named Diane Malecki was putting pro-Walker buttons in a tackle box. She would sell the gear at this weekend's Republican conference in Green Bay. While we talked, a supporter bought one of the buttons Malecki had designed: A sheriff's star with the legend, *Walker, Taxes Ranger*.

"The table and chair in this office—this came from my mom's house," said Malecki. "We had to rehab it. She wore down the wood, writing and reading and writing to Congress. She was like a one-person Tea Party! She'd even write on the backs of the envelopes. I'd ask her: 'Why are you writing on *there*?' And she'd say, 'It doesn't hurt the postman to learn something.'"

The Walker campaign—the one currently leading in polls—is what every Republican presidential candidate tried and failed to build. There's a perfect link-up here between Tea Party, Republican Party, and megadonor. Walker's TV ads run constantly; the Democratic ads don't. Walker's swag is everywhere, paid for by \$25 million in donations, two-thirds of which dropped in from outside Wisconsin. Tom Barrett, Walker's Democratic competition, has raised less than \$1 million.

The yawning money gap grew out of a loophole in [campaign finance law](#). From the start of the recall process until the date the election was official—five full months—Walker's campaign was able to raise unlimited money from any source. Sheldon Adelson cut him a \$500,000 check. Diane Hendricks, one of the state's richest women, gave Walker \$510,000, becoming the biggest donor to a single candidate in state history.

Democrats have responded the way that massively out-spent people must respond: They've made a vice out of it. On Thursday, they shot up flares about a video, from 2011, in which Walker [confidently told Hendricks](#) about his "divide and conquer" strategy. Walker's been answering that sort of attack with the script he wrote back during the union-led Capitol coup.

"The reason we had to raise the kind of money we raised was because of the tens of millions of dollars that have come in from outside of the state from special interests in Washington," said Walker at his Tuesday [night primary victory speech](#), inside a packed Waukesha victory center. "They funded the protests to begin with. They funded the attacks in the Supreme Court race. [A 2011 [retention election](#) became a proxy fight over Walker's labor and tax reforms.] You guys all know it well here—they spent tens of millions of dollars in the Senate recall election, and they're going to spend tens and tens of millions of dollars trying to take me out."

The "they" in any given Walker sentence is the labor movement. Labor isn't shy about this: It beats Walker or it's hobbled, probably for good, in power and in reputation. So Republicans aim to divide them. They point to the post-primary unity rally—labor locking arms with the victorious and defeated Democrats—that these guys were supposed to hold in Madison. Forty-eight hours before the election, Democrats scrapped the rally, announcing that their candidates would have breakfast at the winner's house instead. Labor would go ahead and rally at the Capitol.

“That’s our big ace in the hole,” said Ben Sparks, spokesman for the Wisconsin GOP. “If you look at the Democrats, their ground game is normally a loose aggregation of outside groups. They’ve got a bunch of labor unions who have their own, little bitty grassroots run by each—We Are Wisconsin, United Wisconsin, and so on, and then the campaign itself. They’re chopped up into little groups.”

On the ground, there isn’t any real Democratic *division*. Organizing for America is pushing its staff and activists to work on the recall. But labor-backed Kathleen Falk blew \$4 million on a campaign that lost to Barrett. The outside groups helping Walker haven’t wasted a cent. Americans for Prosperity, the national Tea Party group chaired by David Koch, has spent \$3 million on ads bucking up Walker; it’s got grassroots organizers across the state.

Its last campaign ad went on air in conjunction with the Maclver Institute, a think tank that opened its offices in a Capitol Square high-rise just three years ago. Maclver sends video reporters to protests, often coming away with Breitbart-friendly proof of labor or Democrats behaving badly. One example from 2011: footage of pro-labor doctors offering bogus notes to protesters who wanted to take sick days. On Thursday, Maclver President Brett Healy met me for iced coffee on the square. The conversation was interrupted, occasionally, by the small-but-loud anti-Walker rally that happens every weekday at noon.

“It’s fascinating,” he said. “What kicked this all off, what kicked off all the turmoil and recalls, was Act 10 and the changes to collective bargaining. And those issues were largely absent from the Senate recalls in 2011. They’re largely absent from Gov. Walker’s recall. I must assume that the left has done some polling and their data shows that the public isn’t with them on those issues. So, they have a big question: Is their enthusiasm waning?”

The Walker campaign and the supportive 501c3s don’t campaign on the reforms, specifically. Walker’s [ads](#) repeat a few friendly numbers—the jobs added in Wisconsin this year ([he rounds up](#)), the jobs that Barrett’s Milwaukee has lost (Walker no longer has to defend a record as Milwaukee County executive)—and sum up the Democratic record as “double-digit tax increases and record job loss.” Barrett attacks Walker for starting an “ideological civil war.” Walker just says that the war is over. “Do we want to go back and rehash the debates we had last year?” he asked at a campaign rally in La Crosse this week. “Or do we want to take the positive reforms we made and move this state forward?”

Walker’s supporters agree with a vehemence you rarely find in state elections. On Tuesday, as Walker—surprisingly—[got nearly as many votes as the Democrats running against him](#), I visited a few polling places and met the people toting the free signs. Scott Perzentka, who runs a pier-building business, voted for Walker in Oshkosh, then headed back to his truck with Walker and biker’s-rights signs. [Perzentka survived](#) a horrific motorcycle crash in 2003. The experience made him a kind of activist. As he rebuilt his life, it also reinforced his belief that people had to earn what they had, and that unions existed to puff up the salaries of people who didn’t work.

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Reason

Scott Walker Is No More Anti-Union than FDR

The recall battle against Walker speaks volumes about the misguided priorities of modern-day progressives

by Shikha Dalmia

Those trying to oust Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker in a June 5 recall election are portraying him as a wild-eyed, Koch-brothers-controlled, right-wing ideologue hell-bent on destroying unions. In reality, Walker is more like a panicked accountant trying to fix the Badger State's out-of-whack books. He's no more anti-union and right-wing than the libs' beloved FDR—and that's his real problem.

Numerous websites have sprouted up dedicated to “keeping an eye on this radical extremist.” Wisconsin Democratic Party chairman Mike Tate has condemned Walker's alleged “unprecedented assault on not just the rights of Wisconsin workers, but also our shared values and proud Wisconsin institutions.”

Walker just might survive these attacks thanks to his virtually unrivalled war chest of about \$13 million, although the election will be a real nail-biter. He's only two points [ahead](#) among likely voters against Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, who'll likely [emerge](#) as his challenger after a Democratic primary today, the very man whom Walker originally defeated to become governor. But what exactly has Walker done to deserve a backlash that, if successful, will make him only the third governor in the history of the nation ever to be recalled?

He confronted a \$3.6 billion biennial deficit when he assumed office last year. Raising taxes was not an option: Wisconsin already has the 45th-worst overall business tax climate in the country, according to the nonpartisan Tax Foundation.

So Walker did what a responsible bookkeeper would do: tackle the biggest driver of the fiscal crisis, public employee costs.

Liberals dispute the claim that government workers are paid better than private-sector employees. But one indication that public-sector employees are not suffering compared to private-sector workers is that their quit rate is far lower, Reason Foundation's Adam Summers found two years ago.

And with good reason. Consider the facts in Wisconsin: According to Charles Sykes, editor of *Wisconsin Interest*, Wisconsin employees enjoy one of the best pension programs in the country, whose \$1.37 billion annual price tag is wholly funded by the state—even the “employee contribution.” Likewise, employees contribute all of \$936 annually to their \$19,128 average family health insurance premium.

Walker's draconian move involves making workers pay 5.8 percent of their salaries toward their pensions and pick up 12.6 percent of their health costs. Most private-sector workers, by contrast, get no employer-funded pension and pay about 21 percent of their health care.

In addition, Walker has restricted public employees' collective bargaining rights to their wages, making other workplace-related issues off limits. This means that schools will no longer be bound by their union contract to purchase employee health coverage from the Wisconsin

Education Association Trust, a teachers union affiliate. They can now obtain competitive bids, generating millions in savings. This has allowed the state to cut aid to schools and municipalities and balance its budget without triggering mass layoffs.

But what drove unions bonkers was Walker's refusal to withhold automatic dues from government employee paychecks and make these dues voluntary (although he unfairly exempted cops and firefighter unions from this rule, likely because their opposition killed a similar effort in Ohio). This won't be good for unions, but it's not a tragedy for progressivism—something even FDR understood.

After all, he once declared: "The process of collective bargaining, as usually understood, cannot be transplanted into the public service." There is something obscene about collective bargaining rights for government employees whose appetites are unrestrained by market discipline. When private-sector employees demand more in compensation than they generate in value, their companies go out of business. But when government employees do the same, they burden citizens with higher taxes and debt, which is one reason why Wisconsin—like nearly every other state—is saddled with unsustainable state worker-related legacy and other costs. This is why no president's administration—Democratic or Republican—has ever advocated such rights for federal workers.

But Walker is like FDR not just in his antipathy to public-sector unions, but his support for mandatory private-sector unionism. He has pledged not to make Wisconsin a right-to-work state (like its neighbor Indiana), where workers in union shops would no longer be required to pay mandatory dues as a condition of employment. This is a big mistake: It will undercut Wisconsin's competitiveness and make it harder to restore robust economic growth.

That, however, is not the only way in which Walker reflects an FDR-like understanding of the economy. Contributing to his political vulnerability is his previous campaign pledge to "create" 250,000 jobs—as if that's something that politicians can control. So far, he's added only 15,000. And last month, the Badger State lost jobs, giving it the worst job creation record in the country.

Walker is blaming political uncertainty, but what's his cure? Not wholesale tax reform (although property taxes have declined slightly on his watch) or regulatory overhaul, as would befit a "free-market ideologue." Instead, he announced this week that he'll pump \$100 million into rejuvenating the depressed parts of Milwaukee. His opponents are condemning this as a vote-grubbing gimmick. But that makes no sense, given that Milwaukee is a heavily Democratic area and this election is extremely polarized along party lines with very few undecideds. The more likely reason is that Walker seriously believes that he can buy growth and jobs through such "investments."

In short, Walker won't end forced private-sector unionism, lighten Wisconsin's hefty tax burden, or abandon government spending to stimulate economic growth. All this would have made him a Democrat in FDR's time. That modern-day progressives are branding him as a right-wing radical says far more about them than him.

Legal Insurrection

[Boston Globe buries correction of Elizabeth Warren 1/32 Cherokee claim](#)

by William A. Jacobson

On April 30, 2012, The Boston Globe broke the story that Chris Child of the New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) had located information about a marriage license showing that Elizabeth's great-great-great grandmother was Cherokee, [Document ties Warren kin to Cherokees](#):

A record unearthed Monday shows that US Senate candidate Elizabeth Warren has a great-great-great grandmother listed in an 1894 document as a Cherokee, said a genealogist at the New England Historic and Genealogy Society.

The shred of evidence could validate her assertion that she has Native American ancestry, making her 1/32 American Indian, but may not put an end to the questions swirling around the subject....

Chris Child, a genealogist at the New England Historic and Genealogy Society, said he began digging into Warren's family history on Thursday, when media interest emerged.

At first, he found no link between Warren's family and Native Americans in her native Oklahoma.

But Monday afternoon, he said, he discovered a few links. Warren's great-great-great grandmother, O.C. Sarah Smith, is listed on her son's 1894 application for a marriage license as a Cherokee.

Child also found that Warren's great-grandfather, John Houston Crawford, had lived in Native American territory, but identified himself as white in a 1900 census.

Child cautioned that the search for ancestry often takes a long time and that more information could still emerge as he continues to research the issue.

But he said Warren's family is not included in the official Dawes Commission rolls, a census of major tribes completed in the early 20th century that Cherokees use to determine tribal citizenship.

As you know, that Boston Globe story created a legend which lives on in the media despite having been [thoroughly](#) and [repeatedly](#) debunked at every level, and one from which even NEHGS [has walked away](#).

The Globe finally gets around to correcting the story, but buries it in the "[For the Record](#)" correction section today:

Correction: Because of a reporting error, a story in the May 1 Metro section and the accompanying headline incorrectly described the 1894 document that was purported to list Elizabeth Warren's great-great-great grandmother as a Cherokee. The document, alluded to in a family newsletter found by the New England Historic Genealogical Society, was an application

for a marriage license, not the license itself. Neither the society nor the Globe has seen the primary document, whose existence has not been proven.

(Note: The correction references an article on May 1 which repeated the story; the correction now is appended at the end of the original online version.)

That's it? After all the trouble The Globe caused, necessitating countless hours by lowly bloggers to correct the falsehood.

The Globe and the false report of a 1/32 Cherokee connection may have saved Warren's campaign, as it came [at a time](#) when her campaign was in panic and without any evidence to substantiate her claim to Native American ancestry, which she used when a junior faculty member in a law school association directory to obtain "minority law teacher" status.

The false report bought Warren time during which various supportive pundits could opine about what it means to be Cherokee and how dare white people impose their own standards.

This *mea culpa* should be front page at The Globe.

Politico

[Fordham piece called Warren Harvard Law's 'first woman of color'](#)

by Maggie Haberman

[Elizabeth Warren](#) has pushed back hard on questions about a Harvard Crimson piece in 1996 that described her [as Native American](#), saying she had no idea the school where she taught law was billing her that way and saying it never came up during her hiring a year earlier, which others have backed up.

But a 1997 Fordham Law Review piece described her as Harvard Law School's "first woman of color," based, according to the notes at the bottom of the story, on a "telephone interview with Michael Chmura, News Director, Harvard Law (Aug. 6, 1996)."

The mention was in the middle of a lengthy and heavily-annotated Fordham piece on diversity and affirmative action and women. The title of the piece, by Laura Padilla, was "Intersectionality and positionality: Situating women of color in the affirmative action dialogue."

"There are few women of color who hold important positions in the academy, Fortune 500 companies, or other prominent fields or industries," the piece says. "This is not inconsequential. Diversifying these arenas, in part by adding qualified women of color to their ranks, remains important for many reasons. For one, there are scant women of color as role models. In my three years at Stanford Law School, there were no professors who were women of color. Harvard Law School hired its first woman of color, Elizabeth Warren, in 1995."

Padilla, now at California Western School of Law, told POLITICO in an email that she doesn't remember the details of the conversation with Chmura, who is now at Babson College and didn't respond to a request for comment. It is unclear whether it was Padilla's language or Chmura's.

The description of her [as a minority](#) is coming from the same person - Chmura - whose comments to the Crimson sparked the original story about her heritage, and Warren's camp argued it's old news.

She has said she had no idea Harvard was billing her that way or how the school found out that her family claims [Native American heritage](#). She learned of it first from the Herald story, she said.

And it's possible Warren didn't see the Fordham story.

But the Fordham piece takes the description of Warren by Harvard Law beyond the boundaries of the Massachusetts school. Warren had described herself as a minority on a law professors' listing for several years, ending in 1995. She has said she wanted to meet people like herself, but stopped when she realized that's not what the listing was for.

She has pushed back hard [on suggestions](#) she got her job based on her heritage, and her backers have noted a 1995 [Crimson](#) piece, from the year she was hired, makes no mention of her background.

Asked to comment, Warren spokesman Alethea Harney said, "There is nothing new in this report. Elizabeth has been clear that she is proud of her Native American heritage and everyone who hired Elizabeth has been clear that she was hired because she was a great teacher, not because of that heritage. It's time to return to issues - like rising student loan debt, job creation, and Wall Street regulation - that will have a real impact on middle class families. It's also time for Scott Brown to answer serious questions about his votes to let interest rates on student loans double so our kids pay more while he votes to give oil companies – some of the most profitable companies in the world – tax breaks worth billions. There are plenty more, like his votes against jobs bills because they'd make billionaires pay their fair share, or his votes to water down rules to hold Wall Street accountable that have brought him millions in campaign contributions. Scott Brown's explanation for these votes against Massachusetts families is long overdue."

Investors.com

[Narcissism update: Obama now inserts himself into online bios of past presidents](#)

by Andrew Malcolm

It was probably to be expected from a monstrous political ego that considers himself among the top two presidents of the 21st century.

But faced with the apparently frightening possibility of losing his reelection bid, Barack Obama has inserted himself into the online White House bios of almost every president in the last nine decades. To somehow share and compare their achievements. At one point Obama even draws his wife into the biographical additions.

It would be funny if it wasn't so hilarious. Remember the grandiose but short-lived little party hats that Richard Nixon designed for his special presidential guard unit?

Imagine the emotional insecurities of a grown man who would have henchman find and gratuitously insert [even the faintest link](#) between this 44th president and almost every president back to Calvin Coolidge --"On Feb. 22, 1924 Calvin Coolidge became the first president to make a public radio address to the American people.....President Obama became the first president to hold virtual gatherings and town halls."

Franklin D. Roosevelt -- "On August 14, 1935, President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act. Today the Obama Administration continues to protect seniors and ensure Social Security will be there for future generations."

Herbert Hoover -- "President Herbert Hoover signed the bill founding the Department of Veterans Affairs July 21, 1930. President Obama is committed to making sure that the VA, the second-largest cabinet department, serves the needs of all veterans and provides a seamless transition from active duty to civilian life,..."

For President John F. Kennedy the insert notes that he began the Peace Corps while "President Obama celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps with a Presidential Proclamation." (Wow, an entire proclamation!)

President Bill Clinton -- "...President Obama has worked with Clinton to make buildings in our country more efficient...."

President George H.W. Bush -- "President Barack Obama awarded George H.W. Bush the 2010 Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor...." (So, Bush didn't earn it so much as Obama awarded it.)

President James Carter -- "In 1977, President Jimmy Carter created the Department of Energy; today the DOE works with the Obama Administration to drive towards innovation in energy and reducing reliance on foreign oil with an 'all of the above' approach."

(A good thing the Energy Department works with the Obama administration since the Energy Department is part of the Obama administration. And what about all the Solyndra loans?)

President Ronald Reagan -- "President Reagan designated Martin Luther King Jr. Day a national holiday; today the Obama Administration honors this tradition, with the First and Second Families participating in service projects on this day."

President Harry Truman -- "...President Truman wrote that government has 'an obligation to see that the civil rights of every citizen are fully and equally protected.'....Today the Obama Administration continues to strive toward upholding the civil rights of its citizens, repealing Don't Ask Don't Tell, allowing people of all sexual orientations to serve openly in our armed forces."

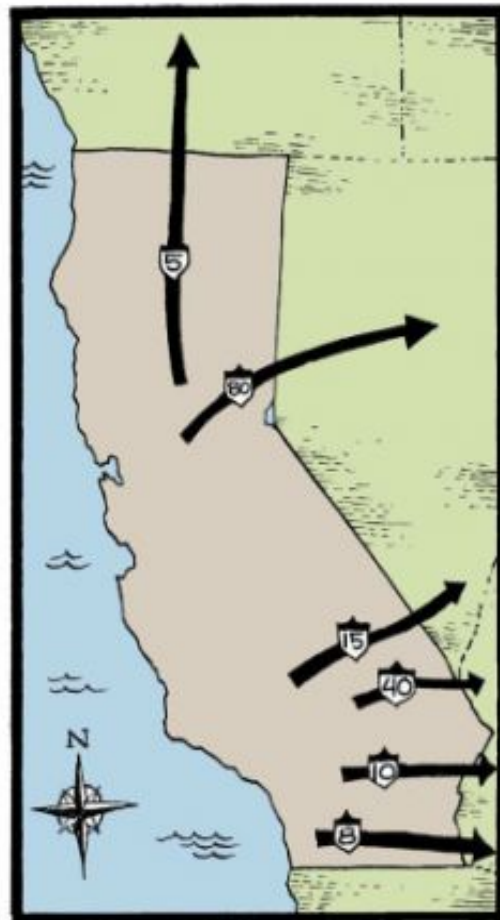
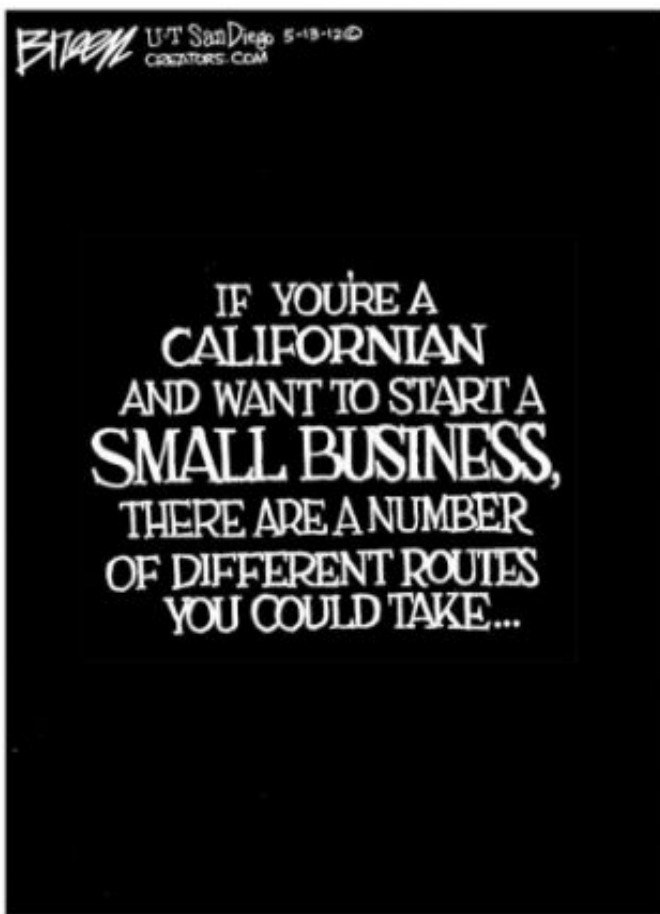
President Lyndon Johnson -- "President Lyndon Johnson signed Medicare signed (sic) into law in 1965—providing millions of elderly healthcare stability. President Obama's historic health care reform law, the Affordable Care Act, strengthens Medicare, offers eligible seniors a range of preventive services with no cost-sharing, and provides discounts on drugs when in the coverage gap known as the 'donut hole.'"

President Dwight D. Eisenhower -- He founded the President's Council on Youth Fitness. "Today the Council is still going strong—with Olympians and professional athletes on board—working in conjunction with the First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move initiative to help promote healthier lifestyles."

President George W. Bush -- "His wanton wars, profligate spending, tax cuts for the rich and funny way of talking were largely responsible for the nation's deep psychological and financial hole that created virtually every single problem that the Obama-Biden team could blame on him." Just kidding.

What Obama really added to George W. Bush -- "In 2002, President George W. Bush's State of the Union was the first to be live broadcast on the Internet. In 2011 and 2012, President Obama's State of the Union speeches were available in an enhanced live stream version that featured infographics, charts and data side-by-side in real time with the President's speech. In 2009, former President Bush partnered with 42nd President Clinton to help rebuild Haiti, after the country was devastated by an earthquake."

The only modern president left out of the Obama bio adjustments is Gerald Ford. But the All-American football player, lawyer, wartime lieutenant commander, veteran House member and Minority Leader and vice president had an actual resume when assuming office.





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TIME

SPENDING

WHO SAYS I'VE
OUTGROWN THIS?





