

June 10, 2012

[Charles Krauthammer](#) knows the real reason the unions fought so hard against Walker's reforms.

*... The real threat behind all this, however, was that the new law ended automatic government collection of union dues. That was the unexpressed and politically inexpressible issue. That was the reason the unions finally decided to gamble on a high-risk recall.*

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*It was predictable. In Indiana, where Gov. Mitch Daniels (R) instituted by executive order a similar reform seven years ago, government-worker unions have since lost 91 percent of their dues-paying membership. In Wisconsin, Democratic and union bosses (a redundancy) understood what was at stake if Walker prevailed: not benefits, not "rights," but the very existence of the unions.*

*So they fought and they lost. Repeatedly. Tuesday was their third and last shot at reversing Walker's reforms. In April 2011, they ran a candidate for chief justice of the state Supreme Court who was widely expected to strike down the law. [She lost.](#)*

*In July and August 2011, they ran recall elections of state senators, needing three to reclaim Democratic — i.e., union — control. [They failed.](#) (The likely flipping of one Senate seat to the Democrats on June 5 is insignificant. The Senate is not in session and won't be until after yet another round of elections in November.)*

*And then, Tuesday, their Waterloo. Walker defeated their gubernatorial candidate by a wider margin than he had — pre-reform — two years ago.*

*The unions' defeat marks a historical inflection point. They set out to make an example of Walker. He succeeded in making an example of them as a classic case of reactionary liberalism. ...*

And [Peggy Noonan](#) has a stunningly good column on the meaning of Wisconsin. *What happened in Wisconsin signals a shift in political mood and assumption. Public employee unions were beaten back and defeated in a state with a long progressive tradition. The unions and their allies put everything they had into "one of their most aggressive grass-roots campaigns ever," as the Washington Post's Peter Whoriskey and Dan Balz reported in a day-after piece. Fifty thousand volunteers made phone calls and knocked on 1.4 million doors to get out the vote against Gov. Scott Walker. Mr. Walker's supporters, less deeply organized on the ground, had a considerable advantage in money. ...*

*... Mr. Walker was not crushed. He was buoyed, winning by a solid seven points in a high-turnout race. ...*

*... President Obama's problem now isn't what Wisconsin did, it's how he looks each day—careening around, always in flight, a superfluous figure. No one even looks to him for leadership now. He doesn't go to Wisconsin, where the fight is. He goes to Sarah Jessica Parker's place, where the money is.*

*There is, now, a house-of-cards feel about this administration. ...*

*... And where is the president in all this? On his way to Anna Wintour's house. He's busy. He's running for president.*

*But why? He could be president now if he wanted to be. ...*

**Michael Barone** drills into the Wisconsin numbers.

*Here are some observations from the election results in the Wisconsin recall race. For the results I've used the convenient interactive maps provided by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and the Huffington Post. When you look at the map, you notice that Democrat Tom Barrett won only in a relatively few counties, 12 of 72. He was reduced to the Democratic base: Madison and a few surrounding counties, the central city of Milwaukee but definitely not the suburbs, a few old factory towns like LaCrosse and Stevens Point, three counties up on Lake Superior near Duluth, Minnesota, and the Menominee Indian Reservation. Everything else went for Scott Walker.*

*Turnout in this election was really high: 2,507,269, compared to 2,160,832 in November 2010 and closer to the 2,984,417 in November 2008. Much has been made of the exit poll finding that union members were one-third of the total, up from 2010, but we see evidence of this in county returns as well. Turnout was up 16% statewide, but it was up 20% in Kenosha County and in Douglas County (Superior) which have had lots of blue collar voters. Walker's percentage as compared to 2010 declined 6.2% in Douglas County, more than in any other county in the state, and Kenosha County was one of the few counties Walker carried in 2010 but lost in 2012. Turnout was up 16% in Milwaukee County, suggesting that black turnout was fairly robust, and up 15% in Dane County (Madison), the epicenter of anti-Walker forces and up 22% and 25% in adjacent Columbia and Dodge Counties, which were two of the 16 counties where Walker's percentage fell from 2010 to 2012. One has visions of Madison Occupy-types heading out to canvass in rural areas nearby. Conclusion: the union and leftish Democrats did a good job of turning out their voters. It was like the 2004 presidential race in Ohio, where the Kerry forces did a great job turning out voters in central cities, but were still beaten because there was also heavy turnout in small and medium-sized counties of strongly motivated Republican voters. Such was the case in Wisconsin.*

*Walker's percentage rose most in small counties in the northwestern quadrant of the state and near Green Bay. These were mostly Barack Obama territory in 2008; the rise in Walker percentage suggests that confrontational tactics hurt Democrats there (as I speculated in a blogpost last night) and they might hurt Obama there as well.*

In Friday's presser, the president said the private sector was "doing fine." [James Pethokoukis](#) begs to differ.

*... But is it really? Is the private sector "doing fine?"*

*1. Private-sector jobs have increased by an average of just 105,000 over the past three months and by just 89,000 a month during the entire Obama Recovery.*

*In 1983 and 1984, during the supply-side Reagan Boom, private sector jobs increased by an average of 292,000 a month. Adjusted for population, that number is more like 375,000 private-sector jobs a month*

*2. If the labor force participation rate for May had just stayed where it was in April, the unemployment rate would have risen to 8.4%. As it is, the U.S. economy is suffering its longest sustained bout of 8% unemployment or higher since the Great Depression. ...*

[Pethokoukis](#) again posts on the remark later in the day.

*... The remark reveals the government-centered nature of Obama's thinking. He just doesn't give private enterprise very much thought, particularly when it comes to all the ways government can muck up the free enterprise system. To Obama, the private sector is always "doing fine," so it really doesn't matter if the public sector overloads it with too many taxes and too much regulation. The private sector? Oh, you means guys like Bain Capital who like to fire people.*

*No wonder there's been so little sense of urgency by the Obama White House to cut the sky-high corporate tax rate or so little consideration given to the impact on small business of letting the Bush tax cuts expire. The private sector is "doing fine," after all. Unintended consequences? What are those?*

*Approve the Keystone pipeline? Why? The environment comes first, especially at a time when the private sector is "doing fine."*

*The private sector isn't just millionaire CEOs of America's largest companies. It's also workers (who bear most of the burden of high corporate taxes) and investors and entrepreneurs. ...*

[David Harsanyi](#) tells us why we love Miss USA.

The cartoonists have fun with Wisconsin.

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## Washington Post

### What Wisconsin means

by Charles Krauthammer

Tuesday, June 5, 2012, will be remembered as the beginning of the long decline of the public-sector union. It will follow, and parallel, the shrinking of private-sector unions, now down to less than 7 percent of American workers. The abject [failure of the unions](#) to recall Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker (R) — the first such failure in U.S. history — marks the Icarus moment of government-union power. Wax wings melted, there's nowhere to go but down.

The ultimate significance of Walker's union reforms has been largely misunderstood. At first, the issue was curtailing outrageous union benefits, far beyond those of the ordinary Wisconsin taxpayer. That became a nonissue when the unions quickly realized that trying to defend the indefensible would render them toxic for the real fight to come.

So they made the fight about the "right" to collective bargaining, which the reforms severely restricted. In a state as historically progressive as Wisconsin — in 1959, it was the first to legalize the government-worker union — they thought they could win as a matter of ideological fealty.

But as the recall campaign progressed, the Democrats stopped talking about bargaining rights. It was a losing issue. Walker was able to make the case that years of corrupt union-politician back-scratching had been bankrupting the state. And he had just enough time to demonstrate the beneficial effects of overturning that arrangement: a huge budget deficit closed without raising taxes, significant school-district savings from ending cozy insider health-insurance contracts, and a modest growth in jobs.

The real threat behind all this, however, was that the new law ended automatic government collection of union dues. That was the unexpressed and politically inexpressible issue. That was the reason the unions finally decided to gamble on a high-risk recall.

Without the thumb of the state tilting the scale by coerced collection, union membership became truly voluntary. Result? Newly freed members rushed for the exits. In less than one year, - AFSCME, the second-largest public-sector union in Wisconsin, has lost more than 50 percent of its membership.

It was predictable. In Indiana, where Gov. Mitch Daniels (R) instituted by executive order a similar reform seven years ago, government-worker unions have since lost 91 percent of their dues-paying membership. In Wisconsin, Democratic and union bosses (a redundancy) understood what was at stake if Walker prevailed: not benefits, not "rights," but the very existence of the unions.

So they fought and they lost. Repeatedly. Tuesday was their third and last shot at reversing Walker's reforms. In April 2011, they ran a candidate for chief justice of the state Supreme Court who was widely expected to strike down the law. [She lost.](#)

In July and August 2011, they ran recall elections of state senators, needing three to reclaim Democratic — i.e., union — control. [They failed.](#) (The likely flipping of one Senate seat to the

Democrats on June 5 is insignificant. The Senate is not in session and won't be until after yet another round of elections in November.)

And then, Tuesday, their Waterloo. Walker defeated their gubernatorial candidate by a wider margin than he had — pre-reform — two years ago.

The unions' defeat marks a historical inflection point. They set out to make an example of Walker. He succeeded in making an example of them as a classic case of reactionary liberalism. An institution founded to protect its members grew in size, wealth, power and arrogance, thanks to decades of symbiotic deals with bought politicians, to the point where it grossly overreached. A half-century later these unions were exercising essential control of everything from wages to work rules in the running of government — something that, in a system of republican governance, is properly the sovereign province of the citizenry.

Why did the unions lose? Because Norma Rae nostalgia is not enough, and it hardly applied to government workers living better than the average taxpayer who supports them.

And because of the rise of a new constitutional conservatism — committed to limited government and a more robust civil society — of the kind that swept away Democrats in the 2010 midterm shellacking.

Most important, however, because in the end reality prevails. As economist Herb Stein once put it: Something that can't go on, won't. These public-sector unions, acting, as [FDR had feared](#), with an inherent conflict of interest regarding their own duties, were devouring the institution they were supposed to serve, rendering state government as economically unsustainable as the [collapsing entitlement states](#) of southern Europe.

It couldn't go on. Now it won't. All that was missing was a political leader willing to risk his career to make it stop. Because, time being infinite, even the inevitable doesn't happen on its own.

**WSJ**

**[What's Changed After Wisconsin](#)**

***The Obama administration suddenly looks like a house of cards.***

by Peggy Noonan

What happened in Wisconsin signals a shift in political mood and assumption. Public employee unions were beaten back and defeated in a state with a long progressive tradition. The unions and their allies put everything they had into "one of their most aggressive grass-roots campaigns ever," as the Washington Post's Peter Whoriskey and Dan Balz reported in a day-after piece. Fifty thousand volunteers made phone calls and knocked on 1.4 million doors to get out the vote against Gov. Scott Walker. Mr. Walker's supporters, less deeply organized on the ground, had a considerable advantage in money.

But organization and money aren't the headline. The shift in mood and assumption is. The vote was a blow to the power and prestige not only of the unions but of the blue-state budgetary model, which for two generations has been: Public-employee unions with their manpower, money and clout, get what they want. If you move against them, you will be crushed.

Mr. Walker was not crushed. He was buoyed, winning by a solid seven points in a high-turnout race.

Governors and local leaders will now have help in controlling budgets. Down the road there will be fewer contracts in which you work for, say, 23 years for a city, then retire with full salary and free health care for the rest of your life—paid for by taxpayers who cannot afford such plans for themselves, and who sometimes have no pension at all. The big meaning of Wisconsin is that a public injustice is in the process of being righted because a public mood is changing.

Political professionals now lay down lines even before a story happens. They used to wait to do the honest, desperate, last-minute spin of yesteryear. Now it's strategized in advance, which makes things tidier but less raggedly fun. The line laid down by the Democrats weeks before the vote was that it's all about money: The Walker forces outspent the unions so they won, end of story.

Money is important, as all but children know. But the line wasn't very flattering to Wisconsin's voters, implying that they were automatons drooling in front of the TV waiting to be told who to back. It was also demonstrably incorrect. Most voters, according to surveys, had made up their minds well before the heavy spending of the closing weeks.

Mr. Walker didn't win because of his charm—he's not charming. It wasn't because he is compelling on the campaign trail—he's not, especially. Even his victory speech on that epic night was, except for its opening sentence—"First of all, I want to thank God for his abundant grace," which, amazingly enough, seemed to be wholly sincere—meandering, unable to name and put forward what had really happened.

But on the big question—getting control of the budget by taking actions resisted by public unions—he was essentially right, and he won.

By the way, the single most interesting number in the whole race was 28,785. That is how many dues-paying members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees were left in Wisconsin after Mr. Walker allowed them to choose whether union dues would be taken from their paychecks each week. Before that, Afscome had 62,218 dues-paying members in Wisconsin. There is a degree to which public union involvement is, simply, coerced.

People wonder about the implications for the presidential election. They'll wonder for five months, and then they'll know.

President Obama's problem now isn't what Wisconsin did, it's how he looks each day—careening around, always in flight, a superfluous figure. No one even looks to him for leadership now. He doesn't go to Wisconsin, where the fight is. He goes to Sarah Jessica Parker's place, where the money is.

There is, now, a house-of-cards feel about this administration.

It became apparent some weeks ago when the president talked on the stump—where else?—about an essay by a fellow who said spending growth is actually lower than that of previous presidents. This was startling to a lot of people, who looked into it and found the man had left out most spending from 2009, the first year of Mr. Obama's presidency. People sneered: The

president was deliberately using a misleading argument to paint a false picture! But you know, why would he go out there waving an article that could immediately be debunked? Maybe because he thought it was *true*. That's more alarming, isn't it, the idea that he knows so little about the effects of his own economic program that he thinks he really is a low spender.

For more than a month, his people have been laying down the line that America was just about to enter full economic recovery when the European meltdown stopped it. (I guess the slowdown in China didn't poll well.) You'll be hearing more of this—we almost had it, and then Spain, or Italy, messed everything up. What's bothersome is not that it's just a line, but that the White House sees its central economic contribution now as the making up of lines.

Any president will, in a presidential election year, be political. But there is a startling sense with Mr. Obama that that's all he is now, that he and his people are all politics, all the time, undeviatingly, on every issue. He isn't even trying to lead, he's just trying to win.

Most ominously, there are the national-security leaks that are becoming a national scandal—the "avalanche of leaks," according to Sen. Dianne Feinstein, that are somehow and for some reason coming out of the administration. A terrorist "kill list," reports of U.S. spies infiltrating Al Qaeda in Yemen, stories about Osama bin Laden's DNA and how America got it, and U.S. involvement in the Stuxnet computer virus, used against Iranian nuclear facilities. These leaks, say the California Democrat, put "American lives in jeopardy," put "our nation's security in jeopardy."

This isn't the usual—this is something different. A special counsel may be appointed.

And where is the president in all this? On his way to Anna Wintour's house. He's busy. He's running for president.

But why? He could be president now if he wanted to be.

It just all increasingly looks like a house of cards. Bill Clinton—that ol' hound dog, that gifted pol who truly loves politics, who always loved figuring out exactly where the people were and then going to exactly that spot and claiming it—Bill Clinton is showing all the signs of someone who is, let us say, essentially unimpressed by the incumbent. He defended Mitt Romney as a businessman—"a sterling record"—said he doesn't like personal attacks in politics, then fulsomely supported the president, and then said that the Bush tax cuts should be extended.

His friends say he can't help himself, that he's getting old and a little more compulsively loquacious. Maybe. But maybe Bubba's looking at the president and seeing what far more than half of Washington sees: a man who is limited, who thinks himself clever, and who doesn't know that clever right now won't cut it.

Because Bill Clinton loves politics, he hates losers. Maybe he just can't resist sticking it to them a little, when he gets a chance.



## Washington Examiner

### Wisconsin results bad news for Obama

by Michael Barone

Republican Governor Scott Walker has been called by Fox News and other news organizations as the winner of the Wisconsin recall election over Democratic Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on [its excellent website](#) has kept a running tally of the results; the Journal Sentinel's chief political reporter, Craig Gilbert, has done a great job of covering this controversy with plenty of facts, excellent analysis and no partisan spin one way or the other; you can link to his work [here](#).

The map on the Journal Sentinel website (I am writing at about 9:30 Central, 90 minutes after the polls closed) tells an important story: only seven counties are inked in as going for Barrett: three traditionally blue collar and unionized counties on Lake Superior, Dane County (which includes the state capital and site of the University of Wisconsin Madison) and two adjacent counties and LaCrosse County on the Mississippi River. Two more will probably be added to this number: Milwaukee County, where early returns showing Walker ahead will likely to be overwhelmed when the numbers from the black-majority north side of Milwaukee come in, and Menominee County, the smallest county in the state which is coterminous with an Indian reservation.

Voters in rural/small town counties in Wisconsin voted heavily for Barack Obama in the 2008 presidential primary and, as I noted, in the general election. Why were they so much more favorable to him than voters in almost any other rural/small town part of America? Two reasons. The first is that Germano-Scandinavian America has been the most pacifist/isolationist/dovish part of America. George McGovern and Michael Dukakis (the latter the most pacifist Democratic nominee since William Jennings Bryan, in my opinion) did well here as well. The second reason is that I think many of these people believed, as I and many non-Obama voters did, that as an abstract proposition it would be a good thing for Americans to elect a black president. Neither reason may be applicable, or fully applicable, this November. Obama, with his assassination list and drone attacks, may not seem as dovish as he did when he was excoriating George W. Bush for launching military action in Iraq. And Americans have already elected a black president; do we need to do so again to show our good faith?

My second overall point: The turnout seems likely to be almost identical to the 2010 general election, and Walker's percentages in counties that have most of their precincts reporting are similar or higher than in 2010. But several big counties have not fully reported. In Milwaukee County only 14% have reported and Walker is currently ahead, but when results from the north side of Milwaukee come in that lead will probably be overtaken.

In Dane County (Madison), where it has been reported that 115% of registered voters voted (presumably legal, because if you're legally qualified you can register and vote on election day), 62% of precincts are in and Barrett leads 65%-35%. Interpolation from those results suggests a Barrett popular vote margin of 76,000, a bit below his 2010 margin there of 81,461 votes. Waukesha County, the state's largest suburban county, has 48% of precincts reporting with Walker leading 73%-27%. Interpolation from these results suggests a Walker popular vote margin of 107,000, well above his 2010 margin there of 81,924 votes. All of which suggests greater unanimity and greater enthusiasm among the conservative suburbanites of Waukesha



County than among the leftish denizens of the state capital/government employee cocoon of Dane County.

Walker's current popular vote margin statewide is 206,000. It looks like Waukesha County will overcome whatever margin Dane County gives Barrett. Milwaukee County in 2010 gave Barrett a popular vote margin of 81,320, but with Walker ahead in current returns and without reports of high turnout in black precincts on the north side of Milwaukee, it seems clear that while Walker's current 57%-42% margins statewide will be whittled down, it's not likely to be whittled down very much.

None of this is good news in Obama's headquarters a few miles south of Wisconsin in Chicago.

## Washington Examiner

### [More observations on Wisconsin](#)

by Michael Barone

Here are some observations from the election results in the Wisconsin recall race. For the results I've used the convenient interactive maps provided by the [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) and the [Huffington Post](#). When you look at the map, you notice that Democrat Tom Barrett won only in a relatively few counties, 12 of 72. He was reduced to the Democratic base: Madison and a few surrounding counties, the central city of Milwaukee but definitely not the suburbs, a few old factory towns like LaCrosse and Stevens Point, three counties up on Lake Superior near Duluth, Minnesota, and the Menominee Indian Reservation. Everything else went for Scott Walker.

Turnout in this election was really high: 2,507,269, compared to 2,160,832 in November 2010 and closer to the 2,984,417 in November 2008. Much has been made of the exit poll finding that union members were one-third of the total, up from 2010, but we see evidence of this in county returns as well. Turnout was up 16% statewide, but it was up 20% in Kenosha County and in Douglas County (Superior) which have had lots of blue collar voters. Walker's percentage as compared to 2010 declined 6.2% in Douglas County, more than in any other county in the state, and Kenosha County was one of the few counties Walker carried in 2010 but lost in 2012. Turnout was up 16% in Milwaukee County, suggesting that black turnout was fairly robust, and up 15% in Dane County (Madison), the epicenter of anti-Walker forces and up 22% and 25% in adjacent Columbia and Dodge Counties, which were two of the 16 counties where Walker's percentage fell from 2010 to 2012. One has visions of Madison Occupy-types heading out to canvass in rural areas nearby. Conclusion: the union and leftish Democrats did a good job of turning out their voters. It was like the 2004 presidential race in Ohio, where the Kerry forces did a great job turning out voters in central cities, but were still beaten because there was also heavy turnout in small and medium-sized counties of strongly motivated Republican voters. Such was the case in Wisconsin.

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**American.com**

**Obama is wrong. The private sector isn't 'doing fine'**

by James Pethokoukis

In his news conference today, President Obama gave some interesting insight into his views of the state of the American economy.

“The private sector is doing fine.”

[Here is the whole quote](#) (via RealClearPolitics):

The truth of the matter is that, as I said, we created 4.3 million jobs over the last 27 months, over 800,000 just this year alone. The private sector is doing fine. Where we're seeing weaknesses in our economy have to do with state and local government. Oftentimes cuts initiated by, you know, Governors or mayors who are not getting the kind of help that they have in the past from the federal government and who don't have the same kind of flexibility as the federal government in dealing with fewer revenues coming in.

But is it really? Is the private sector “doing fine?”

1. Private-sector jobs have increased by an average of just 105,000 over the past three months and by just 89,000 a month during the entire Obama Recovery.

In 1983 and 1984, during the supply-side Reagan Boom, private sector jobs increased by an average of 292,000 a month. Adjusted for population, that number is more like 375,000 private-sector jobs a month

2. If the labor force participation rate for May had just stayed where it was in April, the unemployment rate would have risen to 8.4%. As it is, the U.S. economy is suffering its longest sustained bout of 8% unemployment or higher since the Great Depression.

3. Private-sector GDP rose just 2.6% in the first quarter, after rising a measly 1.2% last year.

By contrast, private-sector GDP rose 3.8% in 1983 and 6.5% in 1984 during the supply-side Reagan Boom.

4. The U.S. stock market is down 7% since early April.

5. Real take-home pay is down over the past year.

6. That first-quarter GDP report also showed that after-tax corporate profits dropped for the first time in three years. Major red flag.

No, Mr. President, the private-sector isn't doing fine at all. And it certainly isn't ready to deal with a fiscal cliff of tax hikes or a continued deluge of new regulation.

American.com

## You know who's really 'doing fine' under Obama?' Big Government

By James Pethokoukis



*"The private sector is doing fine" – Barack Obama, June 8, 2012.*

There's a deeper issue here than just Obama being thoughtlessly glib about the slow-growth nature of the U.S. economic recovery. (In an earlier post, by the way, I highlighted some of the ways in which the private sector is most certainly not "doing fine.") **(You just read it above)**

**Pckrhd**

The remark reveals the government-centered nature of Obama's thinking. He just doesn't give private enterprise very much thought, particularly when it comes to all the ways government can muck up the free enterprise system. To Obama, the private sector is always "doing fine," so it really doesn't matter if the public sector overloads it with too many taxes and too much regulation. The private sector? Oh, you means guys like Bain Capital who like to fire people.

No wonder there's been so little sense of urgency by the Obama White House to cut the sky-high corporate tax rate or so little consideration given to the impact on small business of letting the Bush tax cuts expire. The private sector is "doing fine," after all. Unintended consequences? What are those?

Approve the Keystone pipeline? Why? The environment comes first, especially at a time when the private sector is "doing fine."

The private sector isn't just millionaire CEOs of America's largest companies. It's also workers (who bear most of the burden of high corporate taxes) and investors and entrepreneurs. [Again, Mitt Romney yesterday:](#)

Where my vision believes in the ingenuity of the American people, his vision trusts the wisdom of political appointees and boards, commissions and czars. It's one in which ordinary Americans must get permission from people in Washington before they can buy, build, invest or hire. It's a world of federal mandates and waivers, tax credits and subsidies, federal grants and loan guarantees. It's an economy where a company's lobbyists will be more important than its engineers, and federal compliance lawyers will outnumber patent lawyers. Business models based on building a better mousetrap will give way to those that seek the right mix of government subsidies, waivers and loan guarantees. And Chief Government Officers will join the ranks of Chief Financial Officers and Chief Operating Officers in corporate America's executive ranks.

President Obama trusts in the wisdom of government. I put my trust in the ingenuity and creativity and commitment to hard work of the American people.

Indeed, it seems that Obama thinks the only big flaw in the Obama recovery is that government isn't hiring enough public union members. Everybody else is "doing fine."

You know who really is doing fine? Washington. [Federal spending is at record levels](#). Of course, it's easy to be "doing fine" when you can just keep taxing the private sector. As Ben Bernanke joked yesterday, "A trillion here, a trillion there ..."

But the real economy? It's not doing fine at all.

## Human Events

### [Who's your favorite president of all time, Ms. USA?](#)

by David Harsanyi



Since we here at Human Events are dedicated to bringing you all the latest and most vital news about politics, I wanted to make sure you saw this interview with 20-year-old Rhode Island native, cellist and newly crowned Ms. USA.



A snippet [via GQ](#):

**GQ: Ready for a rapid fire of "favorite" questions?**

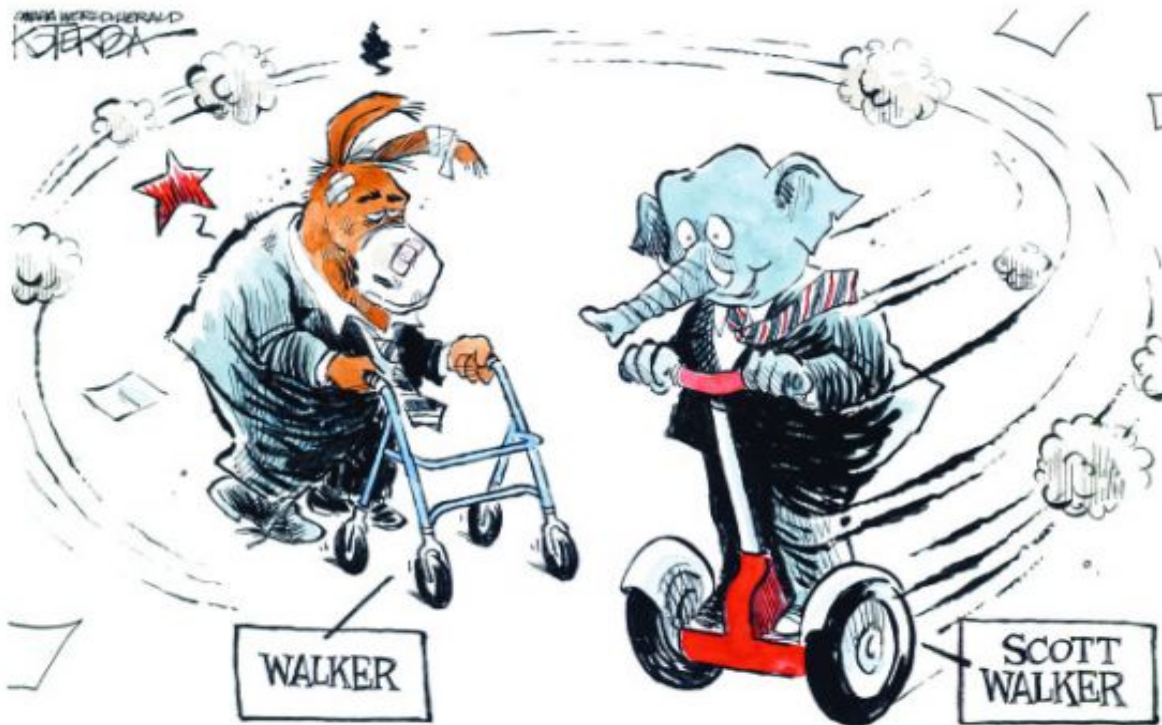
**Olivia Culpo: Yes!**

**GQ: Who's your favorite president of all time?**

**Olivia Culpo: Ronald Reagan, because of his fiscal policies.**

Now, imagine if she had said [Calvin Coolidge](#)?











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