



THE FOUNDATION

"Can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this revolution, and retiring from the field, grow old in poverty, wretchedness and contempt? Can you consent to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor? If you can -- GO -- and carry with you the jest of Tories and scorn of Whigs -- the ridicule, and what is worse, the pity of the world. Go, starve, and be forgotten!" --George Washington

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

'I'm as Mad as Hell, and I'm Not Gonna Take This Anymore!'

That famous line from the 1976 movie "Network" sums up the sentiment of many Americans as the health care debate continued to roar across the fruited plain. More town hall meetings featured citizens angry over proposed government expansion, leaving many congressmen not knowing quite how to handle the reaction. It's clear that many Americans have simply had enough.

That doesn't mean that Democrats were convinced to abandon their nefarious scheme. Instead, when their own constituents dared to question the infinite wisdom of the carriers of Potomac Fever, Democrat regulars put into practice the words of Obama administration lackey Jim Messina: "If [we] get hit, we will punch back twice as hard." In other words, don't worry about winning the debate; just try to discredit the opposition.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and her left-hand man, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD), started with an op-ed in USA Today declaring, "These [town hall meeting] disruptions are occurring because opponents are afraid not just of differing views -- but of the facts themselves. Drowning out opposing views is simply un-American. Drowning out the facts is how we failed at this task for decades." This type of "thinking" -- the transfer of one's own emotions or practices onto others -- is called projection. The Left has long since perfected the art of "drowning out" both opposing views and the facts, while blaming Republicans for doing the same thing.

The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) put out a call to action: "Opponents of reform are

organizing counter-demonstrators to speak at ... several congressional town halls on the issue to defend the status quo. It is critical that our members with real, personal stories about the need for access to quality, affordable care come out in strong numbers to drown out their voices." The SEIU has since removed the words "drown out," but the message is clear -- silence the opposition.

Last week, the administration encouraged Americans who support "reform" to rat on those who are spreading "fishy misinformation," while Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) denounced the administration's opponents as shills of the insurance companies. This week, the Left is painting town hall protestors as racists. "I think 45 to 65 percent of the people who appear at these groups are people who will never be comfortable with the idea of a black president," said Cynthia Tucker, editorial page editor for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. MSNBC's Carlos Watson worried that "the word socialist ... is becoming the new N-word." And Washington Post columnist Steven Pearlstein called them "political terrorists" who are "poisoning the political well" and "willing to say or do anything to prevent" ObamaCare.

Rep. John Dingell (D-MI) added, "[T]he last time I had to confront something like this was when I voted for the civil rights bill and my opponent voted against it. At that time, we had a lot of Ku Klux Klan folks and white supremacists and folks in white sheets and other things running around causing trouble." How convenient, then, that one of *his supporters* showed up at a meeting with an Obama-as-Hitler sign to "illustrate" the opposition's "hate."

Similar signs were made by LaRouche PAC, an organization run by long-time Socialist Workers Party member and seven-time Democrat presiden-

tial candidate Lyndon LaRouche. Rep. David Scott (D-GA) had a swastika painted on his office sign after a heated exchange at a meeting. Talk about "fishy." What are the odds that the swastika *wasn't* painted by an opponent? Pretty good, given the Left's history of perpetrating similar hoaxes. Not that comparisons with the National Socialists of Germany aren't appropriate -- we made one last week -- and the Left certainly has done its best to invite the unflattering comparison. After all, it was Pelosi herself who first introduced the word "swastika" to the debate.

Meanwhile, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid is so confident in the health care bill that he will conduct town hall meetings only by phone. And Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) had such esteem for her constituents that she talked to someone else on her cell phone while questions were being asked by meeting participants.

In the end, while Sen. Benedict Arlen Specter dismisses protestors as not "representative of America," here in our humble shop, we suspect that this horde of hysterical hypocrites is in fact not representative of America.

OBAMA LIED!!!

"I have not said that I was a 'single-payer' supporter." --President Barack Obama at a town hall meeting this week

"I happen to be a proponent of a single-payer universal health care program." --Obama in 2003

OBAMA LIED!!! Part II

"We have the AARP on board because they know this is a good deal for our seniors. ... AARP would not be endorsing a bill if it was undermining Medicare, okay?" --Barack Obama

Scratch that. AARP Chief Operating Officer Tom Nelson issued a statement saying, "While the President was correct that AARP will not endorse a health care reform bill that would reduce Medicare benefits, indications that we have endorsed any of the major health care reform bills currently under consideration in Congress are inaccurate."

This Week's 'Braying Jackass' Award

"UPS and FedEx are doing just fine, right? It's the Post Office that's always having problems." --Barack Obama, in a rare moment of truth-telling, argu-

ing that a public option won't force private insurance out of business

So let's see: Government-run health care = the Post Office. And this is supposed to make us feel *good* about the idea?

The 'Death Panel'

Section 1233 of H.R. 3200, the health care bill, would give financial incentives to doctors to give Medicare patients end-of-life counseling every five years. Yet federal law prohibits Medicare from reimbursing for services "the purpose of which is to cause, or assist in causing," suicide, euthanasia or mercy killing. So why the ruckus over the section? Washington Post columnist Charles Lane explains, "Section 1233 ... addresses compassionate goals in disconcerting proximity to fiscal ones. Supporters protest that they're just trying to facilitate choice -- even if patients opt for expensive life-prolonging care. I think they protest too much: If it's all about obviating suffering, emotional or physical, what's it doing in a measure to 'bend the curve' on health-care costs?"

The consultations are not mandatory, but the financial incentive for doctors makes them not entirely voluntary, either. To some extent, Section 1233 also prescribes the content of the consultation. The doctor "shall" discuss such things as "advanced care planning, including key questions and considerations, important steps, and suggested people to talk to," "living wills and durable powers of attorney," and "a list of national and State-specific resources to assist consumers and their families." Asks Lane, "Who belongs on 'a list' of helpful 'resources'? The Roman Catholic Church? Jack Kevorkian?"

Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin warned of a "death panel" and she may be on to something. As Barack Obama himself enlightened, toward the end of life, tough decisions have to be made, and the government can help: "At least we can let doctors know and [the patient] know that, you know what, maybe this isn't going to help. Maybe you're better off, uh, not having the surgery but taking, uh, the painkiller." Somehow, that's not comforting. When Obama says "we," he almost always means "the government." The government telling the doctor and patient that the painkiller is better than the surgery sure sounds like a death panel to us.

Rush Limbaugh relayed the story of an Oregon woman who was denied a lifesaving medication for

her cancer by OregonCare. The state did, however, in the same communication, assure her that it would pay to facilitate her death.

Furthermore, Obama health care adviser Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel, brother to White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel, wrote, "When the worse-off can benefit only slightly while better-off people could benefit greatly, allocating to the better-off is often justifiable." Perhaps decided by a panel?

Due to the negative publicity, the Senate Finance Committee announced Thursday that the end-of-life consultation provision will be removed from its version of the bill, but if there is any doubt as to liberals' intention to introduce socialized medicine to America with all of its ugly consequences, Ronald Reagan put those doubts to rest in one particular radio broadcast.

This Week's 'Alpha Jackass' Award

"The rumor that's been circulating a lot lately is this idea that somehow the House of Representatives voted for 'death panels' that will basically pull the plug on grandma because we've decided that we don't -- it's too expensive to let her live anymore. (Laughter.)" --New York Times transcript, including the crowd's reaction, of Barack Obama yukking it up about the "death panels"

On Cross-Examination

"President Obama is attempting to transmogrify America's entire medical system. It is literally a matter of life and death. If Obama and his supporters find mirth in the thought of 'pulling the plug on grandma,' do you trust them anywhere near your health care?" --Wall Street Journal columnist James Taranto

News From the Swamp: Deficit Continues to Climb

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) announced that the federal budget deficit reached \$1.3 trillion in July after having grown \$181 billion last month alone. That puts the deficit on track to hit the projected \$1.8 trillion for fiscal year 2009 that ends Sept. 30. Individual and corporate tax receipts are partially to blame, having fallen 17 percent since this point last year, thanks in large part to the recession. Increased government spending has been the heavy hitter, though. The billions of dollars of taxpayer money thrown at banks, the automobile indus-

try, unemployment and the ever-growing Medicare and Medicaid entitlements have added \$530 billion to this year's budget, a 21 percent increase over last year. Congress and the White House appear undisturbed by this news, however. Instead of cutting spending, the Democrats want to add a \$1 trillion health care plan to our liabilities.

The Treasury Department's answer to handling the debt is not to reduce spending but to raise the national debt ceiling above its current \$12.1 trillion. Sure, why not? Secretary Timothy Geithner suggested that Congress should raise the limit "so that citizens and investors here and around the world can remain [get *this*] confident that the United States will always meet its obligations." Geithner, who knows a thing or two about avoiding tax obligations, did not explain just how ignoring government debt limits in order to push more frivolous spending is supposed to instill confidence in the American economy.

Congress Bows to Pressure on Jet Purchase

House leaders thought better of their plan to purchase eight jets for the Air Force at a total of \$550 million after encountering opposition from the Pentagon, House Republicans and a bipartisan group of senators. Apparently, they were reminded of their indignation at auto executives' use of much cheaper private jets. The Department of Defense originally requested four planes at a cost of \$220 million, but the House Appropriations Committee doubled the order. The provision was buried in the \$636 billion Defense appropriations bill that passed the House 400-30. Upon hearing the news of the oversized jet order, the Pentagon publicly stated that it did not need or want that many jets.

Sens. Claire McCaskill (D-MO), John McCain (R-AZ), Jack Reed (D-RI), Richard Burr (R-NC), Christopher Bond (R-MO) and John Thune (R-SD) all voiced opposition to the proposal and planned to oppose funding. House Democrats eventually caved and the order was reduced to the original request. It looks like Washington can make a good decision when it tries; it just tries far too seldom.

From the Left: Charges Dismissed in Countrywide Probe

After a year-long investigation into Countrywide Financial mortgage company, the Senate Ethics Committee -- surprise! -- cleared two Democrats of

using their positions to obtain special deals. Senators Chris Dodd of Connecticut and Kent Conrad of North Dakota allegedly received sweetheart deals and preferential treatment in refinancing their homes through the lender Countrywide. While the complaints were dismissed, the pair were chastised and told that they should have "exercised more vigilance in [their] dealings with Countrywide." Democrats, of course, are never guilty; sometimes they're just "careless" about the appearance of impropriety.

But punishment comes in other ways too. The Senate investigation found that the main benefits to having a "Friend of Angelo" (Mozilo, former Countrywide CEO) loan were "quicker, more efficient loan processing and some discounts" but also noted that these loans were "not the best deals ... available at Countrywide or the market at large."

It appears then that Dodd and Conrad were only exercising typical government oversight on their own personal financial matters. We can thank the "Friends of Harry" program in the Senate for declaring them "innocent."

Martinez Is Out, So Who's In?

In other Senate news, GOP ranks thinned slightly when Florida Sen. Mel Martinez delivered a surprise resignation last week, bringing an end to his tenure more than a year early. Martinez plans on returning to Florida once his successor is named.

Florida Gov. Charlie Crist is already running for Martinez's seat in 2010 and leads former Florida House Speaker Marco Rubio in fundraising by a large margin. As governor, Crist could appoint himself to the Senate, but it's widely expected that he will bypass the easy route as he would have to leave the governor's chair prior to the expiration of his term, and self-appointment is risky in and of itself. Instead, Crist is expected to appoint a placeholder who would have no interest in staying once the remaining 16 months of Martinez's term expire.

The Florida Senate race is noteworthy as another conservative vs. moderate battle. While Rubio is considered an underdog, Crist upset many conservatives by endorsing John McCain days before the state's January 2008 primary and allowing McCain's foundering campaign to gather steam. So Florida Republicans will be watching this replacement process closely and the placeholder could affect a race in which he or she doesn't even participate.

Listening Tour Going Nowhere

It's hard to believe that just three months ago a group of Republican leaders formed a group called the National Council for a New America. In this effort to "rebrand" the GOP, the shiny new group held their first event among the people at a pizza parlor -- just outside the nation's capital in Arlington, Virginia.

Of course, the people of Arlington deserve a chance for input on national affairs, but the envisioned "listening tour" NCNA spoke about putting on hasn't yet proceeded outside the Beltway. Instead, the group formed by Rep. Eric Cantor (R-VA) has run into a number of snags and questions about whether ethics rules prohibiting Congress members from using their offices for explicitly political purposes apply to the NCNA. The Democrats would never transgress ethics in such a manner.

In the meantime, Americans are speaking loud and clear to their representatives without the assistance of Cantor's group -- or any other political entity for that matter. Seems to us that the NCNA could have saved itself the trouble of having a media event to kick off a "listening tour" and just opened its ears to those places where the people are already saying what they want. Perhaps listening to conservative America is not the glamorous duty the Beltway insiders are accustomed to, but it certainly would do far better for the GOP's hopes of regaining power this century.

NATIONAL SECURITY

We'd Rather Be Waterboarding

Ripped from the pages of Orwell's dystopian novel "1984," Chief Truthseeker (a.k.a. U.S. Attorney General) Eric Holder is set to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate not the Black Panther voter-intimidation case, but detainee treatment during -- wait for it -- the Bush administration. Wow. Who knew?

Holder's stated purpose is to "discover whether people went beyond the techniques that were authorized." Kind of like his own "technique" of prosecuting people who shouldn't be prosecuted.

Naturally, waterboarding will be making yet another guest appearance in the "heinous-crimes-of-the-millennium" lineup. In this particular inquisition, er, investigation, waterboarding will have its starring role right next to Nazi gas chambers and Saddam's

people shredders. Never mind the countless officials who have testified to the effectiveness and legality of waterboarding; let's leave those silly facts out of this. Oh, and let's leave any chance of a conviction out of this, too.

Convictions are improbable because the relevant anti-torture statute requires proving that the interrogator "specifically intended to inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering." Of course, since officials close to the case have stated that it's unclear whether any of the soon-to-be investigated CIA interrogators were ever told "what was authorized," getting a conviction out of any of the accused will be exceedingly unlikely. Then there's the pesky issue of evidence -- as in, there's hardly any of it -- as well as the fact that what does exist is poor quality, based on preliminary investigation findings.

For most normal prosecutors, these facts would have closed the lid on this sordid saga. Unfortunately, convictions aren't the target of these heavy-handed tactics, so don't expect an end soon. The real objective here, as with every other effort for this administration, is political advantage. Obama believes he can mollify his frothing, über-left base through Holder's "Get-Tough-on-Warmongers" program. No really: We'd rather be waterboarding.

Warfront With Jihadistan: Great Idea

As the war in Afghanistan heats up, casualties are mounting. July was the deadliest month of the war to date and August isn't looking any better. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the top American commander in Afghanistan, warns that the Taliban is resurgent and his strategy is to counter with more troops in heavily populated areas. These tactics translate into higher casualties for the foreseeable future. "It's a very aggressive enemy right now," Gen. McChrystal said. "We've got to stop their momentum, stop their initiative. It's hard work." One thing that will help stop their initiative is the killing of Pakistan Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud last week.

We believe McChrystal has the stuff to get the job done, but the White House has a brilliant alternative idea ready and waiting. The Associated Press reports, "The Obama administration has mapped out a dual approach to defeating terrorism, fusing military strikes against insurgents with a commitment to pump economic development, political aid and training into countries that are considered safe havens for militant groups." Why didn't someone

come up with these ideas years ago? Of course, we're not supposed to call it terrorism. We thought the AP would have learned that lesson by now.

Honduras 1, Obama 0

Rule of law scored a victory this week when the U.S. State Department was forced to back down in the face of the Honduran people's steadfast commitment to preserving their constitutional government. Since ousting President Manuel Zelaya nearly two months ago, the small South American country has had to endure immense pressure, not only from Zelaya and Venezuelan dictator Hugo Chavez, but from the American government as well.

Zelaya was removed from office in June after the Honduran Supreme Court, Attorney General and Congress determined that the president had violated the constitution by trying to do away with term limits. Zelaya was elected by the people, but governed more like a despot. He then tried to hijack the government altogether by calling for a referendum that would have robbed the Honduran people of the freedom to choose their leaders.

Zelaya threatened violence if he was not returned to power, while Chavez cut off Honduras's oil supply. But the most surprising (and heartbreaking) response came from the United States government. President Obama and Hillary "I am the secretary of state, not my husband" Clinton condemned the Hondurans' move as an illegal military coup and urged them to follow the rule of law, by which they meant ignore the rule of law. For two people trained as attorneys, one would think they would recognize that the Honduran legal institutions had in fact already followed the rule of law, but lawyers trained in leftist institutions believe only in exploiting laws.

The administration even resorted to bullying and blackmail by threatening economic sanctions, which for Honduras -- a country that relies on America for 80 percent of its trade -- would have been crippling.

Now, thanks to the Hondurans' refusal to give up, the U.S. State Department has withdrawn both its economic threats and insistence on Zelaya's return. Several congressional liberals, however, citing "human rights violations under the current de facto regime," continue to push the administration to intervene on Zelaya's behalf. Obama, with a political about-face that is becoming the rule rather than the exception, is calling these U.S. legislators "hypo-

critical." Clearly, he and Clinton have seen the writing on the wall and are now distancing themselves from the "interventionists" in their own party.

The people of Honduras should be applauded for reminding us that liberty can trump tyranny, whether it comes from the dictator next door or from the halls of Washington.

Profiles of Valor:

U.S. Navy HM2 Simson

On July 27, 2007, U.S. Navy HM2 Joshua Simson was patrolling Saret Kholet, Afghanistan, with a joint U.S. and Afghan National Army unit. Simson later recounted that as the unit moved to establish an observation post for a river crossing, "A squad of Afghan National Army had pushed across the river to clear two houses and spotted bad guys. The Afghans fired at them, causing the anti-Afghan forces to initiate their ambush prematurely." While the Americans and Afghans were in the "kill zone," they hadn't progressed so far as to be surrounded. But they still took heavy casualties in the ensuing seven-hour battle. Simson was serving as an advisor on being a medical first responder, and he put his training into action. Soon after the battle began, he pulled a wounded Afghan soldier into a bunker to administer first aid. The bunker took a direct hit, but he kept going. Throughout the battle, Simson said he repeated a sequence of tasks: "See or hear somebody need help, put out suppressive fire, move the man to cover if possible, and render lifesaving aid." Finally, the unit was able to evacuate the wounded. Simson was awarded the Silver Star for his willingness to expose himself repeatedly to potential injury or death to save wounded soldiers on the battlefield.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Counting Clunkers

The success of the "Cash for Clunkers" program has come down to an interesting game of number crunching. The government has claimed that the top vehicles chosen by those turning in their clunkers are small cars. But according to independent analysts at Edmunds.com, among the buyers' top picks are two full-size trucks and a small SUV.

While Edmunds calculated sales by counting the make and model of vehicles sold, the government relied on a complex system of separating out vehicles based on their engine and transmission types, whereby they considered each version as a completely new vehicle. Their method was so convo-

luted that one might ask whether they simply chose their desired conclusion then worked backwards by watering down the sales of unacceptable vehicles. The government, for example, counted Ford's F-150 truck as five different vehicles for the purpose of compiling sales figures. Counted as one vehicle, however, the F-150 came in fifth on Edmunds' list.

The NHTSA, the agency managing the program, has yet to provide their sales breakdown, but they don't dispute that Edmunds' method would arrive at a different result.

In other Clunkers news, General Motors has decided it will no longer take part in the cheerily named End of Life Vehicles Solution Corp., an organization responsible for the collection and disposal of toxic parts from recycled automobiles. GM, which is still fresh out of bankruptcy court, has stated that the new company formed under Chapter 11 did not produce any of the vehicles -- manufactured in the 80s and 90s -- containing potentially dangerous mercury switches. It is therefore withdrawing its considerable financial support for the disposal program, which could put quite a clunker in the Clunker program. Environmentalists should be pleased.

Obama Claims Credit

Where None is Due

It's a bird, it's a plane ... it's SuperBama! At least that's the White House version of the job numbers script, as read last week by President Obama, the economic commander, er, commander in chief. Obama's self-directed laudation announced, "Today, we're pointed in the right direction.... [W]e've rescued our economy from catastrophe." As proof, Obama pointed to the latest Labor Department numbers, which showed unemployment declined by one tenth of one percentage point and *only* 247,000 jobs lost in July. Naturally, a cause for celebration, right?

Not so fast. Despite the administration's assertion that the \$787 billion stimulus package helped catalyze the drop in unemployment, when measured against reality, this fantasy falls flat. According to economist and New York Times blogger Casey Mulligan, second-quarter federal and state stimulus spending amounted to only \$12 per person. And the AP reports that while the employment rate "dropped marginally from 9.5 percent to 9.4 percent ... one of the reasons for that change is that hundreds of thousands of people left the labor force." How convenient for the White House.

No doubt Obama will continue to don his cape and pose for pictures, but when it comes to the bottom line, the facts are kryptonite to his hero image.

Regulatory Commissars:

Timmy's Terrible Tantrum

Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner lashed out at independent U.S. financial regulators in a childish, expletive-laced tirade arising from administration frustration over the objections to another scheme for government control over the economy. Along with central government control over health care, the proposed financial system takeover by the administration is a power grab to reduce the influence of regulators who are not under the control of the White House. The administration's proposal would enable it to take over and break up large financial companies, merge bank regulators and increase executive branch powers over mortgage lending. What could possibly go wrong?

Resorting to the old "enough is enough" strategy, Geithner began echoing liberal arguments aimed at stifling the debate over health care, global warming, etc., by claiming the time for debate is over, that Americans are in favor of reform, and that the independent regulators whose powers he wants to usurp should stop publicly airing their concerns over the new scheme. Evidently, Geithner shares Obama's arrogant belief that others should not voice opposition or apprehension over concentrating power in the White House, and he seems surprised to encounter resistance from those who have the most to lose. Perhaps if everyday folks could only understand Obama's brilliance, they would be more agreeable to his ideas.

CULTURE & POLICY

Around the Nation:

Beware of the 'Militia'

"Militia groups with gripes against the government are regrouping across the country and could grow rapidly, according to an organization that tracks such trends," the Associated Press reports. The story is headlined, "Officials see rise in militia groups across US," but the "officials" turn out to be just those researchers for the far-left race-baiting Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). "The stress of a poor economy and a liberal administration led by a black president are among the causes for the recent rise, the report from the Southern Poverty Law Center says. Conspiracy theories about a secret Mexican

plan to reclaim the Southwest are also growing amid the public debate about illegal immigration." Oh, and there's the one guy from the ATF, whose lone quote about the growing movement is, "All it's lacking is a spark." Like the one at Waco?

The CBS Early Show joined in the fun, as co-host Russ Mitchell also cited the SPLC. "A report out this morning says anti-government and white racist militias are regrouping around the country. The Southern Poverty Law Center says it is in part a reaction to the election of America's first black president." Early Show correspondent Bob Orr expounded: "The report says 50 new militia training groups have popped up in just the last two years. Gun and ammunition sales are skyrocketing, and right-wing extremists, historically motivated by a distrust of government, are now especially angry about the election of America's first black president." Granted, conservatives *are* angry about a lot of things Obama is doing, but his race has nothing to do with it.

And as columnist Ann Coulter notes, "Throughout the presidential campaign last year, liberals were champing at the bit to accuse Americans of racism for not supporting Barack Obama. That was a tough argument on account of the obvious facts that: (1) for every vote he lost because he's black, Obama picked up another 20 votes for being black; (2) Obama won the election in (3) a country that's 87 percent non-black. So the accusations of racism had to be put on hold until ... the first note of dissent from his agenda was sounded."

Faith and Family:

APA on Homosexuality

The American Psychological Association said last week that it is ethical and can even be beneficial for counselors to help clients overcome homosexual impulses. The news is a shift from recent years, in which so-called "gay affirming" therapy has been the only accepted form. Still, the new APA guidelines indicate that a counselor must clarify that homosexuality does not indicate a mental or emotional disorder, that therapy cannot change sexual "orientation," and that homosexuals can lead happy and healthy lives. "We're not trying to encourage people to become 'ex-gay,'" said Judith Glassgold, chair of the APA's task force on the issue. "But we have to acknowledge that, for some people, religious identity is such an important part of their lives, it may transcend everything else." The task force's mission

was to investigate claims by "change therapists" that orientation could be changed. They found "no evidence" that change therapy works. Tell that to countless ex-homosexuals like Alan Chambers, author of "Leaving Homosexuality." Chambers runs the ministry Exodus International, which helps people alter their lifestyle. We would call their work pretty strong evidence of real change.

Village Academic Curriculum: Entitlement

From the Obama culture of entitlement, CNN reports, "A recent college graduate is suing her alma mater for \$72,000 -- the full cost of her tuition and then some -- because she cannot find a job." The 27-year-old graduate of New York's Monroe College filed suit July 24 after less than three months of job hunting. She says Monroe's "Office of Career Advancement did not help me with a full-time job placement. I am also suing them because of the stress I have been going through." Besides, her bachelor of business administration degree in information technology, extraordinary 2.7 grade-point average and good attendance record mean that any employer should jump at the chance to hire her. "They're supposed to say, 'I got this student, her attendance is good, her GPA is all right -- can you interview this person?' They're not doing that," she complained. Perhaps she should give the White House a call. Surely the administration could use someone with such drive and motivation to help fill out the Barackracy.

From the 'Non Compos Mentis' File

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals says that McDonald's is cruel to its chickens. But really, who isn't cruel to animals according to PETA? To draw attention to McDonald's practices, the wacko leftist group has begun the "McCruelty Campaign," which features an "Unhappy Meal" complete with a knife-wielding Ronald McDonald and bloody rubber chickens. Parents are understandably upset. "I don't want my son to be around something like this," said one mom. But PETA argues that kids are

jaded anyway, and, according to spokeswoman Lindsay Rajt, "[C]hildren and adults deserve to be told the truth -- and that's that behind Ronald McDonald's smile is cruelty to animals." For its part, McDonald's claims to use a humane stunning technique that numbs its chickens before they are slaughtered. For our part, we think that the folks at PETA are just a few French fries short of a Happy Meal.

And Last...

The end result of communism is always scarcity of resources, and Cuba is learning that lesson as the small Caribbean nation strains under a toilet paper shortage. Well, except for birthday boy Fidel Castro, who, like Obama and his health care package, won't suffer the same shortages as his subjects. Officials are feeling the pinch as they try to keep the economy afloat, and they expect that "at the end of the year there will be an important importation of toilet paper." In fact, supplies are stopped up because of central planning and price controls -- imports have been cut by 20 percent -- and relief may not come before the end of the rear, er, year. On the other hand, Cuba is also running short on food and is cutting red bean and chickpea rations by a third, and oxen are plowing the fields because there is little fuel for tractors. With so little food, maybe the demand for toilet paper will subside. Ahh, nothing like the bright side of communism. If Cuba would embrace liberty, perhaps it would no longer be the butt of so many jokes. As long as the country continues following Fidel, however, shortages like this will be the bottom story of the day.

Veritas vos Liberabit -- Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus, et Fidelis! Mark Alexander, Publisher, for The Patriot's editors and staff.

(Please pray for our Armed Forces standing in harm's way around the world, and for their families -- especially families of those fallen Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, who granted their lives in defense of American liberty.)