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BRIEF
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“There are more instances of the abridgment of the freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations.” --James Madison

OPINION IN BRIEF

“Just one year ago, would you have believed that an unelected government official, not even a Cabinet member confirmed by the Senate but simply one of the many ‘czars’ appointed by the President, could arbitrarily cut the pay of executives in private businesses by 50 percent or 90 percent? Did you think that another ‘czar’ would be talking about restricting talk radio? That there would be plans afloat to subsidize newspapers -- that is, to create a situation where some newspapers’ survival would depend on the government liking what they publish? Did you imagine that anyone would even be talking about having a panel of so-called ‘experts’ deciding who could and could not get life-saving medical treatments? Scary as that is from a medical standpoint, it is also chilling from the standpoint of freedom. If you have a mother who needs a heart operation or a child with some dire medical condition, how free would you feel to speak out against an administration that has the power to make life and death decisions about your loved ones? Does any of this sound like America? How about a federal agency giving school children material to enlist them on the side of the president? Merely being assigned to sing his praises in class is apparently not enough. How much of America would be left if the federal government continued on this path? ... How far the President will go depends of course on how much resistance he meets. But the direction in which he is trying to go tells us more than all his rhetoric or media spin. Barack Obama has not only said that he is out to ‘change the United States of America,’ the people he has been associated with for years have expressed in words and deeds their hostility to the values, the principles and the people of this country. ... Nothing so epitomizes President Obama’s own contempt for American values and traditions like trying to ram two bills through Congress in his first year -- each bill more than a thousand pages long -- too fast for either of them to be read, much less discussed. That he succeeded only the first time says that some people are starting to wake up. Whether enough people will wake up in time to keep America from being

dismantled, piece by piece, is another question -- and the biggest question for this generation.” --economist Thomas Sowell

RE: THE LEFT

“[O]ur federal government, from the White House through Congress, and so many state and local governments, seems to be demonstrating every day that they cannot make things better. They are not offering a new path, they are only offering old paths -- spend more, regulate more, tax more in an attempt to make us more healthy locally and nationally. And in the long term everyone -- well, not those in government, but most everyone else -- seems to know that won’t work. It’s not a way out. It’s not a path through. ... When I see those in government, both locally and in Washington, spend and tax and come up each day with new ways to spend and tax -- health care, cap and trade, etc. -- I think: Why aren’t they worried about the impact of what they’re doing? Why do they think America is so strong it can take endless abuse? ... We are governed at all levels by America’s luckiest children, sons and daughters of the abundance, and they call themselves optimists but they’re not optimists -- they’re unimaginative. They don’t have faith, they’ve just never been foreclosed on. They are stupid and they are callous, and they don’t mind it when people become disheartened. They don’t even notice.” --columnist Peggy Noonan

LIBERTY

“Ah! Re-regulation. What a great idea. As I recall, the Soviet Union and old Eastern Bloc tried heavy government control and regulation, and it didn’t work. The people rebelled. They wanted economic freedom, the right to keep their own money, the right to start their own businesses and the right to climb the ladder of success in a free economy. Now here’s a counter-thought. The Ronald Reagan free-market revolution, which included regulation lite, a sound dollar and low tax rates, launched a three-decade-long boom. And yes, the Gipper’s policies were copied around the world. ... So why not try something different? Unfashionable as it may be today, why not go back to the supply-side model of lower marginal tax rates for individuals and businesses, large and small? ... It’s the incentive model of economic growth. At lower tax rates, where folks keep more of what they earn and invest, greater after-tax rewards spur greater work effort

and investment risk. They also boost asset values. This is exactly what the economy needs: a rejuvenated dose of incentives -- permanent incentives. Think of this: At the same wage level from cost-conscious businesses, a 10 percent personal tax cut provides a handsome after-tax wage-increase incentive that will spur individuals to go back to work -- simply because work will pay more after-tax. ... That's the message for economic freedom fighters everywhere: Unite, and throw off your chains. Especially here in America." --economist Lawrence Kudlow

INSIGHT

"It is obvious what the fraudulent issue of fascism versus communism accomplishes: it sets up, as opposites, two variants of the same political system; it eliminates the possibility of considering capitalism; it switches the choice of 'Freedom or dictatorship?' into 'Which kind of dictatorship?' -- thus establishing dictatorship as an inevitable fact and offering only a choice of rulers. The choice -- according to the proponents of that fraud -- is: a dictatorship of the rich (fascism) or a dictatorship of the poor (communism). That fraud collapsed in the 1940's, in the aftermath of World War II. It is too obvious, too easily demonstrable that fascism and communism are not two opposites, but two rival gangs fighting over the same territory -- that both are variants of statism, based on the collectivist principle that man is the rightless slave of the state -- that both are socialistic, in theory, in practice, and in the explicit statements of their leaders -- that under both systems, the poor are enslaved and the rich are expropriated in favor of a ruling clique -- that fascism is not the product of the political 'right,' but of the 'left' -- that the basic issue is not 'rich versus poor,' but man versus the state, or: individual rights versus totalitarian government -- which means: capitalism versus socialism." --philosopher and novelist Ayn Rand (1905-1982)

THE GIPPER

"There can be no security anywhere in the free world if there is no fiscal and economic stability within the United States. Those who ask us to trade our freedom for the soup kitchen of the welfare state are architects of a policy of accommodation. They say the world has become too complex for simple answers. They are wrong. There are no easy answers, but there are simple answers. We must have the courage to do what we know is morally right." --Ronald Reagan

GOVERNMENT

"The recently revived idea of creating a government-run

health plan to compete with private insurers may reinforce the impression that President Obama and his allies in Congress are standing tall against those corporate fat cats who delight in denying lifesaving care to children and old ladies. But Obama and the insurers still see eye to eye on a central element of his health care agenda: the requirement that every American obtain medical coverage. It's obvious why the insurers like this idea. What industry wouldn't welcome a law that forces everyone to buy its product? But the insurers also argue that a mandate will help control costs, and the president agrees. Judging from the experience in Massachusetts, which imposed its own insurance requirement in 2006, they're both wrong. ... Since 2006, Michael Cannon notes in a recent Cato Institute paper, health insurance premiums in Massachusetts have risen by 8 percent to 12 percent a year, almost double the national average. During the same period, total medical spending has increased by 28 percent. The cost of subsidizing coverage through the state's Commonwealth Care program is expected to hit \$880 million next year, 20 percent more than originally projected. ... [W]hen you subsidize something, people tend to consume more of it. Total spending is therefore bound to be higher, whether it's covered through direct taxes or through the indirect tax of forcing people to pay for insurance they don't want." --columnist Jacob Sullum

FOR THE RECORD

"It takes no great leap of faith to understand that people who don't pay taxes in the first place welcome the prospect of increasing the burden on those who do -- especially if the 'taking' classes correctly expect to be the beneficiaries. So, too, those whose 'poverty level' exempts them from taxes correctly see the mediocre care under a nationalized health system as better than the longer waits and ER dependency they now experience, especially if someone else is paying the freight. What the average American may regard as inferior care and service is seen as an improvement by those who live at least partly off government redistribution programs. This constituency cares not a whit for the increased costs to taxpayers and future generations of taxpayers; they don't pay taxes, so it's not their problem. Nor do they care about the prospect of reduced overall care quality and availability; they see it as an improvement on what they experience now. Most of all, they have no fear of the vastly increased power a socialized medicine program would give the bureaucracy through control of a major portion of the American economy. They see the government as the main source of sustenance and problem-solving in their own lives -- so the bigger, the better." --columnist Richard Weitz

CULTURE

“Last week, the Pew Research Center released a poll showing that belief in, and concern for, climate change is evaporating. Belief in global warming has dropped from 71 percent in April to 57 percent; only 36 percent believe man is mostly responsible for climate change. Only 35 percent of respondents said it’s a ‘very serious problem,’ down from 41 percent. This is after more than a decade of near-relentless fearmongering -- er, sorry, ‘education’ -- from Al Gore, academia and Hollywood. They can’t persuade the American people to spend trillions for less than a degree Celsius of cooling a century from now. No doubt the fact that neither climate models nor doomsday predictions have panned out (there has been no increase in global temperatures since 1998) is a big part of the story. But my hunch is that the bigger reason for the shift is that Democrats are threatening to really do something about it, and the costs no longer seem hypothetical. Throw in a bad economy, and Americans simply balk. And that’s Americans -- the notion that China, India and Brazil are going to don carbon handcuffs is just silly. Those countries want to get rich, and they’ll gladly sell their carbon to do it. But the anti-global-warming industry seems to be on autopilot, churning out books that only half-jokingly propose eating your pets. Others insist that Americans will have to restrict themselves to only one child, just like in authoritarian China. If those are the costs, free people will not pay them.” --National Review editor Jonah Goldberg

READER COMMENTS

“Excellent essay on ‘Nobody Questions That.’ [Your Essential Liberty Project](#) is also an excellent start to stress the importance of the U.S. Constitution. I believe it may be wise to send copies of the Constitution to our congressmen and president -- they seem to be unfamiliar with it and perhaps have not read it. I keep a copy in my purse and on more than one occasion have taken it out. Keep up the good work!” --Debi

“What else can we do to defend our Constitution from the traitorous politicians ruining (ruining not running!) our country? I can write letters and emails till I’m blue in the face, and what good does it do? Instead of defense we must start a new offense! Educating the general public is the only way to get that done. [Supporting The Patriot Post](#) is the most honorable mission I can think of, other than professing my Christian faith, in saving this country. God’s richest blessings to The Patriot Post!” --Kurt

“I felt like standing up and cheering after reading Mark’s

piece. This gang of carpetbaggers we now have in this administration are going to destroy what we have long giving our Blood and Treasure for. Wake up America before it’s too late. This is another fight that we must win. I just hope its not too late already. We yet may have to defend our founders legacy.” --Ann

“Have arms, will travel!” --R.

THE LAST WORD

“The Democrats’ all-new ‘opt out’ idea for health care reform is the latest fig leaf for a total government take-over of the health care system. Democrats tell us they’ve been trying to nationalize health care for 65 years, but the first anyone heard of the ‘opt out’ provision was about a week ago. They keep changing the language so people can’t figure out what’s going on. The most important fact about the ‘opt out’ scheme allegedly allowing states to decline government health insurance is that a state can’t ‘opt out’ of paying for it. All 50 states will pay for it. A state legislature can only opt out of allowing its own citizens to receive the benefits of a federal program they’re paying for. It’s like a movie theater offering a ‘money back guarantee’ and then explaining, you don’t get your money back, but you don’t have to stay and watch the movie if you don’t like it. That’s not what most people are thinking when they hear the words ‘opt out.’ The term more likely to come to mind is ‘scam.’ While congressional Democrats act indignant that Republicans would intransigently oppose a national health care plan that now magnanimously allows states to ‘opt out,’ other liberals are being cockily honest about the ‘opt out’ scheme. On The Huffington Post, the first sentence of the article on the opt-out plan is: ‘The public option lives.’ Andrew Sullivan gloats on his blog, ‘Imagine Republicans in state legislatures having to argue and posture against an affordable health insurance plan for the folks, as O’Reilly calls them, while evil liberals provide it elsewhere.’ But the only reason government health insurance will be more ‘affordable’ than private health insurance is that taxpayers will be footing the bill. That’s something that can’t be opted out of under the ‘opt out’ plan. Which brings us right back to the question of whether the government or the free market provides better services at better prices. There are roughly 1 million examples of the free market doing a better job and the government doing a worse job. In fact, there is only one essential service the government does better: Keeping Dennis Kucinich off the streets.” --columnist Ann Coulter