



# THE PATRIOT POST®

## VOICE OF ESSENTIAL LIBERTY

**DIGEST**

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## THE FOUNDATION

“Excessive taxation ... will carry reason and reflection to every man’s door, and particularly in the hour of election.” --Thomas Jefferson

## GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

### Yeah, About Those Tax Rates...

Barack Obama signed into law the sweeping financial-sector overhaul Wednesday, opening the way for government tentacles to gain an even firmer grip on the economy. Of course, Obama couched the bill with a promise: “The American people will never again be asked to foot the bill for Wall Street’s mistakes. There will be no more taxpayer-funded bailouts. Period.”

As Democrats feverishly expand the power of government, another issue looms -- the expiration of the Bush tax cuts at midnight on Dec. 31. What a New Year’s celebration that will be. If Congress doesn’t act, Americans will be saddled with one of the largest tax increases in history.

Don’t be fooled by demo-goguery, either. The tax hikes will hit *every* income level. The top bracket would rise from 35 percent to 39.6 percent; the 33 bracket will rise to 35; 28 will rise to 31; 25 will rise to 28; and the lowest bracket, 10 percent, will rise to 15 percent -- a 50 percent hike. Capital gains taxes will rise from 15 percent to 20 percent, and the tax on dividends will skyrocket to 39.6 percent, which is a far cry from the current 15 percent rate. The marriage penalty will return, and the child tax credit will be cut in half from \$1,000 to \$500.

That said, it seems likely that Democrats will act to stop this huge tax increase -- at least for those in the lower brackets, and even if it’s only temporary (after all, it’s “their” money to give or not, right?). A few Democrats have even partially broken with their party’s traditional class warfare platform to argue that tax increases shouldn’t hit top-bracket earners either. The highest bracket includes small business owners, and increasing their taxes during a recession isn’t exactly a way to encourage them to hire new workers -- or to just stay in business.

Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, who found paying his own taxes somewhat inconvenient, doesn’t buy this economic argument. While there is “still some uncertainty about how strong the recovery is going to be,” he said, that doesn’t mean small business owners and individuals in the top bracket should keep their money. “Business always wants their taxes lower and always wants to live with less regulation,” he snorted. Yes, and job-killing Democrats always seems to want the opposite.

So, he concluded, “We believe it is appropriate to let those tax cuts that go to the most fortunate expire.” Got that? All you hard-working taxpayers who dare to earn more than \$250,000 a year are just “fortunate,” and it’s time you paid your “fair share.”

The Obama agenda includes increasing spending to such stratospheric levels that deficits must be solved with higher taxes. Of course, with elections looming, Democrats have suddenly found religion on deficits, which means arguing over how much extending the tax cuts will “cost.” According to Politico, “Extending all the tax cuts would add \$3 trillion to the deficit over the next decade, while extending only the middle-class cuts would cost \$1.4 trillion.” Um, *whose* money is it?

Indeed, deficits are now such a public relations nightmare that Democrats didn’t even bother enacting a budget this year -- they’ll just let that \$3.6 trillion blow in the wind and hope you don’t notice the \$1.5 trillion deficit. On the other side of the aisle, Republicans actually have a plan. Rep. Tom Price (R-GA), an orthopedic surgeon who heads the conservative Republican Study Committee, has offered a budget that reduces federal borrowing from Obama’s new baseline by \$6.4 trillion over 10 years. Not only that, but it makes the Bush tax cuts permanent for everyone and further lowers taxes by \$1.7 trillion.

Price also proposes a spending “reset” to 2008 levels. “We think it’s essential to show the American people we can cut spending enough to balance the budget even with the big hole Barack Obama has put us in,” Price said. However, he admitted, “Even some Republicans will flinch from the spending cuts required to get to a balanced budget.” Those Republicans should grow a backbone.

### This Week's 'Braying Jenny' Award

"[T]he Bush-era tax cuts contributed to the deficit, did not create any jobs, [and] they should be repealed. What we should, though, renew are the middle-income tax cuts. ... If we want to lower taxes for the middle class and reduce the deficit and create jobs, extending the tax cuts at the high end are not furthering reaching those goals." --House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)

If that's the case, why extend them at all?

### News From the Swamp:

#### Kagan Approved By Senate Committee

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted 13-6 to send Solicitor General Elena Kagan's Supreme Court nomination to the Senate floor. Perennial camera-hog Lindsey Graham (R-SC) was the sole Republican senator to cross party lines to support Kagan's nomination, even though, he confesses, she has a "philosophy I disagree with." Graham tried to wax eloquent, saying, "The last election had consequences. At the end of the day, after the hearing, it was not a hard decision for me to make. I thought she did a very good job and she will serve this nation honorably. And it would not have been someone I would have chosen, but the person who did choose, President Obama, I think chose wisely." With friends like these...

This isn't the first time Graham has failed to live up to the "R" after his name. Last year he was the sole Republican vote on the committee in support of Sonia Sotomayor. The scales are certainly tipped in Kagan's favor for confirmation, which, for the next generation, would give liberals one more solid vote on the High Court in support of their attempt to completely deconstruct our Constitution.

#### Rangel to Face House Trial for Corruption

A House investigative panel has found that longtime Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY) likely violated a range of ethics rules, including granting official favors in exchange for money, taking trips to the Caribbean using corporate funds, failing to report income from rental property in the Dominican Republic and misusing rent-controlled apartments in New York City. The New York Times reports, "The finding means that he must face a public trial before the House ethics committee, the first member of Congress to be forced to do so since 2002, when Representative James A. Traficant Jr. was expelled from Congress after a corruption conviction." (Since the Times didn't find it worth mentioning, we'll note that Traficant was also a Democrat.) Rangel is seeking re-election in November anyway, and he said there is no chance he will withdraw or resign.

### New & Notable Legislation

Sen. Scott Brown's proposal to use \$35 billion in "stimulus" money to fund an unemployment benefits extension fell on deaf ears in Congress this week. The Massachusetts Republican has justifiably taken some heat lately from his GOP colleagues for supporting several Democrat measures, but he now laments the fact that bipartisanship is a one-way street with leftists. Welcome to Washington, Mr. Brown. The \$35 billion would have come from future stimulus projects that will not likely provide new jobs anyway. Democrats would rather fund the unemployment extension with deficit spending than use money that's already out there. So that's just what they did, designating it an "emergency" to bypass their own pay-as-you-go rules.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) pulled cap-n-tax legislation off the floor Thursday after acknowledging that he couldn't twist enough arms to reach 60 votes. Instead, he will put forward an energy-only bill to respond to the Gulf oil spill and address other more popular energy items. Reid had pushed a comprehensive climate and energy bill that still wasn't enough for most leftists. The bill included a clean-energy package, restrictions on greenhouse gas emissions, and, of course, more taxes. Environmental activists had hoped to see an economy-wide greenhouse gas cap rather than one that focuses specifically on electricity producers. They also complain that the negotiations that Reid, John Kerry and Joe Lieberman have engaged in with various energy producers and lobbying groups haven't earned them any Republican votes, while watering down the bill. *Not* passing the bill is just about right, in our opinion.

Reid is also pushing the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, a blatant payoff to big labor that seeks to nationalize public sector unions for police, firefighters and first responders. The explanation for the bill is that emergency workers nationwide should be subject to the same rules governing hiring, pay and worker protections. In reality, it's an attempt to strip states and localities of their right to control local public service employees. If this bill passes, we can expect a fundamental breakdown across the country of first responder capabilities as greedy unions push for unrealistic and off-kilter rules to increase their own power.

The Senate passed a \$60 billion war-funding bill Thursday after rejecting the House's \$80 billion version, which included \$20 billion in domestic spending. Republicans resisted adding the aid for states and municipalities to stem possible teacher layoffs because they said the bill

should focus on Afghanistan. The House will take up the Senate version next week.

### **‘Teachable Moment’ in USDA Official’s Firing**

Conservative blogger Andrew Breitbart made quite a splash earlier this week with the release of a video clip of USDA official Shirley Sherrod, who is black, allegedly describing for an NAACP audience how she many years ago considered withholding help to a white farmer facing bankruptcy because she felt black farmers were suffering. For this alleged disclosure, Sherrod was forced by the Obama administration to resign immediately from her position, and the NAACP issued a statement condemning her act.

But that’s not the whole story. Read more [here](#).

### **Tea Party Infighting**

The Tea Party movement was busy this week fighting amongst themselves. After Tea Party Express leader Mark Williams penned a satirical “letter” to Abraham Lincoln from NAACP President Ben Jealous, the Tea Party Federation -- self-described as a “broad coalition of local and regional Tea Party groups” formed “to create a unified message and media response” -- promptly kicked the Express out of its ranks, calling the letter “clearly offensive.” A Federation press release had even demanded Williams’ ouster from the Express as one condition of avoiding expulsion from the Federation.

The Tea Party movement’s strength is not in centralized control or submission to “establishment” demands but in restoring constitutional authority and Rule of Law. Those playing Tory to the Tea Party’s Patriots would do well to take a lesson from colonial history and remember what a bunch of “rabble rousers” can do.

Meanwhile, former Senate Republican Majority Leader Trent Lott, who is now a highly paid lobbyist, said of the Tea Party: “We don’t need a lot of Jim DeMint disciples.” DeMint is a solid conservative senator from South Carolina. Lott’s solution? “As soon as [Tea Party candidates] get here, we need to co-opt them.” Of course, we all saw what happened to the Senate under Lott’s brand of control. He’s clearly more concerned with how Democrats feel about him than with upholding conservative (read: constitutional) principles.

### **West Virginia Special Election Set**

West Virginia Democrat Gov. Joe Manchin signed legislation Monday setting a special primary to fill the late

Robert Byrd’s U.S. Senate seat for Aug. 28 and the special election for Nov. 2. On Tuesday, Manchin announced that he will seek the seat. For now, Carte Goodwin, Manchin’s former chief counsel, holds the seat.

Republicans had hoped that Rep. Shelley Moore Capito would run, but she announced Wednesday that she would focus instead on retaining her House seat. Mining company owner John Raese, who ran for Senate in 1984 and 2006, will make a third attempt in the special election this year, but Manchin is the clear favorite -- assuming he can beat his 95-year-old challenger, former West Virginia Secretary of State Ken Hechler, in the primary.

## **NATIONAL SECURITY**

### **Warfront With Jihadistan: ‘Top Secret America’**

The Washington Post released the findings of its two-year investigation into the world of “Top Secret America” this week. Its less-than-shocking findings closely parallel the trend for the rest of Big Government: a thoroughgoing lack of oversight; an unaccountable, secretive, massive subculture for which no single human being can accurately estimate the cost; and a complete inability to determine how many people this quasi-collaborative network employs, how many programs exist within it, or how many agencies or other entities are involved. As an added bonus, apparently there’s no way to gauge whether it’s even effective. To quote a current infomercial, “Now how much would you pay for it?”

Answer: Evidently, a lot. Roughly 1,300 government organizations and 1,900 private entities are identified as actively engaged in intelligence, counterterrorism and homeland security operations in more than 10,000 locations spanning the U.S. alone. Almost one million people nationwide hold top-secret clearances, including the author of this article (note: all facts contained in this article were obtained from open-source media through unclassified channels). Since 9/11, 17 million square feet of new top-secret office space has been constructed in the D.C. area, alone -- enough to occupy three Pentagons or 22 U.S. Capitol buildings.

Don’t look for this buildup to change anytime soon, either. Not only has this community grown by leaps and bounds since 9/11, but the community itself is quite good at protecting its turf through compartmentalization of information -- especially information having to do with dollar amounts or numbers of personnel involved -- and hiding behind “need-to-know” and clearance-level provisions associated with classified information.

Certainly, America needs robust intel, counter-terrorism and homeland security capabilities. We've discovered, however, that as with any massive government bureaucracy, an exceedingly great potential for fraud, waste and abuse exists. If allowed to fester, it will both further grow the appetite of the ravenous beast that is Big Government and seriously threaten the security of the nation. Unlike other Big Government gorgers that are subject to public scrutiny, almost all of this growth exists well below the radar, producing even more unwitting dependents on Big Brother, virtually all of whom have neither the clearance -- and thus knowledge of the problem -- nor the ability to check that expansion.

What is needed, for starters, is a comprehensive review of the "loose confederation of agencies that is the intelligence community" (as the 9/11 Commission phrased it), to determine which entities are truly needed and which are not. This, in turn, would depend on our national security objectives, and a comparison of each agency's contribution to those objectives. Supposedly, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), an office set up as a result of the 9/11 Commission's recommendations, has this duty. In light of this week's disclosure of the sheer size of this community, however, we're not convinced the DNI has a firm handle on that duty.

### **Did BP Lobby for Lockerbie Bomber's Release?**

BP is in hot water again, but this time it's not in the Gulf. Under pressure from members of the U.S. Congress, the oil giant has finally issued a statement regarding its role in lobbying for the release of terrorist Abdel Baset al-Megrahi, a.k.a. the Lockerbie Bomber. Megrahi, the only person convicted for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, was released by the Scottish government last summer due to his allegedly terminal illness. A year later, he is alive and well in Libya, and the UK government is calling his release a "mistake."

BP's cryptic email response to the issue denied any involvement, yet questions remain. In 2007, Libya and the UK government signed a Prisoner Transfer Agreement (PTA), which coincidentally was followed with a \$900 million deal for BP to drill off the coast of Libya. BP won't begin drilling until late next month, however, because of the mountains of red tape it faced at the hands of the Libyan government until Megrahi was actually set free. In fact, BP was concerned enough to warn the British government in late 2007 that the "slow progress" being made on the PTA could have a "negative impact on UK commercial interests."

While the PTA was not specifically about Megrahi, the Libyans made no attempt to hide the fact that he was their primary concern. After his release, Saif Gadhafi, son of Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi, stated, "At all times we talked about the [PTA], it was obvious we were talking about him [Megrahi]. We all knew that was what we were talking about." The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has scheduled a hearing to determine just what happened here. Meanwhile, the families of the 270 victims, each of whose blood is on Megrahi's hands, are left to ponder this gross miscarriage of justice.

### **Free Speech, Including False Claims**

In the wake of the uproar over John Kerry's military service record and whether he really earned those three Purple Hearts, Congress quietly passed (and President George W. Bush signed) the Stolen Valor Act of 2005, which prohibited, among other things, the unauthorized wearing or claim of earning any military decorations or medals. Last week, however, a federal judge in Denver tossed aside the law, claiming it violated the First Amendment.

Robert Blackburn, who, ironically, was appointed by Bush in 2002, wrote in his opinion that the "social approbation" of those who would make up a story about earning a medal is a societal force strong enough to bring shame onto them, without the need for a law which stands contrary to free speech. Indeed, the First Amendment was designed to protect even foolish lies, and sometimes a well-meaning Congress can take a restriction too far.

## **BUSINESS & ECONOMY**

### **TARP Gets Bigger**

The special inspector general of the Troubled Asset Relief Program, Neil Barofsky, issued his quarterly report on the program this week, and the damage is worse than many thought. As Reuters reports, "Increased housing commitments swelled U.S. taxpayers' total support for the financial system by \$700 billion in the past year to around \$3.7 trillion." The government has promised capital to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the mortgage giants largely responsible for the financial meltdown. Loan guarantees for the Federal Housing Administration, the Government National Mortgage Association and the Veterans Administration raised the government's commitments by \$512 billion.

Specifically, Barofsky hammered the administration on its Home Affordable Modification Program, writing, "The American people are essentially being asked to shoulder

an additional \$50 billion of national debt without being told, more than 16 months after the program's announcement, how many people Treasury hopes to actually help stay in their homes as a result of these expenditures, how many people are intended to be helped through other subprograms, and how the program is performing against those expectations and goals. Without such clearly defined standards, positive comments regarding the progress or success of HAMP are simply not credible, and the growing public suspicion that the program is an outright failure will continue to spread."

Not only is the administration throwing good money after bad, but the White House has ordered a "comprehensive review" of the Community Reinvestment Act to make sure banks are lending money in minority communities. Apparently, there hasn't been sufficient pressure on banks to make loans to those who can't afford to repay them simply because their skin is a certain color.

### **Regulatory Commissars: Sleight-of-Hand Dealing**

TARP was intended for the financial industry, though failing to get Congress to act on a similar plan for automakers GM and Chrysler, George W. Bush unilaterally decided to use TARP for those entities, too. Under Barack Obama, the dealerships became more or less government-run, and part of that scheme was for the auto giants to shutter numerous car dealerships around the country. This week, however, TARP Special Inspector General Neil Barofsky reported that the government failed to prove that those closures were "either necessary for the sake of the companies' economic survival or prudent for the sake of the nation's economic recovery," in part because of job losses arising from the government's actions.

In what is sure to shock, Obama's political decision to take over GM and Chrysler may have involved some unfairness to both the company bondholders and to the dealership employees who lost jobs when the government closed the dealerships. The audit also found that General Motors failed to "consistently follow its stated criteria" for cutting its dealer network and that Chrysler failed to offer an appeals process.

As with so many of his economic policy failures, Obama's decisions resulted in "potentially adding tens of thousands of workers to the already lengthy unemployment rolls -- all based on a theory and without sufficient consideration of the decisions' broader economic impact" during such a severe economic downturn, the report said. We have to wonder if those lost jobs were included in

last week's ridiculous White House report of all the jobs they've "created or saved."

### **Income Redistribution: ObamaCare Fraud**

First, it was Pennsylvania. Now, Maryland will pay for abortions using federal tax dollars under Obama's health care overhaul. Maryland will get \$85 million in federal funds, while Pennsylvania is in line to receive \$160 million to fund a "high-risk" insurance program that will cover abortions. (New Mexico had been set to use \$37 million for a similar program, but the state removed abortions from coverage following media attention and pro-life protests.)

Of course, ObamaCare's abortion funding is no surprise, Obama's "no federally funded abortions" pledge and equally useless Executive Order notwithstanding. As Kathryn Jean Lopez of National Review notes, "*Obamacare never prohibited abortion funding*. It's a matter of administrative discretion.... And the administration will have to provide a new myth or actually act ... to prohibit that which is not currently prohibited." Another promise broken. Surprise, surprise.

Speaking of fraud, federal authorities recently busted a Medicare fraud ring spanning five states and siphoning \$251 million from the entitlement program. The elaborate scheme used tactics such as submitting fraudulent claims and billing Medicare for unneeded treatments and equipment. Obama promised to reduce Medicare fraud and abuse, but lest you think this translates into cost savings for taxpayers, think again. The president aims to use the money for "reform." In other words, what might have been a \$251 million return to taxpayers is now a \$251 million check made payable to Uncle Sam.

## **CULTURE & POLICY**

### **Dezinformatia: Leftmedia Spiked Campaign Stories**

It should come as much more of a surprise than it does: a liberal media plot to protect then-Senator Barack Obama from the Jeremiah Wright scandal. Sadly, for those of us who have followed the coverage of Obama's campaign and his subsequent acts as president, the only surprise is the explicitness of the evidence and how it came to light.

The Daily Caller, an online political journal founded by conservative-libertarian Fox News contributor Tucker Carlson, recently uncovered documents in which journalists from such notable publications as The Washington Post, Time, Politico, Baltimore Sun, the Guardian and the New Republic conspired how best to deflect the public

attention from Obama's relationship with "Reverend" Wright. Their answer: Run a smear campaign against Obama's conservative critics, below the belt and without regard to truth or fundamental journalistic ethics.

"What is necessary is to raise the cost on the right of going after the left," wrote Spencer Ackerman of the Washington Independent. "[L]et the right know that it needs to live in a state of constant fear. ... If the right forces us all to either defend Wright or tear him down, no matter what we choose, we lose the game they've put upon us. Instead, take one of them -- Fred Barnes, Karl Rove, who cares -- and call them racists."

Apparently the above were peeved when ABC's Charlie Gibson and George Stephanopoulos had the nerve to ask Sen. Obama "tough questions" during one of his debates with fellow candidate Hillary Clinton, so they plotted on "Journalist," an exclusive online forum for leftist media. "This isn't about defending Obama," wrote Michael Tomasky of the Guardian, "This is about how the [mainstream media] kills any chance of discourse that actually serves the people." Only a liberal could argue that he is burying information in the interest of "discourse that actually serves the people." It'd be comical, were it not so shamefully despicable.

Journalist was shut down last month after a leak exposed the liberal bias of David Weigel, the Washington Post's blogger covering the conservative movement. The information is still flowing from its archives, however, including the involvement in the "discourse" of Jared Bernstein, who became Vice President Biden's top economist. Apparently, a little ethical lapse here and there was worth gaining, as they put it, "control of the country."

### **Climate Change This Week: Going Under and Warming the Globe**

Anesthesiologists have plenty to worry about in their normal course of duty. Now a clinical professor in anesthesiology claims that certain gases commonly used for putting patients under can have 12 times the impact of other choices when it comes to "global warming." Dr. Susan M. Ryan, who practices and teaches at the University of California at San Francisco, has calculated the impact of particular gases on the environment as part of an article on the subject in the latest edition of the journal "Anesthesia & Analgesia." The study claims that if you're put under with sevoflurane it's far better for the environment than isoflurane or desflurane, other regularly used gases.

Anesthetic gas undergoes little change in the body and is cycled through a closed system, so medical gases are released to the atmosphere after use in essentially the same form they're inhaled. These gases allegedly take up to 10 years to break down in the atmosphere, where they act as greenhouse gases. However, fellow professor of anesthesiology Dr. Joseph Antognini of the University of California-Davis put the study in perspective, noting, "Hardly anyone I can imagine is going to make a choice of one anesthetic over another based on global warming." Thank goodness for that.

### **To Keep and Bear Arms**

Last week we reported the arrest of 82-year-old Robert Wallace from Wheat Ridge, Colorado, for shooting at two thieves as they sped away with his trailer hitched to the rear of their truck. Despite their confessions and living illegally in the U.S., neither suspect was charged with a crime. Wallace is being held on 12 felony counts, four of them being attempted murder.

As an update, the Wheat Ridge Police issued a statement indicating that Wallace did not initially report having fired at the suspects -- only when the suspects arrived at the hospital for treatment did that become evident. Wallace later admitted to firing two shots. He also never reported being in fear of his life, which is why he is being charged. However, we're still trying to figure out how two shots at two suspects resulted in *four* charges of attempted murder.

### **Publisher's Note**

Please join us in welcoming aboard our newest little Patriot, Roman, son of The Patriot Post's Director of Donor Relations, Christy Chesterton, and husband Roman. Momma and baby are doing great, and Christy says she timed the arrival of little Roman with completion of our 2010 Independence Day Campaign. As usual, she outdid herself on both counts.

### **And Last...**

Barack Obama wants Americans to tighten their belts in these trying times -- and pay more taxes to boot -- but he refuses to lead by example. When the First Family took their recent vacation in Maine, they chose to let their dog Bo fly on a separate jet. No word on how much this lavish expense cost, but don't worry: We taxpayers will be picking up the tab. Granted, due to the small airstrip at their destination, Air Force One was a Gulfstream G3 instead of the usual 747, but surely it wasn't too crowded for the little Portuguese water dog to travel with the president and his kin. Maybe BO just didn't want to smell like Bo when he got off the plane.