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DIGEST

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THE FOUNDATION

“A universal peace, it is to be feared, is in the catalogue of events, which will never exist but in the imaginations of visionary philosophers, or in the breasts of benevolent enthusiasts.” --James Madison

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Warfront With Jihadistan: Obama's Speech

Tuesday evening, the Whiner-in-Chief gave yet another prime time speech, this time about ending the war in Iraq. Or was it about the war in Afghanistan? Or the “Bush” economy and joblessness? Whatever the point, Obama declared that combat operations in Iraq are “over” and that it was time to “turn the page” on the war.

Obama did give a strong tribute to U.S. troops, saying that they had “completed every mission they were given. They defeated a regime that had terrorized its people.” Indeed they did, no thanks to Obama. Of course, if removing a terrorist regime is a good thing, then why did Obama oppose doing so? Perhaps Obama could ask the Kuwaitis about how the old Iraqi regime had terrorized people outside of Iraq, as well.

Ignoring the surge that turned the war around, Obama said of his predecessor, “[N]o one could doubt President Bush’s support for our troops, or his love of country and commitment to our security.” Too bad that can’t be said of Obama himself. He continued, “As I have said, there were patriots who supported this war, and patriots who opposed it.” While he’s right that there are patriots who honestly opposed the war from the outset, Obama skipped over how the political talking points of congressional Leftists who opposed the war -- after initially supporting it -- undermined our mission and emboldened our enemies.

We suppose it’s no wonder that he ignored the surge. After all, in 2007, he pontificated, “I am not persuaded that 20,000 additional troops in Iraq is going to solve the sectarian violence there. In fact, I think it will do the reverse.” Later that year, he said of the surge, “The president has simply tried to gain another six months to continue on the same course that he’s been on for several years now. It is a course that will not succeed.”

Now that it has succeeded, Obama naturally wouldn’t be eager to remind everyone of his position then. The same can be said for his refusal to even mention Saddam Hussein in his speech. One can only wonder, therefore, whether Obama believes the world is a better place -- and the U.S. more secure -- without the brutal tyrant.

Moving on to Afghanistan, Obama seemed to hedge a bit on his July 2011 withdrawal timeline, saying, “The pace of our troop reductions will be determined by conditions on the ground.” He also spoke of his own Afghan troop surge, saying, “I have ordered the deployment of additional troops who ... are fighting to break the Taliban’s momentum. As with the surge in Iraq, these forces will be in place for a limited time.” Limited time being the goal, of course.

“Turning the page,” then, Obama dispensed with national security in his speech about national security and moved into campaign mode on his economic agenda, though he tied it together with crocodile tears about the cost of the wars. Quite rich coming from someone whose one-year “stimulus” plan cost more than seven years of war in Iraq. If he wants us to “turn the page” to his economic policy, we’ll have a chance to give a scathing review of that whole book on Nov. 2.

Quote of the Week

“While the speech may have helped him with Democratic voters, it is likely to undermine confidence in American leadership not only in Iraq and the broader Middle East, but in many other areas of the world. President Obama’s proclamation of his ‘central responsibility’ for economic matters, shoe-horned into a major speech about Iraq -- one of the world’s most important international security issues -- will only encourage foreign doubts about his Administration’s commitment to finishing the job in Afghanistan, winning the struggle against Islamist extremism, and protecting U.S. allies around the world.” --James Phillips of the Heritage Foundation

‘Restoring Honor’ Rally Draws Crowds, Critics

Author and Fox News Channel personality Glenn Beck held a “Restoring Honor” rally last weekend that filled most of the National Mall between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. Hundreds of thousands attended from around the country, eager to share the mes-

sage of restoring hope and honor to America. Beck shared the stage with former Alaska Gov. and 2008 vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin, but both speakers downplayed the political aspects of the gathering. Beck's words certainly did have more of a religious tone, encouraging attendees to pray with their families, and to "recognize your place to the Creator. Realize that He is our King. He is the one who guides and directs our life and protects us."

National media outlets and liberals couldn't stomach the fact that Beck held his rally on the anniversary of Martin Luther King's historic "I have a dream" speech during the 1963 March on Washington. The media, of course, tried to make it into a race issue, searching for black people in the audience only to ask them what they were doing there. The "Rev." Al Sharpton accused Beck of co-opting King's legacy, and he held a rather pathetic little counter-gathering of his own.

The message and tone of the two gatherings were quite different. Many of the attendees of Beck's peaceful and respectful "Restoring Honor" rally were motivated to seek a change in direction in America -- one that is less reliant on government. There were many Tea Party supporters in the crowd, as well as average citizens tired of the high taxation and government intrusion in their lives.

Sharpton's "Reclaim the Dream" rally was, on the surface, an opportunity to celebrate King, but underneath was Sharpton's eternal quest to find rampant racism among American whites. Thus, one rally was about the greatness of America, while the other was a gripe-fest about how terrible she allegedly is.

Barack Obama, true to his nature, downplayed the significance of the Beck gathering. First he claimed to have ignored it, but then he told NBC's Brian Williams, "It's not surprising that someone like a Mr. Beck is able to stir up a certain portion" of the American people. This is reminiscent of his various derisive comments about "angry mobs" who are "waving their little tea bags" while they "bitterly cling" to guns and religion. It's no wonder that Obama's poll numbers are tanking when he holds the majority of the American people in such contempt.

This Week's 'Alpha Jackass' Award

"It's a free country. I wish it weren't, but it's a free country, and you got to, you got to respect that freedom."
--Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick, a Democrat, objecting to the Glenn Beck rally and typifying the Left's attitude toward free speech -- it's great only if they agree with it

News From the Swamp: Obama Calls for More Spending

Barack Obama once again focused blame for the ailing economy on Republicans this week, claiming that the GOP was stonewalling a "jobs" bill for political reasons. The legislation in question is a bill that would set up a \$30 billion Treasury Department fund to make loans to small business owners through small, healthy community banks. Legislation has already cleared the House, but Senate Republicans are opposed because the bill does not address the expiration of the Bush tax cuts or the undue paperwork and tax burden that the new health care law will place on small businesses.

Obama claimed, "This bill is fully paid for. It will not add to the deficit, and there is no reason to block it besides pure partisan politics." We've heard that one before, most notably when the president said that ObamaCare would not add one dime to the deficit. In a sense, he was correct. It will actually add hundreds of billions of dimes to the deficit.

Republicans have privately admitted that they don't have the votes to stop this latest liberal boondoggle when Congress goes back to work on Sept. 13. But its passage will provide yet more proof that Obama's so-called fixes for the economy have only sunk America deeper in debt, and just in time for the midterm elections.

From the Left: Demo Rep. Johnson in Ethics Trouble

Another member of the Congressional Black Caucus is in ethical hot water this week. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, a nine-term Democrat from Dallas, violated a number of rules in the distribution of college scholarships set aside by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. The Foundation is a nonprofit funded by corporate and private donations, providing approximately \$700,000 every year for the 42 members of the Caucus to distribute in the form of scholarships.

It's hard to run afoul of the Foundation's disbursement rules, which are liberal to say the least. Lawmakers have wide latitude in how they disburse the funds. For instance, they can give a lot of small scholarships to many students or even one large scholarship to a single student. There are no stipulations about the selection process either -- lawmakers can do it by committee or individually. Among the few requirements are that the student live or go to school in the district represented by the Caucus member awarding the money, maintain a 2.5 grade-point average and not be related to a Caucus member.

Even with all that room to maneuver, Johnson still man-

aged to blow it. Of the 43 scholarships she awarded between 2005 and 2009, 23 are in violation of Foundation rules. These awards totaling \$25,000 went to her grandsons, great-nephews and the children of aide Rod Givens. Not only did she violate the anti-nepotism clause, but also in some cases the recipients don't live or go to school in her district. Johnson predictably played dumb, claiming that she "recognized the names when I saw them," but that she was unaware that she was violating the rules. This might have been a believable excuse were it not for the fact that Johnson actually chaired the Caucus in 2002 and served on the Foundation board from 2002-2005. As with other scandals involving CBC members Charles Rangel and Maxine Waters, we're left to determine whether Johnson was incompetent then or lying now.

It's Miller Time

Incumbent Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) conceded her primary race against challenger Joe Miller Tuesday after failing to gain enough ground during the absentee ballot count. Despite having 20 times the campaign cash as her opponent, she is the third sitting senator this year to be fired before the general election. Sen. Bob Bennett (R-UT) was ousted in a state convention and Sen. Arlen Specter (D-R-D-PA) lost his Democrat primary. Murkowski trailed Miller by 1,668 votes before absentee counting began, and after 15,000 had been counted she remained behind by 1,630 votes. Miller, a West Point and Yale Law graduate who earned a Bronze Star in the first Gulf War, will face Democrat Scott McAdams in November.

There has been much speculation regarding Murkowski's next step, including that she might take the Libertarian Party nomination to keep a slot on November's ballot. It would be generous to call her a moderate, however, and we doubt she or the Libertarian Party would find that a good fit. Miller, meanwhile, won by running a conservative -- and unusual -- campaign for Alaska. The 49th state is heavily addicted to federal cash, and Murkowski and the late Ted Stevens were experts at bringing home the bacon. Miller ran against such government excess, advocating that we restore the Constitution to its rightful place. In a year that has seen growing protests of government overreach, it's encouraging that this approach resonated that far north.

NATIONAL SECURITY

A Decision Made in Cole Blood

The White House proved again that to them terrorist acts are simply domestic criminal acts committed by "foreigners" as the Obama administration just announced a halt to the prosecution of the suspected al-Qa'ida master-

mind behind the attack on the USS Cole, Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri. The Cole was attacked on Oct. 12, 2000, by suicide bombers who detonated more than 1,000 pounds of explosives in a small vessel that pulled alongside the ship while it was on a refueling stop in Yemen. The blast killed 17 U.S. sailors and injured 39 others.

Why the sudden change of prosecutorial heart? A military official speaking on condition of anonymity to The Washington Post explained that "the administration does not want a high-profile terrorist tried in a military tribunal before major figures held at Guantanamo Bay start having civilian trials." Let that sink in for a moment: The Chosen One, through his legal lackey, Attorney General Eric Holder, has decided not to try the terrorists who attacked the Cole on the basis that doing so would introduce even more uncertainty into the execution phase of a poorly contemplated decision. Never mind the evidence linking al-Nashiri to the bombing.

Never mind, too, the palpable link between the Cole bombing and 9/11. Notably, one of the 9/11 hijackers -- Khalid al-Mihdhar -- also helped plan the Cole bombing. Additionally, imam Anwar al-Awlaki, who was linked both to the Fort Hood shootings and the Christmas Day "Undie Bomber," is also tied to the Cole attack. No, apparently the key take-away from the administration's actions is that an attack on an American warship -- one that resulted in the deaths of 17 American Patriots -- doesn't count nearly as much as ensuring that the civil-trial-forward-criminals agenda remains on track.

Of course, it's also very understandable why the ironically named (of late) Justice Department would want to shed cases right now, especially in light of its legal offensive against Arizona holding the federal government to task in enforcing U.S. law. But we digress. For its part, Team Chosen has apparently borrowed a line from "Monty Python and the Holy Grail": "Please! This is supposed to be a happy occasion! Let's not bicker and argue about who killed who."

As for us, our hearts are with the families of the victims of the attack on the USS Cole. We are truly heartbroken for these families that have now witnessed a full decade of justice denied, and our blood boils at the thought that this injustice will continue.

Middle East Peace Talks, Take 87

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton hosted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President

Mahmoud Abbas this week for the latest round of peace talks, the first in nearly two years. The good news is that they had such a good time that they agreed to do it again sometime. Another round of talks will convene on Sept. 14 and 15. To quote the great diplomat Forrest Gump, "That's all we have to say about that."

Immigration Front: ICE Enforcement

Washington's elites are once again having it *their* way. On Aug. 20, Immigrant and Customs Enforcement Assistant Secretary John Morton wrote a memo to the agency's head of removal operations, telling him that being in the U.S. illegally is no longer grounds for deportation. Only illegals who pose a security threat or have violent records need now be deported. The memo represents Barack Obama's announcement of open borders to a waiting world. How much damage can one president create in a single term? Jimmy Carter was a piker compared to this guy.

The agency now has also begun an "outreach" program to illegals closest to eligibility for permanent status. It's coaching illegals on how to obtain the proper credentials to vote. ICE even sent a form letter to one illegal who had admitted to voting in a previous election, a felony. But ICE's priority is to get him his U.S. citizenship, not to enforce the law.

ICE workers themselves are so angry about Obama's dereliction of his duty that their union issued a membership consensus of "no confidence" in the agency's leaders, something a federal union has never done before. But the drug cartels, whose aim is to turn Mexico into a narco-state on our southern border, are thrilled with the new policy and have already stepped up the terrorizing of residents in Northern Mexico.

The recent massacre of 72 would-be illegals in Tamaulipas, Mexico, is the tip of an iceberg. Not only do the cartels smuggle and murder people, but they also enslave many for various reasons: some are forced into sex slavery and some into the ranks of the gangs' foot soldiers. This part of the president's "fundamental transformation" of America is getting ugly.

In other news, the Justice Department has followed through on their threat to sue Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio for supposed "civil rights" violations in his efforts to round up illegal aliens. It's now the third federal suit against Arizona -- all because the state is picking up federal slack.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

10th Amendment Uprising Against ObamaCare

More than 20 states are suing the federal government over this year's Democrat-engineered hostile takeover of the nation's health care system. They argue (correctly) that Uncle Sam has no constitutional authority to mandate that individuals purchase health insurance. Continuing its pattern of constitutional reinventions, however, the Obama administration claims that the Commerce Clause gives Congress the authority. (It must be right next to the "federal government can do most anything" clause.) We would point to Article I, Section 8 and the 10th Amendment for evidence to the contrary.

The legal challenges notwithstanding, seven of the states involved in the lawsuit (Arizona, Idaho, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Nebraska and Nevada) are accepting subsidies provided under ObamaCare to help employers cover early retirees. Jane Jankowski, press secretary for Indiana Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels, explained, "Gov. Daniels does not agree with [ObamaCare], but Indiana will seek funds that help Hoosiers when there are no complicated strings or costs attached."

Meanwhile, the Florida Supreme Court, by a 5-2 vote, nixed a ballot initiative attempting to amend the state's constitution to say that Floridians have the right not to buy mandatory health care coverage. Citing "misleading and ambiguous language" in the ballot summary, the judges said their "only recourse is to strike the proposed constitutional amendment from the ballot." In 2004, however, the court resolved a ballot question by having state officials replace the summary with the full amendment text. Strange how recourse options have changed since then.

This Week's 'Braying Jenny' Award

"Unfortunately, there still is a great deal of confusion about what is in [the health care law] and what isn't. ... So, we have a lot of re-education to do." --Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius

Great idea. Maybe they can even set up some camps to help with the "re-education" effort, à la Chairman Mao's Little Red Playbook.

Income Redistribution: Record Number Receiving Federal Aid

A new survey shows the number of Americans on the government dole has reached a record high, with one in six now receiving some form of government aid. Ac-

According to a USA Today survey, more than 50 million Americans are on Medicaid (up 17 percent since December 2007), more than 40 million receive food stamps (a 50 percent jump), nearly 10 million receive unemployment benefits (almost four times the 2007 number), and more than 4.4 million are on other welfare programs (up 18 percent). As numbers have risen, so have costs. Welfare, food stamps and unemployment benefits now carry respective price tags of \$22 billion, \$70 billion and \$160 billion, with Medicaid claiming some \$273 billion in federal tax dollars, spiking 36 percent in just two years.

LaDonna Pavetti of the left-wing Center on Budget and Policy Priorities argues the government “should be there to support people when the economy can’t.” But the Cato Institute’s Michael Tanner points out that government programs are “much harder to unwind in the long term.”

Speaking of government programs, Social Security snagged the spotlight last week, thanks to former Republican senator and current co-chair of Barack Obama’s deficit committee Alan Simpson, who described the entitlement program as “a milk cow with 310 million tits.” An unpleasant way to speak the truth.

Finally, wrapping up the “Recovery Summer” touted by the White House, the Labor Department announced that employers cut 54,000 jobs in August (mostly temporary census workers) and unemployment rose to 9.6 percent. But not to worry. As Joe Biden says, “No doubt we’re moving in the right direction.”

Judicial Benchmarks: Judge Rules Against Gov’t on Drilling Ban

“A federal judge on Wednesday rejected the U.S. government’s request to dismiss an industry lawsuit challenging its deepwater oil and gas drilling moratorium, dealing another blow to the Obama administration,” Reuters reports. After the administration issued its first drilling ban in June, Hornbeck Offshore Services, Inc., and other drilling companies sued. According to Reuters, “As a result of Louisiana-based Hornbeck’s lawsuit, U.S. District Court Judge Martin Feldman in New Orleans blocked implementation of the drilling ban on June 22.”

What did the administration do? Why, draw up another ban, of course. However, noting that the second moratorium made “no substantial changes” to the first one, Feldman denied the administration’s efforts to dismiss the Hornbeck suit.

Meanwhile, an oil platform off the Louisiana coast caught fire Thursday, just 245 miles from BP’s Deepwater Horizon. Thirteen people were aboard but no one was injured seriously, and the fire is reportedly out. It appears that little or no oil was spilled, but this will no doubt increase the resolve of those who oppose drilling and want even more regulation. After all, when regulations don’t work, the answer is always more of them.

Regulatory Commissars: Report Cars

Fearing consumers aren’t making the politically correct choices, the Obama administration has proposed grading new passenger vehicles with letter grades from A to D based on fuel efficiency and tailpipe emissions. Currently, the EPA rates a vehicle’s city and highway mileage, along with estimating the annual fuel cost. Under the EPA’s and Transportation Department’s proposal, the only cars that can receive Big Brother’s Official Seal of Approval with an A-plus, A or A-minus are electrics and plug-in hybrids. No word on whether all Chrysler or GM products are automatically granted an A while they’re still owned by the federal government.

As can be expected, grade inflation is awarded in inverse proportion to how powerful the vehicle is, so small, weaker econoboxes dominate the top grades while larger family vehicles are at the other end of the spectrum. Not coincidentally, this inversion generally mirrors the sales numbers of the vehicles, with the biggest sellers typically being the would-be lower graded but larger and more powerful vehicles.

Due to the administration’s unrivaled talent for creating unintended consequences, the proposed environmental rules may actually encourage more environmental pollution. Notably excluded are several important factors for evaluating a vehicle’s efficiency, such as longevity and upstream energy usage, both of which are important in comprehensively evaluating Obama’s A+ graded electric vehicles. When the government conveniently excludes non-tailpipe emissions, all the power plant emissions generated in charging the electric cars isn’t counted even though such power plant emissions may exceed the tailpipe emissions of a gas vehicle. We wonder if a grade can be assigned when liars figure and figures are made to lie.

CULTURE & POLICY

Second Amendment: EPA Doesn’t Ban Lead Ammo

In early August, the Center for Biological Diversity and four other radical environmentalist groups filed a petition with the EPA to ban lead ammunition and fishing

tackle. Claiming that lead ammunition and fishing tackle “have a devastating effect” on wildlife, they asked the EPA to enact the ban under the authority of the federal Toxic Substances Control Act. Recognizing this petition for what it really was, a back-door attempt to restrict gun rights, the hunting, outdoor recreation and shooting community quickly mobilized.

There was one major problem with the radicals’ petition: Ammunition is exempt from regulation under the Toxic Substances Control Act. Undeterred, the radicals claimed that the EPA had the authority to regulate ammunition anyway. In an act unusual for the overreaching and power-hungry agency, the EPA denied the petition last Friday, admitting that it doesn’t have jurisdiction to regulate ammunition under the Act. The agency is still considering the petition as it pertains to fishing tackle.

No one seriously expects this to be the end of the matter. The well funded and notoriously litigious Center for Biological Diversity and its radical cronies will almost certainly file a federal lawsuit. No doubt they will ask the courts to do to lead ammunition what they did to carbon dioxide: require the EPA to regulate something it should leave alone. Common sense has -- for a change -- prevailed at the EPA. We can only hope it also prevails in the courts.

Around the Nation: Treading on the Gadsden Flag

An Arizona homeowner is under pressure from his homeowners’ association to remove the “debris” from his roof. The “debris” in question is a Gadsden flag flown from his house since earlier this year. Commonly known as the “Don’t Tread on Me” flag, the yellow banner with a coiled rattlesnake originated in the Revolutionary War when it was flown above ships. It since has been adopted as a symbol of the Tea Party movement.

The homeowner, who was himself a member of the Avalon Village Community Association until July, says, “It’s a patriotic gesture. It’s a historic military flag. It represents the Founding Fathers. It shows this nation was born out of an idea.” Shortly after resigning due to a dispute with the board’s president, he received the first notice about the flag. Now, even the ACLU has come to his defense, saying that homeowners’ associations don’t have the right to “hijack” their members’ First Amendment rights. Avalon Village, for their part, says they are follow-

ing a state statute that allows residents to fly the U.S. flag, the state flag, the official flags of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard, and various Indian nation flags. A similar threat was rescinded in Colorado, and some retired Marines are fighting to have the flag flown over the state Capitol in Connecticut.

And Last...

Everyone is okay at the Discovery Communications building in Silver Spring, Maryland. For nearly four hours on Wednesday afternoon, James J. Lee held three people hostage at gunpoint inside the building. He had what appeared to be explosives strapped to his body.

Lee was no right-wing lunatic with a gun, but a radical lefty environmentalist who had protested Discovery before. His rambling demands included changing programming to add more shows warning against “giving birth to more filthy human children since those new additions continue pollution and are pollution” and stopping shows that are “advertising weapons of mass-destruction.” Lee also wanted Discovery Channel to “find solutions for unemployment and housing.” He continued, “Saving the environment and the remaining [sic] species diversity of the planet is now your mindset. Nothing is more important than saving them. The Lions, Tigers, Giraffes, Elephants, Froggies, Turtles, Apes, Raccoons, Beetles, Ants, Sharks, Bears, and, of course, the Squirrels. The humans? The planet does not need humans.” He experienced an “awakening” after watching Al Gore’s environmental propaganda film, “An Inconvenient Truth.” Does that now qualify it as “hate speech”?

After negotiations failed to placate Lee, police shot and killed him, granting him his wish for fewer people on the planet. We just hope the cops didn’t use lead bullets. That might be bad for the environment.

Veritas vos Liberabit -- Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus, et Fidelis! Mark Alexander, Publisher, for *The Patriot Post*’s editors and staff. Read online at <http://patriotpost.us>

(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.)