

November 7, 2013

Michael Barone posts reflections on VA and NJ voting yesterday.

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Did Obamacare hurt? Well, the exit poll showed Virginia voters opposed rather than favored it by a 53 percent to 45 percent margin.

In contrast:

2. The government shutdown didn't much hurt Republicans.

Northern Virginia was perhaps more impacted by the shutdown than any other part of the country. Yet when the exit poll asked who was more to blame, 47 percent of voters said Republicans in Congress and 46 percent said Obama. Considering that individuals almost always poll better than groups of people—particularly Republicans (or, for that matter, Democrats) in Congress, this is a devastating result for Obama.

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Barone is a friend of ours. How about a leftie from Politico?

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Based on a review of returns, exit polls and conversations with operatives, here are six takeaways from the surprise election of the night:

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“Despite being outspent by an unprecedented \$15 million, this race came down to the wire because of Obamacare,” Cuccinelli said in his concession speech Tuesday night.

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More on the results from [Jonathan Tobin](#).

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The real lessons from the Virginia vote turn out to be a lot more complicated than the simplistic idea that the Tea Party's rise would lead to a permanent Democratic majority. The reason why Cuccinelli fell short in Virginia was due in part to the way the national party abandoned his cause and allowed him to be massively outspent. This is something angry Tea Partiers won't forget. ...

And **Noemie Emery** says healthcare may not be "settled law." Because now the Dems are going after it.

... In one week, this "settled law" got a lot more unsettled. Obama, wrote Jules Witcover in the Baltimore Sun, "faces the prospect of spending the rest of his second term distracted by the imperative of defending the law all over again, amid evidence that Republican warnings of its impracticability were not all partisan ranting. ... Just as the Nixon tapes ... kept alive the Watergate calamity ... Obamacare seems destined to haunt its parent throughout his White House tenure and beyond."

Being haunted by health care all over again after being put through a wringer in the 2009-2010 cycle is a bridge too far for a number of Democrats, some of whom are starting a call for, if not quite "delay, repeal and replace," at least "delay, change, but for God's sake do something."

Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., who must face re-election in 2014, says she's drafting a bill allowing the self-insured to keep their old policies.

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Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., is joining Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., in writing a bill to delay the imposition of penalties until 2015, and suggests other changes are needed:

"They'd better be worried about having a product," he said in a New York Times interview. "Affordable health care means trying to get more people insurance. ... Making people who had insurance buy a different product that costs more for less coverage? You can't ... defend that."

To many Democrats, this sounds like 2010 redux, except for two ominous things: The employer mandate, set for next year, may cancel existing plans for as many as 93 million Americans just in time for 2014 midterms, and Obama is no longer the force that he was. ...

Ed Driscoll says even the Maryland Mikulski drone is calling it a "crisis of confidence." Driscoll's closing sentence has the magical phrase "cargo cult."

"When a loyal leader on your own team says there is a "crisis of confidence" surrounding your signature initiative, you've got trouble," Roll Call notes:

"That's the phrase Democratic Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski of Maryland used repeatedly Tuesday morning to describe the rollout of the new health care law as she questioned Marilyn Tavenner, the head of the health agency tasked with overseeing the law's implementation.

"I believe that there's been a crisis of confidence created in the dysfunctional nature of the website, the canceling of policies, and sticker shock from some people," said Mikulski, who has generally been a strong ally of the administration.

She cited a news report that 73,000 people in her own state are getting cancellation notices, "so there has been fear, doubt and a crisis of confidence" — and she's worried people, particularly the young, won't enroll as a result." ...

*Welcome back Carter — but then, arguably, from the implosion of the doomed Great Society onward, liberalism, progressivism, leftism, Obamaism — whatever it chooses to call itself this week — has never recovered from its own seemingly permanent crisis of confidence, simply because its own FDR-LBJ-style **cargo cult** view of the glories of big government is itself unachievable, as with all forms of magical thinking.*

Examiner

Some reflections on the Virginia and New Jersey elections

by Michael Barone

1. The Obamacare rollout fiasco and Obama's lies hurt Democrats.

You only have to look at Democrat Terry McAuliffe's narrow 48 percent to 46 percent margin in Virginia to see that. McAuliffe outspent Republican Ken Cuccinelli by a wide margin (as much as 10-to-1, some bloggers suggested) and was leading 46 percent to 37 percent in the last days of October in the [Real Clear Politics average of recent polls](#) on Oct. 31. In Virginia, the state that voted closest to the national average in the last two presidential elections, McAuliffe ended up with 48 percent, 3 percentage points behind Barack Obama's 2012 percentage of the state, while Cuccinelli's 46 percent was just 1 percentage point behind Mitt Romney's showing.

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3. Millennials are souring on Democrats.

The Virginia exit poll showed voters ages 18 to 29 favoring McAuliffe over Cuccinelli by a 45 percent to 40 percent margin. The Rock the Vote folks sent out an email crowing about this, but put in context, it's a dismal result.

The 30-to-44-year-olds were much more strongly for McAuliffe (56 percent to 37 percent), providing some evidence for Guardian blogger [Harry Enten](#)'s analysis showing that young people just entering the electorate are less liberal than those who did so in 2008. In comparison,

the 2012 presidential exit poll showed Obama leading Romney 61 percent to 36 percent among that age group in Virginia--statistically indistinguishable from Obama's 60 percent to 37 percent margin among 18-to-29-year-olds nationally, which was down from 66 percent to 32 percent in 2008.

Moreover, in [New Jersey](#), the exit poll showed Republican Chris Christie losing 18-to-29-year-olds to Democrat Barbara Buono by only 51 percent to 49 percent. Christie was up 13 percent among this age group compared with his 2009 showing.

Similarly, in Virginia, McAuliffe was up only 1 percent over the 2009 showing of Democrat Creigh Deeds, who lost statewide 59 percent to 41 percent. One reason is that the not-very-libertarian Libertarian Party candidate Robert Sarvis got 15 percent of the vote among the 18-to-29-year-olds.

True, that indicates that the provocatively culturally conservative Cuccinelli did not do well with this generation. But it also suggests that McAuliffe's last-minute campaigners [Hillary Clinton](#) (born 1947), Bill Clinton (born 1946) and (the not very technologically savvy) Obama (born 1961) don't necessarily strike a resonant chord with the younger segment of Millennials (born between 1984 and 1995).

4. Hispanics and Asians didn't rush out for Democrats.

The New Jersey exit poll showed Christie carrying Hispanics 51 percent to 45 percent and losing heavily Hispanic (and historically hugely Democratic) Hudson County by only 55 percent to 44 percent. This is a great achievement that national Republicans need to study.

In addition, Christie carried both Middlesex County (58 percent to 41 percent) and Mercer County (52 percent to 46 percent), historically very (machine) Democratic counties up and down the U.S. Route 1 corridor from Trenton to Perth Amboy. Aside from California, Hawaii and Queens, this is the most heavily Asian, and particularly Indian-American, part of the United States; many recent immigrants work in New Jersey's pharmaceuticals and high-tech firms, and others start small businesses of their own. Christie carried Middlesex County and Edison Township (with the highest Indian-born percentage in the United States) in 2009 and apparently did even better this time.

5. Private-sector unions.

A largely unreported part of Christie's policy and political success in New Jersey has been his alliance with Democrats with private-sector union backgrounds, like state Senate President Stephen Sweeney of Gloucester County (which Christie carried 64 percent to 34 percent) and longtime political panjandrum George Norcross of Camden County (which Christie carried 55 percent to 43 percent).

They worked with him to rein in the outsized benefits and privileges of greedy and self-righteous public-sector unions in the state on the sensible theory that their hard-pressed members were paying for benefits far more lavish than they were getting themselves.

This alliance was one reason Christie did not sweep in Republican legislative majorities, even though Republican candidates received about 100,000 more votes than Democratic candidates

in contests for the state Senate. But Christie seems likely to continue to have working bipartisan majorities on many issues.

Politico

[Why Terry McAuliffe barely won](#)

by James Hohmann

How the heck did that happen?

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Cuccinelli actually won independents by 9 percentage points, 47 percent to 38 percent, according to exit polls conducted for a group of media organizations. They made up about one-third of the electorate.

"Obamacare helped close the gap," said Richmond-based strategist Chris Jankowski, the president of the Republican State Leadership Committee.

Cuccinelli might have won if he had more money.

Even before Cuccinelli delivered his concession speech, the candidate's close allies were beginning to blame outside groups for not helping out more.

McAuliffe outraised Cuccinelli by almost \$15 million, and he used the cash advantage to pummel him on the airwaves. A lack of resources forced the Republican to go dark in the D.C. media market during the final two weeks.

The Republican National Committee spent about \$3 million on Virginia this year, compared to \$9 million in the 2009 governor's race.

The Chamber of Commerce spent \$1 million boosting McDonnell in 2009 and none this time.

"If the Republicans would have rallied around the nominee instead of refusing to support Cuccinelli, he would have won," said a GOP source involved in the race.

A constellation of liberal interest groups, meanwhile, poured money in as McAuliffe's lead grew in the public polling. They wanted to claim credit for their particular issues, whether the environment or abortion. Mike Bloomberg's super PAC spent \$2 million in the final two weeks on ads boosting gun control, for example.

The Republican Governors Association spent \$8.3 million for Cuccinelli, compared to \$5.2 million four years ago, to try making up for the fundraising disparity. But much of that money came earlier in the summer, and the RGA eventually stopped pouring cash into what looked like a losing campaign.

Cuccinelli personally was not a great fundraiser. Removing direct contributions from outside groups, McAuliffe raised \$28 million to Cuccinelli's \$11.7 million.

RNC spokeswoman Kirsten Kukowski defended the committee, saying that it has to make hard choices about how to spend limited resources.

"The RNC spent millions of dollars to fund the ground game efforts in both New Jersey and Virginia, working in coordination with both campaigns to identify and turn out voters," she said.

It was a base election.

McAuliffe declared in his victory speech that "a historic number of Republicans" supported him. But that's just not how it happened.

The Democrat won only 4 percent of self-identified Republicans, according to exit polling. His key was getting more of his people to the polls — 37 percent of voters self-identified as Democrats and 32 percent self-identified as Republican.

In the exit polling, 28 percent of voters supported the tea party movement and another 28 percent were neutral. Virtually all the rest who oppose the tea party backed McAuliffe.

The partisan outcome wasn't for lack of trying. During the campaign, the former Democratic National Committee chairman embraced one of the main attacks against him — that he is a

wheeler-dealer — and tried to flip it into an asset, calling himself a problem solver in a period of paralysis.

And, after his win, McAuliffe pledged to reach out to Republicans in the statehouse.

The gender gap mirrored the presidential.

Exit polls showed McAuliffe won women by only 9 points, the same margin Obama won them by in the presidential election last year. The Washington Post poll last week had put McAuliffe ahead among women by an astonishing 24 points.

This raises questions about whether women are starting to tune out “war on women” messaging and whether apocalyptic suggestions that Cuccinelli would try to ban common forms of birth control were effective at driving women to the polls who might not typically vote in an off-year.

Cuccinelli is a true-believer social conservative, who has spent his career battling abortion and trying to limit divorce. After avoiding social issues the first half of the year, he began defending himself and touting his anti-abortion bona fides in the final weeks as he tried to galvanize his base.

The margin will embolden both sides of the abortion issue to claim victories of sorts.

The Susan B. Anthony List, which spent \$870,000 for Cuccinelli through a Virginia affiliate, noted that McAuliffe ran more than 5,600 spots on the abortion issue alone.

“This election shows that it is imperative for pro-lifers to be on offense in 2014 against the distortions and extremism of the left,” said SBA President Marjorie Dannenfelser.

NARAL Pro-Choice America President Ilyse Hogue said the attacks worked: “Ken Cuccinelli tried to mislead voters by downplaying his extreme social agenda, but ultimately, he couldn’t hide from his long record of attacking women’s reproductive health.”

Obama himself was a mixed bag.

A 54 percent majority of those voting Tuesday disapproved of Obama’s job performance, according to the exit polling. But 30 percent of those who “somewhat disapproved” of Obama nonetheless voted for McAuliffe.

And despite the widespread criticism directed at Republicans for the government shutdown, an equal number of voters pinned the closure on Obama vs. congressional Republicans.

The president’s approval rating has slipped in the wake of the Obamacare fiasco and other scandals of his fifth year in office, and his trip to Virginia Sunday probably motivated some independents and Republicans to back Cuccinelli, but he still has deep appeal with the Democratic base.

Whether blacks would show up without Obama on the ballot was a big concern for the McAuliffe campaign, and they used the trips of Bill Clinton and the president to push turnout specifically among this community.

African-Americans made up 20 percent of the electorate, according to exit polls, on par with the presidential race as a share of the electorate and up from 16 percent in the 2009 governor's race. Since McAuliffe won 90 percent of the black vote, a 4 percent drop-off in the share of the electorate could have proved fatal.

The black vote helped Virginia Democrats break a four-decade streak — electing a governor of the same party as the sitting president for the first time since 1973.

The shutdown still hurt Republicans.

Though an equal number in the exit polls blamed Obama as blamed congressional Republicans, analysts in both parties agree that the shutdown galvanized Democratic intensity and helped give them the turnout advantage.

Republicans had a 4- to 5-point advantage on the generic ballot through the spring and summer, but internal GOP polling showed a flip during the shutdown. Likely voters preferred “Democrats” by 6 points on the generic ballot in their final polling.

“The shutdown demoralized a chunk of the Republican base and really energized a chunk of the Democratic base,” said GOP pollster Wes Anderson, a partner at OnMessage Inc. “Terry McAuliffe had not found any way to energize the Democratic base prior to the shutdown.”

Contentions

[Va Lessons: ObamaCare v. the Tea Party](#)

by Jonathan S. Tobin

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The real lessons from the Virginia vote turn out to be a lot more complicated than the simplistic idea that the Tea Party's rise would lead to a permanent Democratic majority. The reason why Cuccinelli fell short in Virginia was due in part to the way the national party abandoned his cause and allowed him to be massively outspent. This is something angry Tea Partiers won't forget. But they should also realize that the hole Cuccinelli was in two weeks ago was also due to the shutdown they had recklessly engineered. In the end, the two factors may have balanced each other out, leaving the real problem for the GOP the same one that sunk Mitt Romney there

in 2012: changing demographics that have transformed a once red state into a purple or light blue one.

That factor will reassure Democrats that they are still the wave of the future. But rather than celebrate, they should be thinking about the way anger about ObamaCare can transform elections. Liberals may still be clinging to their belief that eventually the website will be fixed and everyone will love it. But the last week of anger about broken promises and dropped coverage should alert them to the likelihood that it will not only continue to be unpopular but will grow more so as its impact on rising premiums and the economy becomes more pronounced in 2014.

Anyone who thinks this won't be a factor a year from now as control of the Senate hangs in the balance is not paying attention to the reality of a dysfunctional program and a White House still wrapped up in denial of the larger problem. The growing unpopularity of the president and ObamaCare complicate any Democratic plans for the midterms. Democrats had a huge financial and demographic advantage in Virginia as well as a divided GOP and a false flag Libertarian candidate that might have taken votes away from the Republicans. But they still only managed a narrow victory. That's a result that ought to convince many in the GOP that 2014 may still be a good year for them.

As for Tea Partiers, they will be right to be angry about the way some in the GOP were ready to let Cuccinelli lose. But they need to take responsibility for their own role in his defeat. While the liberal media will continue to beat the drums for the Democrats' talking point about the faux GOP war on women, the shutdown is what killed Cuccinelli. The Tea Party is not the kiss of death some on the left contend it is, but the suicidal tactics it has urged on the GOP are a real problem. Without it, the nation would have been focused on ObamaCare weeks earlier and might have given him more of a chance. A repeat of that tactic in the coming year—something that Ted Cruz and others won't take off the table—would be exactly what the Democrats need to get the public's minds off Obama's lies.

In other words, both parties have much to learn from the results. The party that absorbs these lessons best will likely triumph 12 months from now.

Examiner

[Vulnerable Democrats casting wary eyes at Obamacare and 2014 election](#)

by Noemie Emery

Some on the Left have been noting with pleasure that advocates on the Right have now dropped calls to repeal the [Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act](#), whose affordable nature is called into question and whose protection most patients attempt to avoid.

They're right. But why shouldn't they, when the act, with its built-in store of perverse incentives, has done so well at repealing itself?

The act is being repealed, piece by piece and in increments, by courts, by circumstance and by its own incoherence.

Last week, the website shut down for still more repair work, a court threw out the mandate that forced business owners to pay for employees' access to abortion facilities, and the 16 or so million people who buy their own health plans, who found their coverage ended or the prices increased, found their voice as a mad-as-hell pressure group.

President Obama thought he'd be home free when new enrollees began receiving government benefits; he forgot he created a huge pool of losers — prosperous, articulate and including some journalists — who know how to pressure the government.

In one week, this “settled law” got a lot more unsettled. Obama, [wrote Jules Witcover in the Baltimore Sun](#), “faces the prospect of spending the rest of his second term distracted by the imperative of defending the law all over again, amid evidence that Republican warnings of its impracticability were not all partisan ranting. ... Just as the Nixon tapes ... kept alive the Watergate calamity ... Obamacare seems destined to haunt its parent throughout his White House tenure and beyond.”

Being haunted by health care all over again after being put through a wringer in the 2009-2010 cycle is a bridge too far for a number of Democrats, some of whom are starting a call for, if not quite “delay, repeal and replace,” at least “delay, change, but for God’s sake do something.”

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“They'd better be worried about having a product,” [he said in a New York Times interview](#). “Affordable health care means trying to get more people insurance. ... Making people who had insurance buy a different product that costs more for less coverage? You can't ... defend that.”

To many Democrats, this sounds like 2010 redux, except for two ominous things: The employer mandate, set for next year, may cancel existing plans for as many as 93 million Americans just in time for 2014 midterms, and Obama is no longer the force that he was.

In 2009-2010, he was still the boy wonder, so crippling him at the start of his term was considered unthinkable and opposing his signature act was a sin.

In 2014, he'll be battered and dinged, a lame duck on his way out, his personal approval ratings down around 40 percent for the first time ever. And this is before he was known to have lied about Americans being able to keep their coverage.

By 2014, opposing him may be tempting even for Democrats. “What we're seeing,” a New Hampshire political scientist [told Richard Cowen of Reuters](#), is Shaheen “trying to limit her personal downside.” If going out on a limb for Obama starts getting risky, she'll go back to the trunk of the tree.

So may large numbers of dubious squirrels. For the future of health care, cast your eyes leftward. For the time being, *cherchez les Dems*.

Pajamas Media

[It's Deja Malaise All Over Again](#)

by Ed Driscoll



“When a loyal leader on your own team says [there is a “crisis of confidence” surrounding your signature initiative](#), you’ve got trouble,” *Roll Call* notes:

That’s the phrase Democratic Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski of Maryland used repeatedly Tuesday morning to describe the rollout of the new health care law as she questioned Marilyn Tavenner, the head of the health agency tasked with overseeing the law’s implementation.

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A “a crisis of confidence,” you say? I’ve heard that phrase before — and so have you, and so has *Roll Call*, even if they can’t or won’t make the connection. As Steven Hayward of [Power Line](#), who wrote the magisterial two-volume *Age of Reagan* wrote for the *Washington Times* in July of 2009, to mark the 30th anniversary of [the perigee of both Jimmy Carter and postwar America itself](#):

It was 30 years ago this month that Mr. Carter reached the nadir of his presidency with his famous “malaise” speech in which he criticized the American people for their materialism and “crisis of confidence.” To be fair, Mr. Carter never used the word malaise in his speech (an aide used “malaise” in characterizing the speech to the media the next day), but the label stuck because it so accurately conveyed the substance of his message. Having run for president in

1976 on a slogan of giving us “a government as good as the people,” Mr. Carter essentially was saying the people were no good.

Today the malaise speech is being revived as a totem of Mr. Carter’s unrecognized greatness and profundity. Writing a few days ago in the New York Times, Gordon Stewart, one of Mr. Carter’s speechwriters responsible for the text, argued that “the speech was extremely popular” at the time, which is not entirely wrong. Initial polls showed positive public response, but it wilted within days.

Mr. Stewart thinks this was because “it was just too hard to compete with Ronald Reagan and his banner of limitless American consumption.” Over in Politico, Princeton professor Julian E. Zelizer also argues that Mr. Carter had it right, that “many Americans, especially those in the middle and upper income brackets, live in homes, drive cars, and consume resources in ways that are not environmentally sustainable.”

In the midst of an energy crisis that was largely the result of bad government policy, Mr. Carter embraced the “limits to growth” mentality at the core of modern environmentalism and told Americans they should get used to making do with less. Mr. Carter resisted every change in policy that would have ended the energy crisis (such as decontrolling energy markets) and indeed made the problem worse over the long run by locking up huge oil and gas reserves in Alaska, where they remain closed off even as our oil imports continue to grow, and creating a web of subsidies for “renewable” energy such as wind and solar power that still can’t provide more than a sliver of our energy needs.

Criticisms of American materialism and self-indulgence certainly have merit and are a staple of the American character stretching back to the Puritans in Colonial days. This is one reason Mr. Carter’s speech at first received public favor — the Puritan strain in Americans likes to be scolded, preferably on Sunday by men of the cloth.

But the presidency is not a pulpit, and Americans rightly figured out that they were being blamed for Mr. Carter’s own failings, especially when the hypocrisy of the speech was so easy to see. When, a year before, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn had made a similar critique of American materialism and spiritual drift in his infamous Harvard commencement address, the Carter White House had joined liberals in denouncing him. First lady Rosalynn Carter had strongly criticized Mr. Solzhenitsyn, saying Americans did not suffer from “unchecked materialism” and adding that “the people of this country are not weak, not cowardly and not spiritually exhausted.” Her remarks were considered to be the administration’s semiofficial response to Mr. Solzhenitsyn. But now her husband was saying much the same thing as Mr. Solzhenitsyn. Americans notice those kind of self-serving inconsistencies.

A Democrat president who blames the American people for his own failures? Whew — [good thing that’s never happened again](#) in our lifetimes. Here’s Ace of Spades yesterday:

In other words: You were never going to keep your old policy. Even as regards grandfathered policies, you were always going to have something *new*: Steeply increased premiums, which represent a hidden tax to redistribute wealth to Obama’s constituents.

So the only people allowed to change your policy were... Obama’s HHS officials, by jacking up your premiums.

He flat out lied. And lied and lied and lied. And now he's lying some more.

More on the fallout from the Newest If You Like Your Plan Lie at [Hot Air](#).

I can't believe I'm saying this, but the below clip from Morning Joe is worth watching. They point out that Obama sounds exasperated that he's forced to explain his lie. But then Scarborough points out Obama *also* sounded exasperated, as if he was dealing with children, when he was lying in the first false promises.

That is, he sounded like an exasperated parent dealing with children when he was lying to the public, and now that he has to explain why he lied, he also sounds like an exasperated parent dealing with children.

He was exasperated lying to you, and now he's exasperated lying to you about why he lied.

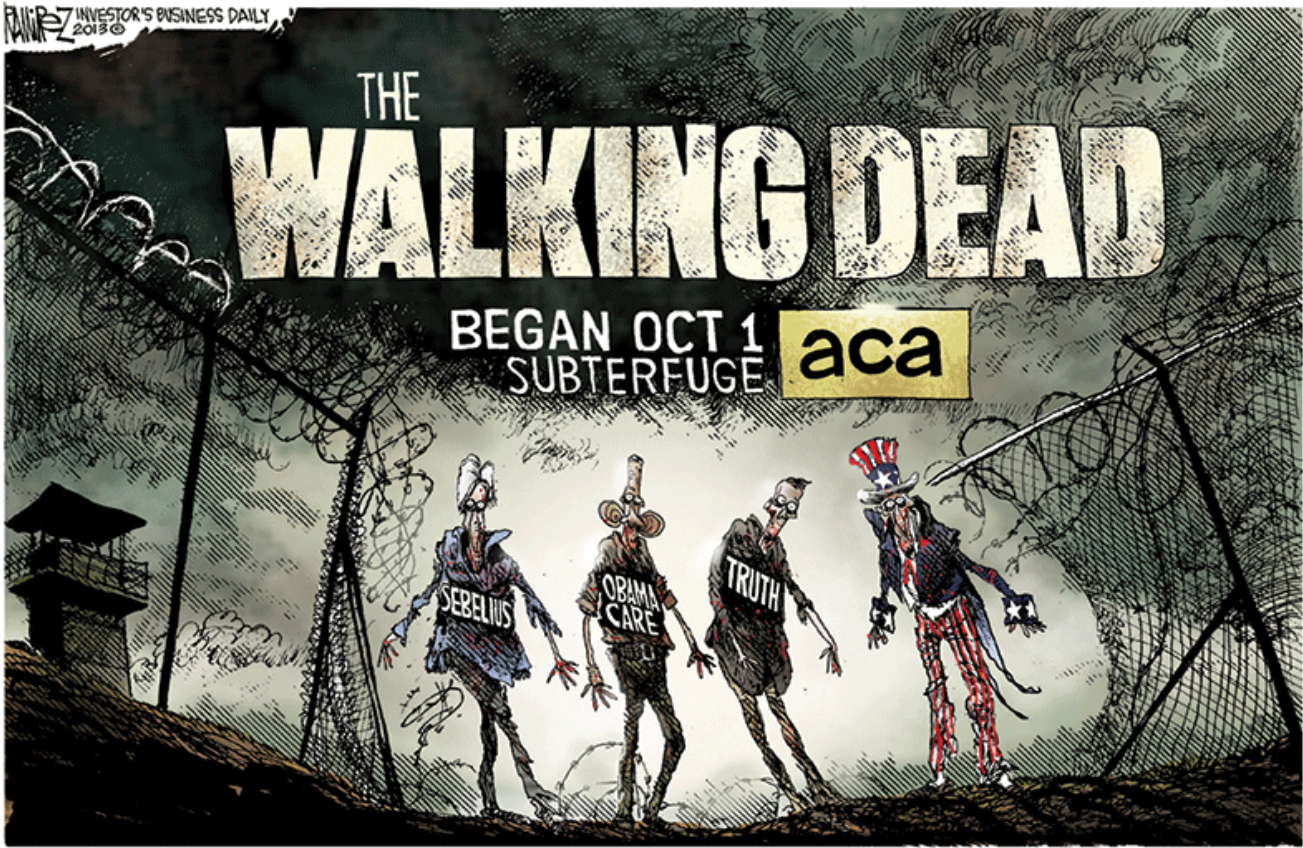
Either way, you have greatly disappointed Him.

Welcome back Carter — but then, arguably, from the implosion of the doomed Great Society onward, liberalism, progressivism, leftism, Obamaism — whatever it chooses to call itself this week — has never recovered from its own [seemingly permanent crisis of confidence](#), simply because its own FDR-LBJ-style cargo cult view of the glories of big government is itself unachievable, as with all forms of [magical thinking](#).



THE WALKING DEAD

BEGAN OCT 1
SUBTERFUGE **aca**

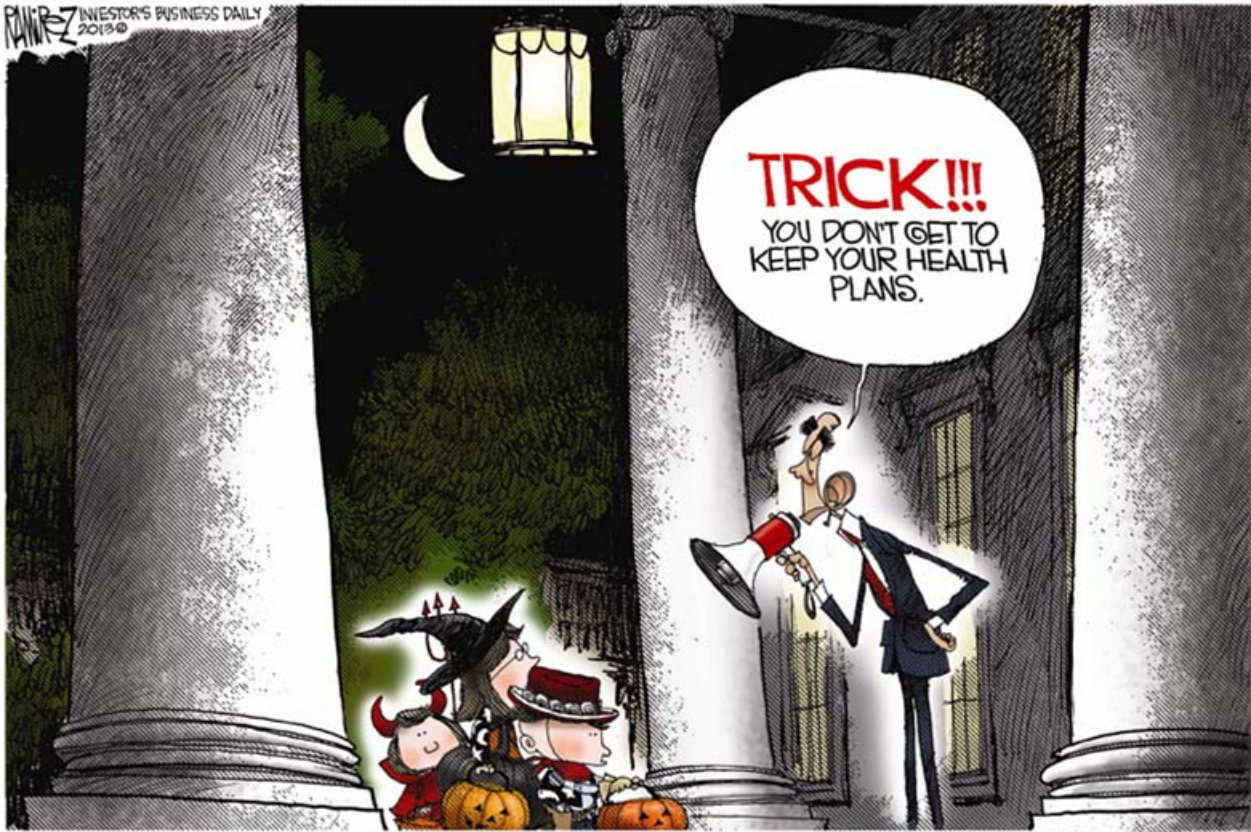


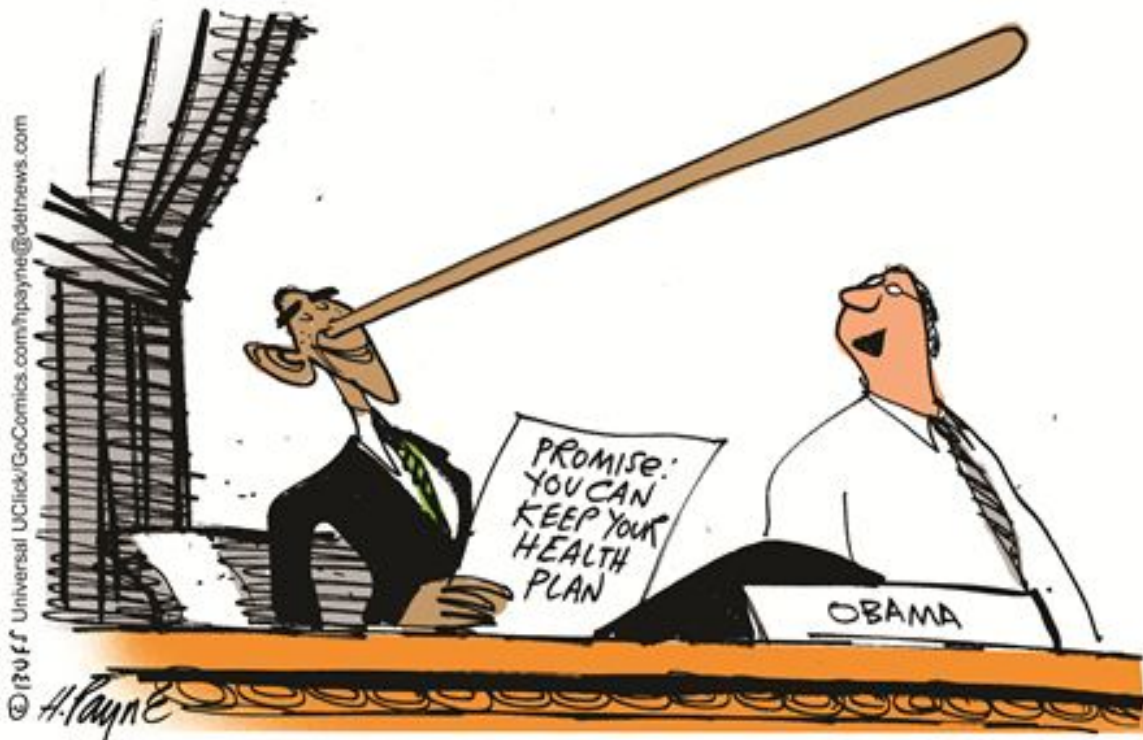
YOU CAN KEEP
YOUR HEALTH
INSURANCE
PERIOD.

ALL OF YOU NOT
NAMED "**PERIOD**"
ARE ON YOUR
OWN.









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"THE GOOD NEWS IS OBAMACARE COVERS PLASTIC SURGERY!"

