

March 26, 2014

Paul Ryan had the temerity to call attention to the poverty program's failures and the left continues to attack him. [Power Line](#) calls our attention to George Will's column defending Ryan.

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*Ryan's analysis undermines the left's indictment of American society. For example, the left insists that our criminal justice system is horribly stacked against young black men. As proof, it cites — even touts — the high rate of incarceration of this cohort. But if the breakdown of the African-American family in our cities is contributing to high rates of criminal behavior therein, then the left's indictment of our justice system loses much of its force. ...*

Here's [Will's column](#).

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*Forty-nine years later, [41 percent](#) of all American children are born out of wedlock; [almost half of all first births](#) are to unmarried women, as are [54 percent](#) and [72 percent](#) of all Hispanic and black births, respectively. Is there anyone not blinkered by ideology or invincibly ignorant of social science who disagrees with this:*

*The family is the primary transmitter of social capital — the values and character traits that enable people to seize opportunities. Family structure is a primary predictor of an individual's life chances, and family disintegration is the principal cause of the intergenerational transmission of poverty. ...*

Great post on the subject from [Jennifer Rubin](#).

*There has been so much political turmoil among Republicans that it is easy to lose sight of the intellectual disarray on the left. On social, economic and foreign policy, liberals are adrift — and sounding somewhat heartless. The party that envisions itself as a friend of the poor and oppressed is very confused.*

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*Consider how reactionary the Democratic Party now is on poverty — going back pre-welfare reform and even pre-Daniel Patrick Moynihan to insist that the cure to poverty is simply “jobs,” ignoring that those mired in poverty lack the education and life skills to obtain and hold work. (This was the same crowd that opposed welfare reform, the most successful social reform in decades.)*

*The overlap between fatherless households and poverty seems not to concern them. Leave the poor alone, they seem to suggest. Alas, it's the conservative reformers who care sufficiently to look at the root causes of poverty and provide educational opportunities available to wealthy children through school choice. The left seems to have forgotten that jobs are not a commodity to be handed out like food stamps. Employment and personal fulfillment are the end products for those who've enjoyed a safe, secure, organized and stable childhood in which their physical, intellectual and moral development has been cultivated. (The Jesuits call it “cura personalis” — devotion to the whole person.)*

*Having ignored poverty and offering no meaningful policy agenda, the left attacks conservatives who are focused and providing batches of policy solutions. It's not liberals, but Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) and Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) who are addressing the issue with serious and varied policy approaches; the left caters to the green elites and defends a health-care plan that discourages work. ...*

**Thomas Sowell** points to issues like school choice and minimum wage laws that make it possible for the GOP to appeal to black voters.

*Recently former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice added her voice to those who have long been urging the Republican Party to reach out to black voters. Not only is that long overdue, what is also long overdue is putting some time — and, above all, some serious thought — into how to go about doing it.*

*Too many Republicans seem to think that the way to “reach out” is to offer blacks and other minorities what the Democrats are offering them. Some have even suggested that the channels to use are organizations like the NAACP and black “leaders” like Jesse Jackson — that is, people tied irrevocably to the Democrats.*

*Voters who want what the Democrats offer can get it from the Democrats. Why should they vote for Republicans who act like make-believe Democrats?*

*Yet there are issues where Republicans have a big advantage over Democrats — if they will use that advantage. But an advantage that you don't use might as well not exist.*

*The issue on which Democrats are most vulnerable, and have the least room to maneuver, is school choice. Democrats are heavily in hock to the teachers' unions, who see public schools as places to guarantee jobs for teachers, regardless of what that means for the education of students.*

...

**Restaurant CEO** explains how the unintended consequences of yet another government over-reach could hurt those it is supposed to help.

*President Obama on March 13 signed an order directing the Labor Department to expand the class of employees entitled to overtime pay. Currently, if a salaried employee makes more than \$24,000 a year and is part of management—if he manages the business, directs the work of other employees, and has the authority to hire and fire—that employee is exempt from overtime coverage. The president wants to raise this salary threshold, perhaps as high as \$50,000, demoting entry-level managers to glorified crew members by replacing their incentive to get results with an incentive to log more hours.*

*At issue is a growing inequality problem in the United States. Increasingly, Americans don't have the career opportunities most took for granted a decade ago. Many are withdrawing from the labor force, frustrated because they're unable to find a job and lured to depend on government rather than on themselves.*

*Rewarding time spent rather than time well spent won't help address this problem. Workers who aspire to climb the management ladder strive for the opportunity to move from hourly-wage, crew-level positions to salaried management positions with performance-based incentives. What they lose in overtime pay they gain in the stature and sense of accomplishment that comes from being a salaried manager. This is hardly oppressive. To the contrary, it can be very lucrative for those willing to invest the time and energy, which explains why so many crew employees aspire to be managers. ...*

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## **Power Line**

### **Why Paul Ryan must be denounced**

by Paul Mirengoff

**George Will** shows that Paul Ryan was right to contend that a “tailspin of culture, in our inner cities” plays a huge role in the persistence of poverty. Will finds the liberal outrage at Ryan’s unexceptionable remarks to be the product of “malice, ignorance, and intellectual sloth.”

I find them to be the product of ideological necessity. Ryan’s analysis is inconsistent with both the left’s narrative and its prescriptions. Therefore it must be denounced as racist.

Ryan's analysis undermines the left's indictment of American society. For example, the left insists that our criminal justice system is horribly stacked against young black men. As proof, it cites — even touts — the high rate of incarceration of this cohort. But if the breakdown of the African-American family in our cities is contributing to high rates of criminal behavior therein, then the left's indictment of our justice system loses much of its force.

The left's [latest crusade](#) is against public school discipline policies that produce much more punishment of black than white students. But if the breakdown of the family in inner cities, coupled with related pathologies, has resulted in significantly more serious classroom misconduct by African-American students, then the racial disparities in school discipline meted out do not show discrimination, and there is no sound basis for reform. After all, the policies under attack promote the right of students of all races to a safe and stable learning environment.

For years, the left has condemned America for its comparatively high infant mortality rates. How many times have you heard that we are the wealthiest large nation in the world, yet are close to the bottom among industrial democracies when it comes to infant mortality?

But if cultural factors are, to a disproportionate degree, causing young American mothers not to take care of themselves during pregnancy and not to take advantage of prenatal care that is readily available to them, then high American infant mortality rates lose much of their utility as a basis for bashing America. Individuals are to blame, not "America," if they abuse drugs and/or fail to seek medical attention during pregnancy.

The left doesn't just use problems stemming from cultural tailspin to denounce America with relish. They also cite these problems as the basis for demanding more government programs and more transfer of income.

Consider the left's latest big idea for reform, ["regionalism,"](#) an effort to redistribute money from the suburbs to the cities and inner-ring suburbs, and to impose racial and income balance in every neighborhood. The implementation of this idea is proceeding apace in Minnesota's Twin Cities area, fueled by the notion that suburban zoning and use practices are denying economic opportunity to, and creating barriers for, low-income and minority individuals.

However, as [Katherine Kersten](#) has shown, citing the analysis of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Council, residents of "racially concentrated areas of poverty" in the Twin Cities actually have better access to jobs, services, and amenities than do residents of supposed "opportunity clusters."

What, then, do the residents of "racially concentrated areas of poverty" lack? They lack of stable family structure. In Hennepin County, Kersten notes, the out-of-wedlock birth rate for U.S. born blacks is 84 percent. The white rate is 18 percent.

These sorts of truth are inconvenient for the left, so inconvenient that those who point them out must be denounced as racist.

Washington Post

## Paul Ryan was right — poverty is a cultural problem

by George F. Will

Critics of [Rep. Paul Ryan's remarks](#) about cultural factors in the persistence of poverty are simultaneously shrill and boring. Their predictable minuet of synthetic indignation demonstrates how little liberals have learned about poverty or changed their rhetorical repertoire in the last 49 years.

Ryan spoke of a “tailspin of culture, in our inner cities in particular, of men not working and just generations of men not even thinking about working or learning the value and the culture of work,” adding: “There’s a real culture problem here.” This brought down upon Ryan the usual acid rain of accusations — racism, blaming the victims, etc. He had sauntered into the minefield that a more experienced Daniel Patrick Moynihan — a liberal scholar who knew the taboos of his tribe — had tiptoed into five years before Ryan was born.

A year from now, there surely will be conferences marking the 50th anniversary of what is now known as the [Moynihan Report](#), a.k.a. “[The Negro Family: The Case for National Action](#).” In March 1965, Moynihan, then 37 and assistant secretary of labor, wrote that “the center of the tangle of pathology” in inner cities — this was five months before the Watts riots — was the fact that 23.6 percent of black children were born to single women, compared with just 3.07 percent of white children. He was accused of racism, blaming the victims, etc.

Forty-nine years later, [41 percent](#) of *all* American children are born out of wedlock; [almost half of all first births](#) are to unmarried women, as are [54 percent and 72 percent of all Hispanic and black births](#), respectively. Is there *anyone* not blinkered by ideology or invincibly ignorant of social science who disagrees with this:

The family is the primary transmitter of social capital — the values and character traits that enable people to seize opportunities. Family structure is a primary predictor of an individual’s life chances, and family disintegration is the principal cause of the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

In the 1960s, as the [civil rights movement](#) dismantled barriers to opportunity, there began a social regression driven by the explosive growth of the number of children in [single-parent families](#). This meant a continually renewed cohort of adolescent males from homes without fathers; this produced turbulent neighborhoods and schools where the task of maintaining discipline eclipsed that of instruction.

In the mid-1960s, Moynihan noted something ominous that came to be called “Moynihan’s scissors.” Two lines on a graph crossed, replicating a scissors’ blades. The descending line depicted the decline in the minority — then overwhelmingly black — male unemployment rate. The ascending line depicted the simultaneous *rise* of new welfare cases.

The broken correlation of improvements in employment and decreased welfare dependency was not just bewildering, it was frightening. Policymakers had long held a serene faith in social salvation through better economic incentives and fewer barriers to individual initiative. The possibility that the decisive factors are not economic but cultural — habits, mores, customs — was dismaying because it is easier for government to alter incentives and remove barriers than to alter culture. The assumption that the condition of the poor must improve as macroeconomic conditions

— which government thinks it can manipulate — improve is refuted by the importance of family structure.

To say that poverty can be self-perpetuating is not to say, and Ryan did not say, that poverty is caused by irremediable attributes that are finally the fault of the poor. It is, however, to define the challenge, which is to acculturate those unacquainted with the culture of work to the disciplines and satisfactions of this culture.

[Nicholas Eberstadt](#), an economist and demographer, notes that “labor force participation ratios for men in the prime of life are demonstrably *lower* in America than in Europe” and “a large part of the jobs problem for American men today is that of not wanting one.” Surely the fact that means-tested entitlement dependency has been destigmatized has *something* to do with what Eberstadt terms the “unprecedented exit from gainful work by adult men.”

Next March, serious people will be wondering why the problem Moynihan articulated half a century earlier has become so much worse while so much else — including the astonishingly rapid receding of racism and discrimination — has become so much better. One reason is what Moynihan called “the leakage of reality from American life.” Judging by the blend of malice, ignorance and intellectual sloth in the left’s reaction to Ryan’s unexceptionable remarks, the leak has become, among some factions, a cataract.

## Right Turn

### [So much for Daniel Patrick Moynihan — and liberals](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

There has been so much political turmoil among Republicans that it is easy to lose sight of the intellectual disarray on the left. On social, economic and foreign policy, liberals are adrift — and sounding somewhat heartless. The party that envisions itself as a friend of the poor and oppressed is very confused.

The left has gone through five years of the Obama presidency essentially ignoring poverty (the topic was largely avoided in favor of the war on women theme at the Democratic National Convention in 2012) until the issue became reincarnated as “inequality” — a slogan with no programmatic content cooked up for election-year attacks.

Consider how reactionary the Democratic Party now is on poverty — going back pre-welfare reform and even pre-Daniel Patrick Moynihan to insist that the cure to poverty is simply “jobs,” ignoring that those mired in poverty lack the education and life skills to obtain and hold work. (This was the same crowd that opposed welfare reform, the most successful social reform in decades.)

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intellectual and moral development has been cultivated. (The Jesuits call it “cura personalis” — devotion to the whole person.)

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On the economic front the left is flummoxed, incapable of pursuing the obvious engines of growth (e.g. domestic energy development, corporate tax reform, trade). It remains wedded to failed Keynesian spending schemes. It is House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (Va.), not the liberal elites. who is going to bat for the poor and middle class. As [Cantor put it in a TV interview](#): “How apropos is it for us to be pushing policies that actually expand our energy supplies, that hence push down home-heating costs, so that working, middle-class families can afford to pay the bills and continue to save for the future and invest for the future. So we’re about these policies that, again, not only help the macro-growth prospect for the economy, but it also helps grow the kind of paycheck and income that working families have to be concerned with every month.”

Unable to overcome its base’s devotion to the status quo, the White House has given up on entitlement reform, thereby throwing in the towel on addressing long-term debt. Democrats’ fiscal policy now extols slashing defense, squeezing domestic discretionary spending and letting middle class entitlements (and public-employee unions) shift government expenditures from the needy to the middle class (and often that segment of the middle class affixed to the Democratic Party’s political machine).

On foreign policy, however, the left’s disarray is the most glaring. Liberals defended Obama’s foreign policy (or lack thereof) for five years. Now, with mass murder in Syria, an invasion of a European ally, Iranian intransigence and widespread contempt for the administration from foes and allies alike on the international scene, the left has entirely lost its bearings. [Bret Stephens](#) exposes some of the worst elements, paraphrasing the left’s odd defense of Vladimir Putin:

[I]sn’t Mr. Putin merely duplicating the tough-guy tactics conservatives favor when it comes to the pursuit of American interests? “For Putin, an anti-Russian government in Kiev is illegitimate regardless of how it takes power,” writes Peter Beinart, “For many American hawks, the same is now true for a pro-Chávez government in Latin America or an Islamist government in the Middle East.” Mr. Beinart calls Mr. Putin a “Russian Neocon.” Thus does cold-blooded foreign policy “realism” blend with the embarrassed apologetics of postmodern liberalism to become the enabler of Russian revanchism.

In adopting Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) as their pet — look how inclusive they are! — the left finds common cause with his hysterical accusations about our government’s anti-terrorism efforts and his denigration of real threats in favor of imaginary ones. Former GOP staffer [John Feehery reminds us](#):

[I]f you listen to Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), you would think that the NSA is akin to the KGB. Paul, who fancies himself as a leading Republican contender for the White House, went to the University of California at Berkley (the once and future hotbed of radical thought) and got himself a standing ovation for his attack on the NSA. He made the spurious claim that the NSA was listening in on our

cellphone conversations. As he told the crowd in California, “I believe what you do on your cellphone is none of their damn business.”

Such comments make for great theater, but they are absurd on their face. The NSA couldn't care less what you tell your girlfriend on your cellphone — unless, of course, your girlfriend is a terrorist. This theory that the NSA is some sort of malignant cancer on the body politic is not only factually wrong, it is reflexively dangerous. . . .

This is not the first time that Paul has ventured into fantasyland to make a political point. He famously launched a filibuster at the beginning of his senatorial term to decry the idea that drones could be launched on American soil against Americans, even though nobody really believed that the government would do such a thing unless the world was coming to an end.

Paul is practicing the politics of paranoia, aimed directly at the American government. It's a form of populist libertarianism that posits that the biggest threat to our liberty comes not from foreign powers but from our own government.

That kind of paranoia is not grounded in reality, but it unquestionably has a following in this country. Edward Snowden, for example, enjoyed a warm welcome at the South by Southwest festival in Austin, Texas, despite being the houseguest of Putin.

That Snowden could somehow continue to attract admirers despite his obvious betrayal of American national security says a lot about the deep vein of distrust that Paul is exploiting for his own political purposes.

And yet the Democrats celebrate Rand Paul as a daring and original thinker. It's odd for a party that trusts government to do just about everything that it should recognize the dangers of overreach only when the federal government is attending to its primary responsibility (national defense) against an enemy it falsely claimed to have slain (al-Qaeda and other jihadists). In liberal circles Edward Snowden, who reside comfortably in Putin's regime, is heralded as a hero. We live in strange times.

So what distinguishes the left these days? Ignoring the root causes of poverty, anti-growth extreme environmentalism, accommodating despots (be it Syria or Russia) and counterfactual paranoia. In place of rational and constructive policy it attacks conservative reformers. It's a measure of how badly this president — a supposed intellectual — has led the party and the left (not to mention the country) that Democrats now show greater sympathy for Putin and green billionaires than Ukrainians and West Virginia coal miners. At least there is another party concerned for the poor and the repressed.

## **Jewish World Review** **Republicans and Blacks**

by Thomas Sowell

Recently former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice added her voice to those who have long been urging the Republican Party to reach out to black voters. Not only is that long overdue, what is also long overdue is putting some time — and, above all, some serious thought — into how to go about doing it.

Too many Republicans seem to think that the way to "reach out" is to offer blacks and other minorities what the Democrats are offering them. Some have even suggested that the channels to use are organizations like the NAACP and black "leaders" like Jesse Jackson — that is, people tied irrevocably to the Democrats.

Voters who want what the Democrats offer can get it from the Democrats. Why should they vote for Republicans who act like make-believe Democrats?

Yet there are issues where Republicans have a big advantage over Democrats — if they will use that advantage. But an advantage that you don't use might as well not exist.

The issue on which Democrats are most vulnerable, and have the least room to maneuver, is school choice. Democrats are heavily in hock to the teachers' unions, who see public schools as places to guarantee jobs for teachers, regardless of what that means for the education of students.

There are some charter schools and private schools that have low-income minority youngsters equaling or exceeding national norms, despite the many ghetto public schools where most students are nowhere close to meeting those norms. Because teachers' unions oppose charter schools, most Democrats oppose them, including black Democrats up to and including President Barack Obama.

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio's recent cutback on funding for charter schools, and creating other obstacles for them, showed a calloused disregard for black youngsters, for whom a decent education is their one shot at a better life.

But did you hear any Republican say anything about it?

Minimum wage laws are another government-created disaster for minority young people.

Many people today would be surprised to learn that there were once years when the unemployment rate for black 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds was under 10 percent. But their unemployment rates have not been under 20 percent in more than half a century. In some years, their unemployment rate has been over 40 percent.

Why such great differences between earlier and later times? In the late 1940s, inflation had rendered meaningless the minimum wage set in 1938. Without that encumbrance, black teenagers found it a lot easier to get jobs than after the series of minimum wage escalations that began in the 1950s.

Young people need job experience, at least as much as they need a paycheck. And no neighborhood needs hordes of idle young men hanging around, getting into mischief, if not into crime.

Republicans have failed to explain why the minimum wage laws that Democrats support are counterproductive for blacks. Worse yet, during the 2012 election campaign Mitt Romney advocated indexing the minimum wage for inflation, which would not only guarantee its bad effects, but would put an end to discussing those bad effects.

Are issues like these going to switch the black vote as a whole over into the Republican column at the next election? Of course not. Nor will embracing the Democrats' racial agenda.

But, if Republicans can reduce the 90 percent of the black vote that goes to Democrats to 80 percent, that can be enough to swing a couple of close Congressional elections — as a start.

Even to achieve that, however, will require targeting those particular segments of the black population that are not irrevocably committed to the Democrats. Parents who want their children to get a decent education are one obvious example. But if Republicans aim a one-size-fits-all message at all blacks they will fail to connect with the particular people they have some chance of reaching.

First of all, Republicans will need to know what they are talking about. There are books like "Race and Economics" by Walter Williams, which show that many well-meaning government programs have been counterproductive for minorities. And there are people like Shelby Steele and the Thernstroms with valuable insights.

But first Republicans have got to want to learn, and to be willing to do some thinking, in order to get their message across.

**WSJ**

### **Obama's Overtime-Pay Boomerang**

***The new rule hurts the very managers climbing the ranks whom it claims to help***

by Andy Puzder

President Obama on March 13 signed an order directing the Labor Department to expand the class of employees entitled to overtime pay. Currently, if a salaried employee makes more than \$24,000 a year and is part of management—if he manages the business, directs the work of other employees, and has the authority to hire and fire—that employee is exempt from overtime coverage. The president wants to raise this salary threshold, perhaps as high as \$50,000, demoting entry-level managers to glorified crew members by replacing their incentive to get results with an incentive to log more hours.

At issue is a growing inequality problem in the United States. Increasingly, Americans don't have the career opportunities most took for granted a decade ago. Many are withdrawing from the labor force, frustrated because they're unable to find a job and lured to depend on government rather than on themselves.

Rewarding time spent rather than time well spent won't help address this problem. Workers who aspire to climb the management ladder strive for the opportunity to move from hourly-wage, crew-level positions to salaried management positions with performance-based incentives. What they lose in overtime pay they gain in the stature and sense of accomplishment that comes from being a salaried manager. This is hardly oppressive. To the contrary, it can be very lucrative for those willing to invest the time and energy, which explains why so many crew employees aspire to be managers.

As the chief executive officer of CKE Restaurants—the parent company of Carl's Jr. and Hardee's, among other chains—for the past 13 years, I've seen this phenomenon in action every day. I've watched young men and women enter the labor force in our restaurants. I've seen the pride and determination that leads to success in their careers and lives. Some move on to other jobs and challenges equipped with the experience you can only get from a paying job. Others stay, aspiring to move up to managerial positions. There's nothing more fulfilling than seeing new and unskilled employees work their way up to managing a restaurant.

On average, our general managers each run a \$1.3 million business with 25 employees and significant contact with the public. They're in charge of a million-dollar facility, a profit-and-loss statement and the success or failure of a business. If that business succeeds, they benefit just as the owner of a small business would.

Our company-owned restaurant general managers earn a management-level salary starting around \$36,000 and going as high as \$65,000—the average is around \$45,000—plus benefits. They also have the potential to earn a substantial performance-based bonus, up to 28% of their salary. They can progress through our management ranks as high as their ambition may take them. Our executive vice presidents responsible for Carl's Jr. and Hardee's both started as crew employees who worked their way up to general managers. Rather than overtime pay, they got an opportunity to prove themselves.

Many businesses offer incentives for managers. Public companies may have stock options or stock-purchase programs. The idea isn't to squeeze labor by compelling managers to perform physical tasks and work long hours without overtime pay. The idea is to encourage managers to increase their compensation and improve their lives by running profitable businesses as if they owned them—regardless of the hours or tasks required.

Mr. Obama claimed that the individuals covered by the Labor Department change in overtime coverage would include employees who "mostly [do] physical work like stocking shelves." This assertion is, at best, misleading.

To be exempt from overtime, the Fair Labor Standards Act requires the employee to be a "bona fide executive" whose "primary duty" is "managing" the business, according to a Labor Department fact sheet. Managing the business must be the "principal, main, major or most important duty that the employee performs." The employee must also supervise "two or more full-time employees" and have authority to "hire or fire" employees. Stocking shelves won't make you a manager and won't exempt you from the law's overtime requirements.

Managers may help their employees stock shelves or perform other "physical work" while performing their "primary duty" as a manager, which is hardly something to disdain. Each manager is entitled to decide whether to perform such tasks, just as small business owners may decide to perform nonmanagerial "physical work" to increase their profits or to show the crew that they too can perform those tasks. That's what effective owners and managers do.

Perhaps this misunderstanding is what led Mr. Obama to believe that government should compel employers to pay managers hourly overtime. Unfortunately, the move would hurt the very managers he intends to help by turning them into hourly employees, depriving them of the benefits that come from moving into management. Overtime pay has to come from somewhere, most likely from reduced hours, reduced salaries or reduced bonuses. It's easy to attack businesses when

they employ these cost-cutting measures. But, unlike government, businesses must generate profits to grow.

Mr. Obama did say that in pursuing the rule change the administration was "going to do this the right way" and would "consult with both workers and businesses." Maybe he should begin the process by asking managers who make below the new threshold whether they would prefer to keep their current salaries and incentive compensation or, in exchange for this overtime "opportunity," go back to being hourly employees without bonus potential or equity incentives. Their answer might surprise him.

*Mr. Puzder is CEO of CKE Restaurants.*



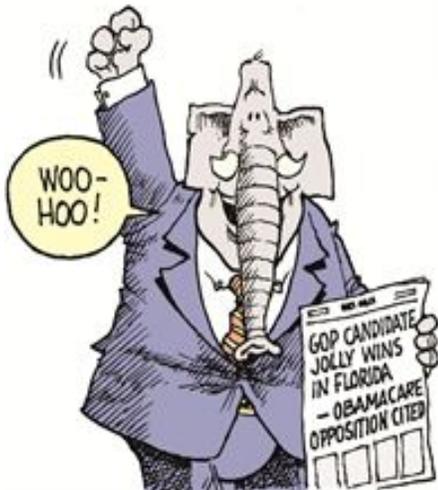


H. Payne

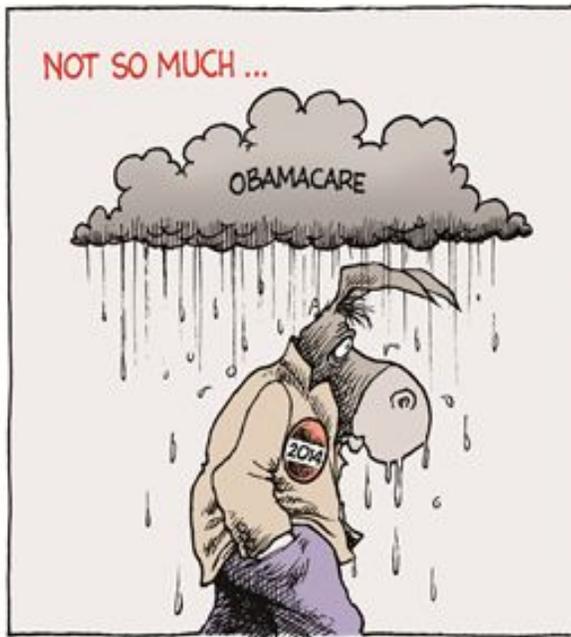
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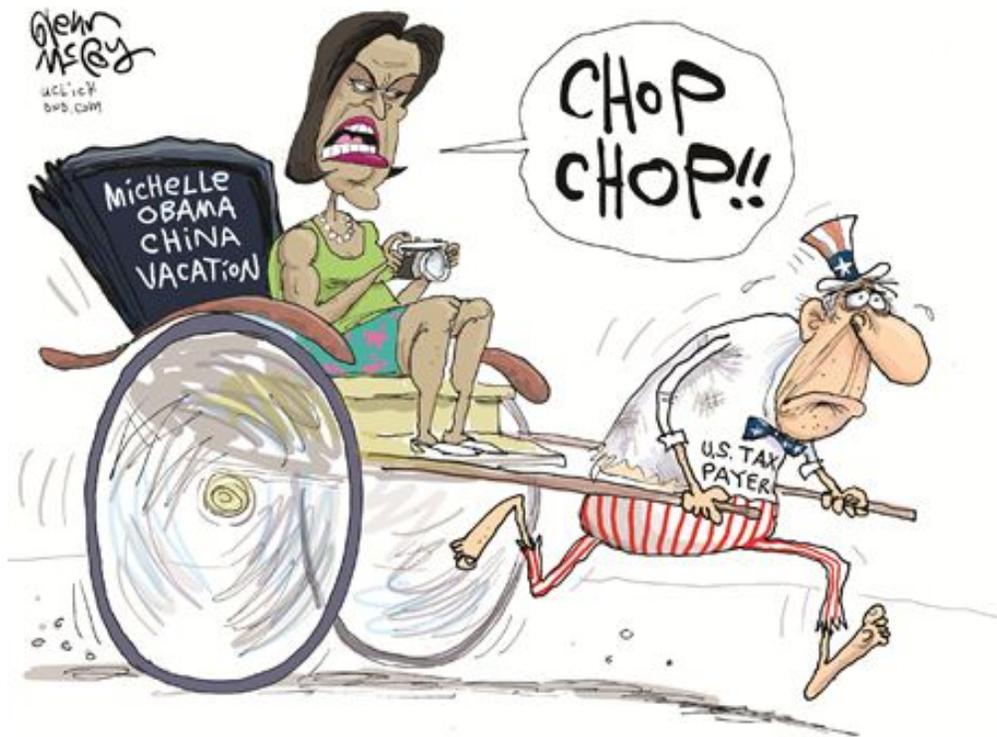
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JOLLY



NOT SO MUCH ...





PRES. SCHEDULE. TUESDAY: BETWEEN TWO FERNS. WED: FINAL FOUR PICKS. THURS: AMERICAN IDOL FRI: WHEEL OF FORTUNE...