

July 6, 2014

While Europe was in the dark ages, the Arab world kept civilization alive. The Economist explores Islam's present dark age.

A THOUSAND years ago, the great cities of Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo took turns to race ahead of the Western world. Islam and innovation were twins. The various Arab caliphates were dynamic superpowers—beacons of learning, tolerance and trade. Yet today the Arabs are in a wretched state. Even as Asia, Latin America and Africa advance, the Middle East is held back by despotism and convulsed by war.

Hopes soared three years ago, when a wave of unrest across the region led to the overthrow of four dictators—in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen—and to a clamour for change elsewhere, notably in Syria. But the Arab spring's fruit has rotted into renewed autocracy and war. Both engender misery and fanaticism that today threaten the wider world.

Why Arab countries have so miserably failed to create democracy, happiness or (aside from the windfall of oil) wealth for their 350m people is one of the great questions of our time. What makes Arab society susceptible to vile regimes and fanatics bent on destroying them (and their perceived allies in the West)? No one suggests that the Arabs as a people lack talent or suffer from some pathological antipathy to democracy. But for the Arabs to wake from their nightmare, and for the world to feel safe, a great deal needs to change. ...

Victor Davis Hanson corrects Dems on the history of war in Iraq.

So who lost Iraq?

The blame game mostly fingers incompetent Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki. Or is Barack Obama culpable for pulling out all American troops monitoring the success of the 2007–08 surge?

Some still blame George W. Bush for going into Iraq in 2003 in the first place to remove Saddam Hussein.

One can blame almost anyone, but one must not invent facts to support an argument.

Do we remember that Bill Clinton signed into law the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 that supported regime change in Iraq? He gave an eloquent speech on the dangers of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction.

In 2002, both houses of Congress voted overwhelmingly to pass a resolution authorizing the removal of Saddam Hussein by force. Senators such as Joe Biden, Hillary Clinton, John Kerry, and Harry Reid offered moving arguments on the Senate floor why we should depose Saddam in a post-9/11 climate. ...

Jennifer Rubin says the border crisis is just another failure of this president.

... Had Obama not moved unilaterally to protect a group of DREAMers from deportation, it is unclear where he and the immigration debate would stand currently. What we do know is that 1.) it fed the narrative that he is an overreaching executive who can't work with Congress and 2.) heightened fears that immigration "reform" is going to make borders less, not more, secure. ...

... In the larger scheme of things, this becomes one more presidential failure along with Obamacare, his foreign policy debacles and a raft of scandals. With losses at the Supreme Court on recess appointments and the [Obamacare contraception mandate](#), the president seems to be shrinking before our eyes. And now with the border emergency, we have one more vivid example of the federal government's inability to perform its core functions. We shouldn't be surprised – all this is par for the course in the second Obama term.

John Steele Gordon starts our look at the jobs report.

The employment picture brightened somewhat in June, with 288,000 new jobs (up from a revised 224,000 in May) and a decline in the unemployment rate to 6.1 percent from 6.3. That's the lowest unemployment rate since August 2008, on the eve of the financial crisis. We have now had job growth above 200,000 for the last five months, the first time that has happened since the very prosperous years of the late 1990s. The number of long-term unemployed (over 27 weeks) declined by 293,000. Unemployment among African-Americans fell from 11.5 percent to 10.7.

But the picture was not all bright. The number of involuntary part-time workers increased by 275,000. Teenage unemployment increased to 21 percent. Among black teenagers it was a horrendous 33.4 percent, up from 31.1 percent in May. One in three black teenagers in the labor force are unemployed. ...

The Washington Post with an extensive article on the growth of part time employment. Maybe instead of president bystander or president petulant, we can call him president part-time. That fits in many ways.

In the new landscape of the American labor market, jobs are easier to come by but hours remain in short supply.

New government data released Thursday showed the economy added 288,000 jobs in June — the fifth straight month gains have topped the critical benchmark of 200,000. The unemployment rate fell to 6.1 percent, down more than a percentage point over the past year.

But there's a gnawing fear among some economists that the improving data provides false comfort. The number of people in part-time jobs jumped by more than 1 million in June to 27 million, according to the government's data, making it one of the corners of the labor market that has been slowest to heal. That has led to worries that the workforce may be becoming permanently polarized, with part-timers stuck on one side and full-time workers on the other.

"What we're seeing is a growing trend of low-quality part-time jobs," said Carrie Gleason, director of the Fair Work Week Initiative, which is pushing for labor reforms. "It's creating this massive unproductive workforce that is unable to productively engage in their lives or in the economy." ...

More from **Ed Morrissey**.

Binyamin Appelbaum delivers the bottom line:

Binyamin Appelbaum **@BCAppelbaum** Follow

Bottom line: This labor market is much much weaker than the last time the unemployment rate stood at 6.1 percent.

Indeed. And while the overall job growth is pretty decent, it's still not high enough to make a dent in the ranks of the chronically unemployed from the last six years.

Update: *Plus, there's this:*

Only one month in the past 4+ years has the number of jobs added exceeded the number of people leaving the workforce. Yikes.

Debra Saunders asks a pointed question about the Hobby Lobby flap.

How did women get birth control before President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act? Before Obamacare, a woman could go to a doctor and get birth control. She often had to pay or make a copayment for contraception. But in the 2014 political lexicon, that means she had no access. ...

You knew this would happen. **Video from inside fireworks.** There is no sound of the explosions, so they added cheesy music. Shut the sound. It's better that way.

The Economist

The tragedy of the Arabs

A civilisation that used to lead the world is in ruins—and only the locals can rebuild it



A THOUSAND years ago, the great cities of Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo took turns to race ahead of the Western world. Islam and innovation were twins. The various Arab caliphates were dynamic superpowers—beacons of learning, tolerance and trade. Yet today the Arabs are in a

wretched state. Even as Asia, Latin America and Africa advance, the Middle East is held back by despotism and convulsed by war.

Hopes soared three years ago, when a wave of unrest across the region led to the overthrow of four dictators—in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen—and to a clamour for change elsewhere, notably in Syria. But the Arab spring's fruit has rotted into renewed autocracy and war. Both engender misery and fanaticism that today threaten the wider world.

Why Arab countries have so miserably failed to create democracy, happiness or (aside from the windfall of oil) wealth for their 350m people is one of the great questions of our time. What makes Arab society susceptible to vile regimes and fanatics bent on destroying them (and their perceived allies in the West)? No one suggests that the Arabs as a people lack talent or suffer from some pathological antipathy to democracy. But for the Arabs to wake from their nightmare, and for the world to feel safe, a great deal needs to change.

The blame game

One problem is that the Arab countries' troubles run so wide. Indeed, Syria and Iraq can nowadays barely be called countries at all. This week a brutal band of jihadists declared their boundaries void, heralding instead a new Islamic caliphate to embrace Iraq and Greater Syria (including Israel-Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan and bits of Turkey) and—in due course—the whole world. Its leaders seek to kill non-Muslims not just in the Middle East but also in the streets of New York, London and Paris. Egypt is back under military rule. Libya, following the violent demise of Muammar Qaddafi, is at the mercy of unruly militias. Yemen is beset by insurrection, infighting and al-Qaeda. Palestine is still far from true statehood and peace: the murders of three young Israelis and ensuing reprisals threaten to set off yet another cycle of violence (see [article](#)). Even countries such as Saudi Arabia and Algeria, whose regimes are cushioned by wealth from oil and gas and propped up by an iron-fisted apparatus of state security, are more fragile than they look. Only Tunisia, which opened the Arabs' bid for freedom three years ago, has the makings of a real democracy.

Islam, or at least modern reinterpretations of it, is at the core of some of the Arabs' deep troubles. The faith's claim, promoted by many of its leading lights, to combine spiritual and earthly authority, with no separation of mosque and state, has stunted the development of independent political institutions. A militant minority of Muslims are caught up in a search for legitimacy through ever more fanatical interpretations of the Koran. Other Muslims, threatened by militia violence and civil war, have sought refuge in their sect. In Iraq and Syria plenty of Shias and Sunnis used to marry each other; too often today they resort to maiming each other. And this violent perversion of Islam has spread to places as distant as northern Nigeria and northern England.

But religious extremism is a conduit for misery, not its fundamental cause (see [article](#)). While Islamic democracies elsewhere (such as Indonesia—see [article](#)) are doing fine, in the Arab world the very fabric of the state is weak. Few Arab countries have been nations for long. The dead hand of the Turks' declining Ottoman empire was followed after the first world war by the humiliation of British and French rule. In much of the Arab world the colonial powers continued to control or influence events until the 1960s. Arab countries have not yet succeeded in fostering the institutional prerequisites of democracy—the give-and-take of parliamentary discourse, protection for minorities, the emancipation of women, a free press, independent courts and universities and trade unions.

The absence of a liberal state has been matched by the absence of a liberal economy. After independence, the prevailing orthodoxy was central planning, often Soviet-inspired. Anti-market, anti-trade, pro-subsidy and pro-regulation, Arab governments strangled their economies. The state

pulled the levers of economic power—especially where oil was involved. Where the constraints of post-colonial socialism were lifted, capitalism of the crony, rent-seeking kind took hold, as it did in the later years of Egypt's Hosni Mubarak. Privatisation was for pals of the government. Virtually no markets were free, barely any world-class companies developed, and clever Arabs who wanted to excel in business or scholarship had to go to America or Europe to do so.

Economic stagnation bred dissatisfaction. Monarchs and presidents-for-life defended themselves with secret police and goons. The mosque became a source of public services and one of the few places where people could gather and hear speeches. Islam was radicalised and the angry men who loathed their rulers came to hate the Western states that backed them. Meanwhile a vast number of the young grew restless because of unemployment. Thanks to the electronic media, they were increasingly aware that the prospects of their cohort outside the Middle East were far more hopeful. The wonder is not that they took to the streets in the Arab spring, but that they did not do so sooner.

A lot of ruin

These wrongs cannot easily or rapidly be put right. Outsiders, who have often been drawn to the region as invaders and occupiers, cannot simply stamp out the jihadist cause or impose prosperity and democracy. That much, at least, should be clear after the disastrous invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003. Military support—the supply of drones and of a small number of special forces—may help keep the jihadists in Iraq at bay. That help may have to be on permanent call. Even if the new caliphate is unlikely to become a recognisable state, it could for many years produce jihadists able to export terrorism.

But only the Arabs can reverse their civilisational decline, and right now there is little hope of that happening. The extremists offer none. The mantra of the monarchs and the military men is “stability”. In a time of chaos, its appeal is understandable, but repression and stagnation are not the solution. They did not work before; indeed they were at the root of the problem. Even if the Arab awakening is over for the moment, the powerful forces that gave rise to it are still present. The social media which stirred up a revolution in attitudes cannot be uninvented. The men in their palaces and their Western backers need to understand that stability requires reform.

Is that a vain hope? Today the outlook is bloody. But ultimately fanatics devour themselves. Meanwhile, wherever possible, the moderate, secular Sunnis who comprise the majority of Arab Muslims need to make their voices heard. And when their moment comes, they need to cast their minds back to the values that once made the Arab world great. Education underpinned its primacy in medicine, mathematics, architecture and astronomy. Trade paid for its fabulous metropolises and their spices and silks. And, at its best, the Arab world was a cosmopolitan haven for Jews, Christians and Muslims of many sects, where tolerance fostered creativity and invention.

Pluralism, education, open markets: these were once Arab values and they could be so again. Today, as Sunnis and Shias tear out each others' throats in Iraq and Syria and a former general settles onto his new throne in Egypt, they are tragically distant prospects. But for a people for whom so much has gone so wrong, such values still make up a vision of a better future.

Looking Back at Iraq

It is historically inaccurate to say the war was cooked up by Bush alone.

By Victor Davis Hanson

So who lost Iraq?

The blame game mostly fingers incompetent Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki. Or is Barack Obama culpable for pulling out all American troops monitoring the success of the 2007–08 surge?

Some still blame George W. Bush for going into Iraq in 2003 in the first place to remove Saddam Hussein.

One can blame almost anyone, but one must not invent facts to support an argument.

Do we remember that Bill Clinton signed into law the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 that supported regime change in Iraq? He gave an eloquent speech on the dangers of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction.

In 2002, both houses of Congress voted overwhelmingly to pass a resolution authorizing the removal of Saddam Hussein by force. Senators such as Joe Biden, Hillary Clinton, John Kerry, and Harry Reid offered moving arguments on the Senate floor why we should depose Saddam in a post-9/11 climate.

Democratic stalwarts such as Senator Jay Rockefeller and Representative Nancy Pelosi lectured us about the dangers of Saddam's stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction. They drew on the same classified domestic- and foreign-intelligence reports that had led Bush to call for Saddam's forcible removal.

The Bush administration, like members of Congress, underestimated the costs of the war and erred in focusing almost exclusively on Saddam's supposed stockpiles of weapons. But otherwise, the war was legally authorized on 23 writs. Most of them had nothing to do with weapons of mass destruction and were unaffected by the later mysterious absence of such weapons — which is all the more mysterious given that troves of WMD have turned up in nearby Syria and more recently in Iraqi bunkers overrun by Islamic militants.

Legally, the U.S. went to war against Saddam because he had done things such as committing genocide against the Kurds, Shiites, and the Marsh Arabs, and attacking four of his neighbors. He had tried to arrange the assassination of a former U.S. president, George H. W. Bush. He had paid bounties for suicide bombers on the West Bank and was harboring the worst of global terrorists. Saddam also offered refuge to at least one of the architects of the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993, and violated U.N.-authorized no-fly zones.

A number of prominent columnists, Right and Left — from George Will, David Brooks, and William F. Buckley to Fareed Zakaria, David Ignatius, and Thomas Friedman — supported Saddam's forcible removal. When his statue fell in 2003, most polls showed that over 70 percent of Americans agreed with the war.

What changed public opinion and caused radical about-faces among the war's most ardent supporters were the subsequent postwar violence and insurgency between 2004 and 2007 and the concurrent domestic elections and rising antiwar movement. Thousands of American troops were killed or wounded in mostly failed efforts to stem the Sunni–Shiite savagery.

The 2007–08 surge engineered by General David Petraeus ended much of the violence. By Obama's second year in office, American fatalities had been reduced to far below the monthly accident rate in the U.S. military. "An extraordinary achievement," Obama said of the "stable" and "self-reliant" Iraq that he inherited — and left.

Prior to our invasion, the Kurds were a persecuted people who had been gassed, slaughtered, and robbed of all rights by Saddam. In contrast, today a semi-autonomous Kurdistan is a free-market, consensual society of tolerance that, along with Israel, is one of the few humane places in the Middle East.

In 2003, the *New York Times* estimated that Saddam Hussein had killed perhaps about 1 million of his own people. That translated into about 40,000 deaths for each year he led Iraq.

A Saddam-led Iraq over the last decade would not have been a peaceable place.

We can also imagine that Saddam would not have sat idly by the last decade as Pakistan and North Korea openly sold their nuclear expertise, and as rival Iran pressed ahead with its nuclear enrichment program.

Nor should we forget that the U.S. military decimated al-Qaeda in Iraq. Tens of thousands of foreign terrorists flocked to Anbar Province and there met their deaths. When Obama later declared that al-Qaeda was "on the run," it was largely because it had been nearly obliterated in Iraq.

Launching a costly campaign to remove Saddam may or may not have been a wise move. But it is historically inaccurate to suggest that the Iraq War was cooked up by George W. Bush alone — or that it did not do enormous damage to al-Qaeda, bring salvation for the Kurds, and by 2009 provide a rare chance for the now-bickering Iraqis to make something out of what Saddam had tried to destroy.

Right Turn

[With the border crisis, Obama's competency declines further](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

Immigration reform was on its last legs even before [Rep. Eric Cantor's defeat](#) was (incorrectly) deployed as a political warning against comprehensive reform. Whatever faint hope there was for a deal in this presidency is vanishing in the midst of a border fiasco largely of President Obama's making, a misstep that muddies his accusation that the GOP is to blame for the lack of comprehensive reform.

Before the calamity at the border, the president had a simple argument: *He and a bipartisan majority in the Senate were for immigration reform; a right-wing rump in the House was holding up comprehensive reform.* House Speaker John Boehner, who plainly wants immigration reform to get done, was reduced to claiming that Congress couldn't act to pass a new law so long as Obama kept changing the current ones by fiat. The argument didn't entirely make sense given that reform could kick in after Obama leaves and, in any event, Obama without congressional action would continue to act unilaterally and cast the Republicans as anti-immigrant.

That changed when [thousands rushed to our border, including flocks of unaccompanied minors](#). A GOP senior aide remarked to me, "I think it is fair to say that his executive order on DREAM-ers is

partially if not fully responsible for the current humanitarian crisis.” The aide contends Obama’s announcement that he will shift resources to the border “is largely a ruse to give him more space for executive action to ease up on the deportations, which again is only going to make the problem worse and not better.”

If nothing else, the border pileup has strengthened Republicans’ argument that border security must precede other aspects of reform. Even Obama now effectively concedes the point by trying to address the border emergency before offering anything to his frustrated base.

Meanwhile, Texas is one state on the front lines. [Gov. Rick Perry \(R\)](#), a potential 2016 contender, was forced to get emergency funding from the legislature. In a moving op-ed this week, he explained the real-world situation:

The very real human consequences of our country’s lax border security and muddled immigration policies huddled right there, under an open shelter in the stifling Texas heat.

This is the McAllen border patrol detention facility, where men, women and children of all ages who have illegally entered the United States are detained and processed. Some are caught attempting to cross the border; some give up willingly. Many are children from Central America traveling alone. Some have paid coyotes to smuggle them through Mexico or have made the trip on the tops of freight trains. All have risked their lives to set foot in our country.

It’s impossible to see these children without wondering how many more were lost somewhere along the way. The desert’s a dangerous place to begin with, even before the worst of summer’s brutal heat arrives, and the border is trafficked by treacherous individuals who see fellow humans as an expendable means to turn a dollar.

He wants the feds to “make it crystal clear that attempting to cross our border illegally simply isn’t worth the considerable risk,” and he wants action on the border. (“The U.S. government needs to send more resources to finally, once and for all, secure the border. Federal engagement was insufficient to begin with and the crush of illegal entrants is draining what resources they have in the area. These gaping holes are just waiting to be exploited by drug cartels and transnational gangs. They also create a national security issue as they could be used by people from countries with known terrorist affiliations.”)

Had Obama not moved unilaterally to protect a group of DREAMers from deportation, it is unclear where he and the immigration debate would stand currently. What we do know is that 1.) it fed the narrative that he is an overreaching executive who can’t work with Congress and 2.) heightened fears that immigration “reform” is going to make borders less, not more, secure.

The good news is that the crisis may make demands for serious and verifiable border security first, *then* legalization, the only acceptable position for either party. That conceivably could provide sufficient reassurance to nervous Republicans and provide the basis of a future deal. So long as the border is out of control, even this president will be loath to signal tolerance for illegal immigration.

In the larger scheme of things, this becomes one more presidential failure along with Obamacare, his foreign policy debacles and a raft of scandals. With losses at the Supreme Court on recess appointments and the [Obamacare contraception mandate](#), the president seems to be shrinking before our eyes. And now with the border emergency, we have one more vivid example of the federal government’s inability to perform its core functions. We shouldn’t be surprised – all this is par for the course in the second Obama term.

Contentions

[The Jobs Report](#)

by John Steele Gordon

The employment picture brightened somewhat in June, with 288,000 new jobs (up from a revised 224,000 in May) and a decline in the unemployment rate to 6.1 percent from 6.3. That's the lowest unemployment rate since August 2008, on the eve of the financial crisis. We have now had job growth above 200,000 for the last five months, the first time that has happened since the very prosperous years of the late 1990s. The number of long-term unemployed (over 27 weeks) declined by 293,000. Unemployment among African-Americans fell from 11.5 percent to 10.7.

But the picture was not all bright. The number of involuntary part-time workers increased by 275,000. Teenage unemployment increased to 21 percent. Among black teenagers it was a horrendous 33.4 percent, up from 31.1 percent in May. One in three black teenagers in the labor force are unemployed. The participation rate stayed steady at 62.8 percent for the third month in a row. But that is down from a year ago, when it was 64 percent and way down from before the recession. So much of the drop in unemployment came from people dropping out of the labor force, not finding jobs.

And many of the new jobs were at the low end of the pay scale. While retail jobs increased by 40,000 and leisure and hospitality 39,000, higher-paying jobs in manufacturing (16,000) and construction (6,000) were far fewer.

So while the news is good, it is not unalloyed good. We'll know we are finally in a full-fledged recovery when the participation rate begins to climb steadily as discouraged workers see more opportunity and begin looking for jobs. That might send the unemployment rate up at first, but that, paradoxically, would actually be good news.

Washington Post

[More Americans are stuck in part-time work](#)

by Ylan Q. Mui

In the new landscape of the American labor market, jobs are easier to come by but hours remain in short supply.

New government data released Thursday showed the economy added 288,000 jobs in June — the fifth straight month gains have topped the critical benchmark of 200,000. The unemployment rate fell to 6.1 percent, down more than a percentage point over the past year.

But there's a gnawing fear among some economists that the improving data provides false comfort. The number of people in part-time jobs jumped by more than 1 million in June to 27 million, according to the government's data, making it one of the corners of the labor market that has been slowest to heal. That has led to worries that the workforce may be becoming permanently polarized, with part-timers stuck on one side and full-time workers on the other.

“What we’re seeing is a growing trend of low-quality part-time jobs,” said Carrie Gleason, director of the Fair Work Week Initiative, which is pushing for labor reforms. “It’s creating this massive unproductive workforce that is unable to productively engage in their lives or in the economy.”

Washington has begun to take notice. As the unemployment rate has dropped, the debate among policymakers has expanded from providing aid to those without a job to include improving conditions for those who do. President Obama has raised the minimum wage for federal contract workers, many of whom are part-time. The White House is also building support for a measure that would require companies to provide paid sick leave. Nationwide protests at retailers and fast-food chains that heavily rely on part-time labor have called for more reliable schedules.

The government defines part-time workers as those whose jobs average less than 35 hours a week. Historically, they made up about 17 percent of the workforce — and, in most cases, they were part-time by choice. They may be caring for family members, enrolled in school or simply uninterested or unable to work more hours. Technically, they are not counted among the unemployed.

But the spike in part-time work since the recession has been largely involuntary. These workers may have had their hours cut or are unable to find full-time jobs, earning them the official designation of “part-time for economic reasons.” In June, their ranks swelled by 275,000 to 7.5 million. In 2007, 4.4 million people fell into this category.

Chicago resident Anna Pritchett is thankful to have a job. The 65-year-old was unemployed for about a decade before landing a part-time position in maintenance at Wal-Mart 2 1/2 years ago. She makes \$9.55 an hour and usually works 32 hours a week.

Pritchett would take on even more hours if it were an option. But the company was only looking for part-timers, she said.

“That’s what they offered, so that’s what I took,” she said. “I gotta take what I can get.”

Some economists still see hope for workers like Pritchett. The swell of people who are part-time for economic reasons has ebbed since peaking at 9 million in 2009. As the broader job market picks up, the prospects of those workers moving into full-time positions could improve.

“I don’t find a lot of evidence to support this argument that we’re becoming a part-time nation,” said Scott Anderson, chief economist at Bank of the West. “I’m not sitting here saying it’s mission accomplished, [but] the tea leaves I’m looking at are looking a lot more positive to me and more sustainable for the recovery.”

Still, the pace of progress has been frustratingly slow compared to other measures of labor market health. Businesses are hiring at a robust pace, and the jobless rate has dropped from a peak of 10 percent in 2009 to 6.3 percent last month. But the broadest measure of unemployment — which includes people who are involuntarily in part-time jobs — is nearly double that rate. Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen has repeatedly pointed to that discrepancy as an example of how much farther the recovery still has to go.

“The existence of such a large pool of ‘partly unemployed’ workers is a sign that labor conditions are worse than indicated by the unemployment rate,” she said at a speech in Chicago this spring.

The demographics of part-timers has also changed. The number of young people in those jobs has dwindled since the recession, according to an analysis by the Federal Reserve Bank of San

Francisco. They've been replaced with adults in their prime working age, between 25 and 54 years old. Many of them are single men and women without a high school diploma.

That finding corresponds with data showing the types of part-time jobs have shifted. Almost every industry employed a higher proportion of part-time workers last year than in 2007, according to the National Women's Law Center. The one exception? Professional occupations, where the share of part-timers actually dropped.

The rise of part-time work is also related to another lingering problem in the job market: long-term unemployment. The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta found that the longer workers have been out of a job, the more likely they were to take a part-time job even if they wanted a full-time one.

"There's not understanding for how having just half a job is fueling unemployment overall," said Gleason of the Fair Work Week Initiative. "That's a part of the discussion we need to be having."

The analysis by the Atlanta Fed concluded that the high rate of involuntary part-time work is a significant factor holding back wage growth in the job market.

Pritchett understands that problem firsthand. Her earnings from Wal-Mart are not enough to cover living expenses for herself and her unemployed adult son, even when combined with her Social Security benefits. She is behind on bills and said her raises have totaled 80 cents an hour over the past two years. Each day after her shift cleaning the store, she heads home to soak her feet.

"People say, 'Anna, you need to buy you some Dr. Scholl's.' But I say, 'Do you know how much those shoes cost?'"

Hot Air

[June jobs report: 288,000 jobs created, jobless rate drops to 6.1%](#)

by Ed Morrissey

Looks like [the portents from ADP and Gallup](#) were accurate. [The BLS reports solid job growth in June](#) of 288K, with the jobless rate decreasing to 6.1%. The number of jobs added in April and May were revised upward by 29,000 as well. However, the workforce participation rate remains at a 36-year low, while the number of involuntary part-time workers rose by 275,000:

Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 288,000 in June, and the unemployment rate declined to 6.1 percent, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Job gains were widespread, led by employment growth in professional and business services, retail trade, food services and drinking places, and health care.

In June, the unemployment rate declined by 0.2 percentage point to 6.1 percent. The number of unemployed persons decreased by 325,000 to 9.5 million. Over the year, the unemployment rate and the number of unemployed persons have declined by 1.4 percentage points and 2.3 million, respectively. (See table A-1.) ...

In June, the civilian labor force participation rate was 62.8 percent for the third consecutive month. The employment-population ratio, at 59.0 percent, showed little change over the month but is up by 0.3 percentage point over the year. (See table A-1.)

The number of persons employed part time for economic reasons (sometimes referred to as involuntary part-time workers) increased by 275,000 in June to 7.5 million. The number of involuntary part-time workers is down over the year but has shown no clear trend in recent months. These individuals were working part time because their hours had been cut back or because they were unable to find a full-time job.

ADP [almost hit it right on the head](#) yesterday with its estimate of 281,000. Private-sector employment rose by 262,000 in June. U-6, the more stable of the unemployment metrics, dropped a tenth of a point to 12.1%, its lowest level since the Great Recession and down from 12.7% in January. However, that's still a long way off from the 8.2% of June 2007.

The number of people working part time for economic reasons rose as noted above, and now is at 7.544 million. A year ago, that seasonally-adjusted number was 8.194 million, and the trend has been going down during the recovery, if slowly. However, June's number is still 287,000 higher than January.

CNBC notes the U-6 rate and [tosses some cold water](#) on the BLS's preferred U-3 jobless rate:

A number of economists look past the "main" unemployment rate to a different figure the Bureau of Labor Statistics calls "U-6," which it defines as "total unemployed, plus all marginally attached workers plus total employed part time for economic reasons, as a percent of all civilian labor force plus all marginally attached workers."

In other words, the unemployed, the underemployed and the discouraged—a rate that still remains high.

The U-6 rate fell slightly in June to 12.1 percent. While it is down 210 basis points over the last year, the trend has been somewhat more volatile than in the main unemployment rate, which steadily declined.

Reuters sticks with the top-line number for its headline, but [on the live blog](#), wage stagnation catches their attention:

Average hourly earnings still aren't rising by much. From the report: "Average hourly earnings for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls rose by 6 cents to \$24.45, following a 6-cent increase in May. Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have risen by 2.0 percent."

Hourly earnings are important because Fed chair Janet Yellen has [indicated](#) she wants to see an increase before she really believes the employment situation is solid. [Wage growth](#) has been more or less stagnant since the end of the recession.

Binyamin Appelbaum delivers the bottom line:

[Binyamin Appelbaum](#) [@BCAppelbaum Follow](#)

Bottom line: This labor market is much much weaker than the last time the unemployment rate stood at 6.1 percent.

Indeed. And while the overall job growth is pretty decent, it's still not high enough to make a dent in the ranks of the chronically unemployed from the last six years.

Update: Plus, there's this:

Only one month in the past 4+ years has the number of jobs added exceeded the number of people leaving the workforce. Yikes.

San Francisco Chronicle
[Free to Choose vs. Cost-Free Access](#)
by Debra Saunders

How did women get birth control before President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act? Before Obamacare, a woman could go to a doctor and get birth control. She often had to pay or make a copayment for contraception. But in the 2014 political lexicon, that means she had no access.

On Monday, the Supreme Court issued its 5-4 Hobby Lobby decision, which recognized family-owned corporations' religious right to not offer contraception mandated under the Affordable Care Act in their employee health insurance plans. In her dissenting opinion, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg charged that the ruling would "deny legions of women who do not hold their employers' religious beliefs access to contraceptive coverage that the ACA would otherwise secure."

The Obama administration broadly prescribed what constituted health insurance coverage in 2012 when the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced that contraception constituted essential preventive care. Hence, under Obamacare, birth control is exempt from copayments and mandatory in most employer-sponsored health plans.

What if employers have deeply held religious objections against contraceptive methods that they consider to be abortion-inducing? Surely, the Obama administration expected resistance.

It came from Hobby Lobby CEO David Green, who, as a devout Christian, had been providing health care to his 13,000 full-time workers for years. The company plan included contraception -- but not four methods that Green and his family believe "risk killing an embryo." In a court brief, Hobby Lobby objected to being forced to be "complicit in abortion."

If the Obama administration were tolerant, then the White House could have worked to accommodate dissent by allowing employers with demonstrated religious beliefs to opt out of Obamacare.

Indeed, the Affordable Care Act already exempts grandfathered employer-sponsored health plans -- which means about a third of workers have health coverage that does not include birth control. Obamacare also exempts small employers from the contraception mandate. Surely, if the Obama administration can exempt millions of workers for reasons of political expediency, then it can find a way to exempt the rare corporation with strong moral objections.

Mark Rienzi -- senior counsel of The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, which represented Hobby Lobby in court -- hailed the ruling as "a great decision for freedom and diversity." In a free country, he argued, the government knows that "the answer is not to crush people for having different beliefs."

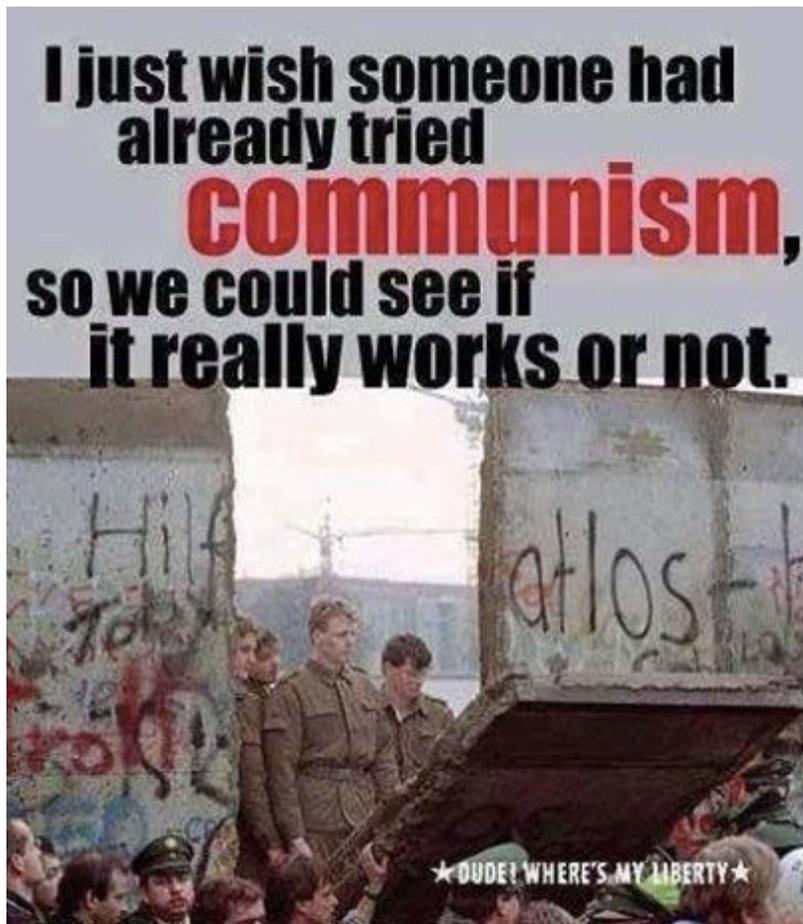
Justice Samuel Alito Jr. wrote for the majority: "There are other ways in which Congress or HHS could equally ensure that every woman has cost-free access to the particular contraceptives at issue here."

Here's a radical idea: If Washington wants to make birth control free, let Washington pay for it.

Here's another radical idea: To paraphrase the U.S. Constitution, let Washington pass no regulations prohibiting the free exercise of religion.

The whole push for reproductive rights started as a quest to establish a woman's right to choose. Now family-owned corporations have choice, too.

You knew this would happen. [Video from inside fireworks](#). There is no sound of the explosions, so they added cheesy music. Shut the sound. It's better that way.



**INDIA HAS 1.27 BILLION PEOPLE.
400 MILLION OF THEM EARN LESS THAN \$1.25 A DAY.**



EVERY SINGLE VOTER HAS A PHOTO ID

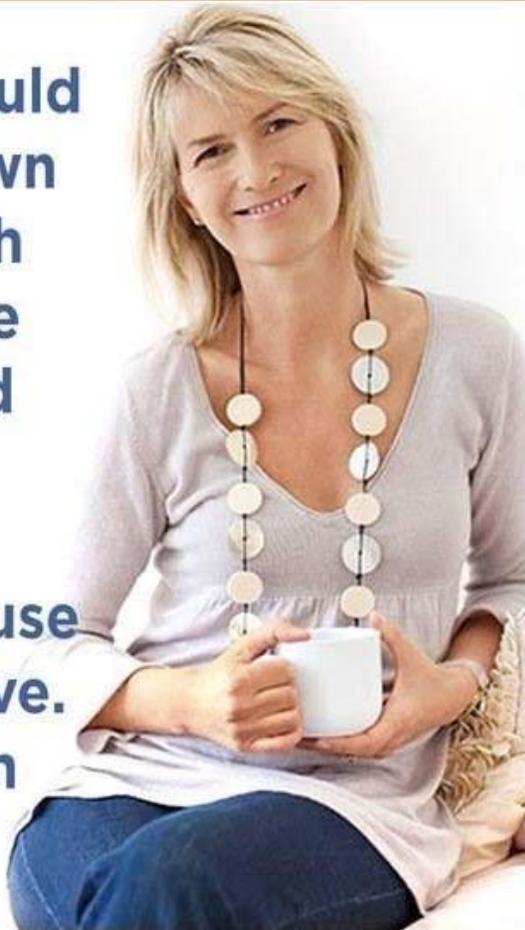
**Hysterically demanding that
the government force people
to pay for your birth control
doesn't exactly say,
"Strong, independent
woman." - John Hawkins**





I think you should pay for your own mortgage, birth control, college loans, food and cell phones.

This isn't because I'm Conservative. It's because I'm an adult.



THE PATRIOT POST®
VOICE OF ESSENTIAL LIBERTY

It's Right. It's Free.
Subscribe Today!
www.patriotpost.us

 **@PatriotPost**
 **PatriotPost**



'I have to admit, Catwoman — you are not as I expected.'