

November 19, 2014

Like a spoiled child who must always be the center of attention, the president promises to double down on the lawless presidency with an executive edict on immigration.

Jonathan Tobin posts on what might result.

... Hispanics may be grateful for the temporary end of the deportations but it will not escape their notice that in doing so the president has ended any chance of immigration reform for the rest of his term. Nor will they be unaware that a GOP successor will invalidate amnesty with a stroke of the pen as easily as the president has enacted them. Republicans will rightly understand that there is no dealing with an administration that would rather go outside the law than first negotiate in good faith with a newly elected Congress on immigration. Nor can they be blamed for thinking any deal based on promises on border enforcement will be worthless with a president who thinks he has the right to simply order non-enforcement of the laws he doesn't like.

Even more to the point, the orders will create a backlash among the rest of the electorate that always results when presidents begin to run afoul of both the law and public opinion. A lawless presidency is something that is, by definition, dysfunctional, and that is a term that has already defined Obama's second term up until this point. Democrats who are counting on wild applause from their base should understand that just as Republicans learned that domination by their Tea Party wing undermines their electoral viability, they too should be wary of governing from the left.

The spectacle of mass amnesty without benefit of law will shock ordinary voters, including many who are Democrats or who think the immigration system should have been fixed. After the orders, responsibility for the failure to do so will rest on Obama, not the Republicans. What the president may be doing with these orders is to remind the voters that parties that grow too comfortable with exercising authority without benefit of law must be taught a lesson, one that will be paid for by his would-be Democratic successor in 2016. Rather than building his legacy, the president may actually be ensuring that his time in office is remembered more for his lack of respect for the rule of law than any actual accomplishments.

Free Beacon staff post on liberal Ron Fournier's reaction to GruberGate.

... "The problem is the central attribute you have to have as any leader, in any walk of life and certainly in government is trust," Fournier said. "This president has destroyed the credibility of his administration himself and government itself."

Fournier said the administration's mistakes, on top of fallout over Obamacare architect Jonathan Gruber's embarrassing comments, have made Obamacare increasingly difficult to defend.

"In the long run, as somebody who would like to see this bill work, I think they have really undermined it," Fournier said. "And it's going to be harder to defend it."

Scott Johnson of Power Line calls our attention to six great minutes on Special Report Monday night.

What is Grubergate all about? It's about more than Gruber's obnoxious account of the passage of Obamacare, an account that exposes the illegitimacy of the law's enactment. It is about more than the corruption through which he has profited handsomely in selling the law. It is about more than the sewage he pumped out for distribution by the White House, by Democratic leaders and

officeholders, and by the mainstream media adjunct of the Democratic Party; the sewage was intended for consumption by the American public.

Grubergate is about all of these things and more. I haven't seen anything that captures the phenomenon better than this six-minute video produced by the team at Fox News Special Report with Bret Baier (below). The video names names and cites sources. It is a superb piece of work and a genuine contribution to understanding. ...

Real Clear Politics links to video and transcripts of last night's [Special Report by Brett Baier](#).

BRET BAIER, SPECIAL REPORT: In Brisbane, President Obama tried hard to downplay Jonathan Gruber's role in the formation of his health care bill. Gruber, who was not only paid by HHS, but eventually made millions from other federal agencies and states has talked often about his time dealing directly with President Obama.

JONATHAN GRUBER: We had a meeting in the oval office with several experts including myself.
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... SEN. HARRY REID: Jonathan Gruber is one of the most respected economists in the world said in today's Washington Post, here's a quote -- "here's a bill that reduces the deficit, covers 30 million people, 30 million more people and has a promise of lowering premiums. ...

Peter Wehner says now the president is lying about his lies.

This is getting pathological. According to [this story](#) in Politico, President Obama, when asked whether he had intentionally misled the public in order to get the law passed, he replied: "No. I did not." He actually did, repeatedly. Here's just one example—on the president's pledge that "If you like your health-care plan, you'll be able to keep your health-care plan, period"—that comes to us courtesy of Glenn Kessler, who works for that well-known right-wing outlet the Washington Post. ...

... No American can take joy in saying this, but the evidence clearly warrants it: We have a president who is lying about his lies. It's not good for him, for the office of the presidency, or for our political culture. He might try telling the truth. At this point it won't salvage his presidency, but it might begin to repair some of the extraordinary damage to his credibility.

Craig Pirrong, The Streetwise Professor, is in good form when posting on presidential lies.

The Gruber Gone Wild video collection (with a release a day!) demonstrates graphically that Obamacare is a 900+ ply tissue of lies. And Obama himself was the lead retailer of those lies.

Today gives another example of Obama's mendacity. He came out against Keystone, again, but this time on the grounds that it just helps Canada, and doesn't benefit the US one whit:

“Understand what this project is: It is providing the ability of Canada to pump their oil, send it through our land, down to the Gulf, where it will be sold everywhere else. It doesn’t have an impact on U.S. gas prices,” ...

... The mendacity is not all that’s appalling about this statement. One of Obama’s worst habits has been giving allies the back of his hand, while he sucks up to sworn enemies. Canada is a close ally, and has been for decades. Indeed, even now Canada is actually contributing military force to Obama’s otherwise farcical anti-ISIS coalition.

Fat lot of good that it does them. Who needs friends like Canada when you have Iran? Can Canada help Obama build a legacy? No! So what good are they? (Please ignore the fact that the legacy will really be a nuclear arms race in the other Gulf: the Arab/Persian one.)

The sad thing is that we are in for two years of this mendacity. It will be all Alinsky, all the time. Non-stop demagoguery in the service of progressive causes. He lost, but we’ll pay.

So we will have to update Twain. No longer should you say “lies, damn lies, and statistics.” The version that will describe the next two years is: “lies, damn lies, and Obamaisms.”

Matthew Continetti rightly points out some of the big losers will be the Central and South Americans who'll hit the road north. He also has suggestions for a GOP response to unilateral executive actions.

Last summer the southern border disappeared. Unaccompanied minors from Central and South America surged across the Rio Grande. Desperate parents had sent their children thousands of miles north. The impoverished girls and boys were housed in ramshackle facilities before being sent elsewhere. The images were heartbreaking. They seemed drawn from a post-apocalyptic future. And they were entirely preventable.

Government policy caused the border crisis of 2014. Not the 2008 law granting special protections to unaccompanied minors from countries other than Mexico, an ex post facto explanation meant to blame George W. Bush. It was after Obama’s 2012 authorization of deferred action and work permits for illegal immigrants who arrived in the United States as children that such migration spiked. This blatant political move, as well as the president’s repeated pledge to amnesty the rest of the illegal migrant population, spurred the uptick in border crossings. The humanitarian tragedy followed.

Now Obama wants to repeat history. Indeed, he wants to expand the 2012 program so that it encompasses not hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants but millions of them. ...

Jennifer Rubin also posts advice for how the GOP can react.

The Republicans are wrestling with a knotty question: How do they thwart President Obama’s unilateral power grab on immigration reform without splintering the GOP, damaging their prospects in 2016 and assenting to a dangerous precedent?

It would seem any approach in response to an executive edict legalizing millions of people should take into account these three concerns, but with two caveats.

First, it may not be possible to stop the president. Nevertheless, they should make sure that the GOP has the most to gain and the Democrats the most to lose if he proceeds.

Second, prospective 2016 presidential candidates will differ widely on what they consider damaging to the party's prospects, and theirs. Governors who intend to run against Washington D.C. might not care if the GOP shuts down the government, wreaks havoc on the country and gets bogged down in a war with the president. They are going to run against D.C., against Hillary Clinton (who will be forced to cheer the action) and against any GOP senators who contributed to the mess. Among the 2016 GOP presidential aspirants in the Senate, Ted Cruz (Tex.) is the most at risk of a meltdown or another government shutdown. He was largely responsible for the first shutdown and another one would eviscerate any hope he might have of being seen as a responsible figure. Meanwhile, he and Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) must satisfy their core supporters whose sense of political realism is shaky. ...

The immigration move is so outrageous, even **David Brooks** is aghast.

... This move would also make it much less likely that we'll have immigration reform anytime soon. White House officials are often misinformed on what Republicans are privately discussing, so they don't understand that many in the Republican Party are trying to find a way to get immigration reform out of the way. This executive order would destroy their efforts.

The move would further destabilize the legitimacy of government. Redefining the legal status of five million or six million human beings is a big deal. This is the sort of change we have a legislative process for. To do something this seismic with the stroke of one man's pen is dangerous.

Instead of a nation of laws, we could slowly devolve into a nation of diktats, with each president relying on and revoking different measures on the basis of unilateral power — creating unstable swings from one presidency to the next. If President Obama enacts this order on the transparently flimsy basis of "prosecutorial discretion," he's inviting future presidents to use similarly flimsy criteria. Talk about defining constitutional deviancy down.

I'm not sure why the Obama administration has been behaving so strangely since the midterms. Maybe various people in the White House are angry in defeat and want to show that they can be as obstructionist as anyone. Maybe, in moments of stress, they are only really sensitive to criticism from the left flank. Maybe it's Gruberism: the belief that everybody else is slightly dumber and less well-motivated than oneself and, therefore, politics is more about manipulation than conversation.

...

We close with a **Washington Post Editorial**.

DEMOCRATS URGING President Obama to "go big" in his executive order on immigration might pause to consider the following scenario:

It is 2017. Newly elected President Ted Cruz (R) insists he has won a mandate to repeal Obamacare. The Senate, narrowly back in Democratic hands, disagrees. Mr. Cruz instructs the Internal Revenue Service not to collect a fine from anyone who opts out of the individual mandate to buy health insurance, thereby neutering a key element of the program. It is a matter of prosecutorial discretion, Mr. Cruz explains; tax cheats are defrauding the government of billions, and he wants the IRS to concentrate on them. Of course, he is willing to modify his order as soon as Congress agrees to fix what he considers a "broken" health system.

That is not a perfect analogy to Mr. Obama's proposed action on immigration. But it captures the unilateral spirit that Mr. Obama seems to have embraced since Republicans swept to victory in the midterm elections. He is vowing to go it alone on immigration. On Iran, he is reportedly designing an agreement that he need not bring to Congress. He already has gone that route on climate change with China. ...

Contentions

A Lawless Presidency Will Destroy Itself

by Jonathan S. Tobin

There is no longer any doubt that perhaps within a matter of days, the president [will issue executive orders that grant amnesty](#) to up to 5 million illegal immigrants currently in the United States. [While the administration is hoping the discussion that ensues will still be about the merits of immigration reform](#), they should understand that the president's decision to use his executive authority to treat law enforcement as a function of his personal whim is bound to change the debate to one about an assault on constitutional principles. This means that rather than debating what can be done to stop him in the short term (the correct answer is not much), observers should be pondering the long-term effects of this move on both the future of immigration reform and the fortunes of our two political parties. The answers to both of these questions may not bring much comfort to the president and his supporters.

The GOP-controlled Congress doesn't appear to have legislative options that won't involve funding measures that can be portrayed as a new government shutdown. Though it would take presidential vetoes to kick off such a confrontation, with the help of a still docile mainstream media ([see Grubergate](#)), Republican leaders understand that this is a political trap they need to avoid. However, what Democrats who assume the mass amnesty will transform the political landscape in their favor and doom Republicans to perpetual defeat are ignoring is that the executive orders will change the terms of the debate about this issue. Though there may be no way of rescinding these orders while Obama remains in office, the real political trap may be the one that the president's arrogant assumption of unprecedented personal power may be setting for his party.

As for the justification for this action, the notion that the president must act because Congress has not done so is utterly unconvincing even for those who support the cause of immigration reform.

The presence of an estimated 11 million illegals within our borders is a problem that must eventually be dealt with in a sensible manner. Mass deportations are neither feasible nor desirable, especially with those targeted by the president's orders that may have children or other family members who are either citizens or legal residents. It is also true that many Republicans that supported the bipartisan immigration compromise that passed the Senate last year signed on to a process that would have given illegals a path, albeit a difficult one, to citizenship.

However, the need to address the problem doesn't justify the president's stand.

A measure that is imposed outside of the law that is not directly tied to border security and a reform of a broken immigration system does not solve the problem. If anything, as we saw last summer, such measures only encourage more illegal immigration. That surge of illegals proved that critics of

the bipartisan bill were right and those of us (including me) who supported it were wrong. The border must be secured first and then and only then will it be possible to start sorting out those who are still here without permission. That was the approach favored by many in the House of Representatives last year and a new attempt at a fix to the problem should start there rather than trying to resurrect the Senate bill as the president demands.

That is why the administration's narrative about the executive orders is simply false. Far from the president stepping in to provide a solution where Congress failed, what he is doing is making the problem worse, not better.

Far worse is the manner in which he is doing it.

It is, strictly speaking, within the president's lawful authority to direct agencies operating under him to exercise prosecutorial discretion. But to do so on a mass scale isn't merely unprecedented. It breaks new ground in the expansion of executive authority. As much as the president thinks the current law is inadequate to deal with the problem of illegal immigration, it is not up to him to unilaterally legislate a new solution. Only Congress may re-write the laws of the land. The idea of a president acting unilaterally to invalidate existing statutes in such a way as to change the status of millions of persons, however sympathetic we may be to their plight, places Obama outside the law and blaming Congress for inaction does not absolve him.

Nor can it be justified as falling within the executive's right to act in a crisis.

There are circumstances when, usually in wartime, a crisis looms and broad presidential discretion is unavoidable. But as much as advocates for the illegals may trumpet their plight, this is not a ticking bomb that requires the normal constitutional order to be set aside. If majorities in both the House and the Senate could not be found to support a measure the president deemed important, he had the normal recourse of going to the people and asking them to elect a Congress that will do so. Unfortunately for those who claim that the president has no choice but to bypass Congress, we have just undergone such an election and the people's answer was a resounding rebuff to the White House. The president may think it is in his interest to pretend as if the midterms should not determine his behavior in his final two years in office but it was he who said his policies were on the ballot. While there was an argument prior to November 4 that claimed that it was the GOP-controlled House that was thwarting public opinion on immigration, that claim disappeared in the Republican sweep.

That brings us to the long-term political consequences of this act.

While much has been made of the impact of amnesty on the Hispanic vote, with these orders the president is digging Democrats a hole that they will have difficulty climbing out of in the next two years.

Hispanics may be grateful for the temporary end of the deportations but it will not escape their notice that in doing so the president has ended any chance of immigration reform for the rest of his term. Nor will they be unaware that a GOP successor will invalidate amnesty with a stroke of the pen as easily as the president has enacted them. Republicans will rightly understand that there is no dealing with an administration that would rather go outside the law than first negotiate in good faith with a newly elected Congress on immigration. Nor can they be blamed for thinking any deal based on promises on border enforcement will be worthless with a president who thinks he has the right to simply order non-enforcement of the laws he doesn't like.

Even more to the point, the orders will create a backlash among the rest of the electorate that always results when presidents begin to run afoul of both the law and public opinion. A lawless presidency is something that is, by definition, dysfunctional, and that is a term that has already defined Obama's second term up until this point. Democrats who are counting on wild applause from their base should understand that just as Republicans learned that domination by their Tea Party wing undermines their electoral viability, they too should be wary of governing from the left.

The spectacle of mass amnesty without benefit of law will shock ordinary voters, including many who are Democrats or who think the immigration system should have been fixed. After the orders, responsibility for the failure to do so will rest on Obama, not the Republicans. What the president may be doing with these orders is to remind the voters that parties that grow too comfortable with exercising authority without benefit of law must be taught a lesson, one that will be paid for by his would-be Democratic successor in 2016. Rather than building his legacy, the president may actually be ensuring that his time in office is remembered more for his lack of respect for the rule of law than any actual accomplishments.

Washington Free Beacon

Ron Fournier: Obama 'Destroyed the Credibility of His Administration and Government Itself'

National Journal writer Ron Fournier said the Obama administration had "undermined" Obamacare and lost the trust of the American people during Monday's Special Report with Bret Baier.

After calling Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell a "competent manager," Fournier said the Obama administration regrettably has not displayed a great deal of competence.

"The problem is the central attribute you have to have as any leader, in any walk of life and certainly in government is trust," Fournier said. "This president has destroyed the credibility of his administration himself and government itself."

Fournier said the administration's mistakes, on top of fallout over Obamacare architect Jonathan Gruber's embarrassing comments, have made Obamacare increasingly difficult to defend.

"In the long run, as somebody who would like to see this bill work, I think they have really undermined it," Fournier said. "And it's going to be harder to defend it."

Power Line

#Grubergate for dummies

by Scott Johnson

What is Grubergate all about? It's about more than Gruber's obnoxious account of the passage of Obamacare, an account that exposes the illegitimacy of the law's enactment. It is about more than the corruption through which he has profited handsomely in selling the law. It is about more than the sewage he pumped out for distribution by the White House, by Democratic leaders and officeholders, and by the mainstream media adjunct of the Democratic Party; the sewage was intended for consumption by the American public.

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with Bret Baier (below). The video names names and cites sources. It is a superb piece of work and a genuine contribution to understanding.

RealClearPolitics has also posted the video along with a transcript [here](#). **(And a transcript with a video link follows below.)**

Real Clear Politics Video

[Bret Baier Reports: Transparency Issues Plagued Obamacare From The Start](#)

BRET BAIER, SPECIAL REPORT: In Brisbane, President Obama tried hard to downplay Jonathan Gruber's role in the formation of his health care bill. Gruber, who was not only paid by HHS, but eventually made millions from other federal agencies and states has talked often about his time dealing directly with President Obama.

JONATHAN GRUBER: We had a meeting in the oval office with several experts including myself.

BRET BAIER: After all that, President Obama issued a challenge to reporters in Australia:

BARACK OBAMA: I would advise every press outlet here, go back and pull-up every clip, every story, and I think it's fair to say that there was not a provision in the health care law that was not extensively debated and was fully transparent.

BRET BAIER: Looking back, even in 2010, the process was considered anything but transparent. In fact, as James Rosen noted, the founder of liberal firedoglake.com Jane Hampshire wrote in March of 2010 about Gruber, She called his contract with HHS "troubling" -- lamenting the "lack of disclosure on the part of the White House, the Senate, the DNC and other Democratic leaders, who distributed Gruber's work and cited it as independent validation of their proposals orchestrating the appearance of broad consensus, when in fact it was all part of the same effort."

An effort that started picking up steam soon after Gruber's \$400,000 HHS contract went into effect in 2009. Before long, Gruber was being cited everywhere, on Capitol Hill...

SEN. JOHN KERRY: According to Gruber, who has been our guide on a lot of this, it's somewhere in the vicinity of an \$8 billion cost.

BRET BAIER: ...and in the press. In 2009, Gruber released his House health care analysis, which was picked up by Washington Post columnist Ezra Klein under the blog title: "Massachusetts provides evidence that healthcare reform lowers insurance premiums: MIT health economist John Gruber sends along a paper looking at premiums under the new House plan."

The White House blog then quickly linked to Klein's post, and praised Gruber's, "objective analysis." Which then made its way back up to Capitol Hill. And still no mention that Gruber was working for HHS.

REP. NANCY PELOSI: I don't know if you have seen Jonathan Gruber's of MIT's analysis, in comparison to the status quo vs. what will happen in our bill.

BRET BAIER: Two weeks later, Gruber's analysis of the Senate version of the health care bill, that was picked up by The Atlantic's Ron Brownstein in a piece called: "A milestone in the health care journey." In it, Gruber is quoted sourced this way: "Gruber is a leading health economist at the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology who is consulted by politicians in both parties."

Nothing about his HHS contract or any other consulting with the administration or Congress on the bill. In the piece, Gruber is quoted stating, "they really make the best effort anyone has ever made, everything is in here, I can't think of anything I would do that they are not doing in the bill. You couldn't have done better than than they are doing."

Firedoglake's Jane Hampshire wrote: "the DNC sent out that Brownstein column in its entirety." One of some 71 e-mails the party sent out touting Gruber's work.

Mike Allen of Politico had this post in his "Playbook" the next day under the heading: "Obama makes Ron Brownstein's post required reading for the west wing." Saying all senior staff and anybody involved or covering health care should see the piece. Allen's post was in turn cited by the White House blog and soon Gruber was being celebrated on the Senate floor.

SEN. HARRY REID: Jonathan Gruber is one of the most respected economists in the world said in today's Washington Post, here's a quote -- "here's a bill that reduces the deficit, covers 30 million people, 30 million more people and has a promise of lowering premiums.

BRET BAIER: That op-ed Gruber wrote in the Washington Post laid out his analysis of the cost of the bill, and here's how he was identified at the end: "the writer is a professor of economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology."

And so it went, for months, Hampshire wrote that Gruber's score sheet for the bill ended up looking very similar to the Congressional the budget office's official scoring. Adding, quote, "now that it is known that Jonathan Gruber was a White House consultant--for decades to come should be made publicly available.

BARACK OBAMA: The reason that I think this conversation ends up being a little frustrating is because the focus entirely is on Washington procession and, yes, I have said it, that is an ugly process.

BRET BAIER: This is one sixth of the U.S. economy.

OBAMA: And Bret, let me tell you something, the fact of the matter is that for the vast majority of the people, their health care is not going to change.

BRET BAIER: You guarantee that they're not going to -- they're going to be able to keep their doctors.

BARACK OBAMA: You've got to let me finish my answers.

BRET BAIER: But sir, I know you don't like the filibuster.

BARACK OBAMA: The notion that this is not transparent, that nobody knows what's in the bill. Everybody know what is in bill. I sat for seven hours--

BRET BAIER: Mr. President, you couldn't tell me what the special deals are--

BARACK OBAMA: I just told you.

BRET BAIER: Is Connecticut in?

BARACK OBAMA: Connecticut? What are you specifically referring to?

BRET BAIER: \$100 million for the hospital. Is Montana in for the asbestos program? This is people, this is real money, people are worried about this stuff.

BARACK OBAMA: As I said before, the final provisions are going to be posted for many days before this thing passes.

BRET BAIER: That was three days before the house voted on the health care bill that eventually became law, that was March 17, 2010.

[**You can see the six minute segment from Special Report clicking on this link.**](#)

This is the video Scott Johnson mentioned above.

Contentions

[**Obama Is Now Lying About His Lies**](#)

by Peter Wehner

This is getting pathological. According to [this story](#) in Politico, President Obama, when asked whether he had intentionally misled the public in order to get the law passed, he replied: “No. I did not.” He actually did, repeatedly. Here’s just [one example](#)—on the president’s pledge that “If you like your health-care plan, you’ll be able to keep your health-care plan, period”—that comes to us courtesy of Glenn Kessler, who works for that well-known right-wing outlet the *Washington Post*.

Mr. Obama added this: “I would just advise every press outlet here: Pull up every clip and every story. I think it’s fair to say there was not a provision in the health care law that was not extensively debated and was fully transparent. It was a tough debate.”

Mr. Obama is confusing some things. The issue isn’t whether there was an extensive and tough debate. There was. The issue is whether the president and his White House, during that debate, intentionally misled us. He and they did, all the time, on all sorts of matters related to the ACA. The conservative criticisms of the president were entirely on the mark. They were the truth-tellers; the president was not.

No American can take joy in saying this, but the evidence clearly warrants it: We have a president who is lying about his lies. It’s not good for him, for the office of the presidency, or for our political culture. He might try telling the truth. At this point it won’t salvage his presidency, but it might begin to repair some of the extraordinary damage to his credibility.

Streetwise Professor

[**Lies, Damn Lies, and Obamaisms**](#)

by Craig Pirrong

The Gruber Gone Wild video collection (with a release a day!) demonstrates graphically that Obamacare is a 900+ ply tissue of lies. And Obama himself was the lead retailer of those lies.

Today gives another example of Obama’s mendacity. He came out against Keystone, again, [but this time on the grounds that it just helps Canada, and doesn’t benefit the US one whit:](#)

“Understand what this project is: It is providing the ability of Canada to pump their oil, send it through our land, down to the Gulf, where it will be sold everywhere else. It doesn’t have an impact on U.S. gas prices,” Mr. Obama said, evidently frustrated with questions about the Canadian-backed project while he was standing alongside Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

(Using a human rights champion-whom he is going to toss aside-as a prop is a great touch.)

Like a good leftist, Obama apparently aspires to become Lillian Hellman, for every word in that statement is a lie, including “and” and “the”.

Where would Canadian heavy crude pumped through Keystone go? The US Gulf.

Now think hard, people. What is located on the Gulf Coast? Think, think, think.

Got it yet? Of course you do: Refineries! You know, those things that turn crude gunk into stuff we can actually use. I know that even idiot leftists know that there are refineries in Texas, because each of the 4 times a Bush ran for president, they told us *ad nauseum* about the pollution in Houston/Texas from the eeeeeevvvvlllll refineries.

US refineries are optimized to handle heavy crude like that produced from oil sands in Canada. At present, we get most of that from Venezuela and Mexico. [Canadian crude would displace most, and perhaps all, of that. \(Maybe that’s what frosts Obama: boring, pasty white, Anglo Saxon Canadians benefit, and Bolivarians/Chavistas lose out!\)](#) Meaning that US refineries would benefit from cheaper crude which would, inevitably, reduce gasoline prices in the US. [\(It will also alleviate some of the excess supply of condensate and light crudes produced in the US-particularly the Bakken-as these can be used as diluents.](#) And I know Obama has totally mastered all of the intricacies of pipeline transportation.)

Indeed, [Gulf refineries are already processing Canadian heavy crude. More than 100kbd is reaching the Gulf](#), via rail or barge, and via rail to Cushing and then pipeline to the Gulf. Keystone would just make those flows cheaper-and safer.

So the “it goes everywhere else” line is a total crock. It comes here, is refined, and fuels our cars, and airliners and homes, and is sold overseas so that we can buy other things foreigners produce that we like to consume.

The only question is: What is worse? That Obama actually believes this crock, or he doesn’t but is willing to say anything to defend an indefensible position?

Obama poses as a great environmentalist. Pray tell, how does relying on riskier forms of transport (tankers from Venezuela and Mexico, barges down the US inland waterways, and rail) rather than pipelines help the environment?

And I am sure it is a total coincidence that Obama booster Warren Buffett, he of the BNSF and Union Tank Car Company, is a major beneficiary of the stonewalling of Keystone.

The mendacity is not all that’s appalling about this statement. One of Obama’s worst habits has been giving allies the back of his hand, while he sucks up to sworn enemies. Canada is a close ally, and has been for decades. Indeed, even now Canada is actually contributing military force to Obama’s otherwise farcical anti-ISIS coalition.

Fat lot of good that it does them. Who needs friends like Canada when you have Iran? Can Canada help Obama build a legacy? No! So what good are they? (Please ignore the fact that the legacy will really be a nuclear arms race in the other Gulf: the Arab/Persian one.)

The sad thing is that we are in for two years of this mendacity. It will be all Alinsky, all the time. Non-stop demagoguery in the service of progressive causes. He lost, but we'll pay.

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Washington Free Beacon

The Next Border Crisis

How Congress can fight Obama's unconstitutional amnesty

by Matthew Continetti



Detainees sleep in a holding cell at a U.S. Customs and Border Protection processing facility in Brownsville, Texas.

Last summer the southern border disappeared. Unaccompanied minors from Central and South America surged across the Rio Grande. Desperate parents had sent their children thousands of miles north. The impoverished girls and boys were housed in ramshackle facilities before being sent elsewhere. The images were heartbreaking. They seemed drawn from a post-apocalyptic future. And they were entirely preventable.

Government policy caused the border crisis of 2014. Not the 2008 law granting special protections to unaccompanied minors from countries other than Mexico, an ex post facto explanation meant to blame George W. Bush. It was after Obama's 2012 authorization of deferred action and work

permits for illegal immigrants who arrived in the United States as children that such migration spiked. This blatant political move, as well as the president's repeated pledge to amnesty the rest of the illegal migrant population, [spurred the uptick in border crossings](#). The humanitarian tragedy followed.

Now Obama wants to repeat history. Indeed, he wants to expand the 2012 program so that it encompasses not hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants but millions of them. [As first reported by Fox News Channel](#), the president may soon announce a 10-point plan that legalizes some 4.5 million illegal immigrants, offers 500,000 tech workers and their spouses (and later, [their extended families](#)) a path to citizenship, and increases opportunities for illegal immigrants to become naturalized by joining the military. A pay raise for immigration enforcement officers and token border security measures are also under consideration.

Not only would a presidential declaration of such measures insult legal immigrants as well as the voters who repudiated the president, his policies, and his party on November 4. Not only would it very likely provoke a constitutional crisis. The executive order would establish the incentives for the next wave of families to show up on an unprotected and unprepared southern border.

[The 150 million adults worldwide who would move to the United States if given the chance](#) will draw the conclusion that their status and future are secure as long as they end up on U.S. soil. Pay the snakeheads and coyotes, avoid the authorities, and fall under the next amnesty. Just as it happened in 1986 and happened again, piecemeal, in 2012 and 2014.

I do not consider it humanitarian to induce people to undertake perilous and uncertain journeys through hazardous territory in the hopes of joining a population that [is at best ambivalent about them](#). I think it is cruel. And it is cruel not only to the immigrants, but also to American citizens, who must cope with the attendant [fall in low-skilled job opportunities and wages](#), rising [inequality](#), economic and social consequences of [population density](#), and erosion of [social cohesion](#). These are all reasons confidence in public institutions is [at a low](#). Obama's executive order will drive it lower.

How to fight him? Begin with the lame-duck session of Congress. The GOP cannot allow Harry Reid to pass a continuing resolution that funds the government through the rest of the fiscal year, thereby depriving Republicans of the opportunity to address executive amnesty using its departmental budgets.

"Using the normal appropriations process, with bills the House has already drafted," [write the editors of National Review](#), the Republican Congress "can attach riders regarding, say, prosecution of illegal immigrants to Homeland Security funding, or power-plant regulations to EPA funding."

Such riders are the best weapons Republicans have to delay and undermine harmful and constitutionally dubious policies such as executive amnesty. To unilaterally disarm would be worse than stupid. It would be a betrayal.

Next, prepare concurrent resolutions censuring the president for his reckless disregard for the legislature. Impeachment is a dead-end street. It won't happen, it will energize the Democrats, it is exactly what the president wants, and in the utopian event it succeeds it would leave the country with President Joe Biden. [I fail to see how that would be an improvement](#).

A censure resolution puts Congress on the record opposing presidential lawmaking and reasserting its constitutional authority as the first branch of government. Censure preserves congressional integrity. The alternative is passivity. "Filing lawsuits that ask courts to referee the

disputes” between the executive and legislative branches of government, [writes Christopher DeMuth Sr. in the Weekly Standard](#), “is constitutionally supine and risks involving the judiciary in continuous supervision of the political branches.”

Not long ago Republican politicians wanted to be known as constitutional conservatives. Here is their chance to prove it.

Finally, refuse the president’s hostage threat. He says he will revoke any executive order if Congress passes legislation accomplishing the same end. Who does he think he is? [Luca Brasi](#)? The House hasn’t passed the Senate bill authored by Chuck Schumer because a majority of the House Republican caucus opposes it. Laws are not supposed to pass unless they embody the sense of the community. The entire community. That’s why we have two chambers of Congress and three branches of government.

Moreover, the party behind the Schumer bill lost the Senate after it was passed, with several Republican candidates running on opposition to legalization before the border is secure. And Obama expects them to give Schumer a victory nonetheless? This is lunacy. It would be oddly funny if it weren’t so dangerous.

Boehner and McConnell can announce a simple rule: No immigration reform if Obama commits such a brazen and unconstitutional act. No piecemeal bills. One bill: border security legislation authorizing the construction of an actual wall (call it infrastructure spending) and making E-Verify compulsory.

Such measures do not preclude legalizing the population of illegal immigrants. They are prerequisites for it. They are not anti-immigrant. They are anti-illegal immigrant. They are not part of the corporate agenda of comprehensive reform, fast-track authority, and corporate tax cuts. They are part of a middle class agenda of family tax relief, sound money, and replacing Obamacare. Nor is that a weakness. It’s a strength.

Obama will veto an enforcement bill. Budget politics and censure won’t prevent the next surge across the border. They won’t stop the next humanitarian crisis. But at least Congress will have used the opportunity to reassert its prerogatives and position the Republicans as the party of rule of law and secure borders.

It will take more than replacing Obama to truly reform the nation’s immigration law. It will take a president, Republican or Democrat, for whom the phrase “We, the People of the United States” has more than rhetorical meaning.

Right Turn

[The GOP’s immigration puzzle](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

The Republicans are wrestling with a knotty question: [How do they thwart President Obama’s unilateral power grab on immigration reform without splintering the GOP, damaging their prospects in 2016 and assenting to a dangerous precedent?](#)

It would seem any approach in response to an executive edict legalizing millions of people should take into account these three concerns, but with two caveats.

First, it may not be possible to stop the president. Nevertheless, they should make sure that the GOP has the most to gain and the Democrats the most to lose if he proceeds.

Second, prospective 2016 presidential candidates will differ widely on what they consider damaging to the party's prospects, and theirs. Governors who intend to run against Washington D.C. might not care if the GOP shuts down the government, wreaks havoc on the country and gets bogged down in a war with the president. They are going to run *against* D.C., *against* Hillary Clinton (who will be forced to cheer the action) and *against* any GOP senators who contributed to the mess. Among the 2016 GOP presidential aspirants in the Senate, Ted Cruz (Tex.) is the most at risk of a meltdown or another government shutdown. He was largely responsible for the first shutdown and another one would eviscerate any hope he might have of being seen as a responsible figure. Meanwhile, he and Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) must satisfy their core supporters whose sense of political realism is shaky.

Most Republicans — not all — would agree impeachment of the president is a nonstarter both because 2/3 of the Senate would never vote to impeach and because, if by some miracle they did, Vice President Joe Biden would become president and the GOP would be vilified. That said, it is hard to think of a reason not to *censure* the president. Yes, it is symbolic, but symbolism matters both as a statement of the egregiousness of a president power grab and as undercutting the action as a viable precedent for future presidents (of either party).

I would suggest that [shutting down the government](#) is also a nonstarter, no matter how unpopular the president's move might be. He would like nothing better than to shift the discussion from his lawlessness to shutdown blame-pointing. And, if we look at our three criteria, this would set off another GOP internal battle and could well harm the reelection prospects of a number of GOP senators who must defend blue or purple states.

This does not mean the GOP need fund the government through the end of the fiscal year, giving the president a complete pass. If the GOP House sends the Senate a clean, short-term funding measure to put on the president's desk that would keep the government funded for a few months, Democrats would be hard pressed to reject it. And Democrats would be nervous about a shutdown that would occur on the Democratic Senate's watch. In any event, every Democrat will have to decide whether to be a door mat for a lawless president.

That then pushes the confrontation into 2015 when GOP majorities in the Senate and House have some more room to maneuver. They could send funding bills to keep virtually every function of government running except that which would administer instant legalization. They could pass legislation to undo the president's power grab — forcing Democrats in the Senate to take hard votes to filibuster and/or to sustain a veto. The chances of prevailing are small, however, but Congress should demonstrate it has tried reasonable alternatives before funding the remainder of the fiscal year.

And finally, both Congress and 2016 presidential aspirants can make clear: Anyone who applies for legalization now has a free pass that expires when Obama leaves office. New legislation may be passed, but there is no guarantee the illegals who proceeded under an unconstitutional presidential edict will escape deportation or that the free pass from deportation won't be narrower than that which Obama decrees. (Whether Congress and a new president actually would un-legalize people is an open question, but as a technical matter and to discourage massive sign-ups the GOP should be clear that the landscape can change dramatically in 2017.)

None of these avenues is perfect, and it may be that the GOP can't attain all three goals — thwarting Obama, avoiding a civil war and preserving their 2016 prospects. However, they should

keep in mind the medical adage to first do no harm. Obama's move will be popular with his base, but outrage millions of voters. The GOP should do everything it can to make sure Americans queasy about the rule of law and furious about instantaneous, massive legalization with no border control guarantee have a reasonable and responsible GOP to vote for in 2016.

NY Times

Obama in Winter

by David Brooks

They say failure can be a good teacher, but, so far, the Obama administration is opting out of the course. The post-midterm period has been one of the most bizarre of the Obama presidency. President Obama has racked up some impressive foreign-policy accomplishments, but, domestically and politically, things are off the rails.

Usually presidents use midterm defeats as a chance to rethink and refocus. That's what Obama did four years ago. Voters like to feel the president is listening to them.

But Obama's done no public rethinking. In his post-election news conference, the president tried to reframe the defeat by saying the turnout was low, as if it was the Republicans' fault that the Democrats could only mobilize their core base. Throughout that conference, the president seemed to detach himself from his own party, as if the Democrats who lost their jobs because of him were a bunch of far-off victims of some ethereal malaise.

Usually presidents at the end of their terms get less partisan, not more. But with his implied veto threat of the Keystone XL oil pipeline, President Obama seems intent on showing that Democrats, too, can put partisanship above science. Keystone XL has been studied to the point of exhaustion, and the evidence overwhelmingly suggests that it's a modest-but-good idea. The latest State Department study found that it would not significantly worsen the environment. The oil's going to come out anyway, and it's greener to transport it by pipeline than by train. The economic impact isn't huge, but at least there'd be a \$5.3 billion infrastructure project.

Usually presidents with a new Congressional majority try to figure out if there is anything that the two branches can do together. The governing Republicans have a strong incentive to pass legislation. The obvious thing is to start out with the easiest things, if only to show that Washington can function on some elemental level.

But the White House has not privately engaged with Congress on the legislative areas where there could be agreement. Instead, the president has been superaggressive on the one topic sure to blow everything up: the executive order to rewrite the nation's immigration laws.

The president was in no rush to issue this order through 2014, when it might have been politically risky. He questioned whether he had the constitutional authority to do this through most of his first term, when he said that an executive order of this sort would probably be illegal.

But now the president is in a rush and is convinced he has authority. I sympathize with what Obama is trying to do substantively, but the process of how it's being done is ruinous.

Republicans would rightly take it as a calculated insult and yet more political ineptitude. Everybody would go into warfare mode. We'll get two more years of dysfunction that will further arouse public disgust and antigovernment fervor (making a Republican presidency more likely).

This move would also make it much less likely that we'll have immigration reform anytime soon. White House officials are often misinformed on what Republicans are privately discussing, so they don't understand that many in the Republican Party are trying to find a way to get immigration reform out of the way. This executive order would destroy their efforts.

The move would further destabilize the legitimacy of government. Redefining the legal status of five million or six million human beings is a big deal. This is the sort of change we have a legislative process for. To do something this seismic with the stroke of one man's pen is dangerous.

Instead of a nation of laws, we could slowly devolve into a nation of diktats, with each president relying on and revoking different measures on the basis of unilateral power — creating unstable swings from one presidency to the next. If President Obama enacts this order on the transparently flimsy basis of “prosecutorial discretion,” he's inviting future presidents to use similarly flimsy criteria. Talk about defining constitutional deviancy down.

I'm not sure why the Obama administration has been behaving so strangely since the midterms. Maybe various people in the White House are angry in defeat and want to show that they can be as obstructionist as anyone. Maybe, in moments of stress, they are only really sensitive to criticism from the left flank. Maybe it's Gruberism: the belief that everybody else is slightly dumber and less well-motivated than oneself and, therefore, politics is more about manipulation than conversation.

Whatever it is, it's been a long journey from the Iowa caucuses in early 2008 to the pre-emptive obstruction of today. I wonder if, post-presidency, Mr. Obama will look back and regret that he got sucked into the very emotional maelstrom he set out to destroy.

Washington Post Editorial

In Mr. Obama's own words, acting alone is 'not how our democracy functions'

DEMOCRATS URGING President Obama to “go big” in his executive order on immigration might pause to consider the following scenario:

It is 2017. Newly elected President Ted Cruz (R) insists he has won a mandate to repeal Obamacare. The Senate, narrowly back in Democratic hands, disagrees. Mr. Cruz instructs the Internal Revenue Service not to collect a fine from anyone who opts out of the individual mandate to buy health insurance, thereby neutering a key element of the program. It is a matter of prosecutorial discretion, Mr. Cruz explains; tax cheats are defrauding the government of billions, and he wants the IRS to concentrate on them. Of course, he is willing to modify his order as soon as Congress agrees to fix what he considers a “broken” health system.

That is not a perfect analogy to Mr. Obama's proposed action on immigration. But it captures the unilateral spirit that Mr. Obama seems to have embraced since Republicans swept to victory in the midterm elections. He is vowing to [go it alone on immigration](#). On Iran, he is reportedly designing an agreement that he need not bring to Congress. He already has gone that route on [climate change with China](#).

The legal or constitutional case for each is different, but the rationales overlap: Congress is broken, so Mr. Obama must act. Two-thirds of Americans did not vote in the midterms, and the president [must represent them](#), too. He has tried compromise, and the Republicans spurned him.

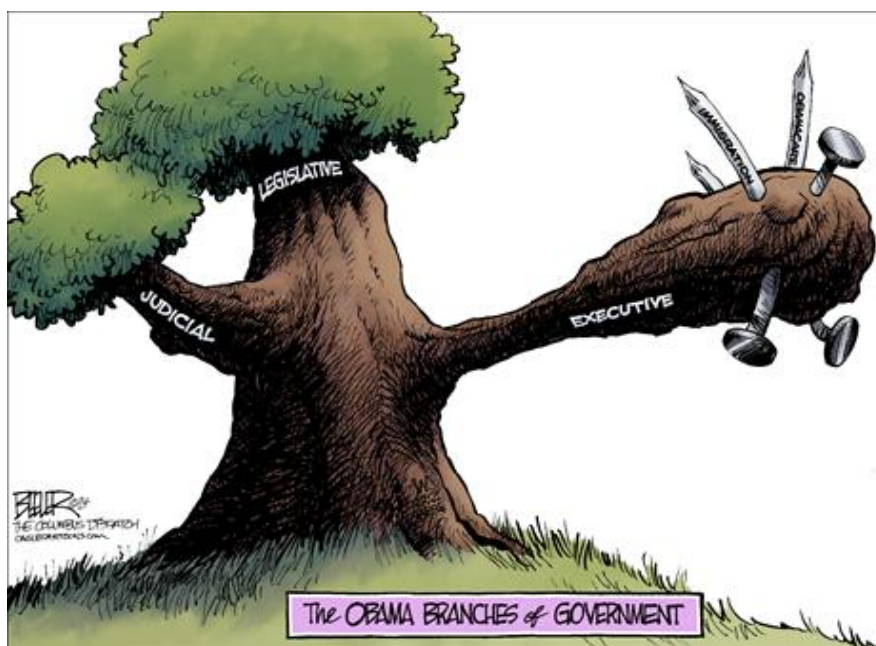
We will not relitigate that last contention except to note that behind the legislative disappointments of the past six years lies fault on both sides. The bigger point is this: In an era of fierce partisanship and close division, there will always be a temptation to postpone legislating until after the next election and to spend the intervening two years jockeying for political advantage. But a knockout blow will remain out of reach for both sides, and the price of postponement will be national decline. Many areas need federal attention and hold a possibility of bipartisan accord: building the nation's infrastructure, protecting its cybernetworks and reforming its tax code, to name just three. It would not be rational for Republicans to spurn compromise in these areas just because Mr. Obama acts unilaterally in others; but it is entirely foreseeable.

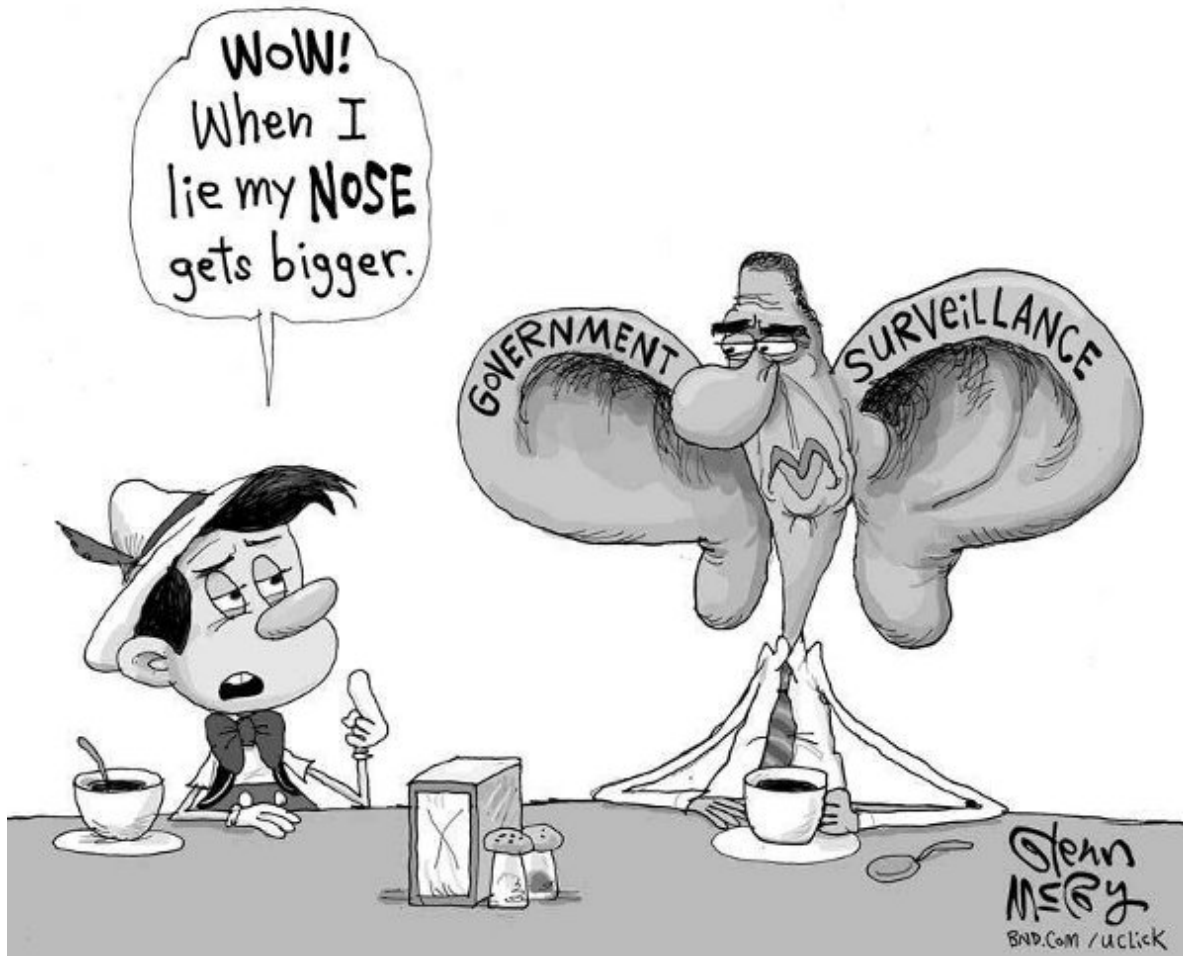
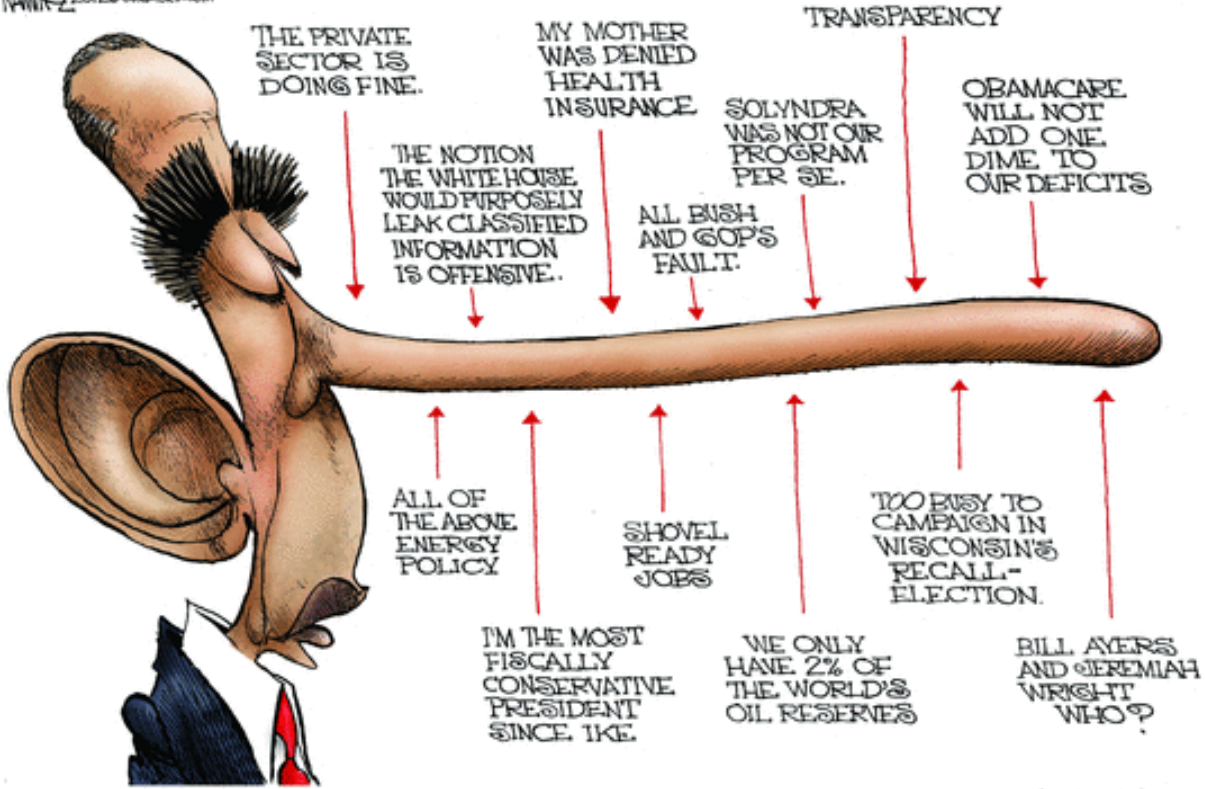
We favor immigration reform, including a path to legal status for the 11 million foreigners in the country without valid papers. Congress should have acted on this long ago. We also understand that the president has broad authority in this area, which [he exercised in 2012](#) to pardon young people who had been brought here as children.

Now, however, he is contemplating executive action not really aimed at one group or another but intended "to make the system work better," [as he said in his post-election news conference](#). He acknowledges that Congress should and could do this job, but he is tired of waiting.

Three years ago, when advocacy groups pressed him to take such a step, Mr. Obama demurred. "Believe me, the idea of doing things on my own is very tempting," [he said](#). "Not just on immigration reform. But that's not how — that's not how our system works. That's not how our democracy functions. That's not how our Constitution is written."

Mr. Obama may find a constitutional way to rewrite the nation's immigration laws. But in his frustration with democracy, he is likely to prove his point: Unilateralism will not make the system work.





IF LIES ////

WERE FLIES



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BENGHAZI CLIMATE CHANGE
BORDER SECURITY DOT
NSA
IRAN
ISRAEL
YOU CAN KEEP YOUR DOCTOR
EPA
UNEMPLOYMENT NUMBER
FAST NO FURIOUS
SHOVEL READY JOBS
YOU CAN KEEP YOUR HEALTH PLAN
MINIMUM WAGE

I AM REALLY...

A TEA PARTIER.

AN ETHICAL CONGRESSMAN.

A FREE MARKET CAPITALIST.

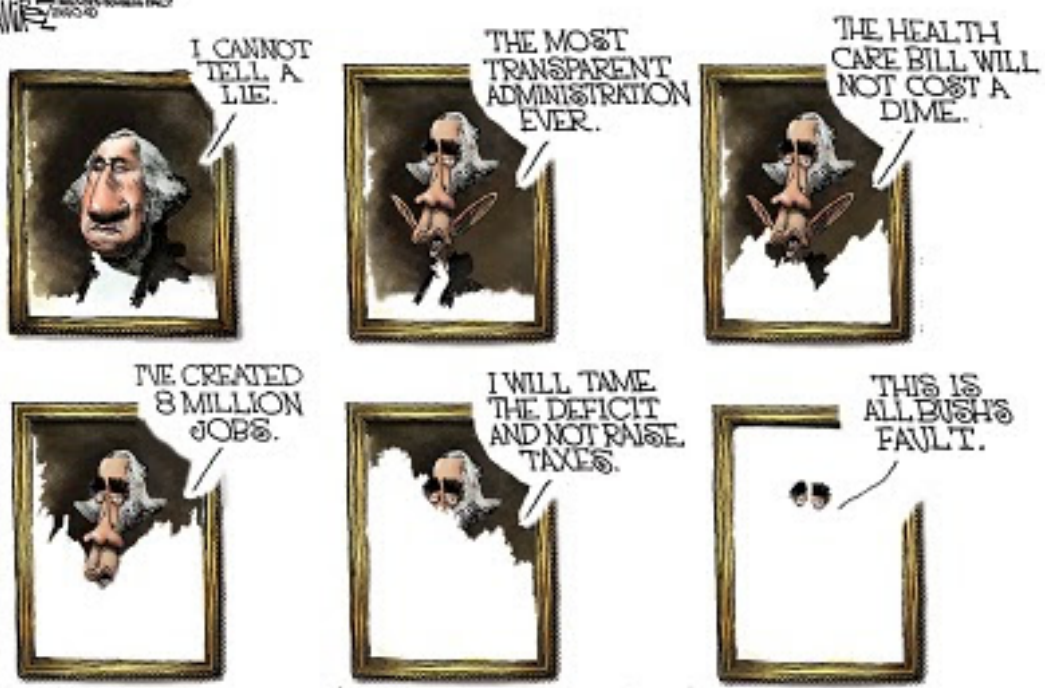


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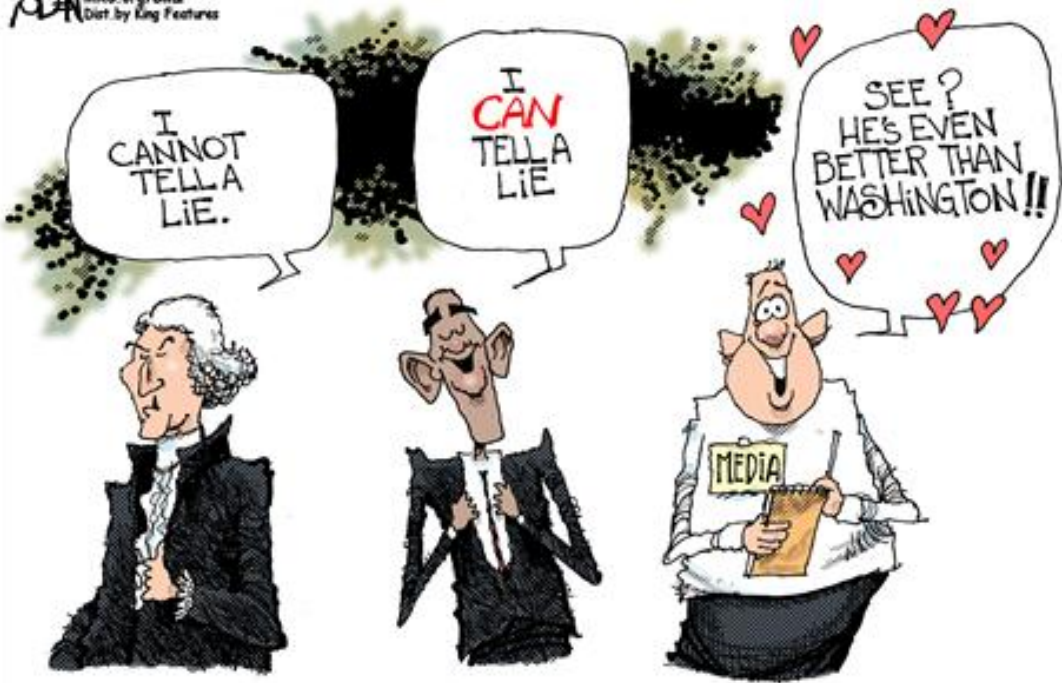
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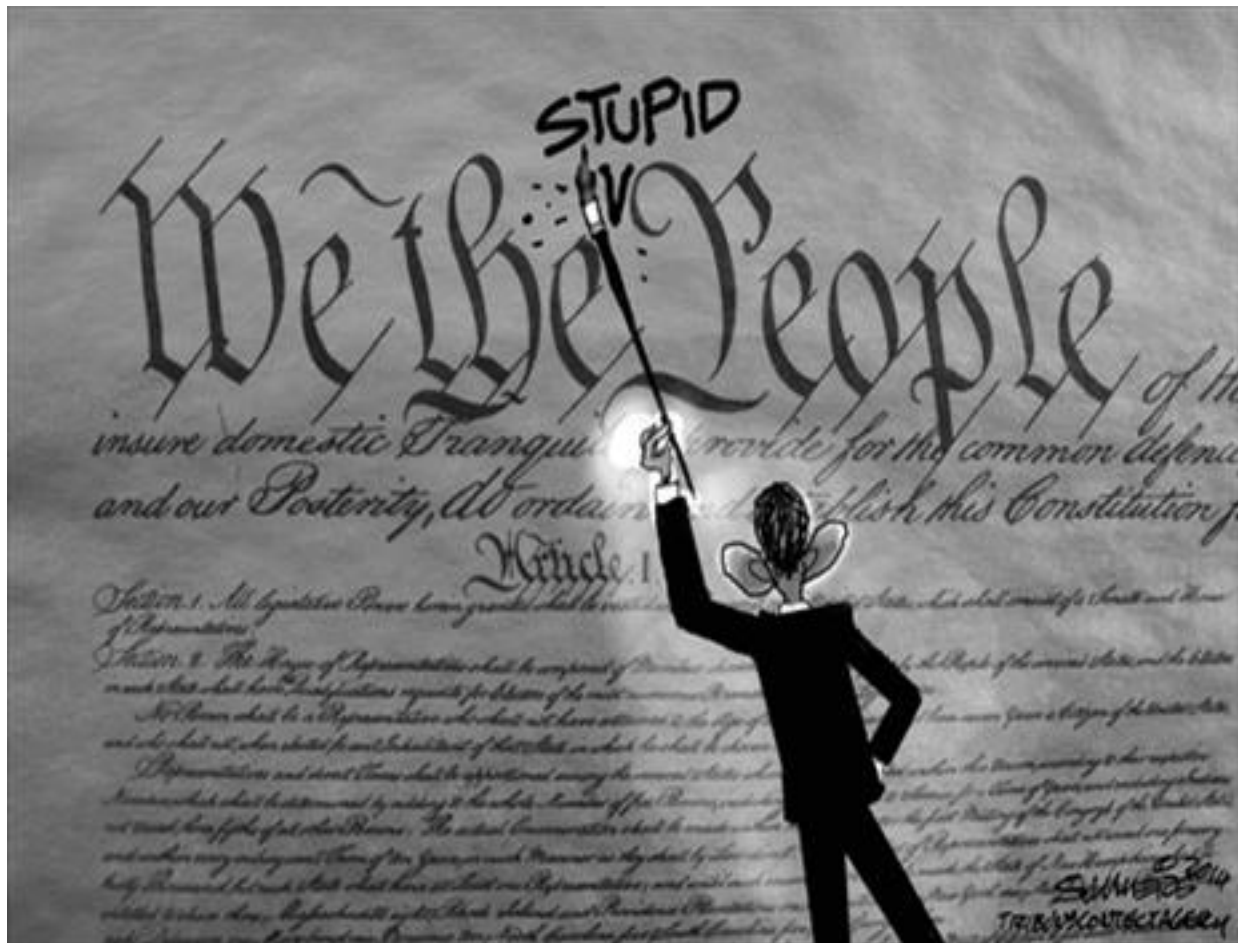
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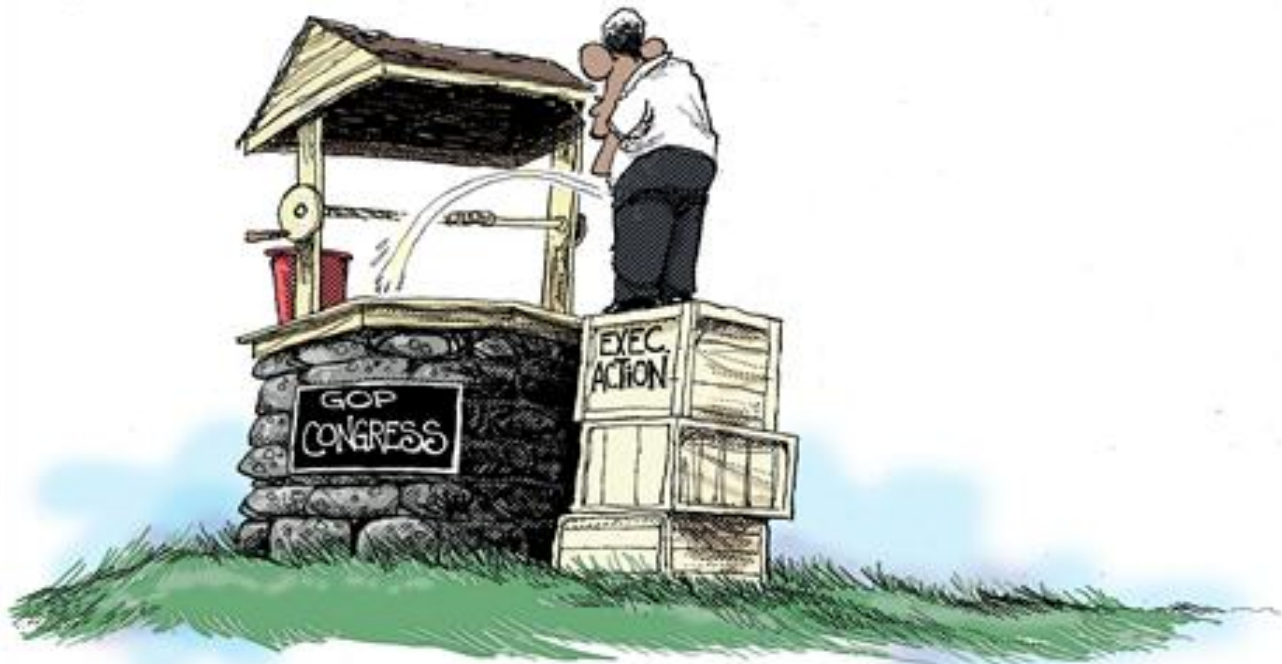


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