

July 30, 2017 – THUNDERING IGNORANCE

The almost terminal stupidity in contemporary American culture is the sub-topic of four items today. The first from [Washington Examiner](#) posts on reviews of the movie Dunkirk.

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In a similarly silly take, at Slate.com, Dana Stevens suggests the British Army at Dunkirk was the "last bulwark against Nazi invasion of the British mainland."

No, this is just wrong. Even if the British Army had been captured, there were two further bulwarks against invasion. First, the British Royal Air Force (RAF). As history records, the RAF was crucial in holding off swarms of German bombers that aimed to destroy the British will to resist and means of doing so. Unless and until the RAF was defeated, the Nazis would have not been able to protect ground forces on the landing grounds and approaches to London. (Incidentally, Hitler's idiocy in diverting German bombers away from RAF airfields and towards British cities helped the RAF win the day.)

Second, the Royal Navy. ...

Walter Williams attempts to deal with left propaganda that tries to portray slavery as an American institution.

... Large numbers of Christians were enslaved during the Ottoman wars in Europe.

White slaves were common in Europe from the Dark Ages to the Middle Ages. It was only after the year 1600 that Europeans joined with Arabs and Africans and started the Atlantic slave trade.

As David P. Forsythe wrote in his book, "The Globalist," "The fact remained that at the beginning of the nineteenth century an estimated three-quarters of all people alive were trapped in bondage against their will either in some form of slavery or serfdom."

While slavery constitutes one of the grossest encroachments on human liberty, it is by no means unique or restricted to the Western world or United States, as many liberal academics would have us believe. Much of their indoctrination of our young people, at all levels of education, paints our nation's founders as racist adherents to slavery, but the story is not so simple. ...

... The most unique aspect of slavery in the Western world was the moral outrage against it, which began to emerge in the 18th century and led to massive elimination efforts. It was Britain's military sea power that put an end to the slave trade. And our country fought a costly war that brought an end to slavery. Unfortunately, these facts about slavery are not in the lessons taught in our schools and colleges. Instead, there is gross misrepresentation and suggestion that slavery was a uniquely American practice.

A Johns Hopkins instructor told a joke and the university decided there would be hell to pay.

For the past six years, I have taught an undergraduate course on international economics at Johns Hopkins University. Most of my students thought it was a very good course. So I was shocked when, on December 6, 2016, I was met at the door of my classroom by Johns Hopkins security personnel and barred from entering.

The next day, I received a letter from my dean suspending me from my teaching duties—just three classes before the end of the semester.

What had I done to cause such a reaction by the administration? I had told a joke when discussing off-shoring, the practice of firms shifting work abroad, often in search of lower wages. Here it is:

'An American loses his job due to his work being off-shored. He is very depressed and calls a mental health hot line. He gets a call center in Pakistan where the call center employee asks, "What seems to be the problem?" The American responds that he has lost his job due to the work being sent overseas and states, "I am really depressed and actually suicidal." The call center employee says, "Great. Can you drive a truck?" '

The lecture on off-shoring took place several weeks earlier. The stated reason for my suspension was that three students (out of 68) complained that my joke had created a "hostile learning environment" in the class. That's a charge most college administrators now take with the utmost seriousness. ...

The old saw, "They don't make them like they used to" is right, because usually things are made better. Unless, of course, the idiots in government get involved. American Lens with a post on what went wrong with gas cans. If you're driving through an old neighborhood and see a garage sale, a good piece of advice is stop and see if they have old gas cans. Because they don't make **them** like they used to. ... *Soap doesn't work. Toilets don't flush. Clothes washers don't clean. Light bulbs don't illuminate. Refrigerators break too soon. Paint discolors. Lawnmowers have to be hacked. It's all caused by idiotic government regulations that are wrecking our lives one consumer product at a time, all in ways we hardly notice. ...*

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Washington Examiner

Why the (true) history of 'Dunkirk' matters

by Tom Rogan

Never has so much ignorance been rendered on such a great feat by so few.

Such is the historical record of reviewers of the new movie, "Dunkirk."

First, a brief historical primer. Dunkirk was the site of the British Army's evacuation from northern France in May-June 1940. The evacuation was made necessary after the British Army in France, deployed as the British Expeditionary Force, was encircled by a rapidly advancing German army. Thanks to the immense courage of rearguard forces, RAF pilots, and British civilians (who lent their boats to the effort), 200,000 British soldiers and 140,000 French, Belgian and Polish soldiers were saved from capture.

Now to the reviews...

At USA Today, Brian Truitt laments "the fact that there are only a couple of women and no lead actors of color." This, Truitt explains, "may rub some the wrong way."

Let me be clear. The "some" that might be offended are the same "some" that attempt to [swim with](#) polar bears and saltwater crocodiles. The Washington Free Beacon's Alex Griswold beat me to it, [explaining](#) why Truitt's review is so silly. But let me add one point. What measure of honor would there be to inject "actors of color" into a historical event in which no persons of color served? It would be like making the civil rights movie, Selma, but hiring all white actors to play the parts that black demonstrators played in real life.

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No, this is just wrong. Even if the British Army had been captured, there were two further bulwarks against invasion. First, the British Royal Air Force (RAF). As history records, the RAF was crucial in holding off swarms of German bombers that aimed to destroy the British will to resist and means of doing so. Unless and until the RAF was defeated, the Nazis would have not been able to protect ground forces on the landing grounds and approaches to London. (Incidentally, Hitler's idiocy in diverting German bombers away from RAF airfields and towards British cities helped the RAF win the day.)

Second, the Royal Navy. Though often ignored, the Royal Navy would have played an instrumental role in defending Britain from an invasion. And most historians believe the Royal Navy's recognized supremacy over the German navy would have allowed it to eviscerate German landing support elements and the German supply train in the event of an invasion by sea.

Still, at Rolling Stone, Peter Travers takes the historical fiction quite a bit further. He argues that, "Had Hitler pursued the fight on the beaches and forced a surrender, we'd all be living a real version of *The Man in the High Castle* [the book series that shows the Axis as victors]."

That's unlikely. Aside from the first point about the two bulwarks, a Nazi invasion of Britain would have been a 50-50 proposition at best. In significant part, that's because of the network of "[stop lines](#)" that the British had constructed to hold the German army from rapidly advancing towards Britain's critical political and industrial infrastructure. These stop lines were intended, realistically so, to give British forces time and space to organize a counter-offensive against German supply lines.

Yet the real idiocy of Travers "Man in the High Castle" claim is its ignorance of the U.S. role in World War Two.

After all, even if Britain had been defeated by the Nazis, the United States and the Soviet Union would remain obstacles to the global high castle. We already know how the Eastern Front ended up for Hitler (with millions of dead soldiers and civilians, and the annihilation of Berlin), but things would have been far worse had he tried to invade the United States. In such an attempt, Hitler's industrial capacity would have confronted the world's greatest industrial power.

Additionally, even if they could land and establish beachheads (which is very much in doubt), German army groups would have had to confront massive U.S. Army pincer movements across the continental United States. Oh, and Hitler's navy would have had to contend with the U.S. Navy strike groups contesting his supplies across more than 3,500 miles of ocean.

Winston Churchill knew this. He knew that America was Britain's last and ultimate hope. Speaking on June 4th, just after the Dunkirk evacuations — which he described as a "colossal military disaster" — Churchill offered Britons a message of hope. "And even if... this Island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet, would carry on the struggle, until, in God's good time, the New World, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old."

By "new world", Churchill of course meant America.

This is the reality Travers arrogantly ignores. But Travers does more, doubling down on his own stupidity by jabbing a finger at middle America. He complains that "especially here in Trump's America, the significance [of the Dunkirk evacuation] might be lost."

Of course, it was those of "Trump's America" — middle America — that formed the forces that saved the world from the Nazis and imperial Japan. Those young men, like [my grandfather](#) from Fishers Island, New York, knew nothing of European history.

But like their brothers at Dunkirk and in the skies over Britain (like [my other grandfather](#)), they [saved it anyway](#).

History matters.

Jewish World Review

Slavery

by Walter Williams

Too many people believe that slavery is a "peculiar institution."

That's what Kenneth Stampp called slavery in his book, "Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South." But slavery is by no means peculiar, odd or unusual. It was common among ancient peoples such as the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Hittites, Greeks, Persians, Armenians and many others.

Large numbers of Christians were enslaved during the Ottoman wars in Europe.

White slaves were common in Europe from the Dark Ages to the Middle Ages. It was only after the year 1600 that Europeans joined with Arabs and Africans and started the Atlantic slave trade.

As David P. Forsythe wrote in his book, "The Globalist," "The fact remained that at the beginning of the nineteenth century an estimated three-quarters of all people alive were trapped in bondage against their will either in some form of slavery or serfdom."

While slavery constitutes one of the grossest encroachments on human liberty, it is by no means unique or restricted to the Western world or United States, as many liberal academics would have us believe. Much of their indoctrination of our young people, at all levels of education, paints our nation's founders as racist adherents to slavery, but the story is not so simple.

At the time of the 1787 Constitutional Convention, slaves were about 40 percent of the population of the Southern colonies. Apportionment in the House of Representatives and the number of electoral votes each state would have in presidential elections would be based upon population. Southern delegates to the convention wanted slaves to be counted as one person. Northern delegates to the convention, and those opposed to slavery, wanted only free persons of each state to be counted for the purposes of apportionment in the House of Representatives and the Electoral College. The compromise reached was that each slave would be counted as only three-fifths of a person.

Many criticize this compromise as proof of racism. My question to these grossly uninformed critics is whether they would have found it more preferable for slaves to be counted as whole persons. Slaves counted as whole persons would have given slaveholding Southern states much more political power. Or, would the critics of the founders prefer that the Northern delegates not compromise and not allow slaves to be counted at all. If they did, it is likely that the Constitution would have not been ratified.

Thus, the question emerges is whether blacks would be better off with Northern states having gone their way and Southern states having gone theirs, resulting in no U.S. Constitution and no Union? Unlike today's pseudointellectuals, black abolitionist Frederick Douglass understood the compromise, saying that the three-fifths clause was "a downright disability laid upon the slaveholding states" that deprived them of "two-fifths of their natural basis of representation."

Douglass' vision was shared by Patrick Henry and others. Henry said, expressing the reality of the three-fifths compromise, "As much as I deplore slavery, I see that prudence forbids its abolition." With this union, Congress at least had the power to abolish slave trade by 1808. According to delegate James Wilson, many believed the anti-slave-trade clause laid "the foundation for banishing slavery out of this country." Many of the founders abhorred slavery.

The most unique aspect of slavery in the Western world was the moral outrage against it, which began to emerge in the 18th century and led to massive elimination efforts. It was Britain's military sea power that put an end to the slave trade. And our country fought a costly war that brought an end to slavery. Unfortunately, these facts about slavery are not in the lessons taught in our schools and colleges. Instead, there is gross misrepresentation and suggestion that slavery was a uniquely American practice.

James G. Martin Center

[My University Treated Me Like a Criminal Over a Joke](#)

by Trent Bertrand

For the past six years, I have taught an undergraduate course on international economics at Johns Hopkins University. Most of my students thought it was a very good course. So I was shocked when, on December 6, 2016, I was met at the door of my classroom by Johns Hopkins security personnel and barred from entering.

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The lecture on off-shoring took place several weeks earlier. The stated reason for my suspension was that three students (out of 68) complained that my joke had created a “hostile learning environment” in the class. That’s a charge most college administrators now take with the utmost seriousness.

At the time of my suspension, the investigation into those complaints by Johns Hopkins’ Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) had not even started, but still the administration somehow concluded that my teaching had to be terminated immediately.

I believe that the real reason I was barred from class and suspended was that in response to being informed two weeks earlier that a complaint had been made, I had noted the Orwellian characteristic of the OIE, quoting from their website but adding the italicized phrase in brackets:

Johns Hopkins is dedicated to the world of ideas and that world expands exponentially as those with different experiences and points of view share their knowledge and interpretations with one another [...*unless of course those views diverge from the dominant groupthink protected under the banner of ‘political correctness’ or threaten the safe spaces and comfort of anyone else*]. Our commitment to diversity and inclusion reflects both a recognition of the past and the promise of the future, something owed to everyone in the Hopkins community.

I had also noted that the OIE appeared to be an enforcement mechanism for the “Political Correctness” and “Safe Spaces” culture supporting the *Roadmap to Diversity and Inclusion* promulgated by President Ron Daniels and Johns Hopkins trustees. This “roadmap” was a response to demands from the Black Student Union that included greatly increasing the number of underrepresented minorities, subsequently defined as African Americans, Native Americans, South Pacific Islanders, Lesbians, Bisexuals, Transgender people, and “self-identifying men, women, and non-binary” persons.

Hopkins has an Academic Council with the mandate to “consider cases of alleged academic misconduct, faculty discipline, and appeals from negative promotion decisions, and will take action as necessary.” An appeal for access to the Academic Council by me, and for me by the Association of American University Professors, was met with the reply that no action could be taken before the OIE investigation was complete.

Although the OIE investigation was finished in early April and I was told a report would be ready in two weeks, the OIE has failed to complete the report, thereby delaying any access to a faculty review.

The term of my contract ended June 30 of this year and the long delay in providing such a report may simply indicate a desire to prevent access to the Academic Council, perhaps with its concurrence. In any case, the Homewood Academic Council (HAC) informed me on July 3 that “removal from a class for incidents of this kind would not ordinarily reach the level of extraordinary grievance that might be productively reviewed by HAC.”

I conclude that Johns Hopkins would rather have a sacrificial lamb to appease student protesters than to provide a faculty member with any semblance of due process.

Over two dozen students wrote emails protesting the actions taken against me and attesting to the value of my teaching. Here are just two of the posted comments.

Craig Vande Stouwe wrote:

As a nineteen-year-old who grew up in New York, I've spent my whole life hearing the virtues of some of the "politically correct" ideologies you've challenged in class extolled. Throughout class, I found myself disagreeing with you and with the class readings in principle on a variety of issues. However, that disagreement was my favorite part of class. Being challenged critically on an idea that I assumed to be indisputable fact has been one of the best intellectual aspects of my time here at Hopkins. Especially when these challenges are on the basis of a sound economic analysis.... If I could give you any advice as a student, I'd say continue to challenge students' beliefs, continue to invite us to discuss with you, and continue to cultivate the intellectual environment you have had in your classes."

John Crawley wrote:

After four years here at Johns Hopkins I have firmly come to believe that the education system here is flawed.... I am very rarely challenged by a teacher to WANT to learn more, and WANT to research more into something... until this semester. For the first time in my four years here, I was truly excited to go to class and learn. For the first time in my four years here, I have spent more than 4 or 5 weeks now working on an assignment (my term paper). And honestly, the first time in my four years year I have thoroughly enjoyed exploring my prompt for an assignment.... How can we be brought up in a "marketplace of ideas" when there is only one "right" (or left) belief? How can we gain a competitive advantage when we're afraid of being wrong? Thank you again for inspiring me.

In their article [*The Coddling of the American Mind*](#), Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt worry that the imposition of "vindictive protectiveness" (a good description of my case) encourages students to think pathologically. Based on my experience, I can also affirm that it also encourages administrators, OIE investigators, and some faculty to also think pathologically. The failure to provide students alternative perspectives while encouraging them to think about and debate controversial issues and to make up their own minds is where many universities are now failing American students.

The encouragement to students to become hyper-sensitive to possible violations of political correctness and its restrictions on speech differs from what was expected of 18- and 19-year-olds some 70 years ago, as was pointed out to me by a high school friend of mine when he heard about my alleged offenses. Dr. Colin McKinnon wrote:

In 1944, 18-year-olds were losing their lives on the beaches of Normandy to protect democracy, including free speech. In 2016 our 18-year-olds need trigger warnings for potentially hot topics of discussion, safe places if their feelings are hurt by an idea, or, even more ridiculous, time off from university because Hillary lost the election. Free speech and the idea of a university is at a crossroads.

From our "greatest" generation to whining victims of "micro aggressions" in less than three quarters of a century? Not entirely, as a reading of the comments from my students attest. But the threat is real.

We are in a battle for the survival of the university as understood by President Hanna Holborn Gray who helped inspire the University of Chicago's recent Statement on Freedom of Expression with the following words:

[Education] should not be intended to make people comfortable, it is meant to make them think. Universities should be expected to provide the conditions within which hard thought, and

therefore strong disagreement, independent judgment, and the questioning of stubborn assumptions can flourish in an environment of the greatest freedom.

Our universities have gone badly astray when professors can be yanked out of their classes and denied rudimentary academic due process simply because a student couldn't take a joke or administrators cannot tolerate criticism of actions that threaten to undermine the idea of a university.

American Lens.com

How Government Wrecked the Gas Can

by Jeffery A. Tucker

The gas gauge broke. There was no smartphone app to tell me how much was left, so I ran out. I had to call the local gas station to give me enough to get on my way. The gruff but lovable attendant arrived in his truck and started to pour gas in my car's tank. And pour. And pour.

"Hmmm, I just hate how slow these gas cans are these days," he grumbled. "There's no vent on them."

Who would make a can without a vent unless it was done under duress?

That sound of frustration in this guy's voice was strangely familiar, the grumble that comes when something that used to work but doesn't work anymore, for some odd reason we can't identify.

I'm pretty alert to such problems these days. Soap doesn't work. Toilets don't flush. Clothes washers don't clean. Light bulbs don't illuminate. Refrigerators break too soon. Paint discolors. Lawnmowers have to be hacked. It's all caused by idiotic government regulations that are wrecking our lives one consumer product at a time, all in ways we hardly notice.

It's like the barbarian invasions that wrecked Rome, taking away the gains we've made in bettering our lives. It's the bureaucrats' way of reminding market producers and consumers who is in charge.

Surely, the gas can is protected. It's just a can, for goodness sake. Yet he was right. This one doesn't have a vent. Who would make a can without a vent unless it was done under duress? After all, everyone knows to vent anything that pours. Otherwise, it doesn't pour right and is likely to spill.

It took one quick search. The whole trend began in (wait for it) California. Regulations began in 2000, with the idea of preventing spillage. The notion spread and was picked up by the EPA, which is always looking for new and innovative ways to spread as much human misery as possible.

An ominous regulatory announcement from the EPA came in 2007: "Starting with containers manufactured in 2009... it is expected that the new cans will be built with a simple and inexpensive permeation barrier and new spouts that close automatically."

The government never said “no vents.” It abolished them de facto with new standards that every state had to adopt by 2009. So for the last three years, you have not been able to buy gas cans that work properly. They are not permitted to have a separate vent. The top has to close automatically. There are other silly things now, too, but the biggest problem is that they do not do well what cans are supposed to do.

There’s also the problem of the exploding can.

And don’t tell me about spillage. It is far more likely to spill when the gas is gurgling out in various uneven ways, when one spout has to both pour and suck in air. That’s when the lawn mower tank becomes suddenly full without warning, when you are shifting the can this way and that just to get the stuff out.

There’s also the problem of the exploding can. On hot days, the plastic models to which this regulation applies can blow up like balloons. When you release the top, gas flies everywhere, including possibly on a hot engine. Then the trouble really begins.

Never heard of this rule? You will know about it if you go to the local store. Most people buy one or two of these items in the course of a lifetime, so you might otherwise have not encountered this outrage.

Yet let enough time go by. A whole generation will come to expect these things to work badly. Then some wise young entrepreneur will have the bright idea, “Hey, let’s put a hole on the other side so this can work properly.” But he will never be able to bring it into production. The government won’t allow it because it is protecting us!

It’s striking to me that the websites and institutions that complain about government involvement in our lives never mentioned this, at least not so far as I can tell. The only sites that seem to have discussed this are the boating forums and the lawn forums. These are the people who use these cans more than most. The level of anger and vitriol is amazing to read, and every bit of it is justified.

There is no possible rationale for these kinds of regulations. It can’t be about emissions really, since the new cans are more likely to result in spills. It’s as if some bureaucrat were sitting around thinking of ways to make life worse for everyone, and hit upon this new, cockamamie rule.

These days, government is always open to a misery-making suggestion. The notion that public policy would somehow make life better is a relic of days gone by. It’s as if government has decided to specialize in what it is best at and adopt a new principle: “Let’s leave social progress to the private sector; we in the government will concentrate on causing suffering and regress.”

You are already thinking of hacks. Why not just stab the thing with a knife and be done with it? If you have to transport the can in the car, that’s a problem. You need a way to plug the vent with something.

Some boating forums have suggested drilling a hole and putting a tire stem in there and using the screw top as the way to close the hole. Great idea. Just what I wanted to do with my Saturday afternoon, hacking the gas can to make it work exactly as well as it did three years ago, before government wrecked it.

You can also buy an old-time metal can. It turns out that special regulations pertain here, too, and it's all about the spout, which is not easy to fill. They are also unusually expensive. I'm not sure that either of these options is ideal.

It fascinates me to see how these regulations give rise to market-based workarounds. I've elsewhere called this the speak-easy economy. The government bans something. No one likes the ban. People are determined to get on with their lives, regardless. They step outside the narrow bounds of the law.

How many other things in our daily lives have been distorted, deformed and destroyed by government regulations?

It wouldn't surprise me to find, for example, a sudden proliferation of heavy-duty "water cans" in 1- and 5-gallon sizes, complete with nice spouts and vents, looking almost exactly like the gas cans you could get anywhere just a few years ago. How very interesting to discover this.

Of course, this law-abiding writer would never advocate buying one of these and using it for some purpose other than what is written on the package. Doing something like that would show profound disrespect for our betters in the bureaucracies. And if I did suggest something like that, there's no telling the trouble that it would bring down on my head.

Ask yourself this: If they can wreck such a normal and traditional item like this, and do it largely under the radar screen, what else have they mandatorily malfunctioned? How many other things in our daily lives have been distorted, deformed and destroyed by government regulations?

If some product annoys you in surprising ways, there's a good chance that it is not the invisible hand at work, but rather the regulatory grip that is squeezing the life out of civilization itself.

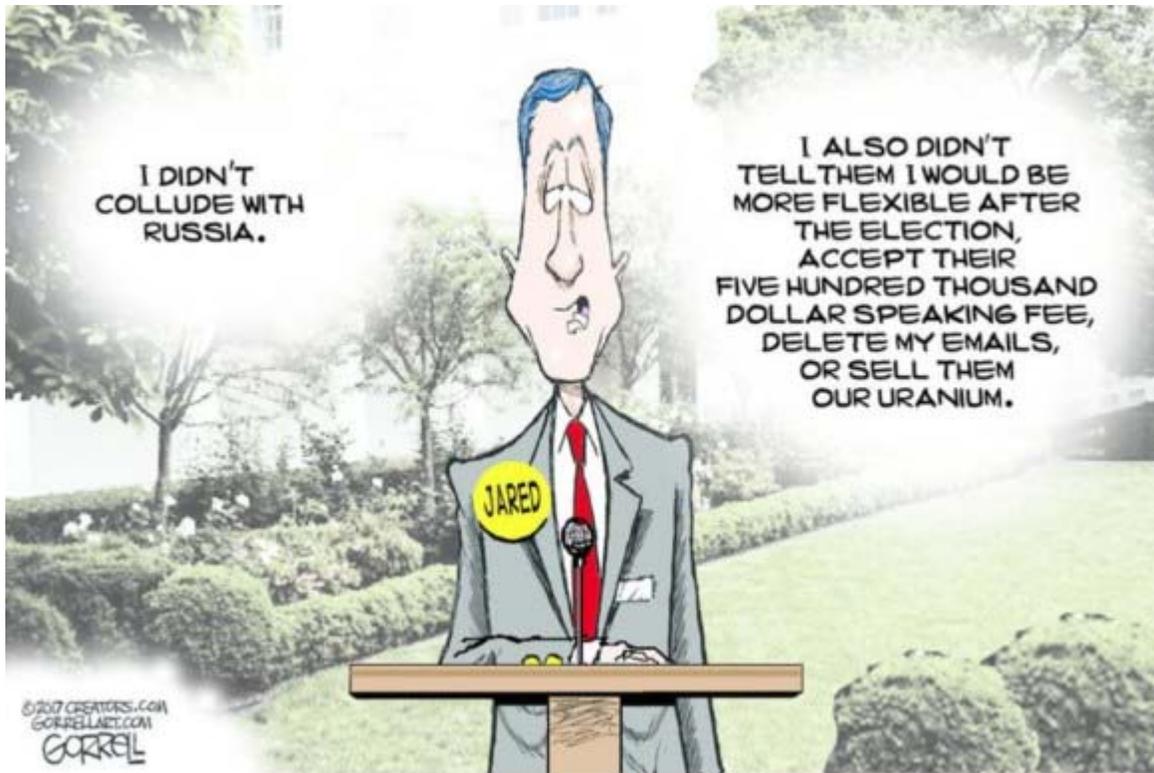
Jeffrey Tucker is Director of Content for the Foundation for Economic Education. He is also Chief Liberty Officer and founder of Liberty.me, ...

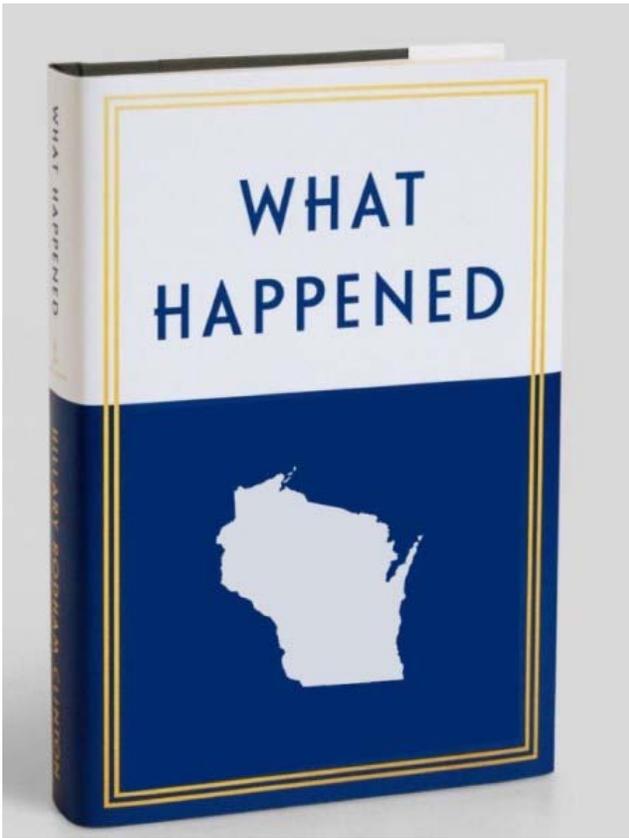


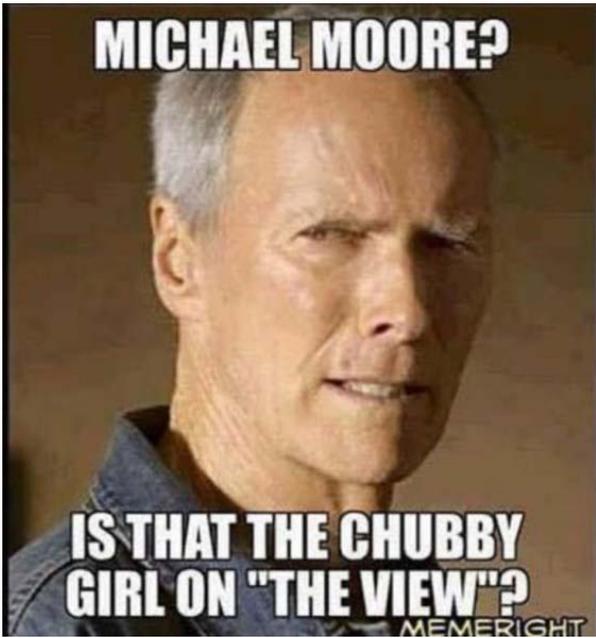
PLACES WHERE **BIG** GOVERNMENT POLICIES HAVE ACTUALLY WORKED...

- ~~1. GREECE~~
- ~~2. DETROIT~~
- ~~3. CALIFORNIA~~
- ~~4. CHICAGO~~
- ~~5. VENEZUELA~~

Nevermind







ACTIVITIES WHERE REQUIRING A PHOTO I.D. IS APPARENTLY NOT RACIST:	ACTIVITIES WHERE REQUIRING A PHOTO I.D. MUST BE RACIST:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BUY ALCOHOL BUY CIGARETTES OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT APPLY FOR FOOD STAMPS APPLY FOR WELFARE APPLY FOR MEDICAID APPLY FOR SOCIAL SECURITY APPLY FOR A JOB APPLY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT RENT A HOUSE BUY A HOUSE APPLY FOR A MORTGAGE DRIVE A CAR RENT A CAR BUY A CAR GET ON AN AIRPLANE GET MARRIED PURCHASE A GUN ADOPT A PET RENT A HOTEL ROOM APPLY FOR A HUNTING LICENSE APPLY FOR A FISHING LICENSE BUY A CELL PHONE GAMBLE AT A CASINO GET A PRESCRIPTION DONATE YOUR BLOOD BUY AN "M" RATED VIDEO GAME USE A CREDIT CARD HOLD A RALLY OR PROTEST... 	<p style="text-align: center;">VOTING</p>



A FEW DIRTY RACIST NATIONS WHO FORCE VOTERS TO HAVE A VALID I.D.★

*EITHER ALWAYS, OR UPON DEMAND OF POLL WORKERS.

- BELGIUM
- IRELAND
- BRAZIL
- MALTA
- CANADA
- MEXICO
- FRANCE
- SPAIN
- GREECE
- SWEDEN
- ITALY
- INDIA
- GERMANY
- SWITZERLAND
- SOUTH AFRICA
- THE NETHERLANDS

