

The Plan

Did you know that last year, Americans paid more taxes to the federal government than ever before?

Two reasons: the robust economy meant workers were making more money. And the Trump tax reform law eliminated deductions for state and local taxes above \$10,000. That means people like me have to fork over more federal income tax, because we can't write off what we pay to the state, which, in liberal places like New York and California, is a lot.

So, it was shocking to see that the new Nancy Pelosi pandemic relief bill, which passed the House on Friday, calls for eliminating the \$10,000 ceiling, thus putting more money in the pockets of the affluent.

Bernie Sanders, who pays property taxes on three homes, has not said a word. That's because the Democratic Party is heavily funded by fat cats in Silicon Valley, Hollywood, Manhattan and the Hamptons, as well as other wealthy, liberal precincts.

This Bud's for you, rich leftists.

Nancy P. gives back despite the phony rhetoric about the rich paying their "fair share." You might ask why a sop to the wealthy is included in a virus relief package in the first place. Or why quasi-amnesty for the undocumented is in there. Or major assistance to companies that legally sell marijuana. Or dozens of other things that have nothing to do with fighting the pandemic.

The answer is politics. Ms. Pelosi is signaling the updated Democrat platform leading to the election.

The Speaker knows the new relief bill will not be passed. Only one Republican congressman, Peter King of New

York, voted for it and no GOP senators will. But Ms. Pelosi would like her party to understand where its future lies, and especially wants her fat-cat pals to realize that they will benefit financially.

This cynical and incredibly hypercritical game is not well understood by we the people and that's why I have written this column. And here's something else that is a hidden truth.

If the new pandemic bill ever did pass, the nation's debt would increase to \$28 trillion; money the USA can never fully pay. The Democrats have no interest in slowing down the massive government spending even though the gross fiscal irresponsibility is a real threat to eventually crash the economy.

But that is exactly what the socialists and their sympathizers want. If the private marketplace collapses, the federal government will have to take it over – completely. Something Bernie and his bros yearn for.

We live in a country full of distractions, distortions, and dismal challenges like COVID. Many of our leaders are not interested in problem-solving and often bury their true agenda in legislation that, in the case of the Pelosi bill, runs more than a thousand pages. The folks are not going to read the thing and neither are most members of Congress and the press, so let me give you the true headline: the Pelosi bill uses the contagion danger to advance left wing power.

And now you know the rest of the story.

Truth, Justice and the American Way

Superman is appalled by the FBI's abusive treatment of General Michael Flynn. Way back in 1952, when television was just beginning to influence the world, a show based on the comic book hero Superman debuted. George Reeves was the star and the program lasted six years – it is etched into the memories of many baby boomers.

At the beginning of each episode, a narrator would tell viewers that the Super guy was in business to promote “truth, justice, and the American way.”

So, now, the truth and justice thing is under siege because the nation's most powerful law enforcement agency, the FBI, launched a corrupt investigation designed to damage President Donald Trump by linking him to Russia during the campaign of 2016.

There is no longer any doubt about the FBI's outrageous behavior. Last week the Justice Department dropped its prosecution of former Trump national security advisor General Michael Flynn. The DOJ did this after hand-written notes from an FBI investigator became public indicating the Bureau was discussing trying to entrap Flynn into a “lying to the FBI” crime.

Agents succeeded, and the General pleaded guilty. Some believe he did that because the FBI threatened to prosecute his son who worked with his father on overseas projects. That remains to be proven.

Subsequently, General Flynn withdrew with his guilty plea.

The reason the FBI tried to set the elder Flynn up was to get him to “flip” on his boss, Donald Trump. Then head of the FBI

James Comey apparently was interested in harming the new President by linking him with Russia and may have believed Flynn had damaging information on Trump.

As we know now, there was never any legal basis for the FBI to even launch a Russian investigation, much less secure surveillance warrants. As we also understand today, much of the media reporting on "Russian-collusion" was false and defamatory.

Superman would like to know exactly who is going to be held accountable for this scandal. After all, the superhero disguised himself as Clark Kent, a "mild-mannered" reporter. Lois Lane and Jimmy Olsen are asking the same question.

US Attorney John Durham is in charge of the investigation into the FBI. His upcoming report may lead to indictments.

But what about the press? Who will hold the New York Times and The Washington Post accountable for years of misleading reports and commentary?

Who will hold Comcast responsible for MSNBC's hateful false narrative?

Is anybody investigating CNN? Is its plantation master AT&T under scrutiny?

What about Disney, will it be brought to justice for airing the blatantly dishonest "View" program among others?

The answer to those questions is simple: no one in the media is likely to be held accountable. No person will be fired, the massive corporations involved will not be fined, no explanations or apologies for the thousands of falsehoods broadcast and published will be forthcoming.

Because the sad truth is that the search FOR the truth is not part of the "American way" any longer.

And somewhere Superman is weeping.

Respecting the Office

During a dinner with President Trump a few months ago, I expressed regret to him for the general behavior of the press in America. I did this not to pander to the President, but to discuss the disintegration of decorum that, as an American, disturbs me.

In the past, most credible journalists respected the office of the presidency, if not the person inhabiting it. President Nixon strained that respect as correspondents like Dan Rather openly loathed the man. But even Mr. Rather brought a modicum of respect to his White House beat.

In 1992, NBC News reporter Stone Phillips interviewed President Bush the Elder in the White House. Using a poorly sourced newspaper allegation that alleged Mr. Bush had committed adultery, the journalist confronted the President.

Phillips: "Have you ever had an affair?"

President Bush: "I'm not going to take any sleaze questions. I gave you a little warning. You see you're perpetuating the sleaze by even asking the question – to say nothing of asking it in the Oval Office. And I don't think you ought to do that and I'm not going to answer the question."

Stone Phillips backed off and the appropriateness of the question was widely debated. To me, a journalist who has interviewed six Presidents, Mr. Bush was correct; the White House is the wrong place to attempt a tabloid exposition.

Today, many media people do not respect Donald Trump and, by extension, the position he holds or the place where he lives. The hate-Trump press explains its conduct by pointing to the President's deficits. They attempt to justify their bad behavior by pointing to his bad behavior – as if a third grade rationalization excuses the media's gross disrespect for the Executive branch.

Americans elect presidents and once that happens the person assuming the office should be afforded a blanket of respect simply for holding the position. The presidency is the apex of our republic, something President Bush well understood.

In the summer of 2007, I interviewed then Senator Barack Obama, the Democratic nominee for President. The chat was in York, Pennsylvania and was lively, to say the least. I challenged the senator and did not let him dodge. I had no problem describing some of his positions as misguided.

The next time I interviewed Mr. Obama he was President and we were in the White House. Whole new ballgame. My questions were still challenging but my tone was more measured. I mean, I couldn't imply he was a pinhead as I can with senators and congresspeople. His status as the head of the country meant I had to respect his office.

And I did.

I remember getting a flood of letters from anti-Obama people accusing me of being "too soft" on Mr. Obama. These critics wanted rhetorical blood. But that would have not only have been disrespectful to him, but to the country.

By the way, the three chats I had with President Obama were the toughest interviews he saw. Check them out.

Today, President Trump is obviously not afforded respect by the media. Many in the White House press corps have been encouraged by their corporate masters to make Mr. Trump look

bad. Legitimate questions are often asked in blatantly hostile tones. It's wrong.

Americans deserve accountability from all presidents and the job of the press is to seek clarity and truth. But that's not what's going on today. It's "get" Trump all day, every day.

Respect for the office of the presidency has vanished and it is unseemly. Donald Trump was awarded his job by the people. To not respect that is to insult the people.

And that's what's happening.

Maybe the Press Should be Quarantined

If you are observant during this time of national isolation, you can learn a lot about your country and, perhaps, yourself. This is a once in a lifetime experience that will change many things in America; some for the better, some for the worse.

On display right before our eyes is the collapse of honest journalism. This has been brewing for a while. In fact, Ted Koppel believes that I, your humble correspondent, ignited the situation by injecting opinion into a prime time cable news program beginning way back in 1996. Mr. Koppel said that to my face on The O'Reilly Factor.

But Ted ascribes far too much influence to me. All I did was take the newspaper editorial pages and hone them on television. Nothing wrong with that. Of course, the concept can be misused by dishonest people but that's been going on

since William Randolph Hearst.

What we are vividly experiencing now in America is a herd media mentality that is using the medical catastrophe to sell a narrative to the folks: the virus is largely Trump's fault and voters must banish him come November.

My opinion is not stated to support or engender sympathy for President Trump. Americans have seen him talk about the pandemic for hours each week. Surely, we the people can arrive at a conclusion about the President using our eyewitness capabilities.

But the actual news reporting on the government's response to the virus is heavily skewed to make Mr. Trump look bad. The hostility of many in the White House press corps is stark and anyone who denies that is a deceiver. Obviously, the animus directed at Mr. Trump by "objective" reporters violates every journalistic tenet. Reporters can and should ask the toughest questions they can formulate. But they should not inject hostility into the query.

What is happening here is failure to communicate honestly, with apologies to Cool Hand Luke. National news organizations like The New York Times, The Washington Post, NBC News, and CNN, among others, are all practicing "outcome journalism." These outfits do not demand their employees search for factual truth. Instead, editors and TV executives want a clear outcome from the pandemic reporting. And that is Trump must go. Therefore, almost every bit of the President's virus response will be portrayed as wrong, stupid, or even lethal.

It should be noted that there are some pro-Trump expositions in the media, but the hate-Trump presentations heavily outnumber them.

Once a free society cannot get honest, objective information, it becomes less able to make responsible decisions. That is

absolutely happening right now in America. The relentless contagion of propaganda funded by massive media corporations has spread to every part of this country.

It is not an overstatement to say the press collapse is a virus that is harming us all. And there's no vaccine in sight.

One World

The global pandemic is the worst thing that could happen to the concept of "globalism," a fervent left wing tenet. Famous people from Barack Obama to Pope Francis have touted the benefits of a world with no power index – that all nations should be pretty much the same, because human beings share universal qualities.

Out of the "One World" movement has come the open border concept, aggressive socialism, "inclusion" that intrudes on fairness and liberty, and a variety of other misguided and even dangerous policies.

Now, because of the virus, the philosophy of global equality is in tatters.

China is mainly responsible. Beijing's communist human rights violators lied to the world about the severity of the contagion. And China was enabled by the United Nations through the colossally incompetent World Health Organization. Five days after the US government stopped flights from China, the WHO officially objected, issuing this statement: "We reiterate our call to all countries not to impose restrictions inconsistent with International Health Regulations. Such restrictions can have the effect of increasing fear and

stigma, with little health benefit.”

That incredibly irresponsible response from a UN agency led to intense condemnation of President Trump. Joe Biden called the flight ban “fear-mongering.” Congressman Eliot Engel said it was “racist.”

As the pandemic spread across the globe, the WHO became even more dangerous. On February 29, it issued this statement: “Travel bans to affected areas or denial of entry to passengers coming from affected areas are usually not effective in preventing the importation of cases ...”

Just a few weeks later, almost the entire world went on lockdown. Now, in attempt to save the WHO, some entertainers are participating in a “virtual” concert to benefit the organization which is under extreme pressure.

Last week, President Trump announced a suspension of the almost \$500 million a year the USA donates to the WHO. Mr. Trump saying the USA wants to investigate exactly why the World Health Organization misled the planet.

But almost immediately, Nancy Pelosi objected, calling the President a “science denier.”

There comes a point when fair-minded people have to speak up. The far-left movement, of which Nancy Pelosi is a leader, is a demonstrably destructive enterprise. It generally despises capitalism, does not respect private property, and sees America as an “oppressive” nation which is consistently wrong if not downright evil.

That mindset has now taken root not only in foreign countries, but also right here at home. However, one of the few benefits of the pandemic is that far left concepts are increasingly being challenged with undeniable facts.

The truth is we do not live in a “one world” situation, no

matter how many ill-informed people say differently. There are enormous differences among countries and some nations are exceedingly dangerous to the human condition.

Like China.

So you can sing "we are the world, we are the children" all you want, but understand by doing that, you are not making the world a better place.

Unless you think lethal pandemics are beneficial.