

“United States of America, R.I.P.” and “Politics, Guns & Surgery”

The Democrats apparently think they can get away with anything simply because the major media outlets are in the tank for them, and perhaps they can. I suppose we'll have to wait until the mid-term elections to find out if America really is prepared to pull the plug on itself.

Clearly, Obama and his gang thought it wouldn't cost them any votes if the Department of Defense suspended death benefits to the widows and children of soldiers killed in Afghanistan. Apparently, they were equally copacetic about shutting down the outdoor World War II Memorial to military veterans, while throwing open the National Mall for a demonstration by illegal immigrants and some of their publicity-crazed supporters in the House.

Speaking of the shutdown, I don't think it's right for people to complain that none of the golf courses on military bases where Obama likes to play were closed for the duration. After all, Obama needs a place where he can unwind after playing all those other rounds of golf.

It is almost beyond belief that people like Obama and John Kerry can still find nice things to say about Syria's al-Assad and Russia's Putin just because they're going through the motions of destroying Syria's stash of chemical weapons. But when it comes to House Republicans, Obama calls them “saboteurs.” Chuck Schumer labels them “extortionists and hostage-takers,” while former Obama speechwriter Jon Favreau draws the line at extortionists; to him, they're just “hostage-takers.” White House advisor Dan Pfeiffer insists they're “terrorists,” while Sen. Dick Durbin agrees they're

“terrorists,” but adds that they’re also “squealing political pigs.” Harry Reid calls them “anarchists” and Nancy Pelosi is equally convinced they’re “arsonists.” Al Gore claims they’re “political terrorists,” while Sen. Angus King of Maine refuses to beat around the bush, insisting they’re nothing more or less than “murderers.”

I realize that the Democrats are taking comfort in the polls that show that whereas 65% of the people hold House Republicans responsible for the shutdown, only 50% lay the blame at Obama’s feet. They’re convinced it will lead to the Democrats retaking control of the House in 2014, enabling Obama to complete his mission of radically transforming America in his own disgusting image.

Now, if I were an extortionist, an arsonist or a hostage-taker, I would probably keep this to myself, but I’m not that sort of guy. The truth is that while everyone claims to hate Congress, they do not hate their own congressman, who happens to be the only member of the House they actually get to vote for. That is why the incumbent generally gets re-elected.

On the other hand, when half the people hold the president responsible for bad stuff, that tends to shred his coattails. Therefore, Democrats who’ll be running in 2014 would do well to realize that Obama will be gone two years hence, but if they keep pushing his loony agenda, they could be gone even sooner.

Also, it’s the president who gets tarred with a bad economy. The recession of 2008 was created by people like Chris Dodd, Barney Frank and Sen. Obama, but it was George Bush who got blamed and the Republicans who suffered the consequences.

In the meantime, Republican politicians would be wise to recall Reagan’s 11th Commandment, cautioning his colleagues not to speak ill of other Republicans. For one thing, a circular firing squad not only makes them look dumb, but it

provides Democrats with a blood bath they can wallow around in, like pigs in mud. I know from my own experience that Republican politicians, by and large, are no smarter than the folks on the other side of the aisle, but there's really no compelling reason to provide Democrats with sound bites to use in future elections.

When I state that Republicans are as dumb as Democrats, I don't mean to suggest that they are equally vile. After all, in the same week that Obama decided that the federal government couldn't possibly accommodate World War II veterans or pay death benefits to military widows, he decided it was essential to hand over 450 million tax dollars to continue funding NPR and PBS. From Obama's point of view, it made perfect sense because both of those media entities are constantly promoting him and his agenda, whereas what the hell have old veterans and young widows ever done for him?

It was also the same week that Obama decided to deny money and military hardware to the Egyptian army. This was seen in Egypt, Israel and everywhere else in the Middle East, as Obama's casting his lot with the Muslim Brotherhood.

That would certainly seem to be the logical conclusion. On the other hand, it could simply mean that he has the same contempt for Egypt's military that he has for our own.

Politics, Guns & Surgery

One of the basic problems with those on the Left is that they become infatuated with certain words while choosing to ignore their meanings. For instance, one of their favorites is equality. Unfortunately, equality is merely a concept. No two individuals are really the same; human beings, after all, are not robots, although liberals come close. For sane people, equality translates to equality under the law and equal opportunity to achieve one's goals.

For progressives, though, it doesn't mean either of those

things. To their way of thinking, it means equality of outcome. Nobody is supposed to be more talented, brighter or more successful, than anyone else. To their way of thinking, if you have a bigger house, a more expensive car and more money in the bank, it can't be the result of greater effort on your part. The only answer is that you cheated the fellow who lives in a hovel, drives a wreck and relies on welfare to cover his expenses.

There is a reason, after all, that socialism has been defined as an economic system in which misery is shared equally, except by those who run the system.

I was surprised to read that Glenn Beck, in calling for Obama's impeachment for sending arms to the Syrian jihadists, wrote: "We did not get into bed with Hitler to defeat Japan." What he seems to have forgotten or chose to ignore is that FDR did get into bed with Stalin to defeat Germany.

In the meantime, Pope Francis, who talks as much nonsense as Juan Williams and Alan Colmes put together, told Europeans they should be more welcoming to Muslim immigrants because they are poor and needy. What he didn't mention is that Muslims do not assimilate. They do not respect the laws, culture or traditions, of non-Muslims. Instead, they take advantage of all the tax-supported social services, which inevitably leads to their hosts becoming poor and needy.

Surely the pope must realize that being needy isn't the same as being deserving. What's more, being charitable doesn't mean taking leave of one's senses and prostrating oneself to one's sworn enemies.

Chicago, it's worth noting, is a gun-free zone, as is Washington, D.C., with some of the strictest gun control laws in the country. Through executive order, Bill Clinton made U.S. military bases gun-free zones. Yet, within a single week in September, over two dozen people were gunned down in those

gun-free zones. The moral, as I see it, is that Obama, Feinstein and the rest of those 2nd Amendment-hating creeps whose own lives are protected by men with guns, should shut their hypocritical pie-holes.

It recently came to light that the USIS, a contractor that provides background checks for the federal government, okayed both Edward Snowden and mass murderer Aaron Alexis. But before anyone starts feeling too superior, keep in mind they had nothing to do with helping Obama, Biden, Pelosi, Reid, Waxman or Rangel, get or keep their jobs.

Not many people are aware of the fact that I once ran for president. Not of the United States, you understand, but of the Writers Guild. I didn't really want the job, but I sure didn't want the guy who had the job to win a third term. He saw his role as being the rubberstamp for the power-hungry executive director.

Possibly because I knew I didn't have a chance, I was able to run the most honest campaign in the history of the Guild. For one thing, even though I had always been a freelancer because I didn't want to get burned out writing for just one show, I told the Freelance Committee that I would do nothing to change the system in which most episodes were written by members of the staff. I explained that there were only about 24 episodes in a season. The Guild rate for an episode was about \$13,000. Multiply that by 24 and you get \$312,000. Even if you add a story editor, the total paid for writing services would only have amounted to about half a million bucks. However, a staff of six or seven could expect to be paid upwards of a million dollars; sometimes way upwards. How could I, in good conscience, insist they break up the staff system and only hire freelancers? Besides, the producer would still hire the same six or seven people to write the two dozen shows, but simply pay them less.

I also told the Minority Writers Committee that I did not

believe that forcing producers to hire writers simply because they happened to be black, Hispanic, female or gay, was the American way. I told them that writing, like the world of professional sports, was one of the few places where people could excel on the basis of their own merits and had no need or right to demand employment on the basis of victimhood.

I still remember a friend and fellow member of the Writers Guild Board, David Rintels, following me into the men's room one night during a Board meeting to apologize for not being able to support my candidacy. He said, "I believe the president has to be able to get along with the executive director, and I know you and Brian often butt heads."

I told him he didn't have to apologize over an honest difference of opinion. I told him I believed the executive director should have to get along with the president.

Needless to say, I was soundly defeated.

In closing, I wish to thank all of my readers who have written to let me know they hoped that the rheumatoid arthritis that has been plaguing my right wrist would get better. It hasn't, and a recent MRI has confirmed that I also have torn tendons in my wrist.

I did see a surgeon who confirmed the bad news. But he did say that so long as I could bear the pain and discomfort, continue to wear the wrist brace and find some relief in Alleve, I shouldn't rush into surgery.

On my way home, it occurred to me how wise I was to seek counsel from an elderly surgeon. You always stand to get honest advice from a guy who is too old to still be paying for his kids' orthodontia and college tuition.

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Notions

Burt would like you to enjoy a bonus article as a Christmas or Chanukah present. After you finish this one, don't miss: "Pinning the Tail on the Donkeys."

Occasionally, a reader will take me to task for covering several topics in a single piece. I assume such people somehow regard themselves as my boss. Although I generally try to be polite about it, I feel obligated to set them straight. In short, I write these articles in order to let off steam. I generally try to leaven them with humor, but that's just the way I am.

Inasmuch as most of my fellow commentators are quite happy to devote entire articles to a single issue, I generally just steer the malcontents to the competition. For my part, I have a rather short attention span, so I like to hop around, lest I bore myself.



Rep. Barney
Frank (D-NY)

The truth is that I get just as angry as every other conservative when I see the leftwing riffraff occupying the marble halls in Washington, our college classrooms, the editorial boardrooms of the MSM and the streets of America. I just try to maintain a sense of humor about these various creeps in order to keep my head from exploding.

I also find it helps me to maintain my emotional equilibrium by keeping in mind that when a glass is half empty, it's also half full.

Moving on, I was delighted when I heard Barney Frank announce his decision to retire from the House. Short of Obama's announcing his own retirement, I could hardly have been happier. But I had to laugh when Mr. Frank said that the best thing about stepping down is that he would no longer feel compelled to be nice to people he didn't like. He didn't specify whom he was referring to. We already know that he treats Republicans and his Tea Party constituents like dirt, so could he possibly have been referring to Pelosi, Reid, Obama or even just heterosexuals in general?

The notion of Barney Frank, one of the vilest individuals in Congress, even suggesting that there's another, even nastier, version waiting in the wings brings to mind the image of Hitler's announcing, "Okay, Poland, no more Mr. Nice Guy."

Although I'd never vote for a Libertarian, I must confess that I agree with them when it comes to illegal drugs. I honestly don't think you or I have any business telling people what they can smoke, ingest or shoot into their veins. But that is not the same as saying they have a right to be hired. I wouldn't employ a drug addict and I don't think anyone else should be compelled to do so.



Dennis Prager

In addition, I object to those who commit crimes or cause accidents while under the influence avoiding punishment by insisting that they are the innocent victims of their addiction. Nobody, after all, put a gun to their head and turned them into a coke, meth or heroin, addict. So, do the crime, do the time...and don't whine. You wanted to be cool? Fine, go be cool in the cooler.

Recently, Dennis Prager devoted an hour of his daily radio show to deconstructing Oregon's Governor John Kitzhaber's

pathetic case against capital punishment. Although I agreed entirely with Prager's logic, I felt that he fell down in one instance. That was when an opponent of capital punishment called in to argue that the biggest danger with capital punishment is that an innocent person might be executed. [Read Prager's article on this subject in the National Review. -ed.]

As an example, he presented a case in which two guys go off to commit a burglary, but one of them decides to rape and murder a woman in the house. The caller argued that the one burglar was innocent of those more serious crimes, but might very well suffer the same fate as his partner. For some inexplicable reason, Prager didn't point out that if someone is killed during the commission of a felony, everyone involved is held to be as guilty as the person who pulled the trigger. But, moreover, if you stand by while your fellow burglar rapes and kills a human being, on what planet would anyone regard you as an innocent bystander?

Some people despise liberals because of their politics. Some people despise them because of their arrogance. Others despise them because of their double-standards and hypocrisy. I happen to believe that all the reasons are equally valid. Take the head of the DNC, Rep. Debbie Wasserman-Schultz. If you've ever seen her, you know that when she was younger, her grandmother would try to find dates for her by telling the other mothers and grandmothers in her circle, "My Debbie's not much to look at, but she has a wonderful personality."

But Debbie, whose personality isn't really all that wonderful, excoriated all the Republicans who are seeking their party's presidential nomination, saying, "If it were up to them, we'd all be driving foreign cars. They'd have the U.S. auto industry go down the tubes."

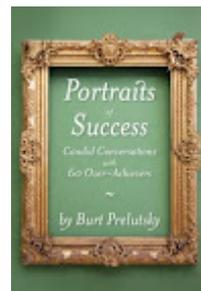
I wager that none of you are surprised to hear that Debbie drives an Infiniti FX35, a Japanese luxury car.

Lest anyone think that I only pick on Democrats, I heard Newt Gingrich say that because he made \$60,000-a-speech, he didn't really need to lobby in order to make money. Instead, he claims, he only lobbied on behalf of issues he really cared about.

Well, inasmuch as Newt was regularly sending mailers to my wife, seeking donations, for at least a year or two before deciding to throw his hat in the ring, I have to assume that taking his wife on cruises to the Greek islands and keeping her bedecked in jewelry were a couple of those issues he really cared about.

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At the Precipice

☒ When I heard Robert Duvall speaking with Mike Huckabee last year about his film, "Get Low", I knew it was my kind of movie. It's the story of a man who wants to throw his own "funeral party" while he's alive and have people come and tell stories about him and is loosely based on a true story that took place in Roane County, Tennessee in 1938.

Sounds a bit quirky but the movie is anything but. Mr. Duvall

plays the main character, reclusive Felix Bush, who has lived the life of a hermit for the past 40 years on the outskirts of town. He's taunted by children who throw rocks at his windows, rumors have been spread about him and he's feared by the town folk. As the movie unfolds, we realize that it's Felix who has a very dark secret, well hidden from everyone but his friend and minister, Charlie Jackson, who has to be coaxed by Felix into attending the "funeral party" to insure his story is told if he, Felix, is unable to unload the heavy burden himself.

Eventually, Felix's secret is uncovered. He slowly and painfully reveals to the hundreds of town folk who have assembled that, 40 years before, he fell in love with a married woman who planned to leave her husband and start a new life and family with him. A tragedy results. **Spoiler alert:** Move on to the next paragraph if you plan to watch the movie.) When she doesn't arrive at their pre-arranged meeting place, Felix goes to her home, confronts her husband, who sets fire to the lower floor of the house. Felix rushes upstairs to find his love on the floor having been beaten by her husband. The husband, who was able to make it up the stairs, attacks Felix who cannot recall if he leaped from the window or was pushed. In either event, he is emotionally destroyed because, ultimately, he was unable to save the woman he loved.

He details his shame in having even looked at the woman, who, in his words, allowed him to feel love the only time in his life. He admits that had he not done so, the tragedy would not have occurred. The guilt he felt over the past 40 years was palpable and his public confession was excruciating to watch. (Mr. Duvall's performance was superb but overlooked at this year's Academy Awards.)

I commend Mr. Duvall for having executively produced this film and bringing to the screen a story about old-fashioned ideas like shame, guilt, remorse, forgiveness and, finally, redemption.

As I watched the credits of "Get Low" roll, I thought about people similarly situated today. Do the characters in these modern-day real-life dramas feel anything – remorse, guilt, shame, humiliation? Do they ever seek forgiveness or redemption?

The latest in this long list of public offenders is, of course, Arnold Schwarzenegger, who just this week publicly admitted to having fathered a child with a member of his household ten years ago. After serving as Governor of California and leaving office in January, he finally told his wife. He now asks the press and public to respect his wife and children. How come he didn't?

There was a time in America when any type of scandal would have and did destroy the careers of celebrities and politicians because the public was not as forgiving as today.

Celebrities and public officials like Woody Allen, Paris Hilton, Barney Frank, Roman Polanski, Al Sharpton, Jimmy Swaggart, Eliot Spitzer, John Edwards, Kobe Bryant and Kim Kardashian, all who've done shameful things, breathe a sigh of relief because, in today's America, they can continue to maintain political power or enjoy highly lucrative careers because of society's acceptance of their "indiscretions." We'll see how Arnold's career goes after this.

On the other hand, I often wonder if the average Joe actually feels the kind of regret, dishonor or embarrassment felt by the character, Felix Bush. In the real world, obviously no one is reduced to ashes because of their behavior, but lives and families are affected forever by bad behavior and are often destroyed beyond repair.

While celebrities and public officials often have no sense of shame, I'd like to think that there are those private individuals who do regret their actions and try to make amends. But for those selfish, narcissistic people who

couldn't care less about the destruction they leave behind in similar circumstances, life goes on.

On good days, I have to believe there are more people in the former category than in the latter. While seeing the public offenders continue to enjoy profitable careers and acceptance by the public, the pessimist in me says we've lost the notion of right and wrong, we're circling the bowl and we're going to Hell in a hand basket, but I'm hoping we haven't completely lost our moral sense of direction but merely on the edge of the precipice, still able to take a step back.

Bottom line: I get Felix Bush.

Let's Ban Another "N" Word

☒ I'd like to think that, for the most part, the "N" word has been abolished in our civilized society. With the exception of it being bandied about amongst young Blacks, something which I will go to my grave not understanding, the word has been pretty much eliminated from everyone else's speech. Almost.

You may not know but there's a new "N" word that's constantly being used today by both the right and the left and I'm sick of it. I'm talking about the use of the word "Nazi."

It makes me cringe every time I hear the word used or when people compare someone to Hitler. First of all, I'm not even sure the people who use this word even know its full meaning.

The term *Nazi* derives from the first two syllables of *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*¹ and members of the Nazi Party identified themselves as *Nationalsozialisten*

(National Socialists), rarely as *Nazis*.

Adolph Hitler, arguably the most evil political figure in the 20th century, rose to power under the banner of Nazism and, unless you're a Holocaust denier, his beliefs resulted in the systematic persecution and murder of approximately 6 million Jews and countless numbers of others who didn't fit into the Aryan ideal.

I'm not naïve to think that the American Nazi Party doesn't exist and I certainly remember the Nazis' march in Skokie, Illinois, but it and other neo-Nazis who wish to resurrect the beliefs of a most contemptuous man are on the fringe of our society with no real political power.

Yet, the word is thrown around in today's public discourse, not towards self-identified Nazis, but towards others with whom one doesn't agree. You would think, based on the frequency the word is used, that the killing of millions of people was an every day occurrence and the ideology behind the slaughter was alive and well in America.

For example and on a lighter note, "the Soup Nazi" was a nickname of a character on "Seinfeld" and used as an exaggeration of the excessively strict regimentation he demanded of his patrons.

On a more serious note, Fox News Chairman Roger Ailes said, in response to the firing of Juan Williams, the executives of NPR "have a kind of Nazi attitude. They are the left wing of Nazism. These guys don't want any other point of view." Sure, NPR has a liberal bent, but really, Roger, are they "Nazis?"

Rep. Steve Cohen (D-Tenn), had no intention of apologizing for and defended his comparison of Republican attack on health care reform to the propaganda disseminated in Nazi Germany. In other words, you don't agree with me, you're a Nazi.

On CNN recently, George Soros, the left's sugar daddy and

multi-million dollar contributor to MoveOn.org and NPR, likened Fox News to Nazi ideology.

Rep. Anthony Weiner (D-NY) said the Arizona immigration law was akin to Nazi Germany.

A Republican caller to the Rush Limbaugh radio show called Rush a “brainwashed Nazi.”

At a townhall meeting, a woman confronted Rep. Barney Frank and asked him, “why do you continue to support [Obama’s] Nazi policy?”

And the latest comes from union members who liken Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker to Hitler.

I’ve seen numerous pictures, signs and placards depicting both Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama with Hitler-style mustaches.

Enough with the Nazi/Hitler references. Please. No one is ever going to convince me that there’s an ideology at play or any imminent threat in America that even compares to the atrocities carried out under Hitler’s command. Nothing.

Comparing one of the darkest moments in the 20th Century – if not the most evil – to people with whom one disagrees, or to a policy with which one opposes, diminishes the evil that truly was Nazism and its leader.

With some exception, we, as a people, in this great nation have eradicated the other “N” word from our speech. I really wish we could abolish the use of the word “Nazi” and all references to Hitler when we simply dislike someone’s thoughts and policies.

Nazism and the vile human being who rose to power under its aegis should remain a part of world history where they belong. To use the word Nazi or compare someone to Hitler in

such a cavalier fashion diminishes the import of how the Nazi movement actually affected the rest of the world. They, and any reference to them, certainly have no place in 21st century America.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.