

# Mariano Rivera For President

If you're not a baseball fan, you might not know who Mariano – Mo to his friends, fans and teammates – Rivera is. He is the closer for the New York Yankees, the fellow they've been calling on since the mid-90s to protect leads in the late innings. Nobody has ever come close to being as good at what he does as Rivera. This past season, as he's announced his retirement, every team the Yankees have played against has honored him. Even the Boston Red Sox gave him testimonials and gifts. Several teams have given him checks for his foundation. And every member of the opposing teams has stood and applauded the man and his accomplishments.

But Mo deserves it. In addition to displaying unmatched talent for 17 seasons, he has performed under the largest spotlight in baseball with grace and humility. When people ask how this native of Panama has been able to pitch the way he has even into his 40s, he credits God first and foremost, and then mentions his family, his teammates and the Yankee organization.

When I saw him recently on TV making his farewell appearance at Yankee Stadium, I found myself wishing we had someone of his caliber in the Oval Office. Can anyone even imagine a Republican having a good word to say about Obama, who ran as a great uniter, but has spent five years demeaning the loyal opposition, accusing them at various times of being racists, obstructionists and traitors?

What I don't understand is how Obama gets away with arbitrarily postponing the Affordable Health Care mandate for business owners. Harry Reid and Nancy Pelosi keep telling us ObamaCare is the law of the land, but Obama keeps ignoring the embarrassing parts of it. According to the Supreme Court, ObamaCare is legal because they decided it's a tax, the very thing Obama spent two years denying it was. But if it's a tax,

where does Obama get off insisting that only some people have to pay it?

It may not have been noticed in some places, but Obama, Biden and Hillary Clinton, all stayed away from Margaret Thatcher's funeral. However, Obama sent an official delegation numbering 14 when socialist dictator and all-around swine Hugo Chavez was laid to rest.

Although I rarely disagree with my friend Bernie Goldberg, he recently devoted an article to comparing the civil rights of gays to the religious rights of Christians. Bernie was entering the fray on behalf of gays, who had been denied wedding cakes and floral decorations by evangelical business owners who oppose same-sex marriages.

He pointed out that such marriages are now legal in several states, and that takes precedence in a nation of laws. I have a different take on things. One, I happen to think that if someone is willing to forego the profit, he should have the same right to withhold service as storeowners who refuse to deal with shirtless or shoeless customers.

In addition, there are always florists and bakers who would be only too happy to supply cakes and flowers, so it is hard for me to imagine that the homosexual couples wanted either as much as they wanted to create problems for those whose religious beliefs offended them.

Moreover, it doesn't seem that long ago that I was reading about Muslim taxi drivers who were allowed to refuse rides to people carrying packages out of liquor stores and blind people if they were accompanied by their Seeing Eye dogs. It just seems to me that Christians shouldn't have fewer religious rights in America than Muslims.

Recently, someone sent me a list of high-profile shootings. Starting in 1865, we had a Democrat named John Wilkes Booth killing Abe Lincoln. In 1881, a left-wing radical shot James

Garfield. In 1963, a socialist shot John F. Kennedy. In 2010, a registered Democrat named Jared Loughner shot Rep. Gaby Giffords and killed six others. In 2013, a registered Democrat named Adam Lanza shot and killed his mother before killing 26 others at a local school.

The point being that guns don't kill people; left-wingers kill people.

In closing I will quote H.L. Mencken, who wrote: "The urge to save humanity is almost always only a false face for the urge to rule it" and Mark Twain, who observed: "Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect."

For my part, whenever I find myself in that unlikely position, I demand a recount.

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## Thank God for Rich People

✘ I have an idea for a monument in our nation's capital. I envision a big bronze and granite statue that would honor an entire group of Americans who are true heroes, and unsung heroes at that.

It is time – no, make that long past time – to pay tribute to those this nation of ours owes a great debt; to those who give and give and give and in return get anything but our gratitude.

This is an idea whose time has finally come.

Right there, amongst the sacred national structures that honor

great Americans, we need to build a shiny monument to ... (this is where the drum roll would come in) The Rich – otherwise known in liberal circles as the filthy, no good, greedy, heartless rich.

The statue could be simple and elegant: a smiling rich guy in a business suit holding hundred dollar bills in both hands, extended toward the blue sky.

President Obama compromises with Republicans and gives the wealthiest two percent of Americans a temporary respite from a tax hike and listening to the yelps of the “progressives” you’d think he just tried to shut down WikiLeaks or something.

The Left is bawling about how “we can’t afford” to give people “who don’t need it” a tax break. This argument makes perfect sense, of course – as long as income re-distribution is a central tenet in your theology. Never mind that liberals weren’t all that concerned about what we could afford when they passed a nearly trillion dollar stimulus package that didn’t stimulate very much or when they poured in billions of our tax dollars to bail out General Motors. It’s only now that they’re concerned about budgets because those nasty rich folks are getting a break. But I don’t want to pick a fight with my liberal friends over whether the wealthiest Americans “deserve” a tax break or not. I have come to praise The Rich, not to bury them.

I offer a few numbers to make my case:

Did you know that the top one percent of American wage earners (adjusted gross income) pay about 38 percent of all our federal personal taxes (according to the National Taxpayer Union)? The top one percent, by the way, account for 23.5 percent of all income – a substantial amount, yes, but considerably less than 38 percent.

Or that the top five percent pay just under 60 percent?

Or that the top ten percent pay about 70 percent of all the personal income taxes collected in this great land of ours?

These “fat-cats” are the ones who do the heavy lifting in this country. They’re the ones whose federal tax dollars pick up a big chunk of the tab for all sorts of noble things, such as: food for folks who don’t have enough to eat ... medicine and doctors for people with little money ... financial aid to help other people’s kids go to college ... milk and diapers for poor babies whose 15 year-old mothers and deadbeat fathers are too irresponsible to take care of their own kids ... a safety net for old folks who are retired on fixed incomes ... and on and on.

And if they “only” bank their new found savings instead of spending it all over town? Well, that’s a plus too. It means there would be more money out there for businesses to borrow for expansion, which probably would mean more jobs. Or it could mean more money for new homeowners to borrow, which would also give a boost to the limp economy.

No, I’m not saying the wealthiest Americans are all a bunch of selfless philanthropists. But try to imagine an America without those rich people.

By the way, the bottom 50 percent of tax filers pay a paltry 2.7 percent of our federal income taxes. How many poor people do you think *their* tax dollars are taking care of? If you ask me, they’re the ones not paying *their fair share*. Every time they pass a “rich” person on the street, they ought to say, “Thank you for everything you do for me and for this country.”

For those of you not already making plans to hang me in effigy – or for real – let me simply say this: The richest Americans may not “need” a break on their taxes, but they sure don’t need being vilified, either. They need our gratitude.

So let’s get busy on that shiny monument in our nation’s capital. And let’s get some unemployed people out there

building it. It's the least they can do for those nice rich people who have been keeping them afloat.

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# The Phony Nobility of Wikileaks

✘ There's a theme running through the latest WikiLeaks story which can be summed up in a single word: Hypocrisy.

It's a safe bet that Julian Assange, the brains behind WikiLeaks, sees himself as a noble idealist at war with a nation that hides its many bad deeds in files marked "secret."

By exposing America for what it is, or at least for what he thinks it is, Mr. Assange is a hero, or at least he thinks he is.

Except he isn't.

If Julian Assange really wants to be noble, idealistic and heroic – if he really wants to make the world a safer place – he would use his considerable talents to uncover the dark secrets hidden in places like Iran, China and Russia. I'll bet they have some really great secrets. But finding an accomplice to hack into their computers and stealing classified material would take real courage. Steal secrets from any of those countries and there's an excellent chance Mr. Assange would wake up dead one morning. Break into U.S. State Department files and the worst thing that happens is that your lawyer gets a letter from the attorney general's office saying play nice.

But what Julian Assange has managed to do, inadvertently to be

sure, is blow up the concept of confidentiality. If you can break into U.S. secret files with impunity, than everything is fair game – including WikiLeaks itself.

Wouldn't you just love to know what Julian Assange and his band of merry men and women say and write in private? Do they worry that confidential informants might be killed because of their leaks involving the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan? Or do they think that the death of a few people working for the U.S. government is a small price to pay if it helps end two wars Mr. Assange doesn't believe should have been waged in the first place?

Ah, but those matters are confidential, don't you know. They're none of our business. They're private, not meant for outsiders. And WikiLeaks privacy must be respected.

Then there's the New York Times, which ran the WikiLeaks story on page one, which I would have also done since the documents were being published in four foreign newspapers and could easily be accessed on the WikiLeaks Website.

But consider this: Just one year ago, the New York Times environmental reporter, Andrew Revkin, refused to publish confidential emails from English academics calling into question some crucial research about global warming, a scandal that came to be known as climategate.

This was Mr. Revkin's statement of principle last year: "The documents appear to have been acquired illegally and contain all manner of private information and statements that were never intended for the public eye, so they won't be posted here" on his New York Times blog.

That was then. But after WikiLeaks, through an unnamed intermediary, gave the Times those state departments cables, the paper said their contents were not only available elsewhere but were in the public interest – and therefore should be published.

As Powerline, which first noted the Times' hypocrisy pointed out, "Without belaboring the pointy, let us note simply that the two statements are logically irreconcilable. Perhaps something other than principle and logic were at work then, or at work now."

That's a pretty safe assumption.