

Let's Shut Down The Government!

As I sit here, it's the 8th of December and I have no idea if the government will be shut down before the end of the month. For my purposes, it hardly matters because the threat of a shutdown is always lurking in Washington. That is especially true now that the two parties are hunkered down in their respective trenches as if reenacting the bloodiest days of World War I.

For a long time, as my wife just reminded me, I opposed such shutdowns. But I only opposed them because the media is always quick to blame it on the Republicans and because in one case, the 2013 shutdown did lead to the Clintons' bagman, Terry McAuliffe, defeating Ken Cuccinelli in Virginia's gubernatorial race. That was because northern Virginia is home to so many federal bureaucrats that they took the work stoppage personally.

My own inclination is to bring the federal government to a halt as often as possible, if simply to slow down the rate at which Obama and Congress are destroying the nation. One of the problems with a shutdown, however, is that it's the president who gets to decide how the available money is spent. And Obama being Obama, he loves to shut down things like the World War II Memorial and the national parks, knowing how much normal Americans resent such closures.

At the risk of being labeled a flip-flopper, I have changed my mind. That's because I finally came to the realization that it's only the mass media that blames the GOP, and fewer and fewer people, including Democrats, are paying any attention to the NY Times and the major TV networks.

Furthermore, I came to see the upside of the two major

shutdowns in the recent past. The first took place in 1995, the second in 2013. In both cases, the GOP got the lion's share of the blame, but so what? In 1996, although Clinton won re-election, defeating the zombie-like Bob Dole, the GOP picked up two seats in the Senate and only dropped two seats in the House.

In 2014, less than a year after the second shutdown, the GOP picked up nine seats in the Senate and a dozen more in the House. So perhaps I'm not the only one who approves of politicians having less opportunity to stick their noses into our business.

Speaking of politicians, I would love to have reporters conduct the same sort of exit polls after those in the House and Senate cast their votes for majority and minority leaders that they do during normal elections. For instance, I'd love to know why the Democrats keep re-electing Harry Reid and Nancy Pelosi. I mean, why would anyone wish to have his party represented by Reid, a guy Hollywood would typecast as a mortician? As for Mrs. Pelosi, she speaks like a backward teenager and has had so many facelifts, my friend Steve Maikoski fears that the day will come when her face will snap in front of the TV cameras and roll up like a window shade.

The Republicans are no better. Mitch McConnell and John Boehner may be nice guys, but they are equally boring to listen to and have the personal magnetism of a pair of sheep. I know that my more conservative readers don't like them because of their middle of the road politics and their unnatural desire to compromise with liberals. Still, politics aside, wouldn't you think that with 54 members in the new Senate and 246 members in the new House, they would come up with a couple of people easier on the eyes and ears than two fellows who should be bottled and sold as surefire cures for insomnia?

I'm not a Washington insider, so I have no way of knowing, but

is there an unwritten law which states that to be a Congressional leader, you have to be able to pass for an attraction at the waxworks?

In the aftermath of the demonstrations over the recent incidents in Ferguson and Staten Island, there were so many statements by politicians, so-called race leaders, demonstrators and commentators, to refute and despise, I hardly know where to begin.

But as I have already covered the first two groups in previous articles, it's time to rat out the latter two. Not since the Occupy Wall Street movement was in full swing have I seen so many self-righteous creeps out in full regalia. Show me a group of chanters and I'll show you a pack of morons. And what could be more moronic than chanting "Hands up, don't shoot" when Michael Brown, as the grand jury witnesses testified, not only never raised his hands, but decided it would be a good idea to rush a cop who had stopped firing his gun?

Then we have the commentators who kept telling us that those marching on behalf of Eric Garner were peacefully demonstrating while the cameras showed us the lunkheads tying up traffic on streets and bridges and preventing Christmas shoppers from entering Macy's Department Store. What is peaceful about doing everything you can to frustrate innocent bystanders trying to get to work or home to their families, raising the blood pressure of thousands of people who are already mentally and physically frazzled by the holiday season?

And of course even those disseminating the peaceful protest propaganda had to eat their words when the thugs in Berkeley began hurling rocks and Molotov cocktails at the cops.

Chris Rock, the black comedian, summed up the case for the aggrieved by quoting W.E.B. Dubois: "A system cannot fail those it was never meant to protect."

For me, the question Rock raises is just how stupid do you have to be before you think the real problem facing blacks in America isn't lack of education and a nonexistent work ethic or men refusing to marry the mothers of their children; and it isn't a generational reliance on welfare and thousands of blacks murdering and raping their fellow blacks. Instead, Chris Rock and his like-minded enablers in show business and the media would have us believe the problem boils down to a couple of white cops killing a pair of black scofflaws.

These days, if you hold the victims even partially to blame, it makes you a bigot. But inasmuch as it only takes speaking out against Obama, Al Sharpton or Eric Holder, to be branded a racist these days, the term for some of us has inevitably become a badge of honor.

Burt's Webcast is every Wednesday at Noon Pacific Time.

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The One Promise Mr. Obama Is Trying to Keep

✘ I have written before about that observation by H.L. Mencken, the Baltimore journalist and all-around sourpuss, who said you'll never go broke underestimating the intelligence of the ordinary American. Once again, let's put that dark remark to the test.

Most Americans tell the pollsters that they don't like ObamaCare. But they detest Republicans, the very people who unanimously voted against it.

They voted for Mr. Obama because he promised he wasn't going to play the old polarizing game that politicians have always played. Today he's the most polarizing president in memory, and thanks to the American people, his approval ratings, though not as high as they once were, are still the kind W would have killed for.

They voted for Barack Obama because he said he would bring us together. Knowing what the American people wanted to hear, he said he would respect the other side's point of view. During the showdown over the debt ceiling and the government shutdown, Mr. Obama and his acolytes used the language usually reserved for terrorists to describe Republicans. They were hostage takers and people with bombs strapped to their chest, in the words of one of the president's top political advisors. Or they were like wife beaters, according to Senator Barbara Boxer, one of President Obama's most loyal allies.

President Obama told us if we passed the Affordable Care Act our premiums would come down. For millions of Americans they're going up. Way up. And so are their deductibles.

He said we could all keep our doctors under ObamaCare. Some will, many won't.

He said if we like our insurance plan we could keep it. Again, some will, many won't.

He told us he'd get to the bottom of the IRS scandal that targeted conservatives. He hasn't.

He told us those responsible for the deaths of four Americans, including our ambassador, in Benghazi would be punished. We're still waiting.

He drew a red line in the sand regarding the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian dictator. Then he said he wasn't the one who drew a red line, the world did. He not only looked

foolish. He looked weak. And the jury is still out on whether the Syrian regime will really turn over its chemical weapons to an international organization.

He told us he cut the deficit in half but forgot to tell us a) that a lot of the reduction was the result of sequestration, which he opposes, and b) that it was half of the biggest deficit in our history, created by him and his fellow Democrats – and about twice as much as the deficit in the last year of the Bush presidency.

He told us that he helped created millions of jobs since he became president but left out the part about how many of them – perhaps most – are part-time jobs since a lot of employers won't hire full time workers because of the costs associated with ObamaCare.

He told us that Republicans were radical extremists at the same time he was the one who wouldn't compromise even a little to open up the government a lot sooner.

How does he get away with this kind of duplicity? Could be because Mencken was right. There really are a lot of dolts in the USA – the clueless class of Americans who, if they ever heard of Benghazi or the IRS scandal or Syria or any of the rest of it, have already forgotten all about all of it. And the so-called mainstream media aren't doing much to refresh their memories.

But liberal journalists almost always favor Democrats over Republicans. Still, this is different. As willing as reporters are to put a thumb on the scale for Democrats, I don't think Mondale or Dukakis or Gore or Kerry would have gotten such an easy ride. Mr. Obama, of course, is different. If we need to say it, he's black. And more than that he's the first African-American president of the United States. And precisely because of that a lot of journalists won't go after him the way they'd go after other politicians,

even those of the Democratic persuasion. They have way too much invested in him.

I understand this is not a new or particularly enlightening observation – not at this late date anyway. But in times of crisis it's important to state the obvious.

There is one more promise Mr. Obama made to the nation while he was selling himself as The One who came to save us from politics as usual. He told us he would fundamentally transform the United States of America. Finally, a statement we can believe he really meant.

The Lefty Buffoonery That Republicans Need to 'Shut Down' Once and For All

✘ One of the residual effects of this week's government shutdown and the implementation of Obamacare has been a sharp uptick in political commentary across social media. At least, that's what I've been seeing when I've logged into my online accounts over the past few days.

I'm not talking about the normal activity. There are certainly a lot of armchair pundits who regularly take to the Internet to air their political grievances, but right now I'm seeing something a little bit different. People who are typically a bit apprehensive about publicly weighing in on political matters (primarily out of fear of irritating their friends on

Facebook) are feeling compelled to throw in their *two cents worth* on the big debates raging in Washington.

I'm watching my typically timid conservative friends fiercely tear into Obamacare, while my friends on the left, including ones who rarely bring up politics, are railing against the "GOP sponsored" government shutdown. There's much more passion out there than usual.

In the midst of all of this grumbling, I keep seeing a YouTube video being referenced by my liberal friends entitled something like, "U.S. Senator Says What Everyone is Thinking About the Government Shutdown." Based on the frequency of its appearance, I decided to check it out.

The video is of a speech on the Senate floor given by Elizabeth Warren a few days ago. She's that hard-left senator from Massachusetts who is best known for pretending to be a Native American to advance her career in education, and also inspiring President Obama's infamous "You Didn't Build That" rant.

What was her profound statement that so many of my liberal friends agreed that "everyone" was thinking? Here you go:

*"With millions of people out of work, with an economic recovery still far too fragile, with students and families being crushed by student loan debt, with millions of seniors denied their chance at one hot meal a day with Meals on Wheels and millions of little children pushed out of Head Start because of a sequester, with the country hours away from a government shutdown and days away from a potential default on the nation's debt, the republicans have decided that the single most important issue facing our nation is **to change the law so that employers can deny women access to birth control coverage.**"*

Well there you have it, folks... The *real* reason for the Republican party's objection to Obamacare: They want to deny

women access to birth control.

Ugh.

Hearing crack-pot nonsense like this is irritating enough as it is, but when I witness people I know and respect actually buying into this left-wing propaganda? It's pretty hard to take.

Even one of my instinctively conservative friends took the bait, expressing outrage over what she didn't realize was merely shameless demagoguery and defamation, because her lefty friends were lending it credence.

When people aren't paying attention to what's actually going on in this country, they're sadly prone to this form of brainwashing, and it's a very frustrating thing to witness.

But the truth is that the "War on Women" campaign that the Democrats concocted in 2012 to yank the national debate away from the failed policies of their president and party was a very successful one. It worked. It created an emotionally-driven narrative (despite bearing no resemblance to reality) that became a key campaign issue of the election, and it compelled a lot voters (women in particular) not to vote for Mitt Romney.

When you look back at the Democrats' strategy, it really was quite impressive.

In January of 2012, during a Republican primary debate, questioner (and former Democratic political advisor) George Stephanopoulos fired the first shot in the *War on Women*, asking the GOP candidates their thoughts on states banning women from using contraception. The Republican candidates on stage were completely perplexed by Stephanopoulos' question, expressing their confusion over why on earth any state would even think of doing such a thing. Mitt Romney himself stated that he had never even heard of a candidate, let alone a

state, who wanted to enact such a bizarre policy.

Romney and the Republicans were right to be confused. The question was completely nonsensical. Even very socially conservative candidates like Michele Bachmann and Rick Santorum, in interviews conducted after the debate, scoffed at the notion of a contraception ban.

Yet, by the time election night rolled around ten months later, there was a national narrative engrained into many voter's minds that the Republicans wanted to take away women's birth control. How did this happen? It's because the DNC, the news media, and the entertainment industry worked in concert to drive this trash right down the throats of low-information voters... and it worked!

As evidenced by the popularity of the Elizabeth Warren video (which has well over a million views right now), my fear is that this craziness still has some mileage. This means we could very well see the *War on Women* conveniently revitalized around election time of 2014.

The GOP would do itself an enormous favor by being better prepared for such insanity this time around, and to get out in front of it. Conservatives and the Republican party can't afford to just laugh this stuff off, and assume that people will see right through it. The people *won't* see through it. They've proven that. 

There needs to be a serious discussion in GOP strategy meetings on how to effectively obliterate the hysterical, women-victimization charges that spew out of the mouths of left-wing demagogues like Elizabeth Warren. Because if Republicans don't take things like this seriously, they'll end up wasting an incredible amount of time next year defending themselves against fairy tale assertions, when they should be spending their time giving Americans reasons to vote for them.

Is This the GOP Shutdown – Or President Obama's?

✘ I interviewed George Carlin many years ago when I was still with CBS News. We hit it off. He was both funny and very smart. Very liberal, too, but that never came out in our interview. One of his points was that we humans had made a mess of things and he wanted the world as we know it to end. He wanted a big meteor to destroy the planet. And for good measure he wanted it to sail right through the hole in the ozone layer. But he wanted Los Angeles, where he lived, to be the last to go. Why? Because, he told me, he wanted to watch the destruction, one city at a time, on CNN.

George was a strange cat.

I ran into him later that night (in Aspen, Colorado) and he said something like, “Hey Bernie, I’ve been thinking about our interview. And you know what it comes down to for me? I root for chaos.”

I think he really did. But part of it was an act. He had a family. I’m sure he didn’t want to see them go up in smoke. But I’ve been thinking about that line, about why some people root for chaos. And it hit me: You know who else is rooting for chaos? President Barack Obama.

First, a few words about the Republicans. They didn’t think this government shutdown thing through. They picked a fight they couldn’t win. They went into battle with the President of the United States but they didn’t have a battle plan. They didn’t have an end game. And now, if the polls are right, they’re getting the lion’s share of the blame for the shutdown. You can’t blame that on the liberal media.

But it didn't have to happen. All the president and his equally hyper-partisan pal Harry Reid over in the senate had to do was throw the Republicans a bone. Give them something. Anything. And there would have been no shutdown. The president could have said, "Ok, let's repeal the tax on medical devices." But he wouldn't do it. He could have said, "Congress gets no special treatment, no subsidies." But he wouldn't do that either.

In a few weeks we'll have a showdown on raising the debt ceiling. Republicans want any increase tied to spending decreases. The president has already indicated he won't compromise on that one either.

Barack Obama is rooting for chaos because he knows most Americans won't blame him. And that is his only hope for capturing the House next year. And if he manages to pull that one off, he will make good on his campaign promise – *to fundamentally transform the United States of America.*

And while the so-called mainstream media are predictably telling us all about the shutdown at Yellowstone and how the panda-cam went offline, they're telling us precious little about why the president is so obstinate.

What I have just written is clearly my opinion. It's commentary. It's not irrefutable fact. But hard news reporters could take those ideas and turn them into legitimate questions. They could ask serious non-partisan political thinkers if the president is refusing to compromise for political gain. They could ask if they believe he's prepared to throw the American economy under the bus hoping it will benefit him in 2014? Is this part of his plan to transform America? And then they could ask: Is the president of the United States rooting for chaos?