

After ‘Doomsday’ Sequester Cuts, Only One Person Laid Off; Do You Care?

☒ President Obama told the country that *it* would “add hundreds of thousands of Americans to the unemployment rolls.” And just in case the media, Republicans, or anyone else among the American public thought he was exaggerating, he made it clear that he wasn’t.

“This is not an abstraction,” the president added. “People will lose their jobs.”

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid took the provocative rhetoric a step further, claiming that *it* had “already cut 1.6 million jobs.”

“As many as 40,000 teachers could lose their jobs” because of *it*, said Education Secretary Arne Duncan. “There are literally teachers now who are getting pink slips.”

The “*it*” I’m talking about, of course, is the controversial sequester that kicked in a little over a year ago.

At the time, there was no shortage of politicians fear-mongering the affects of the unorthodox budgetary measure. The American public was being told repeatedly that the \$85.3 billion cut in federal spending would result in nothing short of Armageddon. Criminals would be released back on the street, children wouldn’t receive vaccinations, and senior citizens would starve to death! But it was the massive number of jobs that were *sure* to be lost – those of teachers, firefighters, policeman, and other public servants – that was really being pushed hard both by the administration and many in congress.

Well, as we learned earlier this week when the findings of a

Government Accountability Office report was released, all of those wide-eyed predictions of massive job layoffs fell a bit short. A lot short, actually. In fact, according to the GAO, a grand total of exactly ONE job was lost, as a result of the sequestration. That's right... One.

The revelation would be comical if it wasn't painfully representative of the shameless tactics used so often by so many politicians to scare the hell out of the American public.

Sometimes the goal is to paint the opposition party as a bunch of extremists – people who want to steal women's birth control pills, push senior citizens off of cliffs, and take us back to the days of segregation. Other times, it's to convince the electorate that it just can't live without a monstrous, ever-expanding government apparatus hovering above – one so important to everyone's well-being that no amount of funding should be spared.

At some point, you would think the public would get tired of being played for fools. Unfortunately, far too many among the public are simply quite comfortable in the role.

In reaction to the GAO report, U.S. Senator Tom Coburn from Oklahoma made the following statement: "It is devastating to the credibility of Washington politicians and administration officials who spent months – and millions of dollars – engaging in a coordinated multi-agency cabinet-level public relations campaign to scare the American people."

Coburn added, "Taxpayers expect us to root our predictions in fact, not ideology and spin."

Is that true, though? Do Americans really expect politicians to be honest with them? Is it something they insist upon? Sadly, I've seen little evidence of that.

I don't think anyone truly believes that any of the politicians and officials who engaged in the hair-on-fire,

doomsday rhetoric surrounding the sequestration will pay any kind of political price for what they did. The public will forget about this story by next week. And therein lies the problem.

As a country, we should care when people play off our emotions to spread ridiculous assertions and blatant untruths. We should care when people tell us that healthcare reform will let us keep our health-plans and doctors when they *know* what they're telling us just isn't true. We should care when we're told a false story about how four Americans in Benghazi, Libya were murdered, and we should care about finding out who it was that made up that story.



We should care.

So, when we're told repeatedly that a spending cut equal to only one-half of 1 percent of GDP will layoff hundreds of thousands of people, and instead only lays off one, we should start laying off some of the people who told us that nonsense in the first place. It seems only fair, doesn't it?

Unfortunately, until that kind of thing happens, the demagoguery and dishonesty will live on. And sadly, we still won't care.

Chuck Hagel Unveils Both a Budget and Why He Was Nominated

 Last year, when President Obama nominated Republican Chuck Hagel as secretary of defense, there were actually quite a

few people in the media who suggested that he did so in the interest of bipartisanship.

Reid J. Epstein of *The Politico* even went as far as writing that the decision “appeals to Obama’s bipartisan spirit.”

I think anyone who has observed President Obama with even an iota of objectivity knows how comical such a statement is. After all, we’re talking about a man who spent his entire first term in office blaming his Republican predecessor for all of the country’s problems. We’re also talking about someone who has committed himself to engaging in a perpetual campaign against his Republican opposition in congress. He’s demonized them as obstructionists and hostage-takers, he’s inferred that they’re bigots, and he’s pretty much portrayed them as unpatriotic people who simply want to see the country fail.

The president, who has demonstrated a disdain for conservatism in all of its forms, isn’t interested in bipartisanship. He never has been. He also wasn’t interested in nominating a qualified individual to hold the position of U.S. Secretary of Defense. Chuck Hagel’s confirmation hearing last year was nothing short of embarrassing. Republicans and Democrats alike were aghast as they listened to him bumble his way through answer after answer, displaying an astonishing lack of competence and an inability to defend his own positions on issues directly relevant to the job he was applying for.

I think it’s safe to say that the real reason for the president’s nomination became apparent this week when Hagel announced a military budget that will reduce the size of the U.S. Army to pre-World War II levels. What better way to run cover for such a drastic proposal than having an individual from the Republican Party (the party traditionally most trusted to defend our country from foreign threats) directly attached to it?

Former Defense Secretary Robert Gates certainly wouldn't have gone for it. Gates has gone as on record saying that he would have quit his job if such mindless military cuts were forced upon him while he held that position.

Hagel, however, is no Gates. He's an outspoken, anti-war guy with a history of making anti-Israel comments and denouncing his party for supporting the Iraq War (after he first voted for it). In 2012, he even went as far as saying that the Republican presidential primary candidates "can hardly race to say who would bomb Iran first." Did I mention that Hagel also refers to Iran's repressive government as "elected [and] legitimate"?

I certainly respect Chuck Hagel, primarily for his honorable service in Vietnam for which we all should admire and be grateful for. His value as our Secretary of Defense, however, is little more than a public relations stunt. He's a tool being used to pursue the only form of government shrinkage that committed liberals like President Obama are ever interested in: Cuts to our military.

Along with cuts to major equipment programs and military benefits, the plan calls for reducing our total number of troops to under 450,000. That's 120,000 less than the number of troops that fought in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Rich Lowry of the *National Review* did a good job of conveying why that's such a bad idea:

"Understandably, we don't want to fight another grinding ground war. But this doesn't mean we won't have to, or we won't experience other nasty surprises. It is an unfortunate part of the American tradition to convince ourselves, when we find it convenient, that the world is not a dangerous place that always demands our attention, or else."

The truth is that we live in a very dangerous world – one that's much more dangerous now than it was the day President

Obama took office. Anyone sitting in the Oval Office would obviously know that. Yet, President Obama's lifelong, liberal sensibilities prevent him from recognizing the prescription for best preparing our country for that world because he is (and always has been) far more concerned with pursuing a domestic, social agenda.

Liberalism is largely about trying to achieve a goal of *social justice* within society. It's not about maintaining an influential role in global issues. Thus a smaller, less consequential part for the United States to play on the world stage is actually seen as a good thing among liberals. The idea is that it will allow for more resources to be diverted toward the pursuit of *domestic bliss*.

There will, of course, *never* be any true restraints placed on spending by politicians who consider years of trillion dollar deficits to be an *Era of Austerity*. With our nation approaching a national debt of \$18 trillion, and no other meaningful spending cuts (only increases) being proposed, one can only laugh at Hagel's statement about recognizing "the reality of the magnitude of our fiscal challenges." 

As Rich Lowry also pointed out in his column, the only *real* austerity we've been seeing has been to our military, first in the form of sequestration cuts and now in the military budget unveiled by Chuck Hagel.

Instead of spreading the *wealth* around, why can't we spread the *cuts* around?

By concentrating only our military, we're reminding the rest of the world just how weak and increasingly inconsequential our country is right now. That's the legacy that Chuck Hagel is creating for himself as Secretary of Defense. Something tells me he doesn't mind, however, because even he knows that it's the reason he's holding the job.

Obama & Friends

Some people insist that guilt by association is unfair. They often dredge up Sen. Joe McCarthy as an example of what that sort of thing can lead to. But the fact is that we all judge people by those with whom they choose to associate. That's where the expression about people lying down with dogs and getting up with fleas originated. And the fact is, more often than not, McCarthy was right, although it was his own fault that he usually came off as a buffoon and drunken bully, thereby tainting even those of us who recognized that Soviet spies and apologists had long polluted our State Department, and that it was Alger Hiss and not Whitaker Chambers who was the lying scumbag.

In much the same way, Obama discloses a great deal about himself by the people he selects to be his advisors. Who but a dedicated Leftist would have the likes of Valerie Jarrett, Kathleen Sebelius and Tom Perez, in his inner circle? And although I know that Obama is not responsible for electing the members of the Congressional Black Caucus, is it even possible that he's not embarrassed to be supported by a group of ignoramuses who went to Cuba a few years back and came back praising Fidel Castro?

More recently, Maxine Waters warned that sequestration would cost the U.S. 170 million jobs, which is 50 million more jobs than we have. In fact, if we had that many Americans working, our unemployment rate would be zero. Not to be outdone, Rep. Charley Rangel announced that "millions of kids are dying because they are being shot down by assault weapons."

Not hundreds of kids, not even thousands of kids, but millions! This is not only extraordinarily dumb, but, as a

black man, he should be aware that most black kids are shot down by other black kids with hand guns. But rather than address that problem, he elects to go to war with gun manufacturers. Someone should tell the tax cheat that whereas assault weapons rarely kill people, gangbangers do it constantly.

And rumor has it that Waters and Rangel are two of the brighter members of the Black Caucus, a group that includes Hank Johnson, the Georgia congressman who famously worried that if too many Navy personnel were transferred to Guam, the island would likely tip over and sink!

While getting off the plane in Israel, Barack Obama was overheard saying that it was good to get away from Congress. I'm sure that for its part, Congress, at least that portion populated by Republicans, felt the same way. I would only point out to Obama that, however he feels about it, Congress is here to stay. But there's nothing that says he has to stick around. After all, if the Pope can retire, surely there's nothing to prevent a lame duck president from calling it quits.

It used to be said that a conservative was a liberal who'd just been mugged. Apparently, these days, a conservative is a liberal who just saw his tax bill. At least that would explain Bill Maher's recent hissy fit. He was so inflamed that he actually said, "You know what, liberals...rich people actually do pay the freight in this country. It's outrageous what we're paying—over 50%! I'm willing to pay my share, but, yeah, it's ridiculous."

I assume it's too late for him to put a stop on that million dollar check he sent to the Obama campaign last year.

Now, with the next presidential election coming up right around the corner, at least judging by the recent words and actions by the likes of Marco Rubio, Rand Paul, Mike Huckabee,

Jeb Bush, Paul Ryan, Michele Bachmann and Rick Santorum, it's not too early to alert Republicans to the fact that a one-size-fits-all litmus test is just plain nuts.

Geography matters. Along with William F. Buckley's injunction to always vote for the most conservative candidate...who can win, I would advise Republicans to always keep geography in mind. Two politicians can hold exactly the same conservative views, but whereas the one running in Texas, Utah or Oklahoma, will coast to victory, the one voicing those identical beliefs in most parts of the country won't even get out of the starting gate.

It would be well to keep in mind that we may all be Americans, but the guy in Chicago barely speaks the same language as his brother in Dallas. In the same way, different cultures have different rules. In France, for instance, it's not only assumed that politicians will have mistresses, it's almost mandatory. Sort of the way it is with Democrats.

I'm reminded that years ago, there was a story floating around that a foreign diplomat connected to the U.N. was photographed professionally engaged, as it were, with a New York prostitute. Not only didn't he pay hush money to the blackmailers, but requested a full set of glossies because he thought it would enhance his reputation with his colleagues.

As I was saying, that's sort of the way it is with Democrats.

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Hypocrite-in-Chief

✘ **Hypocrisy** – n. The practice of professing beliefs, feelings or virtues that one does not hold or possess; insincerity.

While claiming his concern for America's children, President Obama cancels White House tours instead of cutting the countless numbers of wasteful projects, grants, and studies that fail to benefit any American life. Hypocrisy at its finest.

Sequestration was part of President Obama's Budget Control Act of 2011, which required \$85 billion in mandatory across-the-board budget cuts and was supposed to be an incentive for Congress to cut \$1.5 trillion over the next ten years – a mere drop in the bucket, by the way, in my humble opinion. But, of course, that never happened.

Instead of dealing directly with Congress to compromise on what could be cut – and there's a helluva lot that can be cut – Mr. Obama went around the country, in his inimitable style of belly-aching, whining about the disasters that would befall the United States if the sequester happened. Instead of showing some true leadership, Mr. Obama looked like Chicken Little crying, "the sky is falling, the sky is falling." He failed to propose a single cut from the hundreds of useless and wasteful programs funded by us, the U.S. taxpayers.

How hypocritical is all this coming from a President who thinks we don't spend enough already on education? Remember during the State of the Union Address, he spoke about working with states to "invest" (aka "spend") money to provide "high-quality preschool" to every child in America. For years, we've heard from him about hiring 100,000 new teachers (imagine all those union dues that will go to Democrat candidates) rather than insisting on more effective teachers.

Rather than providing an opportunity for school children to

learn about our government by visiting the White House, he spitefully decides to cancel all White House tours. I'm sure he's hoping the public will attribute this action to the Republicans, and, in the end, win back the House in the mid-term elections. I hope the American public isn't that stupid, but time will tell. I have my doubts.

So, for a guy who says he wants to put our children's education first, his actions actually show he doesn't much care about American schoolchildren. It's all about the politics.

I guess he thinks sending a delegation to Hugo Chavez's funeral in Venezuela was more worthy than our children even after its Vice President announced the expulsion of two U.S. diplomats for an alleged plot to destabilize its government.

I guess he really believes the TSA needs \$50 million in new uniforms?

I guess he's really behind Secy. of State, John Kerry's decision to release \$250 million of the \$1.5 billion in aid to the Egyptian government led by the anti-American, anti-Semitic Muslim Brotherhood.

I guess he's okay with lots of federal employees attending conferences at our expense. I read there were more than 894 conferences last year that cost us \$340 million. From my own experience, conferences are about a whole lot of people talking and getting absolutely nothing accomplished. How about taking some advice from the King (not you, Mr. Obama – the real “King” as in Elvis) – “a little less conversation and a little more action.”

I know, in reality, Mr. Obama doesn't want to cut \$1 in spending and just wants to raise taxes and raise taxes and raise them some more. But really? C'mon. Couldn't he come up with one suggestion to cut even \$1 from our federal budget?

And how about all the government agencies that overlap?

How much does all this cost us?

- Fifty-six programs across 20 agencies dealing with financial literacy.
- More than 2,100 data centers – up from 432 a little more than a decade ago – across 24 federal agencies. GAO estimated the government could save up to \$200 billion over the next decade by consolidating them.
- Twenty programs across seven agencies dealing with homelessness. A report found \$2.9 billion spent on the programs in 2009.
- Eighty-two “distinct” teacher-quality programs across 10 agencies. Nine of them address teacher quality in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.
- Fifteen agencies administering 30 food-related laws.
- Eighty economic development programs.

If he really wanted to cut some pork out of the budget, it was a no-brainer. The fact is he doesn't want to. He'd rather lay sequestration at the door of the Republicans, when it was Mr. Obama who put it into play by signing the Budget Control Act of 2011, so, with the help of the mainstream media, the public can blame Republicans and not him. Nice move. It may work.

Rather than do his job, Mr. Obama talks about his concern for America's schoolchildren on the one hand, and yet shuts the White House doors to those same children. What a hypocrite.

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