

Stupid Stories

☒ The day before Thanksgiving is the king of all stupid stories days. These are the days of the year when the media decides to dominate that day's news with completely useless information. There are random stupid stories, such as some movie star doing something stupid. Then there are scheduled stupid stories such as the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. The reason this day is the king of all useless stories days is that it is the combination of three useless stories all in one day. Call it the perfect storm of stupid stories days.

Storm 1 – Black Friday Preparation

For some reason most media outlets think that we have any interest in the misguided youths, unemployed, or otherwise confused consumers who have decided to camp out at their local Best Buy or other retailer for sales that will begin Friday. We are supposed to be interested in people who will spend their Thanksgiving sitting on pavement outside a store for hours on end, eating their can of baked beans hoping their investment of time will pay off in a \$100 reduced price of a TV. Whenever you see these people, just remember that their vote for president counts just as much as yours.

Storm 2 – Butterball Lady

We all know that Thanksgiving is a special holiday, and an American tradition. Do we have to spoil it with a 5 minute advertisement for Butterball Turkey across all media outlets? Is it possible that someone who is hosting Thanksgiving dinner is still looking for information on how to cook a Turkey the day before their house is going to be filled with people? If this is true, thank goodness that she gives us the hotline phone number (also on the bird) for any turkey emergencies.

Storm 3 – Busy Travel Day

The day before Thanksgiving is one of the busiest travel days of the year. This is why we get to see a top notch reporter standing at the airport. Perhaps we are even lucky enough to hear an interview, and find out who some random person is visiting. Scintillating! Just think how unimportant this story is. If you are traveling or waiting for someone, you are not watching the story. Even if you are watching at the airport just when they are about to tell you something useful, they say, "make sure to check with your airline for information". Isn't that what you would have done anyway?

The issue isn't that these things aren't important to somebody (I guess), it is that they are not "news". What stories or reports are shelved to give us these gems? If you missed these stupid stories, don't worry you will have plenty of chances throughout the year. There will be late gift buyer story on December 24th, or tax return wait-till-the-last-minute story on April 15th. If this isn't enough, I'm sure Charlie Sheen or Lindsay Lohan are planning something special for all of us.

Bush Tax Cuts Caused the Recession?

✘ The Democratic Party, led by President Obama, is making the argument that the Bush tax cuts of 2001 and 2003 caused the recession of 2008. Some campaign talking points are...“Driving us in a ditch...We've tried their way and it didn't work...Tax cuts for the wealthy led to the recession...Returning to the failed policies of the past”. The tax cuts were a provable overwhelming success in terms of the resulting economy. They

led to good sustainable growth, and a low unemployment rate. Are we to believe that these cuts were some sort of Trojan horse that looked great for 5 years, but snuck up and bit us in year 6? In fact the President extended them for 2 years in 2010, and is interested in extending them for 98% of Americans now. Why would he allow such a destructive policy to continue if it caused a recession? Why isn't he asked this when he talks about *the failed policies of the past*?

The Bush Tax cuts had the same effect on the economy that the Reagan, Kennedy, and Harding/Coolidge tax cuts had. They created sustained economic growth and jobs. The facts are as follows...

Year	GDP Growth Rate	Unemployment Rate
2003	2.5%	6.0%
2004	3.9%	5.5%
2005	3.2%	5.1%
2006	2.8%	4.6%
2007	2.0%	4.6%

These statistics are readily available at government websites, and could take as long as 10 minutes to research. It is bad enough that the Democrats are trying to gain political advantage by ignoring facts. It is, however, unacceptable that people in the media would propagate this falsehood when the facts are easily available. The housing crisis caused the recession. Unqualified people were able to get mortgages for little or no money down. When the price of the house went down, the mortgage went underwater. Banks packaged these mortgages in investments, and when people started defaulting on their loans it brought the financial system to the brink of collapse. This failed policy of the past is still going on under this president. The FHA still has its 3.5% down payment

mortgages going out the door.

The media and the democrats ignore these statistics so they can continue to deny the effectiveness of tax cuts, when it comes to economic growth and job creation. Acknowledging these facts would also force us to look at the real reasons for the crisis. Liberals in the press love to blame the banks for the housing crisis. They were not without blame, but they just took a bad policy and accelerated it by creating investments that bet on these bad loans. This is like blaming the driver of a car for an accident when the government mandates TNT be put in the gas tank.

The President wants to blame tax cuts for the recession when he and Democrats have not recommended any changes to the policy that was the root cause of the crisis. At the same time he has endorsed almost completely, the tax cuts that he rails about. The media has really dropped the ball in terms of pointing out the incoherence of these arguments. It is left to the Romney campaign and outside groups to get this message out, so we don't make the mistake of leaving the dipsticks in charge in Washington.

Voting “No” on Voting

Before we even get close to November 6, 2012, I'd like to suggest that everybody pledge not to pressure their friends and neighbors to get out and vote. There is absolutely nothing un-American about staying home and minding your own business on Election Day.

I, for one, am sick and tired of hearing about all the brave Americans who fought and died so that we'd be free to vote. What those good people actually fought for was the freedom to

vote, not the obligation. It is the freedom not to vote that is denied to slaves. It's only when dictators are in charge that people are compelled to go through the motions. The likes of Fidel Castro, Joseph Stalin and the Stalin wannabe, Saddam Hussein, never had to worry about chads and miscounts. When those guys got out the vote, they got out the vote!

I can certainly understand why the two major parties want everybody showing up on Election Day. After all, each side is convinced, after losing an election, that if only 100% of the electorate had shown up and done their duty, the right guy – their guy – would have won. But they're in the business. What's in it for us?

Please understand that I am not writing this in my own defense. It so happens that I vote every chance I get. In fact, having been born in Chicago, I subscribe to the belief that I should vote early and often. I mean, I'm good at it. I can be trusted. There I am, faithfully watching CNN and FoxNews, reading a daily newspaper, keeping up on things political, and then, come Election Day, some lunkhead who's spent the past four years watching wrestling on TV and reading Hustler gets shamed into voting, and he winds up canceling out my vote! Is that fair? Is that just? More importantly, is it good for America? I think not.

What possible good can come from the 50-60% of the electorate that prefers to sit things out on Election Day being herded like so many sheep to the polls? I mean, if you think the politicians we elect now are inept, lazy and corrupt, can you imagine what we're going to wind up with when really dumb people start voting in record numbers?

It's bad enough that the Democrats are constantly looking to extend voting privileges to felons, illegal aliens and the deceased, without letting them get away with the pretense that a national ID card smacks of fascism. In a society that already takes drivers licenses, Medicare, Medicaid and Social

Security, cards for granted, it is sheer poppycock to pretend that a national identity card would do anything but make it harder for deadbeat dads to ditch their families, for killers like Whitey Bulger to disappear into the ether and for Democrats to steal elections.

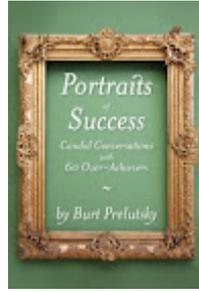
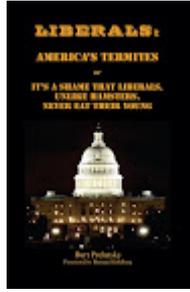
Frankly, I think we should all be ashamed of the fact that in America you have to prove who you are in order to rent a video at Blockbuster, but not to cast a vote in a presidential election.

Yes, I understand this is a democracy and that a double-digit IQ doesn't disqualify anyone from voting – or from pursuing elected office, for that matter. But why on earth would anybody in his right mind want to encourage those sloths to foist their ignorance off on the rest of us?

Instead of pretending it's our obligation to get every single numbskull to the voting booth on Election Day, it should be our patriotic duty to urge them to stay home and mind their own beeswax.

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Against More Taxes? You May Be a Terrorist!

✘ He sounded more like a pastor than a politician that night in Tucson. Here was a man with compassion and dignity who wanted just one thing – to bring Americans together. Barack Obama was at his eloquent best that night in January when he delivered a moving tribute at a memorial for the victims of the Arizona massacre.

He talked about how “our discourse has become so sharply polarized,” about how “we are far too eager to lay blame for all that ails the world at the feet of those who happen to think differently than we do.” He said, “It’s important for us to pause for a moment and make sure that we’re talking with each other in a way that heals, not in a way that wounds.”

Who could disagree with that? Well, it turns out that the

president's most reliable (and fawning) supporters – liberal commentators – either forgot what the president said, or didn't buy into it in the first place.

Today, these media pundits are doing what they so often do when they disagree with the other side. They're vilifying their opponents, opponents whom they see as enemies. And they're doing it, again as they so often do, while convincing themselves that they are the stewards of civility in our culture, and that their commentary is the essence of serious and intelligent public discourse.

There's nothing new, of course, about liberal vulgarity. Bush was a Nazi, Cheney was a war criminal, the tea party is comprised of racists, Sarah Palin and Rush Limbaugh inspired the Tucson lunatic to shoot up the place. Howard Dean once said, "I hate Republicans and everything they stand for." Can't get much clearer than that, can you?

Now, it's the current debate between Democrats and Republicans over raising the debt ceiling that has ratcheted up the rhetoric – while important, hardly a "sexy" topic that should generate the angry attacks it has.

Let's begin with Mr. "I Feel a Thrill Running Up My Leg When President Obama Speaks" – Chris Matthews. Twice, in less than 24 hours, Mathews said on MSNBC that Republicans who oppose raising the debt ceiling are "terrorists." He referred to the GOP as the "Wahhabis of American government," a reference to the sect of Islam often tied to intolerance and hate.

How civil is that?

Also on MSNBC, Tina Brown, the editor-in-chief of Newsweek and the Daily Beast, called Republicans in Congress "suicide bombers" for not "accommodating" the president in his call for more taxes.

When Rosie O'Donnell said Rudy Giuliani looked like a "Pez

dispenser” that was merely obnoxious and insulting. But comparing Republicans to suicide bombers – fanatics who slaughter innocent people – simply because they oppose tax increases? That crosses the line from childish taunts in the playground right into the heart of hate speech territory.

Then there’s Richard Cohen, the Washington Post columnist who once said that Newt Gingrich “should be hanged” for “hypocrisy.” Now he’s describing the Republican party as a “cult” and says the GOP presidential candidates comprise “a virtual political Jonestown.”

As Peter Wehner, the thoughtful political analysts and prolific blogger put it: “It’s hard to know whether these pundits understand how stupid and childish their rants are, or whether they’re so blinded by their ideology they don’t understand it’s not really appropriate to refer to people with whom you disagree on taxes as Wahhabis, suicide bombers and members of a death cult.”

Six months ago in Tucson, President Obama said that, “Rather than pointing fingers or assigning blame, let’s use this occasion to expand our moral imaginations, to listen to each other more carefully, to sharpen our instincts for empathy, and remind ourselves of all the ways that our hopes and dreams are bound together.”

Six months later in Washington, the same president said that, “The debt ceiling should not be something that is used as a gun against the heads of the American people to extract tax breaks for corporate jet owners or oil and gas companies that are making billions of dollars because the price of gasoline has gone up so high.”

A gun to the head? Yes, we know, it’s only a figure of speech, but an unfortunate one, since a gun to the head is what inspired President Obama to speak out so eloquently in the first place about restoring civility, and decency, to our

national conversation. A pastor wouldn't talk that way. A politician would.

Palin Media Frenzy

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