

For the Record

Some people object to the fact that I generally jump around in my articles instead of devoting each to a single topic. They have my sympathy, but I'm afraid I can't possibly accommodate them. It would be too much like firing a musket at a herd of charging buffalo. You might pick one off, but you're sure to be trampled to death by the others. Other conservative pundits can do what they like, but I prefer using a machine gun when it comes to liberals.

For instance, Nancy Pelosi once famously announced that we wouldn't know what was in the Affordable Care Act until it was passed. As if her statement wasn't shameful enough for a leading member of a governing body, it turns out to have also been a lie. It's now four years since it was passed, and people still don't know what's in it. And by people, I'm including unions, the Catholic Church and even Montana's Sen. Max Baucus, who had a lot to do with creating ObamaCare, but now calls it "a train wreck waiting to happen."

But how could it be otherwise? The bill ran 2,500 pages. The regulations run 17,900 pages, and they're not done yet. I don't know how quickly you could get through the 20,400 pages, but I'm guessing that if you started right now, by the time you finished you would be very old and you would therefore be denied healthcare by the Death Panels.

What's more, by his own recent admission, Harry Reid only considers ObamaCare a baby step on the inevitable path to single payer coverage. That means what he hankers after is the system in which the government controls everything connected to health care, just the way it is in Canada and England. Like most socialistic endeavors, it sounds good on paper. But in actual practice, it means months, sometimes even years, before people get the operation they need. The fact that people have been known to die during the delay has its upside. It means

that everyone behind them on the waiting list jumps up one place.

People who actually think that system is better than what we've had in America are bad enough. But when it comes to those like Harry Reid and Nancy Pelosi, you have to add hypocrisy to the mix. We all know that members of the House and Senate have excluded themselves from the glory of ObamaCare. There's no way that someone as old as Harry Reid is going to worry about some secret cabal of bureaucrats authorizing a liver transplant.

If I were John Boehner, God forbid, I wouldn't simply defund ObamaCare, tempting as it would be. We all know that Obama would simply shut down the government, and as much as I, personally, would cheer the closure, Obama is the one with the bully pulpit and the lapdog media and he would blame the closure of national parks, the furloughing of air traffic controllers and the erratic arrival of Social Security checks, on the Republicans. And while it's easy for the rest of us to tell our representatives to take the heat, it doesn't make a lot of sense when the GOP will be trying to hang on to the House and take back the Senate a year from now.

Instead, I would force the House to take a well-publicized vote and let the Democrats go on record defending ObamaCare. The last time it happened, in 2010, the liberals lost 60 seats in the House. I would love to do the same in the Senate, but Harry Reid would never allow the vote to take place.

A while back, some people were insisting that the photo taken in the Situation Room at the White House the evening the Navy Seals were risking their lives to take Osama bin Laden's was photo-shopped. They said that Obama looked too small in the picture. My initial response had been that it looked phony because Obama wasn't shown sitting in a prominent position. In fact, Hillary Clinton appeared to be the alpha dog in the room, while Obama looked as if he hoped the grown-ups didn't

notice that he was up past his bedtime.

It now turns out that, according to presidential aide Reggie Love, Obama not only wasn't in the room, but was playing cards with him and two other guys because he was too nervous to watch the action unfold in Pakistan.

According to a John Stossel special, boys are not only being suspended from school for drawing pictures of guns and swords, but are being discouraged from dealing with action in their writing assignments. Instead, they are being forced to write about their feelings.

I am reminded of my own experiences taking two writing classes at UCLA. One of the professors had very limited professional experience. Apparently he had only sold two pieces in his life, both to men's magazines, as monthlies such as *Saga* and *Argosy* were labeled in the 50s and 60s. The typical article would carry a title like "I Was Captured and Held as a Love Slave by Amazons" and be illustrated with women resembling Anita Ekberg and Irish McCalla in skimpy outfits. As a result, the only sort of writing he cared to deal with was the sort of hoey he wrote. So I dropped out after a few sessions.

In the other class, we were asked on the first day to write a 500-word essay on a subject of our choosing. When the papers were returned, mine didn't have a grade. I asked the professor why, and he said, and I quote, "Humor isn't writing."

That struck me as one of the oddest things I had ever heard. Not only were guys like S.J. Perelman, H. Allen Smith, James Thurber and Max Shulman, consistently showing up on best seller lists, but I had heard a rumor that even Shakespeare had occasionally turned out a comedy.

When I handed in my next assignment, the prof asked me if it was humor, I said, "It's supposed to be." Not too surprisingly, he tore it in half and dropped it in the wastepaper basket. So I walked out of class, never to return.

That is why when people ask me if I believe writing can be taught, I tell them they're definitely asking the wrong person.

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