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DEAR FRIEND.....

Who Stole the American Dream?

The promise of a prosperous middle-class life with decent work, rising living standards, and the potential for a better future has long been the foundation of the American dream. And it has been the political, legislative, and corporate choices that have pushed the middle class to the brink of disaster. As America continues to struggle to recover from the Great Recession, it has become clear that the middle class is in jeopardy -- and many of the policies of the last 40 years are to blame. In his new book, *Who Stole the American Dream?* --C2 Pulitzer Prize- and Emmy Award-winning journalist, producer, and bestselling author, Hedrick Smith analyzes how "pro-business" policies dismantled the previous American social contract and tells the stories of the people who have been left behind. To reclaim the promise of a thriving middle class, Mr. Smith proposes a "domestic Marshall Plan" based on infrastructure investment, a program to spur the revival of manufacturing, corporate tax reform, and renewed support of our key social insurance programs.

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<=p style="font-size:12pt;line-height:107%;font-family:Georgia,serif">Today income inequality is at an all-time high.

- \* Top 10% earn 48.8% of total income of the country
- \* Top 1% earn 19.3% of total income of the country
- \* Top 0.1% earn 8.8% of total income of the country

\* From 2009 to 2012 The Top 1% captured 95% of the increase of national income. In other words The Top 1% incomes grew by 31.4% while The Bottom 99% incomes grew by 0.4%.

In his book, Smith says that the Congress of 1978 was the watershed, first by the passing of the 401K legislation, as a favor for the executives of Kodak and Xerox because they wanted a new tax shelter for deferred compensation. And that it was never intended to be a retirement plan for the mass of Americans. And the other major sea change was the change of culture in business. Prior to then there were a number of populist movements on the 1960s and 1970s representing the sentiments of the middle-class that were co-opted by lobbyist in Washington on behalf of business interest. In 1970 there were 170 businesses in America that had lobbying offices in Washington. A decade later there were 2025. In 1971 there was no Business Roundtable which today is the most potent political force for Blue Chip Businesses in America. By the 95th Congress in 1978 there were 130 registered lobbyist for every member of Congress. Corporate lobbyist shifted power away from the populist movements in favor of corporate interest using Wedge-Economics.

During this same period the notion of stakeholder capitalism changed to shareholder capitalism. The stakeholder capital notion was, if you took care of your workers and paid them well, this not only benefited the workers and corporation it benefited the whole economy, which economist labeled the Virtuous Circle of Growth. The essence is that well-paid workers would spend creating consumer demand and a strong economy with businesses expanding production, building new plants, buying new equipment, hiring more workers to meet increasing demand and power the next cycle of growth.

And this is essentially what happened through the 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s. This changed with the change in business ethos "we are going to cut back to increase profits." The productivity of American workers rose 97% for the mid-40s though the mid-70s and their incomes rose 5%. After that one continued to rise while the other went flat. And the one that went flat was the wages and salaries of workers since 1973 while productivity continue to grow to 80% by 2011. During this period the average hourly wage grew only 4.2% and corporate profits rising on average by 13% a year, resulting with the Middle Class being cut out of the growth and profitability of American Enterprise. This was the result of Wedge-Economics.

And if this was not enough, there was The Great Burden Shift. In 1980 84% of workers in companies of more than 100 employees had a life-time pension. When they retired their employer guaranteed them a monthly paycheck as long as they lived. Today that number is 35%. In 1980 more than 70% of workers in companies of more than 100 employees had fully paid health benefits. Today that number is 18%. In 1980 corporations paid 89% of health cost of employees by 2010 that number had dropped to 49% and the percent that employees were paying rose for 11% to 51%. This is The Burden Shift. Hundreds of billions of dollars a year in costs have been shifted from the corporations to employees at a time when wages have been flat. The U.S. Census Bureau said that the median wage adjusted for inflation for a male worker is lower today than it was in 1978, while inflation has gone up and cost are going up. This shift has devastated the Middle Class as they now have to use more of their incomes to cover these benefits that are no longer being covered by corporations. And with less disposable income the economy has stagnated economically.

As for retirees the 401k plans have been a horror. First of all, because the risk has been shifted from companies to the employees who for the most part are ill-equipped to manage them, leaving it to Mutual Funds that mostly float with the tide. But more importantly, is that the average 401k plan only has \$18,000 and \$85,000 at the time when most people retire. This is not nearly enough because one needs at least ten to twelve times their salary as we are now living longer. As a result economists say that 45% to 50% of Baby Boomers do not have enough sock away in their 401k plans along with Social Security to cover their basic economic needs when they retire. This spells poverty and poverty on a mass scale. Think about it roughly half of the Baby Boomers might end up living in poverty. And this is largely because of The Burden Shift.

Pay For Performance is probably the most egregious practice in business as it is a totally a rigged game in favor of the management who often manipulate the numbers and dates to enrich themselves. And one of the most egregious companies abusing this practice was Apple, who under Steve Jobs admitted to falsifying more than 4000 cases where they falsely changed dates and documents to enable senior executives to enrich themselves. In the old days one would have considered this insider trading, as executives not only do things for short-term benefit, it is a common practice to make decisions that gooses the stock price prior to compensation review. Case in point: the top five executives of Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers received more than \$2 billion in stock options and cash compensation in the last two years including settlements when their companies collapsed. There was no stockholder value yet ten executives received \$2 billion in compensation. Think about it if this had happen in China these guys would have gone to jail and their ill-gotten gains confiscated.

Yet as bad as the aforementioned has been to squeeze the Middle Class, they don't come close to rivaling the housing bubble and bust which did more to devastate the Middle Class than any other development in American as millions of Americans were enticed to take equity out of their houses to maintain their living standards. There has been a massive transfer of wealth from the middle class to the elite of the past 30 years and the most striking element of that is the \$6 trillion lost by the Middle Class during the housing bubble. Prior to the housing bubble roughly 70% of the assets of the housing stock was owned by the homeowner and the other remaining 30% owed by banks. By 2009 that figure had dropped to 40%. Homeowners lost 30% of the value of a \$20 trillion housing markets. This was an enormous erosion of Middle Class wealth. Championed by Allan Greenspan, this Equity Stripping pumped \$750 billion yearly into the economy but it devastated the Middle Class.

The groundwork for these things to happen began in the 95th Congress in 1978. Because in 1978 Congress passed a federal law that over-ruled all of the states usury laws, enabling banks and other financial institutions to charge 15%, 18% and more on people who can least afford it and they know are bad risk. This led to adjustable mortgages, 100% financing, negative amortization enabling borrowers to go further into debt every month. And the latest Payday Loans...

Let's remember, it is consumer demand that drives the American economy. So when we are being told that we need to protect the tax rates of the Super Elite because they are the this is not true. The job creators is actually the Middle Class as consumers. And the reason why we are having such a terrible time getting out of this long slow jobless recovery is because we have a weaker and weaker consumer demand which is why as Head of the Federal Reserve Allan Greenspan championed policies that pumped hundreds of billions into the economy to sustain a false consumer demand bubble that eventually hurt tens of millions of American families. As a result we as a country have almost no chance in hell to dig ourselves in the mess that we are in until we understand the real problems that we have today. The public debate that we are having today is removed from reality because we are not talking about the real issues that are hurting the Middle Class. And the only way that we will be able to is for people to find the facts, use them to bring back populist movements that change government policies away from business and in favor of the Middle Class.

For those who are interested here is the web link to a discussion by Hedrick Smith hosted by Managing Editor of The Atlantic Steve Clemons and the New America Foundation's Economic Growth Program Director, Sherle R. Schwenninger:  
<http://youtu.be/4J5WReyQIT0> <<http://youtu.be/4J5WReyQIT0>>

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How inequality made these Western countries poorer

Rising inequality holds back economic growth -- according to a recent report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The organization, which is primarily composed of high-income countries, analyzed economic growth from 1990 to 2010 and found that almost all 21 examined countries missed out on economic growth due to rising inequalities. (We take a closer look at the countries that were hardest hit in the second half of this post.) "When income inequality rises, economic growth falls," the authors of the report concluded. They explained their findings by pointing out that wealth gaps hold back the skills development of children -- particularly those with parents who have a poorer education background. In other words: A lack of access to high-quality and long-term education among poorer citizens in many OECD countries hurts the economy.

The authors did not examine the impact of a country achieving zero inequality (something that would come close to idealized communism), but used inequality levels and economic growth in 1990 as their reference, which they compared to data from 2010. The wealth gap in OECD countries is now at its highest level since 30 years, as this chart below shows. (Inequality is measured with a Gini coefficient which ranges from zero to one. Zero equals maximum equality, whereas one stands for maximum inequality. Chart: OECD, Focus on Inequality and Growth Report)

Economically, the authors are particularly worried about the gap between low-income households and the rest of the population. "In contrast, no evidence is found that those with high incomes pulling away from the rest of the population harms growth," the authors wrote. "Since 2008, the argument that inequality is causing economic losses has gained steam. But the fact that this study was released by the OECD has surprised me," Dean Baker, co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, told The Washington Post. Particularly before the financial crisis, many economists considered inequality as a useful corollary to economic growth -- an assumption the recent OECD study tries to rebuke.

Here are the countries that missed out on most growth, according to the OECD:

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1. New Zealand: New Zealand's economy could have grown by 44 percent between 1990 and 2010, but the country did only achieve 28 percent growth due to inequality. Hence, it lost 15.5 percentage points -- more than any other country. This is particularly surprising, given that New Zealand was once considered a paradise of equality, as Max Rashbrooke, the author of a book called *Inequality: A New Zealand Crisis*, pointed out in the Guardian newspaper. "New Zealand halved its top tax rate, cut benefits by up to a quarter of their value, and dramatically reduced the bargaining power of 80% and therefore the share of national income -- of ordinary workers. Thousands of people lost their jobs as manufacturing work went overseas, and there was no significant response with increased trade training or skills programs, a policy failure that is ongoing," Rashbrooke writes in the op-ed. He also blames New Zealand for a lack of AFFORDABLE HOMES which led to higher rents and unpaid mortgages.

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2. Mexico: Among all 21 examined OECD countries, Mexico has the highest level of inequality and missed out on 11 percent of potential economic growth, according to the Gini coefficient, a commonly used measurement method. In May, photographer Oscar Ruiz captured Mexico's inequality in aerial footage. The subtitle that accompanies the photos reads: "This image has not been modified. It's time to change that."=p>

=span style="font-size:12pt;line-height:107%;font-family:Georgia,serif">3.=/span> Britain, Finland and Norway: These countries missed out on nearly 9 percentage points of economic growth. While Britain is among the OECD's most unequal countries, Finland and Norway had low inequality levels in 1990 and CONTINUED to do so in 2010. Nevertheless, inequality increased in both Scandinavian countries (and particularly in Finland).'

4. United States= Italy and Sweden: Between six and seven percentage points of potential growth were knocked off by inequality between 1990 and 2010. The report does not offer individual explanations why those countries rank among the nations that are hardest hit. Spain, France and Ireland, however, are the only countries that did not miss out on economic growth. According to the authors of the study, all three countries have decreased or maintained the extent

of inequality and moderate economic gains as a consequence. So, what do other countries have to learn from France, Ireland and Spain? The study offers several proposals:

Besides improvements in access to and quality of EDUCATION, governments should work on fairer labor-market policies, childcare supports and in-work benefits, according to the OECD experts. Taxes, transfers and other redistribution policies could furthermore ensure that economic growth benefits those who need it most.

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Th= Breakers, built in 1892–1895 for Cornelius Vanderbilt

How much money do you have to make to be rich? This is a question that people ask all of the time and in a Huffington Post article last month by David Sirota – That’s rich! Why so many wealthy Americans think they’re middle class – based on recent remarks from Treasury Secretary Jack Lew, to me it got more confusing instead of helping shed light on a troubling phenomenon. Because according to Treasury Secretary Jack Lew’s reckoning, being a millionaire does not constitute living high above the ranks of ordinary people. Lew said that back when he was in the private sector enjoying six- and seven-figure pay packages, “My own compensation was never in the stratosphere.” Lew made that pronouncement as he sought to defend President Barack Obama’s embattled Treasury undersecretary nominee Antonio Weiss from charges that as a financial executive, he is out of touch with the interests of regular people. Lew was seeking to cast his own lot with the ranks of ordinary Americans at a time of growing economic inequality.

But in doing so, Lew shed light on a uniquely American phenomenon — the tendency of extraordinarily rich people to cast themselves as everyday members of the middle class. Earlier this year, for example, Hillary Clinton made headlines when, in response to a question about her personal fortune, she claimed her family was “dead broke” when they left the White House. That statement followed New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s top aide casting those making \$500,000 a year as merely upper middle class. According to IRS data, 99 percent of American households make less than \$388,000 a year, and 95 percent make less than \$167,000 a year. The true middle in terms of income — that is, the cutoff to be in the top 50 percent of earners — is roughly \$35,000 a year.

While Lew claims his private-sector compensation was not “in the stratosphere,” the data suggest otherwise. According to New York University records, Lew was usually paid between \$700,000 and \$800,000 a year as the school’s vice president, while also receiving a \$440,000 mortgage subsidy. Lew also earned \$300,000 a year from Citigroup, with a “guaranteed incentive and retention award of not less than \$1 million,” according to an employment agreement obtained by Businessweek. That agreement said that the seven-figure award would be terminated if he left for another job, but with one exception: He would indeed get the cash if he accepted “a full-time high-level position with the United States government or regulatory body.” Lew was given a \$940,000 bonus from Citigroup in the same week the bank received a \$300 billion bailout from the federal government.

Then again, Lew is a pauper compared to Weiss. The Treasury nominee reported more than \$15 million in compensation in the last two years at Lazard. Like Lew before him, Weiss would receive a massive payout from his firm if he gets a job in government. Of course, there remains a bit of a debate about what constitutes "rich" in America. A recent New York Times poll showed 27 percent of Americans believe a family of four can be considered "rich" if its annual income is between \$100,000 and \$200,000, while another 20 percent say "rich" is defined as making between \$200,000 and \$300,000 a year.

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David Sirota: That said, there appears to be consensus that compensation like that paid to Lew and Weiss constitutes "rich" — two-thirds of the country told the pollsters that making more than \$300,000 means a household is wealthy. While Lew's comments leave him open to charges that he is out of touch with economic reality, he is not alone, as surveys show many Americans also have misconceptions about income distribution. A recent study by Harvard University and Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University found Americans grossly underestimate the divide between CEO and average worker pay. Such misperceptions were recently spotlighted by comedian Chris Rock in an interview with New York magazine. Of inequality, he said: "People don't even know [about it]. If poor people knew how rich rich people are, there would be riots in the streets."

The truth about wealth is that one is not rich solely based on salary. Because I have a friend who was making \$600,000 a year (\$350,000 after taxes in LA), who told me that he was having trouble surviving with two children in Ivy League universities and another two in top private high schools, all with their own cars and allowances, as well a multi-million dollar mortgage, cars for himself and his wife, domestic staff, accounts and attorneys and a vacation home. Does anyone really need all of that? All of the time we see sport stars who sign eight-figure contracts and have to declare bankruptcy within several years of retiring. When I was a kid I used to think that \$12 million was rich, obviously that is no longer true today. Because to be rich in economic wealth you probably need to have twice that and to be seriously wealthy you are in the least nine figures bracket. The real truth is that you are rich when you have enough to easily cover needs and desires. And you are really rich when in addition you have an abundance of friends and family love and support. Because you are never really rich without them.

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How Should Governments Deal with Returning Jihadists?

Western Allies Must Share Intelligence — Treat Them Like Parolees — Consider Why They Came Back — Be Wary of Exploiting Public Fear — Expand and Strengthen Freedoms — Keeping Better Tabs on Suspicious Persons

The recent tragedy in Paris has triggered a strong emotional response as events of this grisly nature usually do. The depth of feeling across a wide range of persons and cultures owes much to its being an act of terror in an age that has become largely defined as the "terrorism era." Since 9/11 Western societies have lived in a state of anticipatory fear and that dread has been kept alive by occasional acts of terrorism, as in London, Madrid and Boston. The rise of ISIL has been accompanied by a spate of anxious speculation that residents of Western countries who have been drawn to the new theater of jihad could return home dedicated to committing mayhem. In this context, the Paris killings have made tangible otherwise abstract fears. Emotional release follows - emotions of anger (revenge for some), sympathy for the victims, a bond of solidarity across religious lines in an affirmation of shared humanity as reflected in the march in Paris last week and other sympathetic events around the world.

Concurrently it is evident that a number of these heinous events in Western Europe, North America, Middle East and elsewhere are the acts of home grown terrorists who after going abroad where they were proselytized and trained radical clerics and seasoned fighters in Syria, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Herein lies the dilemma of how should governments deal with returning jihadists if they want to prevent more acts like the recent massacre in Paris and the bombing of the Boston Marathon several years ago?

Although the media and others try to ignore, terrorism in a number of Western countries has roots in racism -- as well as the cultural distance reinforced by the inescapable callousness that comes with the repetition of nothingness. It is easy to understand how a young unemployed person living in an ethnic ghetto with little or no prospects in a world of abundance that he is not a part of -- and then he is told that not only is he inferior but so is his religion to that of the dominant culture -- can be seduced by jihad

As a result are seeing a growing influx of Europeans returning from Syria and Iraq having joined terrorist organizations. This is a heterogeneous group: Some are highly traumatized and disillusioned. Others return from a few months of "terror tourism" and post pictures of themselves online, armed with guns and little more. The dangerous individuals are those who return tasked with carrying out acts of terror. They come back to recruit fighters or to spread propaganda; some have military experience and want to live out their violent fantasies in Europe.

One of the things that we know is that the terror attacks in Paris highlight a growing trend: Young Western Muslims who enlisted for jihad in the Middle East are coming home. Denmark is trying to rehabilitate them. In much of Europe, prosecutors have put them in prison, where they have found kindred spirits. But sometimes, as with the Paris killers, they fall through the cracks.

At the same time we should remember that for generations, Americans have decamped to fight in other people's wars, whether as freedom fighters, terrorists, colonists, or mercenaries. Sometimes the U.S. Government supports these mostly young idealists or turns a blind eye. No one kept Americans from volunteering to fight in the Lincoln Brigade against Franco or today stop Americans from joining the Israeli army or the Western-favoring Syrian opposition groups.

Some decisions in life are irrevocable. Joining ISIS or Al Qaeda is one of them. Most people would say that joining such terrorist organizations should be grounds for losing your citizenship which would invalidate your passport.



◆=A0And that the US Congress should pass formal declarations of war against these groups which in turn would formalize the declaration of members of these gr=ups as enemies of the United States. Then they can be dealt with accordingly.</=pan>

Last week I started my weekly offerings with a letter by Dr. Ghada Mohamed appealing to everyon= to not paint all Muslims with the same brush as those who try to use the relig=on of Islam to impose their beliefs on me either through intimidation or codif=ing such beliefs into civil law. Dr. Mohamed, "I wil= oppose them and hold the "individuals" concerned accountable. It is not =he religion itself that needs to be held to account, it is those that pervert =he religion to their own ends. Neither, ISIS or Al Qaeda are Islam."</=>

Obviously one can say that the one key to stopping domestic terrorism is to define which grou=s have advocated for terror attacks on Americans, our Western allies or any democracies. And that joini=g these groups is supporting a terrorist enterprise and should be dealt with =y revocation of passports and criminal prosecutions. But what of t=e young person who left a zealot but returned shaken and disillusioned? What should we do to or for him? When these returnees number a handful, it is politically easy to clap them in jail. But when a country has ma=y such returnees, it necessitates a nuanced, thoughtful, effective response t= reintegrate them into civil, law-abiding society. You can't =ust throw these people away, because they land somewhere and continue to cause misery, often aiming their rage back at their countries of origin.</=>

Yes, I know it feels good to vent about throwing the book at these so-called traitors, eve= fantasizing about bringing back the guillotine, electric chair and gas cham=er. Heck, the French Revolution supporters drowned thousands on boats in the ri=er. Meeting terror with terror of our own making is not justice, nor is it effective. But we as a society have =o be cognizant that in our zeal to identify and helm in the bad seeds that we=do not paint all Muslims with the same brush. What is also absolutely vital is that we devote our energy to the young people we have n=t yet lost: to those who are susceptible to radicalization but can still be reached. By focusing on education, on teaching youngsters to thi=k critically, conveying democratic values and providing pathways to success m=ny more young people can be saved. Most of all we have to realize that terrorism is the consequence of a problem and t= prevent it we have to fix the underlying root/cause..... Especially i= a country that turns a blind eye to the deaths of 30,000 people who die e=ch year from gun inflicted wounds in the name of the Second Amendmentundermine th= tenets of our democ=acy and way of life.

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More Good News

The Uninsured Rate Just Keeps Falling, New Survey Shows

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The share of Americans without health insurance has fallen more than 4 percentage points to 12.9 percent since Obamacare coverage began a year ago, according to a new Gallup poll. This is a clear sign that one of Obamacare's primary mission is succeeding. In the fourth quarter of last year, 12.9 percent of Americans were uninsured, a steep drop from 17.1 percent a year before. The change was driven mainly by increased coverage through the AFFORDABLE CARE ACT's HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGES and by the expansion of Medicaid access in more than half the country, the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index shows, based on more than 43,000 interviews conducted between Oct. 1 and Dec. 30.

President Barack Obama and the congressional Democrats who enacted the Affordable Care Act had broader aims for the law than just covering the uninsured, including providing stronger consumer protections for Health Insurance customers and curtailing unsustainable increases in national health care spending. But extending coverage to uninsured people, especially those with low and moderate incomes eligible for Financial Assistance, is the most tangible effect of the law, and survey after survey shows its working. These gains are threatened, however, by the newly empowered Republican Congress and the Supreme Court.

"The Affordable Care Act has accomplished one of its goals: increasing the percentage of Americans who have HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE," the Gallup report says. "The uninsured rate as measured by Gallup has dropped 4.2 points since the requirement to have health insurance or pay a fine went into effect. It will likely drop further as plans purchased during the current open enrollment period take effect."

The second Obamacare sign-up period began Nov. 15 and ends Feb. 15. As of late December, 6.4 million people had enrolled into private Health Insurance policies for 2015, about 1 million of whom were new to the Obamacare exchanges. The Department of Health and Human Services estimates that more than 9 million people will be covered by private Obamacare exchange plans by the end of the year. In addition, nearly 10 million more people are covered by Medicaid or the Children's HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM, two joint federal-state benefits for low-income households, than were covered before Obamacare enrollment kicked off in October 2013.

The new Gallup survey shows declines in the uninsured rate for all segments of the working-age population, and the share of people ages 18-64 without coverage stood at 15.5 percent in the fourth quarter of 2014. The largest decrease was among people ages 18-25, a population that experienced a 6.1 percentage point drop in uninsurance since 2013 to 17.4 percent. Almost all people 65 and older have coverage through Medicare. Low-income Americans and blacks also saw disproportionate declines in their uninsured rates, Gallup found. Still other surveys have shown the improvements in the uninsured rate to be geographically uneven due to the fact that a number of Southern states with higher-than-average uninsured populations, rejected the Medicaid expansion, which the Supreme Court made optional for states in 2012, leaving millions of low-income residents uninsured.

More importantly Obamacare coverage is in grave jeopardy this year. Republicans newly in control of Congress after the November midterm elections aim to dismantle the law, starting with a House vote this week on a bill that would weaken the Affordable Care Act's requirement that large employers provide health benefits or pay penalties. Obama has vowed to resist these efforts. But the more serious danger for Obamacare, and for the millions who have gained coverage under the law, is *King v. Burwell*, a case now pending before the Supreme Court. The plaintiffs claim the federal government lacks the legal authority to provide health insurance subsidies to people living in states that didn't establish HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE and allowed the Department of Health and Human Services to do so instead. A ruling against the Obama administration would invalidate the tax credits 85 percent of exchange enrollees receive, making their insurance policies unaffordable and likely causing most to drop their coverage.

One has to ask why Republicans and the Supreme Court would do everything that they can to gut and dismantle the Affordable Healthcare Act when it has proven that it can give millions of Americans needed healthcare insurance coverage, without death panels or substantially raising costs. Republicans should also remember that Obamacare is essentially Romneycare, and the creation of the Heritage Foundation, which is a Republican think tank. So why don't they accept partial credit for its success? And if they truly feel it has problems why not come up with solutions to make it stronger? But we know the answer. From day one the Republican leadership has made one of their major priorities that the Obama Administration will be a failed Presidency and as such will do whatever they can to make sure that one of his signature accomplishments fails..... no matter how many millions of Americans are hurt in the process and this is my rant of the week..../b>

## WEE's READINGS

### 7 Reasons The Cuba Embargo Needed To Go

The rest of the world hates it

The United Nations has voted for 22 years in a row to condemn the Cuban embargo in lopsided votes. Last year only Israel and the United States itself voted against the resolution.

It's ineffective

The idea behind the embargo is to topple the Communist government. More than five decades later, the policy has led to the overthrow of two out of two Cuban heads of state.

It's expensive

The embargo on Cuba doesn't just hurt the Cuban economy -- it costs U.S. businesses as well. The United States loses out on \$1.2 billion in forfeited earnings from lost trade with Cuba annually, according to the Harvard Political Review.

It's undemocratic

A poll by the Atlantic Council, a non-partisan think tank, found that a solid majority of Americans favors normalizing relations with Cuba. You'd never guess by looking at the behavior of the U.S. government.

Cuba isn't a threat

The idea behind the embargo emanates in part from the Cold War-era notion that a Soviet-aligned government 90 miles off the coast poses a grave security threat. That may have been true during the days of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, but it's tough to make a reasonable case that Cuba poses a threat to the world's most massive military machine today.

It targets the wrong people

The embargo aims to cower the Cuban government into submission by engendering resentment among a cash-starved populace. If one takes the U.S. government at its word that it aims to free a country from an oppressive government, why punish the people you're supposedly trying to help?

Its time has passed

While it's u= for debate whether the embargo was ever a smart policy, today it's clearly anachronistic. The United States now does bu=iness with China, Vietnam and Russia, but not Cuba. The policy, first partially implemented in 1960, has survived 11 U.S. presidents with nothing to show. =ive it a rest.

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The Cold-Medicine Racket=

If you are like me, when =ou have a cold and go to your local pharmacy you are confused by the rows and rows of flashy 'Cold and Flu=99 products. As a result I ran across an article last month in The Atlantic by James Hamlin – The Cold-Medicine Racket =E2 that might be of interest to you. Hamlin says that although there are now hundreds of products there are only a hand=ul of simple, cheap ingredients. Here's one new way to cut through the noi=e because one in four people, when buying an over-the-counter medicine to tre=t a headache, will go for a brand name product. Unless that person is a p=armacist. In that case, according to research from the National Bureau of Economic Research, they'll almost certainly buy a generic version. The pharmacists know, a=d trust, that the drugs are identical.

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But Bayer aspirin costs \$6.29 at CVS, while the same =mount of CVS-brand aspirin costs less than a third of that, \$1.99. The two pro=ucts are required by law to be "bioequivalent," and CVS e=en has signs imploring shoppers to go for the cheaper option. Yet many p=ople do no such thing. The difference in price between brand names and generics accounts for tens of billions of dollars "wasted"= every year by Americans in pharmacies, according to the economics researchers. They also found that more highly educated people are more likely to buy generic medications, concluding that "misinformation explains a sizable share of the brand premium for health products."

Consumer confusion, or misplaced trust, is compounded=by the fact that a drug store is likely to have upwards of 300 cold-and-flu produc=s. Some are generic, and some are branded concoctions with increasingly opaque names. Remember when Mucinex was=Mucinex? You could take Mucinex, and it broke up your mucus, and you expectorated out some mucus and went about your business.=A0 Now there is Mucinex Fast-Max DM Max; Mucinex Fast-Max Severe Congestion and Cough; Mucinex Fast-Max Cold, Flu, and Sore Throat; and on and on. Just thinking about all of that Mucinex is enough to make you expectorate something.

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It's a little underwhelming to learn that Mucinex=Fast-Max DM Max, a name that seems to promise instant invincibility, is just Mucinex pl=s a common cough suppressant. It's the same cough suppressant that's in almost every other cough-suppressing elixir product: dextromethorphan. Mucinex Fast-Max DM Max has the same active ingredients as Mucinex DM, only in liquid instead of pill form. Mucin=x Fast-Max Severe Congestion and Cough is identical to Mucinex Fast-Max DM Max, plus a little phenylephrine (which=is also sold as Sudafed). Fast-Max Cold, Flu, and Sore Throat is identical to Mucinex Fast-Max Severe Congestion and Cough, plus acetaminophen (also sold=as Tylenol).

That's just the beginning of the compendium of Mu=inex products, not to mention the Tylenol products (Tylenol Sinus Congestion, Tylenol Cold Multisymptom Liquid, Tylenol Cold Multisymptom Liquid Severe, etc.) and Sudafed products (Sudafed Congestion, Sudafed Pressure Pain Mucus= etc.) that are simple reiterations of the Mucinex products. They are =ll just permutations of, at most, the same five active ingredients.

There's a decongestant (usually phenylephrine), a=cough suppressant (usually dextromethorphan), a pain/fever reducer (usually acetaminophen), plus or minus an expectorant (usually guaifenesin), and something that will put you to sleep (usually diphenhydramine). All of thos= can be purchased individually, or in almost any combination, in cheaper gen=ric forms.

In a frail attempt to address some of that misinforma=ion, the Food and Drug Administration's web site has a section titled &quo=;Myths and Facts About Generic Drugs." One myth is that &quo=;brand-name drugs are made in modern manufacturing facilities, and generics are often made in substandard facilities." But, the=FDA counters with the reminder that it "won't permit drugs to be made in substandard facilities." And to be approved by the FDA, a generic version of a drug must deliver the same amount of active ingredients into y=ur bloodstream in the same amount of time as the brand-name drug.

The FDA's myth page is 12 years old now, but appa=ently many people are still not buying generic. Maybe another myth therein should be t=at people read the FDA's website. And so they remain congested with misinformation that can be detrimental both economically and physically. But as the packaging is getting more ornate, t=e brand names wordier, and the more-is-better mindset more ingrained, consumer-health information tools are also getting more intuitive. A =conceptually promising one just launched this week from the fledgling health-information company Iodine—a pr=gram aimed at helping everyone find exactly the right cold medication.

Amanda Angelotti, Iodine's head of product, is a =medical doctor who has long been fed up with the confusing brand propositions of over-the-counter cold medications. "I have a lot of friends w=o, if they have a stuffy nose and a headache during a cold," she told me, =quot;they'll just take DayQuil."

Like Angelotti, I am sure that you have friends who take NyQuil when they're not really sick, just to help them sleep. So they're taking it for the diphenhydramine (Benadryl), which is much more cheaply purchased alone and as a generic. DayQuil is dextromethorphan, acetaminophen, and phenylephrine. The actual ideal medication combination for her friends in this case, Angelotti noted, is simply the last two: the decongestant and the pain reliever. Taking the extra dextromethorphan is a low-risk proposition, but it's not without some side effects and a waste of money.

Most people will just walk into a drugstore when they have a cold and grab DayQuil or Tylenol Multisymptom Cold, or whatever, because they know it's going to cover the symptoms that they have. And Angelotti believes that there are a lot of people are taking more ingredients in these combination meds than they actually need. That's going to put them at risk for side effects or overdose, especially with Tylenol. And there are dangers, like for someone with high blood pressure who is taking phenylephrine."

Angelotti, formerly at Google, has now co-created a program that can help people pare down their options. On the Iodine site, you can click on the symptoms you're experiencing, and that will comb a database of common cold-and-flu products and tell you which ones meet your needs. The results also include product reviews (via Google, with over 100,000 medication reviews so far), dosage forms (liquid or pill), active ingredients, and the names of generic versions at various pharmacies.

See Promo For Iodine.com: <https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/medical-translator-by-iod/emfpjjnbhpbflfgenlainjafijjnpmh?hl=en-US> <<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/medical-translator-by-iod/emfpjjnbhpbflfgenlainjafijjnpmh?hl=en-US>>

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In October, Iodine released an extension for Google Chrome that will highlight any medical jargon on a web page and translate it into plain language. It's cool and easy to use, as is this new cold and flu app. Though I can't see myself using it, because I usually keep generic single-drug products around. A family, or a sickness-inclined person living alone, could very reasonably keep the five aforementioned individual generic medications in their medicine cabinet and address the symptoms as they arise. I think that's easier than messing with combination products, and usually cheaper. Especially if you consider that you're not taking medications you don't need.


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Iodine's press release this week was similarly practical of expectation. It told the story of one patient who had used the cold-and-flu tool, "Mary, a 69-year-old woman in the Pacific Northwest." She said, "My husband now has a cold, and the Iodine app confirmed that the product he had chosen was a correct one! The reinforcement was wonderful!" That's such a reasonable endorsement. Wouldn't it be more powerful if your husband chose the wrong medication, though, Mary? And Iodine helped him find the right one? It's a press release, Mary. The iodine algorithm saved your husband from the brink of ruin. His newfound sense of consumer empowerment was so invigorating to his spirit that he no longer needed any Mucinex at all.

With this I urge everyone check out Web Site: <https://www.iodine.com/translate>

A banner reading 'Jobs' hangs on the facade of the US Chamber of Commerce in Washington, DC on February 22, 2011. New claims for US unemployment insurance rose for the first time in three weeks but continued to hover near a two-year low, official data released on February 17 showed. The Labor Department said a seasonally adjusted 410,000 initial jobless claims were filed in the week ending February 12, up 6.5 percent from the prior week when claims had fallen to their lowest level since July 200

The most popular argument for cutting corporate taxes -- that it helps create jobs -- doesn't seem to be true, a new paper argues. According to a working paper by Alexander Ljungqvist and Michael Smolyansky, economists at New York University, corporate tax breaks at the state level don't help create jobs. There's one exception: Tax cuts do help create jobs and boost incomes when they are implemented during recessions, the paper says.

If corporate tax cuts don't do any good, tax hikes must be OK, right?  Not really. Ljungqvist and Smolyansky found that the effect of corporate tax rates is what economists call asymmetric: Cutting taxes doesn't do any good, but raising them does damage. According to the paper, every "one percentage-point increase in the top marginal corporate income tax rate reduces employment by between 0.3 percent and 0.5 percent."

To come to this conclusion, the authors studied changes in state tax rates from 1960 to 2013. Over that period, they found 140 tax increases in 45 states and 131 tax cuts in 35 states. They studied overall changes in tax rates, not one-off deals meant to entice a single company to relocate. At best, the estimated \$80 billion spent annually on company-specific tax breaks is a wash: Jobs just get moved from one state to another.

The authors are quick to point out that their research is limited to state tax rates and should not be extrapolated to federal corporate tax rates. However, they do note that their conclusions are consistent with research published last year by economists Karel Mertens and Morten Ravn that found that federal tax cuts don't increase jobs. Federal tax rates, Ljungqvist and Smolyansky note, rarely change, which makes the impact of altering them difficult to study. Additionally, there's a huge difference between what the corporate tax rate is and what companies actually pay.

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A Majority of U.S. public school students are in poverty



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Three-year-old Saria Amaya waits with her mother after receiving shoes and school supplies during a charity event in October to help more than 4,000 underprivileged children at the Fred Jordan Mission in the Skid Row area of Los Angeles. Children from low-income families now make up a majority of public school students in the nation, according to a new report.

The shift to a majority-poor student population means that in public schools, more than half of the children start kindergarten already trailing their more privileged peers and rarely, if ever, catch up. They are less likely to have support at home to succeed, are less frequently exposed to enriching activities outside of school, and are more likely to drop out and never attend college. It also means that education policy, funding decisions and classroom instruction must adapt to the swelling ranks of needy children arriving at the schoolhouse door each morning.

Schools, already under intense pressure to deliver better test results and meet more rigorous standards, face the doubly difficult task of trying to raise the achievement of poor children so that they approach the same level as their more affluent peers. "This is a watershed moment when you look at that map," said Kent McGuire, president of the Southern Education Foundation, the nation's oldest education philanthropy, referring to a large swath of the country filled with high-poverty schools. "The fact is, we've had growing inequality in the country for many years," he said. "It didn't happen overnight, but it's steadily been happening. Government used to be a source of leadership and innovation around issues of economic prosperity and upward mobility. Now we're a country disinclined to invest in our young people."

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"That's huge," she said. "These children can learn at the highest levels, but you have to provide for them. You can't assume they have books at home, or they visit the library or go on vacations. You have to think about what you're doing across the state and ensuring they're getting what other children get."

The Obama administration wants Congress to add \$1 billion to the \$14.4 billion it spends annually to help states educate poor children. It also wants Congress to fund preschool for those from low-income families. Collectively, the states and the federal government spend about \$500 billion annually on primary and secondary schools, with about \$79 billion coming from Washington. The amount spent on each student can vary wildly from state to state. Vermont, with a relatively low student-poverty rate of 36 percent, spent the most of any state in 2012-2013, at \$19,752 per pupil. In the same school year, Arizona, with a 51 percent student-poverty rate, spent the least in the nation at \$6,949 per student, according to data compiled by the National Education Association. States with high student-poverty rates tend to spend less per student: Of the 27 states with the highest percentages of student poverty, all but five spent less than the national average. "The problems are as big as they've ever been over the last 50 years, and yet the relative level of public investment to face those challenges is really modest,"

Republicans in Congress have been wary of new spending programs, arguing that more money is not necessarily the answer, and they have rebuffed President Obama's calls to fund preschool for low-income families. A number of Republican and Democratic governors have initiated state programs in the past several years. The report comes as Congress begins debate about rewriting the country's main federal education law, which was first passed as a part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's 1965 "War on Poverty" and was designed to give federal help to states to help educate poor children. The most recent version of the law, known as No Child Left Behind, has emphasized accountability and outcomes, measuring whether schools met benchmarks and sanctioning them when they fell short.

That federal focus on results, as opposed to need, is wrong-headed, Rebell said. "We have to think about how to give these kids a meaningful education," he said. "We have to give them quality teachers, small class sizes, up-to-date equipment. But in addition, if we're serious, we have to do things that overcome the damages of poverty. We have to meet their health needs, their mental health needs, after-school programs, summer programs, parent engagement, early-childhood services. These are the so-called wraparound services. Some people think of them as add-ons. They're not. They're imperative." "We've all known this was the trend, that we would get to a majority, but it's here sooner rather than later," said Michael A. Rebell, the executive director of the Campaign for Educational Equity at Columbia University, noting that the poverty rate has been increasing even as the economy has improved. "A lot of people at the top are doing much better, but the people at the bottom are not doing better at all. Those are the people who have the most children and send their children to public school."

Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation, was born in a charity hospital in 1959 to a single mother. Federal programs helped shrink the obstacles he faced, first by providing him with Head Start, the early-childhood education program, and later, Pell grants to help pay tuition at the University of Texas, he said. "Even at 8 or 9 years old, I knew that America wanted me to succeed," he said. "What we know is that the mobility escalator has simply stopped for some Americans. I was able to ride that mobility escalator in part because there were so many people, and parts of our society, cheering me on." "I don't think today that low-income children and their families feel that America is cheering them on. We need to fix the escalator. We fix it by recommitting ourselves to the idea of public education. We have the capacity. The question is, do we have the will?" The country needs to make that same commitment today to help poor children, he said. Remember that the future of the country will be in the hands of our children and if they don't receive sufficient education and training we can kiss the country's future goodbye....

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#### My 6 Top Geopolitical Predictions for 2015

If 2014 proved anything, it's that guessing at the state of the world a year down the line is a vain or even slightly embarrassing endeavor. Indeed, who could have expected a year ago that Russia would take over Crimea, ISIS would break out of Al Qaeda and declare a caliphate, the US would start bombing Syria and Iraq while approaching a nuclear deal with Iran, or that Ebola would ravage three West African countries and scare the world? Nevertheless and being a physical commodities trader deeply involved in and abreast of world affairs I thought I'd share with you my friend Ziad Abdelnour's, (Wall Street Financier & CEO of Blackhawk Partners) -- 6 top geopolitical predictions for 2015.

1. =ommodity oil prices are headed only in one direction: Down. Crude oil is not the only commodity that is crashing and will continue to do so. =ron ore is on a similar trajectory and for a common reason. Namely, the two-decade-long economic boom fueled by the money printing rampage of the world's central banks is beginning to cool rapidly. What the old-ti=e Austrians called "malinvestment" and what Warren Buffet once referred=to as the "naked swimmers" exposed by a receding tide is now becoming all too appare=t and will get much worse before it gets better. Oil and finance have proved to be the only two industries able to tip the world into recession and in my opinion =re likely to remain so. For Europe, the United States and China, a lower =a href="http://www.blackhawkpartners.com/geopolitical-impact-lower-oil-p=ices-personal-assessment/" target="\_blank">oil price i= good news. It's essentially a tax cut for consumers. The Economist =stimates that the average U.S. motorist could save \$800. But economies heavily relia=t on oil revenues — Nigeria, Russia and Venezuela for example ♦=94 will suffer dearly. So may heavily indebted oil companies. For every \$1 drop in the pri=e of crude, Venezuela is estimated to lose some \$700 million in revenue, maki=g it difficult to service debt and fund basic imports. Stagnant global demand=and the rise in U.S. shale oil production are two reasons for the fall in crude prices. Saudi Arabia's decision not to cut its production is anothe=; some oil analysts believe the Saudis are trying to retain their market share and mak= "nonconventional" sources such as shale less viable. Look o=t for major bankruptcies among smaller shale producers.

2. =SIS will slowly evolve into a more al Qaeda-like organization: ♦=A0As it loses gr=und in the Middle East, it'll focus on terrorism abroad: This past year saw the proliferation of "lone wolf" attacks that may or may not be=related to ISIS <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBMAp7i\\_17l](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBMAp7i_17l)> but were at least inspired by the =roup — car attacks in France and Canada, a hostage situation in Australia, and a shoot=ng in Ottawa. This shift in tactics will continue as ISIS <<http://www.fin=ncialpolicycouncil.org/fpcnew/blogdetails.aspx?id=73/ISIS-in-Iraq---Game=changer>> loses ground and calls on its supporters overseas to launch attacks, as it did th=s past September.

3. =o nuclear agreement will be struck between the US and Iran: Ayatollah Khamenei won't go all the way on a deal, while the P5+1, which will drop its demands on the disclosure of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps role in the country's nuclear pr=gram, won't be able to stomach Iran's requirement of a 10-year sunset clause an= an insistence on plutonium reprocessing rights. Perhaps the best to be expecte= is an interim deal that further eases sanctions. The biggest foreign policy initiative of Obama's second term will basically end in failure, le=ding him to spend a lot more time focusing on lower-hanging fruit like rapprochement wi=h Cuba.

4. =urope's future will depend on its 2015 elections: Cheaper oil just may help Europe dodge another recession. But the European Central =ank is not taking any chances. It's planning to take a page from the pl=ybook of the U.S. Federal Reserve through a massive program of "Quantitative=Easing" to buy sovereign bonds and shock the European economy into life. Most in need =f the firepower: France and Italy. If ECB President Mario Draghi, oil and Ger=any can't drag Europe back into growth, the popular mood will continue =o darken, benefiting parties like the anti-immigration, anti-Europe UKIP in Britain a=d protest party Podemos in Spain. The British vote is in May and few dare to predict the outcome. But it seems very likely that one or more of the small=r parties will be involved in coalition negotiations and the historic decline=in the vote of the Labour and Conservative Parties will continue. From Finland=to Portugal, elections in 2015 will be worth watching as they will dramaticall= shape up the future of Europe in the making.

5. =ussia's future all in Putin's hands: One of the safest predictions for 2015 is that Ru=sians will have a tough year. Besides the sliding oil price, high interest rates =o defend a vulnerable ruble, a shrinking economy and financial sanctions (sla=ped on Moscow by the United States and Europe because of Ukraine) are a toxic combination. The unanswerable question is how President Vladimir Putin will respond. Will he double down, seeking closer ties with

China, India and the rest of Asia and causing mischief in the Baltics? Or will the Kremlin see the destabilization of Ukraine as not worth the candle? Until these issues are fleshed out, Russian companies will suffer, unable to tap into international credit markets and more than ever reliant on loyalty to the Kremlin. And Russian citizens' standard of living will be hurt by inflation and rising interest rates.

6. China at a critical stage: A historic transition is under way in China: the "pivot" from an economy based on being the "workshop of the world" into one more sustained by domestic demand. The Chinese leadership is walking a fine line between growth and introducing structural reforms that include a crackdown on institutional corruption and curbing what's known as "shadow banking" — risky and loosely regulated lending estimated to be worth nearly \$5 trillion. The coming year will be a critical stage in that transition.

Overall, I see democracy in the coming year losing big time and likely to lose even more if governments don't start being problem solvers than being themselves the problem. What we are seeing is not the death of democracy; rather, representative democracy must adapt to our times if not we are facing major trouble...worldwide.

Ziad Abdelnour <[https://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=140792&authType=name&authToken=xgH\\_&trk=ulset-athr\\_prof-art\\_hdr](https://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=140792&authType=name&authToken=xgH_&trk=ulset-athr_prof-art_hdr)>

Wall Street Financier, Pres. & CEO Blackhawk Partners,

Common Financial Policy Council, Author

Web Link: <http://www.blackhawkpartners.com/6-top-geopolitical-predictions-2015>  
<<http://www.blackhawkpartners.com/6-top-geopolitical-predictions-2015/>>

#### THIS WEEK'S QUOTE

Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Lord John Emerich Edward Dalberg Acton

Powerlessness corrupts the very core of our democracy.

Ernie Cortes

#### BEST VIDEO OF THE WEEK

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=span style="color:black"> BEFORE TELEVISION, THERE WAS...=E2♦♦..... THE RADIO .</=>

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Here's =n unbelievable collection of all the old time radio shows. </=>Find your favourite, click on it, and list=n to all the episodes.

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#### Comedy

Al Jolson Show <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/1/Comedy/Al\\_Jolson\\_ow.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/1/Comedy/Al_Jolson_ow.html)>

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Aldrich Family <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/3/Comedy/Aldrich\\_Family.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/3/Comedy/Aldrich_Family.html)>

Alka Seltzer Time <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/4/Comedy/Alka\\_Seltzer\\_Time.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/4/Comedy/Alka_Seltzer_Time.html)> =C2♦

Amos & Andy <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/5/Comedy/Amos\\_Andy.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/5/Comedy/Amos_Andy.html)>

Avalon Time

Baby Snooks <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/7/Comedy/Baby\\_Snooks.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/7/Comedy/Baby_Snooks.html)>

Bergen & McCarthy <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/8/Comedy/Bergen\\_McCarthy.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/8/Comedy/Bergen_McCarthy.html)> =C2♦

<[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/9/Comedy/Bickersons\\_The.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/9/Comedy/Bickersons_The.html)> Bing Crosby

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Bob & Ray <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/11/Comedy/Bob\\_Ray.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/11/Comedy/Bob_Ray.html)>

Breakfast In Hollywood

Bright Star <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/13/Comedy/Bright\\_Star.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/13/Comedy/Bright_Star.html)> =u>

Burns & Allen <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/14/Comedy/Burns\\_Allen.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/14/Comedy/Burns_Allen.html)>

Cavalcade Of America <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/15/Comedy/Cavalcade\\_Of\\_America.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/15/Comedy/Cavalcade_Of_America.html)>

Command Performance <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/16/Comedy/Command\\_Performance.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/16/Comedy/Command_Performance.html)>

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=span style="color:black">Couple Next Door

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Curtain Time <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/18/Comedy/Curtain\\_Time.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/18/Comedy/Curtain_Time.html)>

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Duffy's Tavern <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/21/Comedy/Duffy\\_s\\_Tavern.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/21/Comedy/Duffy_s_Tavern.html)> </=pan>

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Father Knows Best <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/23/Comedy/Father\\_Knows\\_Best.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/23/Comedy/Father_Knows_Best.html)> ♦=A0

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First Nighter Program <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/25/Comedy/First\\_Nighter\\_Program.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/25/Comedy/First_Nighter_Program.html)> <=>

Frances Langford Show <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/26/Comedy/Frances\\_Langford\\_Show.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/26/Comedy/Frances_Langford_Show.html)>

Fred Allen Show <=r>=span style="font-size:13.5pt;color:purple">Fred Waring Show

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Gasoline Alley <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/30/Comedy/Gasoline\\_Alley.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/30/Comedy/Gasoline_Alley.html)>

GI Journal

Glenn Miller <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/31/Comedy/Glenn\\_Miller.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/31/Comedy/Glenn_Miller.html)>

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 Misadventures Of Si and Elmer  
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 Fort Laramie <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/202/Westerns/Fort\\_Laramie.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/202/Westerns/Fort_Laramie.html)>  
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 Frontier Gentleman <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/204/Westerns/Frontier\\_Gentleman.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/204/Westerns/Frontier_Gentleman.html)>  
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Casey, Crime Photographer

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Danger, Dr. Danfield <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/62/Detective/Danger\\_Dr\\_Danfield.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/62/Detective/Danger_Dr_Danfield.html)>  
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Federal Agent <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/67/Detective/Federal\\_Agent.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/67/Detective/Federal_Agent.html)>  
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Jeff Regan <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/72/Detective/Jeff\\_Regan.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/72/Detective/Jeff_Regan.html)>  
Let George Do It <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/73/Detective/Let\\_George\\_Do\\_It.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/73/Detective/Let_George_Do_It.html)>  
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Mr. Keene, Tracer of Lost Person  
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Secrets Of Scotland Yard  
Sherlock Holmes <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/83/Detective/Sherlock\\_Holmes.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/83/Detective/Sherlock_Holmes.html)>  
This Is Your F.B.I <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/84/Detective/This\\_Is\\_Your\\_F\\_B\\_I.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/84/Detective/This_Is_Your_F_B_I.html)>  
Yours Truly Johnny Dollar <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/85/Detective/Yours\\_Truly\\_Johnny\\_Dollar.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/85/Detective/Yours_Truly_Johnny_Dollar.html)>

Mystery

Adventures By Morse <[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/160/Mystery/Adventures\\_By\\_Morse.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/160/Mystery/Adventures_By_Morse.html)>  
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 Haunting Hour, The [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/180/Mystery/Haunting\\_Hour\\_The.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/180/Mystery/Haunting_Hour_The.html) =C2  
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 Inner Sanctum, The [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/184/Mystery/Inner\\_Sanctum\\_The.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/184/Mystery/Inner_Sanctum_The.html) </=pan>  
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 Macabre  
 Man Called X, The [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/187/Mystery/Man\\_Called\\_X\\_The.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/187/Mystery/Man_Called_X_The.html)  
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 Mysterious Traveler  
 Mystery In The Air [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/190/Mystery/Mystery\\_In\\_The\\_Air.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/190/Mystery/Mystery_In_The_Air.html) =C2  
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 Shadow, The [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/193/Mystery/Shadow\\_The.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/193/Mystery/Shadow_The.html)  
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 Audio History [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/87/Drama/Adventure\\_Theater.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/87/Drama/Adventure_Theater.html)  
 Avenger <http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/92/Drama/Avenger.html>  
 Avengers <http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/93/Drama/Avengers.html>  
 Big John & Son [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/95/Drama/Big\\_Town.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/95/Drama/Big_Town.html)  
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 Blackstone, The Magic Detective [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/98/Drama/Blackstone\\_The\\_Magic\\_Detective.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/98/Drama/Blackstone_The_Magic_Detective.html)  
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 Campbell Playhouse [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/103/Drama/Campbell\\_Playhouse.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/103/Drama/Campbell_Playhouse.html) </= >  
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 Chesterfield Chicago Theater Of [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/106/Drama/Chesterfield\\_Chicago\\_Theater\\_Of.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/106/Drama/Chesterfield_Chicago_Theater_Of.html)  
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 Columbia Workshop [http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/108/Drama/Columbia\\_Workshop.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/108/Drama/Columbia_Workshop.html)  
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[http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/114/Drama/Fifth\\_Horseman.html](http://www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/114/Drama/Fifth_Horseman.html)  
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 Speed Gibson <http://=www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/149/Drama/Speed\_Gibson.html> </= >  
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 style="font-size:13.5pt;color:blue">  
 <=pan style="color:rgb(25,106,212)">Your Army Air Force  
 <http://www.dumb.com/oldtimer=dio/radio/159/Drama/Your\_Army\_Air\_Force.html> <=b>  
  
 <=div>  
  
 </=r>

\* I THINK MOST WILL FIND SOMETHING THEY LIKE? ◆=A0                      =C2◆    If you are unfamiliar◆=A0with old  
 time radio, you are in for a treat. Enjoy! </=pan>

SIMPLY=C2◆AMAZING!!!!

=span style="font-size:18pt;font-family:Calibri,sans-serif;color:black">=C2◆T=IS WEEK's MUSIC

=p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align:center;background:white"> </=pan>The O’Jays

=/b>

<=b>

The O’Jays are an American R&B group from Canton, Ohio, forme= in 1958 and originally consisting of Eddie Levert (born June 16, 1942), Walter Williams (born August 25, 1943), William Powell (January 20, 1942 –May 26, 1977), Bobby Massey and Bill Isles. The O’Jays made their first chart appearance with "Lonely Drifter&q=ot; in 1963, but reached their greatest level of success once Gamble & Huff, a team of producers and songwriter=, signed them to their Philadelphia International label in 1972. =ith Gamble & Huff, the O’Jays (now a trio after the departure of Isles =nd Massey) emerged at the forefront of Philadelphia soul with "Back St=bbers" (1972), and topped the Billboard Hot 100 the following year with "Love Train". Numerous other hits followed through the 1970s and into the 80s and 90s, and The O’Jays wer= inducted into the Vocal Group Hall of Fame in 2004, and The Rock and Roll H=ll of Fame in 2005.

They formed the group in=Canton, Ohio in 1958 while attending Canton McKinley High School. Originally =nown as The Triumphs, and then The Mascots, the friends began recording with "Miracles" in 1961, which was a moderate hit in the Cleveland area. In 1963, the= took the name "The O’Jays", in tribute to Cleveland radio disc jockey Eddie O’Jay who was part of the powerful ma=agement team of Frankie Crocker, Herb Hamlett & Eddie O’Jay, (Toop, 1991).=C2◆ In 1963, The O’Jays released "Lonely Drifter," =heir very first national chart hit on the Billboard Hot 100, peaking at #93. T heir d=but album, released shortly thereafter was Comin' Through. In 2005, t=e O’Jays were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In 2006, the O’Jays performed at the ESPY a=ards, hosted by Lance Armstrong. "For the Love of Money" is the theme s=ng to the hit reality TV show The Apprentice, starring Donald Trump.

I first met The O’Jays while working with Ken=y Gamble and Leon Huff at Philadelphia International Records in the mid-1970s and had th= privilege of witnessing a number of their recording secession, including ones that created "Use To Be My Girl." I remember that e=en before the end of the first session everyone agreed that this was going=to me the jam of the summer. I then had the privilege of bringing th=m to South Africa in 1980 where they played sold-out stadiums across the country=to more than one million people. The O’Jays are definitely in the front row in the Pantheon of R&B and with this I invi=e you to enjoy the wonderful music of The Mighty, Mighty, Might, O’Jays=E2◆◆..

The O'Jays – Stairway t= Heaven -- <http://youtu.be/erZmWwDKwrU> <<http://youtu.be/erZmWwDKw=U>> and  
h=tp://youtu.be/IR4tv2wiiqw <<http://youtu.be/IR4tv2wiiqw>>

The O'Jays – Use to=be My Girl -- <http://youtu.be/GvSpfyqivEg> <<http://youtu.be/GvSpfy=ivEg>>

The O'Jays – Brandy=C2◆ -- <http://youtu.be/BlSxr1o6XYQ> <<http://youtu.be/BlSxr1o6XY=>>

The O'Jays – Put Yo=r Hands Together -- <http://yo=tu.be/xSNDClVMhYs> <<http://youtu.be/xSNDClVMhYs>>

The O'Jays – Love Train=C2◆ -- <http://youtu.be/2syR4On4xDI>

The O'Jays – Cry To=ether -- <http://youtu.be/W5-leyinUww> <<http://youtu.be/W5-leyinUw=>>

The O'Jays – For the lo=e of money -- <http://youtu.be/kjuRhETwbl0> <<http://youtu.be/kjuRhE=wbl0>>

The O'Jays – Don<sup>l</sup>=;t Call Me Brother -- <http://youtu.be/8Cbiye6XnS0> <<http://youtu.b=/8Cbiye6XnS0>>

The O'Jays – Living For=The Weekend -- <http://yo=tu.be/ihQJorxAyYU> <<http://youtu.be/ihQJorxAyYU>>

The O'Jays (Soul Train Dancers) – =C2◆Message In Our Music -- <http://youtu.be/6Agnx5T8Vq8>  
<<http://youtu.be/6Agnx=T8Vq8>>

The O'Jays – Forever Mi=e -- <http://youtu.be/rfRKzouM9lo>

The O'Jays – Sunshine=C2◆ -- <http://youtu.be/p9ZlcqUN7f0> <<http://youtu.be/p9ZlcqUN7f=>>

The O'Jays – Somebody E=se Will -- <http://youtu.be/LpOXi1243Gs> <<http://youtu.be/LpOXi1243=s>>

The O'Jays – Back Stabb=rs -- <http://youtu.be/Gnm6EdMVllc>

The O'Jays – Wildflower=C2◆ -- <http://youtu.be/QdCqzTbvPEw> special.... special.....=special.....

## BONUS TRACK

THE O'JAYS RECEIVED A TRIBUTE FROM STEVE HARV=Y, GERALD LEVERT, SEAN LEVERT, JOHNY GILL & KEITH SWEAT –  
=i>THE MIGHTY O'JAYS HONORED 2003 -- <http://youtu.be/5LHdFivDiFM=/p>>

I hope that you have enjoyed this week's offerings and wish yo= and yours a great week.

Sincerely,

Greg Brown<=>

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