

OPINION

Stimulus bill a sham by U.S.

A couple of weeks ago marked the one-year anniversary of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, or the stimulus bill, becoming law.

While the debate over its success has been focused on whether or not it is stimulating the economy and on various questionable uses of funds, in my estimation this legislation is accomplishing exactly what it was intended to accomplish — grow the government.



Those of us concerned about the ever-increasing level of government debt gasped at the astonishing \$787 billion cost estimates for this bill.

True to form, it has actually cost 10 percent more at \$862 billion. We heard over and over that government could not sit around and do nothing while people lost their jobs and houses.

The administration claimed that unemployment would not go above 8 percent if the stimulus bill passed. A year later, the government estimates that unemployment is over 10 percent.

The real number is closer to 20 percent. It appears those promises were total fabrications to close the deal.

In any case, the American people know that more government spending obviously equals more government. If the goal was to strengthen the private sector, Congress would have allowed businesses and individuals to keep more of their own money through meaningful tax cuts.

Outrageously, the administration claims that they did "cut taxes" by reducing withholding, and that they have stimulated the private economy by increasing the amount of money in every worker's paycheck.

What they fail to mention is they did not change the total amount of taxes due. This means all that money not withheld from paychecks will add up to a big, unpleasant surprise when returns are filed this year.

Many tax preparers are already seeing shocked taxpayers having to come up with big checks to the government when they normally expect a refund. Stimulus, indeed!

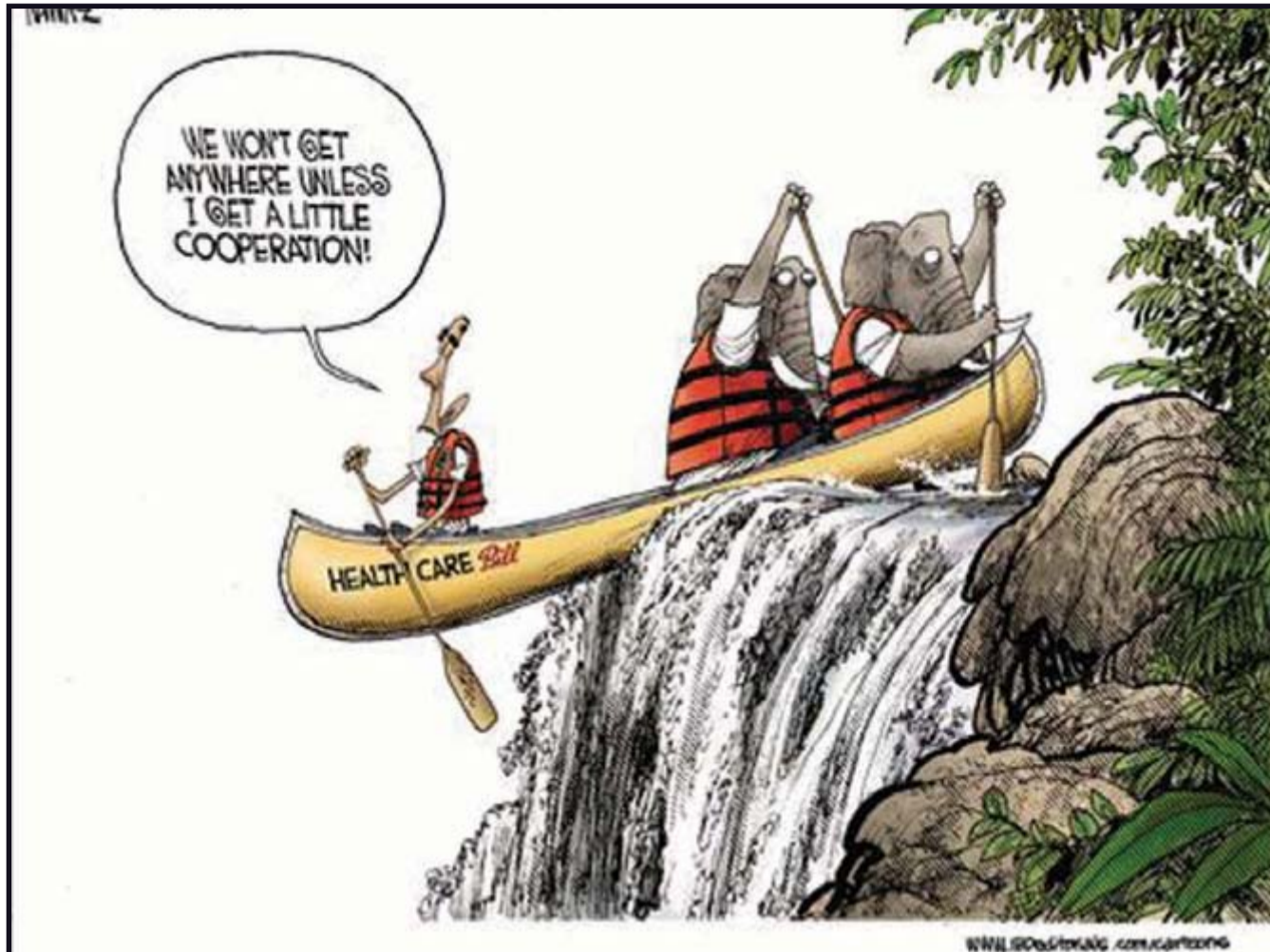
The administration also claims thousands of jobs have been created or saved by this massive spending bill, but these are just more government jobs, and counterproductive in the long run.

Funding for the public sector necessarily comes at the expense of an overtaxed private economy. The more the burden, the closer the government parasite comes to killing its host.

The administration is moving full-speed ahead to do even more economic damage. With the stimulus bill set as a precedent and victory declared, another "jobs" bill is in the works.

And, to address the unavoidable issues of our massive deficit, the administration has named a bipartisan commission to find ways to decrease it. Tax increases on the middle class are notoriously back "on the table", exposing that campaign promise as another instance of merely saying what the people wanted to hear.

Ron Paul represents the 14th Congressional district of Texas.



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CHECKLIST CHARLIE

Offering a columnist's pigeon prose

Being a columnist is much like being an elementary school teacher; as much as you try to do your best with each one, sometimes you can't help but choose your favorites.

And other columnists send me their own favorites.

I've read some doozies; for instance, one about a beloved fat feline that brought tears to my eyes or the one about teenagers that reminded me all parents are in the same boat ... um ... car.

Don Comedy, retired newspaperman and a wonderfully witty wordsmith, sent me this gem and I asked him if I could share.

After a vacation from writing, following the sale of the Haskell (Texas) Free Press where Don served as

editor and publisher for 24 years, he's back at the keyboard.

So here's the Checklist Charlie pick for particularly pleasing playful pigeon prose. Don writes:

"I recently learned of a \$60,000 grant to control pigeons in Hollywood, CA and that the preferred method of control by PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) was some type of birth control pill.

"Most of my friends being more of the 'red-neck' type however, seem to trend more toward pellet guns.

"Now, I'm sure that PETA would much prefer the 'pill' over the 'pellet', but in either event, the costs would probably be about the same if you actually paid the pill pushers or the pellet shoot-

ers.

"One serious potential problem with the 'pill' would be in dispensing to pigeons that prefer to perch on Catholic buildings. While PETA prefers the pill, the Pope has previously preached in opposition to the pill. Surely that preference would include the Catholic pigeons that perch on parish parapets.

"Now, the Catholics might be ok with the 'pellet', but PETA won't.

"Which causes one to ponder

"If the Pope prefers the 'pellet' and PETA prefers the 'pill', how many pigeons could St. Peter pellet, while PETA peddles pills?"

Don's now in Austin, working as a lobbyist, which is a loss to the newspaper industry.

One of his first jobs while he was in high school was working as an intern for Lyndon B. Johnson. Some of his later adventures in the political arena involve flying all over west Texas in an antiquated two-seater plane with one of his childhood buddies to help his friend get elected to his first regional office. That guy's now the governor.

Their friendship continues and Comedy still sings praises for Perry's public service.

Personally, the pigeons and I would like it if Don would take a few months off and write a book. He seems to understand that we have issues.

Cathy Primer Krafve lives and writes with a Texas twang. Visit checklistcharlie.blogspot.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Wise deserves better, reader says

I just can't believe some of the letters that have appeared in the Statesman about Dusty Wise, Y's Hometown Foods, applying for alcohol sales.

The article from the police chief was quite amusing. I would really like to thank the chief for letting everybody know that they can just come on over to Brownsboro after 3 a.m. and run wild since there is no law enforcement on duty and they are just going to be plum worn out because of these alcohol sales.

The passage of alcohol sales does not mean that everybody entering the city limits of Brownsboro must stop and buy beer or wine.

The passage of alcohol sales does not mean that everybody that enters Y's Hometown Foods is required to buy beer or wine.

Reading some of the things that have appeared in the Statesman, one would believe that nobody in Brownsboro drinks beer or wine and that there is not a refrigerator in a Brownsboro household that has a beer or bottle of wine in it.

Citizens of Brownsboro,

you have people among you that consume alcohol and even have it inside their homes!

Alcohol is in many vehicles traveling some distances to be stored and consumed within the city limits of Brownsboro!

Oh my, just think, if alcohol was sold right there at Y's Hometown Foods to citizens that already drink alcohol then it would keep alcohol from being out on many of the roadways in transit to those folks homes. That would mean that Mr. Wise would be helping law enforcement out by keeping alcohol off more roadways.

The folks that are selling alcohol to the citizens in and around Brownsboro that already drink are just laughing at you all that are complaining.

The profit is being made by them and their city is getting the tax dollars off the folks that already purchase alcohol.

After Mr. Wise left the grocery business in Chandler and opened his business in Brownsboro, he has been a true benefit to the

Brownsboro area. He has been around too long to operate illegally.

It's hard right now for the small businessman to make a profit, so let the man try to make a profit and at the same time generate income for your city.

You already have alcohol in your city. It would be foolish not to go ahead and vote for the sale of alcohol and not make the profit.

Larry Rogers
Chandler

Brownsboro firemen respond quickly to fire

We would like to praise and say, "thank you," to the Brownsboro Volunteer Fire Department for their very quick response to our chimney fire Monday night.

It was a very scary time for us and the firemen did an excellent job not only putting out the fire, but also keeping our home very clean inside.

These people are absolute professionals in their jobs. Thanks again, guys, and may God richly bless each of you!

Larry
& Marilyn Dickson

Brownsboro
Businesses offer generosity to DAV

Members of the Disabled American Chapter 101, Athens, wish to thank Dusty Wise, Y's in Brownsboro, Brookshire's in Chandler and Tyler, and KCKL FM 95.1 in Malakoff for their generous gifts of non-perishable items to our DAV chapter.

We will send these items to our troops who are fighting for our freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan. The troops will be forever grateful.

If anyone in this area wishes to join our organization, please call Commander Ken Bragg at 903-515-0852 or Sergeant-at-Arms Dwayne Garner at 903-852-6527.

Our organization helps veterans and dependants of veterans with financial support, filing of claims with the VA, and helps our active-duty troops with care packages.

Thanks again to the merchants mentioned above.

Ken Bragg
Commander
Chapter 101
Brownsboro

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Statesman welcomes and encourages letters and e-mails from readers.

Letters must include the names, addresses, and telephone numbers for verification purposes. Only your name and city will be published.

Anonymous letters will not be published.

All letters are subject to editing and must be limited to 400 words or less.

Letters must not be false or misleading, and the paper reserves the right to authenticate information in

letters.

Malicious attacks on individuals, elected or otherwise, will not be published.

The Statesman reserves the right to reject any letters at the editor's discretion.

The deadline to submit

letters to the editor and guest columns is Monday at 5 p.m.

They may be e-mailed to editor@c-bstatesman.com, faxed to 903-852-7631, or mailed to The Statesman P.O. Box 168 Brownsboro Texas 75756.

Reparations for gays, others are 'un-American'

Left-wing activists love to make the case for gay rights by associating the struggles of today's homosexuals with the long, heroic battle for racial justice in the Civil Rights movement.

Most of these same politically correct advocates also look with favor on demands for reparations for slavery and Jim Crow, so their insistence on the black-gay comparison raises an uncomfortable question: why don't they push for similar reparations for homosexuals?



Medved

An answer to that riddle not only exposes the ridiculous nature of equating African Americans with homosexuals as similarly suffering victim groups, but also reveals the dubious nature of any reparations drive for long-ago crimes.

The distinction between blacks and gays as two aggrieved components of the population has little to do with the discrimination against them, and everything to do with the irreducibly different nature of their group identity.

African Americans and homosexuals have suffered from violent intimidation, blatant discrimination, public ridicule, marginalization, and even brutal murder.

But racial hatred has created historic burdens that plagued families for centuries, while bigotry against sexual minorities focuses on sexual expression in the here and now.

Most obviously, any campaign for gay reparations would fall flat because no evidence exists whatever that today's homosexuals are the heirs to a long, bitter heritage of discrimination that spans generations.

No one can deny that most — in fact, nearly all — gay people were produced and raised by heterosexual parents, grandparents and great grandparents. Today, those who make the case for gay adoption insist no scientific evidence exists that children raised in same-sex homes are any more likely to grow up homosexual than those raised by traditionally married parents.

This contention utterly undermines the notion that a homosexual needs to be compensated for the ancient suffering of some distant gay progenitor. He is no more likely to boast such an ancestor than any heterosexual of the same age. Black identity has everything to do with heritage, with history, and it is (for nearly all African Americans) entirely involuntary.

Consideration of the weak case for gay reparations sheds new light on the weaknesses in the more familiar case for black reparations. In both cases, advocates want to compensate people who are alive today for the undeniable suffering of others, long ago.

The fact that some blacks might claim a distant familial relationship with the oppressed makes their case only slightly less tenuous.

With blacks as well as gays, it's invidious to single out individuals for special treatment and compensatory generosity based on group affiliation.

Heritage may confer distinctive advantages or disadvantages, but focusing on that to demand different treatment for any group from society at large remains un-American.

Michael Medved is an author and syndicated radio talk-show host.