

# Institutional Insanity in America

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If there was a mental health hospital for institutions the Republican Party and its top leaders would be admissible as clinically insane. Their bizarre wackopedia seems to contain no discernible boundaries. Repeatedly, these corporate supplicants oppose any measure, any regulation, any legislation that will directly help workers, consumers, the environment, small taxpayers and even investor-shareholders.

There are some exceptions. Since these Republican politicians eat, some did vote for the long-delayed food safety bill last week so that e-coli does not enter their intestines to disrupt the drivel drooling from their daily repertoire.

The Republicans get away with countless absurdities for at least two reasons. One is that their nominal opponents are the spineless, clueless, gutless Democrats (with a few notable exceptions) who present themselves as uncertain waverers, dialing for the same corporate dollars as the Republicans chase. The other is the political reporters who dwell on questions directed toward tactics and horseraces that the dimmest of Republicans can handle easily.

Take the evasive next Speaker of the House, Ohio Republican John Boehner. I've lost count of the times he said the recent health care law would "kill jobs in America, ruin the best health care system in the world, and bankrupt our country." I don't recall one reporter asking him to be specific on these claims. Instead, the questions focused on Capitol Hill timing and tactics.

Mitch McConnell, the Republican leader in the Senate, makes similar declarations such as: "I've said over and over again, you don't raise taxes in a recession." Really? Of all previous presidents, only George W. Bush did not raise taxes but actually reduced them in wartime. But don't expect a reporter to ask McConnell whether he thinks the children and grandchildren should be sent the bill for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Or if he thinks repealing the Bush tax cuts on the rich would help reduce the deficit.

How many times have you heard the Republicans demand cutting the national deficit? Probably as often as they did nothing when George W. Bush piled up trillions of dollars in red ink. Now that Obama is president, they rarely get specific about just how they are going to do this, other than jumping on Medicare (where corporate fraud is indeed rampant and untreated by them) or social security which is solvent for another 30 years.

For most Republicans, it is never about cutting the bloated military budget—ridden with corporate crime and fraud and burdened with massive redundancies that keep the military-industrial complex that President Eisenhower warned about deep in profitable government contracts.

Nor do the Republicans go after the corporate welfare budget—the hundreds of billions of dollars per year of subsidies, giveaways and handouts to domestic and even foreign corporations. Except for Ron Paul and a very few others, that is. (See: <http://www.taxpayers.org> and <http://www.goodjobsfirst.org>)

Another assertion made in this year's mid-term elections by Republican candidates for Congress all over the country is that: "Government does not create jobs, only the private sector does." Let's see. Government not only creates jobs, taxpayers have paid trillions of dollars for research, development and tax credits that are given over to build entire industries. These include the semi-conductor, computer, aerospace, pharmaceutical, biotech, medical device and containerization industries, to name a few.

The Pentagon created the job-producing Internet, for example. When the government funds public works or expands the armed forces, millions of jobs are created.

Will there be one reporter who challenges this Republican nonsense, often expressed in press interviews on cell phones while driving on highways in cars with seat belts and air bags either based on taxpayer-funded research, directly paid for, or regulated into being through the government?

Mute Democrats and mindless reporters make insane Republicans possible. Bringing these cruel descendants of Lincoln's Party down their ladder of generalities is to become concrete, to give substantiating examples that will either show that they have no clothes or that they prefer mink.

The American people deserve to have reporters ask one question again and again: "Senator, Representative, Governor, President, would you be specific, give examples and cite your sources for your general assertions?"

For instance, especially Republicans regularly roar their demand for "tort reform." A reporter could ask for clarification such as: "Sir, do you mean by 'tort reform' giving more access to the courts to millions of excluded Americans who get nothing for injuries and illnesses recklessly caused by manufacturers, hospitals, and other wrongdoers, or do you mean further restricting the law designed to afford these people compensation for their harms? (See: <http://www.centerjd.org>)

The same demand for concreteness can be directed to the dittoheads who cry out against "over-regulation." Where? Over Wall Street? For health and safety requirements that are either weak when issued, technically obsolete or rarely enforced? (See: <http://www.progressivereform.org>)

Bringing these well-greased pontificators down their abstraction ladder to where people live, work, overpay, bleed and suffer is a major step forward so the sovereignty of the people can begin exercising itself.

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