

January 3rd, 2020

Editor's Note: Welcome to 2020! As the Watchdog enters our 15th year of publication, we wish all our loyal readers a prosperous, healthy year. Your loyal readership is greatly appreciated.

- Harold Hamilton

Quote of the Week: At the direction of the President, the U.S. military has taken decisive defensive action to protect U.S. personnel abroad by killing Qasem Soleimani, the head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Quds Force, a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization.

General Soleimani was actively developing plans to attack American diplomats and service members in Iraq and throughout the region. General Soleimani and his Quds Force were responsible for the deaths of hundreds of American and coalition service members and the wounding of thousands more. He had orchestrated attacks on coalition bases in Iraq over the last several months – including the attack on December 27th – culminating in the death and wounding of additional American and Iraqi personnel. General Soleimani also approved the attacks on the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad that took place this week.

This strike was aimed at deterring future Iranian attack plans. The United States will continue to take all necessary action to protect our people and our interests wherever they are around the world.

- Department of Defense press release

In This Issue:

1. Leftugees;
2. Free College for Felons?

LEFTUGEES

Ever heard of a “Leftugee?” If not, don't feel ignorant. Most people have yet to hear of this existential threat to red states, counties, and townships across Minnesota and America.

Leftugees are people who flee jurisdictions ruined by liberal policies into jurisdictions governed by conservative policies regarding all manner of government

from taxes to education to transportation.

Think California, specifically San Francisco. Every day, thousands of residents flee the city (and state) to escape the high taxes, bad schools, outrageous living costs, and feces-littered sidewalks for states like Idaho and Texas, where conservative public policies have bred jobs, opportunity, and prosperity.

In short, people are voting with their feet.

While one might be tempted to welcome this development as a sign that people are turning away from collectivist policies are being victimized by those policies, that isn't always the case.

The great (and dangerous) paradox of the Leftugee is that many of them import to their new homes the very same odious liberalism that ruined the last home.

There is ample empirical data to support this thesis as well as anecdotal evidence.

Colorado is one example. The state has trended blue for some years now, led by polling that shows recent arrivals tending to vote democrat.

The state's TABOR (Taxpayer Bill of Rights) amendment, which has placed a cap of state taxing and spending, is now under assault and threat of repeal, blamed by liberals for all manner of social ills, which they claim would be ameliorated by authorizing the legislature to tax and spend at will.

Polling out of Texas showing a blue trend can be blamed, at least in part, on Leftugees coming in from California and New York.

Watchdog research has yet to find any empirical psychoanalysis data exploring the lack of cognitive dissonance in Leftugees that allows them to easily reconcile the pain of liberal policies with the continued support of those policies.

Of course, conservatives everywhere are alarmed and must be on guard against Leftugees steering their state, county, or city towards the Leftism that has plagued Illinois, New York, California, and other states and localities.

Minnesota has not been immune to this outbreak.

While anecdotal, the Watchdog has been rather surprised by the number of GOP legislators in the state who report this same phenomenon.

This exchange represents what they tell us is happening:

Legislator: Hi, I'm representative/senator XXX. I'm out door knocking today, meeting constituents and listening to their concerns.

Constituent: Thanks for stopping by. We're new to the area. We moved here a couple of months ago.

Legislator: Welcome! From where did you move?

Constituent: Minneapolis.

Legislator: What inspired you to move here?

Constituent: Minneapolis is awful. High taxes. Crime. The schools aren't teaching kids. The roads are crumbling.

Legislator: You'll find our community is quite the opposite. Good schools. Low crime. Government focuses on the efficient delivery of core services.

Constituent: Yes. We did a lot of research and this community has all those things for our family.

Legislator: That's great. I'm hoping you'll consider supporting me in the upcoming election to help keep those policies in place.

Constituent: Are you DFL or GOP?

Legislator: GOP.

Constituent: Sorry, I'm a loyal democrat. I will be voting DFL.

Legislator: Huge facepalm.

The lesson stands, Watchdogs. Guard your community from the Leftugee. They're here!

FREE COLLEGE FOR FELONS?

A recent article in a local newspaper is touting a new program to give prison inmates in Minnesota yet another path to earn a college degree while they are in prison.

Bored while serving that life sentence for murder?

Take a few classes.

Looking to break the monotony of serving 25 years for child molestation?

Take a few classes, enjoy the taxpayer subsidy.

According to one Department of Corrections bureaucrat, said of the program, “It’s going to be one of the best liberal arts or university colleges in the state.”

Thank goodness. Nothing but the best for our convicted violent offenders.

No word on whether the Princeton Review will be adding Oak Park Heights to its list of Best Colleges.

The irony wasn’t lost on one instructor, who noted that “these inmates can take a for-credit college class for 10 bucks. It’s amazing for them, while you and I have to pay thousands for classes.”

Indeed.

The primary purpose of prison is the retributive aspect. These people are in prison because they have visited serious harm or even death on their victims. They are serving time to repay their debt to their victims and to society at large.

Prison isn’t a reward. It isn’t an ersatz job training program. It isn’t college. It isn’t a frat house.

It’s a place to do hard time for committing crimes, some of them vile and evil.

What’s the message to society at large? If Pell Grants and savings don’t work, there’s always the “Felony Scholarship?”

While rehabilitation is certainly an aspect of prison, this crosses the line.

It’s one thing to have access to a prison library.

It’s another thing to be giving inmates smart tablets to allow them to earn college credits “when it’s convenient for them.”

It’s another thing to be offering incarcerated felons the same or similar for-credit courses that are available to Minnesota’s most promising students on our taxpayer-subsidized campuses.

Unfortunately, this is yet one more example of where Minnesota’s deep-seated liberalism is at work.

We can only imagine the outrage some crime victims and their families feel at finding out that the person who impacted their lives so horribly is now enjoying college credits on a brand-new smart tablet.

What’s next, sex change operations for inmates?

Too late.

January 10th, 2020

Quote of the Week: “There will be no haggling with the House over Senate procedure. We will not cede our authority to try this impeachment. The House Democrats’ turn is over. The Senate has made its decision.”
Sen. Mitch McConnell (R – KY)

Quote of the Week: “We’ve been spending more and more money and getting the same poor results.”

- Former MN Supreme Court Justice Alan Page

In This Issue:

1. Real Problem, Bad Solution;
2. The Poor, Poor IRS.

REAL PROBLEM, BAD SOLUTION

Two distinguished Minnesotans, former Supreme Court justice Alan Page, and Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank president Neel Kashkari, have been raising awareness of the achievement gap in Minnesota’s education system.

The achievement gap, the gap in test scores and learning between white students and minority students, is a very real and pressing problem.

Unfortunately, their proposed solution is almost as bad as the problem.

Essentially, the two have proposed amending the state’s constitution, which mandates a “uniform” system of public education, to mandate a “quality” education.

Put another way, they want to enshrine in the constitution an extremely vague mandate which in turn will open the floodgates to litigation, which in turn will empower courts, not the legislature, to run the state’s public schools.

Who knows what the outcome would be under that scenario? Courts could order all sorts of spending increases to satisfy their subjective definition of “quality.” Those spending increases, of course, would mean higher and higher taxes.

Moreover, courts have proven they would be no better than the legislature at running education policy.

And while there is no doubt that the teachers’ union, Education Minnesota, owns

democrats in the legislature, let's not forget that our judges are subject to the ballot box, meaning the union could just as easily buy judicial races in the same way they have bought legislative seats.

The bottom line is that the achievement gap hasn't been caused by inadequate wording in the Minnesota Constitution. Instead, the problem is multi-faceted but primarily caused by a couple of big factors.

First, too many minority students are coming to school not ready to learn.

They come from broken homes wracked by substance abuse, violence and other traumas.

They come from homes that lack supportive parents. We all know that some uncomfortable societal conversations are in order to discuss why so many homes in certain communities are broken, which leads to a vicious cycle of poverty, violence, and a lack of opportunity.

Basic math shows that a child only spends about 12% of his time in any given year inside the walls of a school. While there are certainly problems with our education policy, it's fair to point out that schools can only do so much to help kids.

Schools and staff are increasingly asked to step into the shoes of parents, family, and other governmental institutions when they should be focused on the core mission of educating students to compete in a hyper-competitive and rapidly evolving global economy.

Sentencing so many children to a life on the sidelines on the economy is an unmitigated tragedy.

Of course, the teachers' union bears a great deal of blame as well.

Very few taxpayers believe the cynical mantra that the union is for "the children."

The union regularly opposes school reform and works hard to protect incompetent teachers.

No reasonable citizen believes the union is anything other than a political organization that buys politicians who, in turn, protect the status quo.

Here in Minnesota, the teachers' union has 24 registered lobbyists in Saint Paul. 24!

In 2017 and 2018, the union spent \$1.8 million on lobbying activities.

In 2018, the union spent over \$5.2 million on elections.

Yeah, it's about the kids.

Between a union that owns politicians from the school board on up to Washington, DC and kids coming from broken homes, it's very difficult for many minority children to get a quality education.

The Watchdog, however, is all for a constitutional amendment.

This amendment would guarantee the right of school choice and give parents the right to have the education dollars follow their child to the school of their choice.

Boom.

THE POOR, POOR IRS

So, what are your chances of being audited by the IRS?

According to the much-despised agency, 0.45% of tax returns were audited in 2019, down from 0.59% in 2018.

In fact, the number of audits has been declining for 8 straight years.

The IRS blames the fall in audit numbers to a reduction in employee headcount, with a reduction of nearly 30,000 employees from 2010 to 2019.

"These losses directly correlate with a steady decline in the number of individual audits during the last nine years", whined the agency.

Yes, taxpayers need to be kept honest and that means audits.

While taxes are way too high, the law is the law.

Respect for the rule of law means following the law.

On the other hand, the IRS has suffered budget reductions at the hands of GOP legislators who are in turn holding the IRS accountable.

The IRS is paying the price for allowing itself to be weaponized by the Obama administration.

Does the name Lois Lerner ring a bell?

She was at the center of an IRS program that targeted conservative groups for maltreatment at the hands of the IRS.

In the aftermath, Republicans in Congress lost faith in the impartiality of the IRS and

thus scarce taxpayer resources were directed elsewhere.

In other words, the GOP wasn't going to countenance the IRS targeting of Americans based on their political viewpoint by giving the agency the budget it wanted.

This reminder of reprehensible IRS citizen abuse has a parallel with the current scandal engulfing the FBI, which is being investigated by a special counsel regarding very credible allegations that agents lied, mislead and withheld information from the courts in order to obtain warrants to spy on the Trump campaign.

Already, 17 instances have been identified when the FBI mislead the courts in providing the information required to obtain permission to spy on Americans, in this case those Americans being Trump campaign officials.

The next investigation report will likely further prove that the FBI sullied its reputation through being co-opted by the Obama and Clinton teams to spy on Trump.

Is there any institution the democrats won't trash to further their partisan goals?

The IRS (Lois Lerner).

The FBI (Spy on Trump).

The Supreme Court (Trash Brett Kavanaugh).

The Office of the President (The impeachment of the day allegation).

How utterly disgusting.

January 24th, 2020

Quote of the Week: "He was in Congress for years. He had one senator support him. Nobody likes him, nobody wants to work with him, he got nothing done. He was a career politician. It's all just baloney, and I feel so bad that people got sucked into it."

-Hillary Clinton, speaking of Bernie Sanders

Factoid of the Week: 29% of Minnesota voters can't identify Senator Tina Smith.

In This Issue:

1. Pete Stauber – William Pittenger;
2. Session Update – Ideas;
3. Impeachment.

PETE STAUBER – WILLIAM PITTENGER

If you don't know who Pete Stauber is, you're living under a rock. If you know who William Pittenger is, you're a true geek.

But did you know Pete Stauber aspires to emulate William Pittenger?

With a well-orchestrated tour and a sweet voting record to match, Republican Peter Stauber of Minnesota's Fightin' Eighth District kicked off his re-election bid this week, seeking to become just like William Pittenger.

Pittenger, you know, was the last Republican member of Congress in that area to win re-election, some 76 years ago. No word on how Bernie Sanders got along with Pittenger in Congress.

It was very much by design that Stauber chose as one of his announcement locations the union hall of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners in Hermantown.

A proud union member himself, Stauber hasn't been shy about supporting and collaborating with construction trade unions during his first term.

While Stauber's commitment to the skilled trades stems from his heartfelt belief in labor, it's also very smart politics.

Blue collar trades folks are up for grabs. For years the DFL has steadily turned their backs on working people, the most recent example being the attacks on mining and pipelines by Democrats like Rep. Betty McCollum and Sen. Tina Smith.

Stauber, like many other Republicans, understands that members of trades typically own guns, attend church, think their taxes are too high, own lots of gas burning vehicles, and want nothing more in life than the opportunity to earn a decent living, work hard, and be left alone.

One of the reasons Minnesota is in play from the presidential race on down is that savvy leaders like Stauber, Tom Emmer, Jason Lewis, Paul Gazelka, and Kurt Daudt understand this.

Moreover, the Republicans are blessed to have two card carrying union members in the legislative ranks, Sen. Mike Goggin (Red Wing) and Sen. Jason Rarick (Pine City). Both men proudly belong to the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). These two swing districts are locked down tight as both Goggin and Rarick are in the sweet spot of being pro-gun, pro-life, pro jobs Republicans who also have the trust and confidence of people in their districts who used to vote DFL.

Republicans in Minnesota need to face a very harsh reality. A GOP candidate hasn't won a state-wide office here since Tim Pawlenty was re-elected in 2006. 2006. 14 years ago. 14 years ago.

One of the best ways for the state GOP to grow the base is to continue to appeal to these voters.

In turn, that means turning away from issues that alienate these skilled workers by telling them they should do the same work but bring home less money to their families.

It's time for the GOP to shamelessly strip these voters right out of the DFL.

The GOP would be dumb not to do so.

SESSION UPDATE – IDEAS

One of the criticisms of Republicans is that they are simply the party of “no” and lack ideas.

This criticism may be unfair but is repeated by the Left because it's effective.

Thus, the Watchdog offers some advice to fellow Watchdogs regarding this coming legislative session, which convenes February 11th.

The first is the gas tax. Once again Governor Walz is proposing a gas tax increase.

Of course, this is a ridiculous idea. The state not only has a \$1.3 billion surplus, the gas tax is a very regressive tax.

In addition to opposing the gas tax, a positive alternative would be to dedicate 100% of all auto-related sales taxes to the highway funding account.

Right now, only about 50% of the taxes go into this dedicated road/bridge account, while the rest disappears into the general fund to be spent on stuff like waste, fraud, and abuse over at the Department of Human Services.

Want a way to pump an extra \$400 million into roads and bridges with no tax or fee increases? Dedicate it all!

Second, there will be a bonding bill. While some of our conservative friends will argue against all state borrowing, we're here to tell you it's going to happen.

In addition to urging restraint (Republicans will no doubt have to be the adults in the room), let's also urge policy makers to focus on core governmental functions such as roads, bridges, prisons, wastewater treatment plants, etc.

Moreover, let's focus on taking care of what we own before we use state money to build more stuff.

Capital infrastructure that will last generations is more than amenable to reasonable borrowing that will spread costs over those generations who will enjoy it.

Finally, there should be some tax cuts on the agenda. Minnesota is a highly taxed state and citizens are voting with their feet.

Reducing the state's draconian tax burden is critical to the future.

IMPEACHMENT

This publication has said little about the impeachment proceedings because this sham deserves little attention.

First, no crime has even been alleged. Instead, the vague, nebulous charges of "abuse of power" and "obstruction of Congress" have been leveled against Trump.

Three years of Deep State surveillance and investigations and this is the best Pelosi and company can come up with?

Next, if you've watched the impeachment case put on by the House managers, you've seen that their narrative is essentially "Man, we would have a great case against Trump if only we would have had access to those 78 files we wanted."

What a joke.

What prosecutor walks into court and admits they have no case?

“Teacher, I would have had a sweet term paper if I had just researched those other sources.”

The would've, could've, should've impeachment.

It's a political sham designed to do nothing more than hurt Trump politically.

The Dems will spare no political institution in their bloodlust for power.

They've embarrassed the legislative branch by savaging the Judicial Branch (Kavanaugh) and now the Office of the President is under attack.

Embarrassing and dangerous.

January 31, 2020

Quote of the Week: “This impeachment sham is nothing more than an attempt at a soft coup against President Trump by the people who still can't get over the fact that he beat Hillary Clinton fair and square at the ballot box.”

- Rep. Thomas Massie (R – KY4)

Editor’s Note: ACTION ALERT! CITY OF ANOKA! BIG GOVERNMENT!

If you live in Anoka, pay attention! If you don’t, pay attention!

The city is attempting to takeover trash collection!

If you like what you’ve read about Saint Paul’s trash collection scheme, you’ll love the Anoka plan. If you’re a common-sense person who’s skeptical about claims that government can do things better than the free market, you’ll hate the scheme and you need to activate!

BACKGROUND

Anoka, like most Minnesota cities, currently has a free market trash system in which citizens are free to shop among the licensed haulers in the city to determine which hauler offers them the best service for the best price. The contract is between the hauler and the citizen.

Through a review of city council documents, including minutes and agendas, the Watchdog has learned that the city is far down the path towards taking over trash hauling and offering a monopoly to a single hauler, who would have a contract with the city and not citizens.

The city would negotiate price, levels of service, and the like. Citizens would have no say in the process and would simply be told who the hauler is, what the price is, and other aspects of a hauling contract.

In short, citizens lose their right to choose their hauler.

In fact, this system in some respects is worse than the awful Saint Paul system because in Saint Paul, the city worked to keep existing haulers in the city, working under a consortium model in which they didn’t lose their market share and business in the city.

Under Anoka’s plan, every hauler except one (or all of them, giving the contract to a hauler not currently in the city) would get kicked out of the city and lose their book of

business, with no compensation. Government would, in effect, take business from some haulers and simply give it to a different hauler.

How distinctly un-American.

A DONE DEAL?

Even if one believes that government can do trash hauling better than the free market, no reasonable citizen should be happy with the city's deceptive process.

The city would have you believe that there is currently a "community conversation" happening and that the city council is interested in collecting community feedback before making decisions.

The city even held an "open house" recently, where City Manager Greg Lee emphasized the city council's interest in hearing from citizens, hawking the "feedback" form on a table in the back as well as noting the form being available on the city web site.

[https://www.ci.anoka.mn.us/vertical/sites/%7B213A9A90-C8E1-49AA-AC02-51D3C4882D33%7D/uploads/Organized_Collection_Feedback_Form\(1\).pdf](https://www.ci.anoka.mn.us/vertical/sites/%7B213A9A90-C8E1-49AA-AC02-51D3C4882D33%7D/uploads/Organized_Collection_Feedback_Form(1).pdf)

The open house also had a Power Point presentation that purported to show the pros and cons of government-managed trash collection.

That open house was held January 23rd.

But listen to what Mayor Phil Rice had to say at an October 28th, 2019 city council workshop, stating, "Yes, it's not even a question of whether you're going to have a single hauler. **It's just when are we going to have a single hauler, you know.**"

Another city council member, Erik Skoquist, also stated his support for moving to a single hauler at the same meeting, saying "I think an RFP (for single hauler) obviously makes the most sense for the city and one hauler. **Let's get the clock rolling... we've already killed ten months.**"

But it doesn't end there.

At a December council workshop, there was more talk of this being a done deal.

Mayor Phil Rice stated, "This is such a difficult — so it shouldn't be. I think the facts speak for themselves, and although I've said it before, **it's not a question of if we're going to go to organized hauling. It's just a question of when we're going to do it.**"

Council member Mark Freeburg said, "Well, the information that you give them is

going to be slanted towards one hauler, because we're going to be telling them how bad garbage trucks are."

And here's one more quote from Mayor Phil Rice who knows better than the citizens, saying on the record, "I can't think of an analogy to use, but there have to be 101 of them about us making decisions on behalf of the city for the better of the city, that we don't care that the people know we're biased. **We are biased biased because our bias is what's best for the city.**"

Again, here's city manager Greg Lee, "**Right. I truly believe the writing's on the wall.** I think, Mr. Mayor, you said it right, that it's not a question of if we go to organized hauling, it's a matter of when."

So not only does the council think this is a done deal, they also don't want you to have unbiased information. That attitude is summed up nice by Mayor Phil Rice, who said at the October 28th workshop, "**We have to encourage people**, both that are opposed and want the freedom to choose and those that believe that this is the right thing to do and go single hauler."

Does this sound like a city council that cares what you think?

Does this sound like a city council is engaged in a process of carefully considering all options, including gathering citizen feedback?

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

If you live in Anoka and this feels like déjà vu, you would be correct.

In the spring of 2015, the city went through a legitimate, real community conversation about the trash hauling system.

The citizens then spoke loud and clear that they didn't want government-run trash collection.

It's too bad the city council isn't listening.

TAKE ACTION

So what can you do?

First of all, get educated on the government-run trash situation by visiting our friends over at Garbage Haulers for Citizen Choice.

Visit <http://www.haulersforchoice.com/> which is an excellent web site on the subject.

Next, attend the February 3rd city council meeting, 7 PM, City Hall, during the "open

mic” period and make your feelings known.

If you can't attend, contact the city council and make your feelings known:

Phil Rice
612-702-8442
Email: philrice@ci.anoka.mn.us

Elizabeth Barnett
612-718-8433
Email: elizabethbarnett@ci.anoka.mn.us

Mark Freeburg
763-421-9244
Email: markfreeburg@ci.anoka.mn.us

Erik Skogquist
763-576-9219
Email: erikskogquist@ci.anoka.mn.us

Brian Wesp
763-576-2718
Email: brianwesp@ci.anoka.mn.us

Fight back!

Tell them. “Hand’s off my can!”

February 7th, 2020

Quote of the Week: “This Nation is our canvas, and this country is our masterpiece. We look at tomorrow and see unlimited frontiers just waiting to be explored. Our brightest discoveries are not yet known. Our most thrilling stories are not yet told. Our grandest journeys are not yet made. The American Age, the American Epic, the American Adventure, has only just begun.”

- President Donald J. Trump

In This Issue:

1. Democrat Heroes;
2. Those Crazy Democrats;
3. Bits and Pieces.

DEMOCRAT HEROES

With the impeachment debacle behind the country, one of the outcomes is the hero status conferred on Senator Mitt Romney by fawning Democrats who are tripping over each other to praise his “courage” and “conviction” in voting in favor of one of the articles of impeachment.

Of course, any Republican who disagrees with the president is heroic in the eyes of the Democrats.

Or, we should add, the very cynical eyes of Democrats.

Romney is just another in a growing line of Republican who they once excoriated but now love.

Remember the Mitt Romney of 2012? He was, according to Democrats, a soulless and rapacious corporate raider who slashed jobs and killed companies in the name of profits.

The “King of Bain Capital” was the personification of unfettered capitalism.

To them, Romney was no heart, no soul, but all greed.

The same goes with John Bolton. Bolton today is a serious and critical witness to the alleged Trump transgressions on Ukraine.

Just a few short months ago, Bolton was a neo-conservative war monger who was

going to blow up the world.

And let's not forget John McCain, perhaps the most egregious example of this fake respect.

Prior to McCain feuding with President Trump, McCain was another war monger unfit to be president.

In the 2008 presidential campaign, the Democrats engaged in a not-so-subtle whisper campaign that McCain was mentally unfit to be commander-in-chief. In fact, McCain was probably insane, according to the smear narrative.

Please.

THOSE CRAZY DEMOCRATS

While the 2020 legislative session here in Minnesota won't start until next week, the period to introduce bills has opened, giving us an idea of what Democrats see as priorities.

As you might guess, it isn't pretty.

Let's start with House File 3030, authored by Rep. Jeff Brand of Saint Peter.

This bill mandates that restaurants serve a "default beverage" with the children's meals they sell.

That "default" beverage is the typical things kids don't want, like sparking water, mineral water, unflavored milk, etc.

A customer may request something beside the default beverage, but must affirmatively ask.

The bill also notes that the attorney general has enforcement authority over the mandate.

Geez, Rep. Brand, thanks for the help but things like this are exactly why those who consume children's meals have moms and dads.

It's not government's job to make food choices for us.

Moreover, let's hope the state's attorney general has more important law enforcement priorities than making sure default beverage mandates are happening.

Then there's HF 3055, which takes money from the general fund to study the impacts of "climate change" on state assets. In other words, let's hire some climate change alarmists to study how minimal changes in temperature impact dorm rooms

at the U of MN.

House File 3061 is a sanctuary bill that prohibits local jails from taking on inmates who are there because of federal immigration violations, which is an extension of sanctuary city bills.

How about HF 3072, which makes it a crime to smoke in your car if a person under 18 is present.

HF 3084 prohibits state government from purchasing plastic bottles.

HF 3101 forces utilities to include “information about renewable energy programs” in their bills.

Our favorite may be House File 3085, which rewards light rail fare evasion by reducing the penalty. Moreover, the bill establishes a “transit ambassador” program, which is presumably designed to create an army of welcome wagons to kindly discourage people from engaging in the kind of violent and uncivil behavior plaguing the system these days.

Excuse me, sir. Could you kindly refrain from stabbing your fellow rider?

Sir, could you please defecate in a designated bathroom. That would be great.

Mandates, requirements, and more societal chaos.

These bills should disgust regular citizens but certainly shouldn't surprise.

BITS AND PIECES

Congratulations to Paul Novotny, who won a special election this week to the Minnesota House of Representatives. The Republican will represent the Elk River area.

Congratulations to Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka and his campaign finance team, who raised a whopping \$1.34 million in 2019 and have an eye-popping \$2.055 million cash on hand.

Gazelka wasn't joking when he promised in 2016 that his caucus wouldn't be grossly outspent in 2020.

Senate Minority Leader Tom Bakk was unceremoniously ousted from his job this week and replaced by Sen. Susan Kent of Woodbury.

Bakk, a retired union carpenter and life-long Iron Ranger, was apparently too conservative, and too rural, for this urban-centric caucus.

Look for the new leader to continue the trend of the DFL becoming more urban, more liberal, and more contemptuous of people who live outside the 612 and 651 area codes.

Pretty soon, someone is going to sue the DFL for false advertising if they don't get around to dropping the "farmer" and "labor" from their name.

Finally, the City of Saint Paul is demonstrating that there is no end to government's appetite for money.

The city on a narrow 4-3 vote decided to move forward in exploring a plan to raise the city's sales tax 1%.

Maybe it's time for the state to let these local units of government do whatever they want for local taxes in exchange for giving up state aid.

There is a legitimate argument to be made that a major city like Saint Paul, with a massive tax base, shouldn't be getting state aid regardless.

Cut them loose. If the taxpayers want to "pay for a better Saint Paul," let them. The others will vote with their feet.

It's telling that the vote was 4-3, showing that perhaps there is a limit to at least the political will to hammer constituents with tax and fee increase after increase.

February 21, 2020

Editor's Note: This week's quotes are all from the battle royal Democrat debate this week. What a circus!

"I'd like to talk about who we're running against. A billionaire who calls women fat broads and horse-faced lesbians. And no, I'm not talking about Donald Trump, I'm talking about Mayor Bloomberg."

- Elizabeth Warren

"What a wonderful country we have. The best-known socialist in the country happens to be a millionaire with three houses."

- Michael Bloomberg

"Are you mocking me? Are you saying I'm dumb?"

- Amy Klobuchar

"Mini Mike Bloomberg's debate performance tonight was perhaps the worst in the history of debates, and there have been some really bad ones. He was stumbling, bumbling and grossly incompetent. If this doesn't knock him out of the race, nothing will. Not so easy to do what I did!"

- Donald J. Trump

In This Issue:

BILLIONS BACK!

As the 2020 legislative session ends its second week, Senate Republicans unveiled a major public policy proposal regarding the state's \$1.3 billion surplus.

In short, the proposal is to return the vast majority of the surplus to the taxpayers.

Every rational person in Minnesota should get behind this proposal. The massive surplus represents nothing more than the over-collection of taxes.

Of course, the DFL will wring their hands and spin all sorts of fantastic stories as to why the state just can't part with a penny.

A recession could be just around the corner. A fat budget surplus protects the bureaucracy and prevents the need to find efficiencies during tough fiscal times. A surplus keeps government fat and happy. In other words, the DFL will always prioritize the government budget over the family budget.

The state budget doesn't factor in inflation. This old chestnut could also be called, "let's put the budget on auto-pilot." There is simply no good public policy reason to presume that state spending should be automatically be afforded an increase of any type without scrutiny.

And, of course, the DFL would love nothing more than to spend the surplus, a never-ending quest to satiate the insatiable appetite of their mooching constituencies for government largesse.

Some aspects of this plan are particularly attractive.

For example, eliminating the tax on Social Security. Minnesota is only one of 13 states that hammers senior citizens with this tax, driving them out of the state and lending much heft to Minnesota's reputation as a "least friendly" state regarding taxes.

A second example is cutting the bottom state income tax rate. Minnesota has among this highest rates for the lowest income earners in the entire nation.

The reality, like so much of human history, shows that liberal governance is not only bad for everyone, its especially bad for the people the Left claim to represent.

Another aspect of this situation is Minnesota's highly regressive taxes, like the gas tax.

While this proposal doesn't cut that tax, Republicans are firmly opposed to Governor Walz's plan to raise the gas tax 70%

Kudos to Sen. Roger Chamberlain (R – Lino Lakes), the Senate Tax Chair, who is the champion of this proposal.

Folks, this is THE game this session. What to do with a massive surplus?

The Republicans will be up against a House DFL majority and liberal governor who will be opposed to this plan.

Contact your GOP legislators and tell them you're with them and you have their

back.

Find your legislators here:

<https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/>

Here are the details of the plan, according to a press release:

PRESS RELEASE FOLLOWS:

Senate Republicans unveil plan to give budget surplus back to taxpayers

Senate Republicans today announced a multifaceted plan to return Minnesota's budget surplus to taxpayers. The Senate Republican tax plan emphasizes putting money back in the pockets of families and individuals, particularly middle-income and low-income earners, so they have more security, freedom, and flexibility to chase their dreams. This is the marquee piece of [Senate Republicans' Vision 2020 Agenda](#), which was unveiled in January.

The Get Your Billion Back plan is built upon a massive package of tax cuts worth more than \$1 billion, which will ease the burden for every single Minnesota taxpayer. The plan calls for reducing the bottom income tax rate, completely eliminating taxes on Social Security income, expanding the K-12 income tax credit, and more.

"It is time to get your billion back, Minnesota," said Sen. Roger Chamberlain, chairman of the Senate Tax Committee. "I have met so many people who have told me what a little extra money in their pocket would mean. For some, it will be easier to afford childcare, groceries, or medical bills. For others, it means being able to go to a Wild game, a concert, or a long-overdue date night. It's about security and flexibility for Minnesotans and their families; it's about giving people the freedom to create their own opportunities and follow their dreams."

Reducing the lowest rate will positively impact everyone who pays income taxes in Minnesota and help low-income and middle-income workers in particular. It will mark the second consecutive year that Senate Republicans have reduced income tax rates – an achievement that hadn't been accomplished in almost two decades prior to 2019.

Expanding the K-12 Education Tax Credit will specifically help parents of school-age children save money when they file their taxes. More families will qualify for the expanded credit, and those who do will also see larger savings on their tax returns.

Eliminating the tax on Social Security Income is long overdue. Minnesota is one of only 13 states that imposes this tax on retirees, many of whom are on a fixed income. Throwing out the Social Security income tax will encourage more seniors to stay in Minnesota after retirement. This is one of the most popular and frequent

requests made by constituents at town halls, via social media, and through emails and phone calls.

Fully conforming to Section 179 of the federal tax code will help farmers and mom-and-pop businesses grow and invest in their operations by giving them more flexibility to deduct large equipment purchases, and Expanding the Angel Tax Credit will help innovative technologies and groundbreaking ideas reach new heights by giving people a greater incentive to invest in Minnesota companies.

Reforming school Equalization Aid will provide more money to school districts that have less property wealth and provide property tax relief to property owners in those districts.

Reallocating more mortgage and deed tax revenue to affordable housing programs, as well as property tax classification rate reductions, will help more Minnesotans secure the American Dream of homeownership.

Reforms and reductions to Charitable Gaming rules will [keep more money raised from gaming by local charities in the communities they support](#). These are games run exclusively by private nonprofits, like Little League teams. Currently, only a tiny sliver of the proceeds from these games benefits the charities' missions. Aside from overhead, most proceeds go to state taxes.

March 7th, 2020

Quote of the Week:: "This morning, Senator Schumer spoke at a rally in front of the Supreme Court while a case was being argued inside. Senator Schumer referred to two Members of the Court by name and said he wanted to tell them that 'You have released the whirlwind, and you will pay the price. You will not know what hit you if you go forward with these awful decisions.' Justices know that criticism comes with the territory, but threatening statements of this sort from the highest levels of government are not only inappropriate, they are dangerous. All Members of the Court will continue to do their job, without fear or favor, from whatever quarter."

- Chief Justice John Roberts

Factoid of the Week: During the winter of 2017-2018, influenza killed 61,099 people in the United States alone.

In This Issue:

1. amy;
2. Corn Pop;
3. Capitol Update.

amy

Poor amy Klobuchar. She kicked off her campaign to much fanfare in a swirling snowstorm, only to see the dream dashed by the Establishment before she could even stand before her hometown voters on Super Tuesday.

Of course, any reasonable observer could see that the campaign wouldn't last.

After all, what presidential campaign has ever been successful by making this proposition to the political marketplace: "Vote for me! I'm safe."

amy was the cardboard of presidential politics. The tofu. The rice cake. The sugar free, zero calorie, zero trans fat birthday cake of American politics. Looks tasty and indulgent on the outside, tastes like cold paint.

Her supporters couldn't offer a rationale for her candidacy beyond the "safety" factor.

Unfortunately for amy there is no "present" button to push in the White House.

It's hard to build a movement on a resume of naming post offices and helping

widows get their Social Security checks.

Hell, she was afraid to choose which state fair she liked best.

A commander in chief who can't pick a state fair? No wonder amy was dropped like a bad habit by primary/caucus voters looking for a movement, not a moment.

While Biden and Sanders are bad bets in their own right, they offer a vision to their supporters.

Yes, it's a vision of failed policies, but it's a vision, nonetheless.

Perhaps she will get a payday if Corn Pop Biden wins, but's that's the only ticket she managed to punch in the whole process.

That can't be satisfying, even to a senator who is satisfied with micro-incrementalism.

CORN POP

Give Joe "Corn Pop" Biden credit. Or, better yet, give the Establishment credit.

Like Weekend at Bernie's, the Establishment flexed huge nuts this past week by clearing most of the field when the fire alarm was finally pulled at DNC headquarters (and CNN) over Bernie Sanders' sudden and sustained rise.

While the coronation of Corn Pop isn't a certainty, the Establishment is good at getting what it wants, even if what it wants isn't what America wants.

They wanted Hillary Clinton in 2016 and America responded with Donald J. Trump.

Corn Pop's sudden reversal of fortune and the palpable sighs of relief from the Establishment show just how far this party has fallen.

The party of JFK has become the party of find-the-least-socialist-elderly-white-guy-to-run party.

Let's remember, a Corn Pop candidacy will be no walk in the park for democrats.

We're always just one question away from a chest-poking, space-violating, push-up challenge.

That's not authentic. That's boorish.

And we're never far away from some senior moments where Biden will lack the mental acuity and coherency to recall his time, place, campaign, or family members.

Who am I? Why am I here?

And then there is the whole feeding at the public trough Biden and anyone who is a cousin 5 steps removed all enjoyed during Pop's time in office.

If he's the nominee, expect lots of scrutiny regarding how all those untalented, inexperienced people all got rich, with no common denominator beyond having a surname that goes B-I-D-E-N.

"Burisma" will become a household name.

CAPITOL UPDATE

Lawmakers consider higher ethanol standard, E15

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/SessionDaily/Story/14139>

Starting Line: No more doggies in the window at retail pet shops

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/SessionDaily/Story/14130>

Secretary of state promises new safeguards after primary poll finder issue

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/SessionDaily/Story/14152>

House passes bill on paid family and medical benefits

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/SessionDaily/Story/14165>

State health officials: \$21 million needed to address potential MN COVID-19 outbreak

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/SessionDaily/Story/14155>

Tax division hears how nearly \$1 million in local aid was overpaid

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/SessionDaily/Story/14135>

Bonding division hears Northstar line extension request

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/SessionDaily/Story/14159>

March 13, 2020

Quote of the Week: “I would like to just ask the Chinese for a formal apology. This coronavirus originated in China, and I have not heard one word from the Chinese. A simple ‘I am sorry’ would do.”

- Jesse Watters

Quote of the Week: “This is the most aggressive and comprehensive effort to confront a foreign virus in modern history.”

- President Donald J. Trump

In This Issue:

1. A Republic, not a Democracy.

A REPUBLIC, NOT A DEMOCRACY

The global pandemic rocking the world and reverberating through our home state is a sobering reminder not only of man’s limited ability to control the world around him, but also a somber tribute to the genius of the Framers, who well understood that a true democracy is a cousin to mob rule.

The irrational, panicked response of so many people to the Chinese Coronavirus is nothing short of breathtaking.

This week’s edition is dedicated to all the Minnesotans out there who are need of some facts, perspective, and reason.

It’s for the guy throwing punches in aisle 2 of the Maplewood Costco, fighting for the last roll of Charmin. There’s no evidence that the Chinese Coronavirus will shut down the toilet paper supply chain.

It’s for the woman in Wal Mart, sprinting down aisle 4 to buy the last case of Spring Mountain bottled water. The virus won’t pollute your tap water or cripple water treatment facilities.

It’s for the people buying cases of soup that you will likely be collecting dust in your pantry three years from now. Just because cream of broccoli was all that was left, it doesn’t mean you now like it.

By the way, Proctor and Gamble, Campbell's, and other manufacturers do thank you for doing your part to stabilize share price and pricing power during the market downturn.

And while the Chinese Coronavirus is certainly a public health risk, it's important to keep some perspective while exercising some very simple, very easy protective measures to mitigate transmission.

It's really too bad that it takes a panic like this convince some people that they ought to wash their hands, cover their cough, and stay home if they're sick.

This is especially true during the regular influenza season.

If you're taking proactive protective measures now, keep these facts in mind as we will inevitably move away from this pandemic and move into the cold and flue season, a perennial burden.

The Minnesota Department of Health does an excellent job tracking public health incidents and keeping statistics.

As most people know, the current outbreak has infected 9 Minnesotans, with 8 of them recovering at home and one hospitalized.

Thankfully, we have recorded no deaths from Chinese Coronavirus.

Compare those statistics to this season's influenza numbers.

So far, 3,577 Minnesotans have been hospitalized with influenza.

110 have died.

Medical professionals would label this season as a "mild" one for influenza.

By comparison, consider the 2017-2018 flu season.

That season, 6,446 Minnesotans were admitted to hospitals due to influenza.

440 died, including 6 children.

Were you paying \$50 for a bottle of hand sanitizer then? Hoarding crates of toilet paper? Burying your change jar in the backyard? Many of you probably weren't even washing your hands after using the bathroom. You had no earthly idea of the numbers.

The Chinese Coronavirus is serious, but the pandemic will pass. Our much-

maligned pharmaceutical companies will likely find a vaccine. Those evil for-profit corporations will produce the health care equipment the sick will require to recover. The usual cast of characters who routinely root against America will be disappointed.

Wash your hands.

Cover your cough.

Use some common sense.

Keep it in perspective, Minnesota.

This too shall pass.

March 20, 2020

Quote of the Week: "We cannot have free government without elections; and if the rebellion could force us to forego, or postpone a national election it might fairly claim to have already conquered and ruined us."

- Abraham Lincoln, 1864

Quote of the Week: "I honestly feel that it would be best for the country to keep baseball going. There will be fewer people unemployed and everybody will work longer hours and harder than ever before."

- Franklin D. Roosevelt, January 15, 1942

Quote of the Week: "Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety."

- Benjamin Franklin

In This Issue:

1. China Virus;
2. Martial Law?

CHINA VIRUS

It's all Chinese Coronavirus all the time these days.

And with good reason.

Yes, the pandemic is real and it's serious.

And yes, the seemly unchecked power of government to run roughshod over civil rights and individual liberties is real – and serious.

To start, let's dispense with the ridiculous notion that referring to the current virus as the "Wuhan" or "Chinese" virus is somehow racist.

That's nothing more than enabling Chinese propaganda.

The Chinese government is working hard to deflect their culpability for suppressing and denying the pandemic in its earliest stages, when a stronger containment strategy could have saved lives and jobs.

The reality is that serious diseases and pandemics have had geographic names for many years.

1871: Japanese Encephalitis (First case reported in Japan)

1918: Spanish Flu (Spain was the first nation to report a case)

1931: Rift Valley Fever (Rift Valley in Kenya, where first reported)

1944: Crimean-Congo Fever: (First reported in Crimea, linked to similar disease in Congo)

1947: Zika Virus (First identified in the Zika Forest of Uganda)

1952: Chikungunya (A native word from Tanzania, where first identified)

1967: Marburg Virus: (First identified in Marburg, Germany)

1976: Ebola Disease (Named for the Ebola River in the Congo)

1994: Hendra Virus (First identified in Hendra, Australia)

2012: Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (First identified in Saudi Arabia)

Thus, there is nothing improper about referring to the city, province, or country where this pandemic was first identified.

The mainstream media's feigned outrage is little more than the latest manifestation of another pandemic: Trump Derangement Syndrome.

MARTIAL LAW?

It's good see some legislative Republicans pushing back against some the Executive Orders Governor Walz has promulgated.

These are incredibly important and weighty issues, the tension between public safety and liberty in particular.

The urgency of these issues is becoming more important as Governor Walz has called a mandatory "shelter in place" executive order "on the table."

A broader public debate should be had on these issues, one that includes the legislature.

The governor should be put to his proof on these decisions.

This isn't to say that the governor is wrong in that his orders are illegal.

To be fair, Governor Walz is managing a difficult situation with extraordinary unknowns.

It's simply to say that the free exchange of ideas and vigorous debate produce the best public policy.

Let's also remember that the governor is only exercising the broad powers the legislature has granted him.

Chapter 12 of Minnesota statutes grants the governor, among other powers, the following:

(7) cooperate with the president and the heads of the armed forces, the Emergency Management Agency of the United States and other appropriate federal officers and agencies, and with the officers and agencies of other states in matters pertaining to the emergency management of the state and nation, including the direction or control of:

(iv) the conduct of persons in the state, including entrance or exit from any stricken or threatened public place, occupancy of facilities, and the movement and cessation of movement of pedestrians, vehicular traffic, and all forms of private and public transportation during, prior, and subsequent to drills or actual emergencies;

(v) public meetings or gatherings.

Moreover, the statute states:

Orders and rules promulgated by the governor under authority of section 12.21, subdivision 3, clause (1), when approved by the Executive Council and filed in the Office of the Secretary of State, have, during a national security emergency, peacetime emergency, or energy supply emergency, the full force and effect of law. Rules and ordinances of any agency or political subdivision of the state inconsistent with the provisions of this chapter or with any order or rule having the force and effect of law issued under the authority of this chapter, is suspended during the period of time and to the extent that the emergency exists.

Finally, the law says:

Unless a different penalty or punishment is specifically prescribed, a person who willfully violates a provision of this chapter or a rule or order having the force and effect of law issued under authority of this chapter is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction must be punished by a fine not to exceed \$1,000, or by imprisonment for not more than 90 days.

The only real legislative oversight is that the legislature, by a majority vote of both houses, may terminate a declared peacetime emergency after it has been in effect for 30 days.

It is thus an important public policy function of the legislature to question these orders, even if the legislature by its own hand passed legislation diminishing its traditional oversight role regarding the executive branch.

Once this peacetime emergency has passed, the legislature would be well served to re-examine the law and ask if it doesn't make for better public policy to have the legislature exercise a more proactive role in overseeing the executive branch's exercise of peacetime emergency powers.

March 27, 2020

Quote of the Week: "When people start talking about 20% of a population getting infected, it's very scary, but we don't have data that matches that based on our experience. The media make the implication that when they need a hospital bed it's not going to be there, or a ventilator, it's not going to be there, we don't have evidence of that. It's our job collectively to assure the American people. There is no model right now -- no reality on the ground where we can see that 60% to 70% of Americans are going to get infected in the next eight to 12 weeks. I want to be clear about that."

- Dr. Deborah Birx

In This Issue:

1. Emergencies Breed Tyranny;
2. Profile in Courage;
3. Good Reading.

EMERGENCIES BREED TYRANNY

Watchdogs, if there was ever a time for vigilance, that time is now.

While the Chinese Virus is clearly a public health emergency, it shouldn't serve as a platform or an excuse to trammel the constitution, eliminate transparency, and pass into law all manner of things that wouldn't pass muster during normal times.

In short, an emergency shouldn't give government carte blanche.

Thus far, we've seen government seek to take increasing stakes in the private economy, impose restrictions and invade citizen privacy at an unprecedented level, and push for public policies that wouldn't see the light of day in normal times.

While Washington is still dickering over a "stimulus" bill that has passed the Senate but not the House, it's appalling to see what has been proposed. Here is a list of some of those things, some of which will become law and some that won't.

Would allow certain funding to go to sanctuary cities.

Under "Overreaching Mandates on Businesses":

Permanent changes to who can serve on corporate boards of directors for companies that receive assistance for payroll and operating costs.

Mandatory disclosure on supply chain management.

Requires board diversity disclosure for all publicly traded companies.

Ban on all federal rulemaking including non-COVID 19 proposals (extends 30 days after emergency) “in an attempt to delay the current administration from promulgating actions House Democrats disagree with.”

Under “New Permanent Mandates”:

Virtually rewrites the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program policy with no reference to COVID-19 and permanently disallows rulemaking pertaining to work requirements and eligibility.

Permanent expansion of Obamacare entitlement, “putting the American taxpayer on the hook for endless and unchecked health insurance spending and would remove all incentives for insurers to reduce the cost of health insurance.”

Limits Customs and Border Patrol’s ability to shutdown processing centers if there is a health crisis on the border and requires CBP to assure the timely adjudication of asylums applications.

Requires the Homeland Security Department to automatically extend visas and work authorizations expiring within the next year, including those with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Temporary Protected Status, for an amount of time equal to their prior visa, authorization or status.

Mandates how states must run elections, including the nationalization of ballot harvesting, requiring early voting, same day registration, and no-excuse vote by mail.

Puts states at risk of costly litigation if they are unable to implement these stringent mandates ahead of the 2020 election.

\$10,000 blanket loan forgiveness.

Includes expansive new tax-credit for solar and wind energy.

Requires all airlines that receive assistance to offset carbon emissions for domestic flights by 2025.

Includes a \$1 billion “cash for clunkers” airplane program where the Transportation Department buys fuel-inefficient planes from airlines in exchange for agreeing to buy new ones.

Requires a labor union representative on every airline’s board of directors.

Multiemployer pension bailout lacking needed reforms.

Permanently raises the minimum wage to \$15 for any business that receives federal aid for COVID-19.

Cancels all debt owed by the U.S. Postal Service to the Treasury.

Nullifies the White House executive orders on federal collective bargaining and codifies taxpayer-funded union official time.

Language ensuring that the FDA reviews newer and more novel ingredients for over-the-counter sunscreen products in a timely fashion.

Never let a crisis go to waste, they say.

PROFILE IN COURAGE

Kudos to State Rep. Peggy Scott (R – Andover) who took to the floor of the Minnesota House yesterday to decry Governor Walz naming abortion providers as an essential health service in one of his executive orders promulgated under a declared Peacetime Emergency.

Rep. Scott noted that this order means that doctors performing elective abortions (most are) will be using scarce medical products and equipment that could be otherwise used in emergency rooms and other facilities on the front lines of the virus fight.

She is right on the issue and courageous to stand up and say something.

GOOD READING

Given all the fake news and junk science masquerading as expert opinion, here are some articles and opinion pieces that offer a good perspective on the Chinese Virus.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/opinion/opinions-trump-understands-what-his-critics-dont-the-current-lockdown-is-unsustainable/ar-BB11L89F>

<https://dailycaller.com/2020/03/26/neil-ferguson-coronavirus-imperial-college-doomsday/>

<https://issuesinsights.com/2020/03/27/if-the-covid-19-models-are-wrong-what-does-this-mean-for-climate-models/>

<https://amgreatness.com/2020/03/22/the-virus-is-not-invincible-but-its-exposing-whos-irreplaceable/>

<https://www.statnews.com/2020/03/17/a-fiasco-in-the-making-as-the-coronavirus->

[pandemic-takes-hold-we-are-making-decisions-without-reliable-data/](#)

<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/china-exploit-control-of-pharmaceutical-exports-by-brahma-chellaney-2020-03>

https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2020/03/27/all_we_have_to_fear_is_the_msm_itself_142788.html#2

April 3rd, 2020

Quote of the Week: “I’ve looked at all the models. I’ve spent a lot of time on the models. They don’t tell you anything. You can’t really rely upon models.”

- Dr. Anthony Fauci

In This Issue:

1. I Was Told There Would be No Math;
2. The Fundamental Risks;
3. Snitch Line;
4. China.

I WAS TOLD THERE WOULD BE NO MATH

Or, there are lies, damn lies, and statistics. America is sadly a math-challenged country that is relying on some very fuzzy math to craft everything from governmental policy to individual decisions regarding the Chinese Virus.

The media is filled on a daily basis with bold headlines touting some horrific number of people who “could” die from COVID-19, sparking concern and clickbait for the failing and dying mainstream media.

Millions have become addicted to the latest “sick models” or “death models” that are supposed to tell us how many will get sick or die unless we hide under our kitchen tables and put our lives on hold.

These models are essentially worthless as tools of public policy, points of information, or any sort of guide regarding how to conduct oneself during this pandemic.

At best, these models are fatally flawed. At worst, they are tools of propaganda, designed to grab headlines and focus attention on personalities seeking to build their profiles and profit from pandemic.

In fact, many of these models have already been debunked, including the infamous College of London model that predicted over 1 million American deaths.

Here in Minnesota, Governor Walz publicly declared that his model of choice, from the University of Minnesota, predicted 74,000 deaths in Minnesota if we all failed to heed his executive orders closing businesses, killing jobs, and destroying civil liberties.

Think about it. Does it make sense, on its face, that COVID-19 would kill more Minnesotans – thousands more – than entire number of American combat fatalities in the entire Vietnam conflict?

Does it make sense that twice as many Minnesotans will die from COVID-19 without mitigation measures than the number of Americans killed in car accidents every year?

At a minimum, the governor should release the entirety of the model so those who think critically can evaluate the model. It's probably too much to ask the media to do the same.

The problem with these models is that they are by definition supported by assumptions – educated guesses.

All models contain assumptions. The real question is both quantitative and qualitative.

How many assumptions?

How valid are the assumptions?

With COVID-19, there are so many critical unknown aspects of the virus that it makes it difficult to craft a reliable model.

Science simply doesn't know enough about the virus to craft meaningful assumptions that result in reasonable, reliable models.

This doesn't mean that the virus isn't serious and that government shouldn't create policy to fight it.

What it does mean is that we would all benefit from moving away from these models as the foundation of both policy decisions and decisions for daily life under the pandemic.

Our governmental leaders would be better served by crafting and sharing with citizens their strategic plan regarding this public health emergency.

What is the exit strategy? When will life return to normal? What metrics will be used to determine when various mitigation measures can be dialed back or eliminated?

So far, we have been fed little more than aspirational calendar dates that might maybe possibly could be the time when we can regain our civil liberties and right to earn a living.

It's time to start asking questions.

THE FUNDAMENTAL RISKS

While the pandemic has rightly drawn serious attention, citizens shouldn't take their eye off the other potential risks of this pandemic – primarily the undermining of the fundamental civil liberties and other American values like free enterprise.

The scope of governmental control and intrusion on our lives is breathtaking.

Orders to stay inside. Orders to close private commerce. Fines and arrests. High tech tracking through Big Data.

A related issue is the lack of transparency in government policy making. Laws and rules seem to spring forth on an almost daily basis, completely lacking committee hearings, public comment, and the transparency and input that is a hallmark of American legislating.

The other important issue is capitalism. While there is no doubt that many jobs and businesses are severely hurting, that hasn't stopped every business in America, especially politically sophisticated corporations, from rushing to rent seek and get piece of the money pie whether they need it or not.

It seems many corporations are proudly capitalist when they're making money and quietly socialist when things get tough.

There is a real moral hazard for both individuals and businesses.

There are people who lost their jobs who also made no effort to save money for a rainy day.

There are businesses that probably shouldn't be saved because they weren't efficient to start.

In short, there is a danger that these trillion-dollar largesse packages do little more than bailout and protect some people and some businesses that don't deserve it.

That's the hard truth.

SNITCH LINE

While perhaps not an existential threat to liberty, Minnesota's "snitch line" is surely emblematic of the problems inherent in tamping down Minnesota society.

Basically, the state has set up a phone line where busybody citizens can snitch on neighbors who don't follow the rules promulgated under the pandemic. These sins could include venturing outside for the wrong reasons, failing to maintain social

distancing when getting the mail, or buying more teepee than you need at Cub.

What a joke.

CHINA

The primary lesson of this pandemic is that the world's reliance on China for cheap labor, critical supply chain functions, and a massive consumer market to peddle goods and services is misplaced.

The world is learning that China is a communist country, and is thus an authoritarian, oppressive regime that doesn't abide by international norms.

China doesn't respect human rights. China doesn't value human rights nor human life. China doesn't respect the rule of law and engages in industrial espionage and the theft of intellectual property on a massive scale. China is a belligerent power seeking to impose its will on neighbors through military intimidation.

That America and other first world countries empower China through selling sovereign debt and trusting the Chinese to control key aspects of supply and production chains is dangerous.

The West rightly didn't house weapons production in the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

Putting our economy in the hands of the communist Chinese is just as insane.

It's time for G20 countries to demand that China abide by international norms or become a pariah.

April 10th, 2020

Quote of the Week: "Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, President Trump's instincts have been far superior to the mass of government health care professionals who, to varying degrees, seem to have either their own agenda, were ill-prepared, or were trapped in a bureaucratic mindset that prevented them from addressing the crisis. This matters because we are about to engage in a full-throated debate over when to re-open the U.S. economy."

- Brian T. Kennedy

Quote of the Week: "We have waterboarded the American economy."

- Sen. John Kennedy (R – LA)

In This Issue:

1. A Class Act;
2. COVIDiocy;
3. A Ray of Hope.

A CLASS ACT

House DFL Majority Leader Ryan Winkler clearly lacks the judgment and maturity to serve as both a leader and a legislator.

Readers will recall Winkler hurling a vicious racial epithet against Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas over his opinion in a case regarding voting rights.

Winkler tweeted, "VRA majority is four accomplices to race discrimination and one Uncle Thomas."

After a torrent of criticism, Winkler implausibly claimed he didn't know that "Uncle Tom" was a racial epithet. This, despite his Harvard Yard pedigree and law training at the University of Minnesota.

When that didn't work, Winkler offered a classic non-apology apology. He stated, "I didn't think it was offensive to suggest that Justice Thomas should be even more concerned about racial discrimination than colleagues, but if such a suggestion is offensive, I apologize."

This week Winkler reminded citizens of his immaturity, impulsiveness, and rank partisanship in the face of pandemic when he was caught on camera flipping off a fellow legislator while that legislator was addressing the media regarding the insulin

issue.

<https://twitter.com/mnsrc/status/1247604989389754368>

As is his apparent *modus operandi*, the majority leader issued the ol' non-apology apology. "My son has Type 1 diabetes. It was poor form to express myself as I did, and for that I am sorry. But after months in which Senate Republicans blocked the emergency insulin bill, it was also poor form of them to claim credit alone after we are all on the edge of a deal," he wrote on Twitter.

The popular and operative phrase here is "There, fixed it for you."

"My son has Type 1 diabetes. It was poor form to express myself as I did, and for that I am sorry. But after months in which Senate Republicans blocked the emergency insulin bill, it was also poor form of them to claim credit alone after we are all on the edge of a deal."

A class act indeed.

COVIDiocy

There can be no doubt that rational, critical thinking Americans will look back at the economic, social, psychological, emotional, cultural, and institutional damage caused by the governmental response to COVID-19 and truly weep for our country.

In particular, those rational thinkers will first condemn the harmful policies that were promulgated based on deeply flawed "models" of the pandemic, which is a charitable description of the guesswork that drove policies that cratered the economy, shuttered businesses, killed jobs, isolated people, ruined countless life milestones, and broke apart families.

Don't you wish you had a job where you could be wrong by exponential factors and still be seen as an "expert" who dictated the behavior of millions?

These so-called experts make weather forecasters and stock market analysts look like soothsayers.

Every day, we see these models consistently revised downward, with dire predictions scaled back exponentially.

We see wildly divergent data points, such as the peak infection hitting anytime between tomorrow and December 31st.

Yes, COVID-19 is serious and it's deadly.

But so is the flu, which kills upwards of 60,000 Americans every year.

So are automobiles, which kill about 40,000 Americans every year.

How about heart disease? 630,000 Americans killed last year.

Do we shut down the economy, trammel constitutional rights, and shatter American life in the name “flattening the curve” regarding those killers?

Of course not. We encourage flu shots for the flu. We encourage people to eat well, exercise, and refrain from smoking to encourage good heart health. We mandate seat belts and criminalize drunk driving, speeding, and distracted driving to reduce road deaths.

Here in Minnesota, the COVIDiocy is running rampant as well.

The governor has issued the all-too-familiar panoply of executive orders shutting businesses and forcing people to live under what is essentially house arrest.

He has said many times his decision making is guided by one of these “models” that are all the rage.

Yet he has thus far declined to share the nuts and bolts of the model with the public, so citizens and interested parties can make their own decisions regarding the value and accuracy of the all-knowing, all-being Model.

The other true COVIDiocy here in Minnesota is the state’s tattle tale line, where busybodies can narc out their neighbors for alleged violations of the executive orders that have supplanted the rule of law.

Too many people in your neighbor’s garage? Call the line.

See your neighbor too close to his wife on a walk? Call the line.

See someone buying more tee pee than they need ? Call the line.

It’s a liberal’s dream, the ability to spy on your neighbor and use the power of government to compel them to act the way you want.

It’s like a campus speech code on steroids.

As Frank Costanza once said, “serenity now!”

A RAY OF HOPE

One silver lining in the dark cloud of pandemic is the Trump administration’s waiving of bureaucratic rules and red tape that delayed the response to COVID-19 and have hampered efforts to fight it.

Americans for Tax Reform has listed 200 of these rules that have been pushed aside. Hopefully, many of them won't come back, having been shown to do nothing but impede the private sector and act as a detriment to the pursuit of prosperity.

You can read the list here:

<https://www.atr.org/rules>

Defend your God-given rights, Watchdogs.

April 17, 2020

Quote of the Week: “It is hard to imagine a more stupid or more dangerous way of making decisions than by putting those decisions in the hands of people who pay no price for being wrong.”

- Thomas Sowell

Quote of the Week: “The economy is clearly in ruins here.”

- Chris Rupkey, chief financial economist, MUFG Union Bank

Factoid of the Week: March retail sales [fell 8.7%, the most ever in government data](#), and New York regional manufacturing activity [hit an all-time low, declining to a shocking negative 78.2%](#). Industrial production slipped 5.4%, the largest decline since 1946, and manufacturing was down 6.3%, a record reflecting in part the 28% decline in auto production as plants shut down.

- From CNBC

In This Issue:

1. Fuzzy Math;
2. Compassion;
3. Kudos to Jim Abeler.

FUZZY MATH

As Minnesota’s economy craters (along with the national economy) and the numbers rival those of the Great Depression, it’s time for our elected leaders to acknowledge that two things are becoming very apparent.

First, the modeling upon which the decisions to shut down the economy were based are wrong.

Second, the damage to the economy is therefore far worse than the damage caused by the virus.

Consider for a moment Minnesota’s COVID-19 modeling, which was finally revealed

to the public just last week.

While the model presentation consisted of some 28 Power Point slides, just one of those slides is telling.

In presenting various scenarios, the one that considered the most draconian of shut down orders still predicted a peak demand of 3,700 Intensive Care Unit beds and 22,000 deaths at the peak, predicted July 13th.

Thus far, ICU demand has never topped just over 100 beds.

The worst death toll for a single day thus far has been 11.

While these are surely welcome numbers, it strains credulity to believe that a trend line could develop over the next 80-odd days to raise ICU demand and mortality rates exponentially.

Thus far, the cumulative death toll stands at less than 100 (94). Also, don't forget that even this number may over-count the mortality number, as Minnesota has instructed physicians to count any person diagnosed with COVID-19 at the time of death to be a COVID-caused fatality, even though an underlying condition may have been the cause.

In any case, it's hard for any rational person to believe the model the governor is using is at all accurate.

While the reasons for the inaccuracy is the subject of speculation, some possible reasons are emerging.

First, COVID-19 is likely far less lethal than thought. Given the lack of testing and prevalence of asymptomatic cases, it is likely that far more people are/were infected with COVID-19 than known, meaning that the percentage of infected people needing hospitalization and those who have died is a far lower percentage than what is known and what is modeled.

Moreover, evidence is emerging that the virus was present in America far earlier than first thought.

Second, it appears that COVID-19 is a rather discriminatory virus. Those who are elderly, have underlying health conditions (especially heart disease or hypertension), and those who are fat are special risk.

Given all of this, the governor should be encouraged to admit that the model is likely very inaccurate.

It's time to recalibrate the model and time to get smarter and more nuanced

regarding the response, starting with opening more of the economy and tailoring restrictions based on demographic factors.

One size does not fit all.

Finally, it's high time the modeling and statistics also start counting the collateral damage from the shutdown. The suicides, deaths from medical treatment delayed or deferred, damage to domestic partners and children unable to escape abusive relationships should all be counted and acknowledged.

COMPASSION

It's bitterly ironic to consider the large number of politicians who pay lip service to the economic carnage visited by the shut down orders yet steadfastly hold to the status quo.

These politicians should lead by example and forgo their government pay and benefits during pandemic.

Every politician and bureaucrat who grabs a microphone to extoll the benefits of the quarantine and the necessary damage it inflicts should share in that pain.

House DFL Majority Leader Ryan Winkler is chief among those advocates for a shut down. To this publication's knowledge, he is still collecting full legislative pay and benefits.

So is every other House DFL member who voted against lifting the peacetime emergency, to the best of our knowledge.

The governor and certain of his staff have taken a 10% pay cut.

If they all suffered a 100% pay cut and lived the life so many of their constituents are living right now, you can bet there would be far more sympathy and far more action regarding the 460,000 Minnesotans out of work and the thousands of businesses who have closed their doors, many to never open again.

KUDOS TO JIM ABELER

Loyal readers know that state Senator Jim Abeler (R – Anoka) has been a target at time for this publication's criticism and disapprobation.

Loyal readers also know that the Watchdog gives credit wherever it is due.

Abeler deserves high praise for his powerful floor speech this week in favor of opening business and relieving the crushing burden Minnesota's job creators are facing.

The floor speech is as follows:

Mr. President, Members, and Governor Walz,

I have the privilege of standing in this historic chamber doing my best to make a difference the people who rely on me. It is an honor and a very high responsibility.

This is a very difficult speech to give.

I have two important points to make.

First, I am critically concerned about the what is happening to Main Street and side street families and the livelihoods of those who are suddenly forbidden to work and can't even get their boat out of storage or dock installed.

This is not a partisan debate, even though some would attempt to paint it so. A number of DFL legislators have publicly or privately agreed with me. As you know, there is great political pressure for members of any governor's party to quietly "support their governor" even when they strongly disagree. This is how it is in both parties, unfortunately.

Governor, as you began your term I told you I would work with you to help Minnesota. Please consider my comments as candid words from a friend.

I suggest a new doctrine to guide the reopening of Minnesota. Constrained optimization. Constrained optimization.

Start reopening small and safe places and then go bigger. And begin today.

Minnesota families are interested in the safety of their neighbors and their town. They are deeply frightened about Covid-19 for their elders, their families, and themselves. And it shows.

They are good people. They care about Minnesota as much as you do. These are the locals who contribute to the middle school girl's softball team. The ones who always give a door prize for the church bazaar. The Rotarians who always seek to help others. The people who make me proud to know them.

They have been shocked with the dozens of executive orders that have rained down over the past few weeks. They were stunned when their safe workplace was ordered locked.

Had they been asked, given the gravity of this situation, they would have stayed home, instead of needing the threat of a thousand dollar fine and prison. Had they been asked, they would have made heroic efforts to make their small business very safe for their fellow townspeople. They would have likely come up with ideas nobody in government has thought of even yet.

Your own modeling shows that we are well ahead of earlier grave projections. We have flattened the curve and built capacity to cover health care needs of the emergency we are facing together.

However, those gains could have happened without great personal expense for so many. There has been very much needless collateral damage inflicted on those who were already extremely low risk.

My Main Street is dying. It's little mom and pop stores aren't powerful corporations. They can't pay their bills. My Anoka Chamber President tells me that time is running out for these businesses to survive.

In these executive orders they are being cast off like chaff.

Reopening Anoka's automated car wash will add no deaths. Reopening Anoka's Greenhaven unmanned golf course will endanger nobody. Allowing the local shoe and clothing stores to reopen is at least as safe as WalMart.

There should be simple guidelines that they can follow, and they are poised to do that.

No lives will be sacrificed to accomplish this. Allowing these re-openings is consistent with epidemiologist Mike Osterholm's views that we have to find a way to resume some semblance of normalcy while Covid-19 is still around. I agree with him.

My townspeople are going to continue social distancing even after the executive order expires. They will follow safe guidelines and the vulnerable people will stay home.

The next state budget forecast will predict a huge devastating deficit. My personal estimate is at least \$5 billion deficit. If we stay closed unnecessarily long, the deficit will be greater. We are going to need these good Minnesotans to be part of the recovery and rebuilding.

Please let them work. Constrained optimization. Start small and safe today.

My second point is why are we here? Our legislative process is decidedly broken.

The opaque method that brought this bill to the Senate Floor is too common of a practice. It is not good for Minnesota. This also happened just two weeks ago, last year, and in 2018. This dangerous pattern must be broken.

And specific to this bill, it adds to the centralization of power. I have a lot of respect for Commissioner Malcolm. However, we are awarding her the authority to suspend

all or parts of 20 chapters of law including quarantine protections, without legislative approval. It is too much power for any one person.

It is time to return to the separation of powers that has made Minnesota so great for over 160 years. A thoughtful, collaborative Governor. An inclusive legislature. A transparent process that includes the people we represent.

At the train crossing by my house, there are two red lights that flash when the train comes. Governor Walz visited there last year. We know to stop when those lights flash.

Hopefully my red light on the board today will warn Minnesota that we need to do better.

Governor Walz, let's start today on constrained optimization. Colleagues, lets commit to a more open process. On both matters, Minnesota will be the winner.

April 24, 2020

Quote of the Week: "[Americans] know this is a result of the virus that originated in Wuhan, China, and they know the Chinese government didn't do the things it needed to do. There will be a cost associated with that, we need to focus on here and now and there will be a time to make sure that we get this right, to make sure we are not dependent on China for our pharmaceutical goods and all the things we have seen that we just didn't have right and that President Trump identified early on as things we needed to fix in the relationship between the United States and China."

- Secretary of State Mike Pompeo

In This Issue:

1. Supreme Court News;
2. COVID Capers.

SUPREME COURT NEWS

With the Invisible Enemy dominating the news these days, one can lose sight of other important developments, which remind us that even in light of a pandemic, life goes on in many respects.

You probably weren't paying attention when the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision in *Ramos v. Louisiana*.

The case was seminal in a couple of respects.

First, the decision affirmed that the Sixth Amendment requires a unanimous jury to convict a defendant of serious, felony-level crimes.

Both Louisiana and Oregon were the only two states that allowed conviction in the absence of a unanimous jury verdict.

The opinion, a 6-3 decision, was authored by Justice Neil Gorsuch and joined by Justice Brett Kavanaugh, among others.

This is notable because these two Trump appointees, especially Kavanaugh, were savaged for their supposedly totalitarian judicial views and thus their lack of fitness to serve on the High Court.

Don't hold your breath waiting for Chuck Shumer, Amy Klobuchar and others to praise their jurisprudence.

The requirement of a unanimous jury to convict goes back to English common law and was well-settled law in the United States until civil rights were conferred on certain groups.

Laws such as the ability to convict with less than a unanimous jury were vestiges of Jim Crow laws passed in response.

More importantly, the decision overturned judicial precedence supporting partial jury verdicts.

This deference to previous decisions, is called the Doctrine of Precedence, or by its Latin name, Stare Decisis.

Some liberals are now freaking out because the decision can be seen as the Court's signaling that it won't be as respectful of precedence as earlier justices.

Think about wrongly decided laws like Roe v. Wade, made-up law that discovered a hidden right to an abortion in the Constitution, despite utterly no language in the document referencing abortion or any history at all indicating that the Framers ever considered or debated the role of abortion in American life when they wrote the Constitution.

Maybe that decision and others will be sometime soon reconsidered.

We can only hope.

COVID CAPERS

While this publication admits to a bit of COVID fatigue, it's still definitely news.

The diversity of policy regarding shut downs and re-opening the various state economies is a good thing in many respects.

In a world that has shown so much disrespect to our political institutions, this diversity honors the important concept of federalism.

The president is right in respecting the 50 chief executives in determining what is right for their state.

The situation in Wyoming is far different than the situation in New York.

In other words, federalism is the right solution here.

This is especially true since much isn't known regarding the behavior of COVID-19.

Clearly, some states will get it right and some won't when it comes to responding to

the virus.

Here, the 50 “laboratories of democracy” should be allowed to try the policies they deem most appropriate for their state.

All of these policies, however, are subject to constitutional limits, both federal and state.

Pandemic or not, constitutional rights remain at all times and a virus can’t change that.

Allowing such a state of affairs is exactly what our Framers intended to avoid.

Moreover, this issue is certainly taking on a partisan and ideological patina, whereby red states are tending to take a more liberal approach to opening their economies while blue states are enjoying trammeling civil liberties, hiding in basements, and otherwise emulating their totalitarian heroes in other nations.

In an atmosphere that has shown so much disrespect for history, rights and privileges, let federalism reign.

May 1st, 2020

Quote of the Week: *“Following the compilation of the above information, the [Crossfire Hurricane] team determined that [Flynn] was no longer a viable candidate as part of the larger CROSSFIRE HURRICANE umbrella case. A review of logical [redacted] databases did not yield any information on which to predicate further investigative efforts. The FBI is closing this investigation.”*

- FBI Report on Michael Flynn

Headline of the Week: *UPMC (University of Pittsburgh Medical Center) doctor argues COVID-19 not as deadly as feared, says its hospitals will shift back to normal.*

In This Issue:

1. Capitol Update;
2. Shut-Down Porn.

CAPITOL UPDATE

Don't take your eye off the ball. The legislature is still in session and that means no taxpayer is safe.

The state's Budget Office will be issuing an updated budget projection early next week, which will no doubt show significant deterioration of revenues (thanks to the state shutting down and cratering the economy) and an increase in COVID-related expenses.

This will surely lead to a titanic struggle to balance the state's budget, which must be done per the constitution. The state cannot run deficits and must be balanced at the end of each biennium.

This, in turn, will lead to DFL calls to raise taxes as part of a “balanced” approach to solving the issue.

Of course, Washington could ride to the rescue after turning on the money presses yet again to issue money it doesn't have.

If not, it's tax increases or spending cuts.

Without question, Republicans must resist all manner of tax and fee increases.

There is simply nowhere else to go.

The state's taxes are among the highest in the country. An increase would simply turn the state into Illinois, which is seeing an exodus of businesses and successful people who have had enough of that state's confiscatory policies.

In addition to being among the highest in the country, the state also has a number of very regressive taxes, including taxes on tobacco, alcohol, and gasoline.

Watch Walz and the DFL attempt to increase existing regressive taxes and add some new ones, like taxes on clothing.

There is no real alternative for the GOP other than to resist all tax increases.

Moreover, the DFL continues to SPEND money, even in the face of a fiscal cliff.

For example, the DFL continues to push forward new collective bargaining agreements for state unionized employees.

These contracts will cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars in new expenditures.

Another example is the DFL bragging about \$100 million for "supportive" housing.

They won't tell you from where the money will be coming.

It appears that the big idea is push forward a bunch of spending to placate their never-ending list of money hungry constituencies. They will then simply blame the GOP for not passing gargantuan tax increases to sate (temporarily) the appetite for other people's money.

Check out this awesome video of State Rep. Pat Garofalo (R – Farmington) calling out the DFL for their cynical and childish actions.

<https://twitter.com/mnhousegop/status/1255559142225465347>

He notes, "Part of me wants to grab this laptop ... and say 'DFL, pay attention. We don't have any money. We're broke.'"

Indeed.

SHUT-DOWN PORN

It's rather astonishing to see the way in which the COVID situation has become partisan and ideological.

Polling and some everyday experience show that one's view of the response to the

virus is very much influenced by that person's political views.

In short, liberals love the heavy hand of government "protecting" them from a virus that continues to look less lethal and less virulent by the day.

They cheer for the president to fail, not understanding that his failures – and triumphs – are our failures and triumphs. They're the country's failures and triumphs.

They cheer the shut down and failure of businesses as they see it as some sort of blow against rapacious capitalism.

They see heavy-handed shelter in place orders as a way to shackle the right-wing people with whom they disagree and as a convenient way to avoid facing a tough situation.

We see social media filled with invective, wishing harm and even death to those who don't follow the orthodoxy to the letter, such as not walking six feet apart, even with a spouse.

They refuse to apply a modicum of critical thinking to the governor's actions.

The simple fact is that the modeling upon which the governor is basing his executive fiats is absolutely flawed. His modeling is wrong.

It's nothing short of gratuitous satisfaction from both the virus and the heavy-handed governmental decisions stemming from it.

It's "shut-down porn" and it says much about those who enjoy it.

May 8th, 2020

Quote of the Week: “The budget is the skeleton of the state stripped of all misleading ideologies”, the truest reflection of the distribution of power and influence.”

- Joseph Schumpeter

In This Issue:

1. The Leviathan;
2. Patriots.

THE LEVIATHAN

As expected, the state’s interim “budget update” showed that government revenues have fallen precipitously, thanks to Governor Walz’ unilateral imposition of shutdown orders through executive fiat.

In short, he owns this.

In particular, the updated budget number show that state coffers are projected to be \$2.5 billion in the red, a \$4 billion swing from the February official budget forecast, which showed a \$1.5 billion surplus.

Clearly, revenues will not match the appropriated expenditures for the biennial state budget that was passed last year and runs through June 30, 2021.

What that means for rational thinking people is that the state budget, like every family budget, will have to share in the pain of reduced spending.

In the minds of powerful liberal special interests, however, that means bullying their bought-and-paid-for minions under the dome into chasing tax increases to extract even more money to keep King Government whole.

If you doubt the Watchdog, take a look at what Education Minnesota, the union that calls the shots in the DFL, had to say in response to the budgetary news this week:

*“But it’s also becoming clear that the wealthiest 1 percent, and the politicians who support them, see the budget deficits in our future as an opportunity not to step up and **pay their fair share**, but as a chance to fuel divisions in our society so they can lobby for budget cuts that will harm the people who all Minnesotans have come to depend on during this pandemic, including health care providers, first responders,*

state employees and educators of all kinds. **It's time for Minnesotans to join together to rewrite the rules and rebuild our state so everyone, with no exceptions, pays their fair share**, earns a fair return for their work and can care for their families and feel good about sending their children to safe and welcoming public schools staffed by professional educators.”

AFL-CIO: “However, corporate special interests and their allies in the Legislature will likely use this crisis as an opportunity to enact painful cuts and slash taxes for the richest 1%. Minnesotans know better. **We know that cuts to the vital services that Minnesotans depend on – especially right now – will only make this crisis worse.**”

Take Action MN (liberal special interest group): “We can get through this and come out stronger, but the days of Republicans passing trillions of dollars in tax cuts for the richest 1% need to end. We deserve a government in Minnesota that’s working for the people, **and that starts with a fair tax system.**”

So, there you have it from those who help fund the DFL. There shouldn’t be any cuts and any funding shortfalls should be made up through tax increases on the successful, who never seem to pay their “fair share.”

Again, rational thinking taxpayers will bear some facts and principles in mind.

Government, like the taxpayers who fund government, must share in the pain and have no legitimate claim to be held harmless through this financial crisis. A crisis unnecessarily exacerbated by government’s own bungled, shotgun, draconian approach to handling the pandemic.

Thus far, government has been quite insulated from the pain, with state worker layoffs and furloughs at a bare minimum.

After all, “we’re in this together,” as goes the shopworn bromide uttered by the Left at every turn.

Similarly, there is no ethical or moral reason to elevate the government budget over the family budget. The family budget, conversely, has a claim to be a higher priority. Government exists to serve the taxpayers, not the other way around.

Next, let’s look not at revenues but expenditures. In the last biennium, FY 2018-2019, the state’s general fund expenditures were \$45,401,378,000. This was a 10.1% spending increase over the previous biennium spending of \$41,254,742,000.

Spending in the current biennium (FY2020-2021) is expected to be \$48,463,332,000, a 6.7% increase over FY2018-2019.

In short, Minnesota could take care of the entire \$2.5 billion projected deficit through

spending reductions alone and STILL experience a spending increase of about \$500 million biennium over biennium.

On the revenue side, let's take a brief look at income taxes, the preferred method of confiscation for the DFL.

According to the most recent report by the MN Department of Revenue, the top decile (top 10%) of income (\$156,000 per year), paid 59% of the income tax. Overall, this group bears 41% of the total state tax burden.

And some say these folks still aren't paying enough.

By contrast, the bottom 20% pay ZERO income taxes. In fact, they show up as "negative" in this column because of refundable tax credits that can be earned, even without any tax liability.

Put another way, there are so many credits and deductions available, that group gets more back than paid in under the system.

In short, the bottom 20% make money off the income tax system.

Let's also remember that most of Minnesota's small businesses, the backbone of the economy, pay their taxes as individuals, called "pass through" entities.

Thus, raising the personal income tax is nothing more than a tax on small business.

Let's also keep in mind that Minnesota is already a brutally unfriendly state when it comes to the income tax.

The state's top bracket, 9.85%, is the fifth highest in the country, behind only CA, HI, OR and NJ.

Perhaps more shockingly, the state's bottom income tax bracket, 5.35%, is HIGHER than the highest income tax bracket in 25 states.

In short, there is simply nowhere to go in terms of raising the income tax, unless this state wants to become the next Illinois.

If the GOP has one mission this session and in any special session, it's to take a hard pass on any invitation to raise taxes.

PATRIOTS

It's amazing and demoralizing to see so many citizens acquiesce to government's abrogation of their natural rights, as recognized and enshrined in the constitution.

Truly, so many would give up their freedom to obtain a bit of security, no matter how

illusory.

Across the country, chief executives are ruling by fiat, dictating the arbitrary closure and suspension of activities and institutions that support our American way of life.

These executive orders strike at the heart of natural rights, suspending First Amendment rights to peaceably assemble by limiting group gatherings, freely worship by closing churches, and petition government by closing government buildings to public access.

The orders are also arbitrary, picking winners and losers in illogical fashion.

For example, the local clothing store is closed but you can buy a shirt at Wal Mart.

You can't gather at church, but you can rub elbows with hundreds at Target.

You can golf, but you can't mini golf.

A dentist can't work but a doctor can perform an elective abortion.

Thank goodness patriots everywhere are standing up for their rights.

The Upper Midwest Law Center is one of those organizations, having this week filed suit against Governor Walz, pleading for a vindication of the plaintiff's God-given rights.

Here is the press release:

Minneapolis, MN – Upper Midwest Law Center, a Minnesota-based public interest law firm, filed suit on behalf of multiple Minnesota churches and small business owners to strike down Governor Tim Walz' unilateral shutdown emergency executive orders as unconstitutional under the First, Fifth and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. The lawsuit was filed today in the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota, and a copy of the complaint is available at www.umwlc.org.

The plaintiffs are:

- Northland Baptist Church of St. Paul, Minnesota and Pastor John Bruski, who have been prohibited from holding in-person religious services and indoor or outdoor religious gatherings while at the same time similar types of secular gatherings have been allowed under the executive orders.
- Living Word Christian Center, which has been prohibited from holding in-person religious services and indoor or outdoor religious gatherings, while at the same time similar types of secular gatherings have been allowed under the executive orders.
- Dr. Marie Joycelyn Lua, a dentist and business owner in Edina, Minnesota, who

has been prohibited from seeing patients to perform major dental work and reconstruction procedures while at the same time reproductive health care workers have been allowed to perform abortions under the executive orders.

- Glow In One Mini Golf L.L.C. in Blaine, Minnesota, and its owner and operator, Aaron Kessler, who have been prohibited from operating a mini-golf business while at the same time golf courses have been allowed to operate under the executive orders.

- Myron's Cards and Gifts, Inc. and its owner and operator Larry Evenson, which has locations in Bloomington, Coon Rapids, Roseville, Blaine and Mankato, Minnesota, who have been required to shut down five gift card stores while at the same time big box stores such as Target, Walgreens and CVS have been allowed to stay open and sell gift cards under the executive orders.

- Andrew Hulse and Gay Bunch-Hulse, owners and operators of 18 | 8 Fine Men's Salons in Maple Grove and Wayzata, Minnesota, who have been prohibited from operating their state-licensed and infection control trained hair salons while at the same time liquor stores and pet groomers have been allowed to operate under the executive orders.

"Governor Walz' scheme of selecting economic winners and losers by wholly shutting down some businesses while allowing others to remain open violates the Plaintiff businesses' 14th Amendment due process and equal protection rights," stated Doug Seaton, Esq., President of the Upper Midwest Law Center. "Governor Walz' actions also constitute a taking under the Fifth Amendment, and his prohibition on worshippers gathering violates churches' and individuals'

First Amendment rights. The Constitution requires that the Governor respect the individual rights of all citizens at all times, narrowly tailor any restrictions, and apply the same rules to all. It is clear that his continuing lockdown executive orders fail these constitutional requirements."

James Dickey, Esq., lead trial counsel to the Upper Midwest Law Center, added the following: "In this litigation we ask the Court to declare Governor Walz' executive orders unconstitutional and enjoin him, Attorney General Keith Ellison, and the county attorneys charged with enforcement of the executive orders from enforcing them. The Plaintiff businesses also seek money damages from Governor Walz for the tremendous losses they have faced due to the executive orders. Governor Walz' orders exceed his statutory authority and violate fundamental rights, so we will be seeking a temporary restraining order from the U.S. District Court and are prepared to take this matter to the Eighth Circuit and Supreme Court if needed."

Howard Root, Chair of the Upper Midwest Law Center, concluded: "The Upper Midwest Law Center was founded in 2019 to protect the individual rights of citizens against the overreach of government. We cannot sit idly by while the governor uses

this pandemic to shred the Constitution – especially when Gov. Walz has so many alternatives to fight the spread of COVID-19 that can be fairly applied in a constitutional manner.”

May 15th, 2020

Quote of the Week:

Don't wanna be an American idiot
Don't want a nation under the new mania
And can you hear the sound of hysteria?

- Billie Joe Armstrong

Quote of the Week: "I don't think a lot of researchers get to work on something over the weekend and have public figures talk about it and make decisions based on it three days later."

- Marina Kirkeide

Quote of the Week: "[In this situation] you don't have the time to validate as much as you normally would."

- Marina Kirkeide

Quote of the Week: "As a modeler, you have complete control over what your results look like."

- Marina Kirkeide

In This Issue:

1. Sine Die;
2. Dorm Room Pandemic Pandemonium.

SINE DIE

It's the end, but not really. The legislature, per the constitution, must adjourn no later than this coming Monday. Moreover, the constitution prohibits the passage of legislation on the last day, so Sunday is the last day for meaningful legislative activity.

And while there is certainly action happening, that level of activity is low, as most Capitol observers expect that there will be a special session or even multiple ones over the summer and perhaps fall.

The legislature isn't mandated to meet in special session, but there are circumstances that make it likely:

1. Peacetime emergency extension. Governor Walz has extended the declared peacetime emergency until June 12th. According to the enabling statute, if he extends the emergency beyond this date, he will need to call the legislature into special session to give them an opportunity to overturn the extension and extinguish the emergency.
1. COVID. The COVID response may require further legislative action in some regard, perhaps to appropriate monies or direct federal funds.
1. Bonding. If the legislature fails to pass a bonding bill in regular session, it is almost assured there will be a special session to pass one. A bonding bill is seen by most legislators as a key job-support during the depression caused by Walz' executive orders.
1. Budget adjustment. Because the state's biennial budget has been set, there is no requirement for the legislature to meet this summer or fall regarding the budget. Having said that, it's obvious that state revenues won't meet the appropriated spending passed last year. Because the state must have a balanced budget by the end of the biennium (June 30, 2021), it would make sense for the legislature to meet in special session to adjust spending downward to prevent a level of spending that is no longer supported by revenues.

DORM ROOM PANDEMIC PANDEMONIUM

What if we told you a story about a governor and a pandemic?

That governor caused untold damage to his state's economy by unilaterally forcing businesses to close and people to stay in their homes.

That governor further caused untold human damage by closing schools and forcing children on to mediocre and untested distance learning platforms.

A human toll was also visited on his citizens as they couldn't access needed surgeries, health services, or were forced to "shelter in place" in abusive or otherwise dangerous environments.

Milestones like births, funerals, weddings, graduations, birthdays, and family gatherings were summarily cancelled by executive fiat.

That same governor told his state that such actions were necessary and predicated on "science" as determined by "experts" who produced a model of the pandemic that predicted tens of thousands of deaths if this form of martial law were not declared and rights denied.

And what if we told you that the vaunted pandemic model was a bunch of total BS.

Would you say that it sounded like a tale written by The Onion?

A joke?

A tragedy?

Well, it's true. And it happened right here in Minnesota.

We learned this week that the governor's pandemic model was whipped up in a short matter of days by two graduate students.

That dorm room exercise became the model the governor used as a basis for his decision making to shut down the state in response to the pandemic.

The evidence is right here, in this article: <https://cse.umn.edu/college/feature-stories/modeling-covid-19-minnesota>.

That article tells us that two graduate students at the University of Minnesota received a call on a Friday night, asking them if they wanted to take on the project and have it done by Monday.

So here are your "experts."

Marina Kirkeide has a BS in Mathematics and is on a gap year until she starts medical school this fall.

She has no education or expertise in pandemic modeling, epidemiology, infectious diseases, or public health.

The other “expert,” Abhinav Mehta, is pursuing a master’s degree in computer science.

There is no indication beyond that of any expertise in medicine or public health.

How about the “science?”

Again, they drummed up the model over a weekend and then shipped it over to the governor’s office, with apparently no peer review or input from true subject matter experts.

In short, the model is little more than a college project, a dorm room exercise.

The two responsible for it lack training and experience in pandemic modeling and public health.

Moreover, their work was done in a matter of hours, lacking the typical peer review and quality checks.

Hence, you get comments like, “[In this situation] you don’t have the time to validate as much as you normally would.”

It’s nothing short of outrageous to consider that this slap-dash work is the basis for a model that was used to disrupt our way of life in a manner no Minnesotan has seen in their lifetime.

Of course, the media won’t ask Walz about the dorm room model he’s using because he’s DFL.

Same goes for the fact that Minnesota leads the nation in nursing home deaths as a percentage of COVID-related deaths.

Let’s hope Republicans in the legislature raise the issue as we all contemplate that two grad students at the U of M were given the power to develop the flimsy tool that has dictated life these past weeks.

Let that sink in.

May 22nd, 2020

Quote of the Week: “We are blessed to live in a nation that guarantees the free exercise of religion. This right can only be abridged for a compelling governmental interest, and only in a way that is narrowly tailored to be the least restrictive means of achieving the desired end. That is why a large majority of states now allow in-person religious services, including many states that had previously suspended in-person religious services. We think that the executive order issued last Wednesday fails this test. An order that sweeps so broadly that it prohibits, for example, a gathering of 11 people in a Cathedral with a seating capacity of several thousand defies reason. Therefore, we have chosen to move forward in the absence of any specific timeline laid out by Governor Walz and his Administration. We cannot allow an indefinite suspension of the public celebration of the Mass.”

- Archbishop Bernard Hebda

Quote of the Week: “What is the science that allows indoor salon services but restricts restaurants to outdoor seating? Why are churches limited to 10 people outdoors but hundreds of people can gather in the aisles of big box stores?”

- House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt

In This Issue:

1. This is What Incompetence Looks Like.

THIS IS WHAT INCOMPETENCE LOOKS LIKE

It’s become quite clear that Governor Tim Walz is in over his head. He’s overmatched in this crisis. He’s displayed the character traits and leadership qualities (or lack thereof) of a poor, incompetent leader.

This assessment isn’t partisan. It isn’t about name calling or scoring points. Instead, it’s a painful, morose realization that our chief executive didn’t rise to the occasion and the people of Minnesota will pay the price.

Good leaders in a crisis impose order on chaos. They provide clear direction and timely strategic guidance for staff and the troops. They inspire confidence and boost morale when the chips are down.

Walz has done none of that. There is nothing but chaos. The executive orders

become more and more confusing and illogical. For example, a big box store can have hundreds inside while churches can't have more than 10 worshipers and - unbelievably – can't allow any singing.

There is no clear guidance or roadmap for citizens, churches, businesses and youth athletic associations regarding when and how Mother Government will let them conduct their affairs.

Instead, we get condescending and patronizing metaphors about “winter” and incoherent babbling about “switches” and “dials” that get turned back in forth in some sort of incomprehensible and mystical fashion that apparently only Tim Walz can understand.

In short, poor leaders compound the chaos and fear inherent in times of crisis.

Poor leaders are fragile and insecure. This insecurity manifests itself in a façade of bravado and arrogance. It's evident in the leader lashing out in the face of constructive criticism and having their dictates examined.

This is typical of Tim Walz. This week, when asked about GOP leaders questioning the continued closure of houses of worship, he snapped, “I get that some people think COVID-19 isn't a big deal.”

What a childish, petulant response. That response should be scrutinized by every citizen because it provided a window into the governor's character. The response tells us everything we need to know about this governor.

Poor leaders also refuse to change course in the face of new information. Doing so requires the leader to admit the current course of action isn't correct. In short, it requires a leader to admit that he's wrong. It requires the leader to acknowledge that mission accomplishment is paramount and the leader's ego and pride is of no consequence.

While not getting into details, this publication and many others have pointed out the inherent flaws in the information upon which the governor has made decisions, particularly the pandemic model he's used.

One example is that Walz continues to stick with a model that predicts 1,700 COVID-related deaths in Minnesota by the end of the month. The state is at 777 total and has never had more than 30 in any given day. Thus, it strains common sense and reality to say that there will be 900 plus deaths in the next 9 days. Ridiculous.

Poor leaders also refuse to accept responsibility and acknowledge that they are accountable to the people and the organization they lead.

The Watchdog has scrutinized volumes of the governor's statements during this pandemic. Not once has he admitted mistakes or that he was wrong. This, even though Minnesota is a national disgrace regarding our nursing homes, which are worst in the nation when it comes to protecting those who live in them.

Walz runs a subtle but telling talking point that the pain and suffering of jobs losses and freedom is because of COVID. This is true only in the same way that matches burn buildings or that guns shoot people.

No, the policies promulgated in response to COVID are to blame, just like the one who strikes the match or pulls the trigger is to blame.

Poor leaders act as innocent bystanders who are victimized by events.

This is a tragedy. As the chief executive, the governor's successes are our successes and his failures are our failures.

It's clear that Governor Tim Walz is failing the people of Minnesota.

Hopefully, the judicial branch will step in and protect the rights Walz continues to trammel.

There is no Pandemic Clause in either the Minnesota or federal Constitutions.

Also watch for legislative Republicans take a more confrontational approach to a governor who clearly doesn't want to compromise.

It was right for the GOP to work hard to negotiate with Walz in good faith.

Sadly, that strategy has been rejected by Walz in favor of the kind of partisan game playing that Mark Dayton employed.

Unilaterally implementing the state employee union contracts was a final straw for many Republican legislators.

A line has been crossed and there will be an escalation and a response.

It has to be that way. Legislators took an oath and have a sacred obligation to uphold the constitution and protect the legislature as a separate, equal branch of government.

In short, don't look for compromise and cooperation any time soon.

This is what incompetent leadership looks like. Its name is Tim Walz.

May 29, 2020

Quote of the Week: “I can’t stand back & watch this happen to a great American City, Minneapolis. A total lack of leadership. Either the very weak Radical Left Mayor, Jacob Frey, get his act together and bring the City under control, or I will send in the National Guard & get the job done right. ...”

- President Donald J. Trump

Factoid of the Week: As of this printing, over 170 businesses have been destroyed by violence.

In This Issue:

1. A Nation of Laws;
2. Scenes from a Riot.

A NATION OF LAWS

The videotaped death of George Floyd is certainly shocking and disturbing. No reasonable person can see it any other way.

But the response of some, including elected officials, is unacceptable.

We are a nation of laws. Concepts like due process and trial by jury are crucial safeguards for every citizen.

Without question, the death of Mr. Floyd demands a fair, thorough, and expeditious investigation. The interests of justice demand nothing less.

That’s why the rhetoric from some elected officials declaring the guilt of the officers in question is so dangerous and irresponsible. All parties to the incident are entitled to their rights. Our system of self-governance, based on individual natural rights conferred upon each of us by virtue of existence, demands nothing less.

The Bill of Rights was crafted precisely to counter what the Framers called the “temporary passions” of the mob.

The correct and only course of action here is to follow the rule of law and prosecute a fair investigation, bring charges if warranted, and hold a trial to determine legal guilt or innocence.

Some will clearly be perturbed by the pace of such a process, but the alternative is decidedly unattractive.

Next, rioting and looting should never, ever be excused. It's beyond outrageous to read and hear of opinion leaders excusing and even justifying the wanton destruction of property.

It's even worse to witness the utter dereliction of duty by the mayor of Minneapolis and the governor of Minnesota.

THE core function of government is to protect the lives and property of the citizens.

Both have failed miserably.

The hard truth is that American government offers citizens the government they deserve.

In Minneapolis, the voters have elected year after year a collection of Left Wing loony tunes who are untethered to both reality and the basic tenets of capitalism and American governance.

Meanwhile, Governor Walz has proven himself to be in the deep end of the crisis pool and in need of swimming lessons.

Fate determines whether political leaders govern in times of ease or in times of crisis.

Unfortunately for Walz, he has been hit with two very difficult situations.

Unfortunately for Minnesotans, he has proven himself unequal to the task.

Thousands of citizens are paying a fearsome price for this incompetence.

SCENES FROM A RIOT

While often a sewer of false and vapid drivel, Twitter is often a source of real-time thought and information regarding the most important issues of our time.

Here are some key tweets regarding the rioting in Minneapolis and surrounding communities.

The more laws we pass the more knees there will be on necks. The bigger the government becomes the more it needs police for enforcement. With the law perverted the police powers of the state are perverted along with it.

@AP4Liberty

None of the key leaders at state or City of Minneapolis level have even communicated on Twitter tonight. Mayor Frey last tweeted 24 hours ago. Gov. Walz 7 hours ago. Attorney General Keith Ellison 7 hours ago. Only MN National Guard has tweeted in past 90 minutes.

@thauserkstp

For all those asking about the governor, it's now been nearly 33 hours since Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz last spoke publicly.

@TheoKeith

On Channel 9 @LydenFOX9 is asking the question that needs to be answered. Who is making these decisions to have police stand down and not arrest people who are burning the city to the ground? Elected officials or the Chiefs of Police?

@PatGarofalo

Minnesota House Minority Leader @kdautt criticizes "disturbing lack of leadership" in response to mayhem across Twin Cities.

@Stowydad

A police precinct doesn't just get breached, abandoned and burned to the ground. Someone gave the order to evacuate. We need to know who and when.

@StribLopez

Mayor Frey is asked a simple question by @PaulBlume_FOX9. Who's in charge? What's the plan? He got a word salad.

@LydenFOX9

But, Mayor Frey could not answer some basic questions about Who's in charge? What's the plan? When did you made the decision to evacuate? And on many questions, answers he presumably knows, he punted to the chief.

@LydenFOX9

Businesses and police stations are ablaze. This is a war zone. The people of MN are afraid. Minneapolis & St. Paul are under siege. Leaders step forward, they don't cower in place!

@LewisforMN

We need to get this under control. @govtimwalz! People need you. Hello....please lead. Now.

@KarinHousley

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz (D), and his staff are not responding to media requests for comment as the Twin Cities burn tonight.

@Breaking911

...These THUGS are dishonoring the memory of George Floyd, and I won't let that happen. Just spoke to Governor Tim Walz and told him that the Military is with him all the way. Any difficulty and we will assume control but, when the looting starts, the shooting starts. Thank you!

@realDonaldTrump

June 5th, 2020

Quote of the Week: “I will never agree with anybody disrespecting the flag of the United States of America or our country. Is everything right with our country right now? No, it is not. We still have a long way to go. But I think what you do by standing there and showing respect to the flag with your hand over your heart, is it shows unity. It shows that we are all in this together, we can all do better and that we are all part of the solution.”

- Drew Brees

Quote of the Week: “You have to dominate, if you don’t dominate, you’re wasting your time. They’re going to run over you, you’re going to look like a bunch of jerks. You have to dominate. Most of you are weak. You have to arrest people. And you can’t do the deal where they get one week in jail. These are terrorists. These are terrorists. And they’re looking to do bad things to our country.”

- President Donald Trump

Quote of the Week: “Protesters I know are saying truck driver drove into a crowd and intentionally ran into them. Confederate flags and white supremacist insignia. Protesters stopped truck. Minneapolis police have shut down 35W bridge.”

- House Majority Leader Ryan Winkler (DFL – Golden Valley)

In This Issue:

1. A House Divided;
2. A Rudderless Ship;

A HOUSE DIVIDED

The events of the last four years have revealed that the country is once again deeply divided, a circumstance far more prevalent that most want to admit. Whether 1968, 1896, or 1861, the nation has been convulsed at times by bitter division, be it economic, social, religious, or geographic.

But there is no doubt that there is a philosophical divide that maybe tough to overcome.

It is clear that some don’t believe in American Exceptionalism.

They don’t believe in capitalism.

They don't believe in the Rule of Law.

They don't believe in the First Amendment.

They don't believe in equality of opportunity, only an equality of outcome.

They don't believe that rights are natural, inherent in individuals.

In short, they don't believe in the precepts upon which the country was founded, unlike most Americans.

That's an issue for a pluralistic society.

A RUDDERLESS SHIP

The past three months have shown us what poor leadership looks like.

Between COVID and the Minneapolis riots, Minnesotans have been harmed in a significant way by Governor Walz, House Majority Leader Ryan Winkler, and Minneapolis Mayor Jake Frey.

While Winkler hasn't had a direct hand in the pandemic nincompoopery or fiddling while Minneapolis burned, he represents what happens when you put a middle schooler in charge.

Someone keep this guy off Twitter.

His tweet last week that the tanker truck driver on 35W who was lost and not wearing a white hood, was the epitome of juvenile, reckless leadership.

He repeated unverified, inflammatory gossip in the same way a 7th grader would tweet about the surfer guy who pulled a knife on Mr. Hand or the high schooler who heard Ferris Bueller needs a new kidney.

Don't forget about his tweet regarding Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, when he called him "Uncle Thomas," a vile racial slur.

Despite being a slur for well over a century, Winkler plead ignorance, shrugging that, "I guess my judgement was way off."

It still is Ryan.

And don't forget about yet another recent episode of sophomoric behavior when Winkler was caught on camera flipping off a legislative colleague who was conducting a television interview.

<https://twitter.com/mnsr/status/1247604989389754368>

On second thought, we apologize. We apologize to every 7th grade boy out there for insulting their maturity.

And then there's Governor Walz.

Walz has been nothing short of a disaster regarding the primary issues he's been tasked to handle since he took office.

A couple of sobering (and appalling statistics) tell the woeful tale of Walz's leadership.

Take nursing homes. The administration made the fatal mistake, ongoing to this day, of forcing nursing homes to accept discharged patients recovering from COVID, placing the most vulnerable among us directly in danger.

The results have been murderous.

Over 80% of Minnesota's COVID-related deaths have been among nursing home or long-term care patients.

By far and away, Minnesota leads the nation in the percentage of COVID deaths coming from patients in these facilities.

Worse than Florida, Georgia, Texas, and even New York, the epicenter of the pandemic.

Chew on that for a while.

Moreover, our COVID infection rate is higher than our neighbors, the same neighbors Minnesota liberals love to denigrate for their unenlightened views on issues like, well, handling COVID.

Our neighbors are open for business while Minnesota is not. Yet, we're worse off in combating the pandemic. Go figure.

On top of that, Walz utterly failed the test regarding night upon night of mayhem and rioting in Minneapolis.

Let's be clear. The destruction and mayhem had nothing to do with peaceful protesting. It was lawlessness, plain and simple.

In the face of this crisis, Walz dithered and delayed, resulting in unneeded destruction.

That destruction will harm, for years to come, some of the poorest Minnesotans.

For these people, the burned down grocery store means a food desert.

For them, the destruction of public transportation infrastructure means no way to get around.

It means no place close to see a doctor or dentist.

All of this because of a naïve, childish, mistaken viewpoint that these rioters were simply aggrieved people who needed “to be heard.”

Indeed, they spoke. With gas cans, bricks, and baseball bats.

The core obligation of government is the protection of life and property.

That obligation was ignored.

To make matters worse, Walz engaged in a ham-handed attempt to blame “right wing” forces for the destruction.

This was a pathetic effort to distract accountability and blame from its true source.

That source is the far Left. The same people radical Democrats cheer on when the destruction is aimed at pipelines and construction workers.

When the mob started burning the property of liberal Minneapolis, then it became a problem.

Finally, Mayor Jake Frey.

He was clearly not up to the crisis and failed miserably.

He melted down and had no answers, much less leadership.

He was effectively fired by Walz, who didn't do much better but at least was late, as opposed to never.

Now, Frey has found his voice again, this time to begin the demands that state and federal taxpayers foot the bill for his incompetence.

This wasn't a natural disaster like a flood or tornado.

It was a man-made disaster made all the worse by his dallying, delay, and cowardice.

Before any state aid is delivered to Minneapolis, legislators should ask what Minneapolis is prepared to do. Or is the mayor proposing that the city be held harmless, to preserve city funding to forestall layoffs to the diversity office?

What local matching dollars will the city be putting up?

What additional resources will Minnesota's wealthiest city be putting up? Or is the expectation that the middle-class folks in Anoka, Saint Peter, and Fergus Falls pony up every dollar?

Maybe it's time for Minneapolis to institute an income tax.

Of course, the city has no compunction about raising property taxes.

Sales taxes should be out as that tax is borne mostly by people who don't live in the city.

Legislators need to ask if Minneapolis gets additional riot dollars, who loses?

What community loses a water treatment plant upgrade?

What community loses a planned fire station?

What students return to facilities in need of upgrade that won't happen (if Walz lets students return to the classroom, that is.)?

The reality is that extra dollars sent to Minneapolis will come at some community's expense.

These state expenditures may be desperately needed to counter-act the misery Walz has visited on Minnesota.

The Iron Range doesn't have mining jobs, in part, because of his challenges to mining projects.

People are out of work because his unilateral executive orders have closed, forever, thousands of small businesses.

Medical help is needed more than ever at precisely the time health care professionals have been laid off, with thousands of Minnesotans dealing with delayed medical treatment and mental health issues brought on by the pandemic shutdowns.

Disney's "The Lion King" is in part an allegory about feckless, oppressive leadership.

Who knew Minnesota would get both a Governor Scar and a Mayor Scar?

June 12, 2020

Quote of the Week: “Every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street building has been renamed, every date has been altered. And the process is continuing day by day and minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right.”

- George Orwell, *1984*

Quote of the Week: “Unlimited power in the hands of limited people always leads to cruelty.”

- Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956*

Factoid: The Los Angeles Police Department announced Tuesday that homicides in the city increased 250% over the previous week, and the number of people who were shot increased by 56% during the same period.

Factoid: In one 24-hour period, May 31st, 18 people were murdered in Chicago. That’s the highest number of murders in Chicago’s modern history. You have to go back 60 years to find a bloodier day.

In This Issue:

1. The Mob Rules;
2. History;
3. The Outsider;

THE MOB RULES

“If you listen to fools, the mob rules.” – Ronnie James Dio

While mob violence and suppression aren’t new to the human experience, it’s nonetheless incredibly dangerous and signals a new, darker chapter of the American experience.

Don’t pretend; the decent into darkness has been happening for some time.

For example, the suppression of free speech and thought, key to imposing mob rule, has been happening for some time, with speech codes, the cancellation of

unfavored speakers, and the “cancel culture” ascendant in society, as led by college campuses.

The Mob Rule is so dangerous to our republic because it is antithetical to the very idea of America.

As a constitutional republic, our government is based on the idea of natural rights, the proposition that rights inhere in individuals and are independent of government.

Government only has authority so far as individuals collectively agree to cede some portion of their natural, individual rights to the government in exchange for mutual safety and the rule of law.

Of course, what is known as “progressivism” is really just a strain of totalitarian ideology.

To be blunt, it is a cousin to communism and other collectivist government.

In other words, it is wholly incompatible with individual rights, and therefore America, precisely because it is collectivist, thus holding that the collective is superior to the individual.

Thus, all laws protecting the individual must be erased.

This is why you see the assault on free speech.

The assault on private property.

The assault on capitalism.

The assault on the Second Amendment.

This assault is best exemplified by the assault on the First Amendment.

As any reasonable citizen can see, there is no room for civil discourse or the free exchange of ideas, concepts essential to a pluralistic, diverse republic.

But free speech is inextricably intertwined with individual rights.

A common characteristic of any totalitarian state is the suppression of concepts like private property, free speech, private enterprise, the ownership of firearms, and the free exercise of religion.

And, by the way, precisely is why such concepts are enshrined in the Constitution.

Whether the mob is disorganized on the streets or organized in the halls of

government as Democrats, opposition to freedom is essential.

If there was ever a time for patriots to stand up, this is it.

HISTORY

A part of the march to Mob Rule is to erase and re-write history.

We have seen that in action with the vandalizing and lawless removal of statues across the country.

To be sure, these actions amount to nothing more than lawless, violent, virtue signaling.

The tearing down of a statue of some little remembered man in a long-forgotten corner of a county park does nothing, absolutely nothing, to change the world.

It won't feed a hungry child.

It won't cloth the naked.

It won't heal the sick.

It won't provide a quality education for the children sentenced to failing public schools.

It won't eliminate or diminish the stain of institutional racism.

It's nothing more than the thoughtless actions of childish, self-centered men who display the maturity of toddlers.

Moreover, history, if it is to mean anything to today's citizens, must include the dark stains as well as the bright light. Eliminating all vestiges of America's darker chapters, such as slavery, does nothing to change that past or lead to a better future.

A dispassionate consideration of history and what it means, good and bad, leads to a better future.

THE OUTSIDER

Speaking of toddlers, the mainstream media and the gullible adults who inhale the pixie dust they peddle have been ecstatic over the news that Republicans like Mitt Romney and members of the Bush Dynasty might endorse Joe "Corn Pop" Biden for president.

Such a development would not only delight President Trump, it would benefit him greatly.

Trump's proposition, which carried him to the White House, is that he is the ultimate outsider. He's a disrupter who will truly fight for the masses against the bi-partisan Good Old Boys network that dominates Washington.

No two families better represent the Republican side of this unholy alliance than the Bush and Romney families.

Having them publicly repudiate Trump would provide irrefutable confirmation of his political *raison d'être*.

Also, we see you, liberals.

We remember when Mitt Romney was a rapacious capitalist who destroyed jobs and lives. We remember the rumor campaign regarding his religion. We remember the "binders full of women" lie.

We remember the same treatment of President Bush. The man who lied, while others died.

How typically cynical. Men you despise become temporarily lionized to serve short-term political goals.

Stay classy, liberals.

June 19th, 2020

Quote of the Week: “When I was growing up, we were taught the stories of people whose inventions and scientific discoveries had expanded the lives of millions of other people. Today, students are being taught to admire those who complain, denounce and demand.”

- Thomas Sowell

Factoid of the Week: Statewide, 37 percent of those who responded said they strongly approved or approved of Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey's response to the protests that followed Floyd's death.

- KSTP Survey 6/16/20

Editor's Note: Just who in the h**l are these 37%? Frey displayed a rare combination of incompetence and cowardice in fiddling while Minneapolis burned. Wow.

In This Issue:

1. Walz Can't Lead;
2. Complaint as Virtue;
3. Absurd.

WALZ CAN'T LEAD

Any observer of Minnesota government, heck any reasonable person, understands that the governor, by definition of his office, leads the state. As the governor goes, so goes the legislature.

Thus, it should come as no surprise that the legislature, as of this writing, is poised to adjourn this special session without any resolution of the most pressing issues.

Walz is about to lead a team that is batting .000.

The reason is quite simple: the governor is utterly lacking in leadership skills.

Sure, he's been dealt a very tough hand regarding “black swan” events (are we

allowed to say that anymore?) like a pandemic and a tragic police killing.

In both cases, his response has been abysmal, as described in previous editions.

In the case of this special session, he's failing by remaining in "campaign" mode instead of "governing" mode.

This is precisely the time the governor should be behind closed doors, working hard to find solutions and looking for the compromise inherent in successful governance when government is divided.

Instead, we have seen the governor act as the Agitator-in-Chief, holding grandstanding press conferences, engaging in Twitter antics, and publishing the contact information of individual GOP legislators, asking his "woke" constituents to harass them via phone and email.

This is hardly a recipe for results.

It's becoming clear that Walz is engaging in a strategy of confrontation, not collaboration, in the hope that voters will blame the GOP and give the DFL total control this November.

It may be smart politics. It may be dumb politics.

What it certainly is not is what any reasonable person would call "leadership."

COMPLAINT AS VIRTUE

We all know that the Left holds complaint as a virtue. The louder one complains about a situation, the more venerated the complainer becomes.

This virtue was on full display this week when the Senate Republicans brought to the floor a number of law enforcement reform proposals, many of them carbon copies of legislation proposed by the legislature's People of Color and Indigenous caucus (POCI).

That fact didn't stop three DFL senators representing Minneapolis to loudly and frequently complain that the legislation was inadequate and "weak tea."

It used to be a widely accepted among our shared social mores that identifying a problem includes offering meaningful solutions.

Consider first some facts. The three state senators in question are Scott Dibble, Jeff Hayden, and Patricia Torres Ray, all representing Minneapolis.

According to the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library, these three have served in the Minnesota Legislature as follows:

Dibble: MN House (2001-2004), MN Senate (2005-Present)

Hayden: MN House (2009-2011), MN Senate (2011 – Present)

Torres Ray: MN Senate (2007 – Present)

Also consider that from 2003 to 2019, the City of Minneapolis has paid tens of millions of dollars to settle some 247 police misconduct suits.

Those suits include massive payouts, including:

\$20 million to the estate of Justine Ruzczyk (2019);

\$3.05 million to the estate of David Smith (2013);

\$2.19 million to the estate of Dominic Felder (2011);

\$4.5 million to Duy Ngo, shot by Minneapolis police but lived (2007);

Clearly, these legislators were aware of the problems and the culture within the Minneapolis Police Department years before the death of George Floyd.

So, what did they do about it?

Why weren't the reforms they are now insistent upon enacted in 2019 or 2013 or 2011 or 2007?

This is especially true when the DFL had control of the governor's office, the Minnesota House and the Minnesota Senate in the 2013-2014 legislative session.

Not only were these three in the Senate majority, their DFL counterparts were also in control of the House and executive branch.

No Republicans to blame for obstructionism there.

It's rather appalling to watch them and other DFL senators castigate the work of the GOP majority when they had ample opportunity to institute the change they now demand.

It's about time Republicans start asking this same question.

It's an absolute tragedy that long before George Floyd, there was a David Smith, a Dominic Felder, and a Duy Ngo, along with so many other victims.

These DFL legislators would be better served working with the GOP majority to find compromise instead of serving up complaint.

Or maybe they're just taking cues from their governor.

ABSURD

"Apart from a few tragic scenes, the revolution has been nothing but a web of farcical scenes."

Jean-Paul Marat (1793)

All too often, any revolution moves from the legitimate, to the lawless, to the absurd.

Protesting the death of George Floyd was legitimate and needed. It was indeed moral.

Reform of law enforcement bad practices is needed and moral.

Lawless rioting and the wanton destruction of property was tragic.

What is now happening is the web of farcical scenes.

Whether it's removing trade images like Aunt Jemima, widely accepted for generations, including when Obama was president, or other empty gestures, our society has clearly jumped the shark.

The latest farce is the City of Duluth's decision to remove the word "chief" from administrative titles, so as not to offend people who apparently heretofore were never bothered by the title.

The chief administrative officer will now be the city administrator.

The chief financial officer is now the finance director.

The effort apparently was born of an effort to rewrite the language of city documents, that were holding the city back and stuck in the past.

Mayor Emily Larson said, “When a gender is identified, it’s always him.” City staff wanted a more ‘people first’ and ‘gender-neutral’ language ‘that can better reflect the work we do now.’”

It’s not at all clear how the “work we do now” is different from the work done in 2019, 2009, or 1989.

None of this vapid virtue signaling will make a meaningful difference in moving America to a more color-blind society, where content of character, and not color of skin, is what we see.

It’s just another example of the farcical nature of our society.

June 26, 2020

Quote of the Week: “Every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street building has been renamed, every date has been altered. And the process is continuing day by day and minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right.”

- George Orwell

Quote of the Week: “How could liberty ever establish itself amongst us? Apart from a few tragic scenes, the revolution has been nothing but a web of farcical scenes.”

- Jean-Paul Marat

Editor’s Note: It seems that America has finally jumped the shark. The overwhelming amount of collective insanity and profound stupidity displayed almost defies any sort of meaningful commentary. How does one rationally explain and analyze the stupid crap we’ve all seen the past few weeks?

In This Issue:

1. The Web of Farcical Scenes.

THE WEB OF FARCICAL SCENES

Let’s start with the indiscriminate violence surrounding the tearing down of statues.

Some simpletons are amazed that the Mob’s violence is indiscriminate and incapable of any sort of control.

These chowderheads all clapped their flippers when Christopher Columbus was torn down (still no charges filed in Saint Paul) and then scratched their tiny heads when the Mob attacked George Washington statues and burned churches.

Here’s a sampling of the Mob’s understanding of history, by their attacks:

Abe Lincoln: Defeated the Confederacy, issued the Emancipation Proclamation

General Ulysses S. Grant: Union General who defeated the Confederates. President who sent federal troops to quash the KKK. Believed to be the first president to welcome African Americans into the White House as honored guests.

George Washington: Father of the greatest pluralistic democracy in history.

Churches across America: Many of these churches were home to the abolitionist movement.

Colonel Hans Christian Heg: This one hits close to home as Heg was a Wisconsinite and many thousands of Minnesotans all have the names "Hans" or "Christian" or "Heg" or some combination thereof.

Heg's statue was torn down and thrown into a lake in Madison, Wisconsin this week during yet another pique of violent rage from the Mob.

Heg was a Norwegian immigrant who was a fervent abolitionist and member of the Free Soil Party.

He volunteered as a Union officer in the Civil War, rising to the rank of regimental commander and was on the cusp of brigade command when he was killed in battle.

The purge has also targeted organized religion, a favorite target of the Left.

Shaun King, a leader of Black Lives Matter, said of the imagery of Jesus and other religious figures, "All murals and stained-glass windows of white Jesus, and his European mother, and the white friends should come down. They are a gross form of white supremacy. Created as tools of oppression. Racist propaganda. They should all come down."

Thus, the true motives of the Mob become known. This isn't a protest against one tragic incident.

Rather, it's the execution of a malignant ideology that seeks to overturn the foundations of our society and replace it with a collectivist, hardcore Leftist society.

This unilateral violence is a form of domestic terrorism and should be treated as such.

Thankfully, President Trump is working hard to stop the violence in Washington, DC. The governors and mayors should follow suit.

As if all that wasn't enough, there was the world-class farce regarding the "noose" found in NASCAR driver Bubba Wallace's garage stall at the Talladega Superspeedway.

As is the modus operandi for our society today, the world accepted as Gospel truth that Wallace was the victim of a cruel, brazen hate crime before there was any sort of investigation or inquiry into the matter.

We were all subjected to the passion play of drivers and crew members rushing to virtue signal their support for Wallace, who basked in the opportunity to raise his media profile.

And, as is the modus operandi for our society, those who raised legitimate questions about the matter were silenced and branded as suspected racists for daring to raise such questions.

And those legitimate questions were legion.

It simply didn't make sense that such a vicious hate crime could be perpetrated in such a secure area, with surveillance cameras everywhere and secure, limited credentials needed for access.

After a platoon of FBI agents were deployed, it was determined that the "noose" was little more than a "garage pull," a rope with a knot at the end that assists in helping pull down the door. Moreover, the pull was in place since at least October 2019, when no person could have known that Wallace and his crew would be assigned the garage for the Talladega race.

In short, there was no hate crime.

Only in 2020 America would a simple garage pull become a national news story.

Finally, there is the ongoing and utterly dangerous scandal regarding General Flynn, the fake Russia dossier and the surveillance of the Trump campaign.

This week was a bombshell week that should have the attention of every citizen.

First, an appeals court upheld the Rule of Law by overruling a lower court judge who had refused the Justice Department's motion to drop the case against General Flynn.

The court ruled that the judge abused his power and discretion by refusing to accept the prosecution's motion to dismiss the clearly flawed case against Flynn.

Second, newly released notes and documentation clearly demonstrate that the campaign against Flynn, and therefore Trump, was directed from the highest level of American government.

Those notes show that President Obama and VP Biden were the ones who directed the campaign against Flynn.

This scandal has the appearance of a situation that could make Watergate look like the filching of a pen from work.

Truly, our country is in peril.

July 3rd, 2020

Editor's Note: Happy Independence Day, as this is the last edition prior to America's birthday. At least to those who celebrate, as it appears some large number of Americans don't, no longer believing in American exceptionalism or the American dream. Troubling times.

Quote of the Week: "The plurality ultimately cast aside this jurisdictional barrier to conclude that Louisiana's law is unconstitutional under our precedents. But those decisions created the right to abortion out of whole cloth, without a shred of support from the Constitution's text. Our abortion precedents are grievously wrong and should be overruled."

- Justice Clarence Thomas, *June Medical Services v. Russo*

Quote of the Week: "A state need not subsidize private education. But once a state decides to do so, it cannot disqualify some private schools solely because they are religious."

- Chief Justice John Roberts, *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue*

Factoid of the Week: On July 1st, the national death toll from COVID-19 was 645, the lowest since March 29th.

In This Issue:

1. Scare Tactics;
2. Polls;
3. The First Minnesota.

SCARE TACTICS

Clearly, science and medicine have been corrupted by politics, politics of the liberal kind.

For years, science scams have plagued the American psyche, propagated by a liberal media, all in the service of enhancing government control of our lives.

Overpopulation, global cooling, global warming, acid rain, AIDS, COVID, all these "issues" have been used in recent decades to scare Americans into surrendering freedoms and liberties for the supposed security government can offer against these

natural boogiemen.

The “experts” all told us that these issues were an existential threat to humankind unless drastic, immediate action was taken.

None of it turned out to be true.

Regarding COVID, the “experts” have been proven wrong by orders of magnitude.

The latest scare tactic is that positive test numbers are “exploding” and thus proof that the pandemic is out of control and America is in need of more martial law.

The reality is that while positive test numbers are rising, so are the numbers being tested. We always knew that, yet we read of hysteric headlines day after day.

The infection rate remains low, which is one important metric in assessing the lethality of COVID and thus very helpful in considering the tradeoffs inherent in shutting down the country.

More importantly, the death rate from COVID continues to fall, both nationally and here in Minnesota.

But these statistics are ignored, which is right out of the liberal play book.

Liberal policy makers cite dubious statistics to justify the need for government overreach.

Once those policies are in place and subsequent data show that the original estimates were way overblown, the statistics are ignored.

Remember the Minnesota COVID model? You know, the one thrown together by a couple of U of M grad students over a weekend? The one that hasn't been updated in weeks? The one that has been way, way off? The one used to justify COVID martial law?

We haven't heard about the model in a long, long, time because the model served its purpose. It was essentially a propaganda tool to justify a political outcome.

The model no longer serves the political purpose, so its been retired, so to speak.

Have you heard anything lately regarding the other models that were so wrong, including the infamous London model?

It's really no different than other “models” like the one that inspired the Watchdog back in 2005.

Back then, the “experts” and their models purported to show that Northstar commuter rail was the best option to increase mobility in the Highway 10 corridor and showed impressive ridership numbers that any rational person would question.

Once the project got built, the ridership numbers (of course) were way off and the train was the boondoggle many thought it would be. No matter, the project got built, it runs today, and no one questions the models and the assumptions.

This is a tried and true strategy out of the liberal play book. It was here before COVID. It will stay here so long as the Left can gain power from it. And after it is no longer useful, the strategy will again be applied to another “crisis.”

POLLS

Have you figured out another old but trusty stratagem from the Left? The one called a “suppression” poll?

A suppression poll is one that shows the Republican candidate losing badly to the Democrat candidate, in order to demoralize the Republican candidate’s supporters?

It’s designed to steer volunteers, donors, and voters away from the GOP.

Want some evidence of these polls?

You bet.

2016: Nate Silver’s vaunted 538 Poll had Clinton the overwhelming favorite over Trump.

The poll had Clinton winning states like Florida, Pennsylvania, Michigan, North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Georgia.

But 538 wasn’t the only one. Most polls were wrong as heck.

2016: On October 25th, the Star Tribune’s Minnesota poll had Clinton beating Trump by 8 points. Clinton ended up winning by 1.5 points.

1980: Polls have Carter beating Reagan. Reagan won.

1988: Summer polls have George H.W. Bush down to Dukakis by an average of 19 points. Bush wins in November.

1990: On the Saturday before the election, Detroit’s liberal newspaper had Republican John Engler losing to incumbent Democratic Gov. James Blanchard by 19 points. Three days later, Engler won by more than 17,000 votes.

1994: Polls show House GOP with very little chance to take control for the first time

in generations. It happened, as Newt Gingrich's Contract with America carries the day.

For over 30 years, polls have gotten it wrong and it just gets worse. The evidence shows that believing political polling is about as realistic as believing in Santa Claus or UFOs.

Don't believe the polls. They aren't designed to inform or educate.

THE FIRST MINNESOTA

Since all history is in danger of being erased, it is time for some good news and a history lesson, as this week also features that anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, one of the most pivotal and costly battles in American history.

Many Minnesotans don't know the key role one of our own volunteer infantry regiments played in the battle.

From the regiment's Wikipedia page, read on and celebrate these true heroes:

The 1st Minnesota Infantry Regiment mustered for a three-year term (1861-1864) in the Union Army at the outset of the American Civil War when the prevailing enlistment period was three months. During offensive movements, it sustained high percentages of casualties at the Battles of First Bull Run (20%) and Antietam (28%) and a catastrophic 82% at the Battle of Gettysburg. It is most noted for its service on the second day at Gettysburg.

At a pivotal moment in the 1863 struggle at Gettysburg, Major General Winfield Scott Hancock, commander of II Corps, ordered the First Minnesota to charge into a situation where it would be outnumbered by at least 5 to 1. The general's purpose was to buy minutes of delay with human lives, and one survivor spoke afterward that he expected the advance to result in "death or wounds to [every single one of the attackers]." The regiment fully and instantly obeyed the order, suffering at least 82% casualties among those making the attack; this action contributed significantly to the preservation of a key Union defensive position on the heights of Cemetery Ridge.

When given the opportunity to speak about the regiment after the war, both General Hancock and U.S. President Calvin Coolidge were unrestrained in their praise. Hancock placed its heroism highest in the known annals of war and ascribed unsurpassed gallantry to the famed attack. Emphasizing the critical nature of the circumstances on July 2 at Gettysburg, President Coolidge considered, "Colonel Colvill and those eight companies of the First Minnesota are entitled to rank as the saviors of their country."

July 10, 2020

Factoid of the Week: A Minneapolis resident has a greater chance of dying from a gunshot than COVID-19.

Quote of the Week: "It's time to stand up in this city. It is time to tell council that utopia is a bunch of BS. We are not in Mayberry, we are in the wild, wild west."

- Minneapolis resident Lisa Clemons

Quote of the Week: "It's easy to demonize police unions. The truth is cities signed off on all these agreements."

- Stephen Rushin, Loyola University Professor of Law

Headline of the Week: Minnesota Officials Project 22,000 COVID Deaths, July 13 Hospitalization Peak

- Star Tribune, April 10, 2020

In This Issue:

1. COVIDiocy;
2. A Disaster, Indeed.

COVIDiocy

The "Through the Looking Glass", dystopian life in which we find ourselves continues apace.

It doesn't make sense, unless once understands the core of liberal ideology.

That core consists of the pursuit of raw, complete state control.

Another way to think about it is that the liberals are French Revolution, not American Revolution.

The French Revolution descended into a bloodbath precisely because the core of that revolution was establishing a collective will and not protecting natural, God-

given individual rights.

When a society pursues a collective will, it means destroying those who don't subscribe to the prevailing collective will.

The current governmental powers being exercised in the name of public safety are simply another manifestation of this political malignancy.

Look at what's happening.

Here in Minnesota, we have the appalling spectacle of the governor continuing to extend the unilateral martial law powers the legislature handed over to him even though the rationale for exercising the powers long ago disappeared.

Recall that the reason for the exercise of these emergencies was to "flatten the curve" to prevent COVID-19 patients from overwhelming the hospital system.

A deeply flawed and grossly inaccurate pandemic model, created by graduate students over a weekend, provided a veneer of scientific legitimacy by predicting deaths and hospitalizations that overcounted exponentially.

We're a long, long way from that rationale and those numbers, yet here we are on the verge of yet another special session to consider yet another 30-day extension of these powers that strike at the very heart of our constitutional system of government.

In fact, not only has the curve been flattened, the curve is disappearing.

Watch the subtle change in narrative from Walz and a compliant media, as the talk turns from hospital capacity to vague talk of mask mandates, second waves, and other hypothetical issues that may or may not come to fruition.

If nothing else, this whole sordid episode should be a sobering reminder to the legislative branch to be very reluctant to give away inherent check-and-balance powers to another branch.

It's also an invitation for the judicial branch to get off its a** and start scrutinizing this situation.

Another example of the power grab is voting, as the liberals never want to let a crisis to go waste.

In rather covert fashion, the DFL Secretary of State and Governor Walz are moving Minnesota to a mail ballot only system of voting this fall.

This different than the current "no excuse" universal absentee voting method.

Under the “no excuse” model, a voter must affirmatively request a ballot.

Under universal mail-in, ballots are spewed out to each and every voter, whether they request a ballot or not.

The liberals intentionally conflate the two in an attempt to minimize the very real ballot integrity issues inherent in these mail-in schemes.

You might be thinking that the premise of this piece is inaccurate, as many Republican elected officials are doing the same in their jurisdictions.

To start, there is a difference in time and place. For example, it makes some sense for Texas to be exercising some of these powers, given their current situation.

Second, some of these Republicans may be Republicans, but they aren't conservative.

Just because one has the “R” behind his or her name doesn't give them a pass on this objectionable conduct.

True lovers of liberty understand the threats come from both sides, whether the justification is a pandemic or the perceived threat of certain nation-states or rogue actors.

A republic, Watchdogs, if you can keep it.

A DISASTER, INDEED

Governor Walz this week sent a letter to President Trump asking that Minneapolis be declared a disaster zone, making the city eligible for federal assistance.

At the same time, Walz and the DFL are working over Senate Republicans for state aid to clean up the mess they allowed to occur on their watch.

Not so fast.

Before any monies are handed out, it should be asked what Minneapolis is doing to help itself.

What monies will the city be kicking in to help rebuild?

After all, this is a city that doesn't hesitate to jack up taxes for all manner of utopian programs.

Legislators and the White House should demand that Mayor Frey and his Band of Misfit Toys put down the seed money and not simply stand by and get away with

doing nothing more than making on others to pay, like some petulant child.

It won't sit well with taxpayers when they find out their tax dollars went to rebuild Minneapolis while the city continued to fund items internally like the "Cultural Outreach and Accessibility" office or the "Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs."

There's also the 54 different boards, commissions, and advisory committees administered and funded by the city, including:

Bicycle Advisory Committee
Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council
Northside Green Zone Task Force
Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Transgender Equity Council
Southside Green Zone Council

And then there's the Chief Resilience Officer, who is charge of creating the city's "Resilience Strategy."

And finally, guess which local unit of government spent the most money on lobbying services in 2019?

If you guessed Minneapolis, give yourself a prize.

Minneapolis spent \$510,404 on lobbying in 2019.

Are you getting a feel for how this city spends money?

Moreover, let's not forget that it was the city's DFL leaders who allowed this situation to fester in both the short and long term.

In the short term, they stood by and did nothing while they failed in their basic duty to protect lives and property. You know, the aptly named and fundamental "police powers" of local government.

In the long term, the city let these issues fester by allowing their public schools to fail children by prioritizing things other than learning. The city for many years failed to negotiate police union contracts that eliminated bad cops, in much the same way many local school boards rubber stamp contracts that protect rotten teachers.

Instead, the city simply passed through contracts that offered ever more protection to bad cops, making it nearly impossible to fire them.

Most importantly, the legislature and federal government should take care to completely cut off the mayor, council, or staff from having anything to do with state and federal dollars.

The legislature would be well served to craft a tax strategy to encourage private sector investment in the affected riot areas.

Instead of turning money over to the city, the state should engage in tax expenditures that create tax incentives within the riot zone to encourage investment by private parties.

Letting Minneapolis handle these funds in any way is an invitation to inefficiency and favoritism.

The legislature should also consider the appointment of a special master to administer funds, such as low interest business loans.

In any case, the legislature must first demand that the City of Minneapolis lead the way in rebuilding and, second, under no circumstances turn over state tax dollars to Jacob Frey and company.

July 17th, 2020

Quote of the Week: “But the truth is that intellectual curiosity—let alone risk-taking—is now a liability at The Times. Why edit something challenging to our readers, or write something bold only to go through the numbing process of making it ideologically kosher, when we can assure ourselves of job security (and clicks) by publishing our 4000th op-ed arguing that Donald Trump is a unique danger to the country and the world?”

- Bari Weiss, Resignation Letter from the New York Times

Factoid of the Week: Challenger Anton Melton-Meaux outraised incumbent Ilhan Omar (D – MN 5) in the most recent quarter, raising \$3.2 million against her \$471,624. Melton-Meaux reports \$2 million cash on hand, while Omar reports \$1.1 million cash on hand. This race will be decided in an August primary.

In This Issue:

1. COVIDiocy;
2. The Dunces of Defunding;
3. The Elites.

COVIDiocy

While one can easily become numb to the ocean of numbers surrounding COVID-19, there are some statistic that matter.

Of late, the Left has sought to demonize Florida, Texas, and Arizona, gleefully pointing to growing case numbers and using those cherry-picked stats as proof that states with GOP governors are rightfully reaping the bitter harvest of liberty because those states didn't gleefully engage in martial law like their counterparts in New York and New Jersey.

Thus, here are some relevant statistics to bear in mind:

COVID-19 Deaths Per Million Residents:

New Jersey: 1,754

New York: 1,285

National Average: 388

Arizona: 321

Minnesota: 274

Florida: 210
Texas: 115

COVID-19 DEATHS (TOTAL):

New York: 24,994
New Jersey: 15,582
Florida: 4,514
Texas: 3,322
Arizona: 2,337
Minnesota: 1,548

COVID-19 DAILY CASES (3-DAY ROLLING AVERAGE)

July 12: 63,543 (USA Peak)
June 9: 17,670 (USA Trough)

COVID-19 DAILY DEATHS (3-DAY ROLLING AVERAGE)

July 6: 252 (USA Trough)
May 7: 2,372 (USA Peak)

COVID-19 DAILY TESTS (3-DAY ROLLING AVERAGE)

July 14: 736,566 (USA Peak)
March 18: 20,103 (USA Trough)

COVID-19 POSITIVE TESTS %

April 13: 19.6% (USA Peak)
July 14: 8.2% (USA Trough)

MINNESOTA FACTS

- Fact: 39 of Minnesota's 87 counties have zero COVID-19 deaths each.
- Fact: 12 of Minnesota's 87 counties have recorded one COVID-19 death each.
- Fact: The seven county Metro accounts for 81% of all COVID-19 deaths.
- Fact: 93% of all COVID-19 fatalities were age 60 or older.
- Fact: Minnesota hasn't recorded a single fatality among the age 0-19 cohort.

THE DUNCES OF DEFUNDING

Local media report that "dozens" of Minneapolis citizens showed up at city hall Tuesday night to demand that the city council's budget committee cut \$45 million from the \$193 million law enforcement budget.

Many of the testifiers asked that the nine council members who pledged to "end the

police department” live up to their word.

The city council should take them up on their offer, subject to conditions.

First, those who have testified in favor of these cuts and ending the police should be made to understand that any calls they make to 911 won't be answered.

Second, the city should conduct a scientific, statistically valid survey, by ward, on the question of the \$45 million cut.

Those wards that favor the cut (50% plus one) should get no law enforcement services, other than 911 call responses that will be given a lower priority than the calls to wards that don't favor the cuts.

Let those who want no uniformed police presence live their words.

Regardless, they may get their wish, as no sane person will want to be a Minneapolis cop. With hundreds of cities and counties in Minnesota, a solid law enforcement prospect will have numerous choices regarding their employer and the work environment.

THE ELITES

A hallmark of all Leftists, from straight-up democrats to communists is the hypocritical behavior of refusing to live under the laws they make.

Whether Soviet dachas, North Korean Mercedes dealers, special health care and retirement benefits, or simply refusing to cut your grass, Leftist politicians rarely live under the laws they make.

The latest example comes from our friends on the Minneapolis City Council, who apparently want to make damn sure you know that they are a collection of clowns.

Three of the council members were granted private, taxpayer funded security details after they claimed they were threatened.

Apparently, “reimagining” law enforcement doesn't extend to the personal safety of those doing the “reimagining.”

The real-world cost to the taxpayers is over \$152,000.

Readers can be outraged, but don't be surprised.

You knew this would happen.

July 24, 2020

Quote of the Week: “We’ve had racists, and they’ve existed, they’ve tried to get elected president. Trump is the first one that has.”

- Joe Biden

Quote of the Week: “Gov. Walz says it’s unclear what metrics of COVID-19 will be necessary to end mask mandate.”

- Tom Hauser, KSTP

Quote of the Week: “When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or in the same body of magistrates, there can be no liberty; because apprehensions may arise, lest the same monarch or senate should enact tyrannical laws, to execute them in a tyrannical manner.”

- Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Law*

In This Issue:

1. Those Racist Democrats;
2. COVIDiot.

THOSE RACIST DEMOCRATS

So, Joe Biden claims Donald Trump is the first racist president, eh?

Putting aside the merits of the smear, let’s fact check China Joe’s recollection of U.S. history.

In particular, let’s closely examine the history of certain Democrat presidents.

Andrew Jackson. The seventh president owned over 200 slaves during his lifetime, with some estimates rising to nearly 300. Jackson was a plantation owner, using slaves to work the land.

Jackson allowed his slaves to be whipped for offenses and also posted bounties for those who escaped captivity.

Jackson was also an enthusiastic proponent of the forced removal of American Indians from their homelands. Jackson was crucial to the passage of the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

Martin Van Buren. While Van Buren didn't have same passion for owning other human beings as that of his predecessor, this Democrat was also a slave owner.

James K. Polk. Polk owned 25 slaves during his lifetime and was a supporter of slavery as a candidate and elected official. In fact, Polk secured the Democrat nomination in 1844 over Van Buren precisely because he was the pro-slavery candidate the Democrat delegates demanded.

Andrew Johnson. Like the other Democrat presidents profiled here, Johnson both owned slaves and supported slavery. As military governor of Tennessee, Johnson convinced Lincoln to exempt swaths of the state from the Emancipation Proclamation.

And while we hope Joe Biden never assumes the Oval Office, he himself has engaged in no small amount of race baiting during his lifelong tenure in The Swamp.

Some of Biden's greatest hits:

"You can't walk into a 7/11 or Dunkin' Donuts without hearing a slight Indian accent."

"I mean, you got the first mainstream African-American (Obama) who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy."

"Unless we do something about this, my children are going to grow up in a jungle, the jungle being a racial jungle."

"That people would come to him and talk about what was happening to them at home in terms of foreclosures, in terms of bad loans that were being ... I mean these Shylocks who took advantage of, um, these women and men while overseas."

Biden has also had many friendships with infamous bigots and racists, including:

George Wallace, a Democrat politician who served as Alabama's governor and is remembered for declaring, "segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever!" Biden said the Democrats needed another candidate just like George Wallace.

Biden also effusively praised Sen. John Stennis of Mississippi, another Democrat segregationist, calling him "a man of character."

Biden also cultivated a fawning friendship with James Eastland, yet another racist, segregationist Democrat senator. Eastland called segregation “God’s Law” and repeatedly referred to blacks as an “inferior race.”

We could also get into Biden’s sexism and misogyny, but will leave that for another hair smelling, personal space violating kind of day.

Joe Biden is an untalented, unserious clown.

COVIDiot

Man, where do you even start with Governor Tim Walz?

One must start with the abject failure to protect those who reside in congregate care settings, who have borne the brunt of the COVID pandemic in Minnesota.

Those Minnesotans constitute the vast majority of deaths from COVID. And weeks after the governor announced his “plan” to better protect them, they still bear that brunt.

Or we could talk about the \$7 million Uber Morgue that will, thankfully, never hold a single body.

And then there’s the \$1.5 million pandemic model that was off by a factor of about 1,000%. Chimps throwing poop at a chart would have had better luck.

But the centerpiece of the latest COVIDiocy is the mask mandate.

Coming months and months after the peak here in Minnesota, the mandate comes in the form of a bureaucratic tome some 15 pages in length.

Even more comical, Walz can’t even articulate the metrics that will determine when this executive order will be lifted.

The man who appeals at all times to “the science” apparently issued the mandate with no consideration other than that all the other cool governors are doing it.

There is no exit strategy, other than the benevolent despotism of Tim Walz.

This order is all the more stunning in its arrogant brazenness because the pandemic has hit so unevenly across the state.

Yet again, Walz seems incapable or unwilling to recognize that a county-by-county approach would be more humane, thoughtful, efficient, and productive.

Or he could have simply avoided governing by fiat and asked Minnesotans to do what they were already doing, using their common sense to avoid the spread of the

virus, as demonstrated by the dropping numbers.

In the alternative, he could have also governed according to the model laid out in our constitution, that whole coordinate branch of government thing.

The mask mandate is further proof that there are only two ways Walz is going to give up his powers of martial law.

First, the judicial branch will rebuke him, repealing these powers in whole or part as offensive to the constitution of either the state or federal government.

Second, the voters will elect legislators who will extinguish his use of these powers.

Other than that, it appears that he will jealously guard these powers.

Perhaps it's time for the legislature to stop negotiating on this issue.

He's obviously not amenable.

The GOP needs to take their case directly to the people.

The GOP doesn't need to come in at this late stage and start jointly owning this fiasco.

This will be especially true when he prevents schools from re-opening this fall.

Let him own it.

July 31, 2020

Quote of the Week: "The risk of COVID-19 mortality for children is about 0.1 per 100,000. So another way to say that, it's one in a million. Now, I'm not trying to belittle that. I'm just trying to make sure we look at it proportional. Because if you do the same thing for influenza deaths for school-age children over the last five years, they're anywhere from five to 10 times greater."

- Dr. Robert Redfield, Director of the Centers for Disease Control

Quote of the Week: "Our data indicate that children are at far greater risk of critical illness from influenza than from COVID-19. SARS-CoV-2 appears to behave differently in children and adolescents than other common respiratory viruses, such as influenza, on which much of the current guidance regarding school closures is based."

- American Academy of Pediatrics

Quote of the Week: "Schools are fundamental to child development and well-being and provide our children with academic instruction, social and emotional skills, safety, reliable nutrition, physical/speech and mental health therapy, and opportunities for physical activity, among other benefits."

- American Academy of Pediatrics

In This Issue:

1. Pandemic Panic Persists;
2. Questions for Walz;
3. Nazi Imagery Hypocrisy.

PANDEMIC PANIC PERSISTS

The mania, propaganda, misinformation, intimidation, and rejection of reason continues apace regarding the pandemic.

Just when it seems there really isn't anything more to say, government does something stupid and the misery is propagated and perpetuated.

The latest foolishness comes to the masses in the form of Tim Jong Walz's edict regarding school openings this coming school year.

Since the Watchdog is one of the last objective news sources in Minnesota, let's give our Dear Leader some credit – it could have been worse.

Many readers were expecting that The Exalted One would either dictate distance learning or some sort of hybrid model for the entire state.

Thus, his Rube Goldberg matrix of rolling case averages isn't all that bad.

No word on whether the same U of M grad students who concocted the Minnesota pandemic model crafted this matrix.

Of course, the matrix has already created a host of problems that apparently escaped the beta tests run at the gov's manse in Saint Paul.

First, some districts cross county boundaries. How to account for cases when they are calculated on the matrix by county? Are the two to be blended? Weighted?

Second, the Saint Cloud public schools have pointed out that the prison accounts for a significant portion of cases. Should they be counted when inmates have no chance of contact with the public at large?

Third, the matrix offers no meaningful opportunity for parents to plan their work and family schedules. There is no certainty offered parents.

Fourth, while it is laudable that the policy offers a measure of local control, it is maddening for school districts that this decision was rendered in late July.

In other words, if the governor was going to essentially kick the can back at school districts, why wait until nearly August?

For the Watchdog, the school policy is a mixed bag.

This publication is pleasantly shocked that Walz didn't knuckle under to the teacher union and shut it all down until Christmas.

But the matrix falls short on a number of fronts, especially in that it offers so much

uncertainty moving forward.

QUESTIONS FOR WALZ

It's aggravating, but not surprising that the media was treated Governor Walz and his staff with kid gloves with respect to questioning key aspects of administration decision making.

Tom Hauser of KSTP is the only journalist who has consistently represented the profession well by asking tough but fair questions.

It's rather stunning to consider that there has been no real reporting of key issues regarding the primary issue impacting the lives of Minnesotans.

For example, why was the pandemic model so wrong?

When will the model be updated? Will it be regularly updated moving forward?

What metrics will be used to determine when you will relinquish your unilateral powers under the peacetime emergency declaration?

Why do you think it is good public policy to make decisions that are normally made in concert with the legislative branch in unilateral fashion?

What is your definition of "emergency" as that term is used in chapter 12 of Minnesota statutes?

What is the strategic goal of these peacetime unilateral executive orders? At the start, citizens were told you were exercising these powers as a resource preservation measure, to keep hospitals from being overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients. Now, it seems that the strategic goal is virus suppression or elimination. What is the goal here? When will we know the goal has been achieved? What are the metrics you are using to determine progress towards the strategic goal?

Asking these questions and pursuing them until an answer is given would be a great place to start.

NAZI IMAGERY HYPOCRISY

The Watchdog strongly supports the long-standing practice of refraining from the use of Nazi imagery and rhetoric to attack political opponents.

Use of this imagery and rhetoric diminishes the historic and solemn place of the Holocaust as one of the darkest chapters in human history and cynically co-opts that overwhelming tragedy in the service of a political issue.

Sadly, that practice has been under assault, as the use of Nazi imagery and rhetoric has proliferated as our civil discourse becomes coarse, virulent, and vile.

It is also disturbing to see the hypocrisy surrounding the issue, as many parties to today's political discourse are quick to call out the use of this imagery by their opponents while excusing it when used by allies.

Minnesota GOP chair Jennifer Carnahan deserves credit for quickly condemning the Wabasha County GOP for using such imagery in a recent social media post.

This publication wonders when Democrat leaders will condemn a recent statement from long-time gadfly Jesse Jackson, who recently co-opted the Holocaust by comparing federal law enforcement personnel to Hitler's Brown shirts.

Jackson's statement included these words:

"Hitler had his Brown shirts and Mussolini had his Black shirts, now Donald Trump has his camouflage shirts."

"Comparisons to Hitler are always explosive, but the comparison is apt."

"Hitler's bullyboys operated on the fringes or outside of the law to violently intimidate Germany's leftists and finally to exterminate Jews. Trump's bully boys are operating on the fringes or outside the law to violently intimidate America's progressives and people of color who are exercising their First Amendment right to protest racial injustice."

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/columnists/2020/7/27/21340670/president-trump-federal-police-chicago-protests-jesse-jackson/>

This is especially true considering that Jackson has a well-documented history of anti-semitic and anti-Israel comments.

Waiting for Democratic condemnation.

August 7, 2020

Quote of the Week: "Civil equality, in fact, is all that a reasonable man can claim. Absolute equality is a chimera; for it to exist, there would have to be absolute equality in intelligence, virtue, physical strength, education, and fortune for all men."

- Boissy d'Anglas

Quote of the Week: "I don't think the mayor knew what he was asking for...I think the mayor said, 'I request the National Guard, whew, this is great. We're going to have massively trained troops.' No. You're going to have 19-year olds who are cooks."

- Governor Tim Walz

Quote of the Week: "We have to stand up for our flag, we have to stand up for our country, we have to stand up for our anthem and a lot of people agree with me. Hey, if I am wrong, then I am going to lose an election and that's OK with me. I am always going to stand for our country and flag."

- President Donald J. Trump

In This Issue:

1. Budget Blues;
2. Taxes Don't Matter.

BUDGET BLUES

Last week the state's Management and Budget Office (MMB), released a "revenue update" that revised the state's fiscal year (FY) 2022-2023 budget deficit at \$4.7 billion.

Put another way, in the next two-year budget cycle, the "out bi-ennium", expenditures are projected to exceed revenues by \$4.7 billion.

For perspective, the state's current general fund bi-ennial budget is approximately \$47 billion, which tells us that the projected deficit is about 10%.

Just as sure as the sun rises each morning, you can bet that Governor Walz and the DFL will reach into their handy bag of euphemisms to speak of “revenue enhancements” to help cover the deficit. Translated into English, a “revenue enhancement” = tax increases.

The disposal of this budget issue will begin in earnest in January, meaning that the legislative elections this November will be critical.

With Walz not on the ballot, the only hope taxpayers have to avoid being pummeled yet again will be to retain the GOP majority in the state Senate and/or flip the Minnesota House from DFL to GOP leadership.

Why not raise taxes?

Let us count the ways.

First, there is the philosophical and moral component.

For every dollar of increased taxes, that means a dollar that was taken from the family budget to spare the government budget. It's fair to ask why the government budget is given any sort of priority over private budgets.

Next, Minnesota taxpayers are tapped out. It's immoral to consider raising taxes on people and businesses that have been hammered by the government-induced depression in response to the Wuhan Virus.

Also consider that Minnesota is already a high-tax state. In fact, Governor Dayton and the DFL recently raised taxes yet again. There's no place to go for the tax raisers. They're out of runway.

By any measure, the state is always near the top of “least friendly” lists, regardless of the type of tax.

In a world where the successful and productive are more mobile than ever, jacking up taxes is only an incentive for them to leave. This is especially true when Minnesota lacks other quality of life incentives offered by other socialist states like California and New York.

Second, consider the practical aspects of the deficit.

The deficit is projected to be 10% of the budget.

While this isn't a small number, there is no reason why the state can't find enough savings to cover the deficit without raising taxes.

There isn't a CEO, CFO, entrepreneur, or head of household who hasn't balanced a

budget by making cuts like this. In fact, many have been doing just that these days, thanks to the governor's unilateral executive fiats that have choked off business activity and killed jobs.

Moreover, the state has a budget reserve in excess of \$2 billion. Some or all of that tax over-collection could be used to mitigate the "draconian" (also found the handy bag of DFL euphemisms) cuts inherent in a 10% reduction.

Consider this. In the current bi-ennium, spending went up \$4.2 billion over the previous bi-ennium. Thus, if \$500 million was transferred from the budget reserve and cuts of \$4.2 billion were made, government would be spending money at the same level as the last budget.

Even that level of spending would represent a major increase over the last decade that far outstripped inflation and population, two rational metrics that can be used to justify more government spending.

Here is the state's bi-ennial general fund spending going back to 2010:

2010-2011: \$30 billion
2012-2013: \$35.3 billion
2014-2015: \$39.6 billion
2016-2017: \$41.5 billion
2018-2019: \$44.5 billion
2020-2021: \$47 billion.

Wow. That's a nearly 60% increase in general fund spending.

During that time, the Office of the State Demographer notes that Minnesota's population grew 7.1%.

During this same time, inflation averaged 1.9% in the Twin Cities area, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Finally, median household income in Minnesota grew by 19% during that period.

Thus, the growth of state government exponentially outpaced population growth, inflation, and taxpayer income over the past 10 years.

There is simply no way in hell Walz and Democrats are justified in any way in proposing tax increases to cover the Leviathan's deficit.

A man going from 500 pounds to 450 pounds doesn't represent starvation.

TAXES DON'T MATTER

Remember when the liberal mantra was that tax rates didn't matter?

They claimed that people didn't make decisions based on taxes, at least the patriotic ones.

That lie has been exposed and then some these days.

The most recent example is New York City, where a vile combination of COVIDiocy and crime have driven the productive class to the Hamptons and other summer retreats, leaving the great unwashed masses to fend for themselves in a dystopian world of rats, violence, and germs.

Governor Cuomo has taken to literally begging the successful to return to the city, where the tax-based beatings can resume.

But it's not so easy, now that the Big Apple has some maggots crawling about.

Cuomo mentioned at a press conference this week that he will even buy drinks and cook dinner for members of the burgeoning uber-rich diaspora.

Said the guy, "I literally talk to people all day long who are in their Hamptons house who also lived here, or in their Hudson Valley house or in their Connecticut weekend house, and I say, you gotta come back, when are you coming back?"

Oh, the humanity.

In addition to seeing the luster wear off Gotham, two other factors are playing into the exodus.

The first technology. The proliferation of technology tools that enable remote work have freed a generation of productive Americans from the ball and chain of proximity to work.

For many of the most productive, an Internet connection and a cell phone are all they need to do their jobs.

Second, a single federal tax policy change exposed the taxes-don't-matter lie in unmistakable fashion.

In a stroke of brilliance, the recent federal tax overhaul put a limit on "SALT" deductions, which are deductions on the federal return for "state and local taxes" paid.

The federal law change limited the SALT deduction at \$10,000, which significantly hit wealthy taxpayers in high tax blue states.

These changes have led to sizable numbers of 1%ers decamping from places like

New York and California to Florida and Texas.

Thus, COVIDiocy and crime only added fuel to a fire started by technology and federal tax policy.

This is why Speaker Pelosi (California) and Minority Leader Schumer (New York) are fighting so hard to either repeal or temporarily lift the SALT deduction.

There is no reason for Republicans to take them up on the offer.

First, it's poor tax policy. Unlimited SALT deductions are simply a form of tax subsidy to blue state taxpayers from red state taxpayers.

Moreover, it's a moral hazard in that it allows states like New York and California to jack up state taxes while insulating those states from the natural negative consequences of doing so (the flight of the successful).

Politically, there is rarely a reward for larding the rich with tax breaks like an unlimited SALT deduction.

In addition, the voters of these high-tax states should get the government they installed. They voted for these jokers and they deserve their "leadership" in spades.

You gotta come back! When are you coming back!

These words should be stenciled on the walls of the Capitol in Albany.

For many productive New Yorkers, the answer is "never."

August 14th, 2020

Quote of the Week: "I believe them and I respect them being able to tell their story and having the courage to do it."

- Kamala Harris, regarding Joe Biden's accusers (April 2019)

Factoid of the Week: Only 39% of Americans think it's a good thing that teachers belong to a union.

- Rasmussen Reports 8/11/20

Factoid of the Week:

Years in federal office:

Joe Biden: 47 years

Nancy Pelosi: 33 years

Chuck Schumer: 39 years

Donald Trump: 3 years

And Donald Trump is the problem?

In This Issue:

1. Primary Results;
2. The Moral Hazard;

PRIMARY RESULTS

The big takeaway from last night's primary here in Minnesota was the unmitigated Democrat-on-Democrat violence.

The political violence resulted in four incumbents being taken down, along with other divisive, bruising primaries that kept the incumbents.

Start with State Senate District 7, where incumbent Erik Simonson suffered a savage beatdown at the hands of newcomer Jen McEwen.

Simonson, a moderate, supported mining and pipelines and frequently crossed party lines. In short, he was an old-school blue-collar Democrat.

Moreover, Simonson had the backing of nearly the entire constellation of DFL

opinion leaders, including Governor Walz and a raft of independent spending on his behalf from unions and other special interest groups.

Despite this dynamic, Simonson was crushed 74-23%, losing every single precinct in the district.

It is indeed rare that an incumbent suffers that kind of humiliating defeat, absent some sort of high-profile scandal or criminal conviction.

As is often the case these days, especially in rural Minnesota, this was a case of the environmental, liberal wing going up against the traditional, blue-collar jobs first coalition.

The environmental wing decisively won, sending the blue-collar faction headlong into retreat.

Their win takes on a very important, symbolic dimension and signals that the environmental, progressive wing is ascendant and there is little room remaining for the “labor” wing of the DFL.

Many of these “Reagan Democrats” have already fled the DFL for the GOP, a trend that will only accelerate in Northern Minnesota.

In Minneapolis, two incumbent DFL legislators were turned out in favor of more liberal challengers.

What is rather stunning is that the incumbents turned out were as liberal as one can get.

In House District 59B, Rep. Raymond Dehn was beaten by newcomer Esther Agbaje.

Let’s be clear about Rep. Dehn’s liberal, woke street cred.

Dehn is a proud ex-con, having done time for a 1976 felony burglary, presumably to feed an admitted cocaine addiction.

More importantly, Dehn can rightly proclaim that he was for defunding the police before “defunding the police” became a cause celebre.

Dehn was excoriated for his suggestion to disarm the Minneapolis Police Department, even though he was more than prescient as a liberal standard-bearer.

The problem for Ray Dehn, clearly, was that he was the wrong race and color for the Group Identity Mob.

In another section of Minneapolis, Senator Jeff Hayden lost his primary to Omar Fateh, a Democrat of a different stripe.

Fateh proudly ran against Hayden as a Democrat Socialist.

Again, Jeff Hayden wouldn't be mistaken for a moderate anywhere.

He has earned high marks from progressive groups everywhere.

Finally, over in Saint Paul, longtime legislative fixture John Lesch was unceremoniously dumped in the most surprising result of the night, save for Simonson's beat down.

The one DFL incumbent who was suspected to be in trouble (at least in some quarters) was Ilhan Omar, the congressional representative in District 5.

Omar's primary challenger raised millions and ran a good campaign.

Nonetheless, she prevailed in rather convincing fashion.

The upshot here is that the crazies are firmly in control of the DFL.

The party is now fully engulfed in a conflagration of liberal, woke excess.

With the party captured by this radical fringe, it will be pulled farther and farther away from the middle, where political success resides.

Party leaders will be challenged, along with more and more incumbents.

Mayor Frey in Minneapolis will be the 2021 canary in the coal mine, with his race being carefully watched.

Having said that, it looks like 2022 will be a tough year for the DFL. Watch as candidates, starting with Governor Walz, get challenged from the Left as not being sufficiently woke, even though their policies are plenty progressive and therefore destructive.

Can they survive? Ask Simonson, Dehn, Hayden, and Lesch.

The media is trying hard to deflect, but 2020, 2021 and 2022 are shaping up to be good years for the GOP, so long as they can carry message of being the adults in the room.

THE MORAL HAZARD

You can't help but feel for Minneapolis business owners who were impacted by the riots that the DFL couldn't control, letting the city burn for days on end.

The business owners were deprived of the most basic governmental obligation, the obligation to provide safety.

Having said that, many of the affected business owners made the conscientious decision to either carry no insurance or too little insurance.

Thus, they have been complaining that government hasn't provided them with the money they should have gotten through a proper insurance policy.

It may be impolitic, but these business owners have no claim to their neighbor's resources.

If government bails out these businesses, what and who is next?

Why should any homeowner maintain a policy?

Why have health insurance?

Why have any insurance and simply make the government the backstop for all risks and losses.

If there is any recompense to be had from government, it should come in the form of lawsuit against Minneapolis for its abject and negligent failure to prevent the looting.

A lawsuit would allow for a proper assessment of fault, damages, and remedies for each plaintiff.

The distinction is important.

The courts are the only venue to properly assess these issues of fact and law.

It's a very unfortunate situation, but simply handing money over to those who makes claims in the form of loans or grants isn't good public policy.

August 21, 2020

Quote of the Week: “Don’t underestimate Joe’s ability to f**k things up.”

- Barack Obama on Biden

Quote of the Week: “Blue lives ain’t s**t!”

- John Thompson, DFL candidate for the Minnesota House of Representatives

Factoid of the Week: COVID-19 deaths per million residents:

New Jersey – 1,793

New York – 1,299

Florida – 469

Texas – 364

South Dakota – 155

But we’re sure looking forward to that Gov. Cuomo book that tells the rest of America how to handle the ‘Rona.

In This Issue:

1. DFL Privilege.

DFL PRIVILEGE

There’s been a lot of talk lately about “privilege” and the shame and remorse that should accompany such status.

The one “privilege” that no one is discussing, however, is “DFL” or “Democrat” privilege.

This particular privilege involves saying and doing things that would meet with approbation (or worse) if said or done by someone other than a self-identified Democrat.

Examples of such privilege are legion and selecting a few is akin to shooting fish in a barrel.

Take the recent antics of one John Thompson, a heretofore unknown legislative

candidate running under the DFL banner for a vacant seat on Saint Paul's East Side. In other words, as the lone DFL candidate for the seat, he will win in November.

Today, Thompson is infamous and viral. As a member of Black Lives Matter, he was front and center in video footage of a mob scene that took place in front of the private home of Bob Kroll, who is the head of the Minneapolis Police Union.

In the video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4HZahNuBOY&t=52s>), Thompson engages in a long profanity-laced rant, carried over a loudspeaker.

Thompson's sewer mouth also challenged neighbors to confront him, clearly attempting to intimidate and terrorize the people (including children), who were on their own property minding their own business.

Among other rants, Thompson called the residents "racist motherfu**ers" and threatened to "burn Hugo to the ground."

No reasonable person can watch the video and come to any conclusion other than that John Thompson is utterly unqualified to serve in the Minnesota House of Representatives.

He's an embarrassment. He should withdraw from the race immediately.

Moreover, he should be called upon to drop out by his party and his caucus.

But that hasn't happened and it won't.

If a Republican had done it, the calls for dropping out would be a deluge.

But not for the DFL candidate.

That's DFL privilege.

And what of Laura Loomer and Marjorie Taylor Greene?

Both women are highly controversial figures who won GOP primaries for Congress in their respective districts.

Loomer is a well-known media gadfly who has earned a following by confronting leftists on camera.

Greene is not so well known but has earned media approbation for her support of the QAnon movement.

The media can't get enough of asking Republican office holders, including the

president, if they support Loomer and Greene, looking for some sort of disavowal of their candidacies, which would obviously boost the Democrats in the race.

Fair enough, but what about the radicals *already* in Congress, such as Ilhan Omar, Rashida Talib, and Ayana Pressly?

When will the press ask Biden, Schumer and Pelosi time and again if they disavow these radical America haters?

It won't happen.

That's Democrat privilege.

How about Joe Biden's health?

He's clearly dealing with a mental impairment such as dementia.

Reasonable people can see that and rightly be concerned about his ability to discharge the duties of the office should he be elected.

Thus, questions about his health are in order and a big deal.

But you don't see the media asking, as they cover for his clear health issue.

Conversely, the media traffics in near daily gossip about the current president's health, often invoking wild hypotheticals about his removal from office under the 25th Amendment.

Moreover, when a black journalist recently asked Biden about the issue, he got belligerent and asked the journalist if she was a "junkie" who had been drug tested.

Avoiding tough questions about the health of the Democrat candidate for president is clearly Democrat privilege. And so is avoiding criticism for bigoted comments, apparently.

And, finally, Democrat privilege certainly means that the shady dealings, bad behavior, and other problems of the Biden Clan are off limits.

Hunter Biden, for example, is a walking disaster and a poster boy for political privilege.

He's fathered a child out of wedlock with a stripper, been booted from the military for cocaine use, and still can't answer how he got paid millions to work for companies in professional fields in which he had no education or experience.

From the looks of it, Hunter could have been a consultant for either strip clubs or the

Cali Cartel.

And that's not the end of it. Other Biden family members have received sweetheart deals or had problems.

James Biden, Joe's brother, has had at least 5 tax liens placed against his property.

Another brother, Frank, has had at least three, which he has blamed on his alcohol addiction.

And lest there be at least one area where Hunter isn't a loser, tax problems are NOT one of them.

He, too, has tax problems.

Washington, DC recently filed a whopping \$450,000 lien against him, which was amazingly paid off six days later.

This is amazing because Hunter recently claimed in a court filing that he is broke and has no income.

The claim of poverty was part of his legal defense in the paternity case where he denied fathering a child with a stripper, but he DNA test proved otherwise.

Where's Maury Povich when you need him? "Hunter, you ARE the father!" It could be on the "white rich kids who had daddy give them everything but they still screwed up" episode.

Democrat privilege, people. You can be disgusted, but you can't be surprised.

August 28, 2020

Quote of the Week: “None of these guys — even Chauvin — actually killed him. He killed himself.”

- Defense attorney Earl Gray, speaking of George Floyd

Quote of the Week: “This is not a slam dunk for the prosecution and not an easy case, especially for the higher-degree homicide charges.”

- Professor Philip Stinson

In This Issue:

1. America Burning;
2. Floyd Case Bombshell;
3. Post Office Peccadilloes;
4. RINOS – Get to Know ‘Em.

AMERICA BURNING

The summer of destruction continues apace. The news is a daily assault on the sensibilities of average citizens as rioters rampage through major cities, assaulting people, looting, and destroying property.

It isn't lost on these main street voters that the cities in questions are bastions of liberal, Democrat rule. They see the “space” these leaders have given rioters in order to appease the mob, comprised of people who certainly don't vote Republican, if they are eligible to vote at all. Many of the named protesters have felony records that preclude voting rights.

It isn't lost on these main street voters that public safety is a core responsibility of government and they see that Democrats have subordinated that obligation to the obligation to appease the mob.

And now, this lawlessness isn't lost on DFL politicians. The disgust of voters is starting to show up in both field polling and focus groups, according to sources who spoke to the Watchdog on the condition of anonymity.

Democrats in Minnesota are starting to get hurt in the polls by their apathy towards this lawlessness.

So, when you see these Democrats starting to respond to the rioting, one has to wonder whether the response is based on public safety or politics.

A “security election” clearly favors the GOP. As one strategist told the Watchdog, “If the DFL wants to debate us on public safety, we’re more than willing.”

The Democrats are clearly caught on the horns of a political dilemma. Since the start, they have tacitly and explicitly supported these street protests-cum-riots, which has alienated the suburban voters who swung their way in 2018.

Winning back those suburban voters with a tough-on-crime message will alienate much of the urban base that has supported the riots, as evidenced by the claim that it’s a form of racial reparations, for example.

Make no mistake, Minnesota is in play this year.

The crime fiasco is one reason why.

FLOYD CASE BOMBSHELL

Our friends at @AlphaNewsMN uncorked a bombshell this week when they broke the story regarding the Hennepin County medical examiner’s conclusions regarding the George Floyd death.

The narrative from the media and many elected officials, including Governor Walz and Attorney General Keith Ellison, is that George Floyd was murdered by Minneapolis police officers, who are now facing criminal charges in that same vein.

Not so fast, says Dr. Andrew Baker, the chief medical examiner.

His autopsy report contains bombshell revelations that may prove exculpatory at trial.

First, Dr. Baker concluded that Floyd had a “fatal” level of the powerful opioid fentanyl in his system.

This is consistent with law enforcement reports that show Floyd admitted that he had been “hooping” (using drugs) the day he was arrested.

Moreover, body camera footage from officers on the scene show Floyd acting in an erratic manner consistent with drug use. In fact, the officers asked him if he was on drugs because of this behavior.

Dr. Baker’s autopsy also concluded that Floyd’s lungs were 2-3 times their normal weight, carrying excess fluid that is often caused by fentanyl overdosing, a condition known as pulmonary edema.

Baker concluded that, "If Floyd were found dead at home alone and no other apparent causes [existed], this would be acceptable to call [his death] an OD [overdose]."

Importantly, Dr. Baker also concluded that Floyd showed no evidence of a restricted airway, a vital point, as the prosecution will argue that Floyd was murdered by a restricted airway, essentially choked to death by Minneapolis police kneeling on his neck.

Baker wrote, "Mr. Floyd did not exhibit signs of petechiae, damage to his airways or thyroid, brain bleeding, bone injuries, or internal bruising."

Surely, the prosecution will produce experts who will argue differently, but this report is one more obstacle to the prosecution's case.

After all, the defense has the primary tactical goal of introducing reasonable doubt into the minds of the jury.

Baker's expert medical opinion may prove to be the cornerstone of the defense's case.

Moreover, the prosecution has chosen to charge the officers with second degree murder.

Under Minnesota law, here is what the prosecution must prove in order to win a conviction:

causes the death of a human being with intent to effect the death of that person or another, but without premeditation.

The prosecution must prove that Officer Derek Chauvin *intended* to kill George Floyd when he restrained him.

Proving this mental state, which lawyers call *mens rea*, can be difficult as the prosecution has to try to prove what was in the defendant's head at the time.

Moreover, it is likely that the case will be removed out of the Metro area, thanks to pretrial publicity and the argument that the defendants can't get a fair trial in Hennepin County.

This motion has been made all the easier to prove by the prejudicial statements made by politicians like Governor Walz and AG Ellison, who have already pronounced the defendants guilty by labeling the death a "murder" time and again in public settings.

Thus, proving second degree murder beyond a reasonable doubt will be no slam dunk for the prosecution.

POST OFFICE PECCADILLOES

Of the numerous hoaxes and fake issues the Democrats have perpetrated against Donald Trump and his administration (the Kavanaugh sexual assault, Russia collusion, emoluments clause), the post office hoax may be the most audacious and improbable of all.

The Democrats would have us believe the United States Post Office was some efficient, well-oiled machine prior to 2020.

Really.

While the Watchdog could consume pages with facts to the contrary, consider this one news item from this week.

According to the Postal Service Inspector General, the Postal Service has been wracked with questionable overtime expenses.

The report noted that there were some \$522 million in questionable overtime expenses in 2019 alone.

The report goes on to note a whopping 42% of Postal Service employees logged unauthorized overtime last year.

More than 4,000 employees made more in overtime than their salaries.

Chuck and Nancy, if you want to run with a narrative that the post office is some sort of critical service that is under attack from Donald Trump, go for it.

The only thing dumber would be to try the same narrative with the IRS.

RINOS – GET TO KNOW ‘EM

Speaking of absurdities, it's always entertaining when the Democrats trot out retread Republicans to endorse them.

Such was the case last week when Minnesotans were supposed to be impressed by the endorsement of Joe Biden by three "Republicans", Arne Carlson, Tom Horner, and Dave Durenberger.

Arne Carlson hasn't endorsed a Republican for decades, hasn't been seen at a GOP event for decades, and was kicked out of the party years ago as he was no longer a Republican.

Tom Horner left the GOP in 2010, when he ran for governor as an endorsed

member of the Independence Party. As a side note, guess who endorsed him? None other than Arne Carlson.

As another side note, how did Tom Horner get his start in politics? He was a staffer for Dave Durenberger.

Dave Durenberger, a former GOP senator, hasn't been heard from since 1994, when he left the Senate in total disgrace, indicted criminally and formally rebuked on a 96-0 censure vote for multiple violations of finance and ethics laws.

In fact, he is the last U.S. Senator to be censured and one of the few in American history to suffer such ignominy.

A real loser.

So, go ahead DFL. If these three impress you, keep them.

September 4th, 2020

Quote of the Week: “I take responsibility for trusting the word of the neighborhood salon that I’ve been to, over the years, many times ... as it turns out, that was the setup.”

- Speaker of House Nancy Pelosi

Quote of the Week: “Given the threats to my home and my family, I’m gonna do everything to make sure that they are protected. I make no apologies whatsoever for that.”

- Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot

Quote of the Week: “My concern is the large number of white nationalist(s) in our city and other threatening communications I’ve been receiving.”

- Minneapolis Councilperson Andrea Jenkins

In This Issue:

1. Liberal Privilege;
2. How Trump Wins;

LIBERAL PRIVILEGE

A hallmark of the continuum of totalitarian government (liberalism-socialism-communism) is the privilege of the elite, those who govern through unilateral control and fundamentally believe that laws are designed to control the great unwashed masses who deserve to be governed by an enlightened elite.

Whether we are talking the bucolic dachas of the Soviet Union, the tricked-out BMWs owned by the North Korean apparatchiks, or the gun toting security details of liberal politicians who despise private gun ownership, the cornerstone creed of these ruling elites is “Rules for thee, not for me.”

Such is the state of affairs in pandemic America, where the rule of law has been severely curtailed in the name of public safety, a universal and timeless excuse for government power grabs.

Across the Union, and in Minnesota, chief executives at the state and local level have imposed a form of martial law, imposing by fiat laws that were crafted in the total absence of legislative consideration and approval.

Witness Governor Tim Jong Walz ruling by fiat for over 170 days thus far, churning out over 80 executive orders under the auspices of a “peacetime emergency.”

Thus, it should be no surprise that this giant leap forward towards unaccountable government should be accompanied by an increase in brazen incidents of liberal privilege exercised by ruling elites.

While examples of this appalling and shameless behavior abound, three examples stand out.

The latest is House Speaker Nancy Pelosi getting busted for a hair coiffing in blatant violation of San Francisco’s strict prohibition against indoor appointments.

Laughably, Pelosi took no responsibility and showed no remorse for her liberal privilege, claiming that she didn’t know the rules and further blamed the salon owner for a “set up.”

While the substance of the privilege is minor, the principle is enormous.

Contrary to her lame excuse, she simply felt entitled to an activity denied to others.

She felt no compunction about living differently – and better – than people she claims to represent.

Example number two comes from the failed rat hole of Chicago, Illinois.

There, liberal mayor Lori Lightfoot, a staunch opponent of gun ownership, ordered law enforcement to establish a “no go” zone around her home, prohibiting entrance by the general public for any reason, including protests and marches.

The mayor who tolerates looting, rioting, and marching on the property of others refuses to tolerate it on her own property.

Like Pelosi, Lightfoot has absolutely no shame in claiming the privilege while thousands of her constituents suffer the lawlessness that shows the final failure of liberal governance.

And then there’s our home city, Minneapolis.

In the midst of the rioting and lawlessness that burned the city to the ground, we learned that some city council members somehow availed themselves of a private

security detail - at taxpayer expense.

Think about that. At the same time thousands of Minneapolis residents were left to the mercy of a violent mob, three council members gave themselves the security and peace of mind that comes with a security detail.

Four legs good, two legs better!

HOW TRUMP WINS

Despite DFL protestations to the contrary, there is no doubt that Minnesota is in play this year.

In politics, as in life, all you need to do is follow the money.

Both presidential campaigns are investing significant resources in Minnesota and that's all you need to know to confirm the hypothesis.

If Trump wins Minnesota this year, it is likely that these 5 factors fell in his favor.

One: Resources. Trump nearly won Minnesota in 2016 with no meaningful presence in the state. There was one staffer on the ground, who was sent to Colorado in early October.

This cycle, the Trump campaign is investing in Minnesota in a way no GOP presidential campaign has ever has.

Since early this year, the campaign has had field staff on the ground, running voter outreach programs, getting lawn signs installed, and coordinating with other GOP campaigns.

Today, there are about 80 of these full-time campaign veterans on the ground.

Millions of voter contacts have happened and thousands of lawn signs are out the door.

Sources tell the Watchdog that the campaign may spend upwards of \$80 million by Election Day.

Two: The Pennsylvania plan worked. It's not much of a secret that the Minnesota 2020 plan is built on the Pennsylvania 2016 plan. Simply put, the idea is to jack up turnout in Greater Minnesota while minimizing losses in the Metro. This plan is a departure from the traditional GOP template that Romney used in losing in 2012. That is, make the primary campaign strategy one of persuading moderate suburban voters.

The plan is a smart one as Minnesota has a large number of rural voters who fit the

profile of a Trump voter. Moreover, the GOP is also pouring resources into the state's three rural congressional districts. In fact, two of the three (1st and 7th) are targeted by the national party (1st hold and 7th pick up).

In the 8th District, Pete Stauber is poised to become the first Republican re-elected in NE Minnesota in 70 years.

In the 7th, Michelle Fischbach is a tier one candidate who has a great chance to flip the seat and send Colin Peterson packing.

In the 1st, incumbent Jim Hagedorn is facing a stiff challenge and is getting resources to help hold the seat.

All this activity will maximize Republican turnout where they want it.

Three: Party unity. In 2016, Trump won despite a bruising and draining primary that divided the party. This year, there is near universal unity, given that the choice is simply the policies of Trump or the policies of hidin' Biden.

All resources expended by the Trump campaign have been strictly focused on winning the general election.

This development should provide a boost to Trump, especially in Minnesota, where nearly 150,000 voters in 2016 voted for either Johnson or McMullin. If those voters come home to Trump, that could provide the margin of victory.

Four: Is Biden Hillary or Barack? 2016 wasn't as much about Trump as it was about Hillary. While Trump ran about even with Romney's 2012 numbers, Clinton vastly underperformed Obama.

In other words, Trump didn't jam in 2016 in Minnesota. Instead, Hillary was awful.

Can Biden boost the 2016 turnout? That remains to be seen. While Biden isn't as reviled as Clinton (who is?), he still is seen as an establishment candidate and that may turn off the Bernie Bros and others who want to see full on communism.

Moreover, questions about Biden's mental competence remain, despite what the media chooses to ignore.

If Biden continues to look feeble, incoherent, and irritable, he may lose voters who would otherwise be in his camp.

Five: The riots. There is no question that the riots are hurting Democrats. The Watchdog has spoken with DFL sources this week who confirm it. This is why we are seeing condemnation of the violence in way we didn't before.

The real question is how long-lasting the damage is. Is the damage temporary, a fleeting blip from the summer? Or has the violence moved votes similar to the disastrous Wellstone memorial?

While the Wellstone event was close to Election Day, Minnesota also didn't have early voting the way we do this year.

With absentee ballot requests being fulfilled soon, mid-summer events are now influencing votes in way they never had before.

Thousands of Minnesotans will soon cast their ballot for the November election.

September 18th, 2020

Quote of the Week: "If you're able to, chip in now to the [@MNFreedomFund](#) to help post bail for those protesting on the ground in Minnesota."

- Kamala Harris

Quote of the Week: "You know, putting a national lockdown, stay at home orders, is like house arrest. Other than slavery, which was a different kind of restraint, this is the greatest intrusion on civil liberties in American history."

- Attorney General William Barr

Quote of the Week: "The destruction of property in the civil unrest was not positive."

- Governor Tim Walz

In This Issue:

1. Memory Lane;
2. Voting in 2020;
3. Freeing Criminals;

MEMORY LANE

It's important to recall recent history, as the Left and their co-conspirators in the media regularly lie, have the lie disproven, and then simply move on to the next lie.

Don't believe it? Let's take a trip down memory lane.

Remember when both KSTP and the Star Tribune published polls in mid-September 2016 that showed Hillary Clinton with a six-point lead in Minnesota? Those are called suppression polls, designed to discourage Republicans from voting.

Remember when the big criticism of the president was over ventilators? The lack of ventilators was going to result in thousands dying in the hallways of overflowing hospitals, with "death panels" deciding who got a ventilator and who didn't. In other words, who would live and who would die.

Remember when the big criticism was over PPE (personal protective equipment), and front-line workers would be needlessly exposed to COVID?

Remember when, here in Minnesota, the governor was using martial law powers only to “flatten the curve” and preserve hospital resources?

Remember when, even with draconian lockdowns, 22,000 Minnesotans would die from COVID?

Remember when 3,000 ICU beds would be occupied in Minnesota?

Remember when Tim Jong Walz spent \$7 million to buy a 71,000 square foot warehouse to store bodies?

Remember when Tim Jong Walz unveiled his “dashboard” of dials and needles to tell us about regaining our freedom?

Remember when the goal in Minnesota was 20,000 daily COVID tests?

Remember when the riots were “mostly peaceful” protests?

Remember when the president colluded with Russia to steal the 2016 election?

Remember when the Steele dossier was considered a legitimate document?

Remember when most media outlets at least pretended to be objective?

Remember when Joe Biden supported NAFTA?

Remember when Joe Biden supported the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal?

Remember when Joe Biden blasted Donald Trump for suspended travel from China?

Remember when the Democrat party wasn't filled with Anti-Semites?

Above all, remember in November!

VOTING IN 2020

With early in-person voting starting, recall there are essentially three ways to vote in Minnesota.

First, you can vote in person at your regular polling location on Election Day, November 3rd.

Note that it will be very important this year to check your polling location as it may

have changed.

For example, some polling locations used to be in or near nursing homes and were moved to reduce exposure for residents of those locations.

You can find your polling location here: <https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>

Second, Minnesotans can vote in-person starting today, September 18th.

Note that polling locations for early voting are different than the regular polling location on Election Day.

Voters can vote early at their county election office, usually located in the county courthouse.

Moreover, some cities and towns offer early voting polling locations. Call your city/township or check their web site for information.

Here's some more information on early, in-person voting:

For most elections, absentee voting locations must be open during their normal business hours starting 46 days before the election. In addition, locations offering absentee ballots for federal, state or county elections must be open:

- The last Saturday before Election Day (10 a.m. — 3 p.m.);
- The day before Election Day until 5 p.m.;

This does not apply to school districts holding standalone elections.

Some local jurisdictions may provide additional absentee voting days or hours beyond the above required days and times. Call your jurisdiction for more information.

Finally, Minnesotans can vote by mail by requesting an absentee ballot.

Note that any eligible voter can vote absentee without needing to provide a reason for doing so.

Also note that “absentee voting” is not “vote by mail.”

The voter must proactively request their absentee ballot.

You can request your ballot here:

<https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/other-ways-to-vote/vote-early-by-mail/>

Vote, Watchdogs!

FREEING CRIMINALS

After the focus groups and internal polling told Democrats that they had to start condemning the rioting and lawlessness that they had previously celebrated, the paper trail left on the Internet makes it difficult for these pols, including Kamala Harris, to change their tunes.

It has come to light that the Minnesota Freedom Fund, a fund organized to bail people out of jail, has been freeing some pretty vile people who shouldn't be on the streets.

This fund has been promoted by Kamala Harris and a bevy of virtue signaling Hollywood types.

In addition, at least 13 Hidin' Biden staffers have claimed they have contributed to the fund.

So, who are some of the good, "mostly peaceful" folks who have been sprung by the fund?

Timothy Wayne Columbus is a registered sex offender. He was bailed out in July. He is currently facing charges of raping an 8-year-old girl.

Richard Kelly is facing charges of burglary and first-degree assault for breaking into his mother's home and savaging beating her over a number of hours, including taping her wrists and ankles before he beat her. He was bailed out by the fund on August 10th.

Deshaun Boyd was freed on \$70,000 bail in July. He has since pleaded guilty to felony first degree aggravated robbery for robbing an elderly man who used a cane. Boyd and an accomplice savagely beat the victim, including "curb stomping" his head.

Boyd faces up to 20 years in prison.

Chris Boswell is a rapist. MFF paid \$35,000 in cash to bail out Boswell, who is a twice-convicted rapist. Boswell also is currently charged with sexual assault, assault and kidnapping in two separate cases.

Jaleel Stallings. MFF paid \$75,000 to bail out Stallings, who shot at a SWAT Team during May riots with a modified pistol. He was charged with attempted murder.

These are just a sampling of the winners MFF has put back on the streets.

This is today's Democrat. This is the Harris-Biden ticket.

September 25th, 2020

Quote of the Week: *“My decision regarding a Supreme Court nomination is not the result of a subjective test of ‘fairness’ which, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. It is based on the immutable fairness of following the law, which in this case is the Constitution and precedent. The historical precedent of election year nominations is that the Senate generally does not confirm an opposing party’s nominee but does confirm a nominee of its own.*

“The Constitution gives the President the power to nominate and the Senate the authority to provide advice and consent on Supreme Court nominees. Accordingly, I intend to follow the Constitution and precedent in considering the President’s nominee. If the nominee reaches the Senate floor, I intend to vote based upon their qualifications.”

- Senator Mitt Romney (R-UT)

In This Issue:

1. Supreme Court Pearl Clutching.

SUPREME COURT PEARL CLUTCHING

Man, the wailing and gnashing of teeth and pearl clutching coming from the Left (when they aren’t busy burning down America) is something to behold.

Frankly, is both laughable and disgusting at the same time.

The current Supreme Court vacancy has crystalized the difference between the two major parties and their candidates for president and the U.S. Senate.

Here are the Watchdog’s five big takeaways from this “October Surprise” that came just a bit early this election year.

Truly, it’s a shocker and a bombshell, in the words of one Mean Gene Okerlund.

One: Elections Matter/Trump Matters.

Let’s recall the importance of the presidency, and this president, the next time idiots from the Lincoln Project and other Never Trumpers tell conservatives to vote for the liberal, incoherent, entrenched careerist Joe Biden.

Donald Trump has delivered two new justices to the Supreme Court and will soon

deliver a third.

While Hidin' Joe Biden is too embarrassed to release a short list of people he would nominate to the Court, you can rest assured names like Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, Barrett, Cruz, Hardiman, Thapar, and Lagoa aren't on that list.

Moreover, Justice Breyer is 82 and two others are over 70 (Thomas and Alito).

The odds of the next president appointing at least one justice is quite good.

So, while many of us can agree that we don't like the president's style, which is often beneath the dignity of the office, that's no reason to install Joe Biden and Kamala Harris in the White House.

Moreover, President Trump, for his personal flaws, has demonstrated rock solid, courageous leadership during his term.

In fact, the Democrats have been on their heels for three years simply because they've never encountered a Republican who is their equal with respect to political street fighting.

It's no certain thing that a different Republican president would have so resolutely declared that a justice would be nominated and confirmed in this environment.

Simply put, Trump has got some real stones and perhaps that exactly what Republicans need.

For many years, the GOP was a permanent minority in Washington, willing to defer to Democrats and settle for the policy crumbs thrown their way.

So, if you're thinking that you might vote for Sleepy Joe because he more stylistically your person, remember this fight.

Two: Democrats Don't Care About Tradition or Rules.

It's comical to watch none other than Sen. Chuck Schumer appeal to tradition and institutionalism in the name of deferring this nomination to the next president.

This is nothing more than raw power. Schumer and pals want a chance to install the justice of *their* choice, not the one of Trump's choice.

If the roles were reversed, Schumer would plow ahead with nary a pang of apprehension.

The elimination of the filibuster for lower level federal judges under the last Democrat majority proves it.

The same holds true regarding the Democrats trying to hold other democratic institutions hostage to blackmail Republicans into deferring to the next Congress.

Since long before Justice Ginsburg passed, Democrat opinion leaders have been calling for the elimination of the Electoral College, the abolition of the filibuster in all cases, packing the Supreme Court, and creating additional states simply to add Senate seats and tip the balance of power.

Kudos to President Trump and Senate Republican leaders who refuse to cave to these vile threats to long-standing institutions.

But rest assured, the ruthless and nihilistic nature of Senate Democrats will be on full display when hearings are held on the next nominee.

The appalling and unrestrained attack on Judge Kavanaugh laid bare the one and only touchstone of Democrat rule: power.

Three: The Constitution is Clear.

The text of the Constitution is clear and unambiguous regarding the appointment of justices to the High Court.

Article II, Section 2 states:

*He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and **he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.***

There is absolutely no qualification on the president's power to nominate. For example, this power isn't suspended during the last weeks or months of his term. It isn't subject to subjective notions of "fairness" as explained by people who have no real understanding of the Constitution or the law.

The same holds true of the Senate's Advice and Consent role.

Of course, much has been made of the so-called "Biden rule" that allegedly prohibits the Senate from considering a Supreme Court nomination during a presidential election year.

First, one can argue that the "rule" only applies when the Senate and White House are controlled by opposite parties.

Second, history indeed shows that on many occasions, a president has nominated and the Senate has concurred in the appointment of justices to the Supreme Court.

Finally, rules can be amended or abolished at any time. There is nothing sacrosanct about this “rule”, especially when Democrats so recently vaporized the filibuster rule for federal judges of inferior courts.

They truly made a bed in which they now lay.

Four: The Supreme Court is a Tragedy.

Now here us out, before you deem the language too harsh.

The tragedy is that the Supreme Court has become so central to American life, the country loses its collective mind when there is a vacancy.

Millions are poured into PR campaigns for or against a nominee.

The nominee and their family are subject to smear campaigns and harassment over alleged high school infractions.

Secret Service details are assigned to Judiciary Committee members because of death threats.

You can thank the Democrats and the Left for this state of affairs.

For decades, they have encouraged, cheered, and taken victory laps as the Court became highly activist, reordering American life in wholesale fashion at the stroke of a pen.

They celebrated the idea that 5 unelected people sat as a super-legislature, taking control of issues, particularly social issues that were once the jurisdiction of 50 state legislatures, all popularly elected.

The Court frequently did so by inventing and making up constitutional rights that were nowhere to be found in the text of the document or the historical deliberations of the Framers.

These “rights” are said to “emanate” from the text or exist in “penumbras” that cannot be seen in any plain reading.

A prime example of such unrestrained judicial activism is *Roe vs. Wade*.

No reasonable person can find the right to an abortion in the text of the Constitution.

Moreover, there isn't a shred of historical evidence that the Framers intended to protect abortion as a federal constitutional right.

Now we get the circus we have today, which is nothing but toxic to our society and our political institutions.

Five: The Legend of RBG is Bigger Than the Truth.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg lived a life that in many respects is to be admired.

She blazed a trail for women in the legal profession, to be sure. She broke barriers at a time when women weren't viewed as professional equals.

That aspect of her life is rightly celebrated.

Having said that, she spent 27 years on the High Court, leaving no real legacy as a jurist.

Americans would be hard pressed to name cases she authored that were of any real consequence, other than perhaps *United States vs. Virginia* (1996).

Her judicial philosophy was difficult to discern and certainly wasn't influential among her colleagues.

Moreover, many have argued, including opinion leaders on the Left, that her tenure on the Court is blemished by a selfishness that harmed the institution.

She remained on the Court long after being productive and engaged, they argue.

They say this view is ironically captured by her alleged "dying wish" that her seat remain unfilled until after the election.

This publication agrees that the seat isn't hers to control. In addition, there is no "dying wish" clause in the Constitution that excuses either the President or the Senate from fulfilling their duty to nominate and appoint.

The Court begins a new term soon and needs a full compliment.

We also can't discount the possibility of a contested presidential election that may require a full compliment to dispose of serious legal issues.

This seat must be filled without delay.

The president is right and the Left is wrong.

Enjoy the process you've created, Democrats.

October 2nd, 2020

Quote of the Week: “It was the least enlightening, edifying or elevating presidential debate in U.S. history.”

- Karl Rove

Quote of the Week: “The president depressed everybody, even his own supporters, by acting like a bullying nut. He left people anguished about the future of the country. By the time it was over people were thinking, deep down: The incumbent is an incompetent who’s out of his mind, and the challenger is a befuddled man who struggles to carry a public thought to its conclusion, and who can’t tell you what he’ll do in part because he doesn’t want to and in part because he doesn’t really know.”

- Peggy Noonan

In This Issue:

1. The Circus;
2. No Confidence.

THE CIRCUS

Well, that sucked. The first presidential debate of the election cycle was neither presidential nor a debate.

The big idea, allegedly, is to allow each candidate to make a case to the American people why they should be elected to the highest office in the land through a civil exchange of ideas and the give and take of examining those ideas through a normal, adversarial process.

It’s not supposed to be the Thunderdome or the UFC Octagon or the Roman Colosseum.

Instead of Lincoln-Douglas, the night resembled two old men fighting over the television remote at the Springfield Retirement Castle.

Anyone who thought that either candidate “won” the debate is hopelessly blinded by partisanship.

Joe Biden was exactly who we thought he was.

He was somewhat coherent, mostly not, and unable and/or unwilling to tell the American people exactly where he stands on critical issues.

Viewers were subjected to sophomoric bromides about “bringing people together” and making it about “your family, not mine.”

Biden reminded this publication of some sort of elderly, peevish doll where you pull the string and it randomly spouts a slogan. “Pay your fair share!” “I’ve got a plan.” “I hear a dog whistle!”

What was worse, Donald Trump displayed an utter inability to take advantage of his incompetent opponent.

The president missed opportunity after opportunity to press the advantage by comparing and contrasting records and ideas.

Instead, the president made a spectacle of himself by constantly interrupting both Biden and Chris Wallace and coming off as a complete jerk.

“Jerk” is hardly the description you want to impress on the voting populace when you’re looking for 270 electoral votes.

For example, there was no mention of Biden’s support of trade deals that hallowed out our manufacturing base and wiped out towns across America. You know, one of the things that got Trump elected in the first place.

Instead, there was an obsessive fixation on Hunter Biden getting a loan from some Russian.

What was worse, however, was Trump saving Biden by interrupting when Biden was stumbling over tough questions or having no good answer for important issues.

Trump would be well served to agree to a mute button at the next debate.

If this is what we can expect from both candidates moving forward, just cancel the debates and allow Americans to morosely go to the polls and pick one of these people.

There is no question that Donald Trump has the better ideas and the better record.

But delivering them in a vessel of undisciplined, uncontrolled rage crushes the message and negatively reflects on the messenger.

If the president reads this commentary, we advise spending some time watching Ronald Reagan.

The Happy Warrior was a sterling messenger of the conservative viewpoint.

People want to vote their hopes and dreams. It's not a trite slogan.

Trump is on a path to defeat. That trajectory needs to change.

This disaster didn't help.

NO CONFIDENCE

The downward trajectory of our political discourse has been led by the mainstream media, which has suffered from the twin cancers of blatant bias and the disappearance of professionalism in the craft.

The loss of credibility and respect is starting to show up polling, which paints a grim picture for the editor's office in any newspaper or television.

A recent Gallup poll asked Americans to respond to the following question: *In general, how much trust and confidence do you have in the mass media -- such as newspapers, TV and radio -- when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately and fairly?*

A whopping 60%, a clear majority, responded that they have "not very much trust" or "none at all."

Among Republicans, the numbers are even worse.

Only 3% have "a great deal of trust" in the mainstream media.

7% have a "fair amount" of trust.

The other 90% have "not very much trust" or "none at all."

Of course, the mainstream media is in denial, and will blame large sections of the populace for being too ignorant to understand the value, integrity, and genius of the media.

It's similar to the arrogance of the education unions, who refuse to concede that they have lost credibility with the average American and instead blame everything but their "all pay, no accountability" attitude.

We've come a long way since Walter Cronkite.

We're now stuck with political shills seeking celebrity with people like CNN's Jim Acosta reveling in attacking the president and others like Don Lemon acting as a mouthpiece for the Left.

Quality, objective journalism is healthy for our Republic.

Barring that, the next best option is depriving the media of their cloak of objectivism, so their propaganda can be exposed for what it is.

The reality is that most Americans no longer get their news from these corrupted outlets, so it doesn't matter too much.

For any reader who can remember the days of people like Cronkite, Donaldson, and Woodruff, it's a stunning fall from grace.

October 9th, 2020

Quote of the Week: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself"

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1933

Quote of the Week: "Don't be afraid of Covid. Don't let it dominate your life."

- President Donald J. Trump, 10/6/20

Quote of the Week: "It's imperative that we have the tools necessary to respond to this public health emergency and protect the health and wellbeing of each and every Minnesotan. This emergency is not over."

- Governor Tim Walz

In This Issue:

1. Martial Law;
2. Irony;
3. Fear.

MARTIAL LAW

Governor Walz will bring the legislature into special session for the fifth time since the May 2020 adjournment of the regular session.

Again, the purpose of the special session is to allow the legislature the opportunity to vote down this extension of emergency, unilateral powers.

Recall that the statute granting these powers, which is unconstitutional for a variety of reasons, has a goofy "legislative veto" that allows for the extension unless both houses of the legislature affirmatively vote to deny the extension. Every time, the Senate has voted down the extension of the emergency while the House has abdicated its core constitutional obligations and acquiesced to the de facto imposition of martial law in Minnesota.

The governor claims he needs to act in unilateral fashion because he simply can't get laws passed through the legislature.

What's interesting about the claim is that he has signed 66 bills into law since he first declared these unilateral powers on March 16th, 2020.

Moreover, many of these laws deal specifically with COVID-related issues and, in fact, some outright codify aspects of the executive orders.

Put another way, there is ample evidence that the governor can work with the legislature to pass laws in the constitutionally mandated manner and meet the needs of the state regarding the virus.

This evidence clearly demonstrates that the governor is simply engaged in a power grab that relieves him of the inconvenience of dealing with the legislature while also eliminating the need to compromise and bargain, features of democratic government.

Unilateral decision making of the kind we have seen over the past seven months is reminiscent not of democratic government but of authoritarian government.

It's obvious that the only way these powers will be relinquished is either through an election outcome in November that delivers pro-democratic Republican majorities in both the House and Senate, or the other outcome is that the judicial branch nullifies the law as an unconstitutional delegation of the legislative function to a separate coordinate branch of government.

It is basic constitutional jurisprudence, called the Non-Delegation Doctrine, that one branch of government cannot give away its inherent powers to another branch.

This doctrine upholds a core aspect of republican government that the power of the sovereign should be subject to a system of checks and balances that prevent tyranny and uphold the rule of law.

The Minnesota Legislature doesn't have the authority to give away the law-making function to law-making by executive order and certainly not for months on end with no end in sight.

This is precisely the ruling of the Michigan Supreme Court that recently ended the unilateral law-making of another Democrat governor.

What a truly disgusting mess.

IRONY

The unilateral law-making of Governor Walz claims another victim.

That victim is Bethesda Hospital in Saint Paul.

How ironic that this hospital is the state's designated COVID care site, caring for the those most impacted by the virus, primarily elderly Minnesotans infected through yet a different Walz policy negatively impacting people.

The hospital has announced that it and another hospital will close, thereby reducing the very hospital capacity we were told needed to be conserved, providing the pretext for those same unilateral powers.

So, we need to shut down the state to preserve health care resources, while those resources are being reduced by the laws designed to preserve them.

During the battle of Hue in Vietnam (1968), an American commander ironically noted that the city had to be destroyed in order to save it, a quote that came to define the illogical and somewhat insane saga that the war had become.

Bethesda Hospital is Minnesota's Hue.

Walz must destroy healthcare resources in order to preserve them.

FEAR

The last three years have clearly demonstrated that anti-Trump forces will go to any length in their attempt to destroy the man.

While the Russia hoax will soon prove to be the most poisonous effort (because it is the most treasonous), the hysterical castigating of the president over his recent COVID comments are also emblematic of Trump Derangement Syndrome.

After being released from Walter Reed military hospital in great health despite testing positive for COVID, the president tweeted out words of optimism and encouragement, proclaiming that Americans shouldn't live in fear of COVID.

Predictably, the commentariat went bonkers, claiming that Trump was downplaying the seriousness of the virus and even disrespecting those harmed by it.

What a bunch of total BS.

Was FDR downplaying the Great Depression when he uttered his famous "fear" quote? Was he showing disrespect for those who had lost everything in the crash?

Was FDR doing the same when he optimistically said that America would defeat the twin evils of Nazism and Imperialism. Disrespecting those who died in combat?

Of course not. It is a core duty of the president to offer the nation optimism and comfort when the chips are down.

Every president has done it, regardless of the situation.

Trump is rightly panned for often failing to act presidential.

Here, he fulfills a basic function of the office and the Left immediately pounces.

Donald J. Trump is truly in a “damned if you do, damned if you don’t” situation.

The Left has clearly lost it.

October 23rd, 2020

Quote of the Week: “For nearly a week at the end of May, Minnesotans watched in horror each night as Minneapolis descended further into chaos. They were begging for leadership that took far too long to arrive — an unacceptable reality that must be addressed and fixed.”

- Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka (R-East Gull Lake)

Quote of the Week: “Northstar, even on its best days, was under duress. Now it’s close to bleeding out.”

- Anoka County Commissioner Matt Look

Factoid of the week: In their final Minnesota poll (conducted 10/22/16), KSTP/Survey USA had Hillary Clinton beating Donald Trump by 10 points in the state.

Factoid of the Week: In their final Minnesota poll (conducted 10/20/16), the Star Tribune had Hillary Clinton beating Donald Trump by 8 points in the state.

Factoid of the Week: On Election Day, Hillary Clinton won Minnesota by 1.5 points.

In This Issue:

1. Hard to be Right;
2. A Silver Lining.

HARD TO BE RIGHT

Pop quiz: what public policy issue caused Harold Hamilton, way back in 2005, to start a weekly commentary entitled, “The Anoka County Watchdog?”

Long-time readers know that the failed Northstar commuter rail line is the answer.

Harold thought back then that the line would be a disaster.

And he was right.

The latest ridership numbers from the line are downright appalling.

Ridership is down a whopping 95%!

While there is some dispute regarding the precise number, the average passenger subsidy is somewhere between \$445 and \$794.

These brutal numbers are even causing the unaccountable, utopian bureaucrats to rethink the line's future.

Of course, the governor's response to COVID-19 has greatly exacerbated these problems. That can't be denied.

Having said that, this situation has only reminded taxpayers that the line was a debacle to start.

Recall that Northstar has never, ever, met ridership projections. The projections were a lie and a scam from the start, designed only to fool citizens into supporting the project.

Readers of this publication clearly recall boosters telling them that "the studies" all supported Northstar from a fiscal and transportation perspective.

Readers also know that these studies were never produced for their scrutiny.

Second, Northstar rail has always been the most highly subsidized mass transit line on the Met Council's system. It's been a money pit since day one.

This is all because of two fatal flaws.

First, commuter rail running through far exurban counties was always a bad idea. The population density needed for rail to be successful simply isn't present along the line.

A romantic vision of trains and the insatiable need of certain elected officials to be different and have a shiny new toy different from what the other kids had.

Second, rail is inferior to busses for a variety of reasons that are haunting the line, especially in a pandemic.

Rail, by definition, is on a fixed guideway incapable of easy realignment. You pick your line and the die is cast. With busses, lines can be easily re-routed to adapt to changing commuter patterns and tastes.

Next, rail has overhead that can't be easily dealt with. The locomotives and passenger cars are grossly expensive to own and operate.

Also, rail has to share the crowded rail lines with freight trains, owned by the same

people who own the line. Timetables are far less flexible and thus less accommodating to customers.

Finally, let's all remember another lie about Northstar that continues to make the rounds and will continue to do so.

Legislators, are you listening?

Northstar rail wasn't originally planned to end in Saint Cloud as its western terminus. The line was slated to end in Rice, Minnesota, population 1,400.

Second, the line wasn't stopped in Big Lake because funding ran out.

The line was dropped at Big Lake because running the line beyond that point caused the ridership, time to travel, and other crucial Federal Transit Administration metrics to fall below required minimums, which would have denied federal funding and killed the line.

The plan for Northstar boosters was always to take what they could get and then come back to the public trough later on.

This is precisely what happened with the Fridley station, which was the same situation. Building it would have caused problems with the FTA metrics, so they ditched the stop early on and then came back later.

Don't let anyone, especially a politician, propagate the lie that the line should have gone to Saint Cloud but didn't only because of federal funding.

Northstar is a horrible white elephant.

The Watchdog takes no pleasure in saying, "I told you so."

Actually, we do. We will be holding a ticker tape parade in Anoka County the day the line is shut down.

Former commissioner Dan Erhart will be the invited grand marshal.

All Anoka County politicians who voted for the debacle will be invited special guests, especially the Republicans who defied their party platform and the wishes of their delegates.

Throwing good money after bad is never a good idea.

A SILVER LINING

There is no question that the virus and the government response thereto has been a tragedy.

The pain and dislocation felt by millions of people is real.

Having said that, there have been some silver linings that have come about that will serve people better.

One of those silver linings is school choice.

The government's horrific decision to deny children the ability to learn in person and confer the benefits of "community" that happen when students are present in the classroom on a daily basis has caused parents to examine what government schools have to offer compared to what other types of schools have to offer.

The numbers are starting to show up.

All over Minnesota, kindergarten enrollment is down by double digits in many government school districts.

On the other hand, private schools are seeing corresponding enrollment increases, along with other education platforms, such as "learning pods."

Perhaps this tragedy will help more parents see that competition in education, like any other market, benefits the consumer.

The government monopoly over schools is an anachronism that should be eliminated.

School choice benefits students – all of them.

The challenge will be to also make sure that all students, especially impoverished ones, are offered choice.

The Education-Industrial Complex, which has never helped these students, will want to sentence them to failing schools regardless.

Truly, no child should be left behind and none sentenced to a school that fails them.

October 30, 2020

Quote of the Week: “There was no other reason for me to be in that bar meeting Joe Biden than to discuss what I was doing with his family’s name and the Chinese CEFC.”

- Biden associate Tony Bobulinski

Factoid of the Week: Clinton 49 – Trump 39. Clinton +10.

- KSTP/Survey USA poll 10/25/16

Factoid of the Week: Biden 47 – Trump 42. Biden +5.

- KSTP/Survey USA poll 10/29/20

In This Issue:

1. The Bitter End;
2. Races to Watch;
3. Follow the Money.

THE BITTER END

Here we are, loyal readers. This is the last edition prior to Election Day 2020, marking the end of a seemingly endless campaign. No more texts. No more lawn signs. No more mail pieces.

Will it mark the end of the election? We don’t know, as the talking heads and other self-appointed “opinion leaders” are preparing us for an outcome that may not be known for days or weeks. These “experts” tell us that days or weeks of delay are “normal” and “to be expected.”

Yeah, right. The obsession with open-ended, standardless mail balloting dictated by fiat instead of legislating raises the dangerous specter of one candidate winning on election night, only to become a loser days or weeks later after all the late-arriving mail ballots show up.

Think it can’t happen?

In 2018, seven (seven!) congressional seats in California were won by Republicans on election night, only to be overturned weeks later, resulting in a Democrat win.

In any case, millions of you have already voted, some regretting that vote as new allegations have come to light that demonstrate the extent to which the Biden family monetized Sleepy Joe's election certificates.

For those who have yet to vote, remember that you can vote early, in person or by mail, or in person next Tuesday.

For those voting by mail, be careful about timelines. Remember that you can hand carry your absentee ballot to your local election authority.

For assistance with casting your ballot, check this web site:

<https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/>

The Watchdog isn't into making predictions about elections, other than this one: Republicans will outperform the polls, which have unsurprisingly predicted DFL victories across the board.

RACES TO WATCH

As mentioned, this publication won't make predictions, but we will be paying attention to certain legislative races that we believe will provide clues as to how the night will turn out here in Minnesota.

In no particular order:

SENATE DISTRICT 56

This district in the South Metro, centered on Burnsville, Savage, and parts of Lakeville. The seat is held by the GOP and needed by the DFL if they are to take the majority. The district has always been a bit of swing district. The outcome of this election will tell us much about the Metro. If the GOP holds, good news for them and bad news for the DFL.

HOUSE DISTRICT 39B

This eastern Washington County district has historically been Republican and is one the district the DFL flipped in 2018, thanks to both the general atmospheric and a GOP incumbent who ran a poor campaign. The district leans GOP and needs to be a pick-up if the GOP wants to regain the majority.

HOUSE DISTRICT 5A

This strangely configured district encompasses the City of Bemidji and jogs its way east through Itasca County. It has been traditionally a swing area that has started to trend GOP, like much of the Eighth Congressional District. The GOP lost the

district in 2018 by the slimmest of margins and has high hopes of regaining it. Trump won District 5A by 12 points in 2016.

SENATE DISTRICT 27

District 27 runs along the Minnesota-Iowa border, centered on the cities of Albert Lea and Austin. Like other rural areas, this district was once deep blue but has trended red recently, with Donald Trump winning it by about 14 points in 2016. Incumbent DFLer Dan Sparks has won relatively easy races, but the GOP has targeted the district as a pick-up opportunity this time around.

HOUSE DISTRICT 37B

Representing the city of Blaine in Anoka County, this district is a true swing district that features close elections. Rep. Nolan West well represents this fact, having won in 2016 and 2018 by fewer than 200 votes each time. The outcome in 2020 will give us clues for the larger outcome.

SENATE DISTRICT 34

Represented by long-term GOP incumbent Warren Limmer, the district is heavily targeted by the DFL this year. Located in the Northwest Metro, running from Maple Grove north through Dayton, the district has been reliably Republican. Will it stay that way in 2020, or are things moving towards the DFL?

FOLLOW THE MONEY

Now that the Watchdog has weighed in, where do the political operatives think the close races lie?

Let's look at where the money is being spent by the GOP and their allies vis-à-vis the DFL and their allies. These are the top money races, in order (note that these will be Senate races as there are simply more people to cover compared to a House district):

District
Area
Status
DFL
GOP

34
Maple Grove, Dayton
GOP Held
\$1.137 million
\$611k

56
Burnsville, Savage
GOP Held

\$963k
\$461k

26
Rochester
GOP Held
\$1.038 million
\$283k

39
Stillwater, Forest Lake
GOP Held
\$929k
\$367k

14
Saint Cloud
GOP Held
\$704k
\$374k

25
Rochester
GOP Held
\$879k
\$90k

58
Lakeville, Farmington
DFL Held
\$557k
\$400k

27
Austin, Albert Lea
DFL Held
\$457k
\$273k

38
Lino Lakes, White Bear
GOP Held
\$580k
\$78k

20

LeSueur County
GOP Held
\$156k
\$442k

Overall, nearly \$24 million has been spent to influence legislative races here in Minnesota.

November 6, 2020

Quote of the Week: "If the pollsters get it wrong this time, they're done. The industry is done. The profession is done."

- Famed pollster Frank Luntz

Quote of the Week: "The House looks likely to see Republicans lose a few more seats on top of the 40 they dropped in 2018. If the over/under is 10 seats, I tend to come down on the higher side. The Senate is increasingly less a case of whether Democrats will take a majority, but how large will it be."

- Political "expert" Charlie Cook, 11/3/20

In This Issue:

1. They're Done;
2. Money Can't Buy Love – or Elections;
3. Splitting Votes.

THEY'RE DONE

One of the major takeaways from the 2020 election is that the political "experts" are done. They've killed their profession. Whether by calumny or incompetence, these people got it wrong – yet again, by making calls for a "blue wave" and boosting the prospects of Democrats that turned out to be either a big lie or an honest miscalculation by orders of magnitude.

This publication could fill many pages of commentary with the massive polling errors that prevailed during the campaign. Overall, the polls consistently showed Biden leading Trump in key battleground states. They were all wrong. While we don't know the outcome as of this writing, we do know that the pollsters have no credibility nor do the political talking heads who called this election for Biden and Team Socialism. They got it wrong on every level.

Consider the RealClear Politics polling average versus the results in select states:
Florida: RCP average of Biden +1. Result: Trump +3.5
Wisconsin: RCP average Biden +6.7. Result: Biden +0.7.
Iowa: RCP average Trump +0.2. Result: Trump +8.2.
Texas: RCP average Trump 1.3. Result Trump +5.8

Remember that these are polling averages. Many polls were downright ridiculous, such as the New York Times poll in very late October that showed Biden at +11 in Wisconsin.

In the Senate, the polling was just as bad.

In Maine, not ONE poll showed Republican Susan Collins ahead. The most recent poll in that state showed her opponent ahead +6. She won.

In North Carolina, not one recent poll showed Republican Thom Tillis with the lead. He is poised to win.

In Iowa, Republican Joni Ernst beat the RCP average by +5.2 to win re-election.

In the generic vote for Congress, once again, every poll had Democrats ahead, for an RCP average of +7. The pundits had Dems picking up between 5-15 seats.

The reality is that Republicans have gained at least six seats in the U.S. House and will likely pick up at least 10.

The media was even worse, clearly dropping all pretense of objectivity over the past four years in order to attack President Trump and Republicans. We have witnessed the death of polling, political commentary, and the legacy media, regardless of the presidential outcome.

MONEY CAN'T BUY LOVE – OR ELECTIONS

Ever increasing sums of money are spent on elections, but this cycle takes the cake.

Truly, the amount of money expended shocks the conscience. Of course, most of this money was spent by Democrats and their aligned partners in slime.

The amounts these groups spent in futility are amazing to behold and demonstrates the long-accepted economic principle of marginal value.

Consider the amounts of money spent in futility in MN and the country.

Democrats spent:

\$107 million to lose in SC (Senate seat)

\$88 million to lose in KY (Senate seat)

\$48 million to lose in ME (Senate seat)

\$47 million to lose in IA (Senate seat)

\$42 million to lose in MT (Senate seat)

\$24 million to lose TX (Senate seat)

Here in Minnesota, Democrats spent:

\$1.1 million to lose in SD 34
\$1 million to lose in SD 26
\$1 million to lose in SD 39
\$880,000 to lose in SD 25
\$580,000 to lose in SD 38

SPLITTING VOTES

One fascinating takeaway from election night is that voters in Minnesota and around the country split their tickets on a variety of issues and races.

Here in Minnesota, Joe Biden and Tina Smith delivered decisive victories for the DFL but there was no coattail benefit to Democrats down ballot.

Collin Peterson was ousted by 13 points in congressional district 7.

Jim Hagedorn won re-election in the First District.

The GOP held the state Senate.

The GOP made big gains in the House, and didn't see a single incumbent lose re-election while the GOP also held every open seat where a Republican retired.

In many critical races, Biden's margins didn't help the Democrat down ballot.

In SD 34, GOP senator Warren Limmer won by 2 points even though Biden carried the district by 8.

In Rochester, Sen. Carla Nelson won even though Biden won the district.

The same is true in SD 39, where Karin Housley won even though Biden carried her district by a narrow margin.

In New Hampshire, Biden carried the state while the state House and Senate were flipped to the GOP.

In Maine, Biden won comfortable while Republican senator Susan Collins won re-election is a surprise that no pundit saw.

In California, voters overwhelmingly went for Biden but rejected an affirmative action ballot initiative.

In Illinois, Biden won big but voters rejected an income tax increase.

In South Dakota, Trump and Republicans won while voters also approved a constitutional amendment to legalize marijuana for recreational use.

Perhaps the overall lesson here is that the nation fundamentally wants centrist government and the mixed verdicts are evidence of that.

November 13, 2020

Quote of the Week: "Will you pledge not to declare victory until the election is independently certified?" "Yes."

- Joe Biden replying to Chris Wallace in the first presidential debate

Quote of the Week: "Resources are hemorrhaging. Our city is bleeding at this moment. I'm trying to do all I can to stop that bleeding."

- Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo

In This Issue:

1. Bloody Minneapolis;
2. The Blue Trickle;
3. No Mandate.

BLOODY MINNEAPOLIS

Before we get to election analysis, we need to take a moment to rightly castigate the clowns on the Minneapolis City Council for failing to fulfill the first obligation of government: protection of life and property.

Since May, the city has been nothing short of a war zone, with civil unrest resulting in significant property destruction and assaults on the lives of innocent residents.

The city's response has been appalling. Instead of timely responding with a level of resources needed to guarantee public safety, city leaders muzzled law enforcement and led a rhetorical assault on them, with calls to defund and abolish the police department.

The logical result of this tragic comedy is a city on the brink. Lawlessness runs rampant, despite the cover-up from a complicit media that is loathe to embarrass progressive stars like Boy Mayor Jacob Frey.

So, what can be done?

Thankfully, Republicans retained control of the state Senate.

This means they have some control over the disposition of state aid that is dispensed to Minneapolis.

This aid, called Local Government Aid (LGA), is roughly \$80 million per year to the city.

Republicans should insist that LGA to Minneapolis be used only to support the police department.

For example, about 90% of the department's budget is for salaries and benefits. LGA could go to that purpose, and perhaps for equipment.

Moreover, maybe that \$80 million could first be dedicated to rebuilding the Third Precinct, abandoned to rioters and burned to the ground.

Another possibility is to simply zero out the city's LGA and let the city council figure it out.

The problem with directed LGA is that this money is fungible. State monies to the police department simply mean the city can spend resources elsewhere, wasted on diversity experts, sustainability coordinators, and climate crisis programs. In other words, we could see the unintended consequence of freeing the city from the financial obligation to fund public safety.

Let Governor Walz and the House DFL fight for the city's LGA loot. Make them buy it in budget negotiations.

Zeroing out Minneapolis LGA would send a powerful message on behalf of the millions of taxpayers who are disgusted by the city's actions and attempts to mimic Portland.

Doing otherwise is a classic example of rewarding bad behavior.

THE BLUE TRICKLE

Last week, this publication engaged in round one of election analysis.

Today is part II.

The theme is that despite the predictions from “experts,” there was no blue wave this year.

It was more like a blue trickle.

Despite spending hundreds of millions of dollars, democrats and their Leftist allies were rebuffed at nearly every turn, with the presidency being the only notable exception (probably).

It appears quite likely that the U.S. Senate will remain in GOP hands. The current split is 50-48, with two seats, both in Georgia, heading for a January 5th runoff.

If the GOP retains at least one seat, it will be only the third time since 1914 (the first year of direct Senate elections) that the American people elected a president of one party and vested control of the Senate in the other.

In the U.S. House, it appears that Republicans will gain at least 10 seats, giving the Democrats their narrowest majority since World War II.

In fact, it looks likely that every single incumbent House Republican will win.

At the gubernatorial level, Republicans saw a net gain of one, picking up Montana and retaining all other incumbents (UT, ND, MO, IN, WV, NH, VT).

At the state level, things weren't any better for the Dems.

Despite spending over \$500 million, they failed to flip a single house.

In fact, Republicans were successful in not only protecting all incumbent governors and their legislative majorities, but they also flipped the governorship of Montana and both legislative chambers in New Hampshire.

NO MANDATE

One of the most interesting data points from 2020 exit polling is that a majority (about 52%, depending upon the poll) of Biden voters characterized their choice as “against Trump” and not “for Biden.”

While the outcome remains in some doubt, it appears that Joe Biden will be the next president.

Good luck with that.

Half your supporters didn't really support you; they just didn't like your opponent.

71 million Americans voted for your opponent and many of them think fraud influenced the outcome.

It's likely voters gave a Senate majority to the GOP, putting up a major obstacle to your agenda.

In the House, it appears that Democrats will have their smallest majority since World War II, leaving very little room to pass agenda items, most likely meaning there will have to be Republican buy in.

The Supreme Court is now in conservative hands, eliminating the liberal stratagem of having the judiciary pass in the courts what they couldn't pass at the ballot box.

Instead of making law, the high court will now get back to the basic job of interpreting the law.

On any given issue, the hard Left will be nipping at Biden's heels, demanding action on items like the Green New Deal, reparations, court packing, tax increases, wealth redistribution, and statehood for federal properties like DC and Puerto Rico.

Good luck, Joe. You dog faced pony soldier.

November 20th, 2020

Quote of the Week: "David and I have always voted our districts. We have always represented our districts as bipartisan and moderate members of the legislature. Forming this new caucus is just a natural progression of aligning more with moderate than the far right or left. Additionally, we will not stray from the values of Northern Minnesota and what our people are most passionate about -- our economy and jobs that support our families and our economic lifeline of mining and wood products. Our natural resource-based economy is critical to our region of the state."

- State Senator Tom Bakk (DFL – Cook)

Quote of the Week: "Republican dominance in supposedly 50-50 districts is yet another reminder of just how wrong polls were in 2020, and how wrong they have been for some time. What should embarrass pollsters most, though, is not the fact that they were wrong, but how one-sided they were in the process."

- Cabot Phillips

In This Issue:

1. Bias;
2. Rocks and Cows;
3. Lockdown Lunacy.

BIAS

Now is the time in the election cycle where the Political-Industrial complex makes excuses as to why they were so wrong – and so biased – in favor of their predictions and prognostications in favor of Democrats throughout the election cycle.

For months and months, you heard about a "blue wave" and other predictions about how Donald Trump and Republicans were headed for disaster at the polls, thanks to an agenda focused on tax cuts, job growth, pro-family initiatives, and a true "America first" world view.

And just like in 2016, it didn't happen.

Don't allow these agents of the Left to fool you. Their incorrect data and predictions were intentional, designed to suppress the Republican vote and assist the

Democrats in winning races.

The Mainstream Media has dropped all pretense of objectivity and has openly shown their bias.

The polling industry has yet to drop the pretense, but the evidence is undeniable.

Check these “coincidences” and think about it:

Of 27 U.S. House races labeled a “toss up” by “expert” Charlie Cook, Republicans won all 27. ALL 27.

Of 26 House races deemed “lean GOP” or “likely GOP”, the GOP won all 26.

The GOP even won 7 of 36 House races labeled “leans or likely Democrat.”

We could also list a litany of biased polling data from House races, such as the poll from Utah-4 that showed Republican Burgess Owens down 11 points. He won.

Rest assured, this whole crew will be back in 2022, spinning a narrative that the GOP is not only poised to lose, but on the brink of political extinction.

Don't buy it. These guys are dead and can only be revived if you buy into their bulls**t.

ROCKS AND COWS

Governor for Life Tim Jong Walz once declared that rural Minnesota was “mostly rocks and cows.”

That insult was just one of many that has been hurled at those who live more than 20 miles from the skyscrapers of burned-out Minneapolis. Recall Barack Obama accusing those same Americans of “bitterly clinging to the guns and religion.”

There was once an ad campaign regarding dental health that warned, “Ignore your teeth and they will go away.”

In 2020, we see that if Democrats ignore rural legislators and voters, they will go away.

This week, a bombshell was dropped when two veteran DFL state Senators announced that they have left the DFL and will serve in Saint Paul as independent legislators, representing no party.

Tom Bakk represents northern Minnesota in the legislature for the past 26 years. He has been the Senate Majority Leader, the Senate Minority Leader, and a DFL candidate for governor.

David Tomassoni represents a neighboring district on the Iron Range and has been in the legislature for 28 years as a DFL member. He serves as the President of the Senate.

This turn of events is a stunning rebuke for the DFL. These men have a combined 54 years of legislative service and have held prominent positions within the DFL caucus.

Any reasonable review of their voting records shows that both haven't changed their views over the years. Instead, their departure can be seen only as an indictment of a DFL that has become dominated by a coalition of wealthy white urban elites, effete suburbanites wracked with guilt, and radicals who hate America, capitalism, and the rule of law.

Moreover, the move places control of the state Senate firmly in GOP hands. Under the new alignment, the body is now 34 GOP, 31 DFL, and two independents who will likely caucus with the GOP. Majority Leader Paul Gazelka has already announced that both men will be named committee chairmen.

Today, there is really only one DFL senator who can be said to represent rural Minnesota, Sen. Kent Eken of Twin Valley. There are three more DFL senators who don't represent the Metro, but their districts are primarily regional centers in Mankato, Duluth, and Saint Cloud.

It's amazing to consider the rural areas of the state that just a short number of years ago were solidly DFL but are no longer. Cities like Austin, Albert Lea, Willmar, Hibbing, and Pine City are now in GOP hands.

LOCKDOWN LUNACY

So here we are again, locked down under the executive fiat of King Tim Jong Walz, Supreme Leader and Sun King of Minnesota.

These lockdowns, already of dubious efficacy, weren't supposed to happen anymore.

Remember back in March when Walz first seized power in the name of "flattening the curve" and ensuring that health care resources would be preserved?

What happened?

Eight months later, we apparently are still unprepared for the spike in cases we all knew was coming.

In fact, during that time, we have seen two hospitals close, including one that was specifically designated as a COVID care site.

We have seen mask mandates. Wasn't that supposed to cure everything?

What about the \$7 million morgue that remains, thankfully, without a single body?

So, we're taking away sports from young kids but keeping the status quo in nursing homes, the scene of about 75% of COVID deaths.

The governor's unilateral, authoritarian, go-it-alone strategy has been an abject failure.

And legislative DFLers who have supported his actions are his unindicted co-conspirators.

What's even more disturbing, Walz has begun to act like totalitarian leader, becoming increasingly belligerent as citizens begin to question what's happening.

Many of you don't know that the Department of Health has been excluding certain members of the media from briefings, presumably for political reasons.

https://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2020/11/media-access-in-one-state-finale.php?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=sw&utm_campaign=sw

We have seen governor Walz attack those who disagree with him, such as his infamous quote recently that "Republicans are wrong every damn time."

How has that morgue worked out, Mr. Perfect?

Eight months after seizing unilateral powers, Walz continues to act by fiat, excluding the legislature from the law-making process that has been central to our system of self-governance since the start and featured in Western governance since Montesquieu.

He owns this debacle.

One would think that the judicial branch would step in at some point.

It's too bad voters didn't do just a titch more on election day. A few hundred more votes in districts like 38B and 39B, and there would be a GOP majority to extinguish the madness.

December 4th, 2020

Quote of the Week: “We feel like two people because we are two people. The signs are unmistakable. Our most divisive issue is our symbol of unity. Factions like BLM and blue lives matter have their own flags. Our heritage, revered by half of America, is being vandalized and toppled by the other half. Our most popular sport now begins with two anthems.”

- Anonymous (11/30/20)

In This Issue:

1. A House Divided;
2. Minneapolis is Horrible;
3. Committee Capers Come Calling;
4. The People’s Republic.

A HOUSE DIVIDED

While the subject is lengthy, complex, and worthy of books, it is increasingly clear that America is deeply divided, perhaps in an irreconcilable way.

Vapid bromides exhorting us to “conversations” and “awareness” about this issue or that issue mean nothing and do nothing. Slogans about being “in this together” and “unity” are just that – slogans.

If you doubt this observation, if you are of the opinion that America today is more 1968 than 1858, some statistics say emphatically 1858.

In a January 2019 poll, Donald Trump had the approval of 87% of identified Republicans and the approval of 8% of identified Democrats. This 79% “approval gap” was the largest ever recorded. Of the 15 largest partisan gaps in annual presidential approval ratings, 14 of them have occurred in the past 15 years. We are clearly seeing the chief executive through an exclusively partisan lens.

A 2019 Pew Research poll showed exactly how Republicans and Democrats feel about each other. A majority of Republicans say Democrats are “more immoral” than the average American.

75% of Democrats say Republicans are “more closed-minded.”
63% of Republicans say Democrats are “more unpatriotic.”

Majorities in both parties say the other side doesn’t share their non-political values

and principles.

77% of Republicans and 72% of Democrats say that voters in both parties “not only disagree over plans and policies, but also cannot agree on the basic facts.

Only 17% of Republicans say that the Democratic Party has “a lot” or “some” good ideas” and only 13% of Democrats say this about the Republican Party.

83% of Republicans say the phrase “governs in an honest and ethical way” describes the GOP very or somewhat well; just 12% say this phrase describes the Democratic Party well. The pattern of opinion is very similar among Democrats: 85% of Democrats describe their own party as governing in an honest and ethical way, while just 15% say this describes the Republican Party.

And finally, a majority in both parties do not want their children to marry across party lines. In 1960, the number of respondents who felt this way was in the low single digits.

Do you need any more proof?

MINNEAPOLIS IS HORRIBLE

Minneapolis has become a lawless dystopia. Car jackings are off the charts, some blocks are police “no go” zones, and parts of the city resemble the burned-out rubble reminiscent of cities like Hue, Dresden, or Fallujah.

None of this has stopped elected officials representing the city from their quest to defund the police and institute some type of collectivist utopia.

Yet these same city officials continue to call on the state and federal government to ship in money to rebuild what was lost to their dallying in the face of crisis and perfidy towards the rule of law.

The latest outrage concerns the city’s upcoming debt service for their share of the Viking’s stadium, the place where professionals get to play sports while kids can’t play thanks to Governor-Supreme Tim Jong Walz.

As part of the scheme to finance the \$1.1 billion stadium for the Vikings, the city agreed to a back-loaded \$150 million contribution, the first tranche of which is due next year.

This is the outrage. City officials are now proposing to have the state cover the first debt payment and then discuss ways to lower or eliminate the city’s remaining obligation.

Of course, the city’s finances are indeed in crisis, thanks to the twin liberal policies of pandemic shutdowns and the tacit approval of allowing thugs to burn the city in

the name of social justice.

Hell no.

In fact, it's high time that Republican legislators defund Minneapolis.

Enough is enough.

If city leaders want to run a circus, make them pay for it.

Start by zeroing out local government aid to the city immediately.

This is the wealthiest city in the state. They should have been off this form of welfare years ago.

The idea of taxpayers in Hibbing or Willmar sending money to the liberal elites in Minneapolis was ridiculous from the start.

If the city wants to defund cops while funding bicycle sustainability coordinators, let them do it on their dime.

This publication speaks for thousands of taxpayers who have had enough of tracking these fools.

This is a win-win. They get left alone to do crazy stuff. We don't have to worry about it.

Next, the state can continue to make alternative learning options available to children who are currently sentenced to failing schools.

Again, enough of this business of trying to force accountability. Instead, make it easier for families to vote with their feet.

Part of this effort should include an amendment to eliminate the prohibition on private school vouchers. The prohibition is nothing more anti-Catholic bigotry that should be erased.

Those two agenda items should be enough to start.

COMMITTEE CAPERS COME CALLING

As you know, the DFL maintained control of the Minnesota House by a shrunken 70-64 majority.

As such, they can only lose two votes and still pass a bill.

The real issue here is that House committee structure was released this week, with

a whopping 30 committees to vet and process legislation.

With 70 legislators, 43% of House DFL members will be a committee chair.

It's almost as if a committee gavel has become a participation ribbon. Everyone gets a gavel!

A byzantine scheme of committees with overlapping jurisdiction is sure to create confusion and turf battles between power-hungry legislators.

In the healthcare realm:

- Health Finance & Policy
- Human Services Finance & Policy
- Preventative Health Policy
- Behavioral Health Policy

In the business and commerce realm:

- Commerce Finance & Policy
- Climate and Energy Finance & Policy
- Labor, Industry, Veterans and Military Affairs Finance & Policy
- Workforce and Business Development Finance & Policy
- Industrial Education and Economic Development Finance & Policy

THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

The Fraser Institute recently released its "economic freedom" report that measures how economically free nations, states, and localities in North America rank.

As one would expect, Minnesota ranked an abysmal 40th out of the 50 states, earning a "least free" designation.

States were graded on three areas: Government Spending; Taxes; and Labor Market Freedom.

This is yet one more indicator that Minnesota is on a trajectory for economic malaise.

Policies like this will catch up with the state, especially since Minnesota lacks the amenities of other high tax, economically oppressive states like New York and California.

The "most free" state was New Hampshire.

The "least free" state was New York.

South Dakota ranked #5.

North Dakota was #13

Wisconsin ranked #19.
Iowa ranked #28.

Another dubious distinction for the North Star State.

December 25th, 2020

Editor's Note: On behalf of Harold Hamilton and the entire Watchdog staff, we wish you and yours a very, very Merry Christmas. 2020 was a year to forget in so many ways, but we always maintain a grateful heart and supreme faith that Divine Providence will forever keep and protect our Republic. We look forward to the Watchdog's 16th year of publication in 2021.

In This Issue:

1. America's Consequential Christmas.

AMERICA'S CONSEQUENTIAL CHRISTMAS

The year is 1776. The time is Christmas.

(By Andrew Knighton, first published 3/1/2016)

The war was not going well for the American colonies. They had suffered several defeats and Washington was forced to move his forces during the depths of Winter, which was contrary to all military thinking, at the time. Throughout the history of warfare, winter has tended to be a time of consolidation and recuperation rather than advance. Winter was a terrible time to be on the march in the colonies, with ice on the rivers and snow covering the ground. With Christmas in sight, few of the troops wanted to be bearing arms rather than back home in the arms of their loved ones.

Small wonder then that British commander Sir William Howe had sent his troops into winter quarters, rather than send them out into the bitter cold. He would have expected his opponents, smarting from defeats at Fort Lee and Fort Washington, to do the same.

Among the forces settling down to wait out the winter were the Hessians at Trenton, New Jersey. These German mercenaries had often proven a fearsome addition to the British forces, but for now, they wanted to stay warm and dry and to enjoy a festive drink or three.

The Hessians were led by Colonel Johann Gottlieb Rall. To Rall, image was an important part of military discipline, and his image was one of confidence. His desire not to be seen as weak or intimidated by the colonials overstepped the line from inspiring to over-confidence. He would not admit in front of his men, but he informed his superiors – that Americans raids led him to believe that Trenton might be attacked. Without expressing these concerns he could not fortify the town, never mind ensure his men were in a state of preparedness.

Always a man who liked to stay up late drinking and rise late for a hot bath, Rall

celebrated Christmas 1776 in his traditional style – drinking and gambling into the night.

What Rall feared but could not admit was true – the Americans were coming, and they were led by a commander who remains the most famous in his nation's entire history – General George Washington.

Washington was a man who liked to analyze and plan. He favored complex and clever-sounding tactics, and at Trenton, this almost became his downfall.

To ensure a morale-boosting victory, and prevent the Hessian's escaping, Washington wanted to achieve two things at Trenton – to surround the enemy, and to surprise them. To this end, he divided his troops into three formations, who would march on Trenton under cover of the night of 25 December. They would then attack the enemy all at once, ensuring tactical advantage and cutting off the British force's escape route. It was a plan that looked great on paper! However, the reality of the situation was not suitable for Washington's tactics.

The reality for an 18th-century army was that it was hard to coordinate separate formations over a distance, doubly so in darkness and with winter conditions hindering their movements. And so it was that, when Washington attacked, two out of three formations were not in position.

Though the plan may not have gone perfectly, it achieved its aims, in particular, the element of surprise. This was as much down to Hessian failings as colonial cunning.

Rall, given a note the previous day predicting an American attack, had stuffed it unopened into his pocket. Meanwhile, his second-in-command, Major von Dechow, had canceled the dawn patrol for 26 December.

It was Christmas, bitterly cold out, and he did not expect trouble from the Americans under such circumstances.

The first the Hessians knew of the attack was when the Americans assaulted an outpost a mile from town. Soon messengers were rushing to rouse Rall and gather the defenders. While the Hessians struggled into action, the American formations approached the town, cutting off escape routes and bringing up their cannon to bombard Hessian troops.

With cannon at the heads of both main roads and other artillery firing from across the river, the Americans quickly broke the Hessian formations and gained control of much of Trenton. Buildings gave them defensive cover, and sympathetic civilians came to their aid.

Rall made one final attempt to break out of the trap. With pipes and drums playing, he led his men toward the American flank on hills north of Trenton. On the heights, Washington saw the Hessians coming and formed his men up ready.

The mercenaries marched into withering fire that fell on them from three directions at once. Rall was fatally wounded, and his men broke for the final time. 22 were killed and 83 wounded, but more significantly, 896 were captured.

The Americans lost only five men wounded in the battle, and two dead from frostbite. They had taken out the entire Hessian force with almost no losses and added to their own arms and supplies with those taken from the Germans.

Perhaps more significantly, Trenton provided the Americans with a much-needed psychological boost. Morale and recruitment lifted once more while the stunned Howe struggled to come to terms with the apparent turnaround. By making winter his ally, George Washington had saved the struggling Revolution. It would take several more years for the British to learn to respect their foes.