

Comment on the Commentary of the Day

by

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Disclaimer: The following "Letters to the Editor" were sent to the respective publications on the dates indicated. Some were printed but many were not. The original articles that are being commented on may or may not be available on the internet and may require registration or subscription to access if they are. Some of the original articles are syndicated and therefore may have appeared in other publications also.

13 November 2005

The Editor, The Washington Times

To the Editor:

Writing that we "undertax" ourselves and, hence, fail to "harvest the benefits of growth," William Hawkins misunderstands the real problem with Uncle Sam's deficit spending ("Fiscal Weakness Undermines Security," Nov. 13). If government spends \$1.3 trillion today, it "harvests" now \$1.3 trillion of the fruits grown in today's economy, even if only a portion of this expenditure is financed by taxes. The problem with deficit financing is that it deludes current taxpayers into thinking that government is "harvesting" fewer economic fruits than it really is.

12 November 2005

The Editor, The Boston Globe

To the Editor:

Elena Latona writes sensibly about immigration, including pointing out that we had open borders until the 20th century (Letters, Nov. 12, http://www.boston.com/news/globe/editorial_opinion/letters/articles/2005/11/12/its_time_to_rethink_us

[immigration policy](#)). That policy worked well.

Some argue, though, that America could in the past better 'absorb' immigrants. Wrong. Consider that still only three percent of land in the lower 48 states is devoted to urban and suburban uses - and that we have today PER CAPITA ten times more miles of paved roads, twice as many MDs and firefighters, three times as many teachers, and five times as many police officers. Also, ten times as much capital is invested today per worker than in 1910.

For these and other reasons, America is better able than ever economically to absorb immigrants.

11 November 2005

The Editor, The Boston Globe

To the Editor:

You assert that America "needs tougher vehicle mileage standards and incentives to encourage the purchase of fuel-efficient cars. And the gasoline tax should eventually be raised so that prices of gas are permanently higher and Americans once and for all stop relying on gas-guzzling transportation" ("Oil

deja vu," Nov. 11, http://www.boston.com/news/globe/editorial_opinion/editorials/articles/2005/11/11/oil_deja_vu/).

In other words, you propose to save us from paying high prices for energy by forcing us to pay high prices to conserve energy.

10 November 2005

The Editor, The Christian Science Monitor

To the Editor:

Cartoonist Clay Bennett shows an oil-company executive sitting smugly in front of charts showing that "audacity" and "temerity" are rising along with profits (Nov. 10). Is it audacious to risk billions of dollars annually to explore for oil? Is it temerity to enjoy high profits in some years, knowing that other years will bring losses?

The truly audacious (and greedy) ones are the politicians who demagogue this issue. After all, since 1980 oil companies paid taxes of \$2.2 trillion (in 2004 dollars) - an amount more than three times higher than the profits these companies earned during the same period.

<http://www.taxfoundation.org/news/show/1168.html>

9 November 2005

The Editor, New York Times
229 West 43rd St.
New York, NY 10036

To the Editor:

President Bush finds the U.S. trade deficit with China "bothersome" ("A Return to Quotas," Business Day, Nov. 9). There's hardly reason to worry about the U.S. trade deficit with the world, much less about a deficit with a particular country.

But if politicians are right to worry whenever any two economic entities do not buy and sell to each other equal amounts, then I'm troubled by my trade deficit with Washington. I (am forced to) buy far more from Uncle Sam than he buys from me. I propose curing this bothersome imbalance by refraining from any further purchases from Washington. May I do so, Mr. President?

8 November 2005

Editor, The Washington Post
1150 15th St., NW
Washington, DC 20071

Dear Editor:

John Shephard and Harvey Sapolsky correctly note that America's shipbuilding capacity is excessive and inefficiently used ("Five Shipyards Too Many," Nov. 8). And while part of the problem is indeed Congress's insistence that the Navy spend money politically rather than wisely, another part of the problem is the Jones Act. This

1920 Act requires that all merchandise transported by water between U.S. ports be carried only in vessels "built and documented under the laws of the United States and owned by persons who are citizens of the United States."

Repealing the protectionist Jones Act is indispensable to efforts aimed at ridding the U.S. of unnecessary shipyards.

7 November 2005

The Editor, New York Times
229 West 43rd St.
New York, NY 10036

To the Editor:

Suppose that every accusation Paul Krugman levels against health-care in the U.S. is correct ("Pride, Prejudice, Insurance," Nov. 7). His conclusion that government-supplied health insurance is the best alternative doesn't follow.

Far better to change the tax code so that health insurance isn't linked to employment; to adopt a loser-pays tort system to discourage predatory litigation; to eliminate licensing regulations that, for example, prohibit independent nurses from supplying basic medical care; to allow Americans to buy all medicines over the counter; and to abolish the FDA - that arrogant and cumbersome behemoth preventing each of us from choosing the medical care that each of us judges best.

