



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.

16 July 2006

The Editor, New Orleans
Times-Picayune

To the Editor:

You say that "Louisiana's fortunes are also tied, for better or worse, to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers" ("Counting on corps reform," July 16). You then understandably bemoan how easily Washington politics can pervert reform of big bureaucracies such as the Corps.

So think outside of the box - or, rather, outside of Capitol Hill. Let Louisiana rebuild her own levees. The projected cost of \$3.5 billion can be financed by bonds, with repayment spread over several decades.

Sure it would be nice for Louisianans to have this bill paid by Uncle Sam. But because the Army Corps is so infected with grotesque politicization - politicization that might well bungle the rebuilding - by assuming this responsibility themselves Louisianans would likely in the long-run save money and much heartbreak.

15 July 2006

The Editor, New Yorker

To the Editor:

George Packer classifies Bill Buckley's and George Will's skepticism of U.S. military operations in Iraq as an instance of "their creed's more cramped vision of human possibility" ("Fighting Faiths," July 10 & 17). Mr. Packer mistakes skepticism of social engineering for

skepticism of human possibility.

Those of us who want to shrink the role of government in order to expand the scope of individual freedom believe that truly creative human energy is released only when people are sufficiently free from government regulations and taxation. Such freedom is prerequisite for any prosperous and dynamic civilization - such as ours that conquers hunger, builds skyscrapers, flies us routinely across vast oceans in thin metal tubes, and daily allows us to talk in real time to friends and loved ones thousands of miles away.

Drenched with evidence of it, how can we deny the magnificence of human possibility? What we deny is the reality of politician possibility.

14 July 2006

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

To the Editor:

Presumably rejecting the argument that raising the minimum-wage prices many low-skilled workers out of jobs, Paul Krugman wants to reduce income inequality by increasing the minimum-wage ("Left Behind Economics," July 14).

But if (as is plausible) workers' standards of living are determined more by their annual incomes than by their hourly wage rates - and if mandated higher pay prices no workers out of jobs - why doesn't Krugman demand for full-time workers a legislated minimum annual salary? Can it be that he doesn't really believe that government-mandated minimum pay helps low-paid workers?

10 July 2006

The Editor, USA Today

To the Editor:

Christopher Edwards wants stricter limits on immigration because he worries that growing population threatens Americans' "long-term quality of life" (Letters, July 10). But Mr. Edwards lives in New York City -- one of the most densely populated places on the planet.

If quality of life falls with higher population, it's a wonder that Mr. Edwards doesn't escape this problem by moving to Mississippi or Oklahoma where population density is much lower.