



## 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.**

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3 June 2007

The Editor, The Baltimore Sun

To the Editor:

There's much anger over the Supreme Court ruling that strictly limits the window of opportunity for workers to bring pay-bias lawsuits (Letters, June 3). I can't join in this orgy of outrage.

Comparing pay from one worker to the next is difficult. Even employees with the same job title often have different informal agreements with their employer. One worker, for example, might never be called for weekend work because of his family

situation while a fellow worker is frequently called upon to work unusual hours. If the first worker is paid less than the second, is he a victim of discrimination? If so, another employer likely would eventually hire him away by offering him a salary closer to his true worth. But if this first worker continues working for the same employer at the lower wage, the best bet is that he truly is a less-productive worker than his colleague.

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2 June 2007

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

To the Editor:

The Federal Trade Commission might stop Google from merging with DoubleClick ("Inquiry Into Deal," June 2). Google's rivals support this obstruction; as you report, "Rivals of Google contend that the merger would give Google immense power in Internet advertising in both search ads and display ads online."

A good rule of thumb is that when rivals of any company support antitrust action against that company, those actions should be dismissed pronto. If the company's behavior really threatens to harm consumers with higher prices or lower

quality, rivals generally benefit. Rivals squawk for antitrust actions against other firms in their industries only when those other firms innovate and re-organize in ways likely to intensify competition.

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1 June 2007

The Editor, Washington Times

To the Editor:

Michelle Malkin is hot'n'bothered by the booing of Miss USA at the Miss Universe pageant in Mexico City ("Hostility...and hypocrisy," June 1). She even wants President Bush to "speak out against" this dissing of America.

But actions speak louder than boos. The actions of millions of Mexicans who come to America seeking opportunity demonstrate a profound affection for American civilization - a civilization rooted in an openness and optimism that Ms. Malkin and her xenophobic comrades seek to replace with a nativist nationalism rooted in ignorance and fear.

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Friends,

Yesterday, Karol and I attended a screening of the new movie "Mine Your Own Business" -- an entertaining documentary exposing the arrogance, greed, cruelty, and irrationality of many environmental activists.

One of these activists actually argued that poor

people don't really want better housing, better nutrition, or better education. Instead, says the well-housed, well-fed, highly educated "environmentalist," poor people really want their quaint, traditional ways of life.

Martin Wolf and Deepak Lal are among the prominent, sound scholars whose comments enrich this film.

You can find the trailer here:

<http://www.mineyourownbusiness.org/>

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31 May 2007

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

Dear Editor:

George Will's eloquent "Case for Conservatism" (May 31) really is the case for liberalism - the liberalism of Adam Smith, Turgot, Madison, Mencken, and Hayek. This true liberalism has at its core a genuine respect individual autonomy. It rejects belief in salvation by Great Leaders or Big Plans as dangerous delusions. True liberals understand that great societies are not

constructed according to blueprints. They understand also that our world can never be perfect and that attempts to create heaven on earth inevitably produce hell.

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30 May 2007

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

To the Editor:

David Leonhardt says correctly that Lou Dobbs "has a somewhat flexible relationship with reality" ("Truth, Fiction, and Lou Dobbs," May 30). Not only does the ostentatiously populist Mr. Dobbs misconstrue the reality of immigration, he's equally fanciful on matters of trade. In his 2004 book "Exporting America" Dobbs asserts that international trade is beneficial only when it is "balanced" - that is, produces no trade deficits - and then assures his readers that Adam Smith would agree with him.

Funny, that. In The Wealth of Nations Smith observed that "Nothing, however, can be more absurd than this whole doctrine of the balance of trade."

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29 May 2007

Editor, The Wall Street Journal  
200 Liberty Street  
New York, NY 10281

To the Editor:

With both the spunk and the brains of the Energizer Bunny, Sen. Charles Schumer keeps insisting that the value of the Chinese yuan is too low and that this (alleged) fact is a benefit to China (Letters, May 29).

China can lower the value of the yuan against the dollar only by increasing the supply of yuan relative to the dollar - a policy that causes inflation in China. This result hardly benefits the Chinese people or strengthens their economy. Also, by increasing nominal prices in China relative to those in the U.S., yuan inflation ensures that Americans do not buy Chinese goods and services at prices kept artificially low.

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28 May 2007

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

Dear Editor:

Re Congressional Democrats' penchant for earmarks (Robert Novak, "Murtha's Friends," May 28): When pigs second in line at the trough accuse pigs first in line of being shameful gluttons, it is a dimwitted farmer indeed who fantasizes that the squealing accusers will be any less gluttonous when they gain favored access to the slopping pit.

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28 May 2007

Editor, Washington Times

To the Editor:

So the DC government now prohibits persons and businesses located outside of the District from registering taxicabs in the District ("D.C. cab law would rule out 80% of taxis," May 28). The goal, I presume, is to "create" jobs for DC citizens by "protecting" them from having to compete with non-DC citizens.

Inspired! But why stop with cabs? Imagine the jobs and prosperity that Mayor

Fenty and the DC Council would create if they prohibit non-DC residents also from selling in the District the likes of vegetables, coffee, wine, books, clothing, furniture, artworks, computers, medical care, legal advice - the list is long. Doesn't consistency require that the DC government apply to all goods and services the economic principle that it now applies to taxi service?

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Friends,

My brilliant younger colleague Bryan Caplan is making quite a splash with his new book, *The Myth of the Rational Voter*. It is, in my opinion, the most important book on the economics of politics to appear in the past decade.

Today's New York Times Magazine (p. 18) features a favorable discussion of its theme. Here's a whiff:

"Now Bryan Caplan, an economist at George Mason University, has attracted notice for raising a pointed question: Do voters have any idea what they are doing? In his provocative new book, *'The Myth of the Rational Voter: Why Democracies Choose Bad Policies'*, Caplan argues that 'voters

are worse than ignorant; they are, in a word, irrational — and vote accordingly." Caplan's complaint is not that special-interest groups might subvert the will of the people, or that government might ignore the will of the people. He objects to the will of the people itself."

And here's the link to the full article:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/27/magazine/27wwln-idealab-t.html?ei=5070&en=afe9c67284e02319&ex=1180929600&adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1180267411-OHomd7/2tiiUlyy4BRI+XA>