



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.

12 June 2007

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

To the Editor:

The data and analytics of income "inequality" are sufficiently complex without David Leonhardt further confusing matters with a claim that is flat-out wrong. In "Larry Summers' Evolution" (June 10) he writes that "since 1979, the share of pretax income going to the top 1 percent of American households has risen by 7 percentage points, to 16 percent. Over the same span, the share of income going to the bottom 80 percent has fallen by 7 percentage points. It's as if every

household in that bottom 80 percent is writing a check for \$7,000 every year and sending it to the top 1 percent."

Overlook the inaptness of Mr. Leonhardt's use of pretax income: because the top 1 percent of income earners pay a disproportionately large share of taxes, it is these high-income earners who are literally writing the big checks to the rest of us.

The real problem is that Mr. Leonhardt mistakes a falling SHARE of income for falling income. It's simple arithmetic: Jones can simultaneously enjoy higher real income and see his income fall relative to Smith's.

11 June 2007

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

To the Editor:

Ponder the opening paragraph of your report on the latest antitrust action against Microsoft, in which your readers learn that Google complains to government that Microsoft's "Windows Vista operating-system software puts rivals at a disadvantage" ("Google Intensifies Microsoft Fight," June 11).

These few words reveal the true purpose of antitrust legislation: it isn't meant to protect

consumers but, rather, to protect competitors.