



## Comment on the Commentary of the Day

by

Donald J. Boudreaux  
Chairman, Department of Economics  
George Mason University  
[dboudrea@gmu.edu](mailto:dboudrea@gmu.edu)  
<http://www.cafehayek.com>

**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.**

---

31 August 2007

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

To the Editor:

Why all the surprise and "omigod!"s over Senator Larry Craig's monkeyshines ("The Larry Craig Mess," August 31)? Politicians, regardless of party, specialize only in winning elections. The most successful are those who dupe the largest number of voters into thinking that he or she is superhuman - a saint or savior immune to ordinary human behaviors, foibles, and desires.

Of course, Sen. Craig - like Pres. Clinton, Gov. McGreevey, and Rep. Foley, and no less and no more than the likes Pres. Reagan, Gov. Schwarzenegger, and Rep. Hastert - in fact is merely human. He and they and other successful politicians are distinct from the rest of us only in the intensity of their lust for power, in the arrogance of their presumption that they are fit to rule other people, and in the jejune gratification they enjoy from the pomp of holding government office.

---

30 August 2007

Editor, Baltimore Sun

To the Editor:

Appalled that some corporations doing business in Maryland sometimes legally avoid paying state income taxes, state senators Lisa Gladden and Paul Pinsky assert that these companies "give nothing back to the state" ("Make corporations pay fair share," August 30).

I have no idea if Maryland's tax code should be revamped, but I do know that avoiding taxes is not equivalent to "giving nothing back." Even corporations that pay no taxes make valuable goods and services available to Marylanders. This

commercial activity is a genuine contribution to the public welfare. If you're doubtful, ask whether Marylanders would be better off if each corporation in that state would pay lots of taxes but shut down all operations there, OR if each corporation were to pay no taxes but also were to continue to hire workers, produce outputs, and sell these outputs to Marylanders. If you even suspect that the latter option is correct, then you must reject the notion that businesses contribute to society only what the state extracts from them in taxes.

---

29 August 2007

Editor, USA Today

To the Editor:

The Internet, cell phones, GPS navigation, and the Boston Red Sox's 2004 World Series victory are just some of the happy marvels of the past quarter-century. Alas, 2007 differs from 1982 also in ways less happy - one of which is the re-emergence of xenophobia. 9/11 fueled this ugly trend. But even before that awful September day Americans were growing more overtly hostile to immigrants. Groundless fears over jobs

and threats to America's culture are stoked successfully today by nativist rabble-rousers such as Lou Dobbs and Michelle Malkin. Modern "Minutemen" officiously "guard" Americans against immigrants. A 700-mile-long wall is being built to "protect" us from Latin Americans seeking work. Across the land there spreads a disquieting "us-versus-them" mentality.

Take note, though: All great societies are open societies. They fear neither competition nor different cultures. They are stimulated by contrasts and they welcome new perspectives. They are optimistic, tolerant, confident, and, as a result, dynamic, strong, and prosperous. They avoid the stupidity of tribalism.

My fervent hope is that by 2032 Americans will have rejected once and for all the ignorant intolerance of today's bigoted, big-mouthed, and benighted xenophobes.

---

27 August 2007

Editor, Chicago Tribune

To the Editor:

You're correct that free trade likely would create more opportunities for

workers in Illinois to produce goods for export ("How free trade boosts Illinois," August 25). Never forget, though, that the ultimate benefit of trade lies not in what people must sacrifice - not in the creation of opportunities to produce output for others ("jobs") - but in the greater quantity, quality, and variety of goods and services that free trade makes possible for ordinary people to consume.

Free trade's bountiful harvest is not its exports; it is its imports.

---

27 August 2007

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

To the Editor:

Paul Krugman believes that children's health insurance should be a government-supplied "right" for the same reasons that K-12 education today is a government-supplied "right" ("A Socialist Plot," August 27).

Let's hope that government would insure children better than it educates them. After all, a front-page report appearing in

the very same edition of your paper that features Prof. Krugman's column describes the difficulty many government schools face in retaining competent

teachers ("With Turnover High, Schools Fight for Teachers," August 27). In that report we learn that Tim Daly, president of the New Teacher Project,

regards the hiring of teachers for urban school districts as "a conspiracy of dysfunction."