HALF-FULL REPORT 12/23/11

First things first. *Merry Christmas!!* As Jack Kelly observes, "There is no happier day."

It is the day to honor the true meaning and origin of Christmas. It is the day, as Joel Wade notes, to honor our loved ones with gratitude. It is the day of squealing delight of little children when we give them presents from Santa. And it is a day that expresses one of humanity's most profoundly admirable abilities.

Christmas originated in the Northern Hemisphere where it is *winter* in late December. It is dark, the hours of sunlight are few. It is freezing cold, the skies are gray and gloomy, there can be blizzards and snow and ice. All the leaves are gone, nature is hibernating. It is the lousiest time of year. Yet we humans choose to make this a time of glorious joy, a magical time of love and celebration.

How extraordinary. How extraordinarily admirable that we have this capacity to do such a thing. Christmas is, then, a most appropriate time to reflect upon and be grateful for the goodness that Providence has bestowed upon the human soul.

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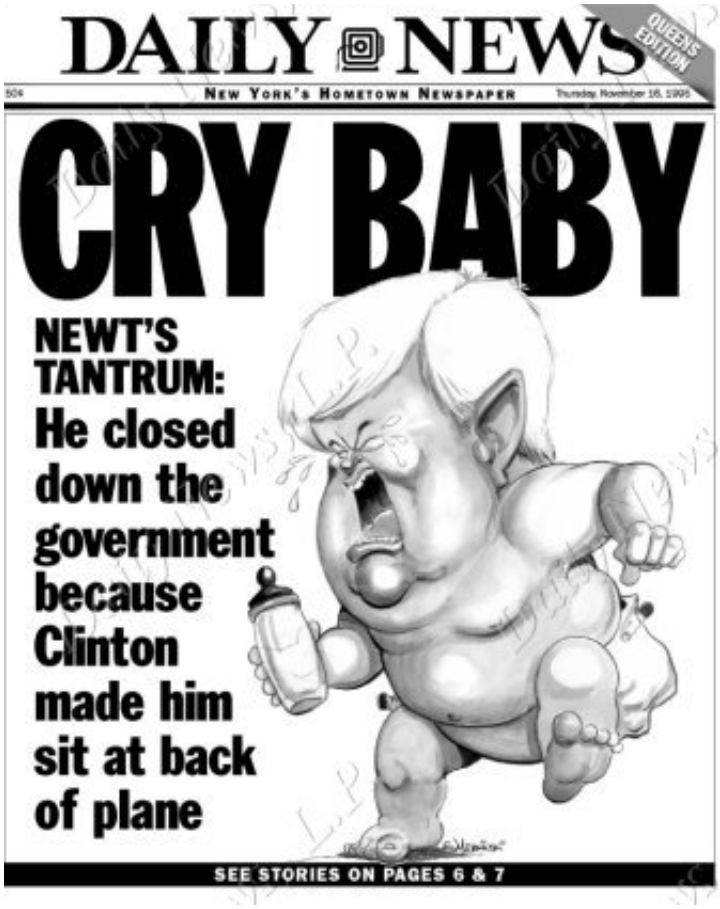
Time to descend from the sublime to the ridiculous. This is, of course, the utterly, completely, totally pathetic performance of the Republicans in Congress. You can't get more congressionally ludicrous than their capitulating this week to the Dems on a two-month extension of the payroll tax holiday. Charles Krauthammer explains the GOP debacle.

The problem that is driving us around the bend is that, with the Pubs, it's nothing but debacles. Like Hindu turtles, it's debacles all the way down.[1] Yet for them all, in their endless procession, there is a cause. The name of the cause is Newt Gingrich.

Republicans are elephants. Elephants never forget, especially disasters that traumatize them. The Pubs in Congress are paralyzed by a trauma they cannot overcome. It is this trauma that has disenabled them from defunding Obamacare, the fascist EPA, the myriad of Zero's business-destroying regulations, or any Dem program contributing to the federal budget deficit.

The trauma is encapsulated in this cartoon, which took up the entire front page of the New York Daily News on November 16, 1995:



In November 1994, thanks to a massive rejection of Bill Clinton's policies - particularly Hillarycare and homosexualization of the military (sound familiar?) - and Gingrich's Contract With America as a positive alternative, the GOP won 54 seats and thus the House Majority held by the Dems for 60 of the previous 64 years.

Gingrich became Speaker when the 104th Congress was sworn in on January 4, 1995. One of the priorities was to fashion a budget for FY1996 that slowed the growth of government spending. Clinton wanted the opposite. To force Clinton to cut spending, Gingrich refused to authorize an increase in the debt limit (sound familiar again?).

FY1996 began on October 1, 1995. No budget was agreed to, so Gingrich got a CR (Continuing Resolution) passed for interim funding until November 13. On that day (11/13/95) Clinton vetoed a further CR to keep the government funded and also raised the debt limit. The federal government shutdown that midnight, lasting until January 6, 1996. It was entirely Bill Clinton's fault. Clinton's popularity plummeted.

But, on the second day of the shutdown (11/15/95), Gingrich complained at a press breakfast (yes, he told this to reporters) that on the return flight of Air Force One from the funeral of Israeli Prime

Minister Yitzhak Rabin in Jerusalem (Rabin was assassinated on Nov 4, the funeral was Nov 6), he and Clinton had gotten into an argument over the budget whereupon Clinton "insulted" him by making him leave the plane by the rear door.

The media had a field day with "Cry Baby Gingrich" causing the shutdown, resulting in the public blaming Gingrich and the Republicans for the Clinton-caused shutdown - as the story fit in with Gingrich's well-known testiness and thin-skinned temper. Clinton's popularity soared, he smoked Old Bob Dole in his '96 re-election, with the blame for the shutdown indelibly tattooed onto the GOP to this day.

This is why the Boehner Pubs are so worthless. All Zero has to do is threaten a shutdown in response to the slightest attempt of the Pubs to defund anything, and they meekly give up. Thanks, Newt.

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Every day now, it becomes clearer.

Both Gingrich and Romney are for the payroll tax holiday to be made virtually permanent, thus bankrupting Social Security more quickly (although, typically, Mitt doesn't want to take a firm stand on the issue at all). Perry is against it.

Romney has announced that, if president, he will continue Zero's homosexualization of the military. He further announced that a state mandate forcing (that means at the point of a government gun) everyone to buy health insurance - as he did in Massachusetts - is politically "conservative."

The Wall Street Journal, in a cleverly-entitled article, Judge Newt, put its finger on Gingrich's claim that he as president has the constitutional authority to rule the Supreme Court, instead of Congress which does have the authority:

"Mr. Gingrich criticizes judicial activism, but it seems what he really wants to do is expand his own authority to bully and undercut judges who disagree with him. That sounds awfully dictatorial and radically un-American."

Then there's Gingrich of Freddie Mac: "The real history lesson here may be what the Freddie episode reveals about Mr. Gingrich's political philosophy. To wit, he has a soft spot for big government when he can use it for his own political ends."

And the Journal's Dorothy Rabinowitz skewers "the best known American propagandist for our enemies," the Jeremiah Wright of the Right. Hopefully, she will awaken Ron Paul supporters to the realization that there is no difference between Paul's foreign policy and Zero's. Or if there is, it is

more apologetic, *more* enemy-appeasing, and *more* resistant to defending America.

It's hard to argue otherwise when Paul praises traitor Bradley Manning as a "patriot" and a "hero."

Meanwhile, the recession is over in Texas, with the Texas state budget projecting a $1.6 billion surplus. A number of folks have figured out that the governor who has overseen this is the obvious choice for president. Such folks as:

Erick Erickson and his contributors at RedState. Big Government's Mike Flynn. Don Surber. And Ace of Spades. Ace's is particularly important because he makes such a good case for Perry, and he is extremely influential in the conservative social networks. All these folks do and are, in fact.

Oh, and for anyone who thinks Perry is weak on border security, regard:

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Texas has no land border with Mexico - it's the Rio Grande River from El Paso to Brownsville. Perry authorized the creation of a Tactical Marine Unit of the Texas Highway Patrol, equipped with six "shallow-water interceptor" boats that will patrol the Rio Grande. Each is named after a Trooper killed in the line duty. They are bullet-proof armored, have six machine guns, and three 300HP engines. Perry is taking care of business on the border.

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Ready for some good news?

Cocaine is now a has-been drug. US use is down 37% over the last five years. Workplace drug testing positive is down 65%. The price is way up and the quality is way down. It's not cool to snort this crap anymore. It's getting so bad for the Mex cartels, they're reduced to smuggling pirated software and CDs.

It's not all good news, though, as the cartels are focusing on meth in place of coke. See The Nightmare of Meth (March 2006) that explains its horrific brain damage. Please share it with anyone with kids or friends remotely tempted by meth.

So much for "Beyond Petroleum" - British Petroleum's stupid advertising slogan. BP has given up on solar energy. Its division, BP Solar, is the world's largest solar energy company, and it's being liquidated because "it can't make any money." Solar is dying. Britain, Germany, and Spain have stopped their subsidies. It's finished. The greenies are in anguish.

Now for extra good news: the most moonbat of all hyper-leftie moonbat outfits, Moveon.org is in "big time money trouble." Well, hallelujah. What a nice Christmas present from Santa.

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Which of two ladies should be the HFR Hero of the Week? You decide.

Karen Budd-Falen is ending the scam of Big Green lawyers turning the fascist Endangered Species Act into a taxpayer-funded private money machine. She is the primary driver behind Wyoming's Rep. Cynthia Lummis' HR 1996: The Government Litigation Savings Act that could terminate the scam and defund enviro-lawyers.

Karen's goal is to nuke the "environmental litigation industrial complex." If she succeeds, it's a tossup between her deserving the Nobel Prize in Economics or the Nobel Peace Prize.

Then again, Karen Budd-Falen's heroic campaign is on-going. This week, one of the most alluring actresses on the planet, Maria Conchita Alonso (born in Cuba, Miss Venezuela 1975) called hate-

America scumbag Sean Penn a "Communist A***ole" to his face. Penn is a bootlicker of Fidel Castro, Hugo Chavez, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and any other dictator thug that hates America as much as he does. Alonso, who lived under two of these thugs, despises him for this, and spoke truth to power.

Her description of him could not be more accurate. That is exactly, precisely, what he is. Good for her.

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Today (12/23), one of the 20th century's great heroes of freedom was laid to rest. Vaclav Havel, the peaceful liberator of Czechoslovakia, died on Sunday (12/18). Havel was a principal founder of the Charter 77 democracy movement in Prague.

Then came Ronald Reagan. He enabled the liberation of Czechoslovakia (today the peacefully separated countries of the Czech Republic and Slovakia) - and the naming of *To The Point*. The story is told in Touched To The Point from June of 2004:

> In 1989 on the eve of the fall of the Berlin Wall, I had a meeting in Prague, Czechoslovakia with a group of Anti-Communists dedicated to ridding their country from Soviet rule. Their leader was Martin Palous, a founder of the Charter 77 democracy movement.
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> He explained that when he and other Czech intellectuals such as Vaclav Havel formed Charter 77 in 1977, they did so against all hope. "To dream of real freedom for our country was unthinkable," he said. "The best we could ask is some little bit of light, some small increase of breathing space for us to think and talk more freely."
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> Then the world changed: Ronald Reagan was elected President of the United States. "The moment came for us," Palous recounted, "when we heard Radio Free Europe broadcast in Czech the speech by President Reagan in which he called the Soviet Union the 'Evil Empire.' Luckily, RFE broadcast it several times, because it was hard to hear on our illegal short-wave radios and the signal was mostly jammed by the Soviets.
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> "This was the moment of hope for us. Finally - finally and at last - the President of the United States"... Palous raised his pointed index finger straight up in the air, then brought it straight down in a sweeping arc to touch the table"... touched to the point. These were the words we had always dreamed we would hear from the leader of the Free World but never had before. We knew in that moment we now had a chance to bring freedom to our country."

> It is in remembrance of Martin Palous' story that I named my website To The Point. It is our goal to place our finger on the critical points regarding the principal issues of our day. Just as Ronald Reagan provided the inspiration for freedom fighters throughout the Soviet Empire, so he continues to provide inspiration for me and so many others here in America.

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We'll close this HFR with a tribute to a real-life Ayn Rand entrepreneurial hero right out of *Atlas Shrugged*. Michael O'Leary is an Irishman, and CEO of RyanAir, an amazingly successful low-cost airline in Europe.

Earlier this month, he was invited to speak at the Innovation Convention in Brussels, Belgium, held by the European Commission - the mandarins who run the European Union headquartered in Brussels. Here is the video of his talk. It's long (17 minutes), but you'll hardly notice the time as he's so fascinating.

This guy is prospering inside the most fantastically anti-capitalist bureaucracy in the civilized world. He is proof that brains and balls can triumph over government punks. Michael O'Leary - God bless the Irish! - is an inspiration to us all.

And one more time: *Merry Christmas to our entire TTP family*.

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[1] The story is told of a Western astronomer explaining to a Hindu astrologer how gravity keeps the earth suspended in space. "You are wrong, Sir," replies the Hindu. "The earth rests on the back of a giant turtle." "And what does this giant turtle rest on?" inquired the astronomer. "Another turtle," came the answer. "And that turtle?" the astronomer further inquired. "I see what you're getting at, Sir," replied the Hindu, "but it will do you no good. It's turtles all the way down."