

The New York Times

LETTERS

Analyze This: Donald Trump’s Thoughts and Speech

Aug. 16, 2023

To the Editor:

Re “[Donald Trump’s Way of Speaking Defies All Logic](#),” by Michael Wolff (Opinion guest essay, Aug. 6):

Mr. Wolff argues persuasively that much of what Donald Trump says can be chalked up to illogical and thus legally inconsequential blather and bluster. Except that is true only when one evaluates the former president’s pronouncements individually. Taken in their totality, they reveal themselves as the opposite of random scattershot.

Virtually everything Mr. Trump has said in the aftermath of the 2020 presidential election pushes in the same direction: to try to reverse the election by every legal and — failing that — illegal means conceivable. Thus, the route to defeating Mr. Trump’s “my words are meaningless” defense is to assemble them into their coherent and sinisterly subversive whole meaning.

Richard Sclove
Amherst, Mass.

For Trump’s Base, He’s Still Their Man

Aug. 21, 2017

To the Editor:

Re “[The Failing Trump Presidency](#)” (editorial, Aug. 20):

Congressional Republicans have evidently decided that they won't impeach President Trump until he does something so awful that no sane person will deny that impeachment is necessary to the nation's survival. The danger is that an act sufficient to cross that threshold may have already destroyed the nation.

RICHARD E. SCLOVE

The Special Doctor-Patient Relationship

April 26, 2011

To the Editor:

[Paul Krugman's apt critique](#) of Republicans' misconstrual of medical patients as consumers points toward a more pervasive cultural pathology.

Whereas formerly we were patients, parents, neighbors, citizens, congregants and so on, now in most of life we're just consumers. This crimped conception flows directly from the modern American propensity to deify the free market.

While reducing us to consumers, free market fundamentalism also corrodes, corrupts or demonizes all other basic social instruments, like effective government programs and regulations.

The deification of the free market cannot coexist with a robust concern for the common good and a dignified regard for what it means to be human.

RICHARD E. SCLOVE

The Coming Battle Over the Budget

February 27, 2009

To the Editor:

Re [A Bold Plan Sweeps Away Reagan Ideas](#), by David Leonhardt (Economic Scene, front page, Feb. 27):

Statistics on rising economic inequality in the United States often make people's eyes glaze over. They shouldn't.

President Obama's attempt to restore some semblance of economic equality and fairness is of paramount importance. It's the right thing to do morally.

It is also essential to re-establishing an economy and culture that can, in turn, stand behind all other necessary and vital policy changes, in every sphere of social life.

Consider the contrast: the soaring economic inequality of the Reagan-Bush era concentrated wealth and power. That has egregiously distorted our political system, tilting policy in favor of perpetuating inequality and frustrating crucial reforms. The bitter fruits of that distortion are evident all around, most obviously in the regulatory lapses that contributed to economic calamity.

It is going to require enormous effort to ensure that President Obama's bold, good and essential budget proposal survives the torturous journey through Congress.

Richard E. Sclove

The Stimulus America Really Needs

December 28, 2008

To the Editor:

Re [Time to Reboot America](#) (column, Dec. 24):

As Thomas L. Friedman suggests, the prospect of a \$1 trillion stimulus in an Obama administration offers a crucial opportunity for our nation to invest in productivity-enhancing infrastructure improvements.

Nonetheless, productivity, as conventionally defined, remains too narrow a metric to serve as an overarching objective for public policy.

Besides advancing productivity, infrastructural investments should support other key social objectives that productivity omits, such as more locally self-reliant economies, a vibrant democratic civil society, social justice and environmental sustainability.

Otherwise, the United States will continue down a trajectory toward deepening injustice, instability and inhumanity, rather than epitomizing self-governance, conviviality and hope.

Richard E. Sclove

First Strike

March 6, 1981

To the Editor:

Why begrudge National Aeronautics and Space Administration advisers the \$100 million they need to study ways of ridding the heavens of threatening asteroids ("Saving the Earth," Topics Feb. 17)? Better yet, instead of waiting passively for asteroids to approach the earth, the United States and the Soviet Union should embark jointly on an unrestrained effort to seek out and - with our existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons - destroy those dangerous asteroids wherever in the solar system they may be lurking.

RICHARD E. SCLOVE