

Subject: [Fwd: Point Commentary Schedule: Monday, July 31st - Sunday, August 6th, 2006]
From: Lisa Liebl <lliebl@sbgnet.com>
Date: Thu, 27 Jul 2006 14:20:58 -0500
To: Cece Smith <csmith@kocb.sbgnet.com>

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Subject: Point Commentary Schedule: Monday, July 31st - Sunday, August 6th, 2006
From: Ashley Dougherty <adougherty@sbgnet.com>
Date: Thu, 27 Jul 2006 14:17:58 -0400
To: adougherty@sbgnet.com
CC: Dina Nesheiwat <dneshewat@sbgnet.com>, Mark Hyman <mhyman@sbgnet.com>

REMINDER: Friday's feed will also include Saturday 07/29 (Mailbag July 29th) and Sunday 07/30 (Georgia's Voter ID) Point Commentaries.

ND's and News Staff:

Attached to this email are the scripts for the week of July 31st, 2006.

Direct questions regarding satellite issues to Alan Almond at 410.568.1719. Satellite feed information can be found at the sbgnet.com web page (click "news", then "satellite", then "permanent satellite feeds").

Direct questions regarding The Point contact Dina Nesheiwat at 410.568.1567 or Ashley Dougherty at 410.568.2138.

Topic suggestions can be directed to Dina Nesheiwat or Mark Hyman at 410.568.1565.

Running times include 1 second of tail at commentary's end.

07/31 - Dayton's Grave Concern - 1:40
08/01 - FY- 2007 Appropriations are Behind Schedule - 1:27
08/02 - Ignoring the North Korea Threat - 1:30
08/03 - Doc English - 1:42
08/04 - Coast Guard Birthday 2006 - 1:26
08/05- Mailbag August 5th - 1:20
08/06 - Maryland's Near-Junk Status Utilities - 1:45

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DAYTON'S GRAVE CONCERN

This was always meant to be a final resting place of honor for some of the nation's oldest war veterans.

The Green Castle Cemetery is Dayton, Ohio's oldest cemetery. Countless Civil War veterans are buried here. The privately-owned cemetery had fallen into a state of neglect although recent efforts to restore it to its former honor have been attempted.

Missing from the cemetery is a rare, historical artifact. Dayton's News Source, Don Hammond explains. "This weapon is correctly called a sea coast mortar. It was removed from Green Castle, June 1st, 1998, and sold to a museum for twenty-five grand," said Hammond.

Initial indications are that the cemetery owner did not have the right to sell the mortar because it belongs to the U.S. Army. Reportedly, military hardware is loaned to town squares, parks, and local cemeteries with the understanding it cannot be resold. This prohibition may have been forgotten in the case of monuments loaned more than a century ago.

The alleged buyer of the Green Castle mortar operates a private, by appointment only, museum near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. A recorded telephone message states the owner will not return until August. According to press accounts, the alleged buyer may

have purchased more than two dozen rare and valuable Civil War cannons and sentinels from small town officials from across the country who may not have known the restrictions against reselling the artifacts or of their true value.

We would like to hear from you if you know about this or similar activities. And we'll let you know more as we learn how this shameful turn of events was allowed to occur in the first place.

And that's the Point. In Dayton, Ohio.

I'm Mark Hyman.

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FY-2007 APPROPRIATIONS ARE BEHIND SCHEDULE

The federal government's new fiscal year will begin in two months, on October 1st. And Congress has yet to pass a single one of the annual appropriations measures.

Last year, Congress spent \$29 billion on nearly 10,000 pork projects, according to the watchdog group, Citizens Against Government Waste. No doubt a new record will be set for pork spending next year. The temptation is too high for 535 members of Congress to keep from spending the people's money on wasteful projects.

Each year the outcome is the same. A handful of appropriations measures will be acted upon such as Defense, Military Construction and the Legislative Branch. It's a lock that Congress will take care of itself. First. The remaining appropriations will be rolled into one big omnibus spending bill that will contain thousands of pork projects that will never be scrutinized until after the legislation becomes law.

Because this is an election year, Congress will likely avoid a series of continuing resolutions that are stop-gap bills that allow the government to spend money at last year's spending rate. After all, they wouldn't want to draw attention to their poor fiscal policies.

Speaking of which, we've come to learn that Republicans in Congress are no better than Democrats when it comes to mismanaging the nation's finances. And we have to foot the bill.

And that's The Point.

I'm Mark Hyman.

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IGNORING THE NORTH KOREA THREAT

North Korea's long-range missile threat to the U.S. was not the surprise as some have suggested. The potential threat posed by North Korea was known in the early 1990s. But then politics took over.

Aside from the five major nuclear powers of the U.S., U.K., Russia, China and France, several countries have pursued ballistic missiles with ranges in excess of 1,000 miles. These include India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and North Korea.

Congressional plans in the mid-1990s to fund a national missile defense to protect against rogue regimes such as North Korea received a setback when an intelligence report soft-pedaled the North Korea threat.

A 1995 SECRET, but then later declassified, National Intelligence Estimate became controversial in Washington, D.C. for its hard and fast position that North Korea would pose no threat until at least after the year 2010. Critics claimed the data was cooked at the direction of President Clinton in order to delay funding a national missile defense. In fact, a Government Accountability Office study of the report found the firm pronouncement that the U.S. did not face any new ballistic missile threats to be seriously flawed.

Early testing of North Korea's Taepodong-2 missile has not been impressive. Nonetheless, North Korea's ballistic missile program poses a significant potential threat that should be concern to the western-most U.S. cities.

And that's The Point.

I'm Mark Hyman.

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DOC ENGLISH

According to an opinion article in the New England Journal of Medicine, hospital patients who speak little or no English are more susceptible to errors in medical diagnoses and treatment than patients who do speak English. Well, here's a universal word: Duh!

This is why they're called language barriers. There are several valid reasons for medical professionals to bridge language differences. It's a safe assumption that medical professionals would prefer to administer proper medical care. Yet, the tone of the opinion segment in the New England Journal was troubling. The Journal claimed that a 1998 edict from the Clinton Administration's Department of Health and Human Services categorized failure of medical professionals to provide language interpreters as an act of discrimination. The Journal cited Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as guiding legal authority. Title VI makes no such claims and any attempt to link discrimination based on race, color or national origin with healthcare providers who do not provide interpreters for everyone who walks through hospital doors is totally absurd.

Moreover, placing the onus of responsibility on emergency rooms, for example, to provide interpreters for any and everyone regardless of what language they speak is impossible. No wonder health care costs continue to skyrocket.

Here is the larger issue. Where should responsibility lie when it comes to bridging language barriers? It is not with those who speak English in American hospitals. The burden rests with those who come to the U.S. This is not discrimination. It's just commonsense.

And that's the Point.

I'm Mark Hyman.

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COAST GUARD BIRTHDAY 2006

The United States Coast Guard celebrates its 216th anniversary.

The Coast Guard was chartered on August 4th, 1790 as the system of cutters, a maritime service to enforce customs laws. By 1863 it officially became known as the Revenue Cutter Service. A separate agency, the U.S. Life Saving Service was established in 1878. In 1915, President Woodrow Wilson signed into law legislation that combined both the revenue and life saving services, thereby creating the U.S. Coast Guard.

Most people think of the Coast Guard when it comes to boating safety, at-sea rescue and drug interdiction. But the Coast Guard is also active in our nation's defense. From the quasi-war with France in the late 1790s to the Spanish-American War a century later to the Global War on Terror a hundred years after that, the Coast Guard has played a valuable role. Of course, not to be overlooked are other major wars including World Wars I & II, the Korean and Vietnam wars, and Operation Desert Storm.

Today's men and women in the Coast Guard support a number of important missions: maritime safety, maritime mobility, maritime security, national defense and protection of our natural resources.

We wish the 47,000 active and reserve members of the Coast Guard a very happy birthday and congratulate them on a job well done.

And that's the Point.

I'm Mark Hyman

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MAILBAG – AUGUST 5TH, 2006

Identifying the beliefs of the Angry Left brought these comments.

Richard in Asheville, North Carolina wrote, “I am glad that you stand up for what is actually right.” David and Lori in Des Moines, Iowa emailed, “Loved, loved, loved your message...Most would stay completely away from such truth but you’ve got the guts to say it!” Richard of Hampstead, Maryland exclaimed, “‘The Point’...was spectacular.” Paul in Greer, South Carolina said, “An absolutely fantastic commentary.” Mary in San Antonio, Texas observed, “Thank you for exposing and informing viewers of the injustice of politics.” Charlie of Hendersonville, North Carolina said, “Your comments...will be sent to some of my correspondents who think the New York Times and Washington Post are the last word.”

However, Robert in Parkersburg, West Virginia noted, “All you did was take every general stereotype spread across the wide spectrum of liberals in this country and put them all under the same name.” Robert, I never said “liberal,” you did. Chris in Madison, Wisconsin emailed, “What [is] a welterweight hack like yourself ... doing stinking up the space between the weather and the [Green Bay] Packer[s] report?”

Finally, Tai in Dayton, Ohio commented, "I think that you think that you are all that but you're not." Tai, I'm sorry. But I have no idea what that means.

You can share your comments by logging onto the web at www.newscentral.tv and click on "The Point."

I'm Mark Hyman.

MARYLAND'S NEAR-JUNK STATUS UTILITIES

Two weeks ago, I addressed how the Maryland legislature created a state energy crisis. In 1999, the legislature capped the electricity rates of Baltimore Gas & Electric at 1993 price levels. They were set to expire on July 1st of this year. And after 13 years of no increases, Maryland consumers were faced with rate increases as high as 72%.

The legislature realized their boneheaded actions in 1999 would result in free-market payback only months before this year's November elections. So these Maryland politicians wisely, and for purely political reasons, extended the rate caps until after they were safely reelected.

The Maryland scenario is identical to that which occurred in California in 1999. Retail rates were capped, wholesale prices rose, and something had to give. A California energy crisis ensued for months. Blackouts occurred. And California utilities suffered major financial damage. All of this happened during extreme summer weather. Sound familiar?

Now the other shoe has dropped. Because of the legislature's shenanigans, Moody's Investment Services, the Wall Street credit agency, has reclassified BG&E and other Maryland utilities to near junk status.

This means the utilities will pay among the highest rates to borrow money, which they will have to do in order to make up the difference between their wholesale and operating costs and their retail rates. Debt will increase big time. And this could lead to the perfect storm scenario I predicted last month.

The question is who will the Maryland legislature blame when the lights go out?

And that's The Point.

I'm Mark Hyman.

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