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Lawmakers found themselves with a sizable surplus, thanks to a mega-millions education lottery winner. Sadly, they saw fit to debate what to do with the money, even though the windfall came from the sale of an education lottery ticket. Ultimately – and even sadder – they chose to give taxpayers roughly \$50 apiece rather than put it into more meaningful pots – again, such as education.

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OUR VIEW

Education lottery windfall should fund education

What would you do with an extra \$61 million in your pocket? Would you divide it up and dole it out to each South Carolina taxpayer? Sounds nice, but it wouldn't be a whole lot of money per person. Would you play Santa with it and give state employees who make less than \$100,000 a year a 2 percent pay bump, and those who are now making less than \$50,000 an additional 2 percent raise? We don't ask those questions to dismiss the notion of giving taxpayers a break now and then. Most would welcome that, but with no hard figures on how much each would get, it sounds more like a politically motivated gesture. A nice gesture, absolutely, but not necessarily the best ROI when all is said and done.

And we are not suggesting that state employees do not deserve to have their pay re-evaluated and, in some cases, hiked. We say some because it's unlikely all are deserving, provided the merit litmus test is applied as opposed to blanketed distribution of pay hikes. Again, a great politically motivated gesture, but not necessarily the best ROI.

Do we not still have a need for cash flow to repair existing roads, highways and bridges? The gas tax hike finally implemented a couple of years ago doesn't cover all those needs.

And what about the fact that this 61 million in extra dollars the state lawmakers find before them came as a result of an SC Education Lottery winner finally coming forward to claim this past year's Mega Millions winnings?

Perhaps there is sound logic in the idea of reinvesting that money — at least a good portion of it — into our education system. Perhaps for meritorious teacher pay hikes. Or for buses. Or to help some districts with schools that are in disrepair.

South Carolina outlawed video gambling machines, which could have been a significant source of revenue, only to turn around and create the SC Education Lottery on the understandable premise that its neighbor states were siphoning dollars our residents were spending on buying tickets. Then let's be sure that lottery money is, in fact, serving our state's educational needs.



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Has the Catholic Church committed the worst crime in American history?

PHILADELPHIA
“Horseplay,” a term used to denote child rape, is, says Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro, part of a sinister glossary of euphemisms by which the Catholic Church’s bureaucracy obfuscates in documents the church’s “pattern of abuse” and conspiracy of silence “that goes all the way to the Vatican.” “Benevolent bishops” are those who allow predatory priests, shuffled from other dioceses, to continue as priests.



GEORGE WILL
WASHINGTON POST WRITERS GROUP

last August in a Pittsburgh grand jury’s report on the sexual abuse by about 300 priests of at least 1,000 victims in six Pennsylvania dioceses.

Seven months later, the nationwide stonewalling and cover-up continue by the church that, Shapiro says, has resisted discovery “every step of the way.” And “bishops are still involved.” The church fought his office’s jurisdiction, and fought the release of the report with its sickening details of, for example, giggling priests photographing and fondling boys, and “whips, violence and sadism.”

Shapiro says that his being Jewish has not adversely affected public perceptions of his office’s scrutiny of the church. This might be because of credible reports about a boy being raped and then forced into a confessional to confess *his* sin. Or a boy having his mouth washed out with

holy water after oral sex. The church’s crime wave is global. A French cardinal is convicted of concealing decades of sexual abuse by a priest in his jurisdiction; The Washington Post reports how clerical pedophiles “preyed on the most isolated and submissive children,” at an institute for the deaf in Argentina. Scrutiny of Latin America, from which today’s pope came, will be interesting.

In America, the acid drizzle of stomach-turning revelations might become a deluge now that 45 states’ attorneys general have contacted Shapiro about possible investigations in their states. It is highly unlikely that the abuses and conspiracies of silence about them are confined to Pennsylvania. Asked if this might be, cumulatively, the worst crime in American history, Shapiro says: Perhaps, considering the power of the guilty institution, the scale and prolonged nature of the crime, and the “sophisticated criminal cover-up.” He speaks of charging the guilty — when possible; many predatory priests have died, and statutes of limitations shield others — “the way you would typically charge the mob.”

An issue that used to bedevil Western nations — negotiating the border between the powers of civil authorities and the church’s prerogatives of self-governance — has been settled in favor of the former. So, when other states’ attorneys general consult with him, Shapiro says “do not trust the church” about voluntarily surrendering archives. The U.S. Justice Department has put dioceses on notice about preserving records concerning such things as the shuffling of predatory priests to benevolent bishops.

In November, a much-anticipated meeting of American bishops in Baltimore concerning sexual abuse was neutered by the Vatican, and the pope’s February meeting on the subject pro-

duced nothing reassuring. In America, the unfolding story — Shapiro says this is “only the third or fourth inning” — will involve legislating. Pennsylvania might open “a civil window” for suing the church, a measure fiercely resisted by the insurance industry that has sold liability policies to dioceses.

“The Faith is Europe and Europe is the Faith,” said the Catholic writer Hilaire Belloc in 1920, a statement wisely construed by Georgetown University professor emeritus James V. Schall, S.J.: “Europe is where Old Testament, New Testament, and Greek and Roman traditions melded. ... Catholic origins united [Europe] under common assumptions about what life, liberty, God, man, and cosmos were about.” It is therefore momentous that the church is in perhaps the worst self-inflicted and self-prolonged crisis since the Reformation.

Many common locutions — e.g., “Catholic Italy” and “Catholic Ireland” — no longer denote anything real. In the United States, the most religious modern nation, Catholics are leaving their religious affiliation at a higher rate than any other Christian sect. In December, Illinois’ attorney general said the church in that state concealed the names of all but 185 of the 690 priests accused of sexual abuses. The former archbishop in the nation’s capital, Cardinal Donald Wuerl, came to Washington from Pittsburgh. The church’s leaders, says Shapiro, “have shown over decades, centuries really, a focus on protecting the power of their institution.”

In a homily last September, the pope discerned something Satanic in the sexual-abuse scandal. He meant, however, that “the Great Accuser,” aka Satan, was attacking the pope’s bishops.

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Thank you, Bubba and Tuck

WASHINGTON
Some days you wake up and think, “Nope, not getting up.” I call these column days. Then, there are those other times when you practically hurl yourself from the sheets in a grande jete because: Bubba the Love Sponge and Tucker Carlson.

I call these proof of the deity. Bubba is a radio shock jock in Tampa, Florida. And, Carlson, of course, is the Fox News anchor who used to wear bowties. Forever cursed with preppy looks, he is known these days for, shall we say, over-correcting. His aversion to political correctness has become so acute that he routinely says “mean” things that ostensibly hurt people’s feelings. His plain-spoken ways have also made him a multi-multimillionaire who makes his Fox predecessor and heretofore unrivaled smirking bully, Bill O’Reilly, seem boyishly pranky.

Apparently, Carlson hasn’t always been so charming. Between 2006

and 2011, he was a somewhat regular feature on Bubba’s show. Recently unearthed tapes, compliments of the dogged archaeologists at Media Matters, reveal that Carlson was shockingly jock-ish in some of his musings, causing the mind-minders to dust off their high dudgeon.



KATHLEEN PARKER
WASHINGTON POST WRITERS GROUP

I’ve bought jewelry from his sister-in-law. We also share a close mutual friend, who shall remain anonymous, as he prefers, primarily so that he can fish more. Finally, I never watch Carlson’s show because he infuriates me. Oddly, now that everyone seems

to be mad at him, I’m coming around to liking him again.)

Let me explain. First, what Carlson said on Bubba’s show about Iraq was abominable. Perhaps in the spirit of shock, he said several remarkably offensive things, such as that he had “zero sympathy” for the Iraqi people because they “don’t use toilet paper or forks.” He also said that Iraq was populated by “semiliterate primitive monkeys” and, thus, not worth invading.

In other taped ruminations, Carlson also said that women are “extremely primitive” and “basic,” and “not that hard to understand,” which earned him the title of misogynist. I know Carlson well enough to know that this is ridiculous. In a tweet, Carlson described these remarks as merely “naughty” — and I am inclined to give him the benefit of the doubt that he at least wasn’t being completely serious. He’s a traditional, country-club Republican guy who knows and practices the gentlemanly

arts (when it suits him). Besides, who would disagree if he had said instead that *men* are primitive? (Deafening applause.) Basic? Hard to understand? Puh-leez. My guide to men is a one-pager titled “Sex and Supper.”

To clarify, these observations don’t mean I in any way agree with Carlson’s offensive quips — or that I don’t think his words are often over the top — but Fox didn’t hire him for his righteous platitudes. He knows his audience and feeds them all the red meat they can stomach. As for Bubba, bless his heart, shock radio is what it is. I don’t listen to it; I don’t like it; I find it as boring as I would eavesdropping on a men’s locker room. I do, however, listen to a lot of comedy and suspect many “Bubba the Love Sponge” listeners felt that Carlson was merely joking in a guy-taining way.

What I do agree with, however, is that neither Carlson nor anyone should instinctively bow to the mob, as he said in a retort to demands that

Fox fire their most popular anchor. Let them rage their furies, but once we allow a self-selected subset of American liberalism to become arbiters of what constitutes acceptable thought, then we are, indeed, on the road to purgatory. I figure it’s always better to let Vile and Invective exercise themselves by the light of day rather than push them into the dark down-under, there to fester and grow ever-more foul.

Such high principle is, obviously, problematical at a time when rhetoric has tended toward the incendiary, pitting American against American. It would be a far better world if speaking every thought weren’t rewarded and if the gentlemanly arts were extended to the spoken and written word. But when it comes to free thought and expression, the remedies are always worse than the original offense.

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OUR VIEW

Windfall to taxpayers
a wasteful effort

What a crock. And with it, you can buy yourself a pair of Crocs, but so what?

We are, of course, referencing state lawmakers' decision to refund taxpayers roughly \$50 apiece with an unexpected \$61 million windfall that resulted from the Mega-Millions jackpot.

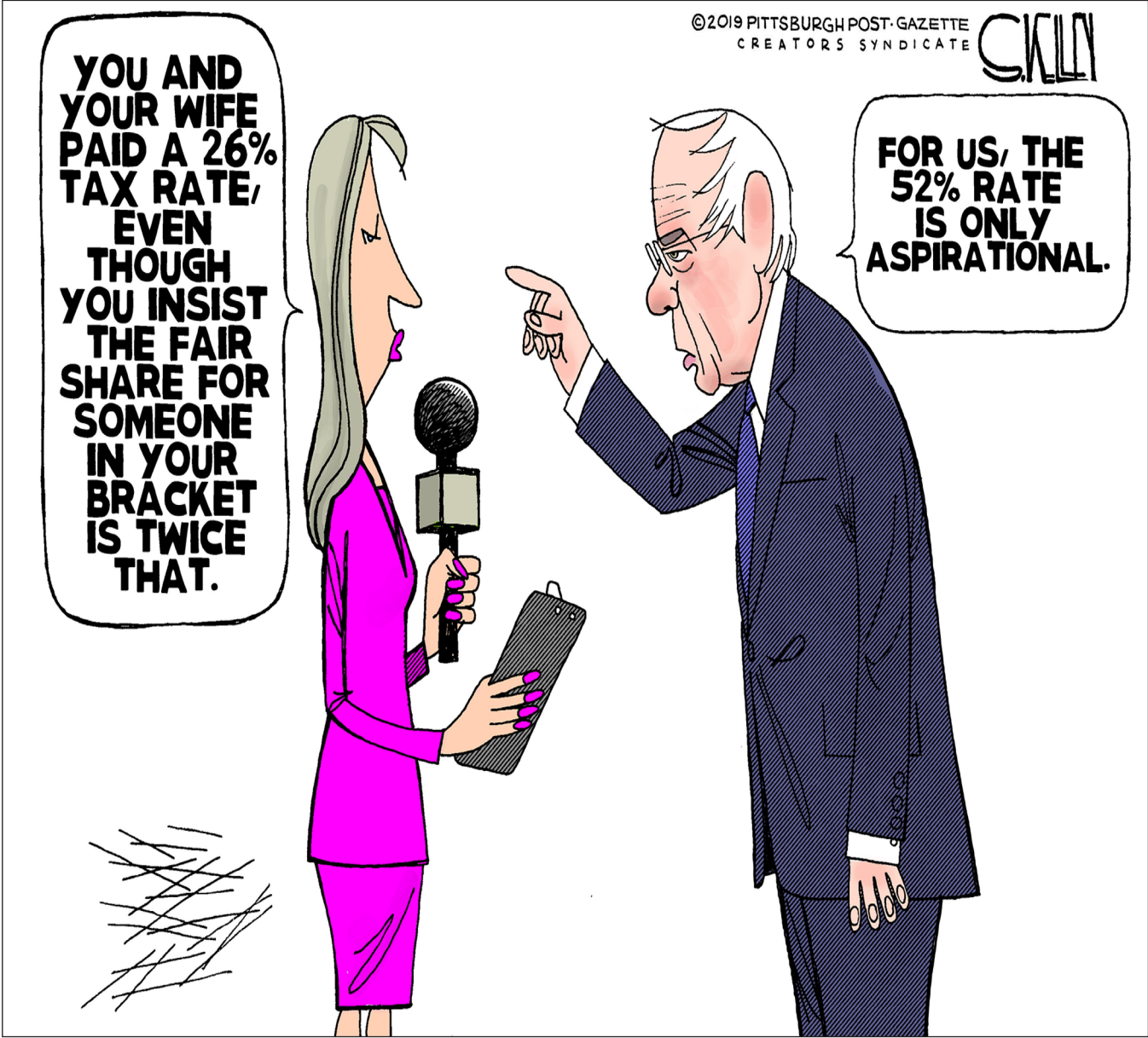
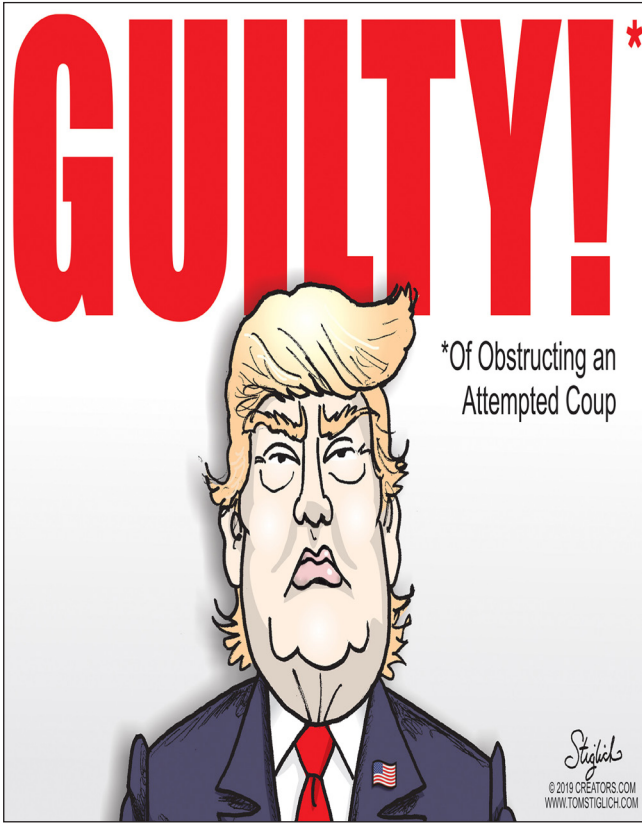
Tax-and-spend is no more our motto than it belongs to most taxpayers across the Palmetto State, and we do appreciate those occasions — rare as they might be — when lawmakers appear to be frugal with our money. This is not one of those times, however, especially in light of the fact that it will cost the state nearly three-quarters of a million bucks to send each taxpayer 50 bucks.

Surely something more important and meaningful could be done with that money. Not every lawmaker agreed with the proposal. A couple of coastal Republican lawmakers agree, even if they don't agree on how best to spend the windfall. Charleston Sen. Sandy Senn thought litter control would be a good option while Sen. Greg Hembree of Horry County suggested the windfall be used to prop up the state's underfunded pension system.

What's done is done and the rebate looks like nothing more than a way to try to appease voters. Er, taxpayers.

Meanwhile, how about this idea: Lawmakers, get a firm grip on the budget, what can and cannot be expected, and outline priorities even ahead of unexpected windfalls such as the one that came about from the sale of a winning lottery ticket.

Come to think of it, aren't lottery dollars supposed to help fund education efforts? Or is the state of our state's public schools just fine?



Democrats must move fearlessly
toward impeachment

WASHINGTON

The constitutional case for impeaching President Trump was best made two decades ago by one of his most servile enablers, Lindsey Graham, now the senior senator from South Carolina:

"You don't even have to be convicted of a crime to lose your job in this constitutional republic if this body [the Senate] determines that your conduct as a public official is clearly out of bounds in your role ... because impeachment is not about punishment. Impeachment is about cleansing the office. Impeachment is about restoring honor and integrity to the office."

The political case for moving deliberately but fearlessly toward impeachment is even clearer: If timorous Democrats do not seize and define this moment, Trump surely will.

What just happened is that special counsel Robert Mueller delivered a searing indictment of a president who has no idea what "honor" and "integrity" even mean — a president who lies almost pathologically, who orders subordinates to lie, who has no respect for the rule of law, who welcomed Russian meddling in the 2016 election, who clumsily tried to orchestrate a cover-up, who tried his best to impede a lawful Justice Department investigation and failed only to the extent that aides ignored his outrageous and improper orders.

What Trump claims just happened is a "witch hunt."

Anyone who thinks there is a chance

that Trump will lick his wounds and move on has not been paying attention. Having escaped criminal charges — because he is a sitting president — Trump will go on the offensive. With the help of Attorney General William Barr, whose title really should be Minister of Spin, the president will push to investigate the investigators and sell the bogus counternarrative of an attempted "coup" by politically motivated elements of the "deep state."

Here is the important thing: Trump will mount this attack *no matter what Democrats do*. And strictly as a matter of practical politics, the best defense against Trump has to be a powerful offense.

I fail to see the benefit for Democrats, heading into the 2020 election, of being seen as such fraidy-cats that they shirk their constitutional duty. Mueller's portrait of this president and his administration is devastating. According to Lindsey Graham's "honor and integrity" standard — which he laid out in January 1999, when he was one of the House prosecutors in Bill Clinton's impeachment trial in the Senate — beginning the process of impeaching Trump is not a close call.

It is also important for Democrats to keep their eyes on the prize. The election is the one guaranteed opportunity to throw Trump and his band of grifters out of the White House, and the big anti-Trump majority that was on display in last year's midterm must be maintained and, one hopes, expanded.

But that task will largely fall to the eventual Democratic nominee, whoever that turns out to be. Presidential contenders should be free to position themselves however they see fit on the impeachment question. Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., has chosen to single

herself out by leading the charge. Others may choose to demur and focus instead on the kitchen-table issues, such as health care, that polls show voters care about.

But most Democratic members of Congress (believe it or not) are not running for president. Their focus has to be on their constitutional duty — and nowhere in the Constitution does it say "never mind about presidential obstruction of justice or abuse of power if there's an election next year."

I have no intention of letting congressional Republicans off the hook. They have constitutional responsibilities as well, though it's clear they will not fulfill them. Imagine, for a moment, if the tables were turned — if a GOP majority were running the House and a Democratic president did half of what Trump did. Do you think Republicans would hesitate for a New York minute? Articles of impeachment would have been drawn up long ago and stern-faced senators, including Graham, would already be sitting in judgment.

The conventional wisdom is that Republicans made a political error by impeaching Clinton. But they did win the presidency in 2000 and go on to dominate Congress for most of George W. Bush's tenure. If impeachment was a mistake, it wasn't a very costly one.

Does it "play into Trump's hands" to speak of impeachment? I think it plays into the president's hands to disappoint the Democratic base and come across as weak and frightened. Voters who saw the need to hold Trump accountable decided to give Democrats some power — and now expect them to use it.

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Justice Kavanaugh and GMU snowflakes

George Mason University's Antonin Scalia Law School hired Supreme Court Associate Justice Brett Kavanaugh to co-teach a course this summer called Creation of the Constitution. The course will be held 3,668 miles away, in Runnymede, England, where the Magna Carta was sealed 800 years ago.

Some George Mason University students and faculty have become triggered. One student told George Mason's Board of Visitors, "It has affected my mental health knowing that an abuser will be part of our faculty." Another said, "The hiring of Kavanaugh threatens the mental well-being of all survivors on this campus." The Washington Post reports that a petition to fire Kavanaugh has gathered almost 3,500 signatures and has the endorsement of George Mason Democrats. GMU students have created separate forms for parents and alumni to pledge that they will not donate to the university

so long as Kavanaugh is teaching. Part of student demonstrations included defacing a statue of the university's namesake George Mason by putting blue tape on his mouth and attaching anti-Kavanaugh signs. The university's spokesman Michael Sandler gave The College Fix a mealy-mouthed excuse saying, "We allow students to dress up the statue, so this doesn't violate any policies that I'm aware of." He said the university "strongly supports



WALTER WILLIAMS

CREATORS SYNDICATE

freedom of expression and this would seem to fall into that category." His vision suggests that freedom of expression includes defacing university property.

Youngsters with little understanding might be forgiven for their protest

of a U.S. Supreme Court associate justice sharing his wisdom with law students. But faculty members cannot be excused. Professor Bethany Letiecq, the head of the George Mason chapter of the American Association of University Professors, endorsed a call by UnKoch My Campus, another leftist group, for a congressional investigation of GMU's law school's hiring of Justice Kavanaugh as an adjunct faculty member. Fortunately for civility, Dr. Angel Cabrera, the university's president, said that there were no legitimate grounds for an investigation by the university. He threw a bit of pabulum to the protesters by saying: "I respect the views of people who disagreed with Justice Kavanaugh's Senate confirmation due to questions raised about his sexual conduct in high school. But he was confirmed and is now a sitting Justice." Considering that a college president is also a politician, that statement demonstrates good judgment. According to The College Fix,

after listening to the student protestors speak during the board meeting, Cabrera and Board of Visitors rector Tom Davis said they were proud of the students and appreciated that they spoke up and acted as engaged citizens. That's nonsense.

I receive many questions from people around the nation who are surprised by the happenings at GMU. As I have advised on numerous occasions, George Mason University erroneously earns a reputation as a conservative/libertarian university because of its most distinguished and internationally known liberty-oriented economics department, which can boast of two homegrown Nobel laureates in economics. Its Antonin Scalia Law School has a distinguished faculty that believes in personal liberty and reveres the U.S. Constitution — unlike many other law schools that hold liberty and our Constitution in contempt. The rest of the university is just like most other universities — liberal, Democratic

Party-dominated. The chief difference between my GMU colleagues and liberals at some other universities is that they are polite, respectful and congenial, unlike what one might find at places like U.C. Berkeley or University of Massachusetts.

GMU students and faculty may also be disturbed about what Justice Kavanaugh is going to teach. In the course, Creation of the Constitution, he will explain how much the Magna Carta influenced the founders of our nation. The 1215 Magna Carta limited the power of central government and it forced a reigning monarch to grant his English subjects rights. It contained a list of 63 clauses drawn up to limit King John's power, resulting in making royal authority subject to the law instead of reigning above it. It laid the foundations for limited constitutional governments, an idea offensive to most leftists.

Walter Williams is a professor of economics at George Mason University.