

## Re: OT: Politics [Was:Social Contract]

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- *From:* Steve Lamb <grey@xxxxxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Sat, 29 Apr 2006 22:00:57 -0700
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Monique Y. Mudama wrote:

It's a sad reality that not all adults are responsible.

Yes, it is. Problem is is it really the government's role, especially at the federal level, to deal with that problem? Or is it more appropriate for local institutions and local governments where people have more say in how those problems are handled?

So it's a reality that there will be kids whose parents can't afford to pay for education. Now, here in the US, those kids will eventually be able to vote. I do feel that I benefit from a voting public that has at least a high school education.

I wish I could feel the same. However the foolishness that the general population lets their politicians get away with does not instill me with confidence that they were educated at all. Take a look at the the two top political issues out currently. Immigration reform and gasoline prices.

I feel that if the public at large had a high school education they should be able to see through the sham that both of these issues are. First off it isn't immigration reform. I know several immigrants (one from France, one from India) and the current debate has little to no impact on them. Why? Because they did just what we label them implies. They immigrated here... legally. They didn't illegally cross the border. They didn't engage in class and race warfare in an attempt to legalize what they did after the fact. In fact both of them, shockingly enough, learned English before coming here and aren't still speaking their native tongue after several years of being here! Imagine that! So to me the fact that most people seem manifestly incapable of distinguishing illegal aliens and legal immigrants implies they really weren't educated to a high school level on what constitutes, legal and illegal and the consequences of illegality.

As for gas prices the same applies. I am able to produce a widget for \$1. I sell it for \$1.10. I make \$1.10 in revenue and \$.10 in profit or a 10% profit margin. All is well. I make the same widget for \$1 but I'm able to

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make two billion of them. I sell all two billion of them at \$1.10. I make \$2,200,000,000.00 in revenues, a profit of \$200,000,00.00, a 10% profit margin and now there's congressional hearings into my "windfall" profits. Seems foolish, that's exactly what's happening. Look at the news coverage carefully and the words they're using. They talk about gross revenues and profits. Obviously if companies sell more their revenues are going to go up and their profits will go up. But that doesn't mean their profit MARGIN has changed one iota. So I fail to see how having high sales is something to warrant a government probe! I fail to understand how supposedly high school educated individuals (heck, college graduates for that matter) can't grasp such a simple concept. Sell more, make more. Sell less, make less. Selling tons more doesn't mean something is amiss. In many cases that's doing something right!

But that issue gets better. What kind of double-think does it take to complain a few weeks ago about America's dependence on foreign oil only to turn around this week to investigate companies here who are reliant on foreign oil for their stocks! Might there just be a connection there and if there's any price fixing it might be \*gasp\* at the source of the oil? In fact how many people here remember a few years back the big news was that OPEC member nations got together to do something? Anyone remember what that was? Beuller? Beuller? Yes, it was to fix the price of oil that they sell on the market! They didn't hide it! They flat out told the world they were going to fix the price of oil and not break ranks. Nevermind that one nation (Iran, was it?) did break ranks for a time and sell oil for lower than the price they set.

Now, either the public high schools aren't doing their job because this same pattern develops time and again and large swaths of the public don't seem to be able to grasp the concept. Either that or my expectations of what defines an educated individual high schools should be producing is far too high.

As for me, I attended public schools throughout my education. They did d\*mn well by me. I'll grant that I went to a high school that routinely ranks in the top of schools nationwide, and furthermore that I was lucky in that I was in the accelerated track, which tends to draw highly motivated teachers, but in any case, I don't feel I missed out by getting a public school education. I do wish everyone had access to the kinds of teachers I had in high school.

I truly feel your experience is the exception. I know that of the 5 high schools in the city I grew up 4 of them were a complete waste and I attended the worst. The best advice I ever got was from my 10th grade English teacher. She pulled me aside one day and ask "What are you still doing here? Tell your parents about this program and get out." The program? The California High School Proficiency Exam. What I would have wasted on 11th and 12th grade was spent in college.

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Steve C. Lamb | But who decides what they dream?

PGP Key: 8B6E99C5 | And dream I do...

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*Attachment:* **signature.asc**

*Description:* OpenPGP digital signature