

This Just In -- We're Blue, Tattooed, Etc.

Written by Alex Baer

Wednesday, 26 March 2014 14:40

Well, it's just about official: We can all go get *blued*, tatoed, and have some machined screw threads carved into ourselves, if you catch the drift.

Oh, sure. There's lots of chest-beating about the sacredness of human life, especially from the Family Values segment of the population -- a group of highly religious policy-pushers noted for doing whatever can be done to utterly rip, rend, and wrench apart families, legally. You'd do better with Charles Manson as your social worker, Jeffrey Dahmer as your nutritionist, Jack the Ripper as your morale officer.

More correctly, all the hollering and screaming and protesting and Bible-thumping is about the sacredness of The Fetus. *Once the thing is born, to heck with it*, say almost all GOP policies for the past 35 or so years. If it's no longer

in vivo

, or even

in vitro

, then it's no longer in our supposed thoughts, in our sham prayers, or in our political hay-making and mud-slinging -- that particular life, once sprung from the womb, is simply no longer in play.

Republican actions clearly demonstrate their actual values. Programs for *corporations-as-people* get gangbuster support, to the point of sweat-stained apoplexy, while programs for *people-as-people* routinely die on the vine. And in Congress... where all good ideas and nice intentions go to become maimed for life.

Right-wingnuts always retreat when anyone dares to point out the glaring hypocrisies between their humid, wistful laments and fetid, action contents, to the protection of religion, saying it's a matter of God's Will, what gets done on Earth. Well, until God has a seat in Congress, I say, Republican *speechifying* is more a matter of GOP-swill than God's Will.

God does not pass corporate welfare bills in the tens of billions of dollars annually. God does not take out cosmic shears and snip out the supports to the remaining threads of the societal safety net. God does not show up with placards, protesting the sexual preferences of deceased

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war veterans at their own burial ceremonies. God does not shutter soup kitchens using public loitering laws.

God does not stroll the planet with a club, acting as our own individual, prayer-driven, private Smiting Agency -- although God knows Republicans think this is the case. This is especially true when sublime corporate resources not currently under U.S. control are spotted. Then, using a complex series of maneuvers, called *lying*, war is declared, and poor people go help thin out their own herds.

Unless you are an organ farm for someone rich and important, your actual chemical value is about 4 bucks and a half. This is about what you'd drop at a fast food joint. This is fitting, as we've all of us become fast food snacks -- figurative ones, so far, Soylent tea cakes for the upper crust's future aside for the moment.

* * * * *

Should Americans work themselves to early deaths simply to subsidize low wages enabling corporations to make ongoing killings? *You bet!* Corporations, the real welfare queens, get an average of 200 billion dollars a year in welfare payments.

Hurrah!

Every Wal-Mart worker costs taxpayers a thousand bucks a year in public assistance.

Hurrah!

McDonald's workers --

workers, people who already

have

jobs

-- took home seven billion dollars last year in public aid.

Hurrah!

For the fast food industry as a whole, it's a whopping 243 billion dollars a year.

Woo-hoo! Parr-tee!

Supplemental food assistance, to take one small measure of ameliorating forces for everyday Americans, was slashed 5 billion dollars already, with at least another 40 billion on the Republican Hit List. That's just Food Stamps. Of course, you already have it on excellent authority that Food Stamps cost every taxpayer *hundreds, if not thousands* of dollars a year!

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Maybe you should listen to someone besides Rush and Sean and Bill and Glenn and Fox and all the other brain-and-thinking-damaged media stars who are paid millions of dollars a year to keep you *entertained*, not *informed*. (Entertained, in this case, means *confused*, *in constant fear* , and *witho*
ut a clue
what is really going on around you, ready to bite any hand feeding you.)

- If you can stand the jolt of reality -- *or even if you can't* -- Food Stamps *actually* cost the average taxpayer 36 bucks a year, or about a dime a day. As you can easily see, you should be far more worried about that daily dime of yours than the 6 thousand dollars a year the average family shells out to keep the Republican shell game alive, paying annual subsidies to GOP-friendly corporations.

The non-profit, non-partisan research group, Good Jobs First, notes Boeing as the top vampiristic feeder at the Bank of American Blood. Boeing, at 13.1 billion dollars, has plenty of company at the knife-in-back, blood-gully aqueduct. In the billions of dollars: Alcoa, 5.6; Intel, 3.8; GM, 3.4; Ford, 2.5... *and on and on and on and on*.

Daydreams:

- *Close a few of the smaller tax loop holes, and the social safety net is paid in full for a year.*
- *A Wall Street transaction tax of anywhere from a tenth of a cent (\$1 on \$1,000) to half a percent (3 cents on \$100)*
 - *Tiered, flat-rate tax for everyone -- with income at 1.5 or 2.0 times the poverty rate not taxed at all*
 - *Stop exempting wages over \$113,700 from Social Security wages -- make all wages liable*

The imagery here is staggering, once you realize a million dollars, in hundred-dollar bills, fits on a standard pallet, about waist-high. A billion dollars is ten of these pallets. So, Boeing, for its corporate welfare, gets 130 million-dollar pallets a year. Alcoa gets more than 50 million-dollar pallets a year. Intel gets... *and on and on and on and on*.

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If you think corporations are using these funds to develop and create jobs, as the Republican mythos and meme goes, then you know nothing about the amount of money corporations are socking away offshore, away from any hint of U.S. taxation. Guess who picks up the slack? So far, by the way, that best-guess number is 21 trillion dollars.

That's 21 thousand billion dollars, or 21 million *million* dollars. A one with 12 zeroes trailing behind it, all in a daze, zombie-like. If you were to double-stack those hundred-dollar-bill pallets, up over your head, take a guess how many football stadiums we're talking about here. Or how many pallets. Or how many hundred-dollar bills. And no, that number will probably *not* fit in a standard bread box. Or shopping cart. Or chest freezer.

Now, an easier number: Guess how many of those corporate welfare dollars will go to help flesh-and-blood, everyday Americans? (*Please put your answer in the form of an astonished question and take a blast off the oxygen tank to your left.*)

While we're talking about zeroes here, tell me about the concerns of the blessed Saint Reagan -- how he got just *so darned mad* at all those unfair busy-bodies he dubbed *welfare queens*, to get his base all riled up like that. And, please, tell me about his slashing the social safety net, crushing unions, tripling the federal deficit, raising the debt ceiling 17 times...

* * * * *

What is a life worth? For all the fuss and foaming, an American life is worth whatever profit you, or that life-leaser, can create for someone else. All things aside, it's the only purpose you have in life -- the only reason for you to be alive. *To make someone else rich.* That's all.

Yes, this is the way it looks from behind GOP eyes, and from the corporate towers. It is well known that it is best to allow serfs to dream of freedom, if you want to get a full day's work from them. Or, if you expect them to vote against their own best interests. Or, if you expect them to blame themselves when there are no jobs. Or ignore the 10.5 million of their jobless peers. Or put aside the fact that CEO-to-worker pay has increased at a rate of 1,000% since 1950, and where CEOs now earn 874 times the wages of the average worker. Or...

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- I love the Despair.com *Demotivator* poster depicting the pyramids of Egypt, along with the caption, "**Achievement:** You can do anything you set your mind to when you have vision, determination, and an endless supply of expendable labor."

- A runner-up? It shows an Aztec pyramid and the caption, "**Sacrifice:** All we ask here is that you give us your heart."

* * * * *

Income inequality: This is a new buzz-phrase, slang for *What level of financial rape are you experiencing from your friendly local Robber Baron?*

That two-word phrase attempts to inform you that the richest 400 people in the U.S. now own more than three-fifths of what *everybody else has*

Yes, the top 400 people own more than 72 million families, combined. The top 400 took in more than \$300 billion -- which is more than the total cost of the remaining safety net. Most of these people are not *Makers*, as is the latest disinformation meme. They are not job creators, they are *Takers*, those who suck up wealth created for them by others.

About half of the country is now poor and low-income. These numbers have been booming along, busting records since 1922. These trends are about as sustainable as the freshness of flapper girls, the Charleston, or Marie Antoinette's cake.

I don't know where I'm a-gonna go when the volcano blows. You?

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You want to know what life is worth? Ask the folks at the Danish zoo who put down a giraffe and a family of lions when it wasn't *convenient* for the animals to be around any longer. Ask the folks at the Frankfurt zoo who found 15 flamingoes dead. Closer to home, consider all the world's dead from all the world's wars, throughout all times -- how many pallets would *they* fill?

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I am not comforted by the fact that the best use for humans, once the gases and liquids are drained off, would likely be as sulfur, for matches. This factoid in mind, I am surprised we are not seeing *little match girls* in the current economic depression, just as we did in the previous one.

This time around, the *little match girls* can sell us matches made from ourselves. This is called Progress. These new matches -- made up of friends, loved one, strangers -- can maybe help us better see our way to the real value of human life, and help illuminate the dank night of ice-cold statistics.

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Postscript / Epilogue: To ease up on the psychic damage here, and end this one on a somewhat more upbeat note, it appears Girl Scout cookie hawkers are not the next *little match girls*, but the next CEOs, Presidents, and Rulers of the Earth, and this Solar System. This appears to be especially true for Girl Scout cookie sellers who spot early trends, use some imagination, and set up shop outside medical marijuana dispensaries.

Location, location, location.

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The value of human life:

<http://chemistry.about.com/b/2011/02/06/how-much-are-the-elements-in-your-body-worth.htm>

Soylent snax:

<http://www.amazon.com/Soylent-Green-Crackers-4-4-Ounce-Pack/dp/B005H5ZOEU>

and: <http://laughingsquid.com/soylent-green-crackers-just-like-grandma-used-to-taste/>

Welfare queens:

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-11-13/how-mcdonald-s-and-wal-mart-became-welfare-queens.html>

and: <http://truth-out.org/opinion/item/21228-americas-real-welfare-queens>

and: http://inthesetimes.com/article/16362/the_real_welfare_queens

and: http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/publiccosts/fast_food_poverty_wages.pdf

and: http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/sites/default/files/docs/pdf/subsidizingthecorporateonepercent_prrel.pdf

Transaction Tax:

<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2013/12/28/1265765/-The-Tax-that-could-save-America-from-Wall-Street>

Tiered flat tax:

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[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What are the pros and cons of a tiered flat tax system with a bsolutely no deductions nor loopholes](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_are_the_pros_and_cons_of_a_tiered_flat_tax_system_with_a_bsolutely_no_deductions_nor_loopholes)

Lift the cap:

<http://www.npr.org/2013/12/05/249068448/to-fix-social-security-some-democrats-want-to-lift-wa-ge-cap>

Scale of money: <http://www.pagetutor.com/trillion/index.html>

Ronnie and The Welfare Queens: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Welfare_queen

The Reagan Legacy: <http://www.sociology.org/content/vol003.004/thomas.html>

and: <http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2011/02/05/142288/reagan-centennial/>

and:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/wp/2013/10/16/guess-who-raised-the-debt-ceiling-17-times/>

Offshore stash: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/frederickallen/2012/07/23/super-rich-hide-21-trillion-offshore-study-says/>

Demotivators: <http://www.despair.com/demotivators.html>

Unemployment blame: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-26669971>

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Long road of unemployment: <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-25684520>

U.S. income inequality: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-24039202>

The *Munny-Go-Round*: <http://www.nationofchange.org/another-shocking-wealth-grab-rich-just-one-year-1390231015>

and: <http://www.nationofchange.org/more-evidence-half-america-or-near-poverty-1395672039>

Danish Giraffe, lions: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26734377>

Little Danish match girls: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Little_Match_Girl

Flamingoes: <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-26714665>

Ashes to ashtray, human dust to matches: https://www.adbusters.org/magazine/95/dollar_value_of_a_human.html

Today's Bonus:

Cookies! <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-26733757>

Jimmy & The Volcano: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbzIVR1OaAY>

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Joe & The Volcano: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGLKnAvzlg4>

Life at the Koch Bros. Company Store, aka "Joe..." opener:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytS4yFM4Oxw>