



THE DAILY WRAP

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Criminal Justice and Policing Reform

Curtis Bunn. "[Are Asset Seizures by Police Ripping Black People Off?](#)" *Ebony*.

This article begins with the tale of Darren, who is unwilling to give his last name for fear of reprisal after his property was taken by the Chicago police. Darren's tale begins with his being wrongly identified as a drug dealer, and based on this suspicion, he had two flat-screen televisions and an Apple computer seized from him by the police last summer. Despite Darren's being cleared of any wrongdoing and having no criminal record as a result of the proceedings, the police never returned his property. As Bunn notes, "Although police admitted their mistake and exonerated Darren of drug charges, the mound of money and paperwork required to recover his belongings was so steep that he eventually gave up." The obstacles Darren faced to getting his property back, including the burden of proof resting upon him to prove the legality of his assets, are

among the incentive problems associated with the practice of civil asset forfeiture. In noting the problems with the practice, the article quotes Clark Neily, an attorney with the Institute for Justice, and Vikrant Reddy, a senior fellow at the Charles Koch Institute, as underscoring the urgent need for reform to civil asset forfeiture practices around the country. The article also notes how the practice could be disproportionately impacting racial minorities: “Last year, an ACLU study indicated 63 percent of cash seizures belonged to black people — and 32 per cent of the cash-seizure targets had never been convicted of a crime.” Without a significant overhaul of civil asset forfeiture laws at the state and federal level, law enforcement will continue to be incentivized to trample on the property and due process rights of ordinary citizens, while jeopardizing its legitimacy in the eyes of their communities.

Cronyism and Corporate Welfare

Editorial Board. “[Bury the Zombie Board.](#)” *Chicago Tribune*.

The *Chicago Tribune*’s editorial board recently applauded the 3rd District Appellate Court’s decision to allow Centegra Health System to build a new hospital in a northwestern suburb of Chicago. Centegra was held up by the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board—“a vestige of an ill-conceived 1970s attempt to control rapidly rising health care costs by strangling the development of new hospitals and other facilities.” The board points out, “The theory was that too much competition drives up costs. The reality is that strangling competition is more likely to drive up costs.” The result being: “It has worked about as well as those centralized Five-Year Plans for the Soviet Economy.” In a special concurrence Justice Schmidt wrote that “the legislation assures that money keeps pouring in to Illinois politicians not only from those wishing to build new hospitals, but also from incumbent hospitals wishing to avoid any competition. Each side wants their friends on the Board.” The *Tribune*’s editorial board supports dismantling the board. Cronyism and corporate welfare are often discussed in terms of self-interested politicians and businesses colluding together against consumers and other businesses. Underscored in this case is how poorly conceived laws, even if well-intentioned, can lead to bad incentives that many politicians and

businesses gladly follow.

U.S. Foreign and Defense Policy

Doug Bandow. "[Crimea After Two Years As Part Of Russia: Time To Drop Sanctions](#)." *Cato at Liberty*.

Bandow examines the ineffectiveness of the sanctions imposed against Russia stemming from its annexation of Crimea and other actions in Ukraine. The sanctions have not had the intended effect of returning Crimea to Ukrainian control or otherwise changing the Russian government's behavior. Instead, the sanctions have hurt the Russian general public and damaged the liberalization of the Russian economy by making Russian businesses "more dependent on government support." Some European states are skeptical of continuing the sanctions. Supporters argue that the sanctions must continue until Russia more fully complies with the Minsk accords, but Bandow argues that "the belief that imposing sanctions a little longer will force Moscow to capitulate reflects the triumph of hope over experience." Instead, Bandow urges that the West rethink its policies towards Moscow. Because Ukraine is of much greater geopolitical importance to Russia than it is to the West, Russia is willing to "risk more to protect its perceived security interests next door." Bandow points out that Putin reacting to the West encouraging revolt in the country next door does not make him Hitler or Stalin, but simply a Tsar acting "predictably and rationally." Bandow concludes that "the U.S. and Europe shouldn't allow the perfect to be the enemy of the good in policy toward Russia."

Technology and Innovation

Grace Schneider. "[UPS Will Test Drones For Blood Deliveries In Africa](#)." *USA Today*.

This article highlights UPS' plan to test the delivery of vaccines and blood for transfusions to remote parts of Rwanda in Africa. The UPS Foundation will commit \$800,000 and partner with Gavi, a Swiss vaccines group, and

Zipline, a California robotics company. According to Schneider, the drones could make up to 150 deliveries a day and provide a safe and effective delivery method that can save lives and is expected to be used as a model for scaling up humanitarian relief efforts globally. This story highlights the transformative power of technology. Groups in three countries separated by thousands of miles are partnering to deliver life-saving medicine and blood to people they have never met through unmanned flying vehicles. It is a testament to innovation that not only does this technology exist, but it is being used to improve the lives of the least well off in society.

Toleration

Jeff John Roberts. "[Like It Or Not, Facebook Has The Right To Choose Your News.](#)" *Fortune*.

Many were shocked by a claim from a former Facebook worker that Facebook regularly removed conservative stories from its trending stories section. While this might be disappointing for those who had viewed Facebook as a neutral forum for debate, Roberts suggests to us that the proper mental model is to view Facebook as a newspaper. Facebook, as a private company choosing what goes into its trending stories, is simply exercising editorial control. As Ken Paulson of the First Amendment Center notes, it "has a First Amendment right to publish content in any way it wants, just as a newspaper or magazine publisher has a free hand in deciding what to print. There's no role for government—and that's a very good thing." Noted legal scholar Eugene Volokh also affirmed Facebook's First Amendment rights, though he noted it is also subject to market forces: "It may well be very bad for Facebook's business if it turns out that it was indeed making these selections based on the politics of the stories." Rather than asking government to step in, Facebook users should determine in their individual capacity whether or not to use the site, letting market forces determine whether revelations around Facebook's curation process impact the company.

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