



[Return to the Article](#)

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## Random Thoughts

By [Thomas Sowell](#)

Random thoughts on the passing scene:

One of the most important skills for political success is the ability to make confident assertions of absurdities or lies.

The adage "follow the money" will be hard to apply in the current administration, when there is so much money going in all directions that it is doubtful whether anybody can follow it.

I hate to hear about "partnerships" between government and business, or between government and other organizations. When there is a partnership between an ant and an elephant, who do you suppose makes the decisions?

There are too many people, especially among the intelligentsia, who will never appreciate the things that have made this country great until after those things have been destroyed-- with their help. Then, of course, it will be too late.

How can a President of the United States be re-elected in a landslide after four years when unemployment never fell below 15 percent for even one month during his first term? Franklin D. Roosevelt did it by blaming it all on the previous administration. Barack Obama may be able to achieve the same result the same way.

Do you want to have to jump through bureaucratic hoops when you are sick? If not, why would you be in favor of government-run medical care?

The "Wall Street Journal Report" is one of the few things on television worth watching. It is worth it just to see the sardonic smile of Kimberly Strassel whenever she discusses politics.

Democrats could sell refrigerators to Eskimos before Republicans could sell them blankets.

Anyone who wants to understand the housing crisis without getting a headache from reading economic jargon should read the new book "Financial Shock" by Mark Zandi.

Human beings are going to make mistakes, whether in the market or in the government. The difference is that survival in the market requires recognizing mistakes and changing course before you go bankrupt. But survival in politics requires denying mistakes and sticking with the policies you advocated, while blaming others for the bad results.

I know that there are still voices of sanity around because I have counted them-- on one hand.

More frightening to me than any policy or politician is the ease with which the public is played for fools with words. The latest example is the "Employee Freedom of Choice Act," a bill that will do away with secret ballot elections among workers voting on whether to be represented by a union. It is an open invitation to intimidation-- which is to say, loss of freedom of choice.

Our economic problems worry me much less than our political solutions, which have a far worse track record.

One of the wonders of our times is how much more attention is paid to the living conditions of a bunch of cut-throats locked up in Guantanamo than to the leading international sponsor of terrorism getting nuclear weapons.

The great sense of urgency of the Obama administration to get legislation to authorize slow-moving spending projects may seem inconsistent. But the urgency is real, even if the reasons given are not. The worse case scenario for the administration would be to have the economy begin to recover on its own before this massive spending bill is passed, reducing their chances of creating the kind of politically directed economy they want.

I realized how far behind the times I am when I saw a TV commercial for some weight-loss product, showing Marie Osmond "before" and "after." I thought she looked great "before."

War should of course be "a last resort"-- but last in terms of preference, not last in the sense of hoping against hope while dangers grow, and wishful thinking or illusory agreements substitute for serious military preparedness-- or, if necessary, military action. As Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "If you wait until you see the whites of their eyes, you will never know what hit you."

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