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WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

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The paranoid interpretation of Barack Obama's presidency would be that he's a plant from the libertarian **Cato Institute** slyly working to discredit government. Could the tea party have devised a more diabolical scheme than a liberal president delivering a passionate speech plugging an enormous jobs program that won't work and doing it in grandiose terms that identify it with the historic liberal agenda?

No one doubts the necessity of infrastructure. But that doesn't mean it should be thought of as a fast-acting jobs program, or that it should trump all fiscal considerations. Obama invoked Abraham Lincoln as a fellow believer in big, government-supported projects. He didn't mention the sweeping transportation scheme supported by Lincoln as a state legislator in Illinois that collapsed in a heap. It left the state, in the words of a biographer, "with an enormous debt and an empty treasury."

Rich Lowry, National Review Online \

(Rick) Perry's claim is that his state, where he has served as governor for the last 11 years, has found more creative and more business-friendly ways to fill its coffers. Don't tell that to one of the state's most vibrant industries: its nearly 200 strip clubs. They are caught in an endless legal battle with the state that points to the downside of the Texas approach to revenue collection.

The \$5-per-customer tax on strip clubs that Perry signed in 2007 -- which goes by a number of nicknames, the most clever of which is the "pole tax" -- was to fund an array of programs relating to sexual assault prevention and counseling, as well as subsidies for a sliver of

the 6 million Texans without insurance. In a state with no income tax, helping those without health coverage fell to, well, those looking for women who aren't covered.

Alec MacGillis, The New Republic