

One 'Fine' Day The Hotline June 11, 2012 Monday

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The Hotline

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HEADLINE: One 'Fine' Day

BODY:

Mitt Romney's campaign on June 10 released a new web ad targeting Pres. **Obama** for his remark on June 8 that the private sector of the economy is doing "fine."

The video "features footage of Americans describing their personal economic hardships" and then repeats the clip of Obama saying "the private sector is doing fine" three times. The video closes with a message: "No Mr. President, we are not doing fine" (**Blake, Washington Post**, 6/10).

Hawkeye Hellraiser

Campaigning in IA June 8, Romney "took aim" at Obama's remark that "the private sector is doing fine." Romney, at a rally in Council Bluffs: "Is he really that out of touch? I think he's defining what it means to be detached and out of touch with the American people. Has there ever been an American president who is so far from reality?"

Romney, on his second visit to IA since the caucuses, said: "For the president of the United States to stand up and say the private sector is doing fine is going to go down in history. It's an extraordinary miscalculation and misunderstanding by a president who is out of touch, and we're going to take back this

country and get America working again."

Romney joked that he has a copy of Obama's to-do list from the president's desk. Romney: "You see, I was able to sneak that out. There are a few things that are missing. Missing is lead a real recovery. Missing is reduce the deficit. Missing is save Medicare and Social Security. Missing is help small business. ... I won't have to have a long to-do list in my drawer at the White House. My to-do list is written on my heart, and my first three entries are these: jobs, jobs and jobs" (**Jacobs/Clayworth, Des Moines Register**, 6/9).

Romney ticked off a list of statistics that run counter to Obama's "doing fine" claim: 23M Americans out of work, no longer looking for work, or able to find only part-time work; the economy growing at only 1.9% in the first quarter of the year; median income dropping by 10% over the last four years; and a record number of home foreclosures.

Though Romney repeatedly hit Obama for the weak economy and slow jobs growth during his speech in Council Bluffs, he did admit that the recession that gripped the nation after the financial crisis of 2008 has been slowly improving. But he denied that Obama's policies were the reason (**Huisenga, National Journal**, 6/8).

-- Also in Iowa:

Romney "personally called a Council Bluffs restaurant owner" June 8 to apologize "after she said she and her husband felt disrespected by the presidential candidate's campaign staff."

On June 8 morning, **Dianne** and **Earl Bauer** hosted Romney's roundtable meeting at their restaurant, Main Street Cafe, prior to his speech at Bayliss Park across the street. "The Secret Service required the closure of half of their cafe for about five hours, but they weren't allowed to personally meet Romney, they said. As soon as Romney campaign aides read about the cafe owners' concerns in an online story posted by The Des Moines Register, they notified the candidate."

Romney was flying out of IA "immediately after the day's events,

but said he wanted to apologize to the Bauers before the plane took off. A campaign volunteer dispatched to the cafe connected with Romney by cellphone, then handed the phone to Dianne Bauer. ... Bauer said Romney's call, as well as apologies from the campaign volunteer, helped smooth over the situation" (**Jacobs/Clayworth, Des Moines Register, 6/9**).

On June 9, IA tea party activists gathered for a rally at the state capitol. Des Moines Tea Party founder **Charlie Gruschow** spoke to the crowd about "the dilemma now facing many Tea Party activists": They're strongly opposed to Obama's re-election, but many are unsure whether they can actively support Romney.

Gruschow "drew sympathetic laughter and applause when he spoke of what's likely to occur on Election Day." Gruschow: "I don't know if I'm going to hold my nose and vote, but that's a decision I'll make in the voting booth. I know I'll be voting for Romney as he is in my opinion, at least - the better of the two men. ... Romney is certainly better than what we've got in the White House today" (**Kauffman, Des Moines Register, 6/9**).

All That Jazz

"Shutters clicked and video rolled" as Romney arrived in Salt Lake City on June 8. There, Romney and Sen. **Orrin Hatch** (R-UT) "strolled down the tarmac ... at the Executive Terminal at the Salt Lake City International Airport."

Hatch "is counting on those pictures being worth thousands of votes" in the UT SEN GOP primary election June 26.

Romney came to UT "for a quick, highly orchestrated appearance" with Hatch before attending two private fundraisers. "The two chatted as they walked to an awaiting Suburban and Romney could be heard laughing. Neither took questions from the media gathered outside the terminal before driving off together" (**Romboy, Deseret News, 6/8**).

Later in the afternoon June 8, Romney gave "a 20-minute speech to about 150 invited guests attending a fundraiser at the Grand America Hotel." There, Romney told supporters "he could put the

country back to work" if elected. Romney: "It's time for a president who understands what's happening with the American people."

Jabbing at Obama for his comment earlier in the day that the "private sector is doing fine," Romney told the crowd: "Oh really. Go talk to those 23 million people [out of work]. Go talk to those people who have seen their homes vanish underneath their feet. Talk to the people who have seen their incomes decline and their expenses go up. Talk to seniors" (**Gehrke, Salt Lake Tribune, 6/8**).

Romney told his "enthusiastic audience" that the nation's debt under Obama is "immoral," promising his to-do list in the WH will be "jobs, jobs and jobs." Romney: "I am absolutely convinced that if we take a different course than the one we're on, we're going to have a bright and prosperous future. If I'm president of the United States, we're not going to have trillion-dollar deficits. I will get us on track to finally have a balanced budget."

The crowd included Hatch, who said in his introduction of Romney that many Americans don't feel Obama's "up to the job." Hatch: "But we know who's up to the job, we in Utah more than any other place" (**Roche, Deseret News, 6/8**).

Later that evening, Romney "attended dinner at a home with major donors" who were reportedly contributing as much as \$50K to dine with Romney (**Mehta, Los Angeles Times, 6/9**).

-- Also in Utah:

Salt Lake Tribune's Burr reports, "Romney bid an opportunity, challenge for Mormon church": "When the world came to Salt Lake City in 2002 for the Winter Olympics, the LDS Church courted American and international journalists with snazzy videos, calendars and press packets, pitching stories on how the faith sprouted from humble roots to become one of the fastest-growing religions."

"Ten years later, as the spotlight on Mitt Romney's candidacy reflects onto the Utah-based religion, the church says it plans to

be more restrained using the opportunity to clear up misunderstandings but not to convert people to the Mormon fold or weigh into the politics" (6/9).

Handing It Back

Amid swirling criticism from GOPers over Obama's "doing fine" remark, Dems "are seizing on" Romney's suggestion that the country does not need more teachers and first responders. Speaking after Obama's news conference on June 8, Romney assailed Obama's call for more aid to state and local governments to boost hiring.

Romney, in IA: "His answer for economic vitality...was, of course, pushing aside the private sector, which he said is doing fine. Instead, he wants to add more to government. He says we need more firemen, more policemen, more teachers. Did he not get the message in Wisconsin? The American people did. It's time for us to cut back on government and help the American people."

The Obama campaign and DNC "blasted out the comments in a series of email statements, web videos and tweets, saying that Romney was advocating the elimination of jobs for firefighters, cops and teachers" (**Dwyer**, ABC News, 6/9).

AFL-CIO pres. **Richard Trumka**: "Mitt Romney says he wants fewer teachers, that means larger classrooms. He says he wants fewer firefighters, that means less safety. I mean, rich people will probably still have good protection, working class people won't" ("Face the Nation," CBS, 6/10).

Ex-Sen. **Rick Santorum** (R-PA), on Romney's comment on teachers: "Teachers are great, we love teachers, but if anybody believes that hiring more teachers as we did over the many, many years in this country ... if that's dramatically improved the quality of education, you got to show me the numbers because it's not. This is a false choice, that somehow or another pumping more money into an educational system that's already spending an enormous amount of money is going to solve the problem. What we need to do is have education reform, not throw more money at teachers. And Mitt Romney understands that" ("This

Week," ABC, 6/10).

WI Gov. **Scott Walker** (R), on Romney saying the message of WI is that Americans want fewer public employees: "I think it's slightly different. I think in our case what they wanted is people who were willing to take on the tough issues not only here in Wisconsin but across the country. I think Gov. Romney's got a shot if the 'R' next to his name doesn't just stand for republican but stands for reformer."

Walker, on whether he thinks Romney is talking about getting rid of more teachers and firemen: "No I think in the end the big issue is that the private sector still needs more help and the answer's not more big government. I know in my state our reforms allowed us to protect firefighters, police officers and teachers. That's not what I think when I think of big government. I think of the bigger sense is more government regulations, more stimulus, more things that take money out of the private sector and put it in the hands of the government, and that's not the answer out there" ("Face the Nation," CBS, 6/10).

What's On Tap

On June 12 morning, Romney will hold a campaign event at Con-Air Industries in Orlando, FL (**Smith, Tampa Bay Times**, 6/10).

The Boys On The Bus

Romney on June 11 announced the "Believe in America" bus tour, a five-day, six-state trip through "small towns" in battleground states across the northeast and Midwest.

The tour kicks off June 15 in NH; June 16 in PA; June 17 in OH; June 18 in WI and OH; June 19 in MI (release, 6/11).

Expanding The Influence

The Romney campaign, "which has had a scant presence on the air in recent weeks," has added CO, NH and NV to the states where it is running TV commercials. Its purchases "were small and for just four days," with the new round of ads starting on

June 9 \$216K in CO; \$82K in NH; and \$113K in NV.

Romney's campaign had already committed another \$1.5M to advertising in OH, IA and VA during that same period, "giving him a modest presence on the air in those states." In all, the Romney campaign has committed \$7.1M to advertising since mid-May (**Peters, New York Times**, 6/8).

Meanwhile, Romney's campaign purchased almost \$2M worth of ad time for a TV ad, released last week, defending his record as MA gov (CNN, 6/8).

Run For The Border

Hispanic advisers to Romney's campaign "have told him that it is vital that he soften the sharp rhetoric on immigration that he adopted during the [GOP] primary race and that he work to make inroads with one of the fastest-growing segments of the electorate."

Several advisers said "it is evident that Romney is getting the message, and there are plans underway to make a push among Hispanic voters," who currently support Obama by more than a 2-to-1 margin. The Romney campaign "recently hired a full-time Hispanic outreach coordinator and has held several strategy meetings in Boston with Hispanic leaders."

Spanish-speaking surrogates are being trained, "and there are ongoing talks with a major Hispanic advertising firm to work on new television ads that are aimed at Spanish-speakers. With a bit of irony, the campaign is also reaching out to a group that combines two constituencies that Romney has fared poorly with in the past: Hispanic evangelicals" (**Viser, Boston Globe**, 6/9).

Let The Record Show

Obama's campaign "has been focused for more than a week" on Romney's MA record, "pointing out that the state was 47th out of 50 in job creation during Romney's term." Romney is arguing that he did better than his predecessor and current Gov. **Deval Patrick** (D).

The two sets of statistics "are not actually incompatible. Bureau of Labor Statistics data support both." When Romney took office, MA "was ranked last in the country, largely thanks to the dot-com bust and the 2001 recession. When he left, it was ranked 35th for the year. After Romney left office, the recession hit and job growth plunged again."

But for his overall term, MA was ranked 47th. "It was one of just four states that had not recovered all the jobs lost in the 2001 recession." Obama is arguing that while MA grew, "it lagged behind most of the country in growth. While it's true that Romney did not raise taxes to balance the budget, he did raise a multitude of fees" (**Weiner, Washington Post**, 6/8).

Los Angeles Times' Finnegan reports: "By Mitt Romney's account, his record as governor of Massachusetts shows how cutting taxes and public spending spurs economic growth and serves as a model for shrinking the U.S. government. He says he stood up for conservative principles, guiding the state out of a fiscal crisis by ramming cuts through a recalcitrant Democratic Legislature. Romney takes credit for vetoing more than 800 spending items passed by the Legislature, saying he wiped out unneeded programs, cut taxes 19 times, built up a \$2-billion rainy-day fund and balanced the budget four years in a row."

But Romney's telling "omits key facts that clash with the agenda of his campaign for president." Namely: "The Legislature overrode most of Romney's spending vetoes. ... State spending rose by 22% on Romney's watch, nearly double the rate of inflation. ... Romney increased corporate taxes and state fees by \$750 million a year, outstripping his tax cuts" (6/9).

Beacon Hill Institute exec. dir. **David Tuerck** said Romney "had little to do with the uptick in state revenue, but deserves credit for maneuvering within the confines set by Democrats, who held a veto-proof majority in the legislature." Tuerck: "In effect, his high points were more what he tried to do than what he got done."

Near the end of Romney's term, **Cato Institute's Stephen**

Slivinski gave Romney a "C" in his rankings of the nation's governors. In his evaluation, he said Romney generally limited more spending, but that his claim that he met his no-new-taxes vow is "mostly a myth." Slivinski: "If you consider the massive costs to taxpayers that his universal health care plan will inflict ... Romney's tenure [was] clearly not a triumph of small-government activism" (**McLaughlin, Washington Times**, 6/10).

Obama sr adviser **David Axelrod**: "Look at Governor Romney's record when he was in Massachusetts where public sector employment grew six times faster than private sector employment and he was 47th in the nation over those four years in job creation, even as he was growing government by 30 percent and growing the state workforce by 5 percent. So, his record doesn't square with his words, and his vision is a disaster."

Axelrod: "He said we don't need any more teachers. We don't need any more teachers? Two hundred and fifty thousand teachers have lost their jobs in the last couple of years. That is a dramatically bad news for the country. It's certainly not good news for our future. What planet is he living on where he thinks that we can take this kind of hits in our education system and progress as a country?" ("State of the Union," CNN, 6/10).

Optimism Abounds

AP's **Bakst** reports: "Republicans riding high from a string of breaks in their favor are increasingly optimistic about Mitt Romney's chances to claim the White House in November, even among conservatives who had qualms about making him the party's nominee."

"The bullish take is reflected in interviews with party strategists and activists, including people who supported Romney rivals during the primary season. Mood matters because it can fuel fundraising and volunteer hustle. But some of those GOP players stress that Romney, the former Massachusetts governor, has little room for error if he expects to topple an incumbent president" (6/11).

Going International

Romney sr economic adviser **Glenn Hubbard** criticized Obama and his policy toward Europe, and Germany in particular, in an op-ed article in a leading German newspaper on June 9, "raising the question of the propriety of taking America's political fights into international affairs."

The article "drew a rebuke from the Obama campaign." Obama press sec. **Ben LaBolt**: "In a foreign news outlet, Governor Romney's top economic adviser both discouraged essential steps that need to be taken to promote economic recovery and attempted to undermine America's foreign policy abroad."

In his article, "Hubbard proposed a classic conservative pro-austerity, anti-Keynesian approach, arguing that cutting government spending will restore public confidence, encourage growth and avert future tax increases. ... He opposed what he described as the Obama administration's efforts 'to persuade Germany to stand up financially weak governments and banks in the euro zone so that the Greek crisis would not spread to other states'" (**Calmes, New York Times**, 6/9).

iMitt

Political advertising "is about to become a lot more common on some iPhones and iPads." Romney's campaign said it is using Apple's "iAd" mobile advertising service on an ad drive for the iPhone, iTouch and iPad devices. "It is the first time a political candidate has used Apple's iAd service, which started in 2010, an Apple spokesman said."

The effort "is part of a broader strategy by the campaigns ... to use mobile ad networks and website-based advertising to target their messages at likely swing-state voters." Ad networks from Apple, Google and others "allow advertisers to target specific demographic segments such as women or age groups, as well as focus on specific geographic areas" (**Schatz, Wall Street Journal**, 6/8).

Calling Him Out

Washington Post editorializes on "Mr. Romney's secret bundlers": "The difference between President Obama and presumptive Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney when it comes to fundraising is not only that Mr. Romney managed to outraise the president last month. A more troubling difference is that Mr. Romney provided almost no information about the key 'bundlers' who helped his campaign vacuum up such huge sums. ... Who are these men and women to whom the campaign is so deeply indebted? Mr. Romney has yet to answer indeed, he has yet to be directly asked why his campaign will not live up to the standard set by Mr. **Bush** and Mr. **McCain**. Why would he hide his roster of key supporters?" (6/9).