

## Using dishonesty to advance the statist agenda

*Why do Right-wing parties, the US Republicans included, continue to support big state bureaucracy and the international organisations, like the OECD, that underpin modern corporatism?*

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I'm [frequently baffled](#) at the [stupidity of Republicans](#). When they took control of Congress back in 1994, for instance, they had unrestricted ability to get rid of the bureaucrats that generated bad economic analysis at both the [Joint Committee on Taxation](#) and the [Congressional Budget Office](#).

Yet notwithstanding more than a decade of congressional power, GOPers [did almost nothing to neutralize the bureaucrats](#) who produced shoddy research that helped the left push for more spending and higher taxes.

Sort of like a football team allowing the opposing coach to pick the refs and design game plans for both teams. Another painful example is that Republicans never used their majority status to [defund the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development](#).

This international bureaucracy is infamous for pushing policies to expand the power of government. That's not too surprising since it's dominated by European welfare states. But it is amazing that Republicans seem to think it's perfectly fine to [send about \\$100 million each year to subsidize the OECD's agenda](#).

Particularly when the OECD so often pushes policies that are [directly contrary to American interests](#).

It has [allied itself with the nutjobs](#) from the so-called Occupy movement to push for bigger government and higher taxes in the United States.

The bureaucrats are [advocating higher business tax burdens](#), which would aggravate America's competitive disadvantage.

The OECD is pushing a "[Multilateral Convention](#)" that is designed to become something akin to a World Tax Organization, with the power to [persecute nations with free-market tax policy](#).

It [supports Obama's class-warfare agenda](#), publishing documents endorsing "higher marginal tax rates" so that the so-called rich "contribute their fair share."

The OECD [advocates the value-added tax](#) based on the absurd notion that increasing the burden of government is good for growth and employment.

It even [concocts dishonest poverty numbers](#) to advocate more redistribution in the United States.

Let's elaborate on the last item dealing with poverty in the United States. According to the OECD, poverty is more severe in the United States than it is in relatively poor nations such as Greece, Portugal, and Hungary.

Indeed, the bureaucrats in Paris even put together a chart showing how "bad" America ranks in this category.

But it's all bunk. Utterly dishonest garbage. Here's [some of what I wrote last year](#) on this topic.

"...if you read the fine print, you may notice one itsy-bitsy detail. The chart isn't a measure of poverty. Not even close. Indeed, the chart wouldn't change if all of the people of any nation (or all nations) suddenly had 10 times as much income. That's because the OECD is measuring is relative income distribution rather than relative poverty. And the left likes this measure because coerced redistribution automatically leads to the appearance of less poverty. Even if everybody's income is lower!"

But the OECD isn't letting up. In a [new "Society at a Glance" look at the United States](#) last month, here's what the OECD claimed.

"The relative poverty rate in the U.S. is 17.4%, compared to an OECD average of 11.1%. Only Chile, Israel, Mexico and Turkey have higher poverty rates than the U.S."

But unlike in other publications, the OECD didn't bother to include any fine print admitting that its poverty measure has nothing to do with poverty.

That's grotesquely dishonest and morally corrupt.

And since we're on the topic of corruption, let's broaden our discussion. *National Review's* Kevin Williamson has an [article](#) on the rampant corruption among elected officials.

But what caught my attention weren't the parts about pro-gun control politicians trying to help sell weapons to terrorists. Instead, I especially appreciated the broader lesson he provides for readers.

"James Madison famously observed that "if men were angels, no government would be necessary." But he also understood that men do not become angels once they win elections, become police, or are appointed to positions of power. Our constitutional order strikes an elegant balance between policing the non-angels outside of government and constraining the non-angels

within government, setting the ambitions of the three branches against one another and subdividing the legislative branch against itself. ...

"Adam Smith's formula for prosperity — "peace, easy taxes, and a tolerable administration of justice" — is the very modest ambition that conservatives aim for. Limited government is the tool by which government can be made to do good without necessarily being good, or being composed of good men. ...The corruptibility of the political classes is fenced in by limiting the power of the political classes per se. You cannot expand the scope and scale of government without expanding in parallel the scope and scale of government corruption."

Amen to that. That's the core message of [this video I narrated](#), which explains that shrinking the size and scope of government is the only effective way to reduce corruption.

Remember the lesson of [this superb poster](#): If more government is the answer, you've asked a very strange question.

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