

Mainstreamers' votes will rescue this country

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It was cannily clever of the Burlington County Times to use its editorial, "Turning off the mainstream," published Sept. 13, to suggest that only a political/policy "moderate" is the best hope for the Republicans in 2012. The only "moderate" among the current Republican primary candidates is Jon Huntsman, who has zero chance of defeating even a "weakened" Barack Obama. Nice try, BCT. I challenge the BCT to publish a list of great moderates in American history or point out which of those fellows on Mount Rushmore it considers moderate.

In the same piece, the editorial writer is aghast at Texas Gov. Rick Perry's description of Social Security as a "monstrous lie." Perry also called it a Ponzi scheme. Both are true.

Anyone currently paying into Social Security via the payroll (FICA) tax is headed for a Bernie Madoff moment. Actually, Madoff's scheme, although illegal, had some positive features that Social Security does not. First, participation was voluntary and his investors had individual retirement accounts and got monthly statements reflecting the value of their "investment." The scheme imploded when Madoff failed to sign-up enough new suckers to pay his current clients. When Social Security is faced with the same problem it simply raises the payroll tax.

Michael Turner of the Cato Institute recently pointed out the following: Social Security taxes have been raised some 40 times since the program began. The initial tax was 2 percent (split between employer and employee), capped at \$3,000 of earnings. That made for a maximum tax of \$60. Today, the tax is 12.4 percent capped at \$106,800, for a maximum tax of \$13,234. Even adjusting for inflation, this represents more than an 800 percent increase.

Finally, the editorial's definition of America's mainstream is self-serving and wrong. The real "mainstream" in poll after poll, by substantial margins, favors the death penalty, the war on terrorism, and a strong military. They are opposed to deficit spending, gay marriage, abortion and Obamacare. If these mainstreamers show up at the polls on Nov. 6, this great country may be rescued for our children and grandchildren.

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