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The Arena

Is Paul Ryan harming congressional candidates?

Roger Pilon | August 14, 2012

Today's Arena question boils down to this: Are Americans able to handle the truth - that we're going broke, as Paul Ryan puts it, plainly.

P.T. Barnum allegedly said "There's a sucker born every minute." Unfortunately, voters too often prove him right.

As I implied in [my post yesterday](#), Robin Hood Democrats, promising "free goods" provided by the rich, are betting that Americans are too stupid to see through their many scams. Their cynicism is as boundless as their politics of personal destruction. To take the simplest example, in June 2009, and often since, Obama assured us, "No matter how we reform health care, we will keep this promise...If you like your healthcare plan, you will be able to keep your healthcare plan. Period. No one will take it away. No matter what." As Professors Richard Epstein and David Hyman have shown, [he's already broken that promise in multiple ways](#).

But give the president his due: He makes Robin Hood look like a piker. His latest? In Iowa yesterday [he announced](#) that the federal government will purchase over \$150 million in meat and fish to help ranchers survive the drought. "That food is going to be spent by folks over at the Pentagon and other places." Never mind that you don't "spend food," this is simply shades of [Solyndra](#) - the flimflammy that runs through this feckless administration. But the main question is, will Americans fall for it again?