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Right Now

Inside the conservative movement and the Republican Party with David Weigel

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WHAT I'M READING

- Alexander Zaitchik has turned his [gripping Salon profile](#) of Glenn Beck into a full-bore bio of the host, [Common Nonsense](#). The publisher has kindly requested that reporters don't quote from the book; instead, I'll just recommend it.
- The Winston Group [gives us the first in-depth survey](#) of the Tea Party movement.
- Andrew Ferguson [brings the hammer down](#) on those snobby people at metropolitan new papers who cover the conservative movement.

DAILY CLICKS

- [The American Conservative](#)
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Bachmann: We'll repeal Obamacare in 34 months

Amid all of the red meat tossed out at last night's [Conservative Victory Tour](#) with Sarah Palin, Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R-Minn.), and Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.), I think I heard a concrete and quasi-realistic answer on a question that's been irritating Republicans. How can they campaign on repealing the health care bill if Barack Obama is still president in 2011? Sean Hannity asked; Bachmann answered.

HANNITY: OK. So let's just assume for a minute that conservatives Republicans take back the House of Representatives, maybe not the Senate, maybe the Senate. What can you do specifically? And what do you think can be accomplished to stop the move to socialism, the weakening of our national defense? What do you think can actually happen?

BACHMANN: Number one, we starve the beast of Obamacare. We don't fund Obamacare. And we don't fund [APPLAUSE] ... from there we tell the truth about what's in the bill. The more we tell the truth to the American people the more they're going to recognize we must repeal that bill in February of 2013. I think we will.

That's a good answer, sort of. "Defunding" something means taking it out of an appropriations bill. Barack Obama, still president in 2011, can veto that bill as easily as he can veto anything else. What Bachmann is [suggesting](#) is a showdown between the president and a GOP that is already discussing (or claiming to be discussing) a strategy to attack health care reform in the appropriations process. And this will happen, presumably, after the GOP passes Bachmann's "[repeal bill](#)" before watching Obama veto that. So this would be a huge mess. But it's more clever than the out-and-out "repeal" message that Republicans can't possibly deliver on in 2011. Bachmann has a knack for this -- getting made fun of relentlessly, then framing an argument that other conservatives start using.

By David Weigel | April 8, 2010; 2:10 PM ET
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LATEST TWEETS

RT @MajoratWH: I don't mind saying, been chasing Stupak story since @marcambinder popped it at 7:59 a.m. EDT. Some days harder than others. 36 minutes ago

If Stupak's retiring, it comes after a week of Tea Party ads and protests -- really makes it look like they got to him. about an hour ago

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Comments

Well I have no doubt that Mrs. Palin and Mrs. Bachman are not nearly as smart as Mr. Weigel, however by the look of the number of comments you certainly don't have as many followers. Son I suggest you put down your goofy little computer phone and turn on the history channel or do a little historical research. Do they still teach good old fashioned history at our major universities? Any way you sound like another of the so-called libertarian-left types, and your idea of liberty is getting in good with whoever is elected and begging them to allow you to do something you never should have been restricted from doing in the first place. Try to be more honest!
Pat

Posted by: PatLynch | April 8, 2010 2:35 PM | [Report abuse](#)

Hannity must be smoking crack with that "maybe the Senate" comment. Or maybe, like most conservatives, he's just really bad with numbers.

Even if the Republicans pick up every single seat where a Democrat is retiring or weak, that gets them to 50.

Bachmann's lunacy would have to get past Joe Biden's tie-breaking vote to even get to Obama's desk. Unless of course Lieberman decides to finally announce he's a Republican.

But that's the only way they'd get to 51 in the Senate.

Posted by: JennOfArk | April 8, 2010 2:39 PM | [Report abuse](#)

Of course Obamacare cannot be repealed in 2011.

But repeal of Obamacare in 2013 is definitely possible.

IF unemployment is still high in 2012 (almost 100% certain) and IF Obamacare fails to deliver on all the hype (almost 100% certain) and IF real conservatives are able to inject some spine into the GOP (a long shot) THEN an anti-Obamacare President and Congress could result.

The fun thing is imaging what else is possible. If you have a conservative government capable of repealing Obamacare, think of all the other socialist programs that could be repealed!

Posted by: pmendez | April 8, 2010 2:54 PM | [Report abuse](#)

To be fair, the fact other conservatives start using Rep. Bachmann's arguments after they have been mocked relentlessly is more a testament of the quality of the intellectual life in these parts nowadays than any particular quality of Ms Bachmann. The more ridiculous liberals think (often rightfully so) something is, the more willing conservatives are to embrace it (see Palin, Sarah).

Posted by: nhuixnhuix | April 8, 2010 2:55 PM | [Report abuse](#)

Beware of the "libertarian left". Fakes! and Phoney

Posted by: PatLynch | April 8, 2010 3:52 PM | [Report abuse](#)

I'm not sure how clever this 'strategy' is at all. Recall all of those successful 'strategies' to defund Social Security, Medicare? Of course not none of this is politically salient although it 'sounds' good to the base, and even on some polls it 'polls well'.

Actually these extremist strategies often backfire on the GOP so let them dig their own graves.

Posted by: teacher3675 | April 8, 2010 4:43 PM | [Report abuse](#)

TEACHER3675:

50% of the voters didn't hate Social Security or Medicare. Social Security and Medicare passed with bi-partisan support.

It's apples-and-oranges.

Posted by: pmendez | April 8, 2010 4:51 PM | [Report abuse](#)

she said she'd tell the truth? that'll be a first.

Posted by: merlallen1 | April 8, 2010 6:35 PM | [Report abuse](#)

"Statesmen my dear Sir, may plan and speculate for Liberty, but it is Religion and Morality alone, which can establish the Principles upon which Freedom can securely stand. ... The only foundation of a free Constitution, is pure Virtue, and if this cannot be inspired into our People, in a great Measure, than they have it now, They may change their Rulers, and the forms of Government, but they will not obtain a lasting Liberty." — John Adams

Posted by: Clearbrook | April 8, 2010 7:46 PM | [Report abuse](#)

@teacher3675:

I beg to differ. "These extremist strategies" are EXACTLY what the Democrats used to shove this fecal matter down our throats.

Defunding is actually quite easy. You pass appropriations WITHOUT any provision for ObamaCare. Getting it by the Senate could be tricky if there are not enough Republican seats gained. However, the DEMOCRATS will then be seen as the obstructionists, and will be obstructing things that ARE popular and even NEEDED in the minds of the majority of Americans. The DEMOCRATS will be blocking THAT to defend something, that if things have not changed radically in THEIR FAVOR by then, will STILL be particularly unpopular. That does not play well for the Senators still sitting in the Senate, and some states have already threatened recall votes on their Senators! GASP!!! Should that happen, ladies and gentlemen, I suggest you go back to the 1860s and see how slavery (forced servitude -- the liberal dream) fared back then. The party that supported SLAVERY, which is what the Democrats most certainly are doing with FORCED SERVITUDE to their program by the mandates they impose, was DESTROYED back then.

Obama Vetos it, naturally. Then you fund things one at a time, and everyone KNOWS that it could've been done sooner if Barry just bent over and grabbed his ankles like he told the Resistance to do this time around! If what is funded, one thing at a time, is popular, Obama cuts off his own nose to spite his face to Veto anything that is remotely popular to have funded. He loses and loses big!!!

Posted by: Clearbrook | April 8, 2010 8:01 PM | [Report abuse](#)

Hmm. I would let the bill fail on its own and force the Dem's hands into being the first to repeal their own bill, offering support only if they agree to replace it with a Republican bill.

Posted by: RealTexan1 | April 9, 2010 12:00 AM | [Report abuse](#)

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