



Dick Morris: Panetta's Book Helps Hillary; 'War on Women' Polls as Political Figment

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Headlines (Scroll down for complete stories):

- 1. Immigrants in US at All-Time High**
- 2. Dick Morris: Panetta's Book Helps Hillary**
- 3. 'War on Women' Is Political Sloganeering: Poll**
- 4. Cato: Top-Rated Governors Are All Republican**
- 5. Rich Man, Poor Man Among the States**
- 6. One in Five US Households Got Food Stamps in '13**

1. Immigrants in US at All-Time High

Newly released figures show that the U.S. immigrant population grew by 1.4 million from July 2010 to the middle of last year, reaching a record 41.3 million in July 2013.

About 3.3 million new immigrants settled in the United States in that period, but the number was offset by deaths and return immigration among the existing population.

The 41.3 million figure was double the number in 1990, nearly triple the number in 1980, and more than quadruple the figure in 1970, when it stood at 9.6 million, according to the data from the Census Bureau's latest American Community Survey.

Immigrants — all those in the country who were not U.S. citizens at birth, including illegal immigrants — comprised 13.1 percent of all U.S. residents last year, the highest percentage in 93 years, the Center for Immigration Studies noted.

As recently as 1980, the figure was just 6.2 percent.

The largest number of immigrants in the country in 2013 originally came from Mexico, 11.58 million, but that was down by 126,126 since 2010.

The region showing the greatest growth in U.S. immigration from 2010 to 2013 was South Asia, with 372,546 new immigrants, including 254,355 from India, bringing the total number of immigrants from that region to 2.71 million.

In raw numbers, the largest number of immigrants in the country last year came from East Asia, 7.88 million, including 2.38 million from China and more than a million each from Korea and Vietnam.

There were 3.9 million immigrants from the Caribbean last year, including 1.14 from Cuba and 991,046 from the Dominican Republic.

About 3.16 million immigrants from Central America were in the country, including 1.25 million from El Salvador and 902,293 from Guatemala.

The greatest share of the 2.76 million immigrants from South America were from Colombia, 677,231.

The U.S. was home to 1.81 million immigrants from the Middle East, with the largest number — 363,972 — from Iran.

There were also 4.88 million immigrants from Europe, 1.5 million from Sub-Saharan Africa, and 846,921 from Canada.

California was home to more immigrants last year than any other state, 10.31 million, followed by Texas with 4.36 million.

But the state with the largest percentage growth in its immigrant population from 2010 to 2013 was North Dakota, 27 percent.

2. Dick Morris: Panetta's Book Helps Hillary

Bill Clinton's former chief of staff, Leon Panetta, has a new book with one clear motive: to bolster Hillary Clinton's narrative that the failures of her foreign policy are not her fault, according to veteran political analyst Dick Morris.

In Hillary's book "Hard Choices," she criticized Obama's lack of strategic vision, and in an interview several weeks after the memoir's publication, she said that the president's dictum of "don't do stupid stuff" is not an overarching foreign policy organizing principle.

Now Panetta, in "Worthy Fights: A Memoir of Leadership in War and Peace," echoes this criticism, saying the president "avoids the battle, complains and misses opportunities." He accuses Obama of "coordinating" rather than leading negotiations to allow our troops to stay in Iraq to guard against what became an ISIS surge.

Morris observes: "Panetta said officials at the White House 'seemed content to endorse an agreement if State and Defense could reach one' to keep our troops in Iraq. But Panetta points

out that without Obama's personal involvement, it turned out to be impossible to get Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki to reverse his position and agree to let a garrison of American troops remain."

Panetta amplifies the impact of the failure to leave troops there, saying: "To this day, I believe that a small U.S. troop presence in Iraq could have effectively advised the Iraqi military on how to deal with al-Qaida's resurgence and the sectarian violence that has engulfed the country."

But Obama had "kind of lost his way," Panetta writes, noting that the president too often "relies on the logic of a law professor rather than the passion of a leader."

Panetta's assertions come as Hillary wrestles with a central threat to her candidacy: She was secretary of state for four years yet the foreign policy crafted then has proved to be "an unprecedented failure," said Morris, whose new book is "Power Grab: Obama's Dangerous Plan for a One-Party Nation."

"Everything that she worked on has blown up in our face. The Arab Spring has become a nightmare. We are on the verge of signing a phony deal with Iran that will let them enrich uranium far into the future so they can make a bomb any time they want. The reset button with Russia is a joke, and we have made zero progress on human rights or fair trade with China.

"Hillary realizes that this is not a record on which to predicate a presidential campaign. So if the foreign policy she helped to craft is a fiasco, she has to blame someone else — the president."

Panetta has stepped into this breach, according to Morris. He legitimized Hillary's efforts to distance herself from the president on foreign policy without her having to do it herself. Now the negative points for disloyalty will accrue to Panetta, not to Hillary.

Panetta, a former defense secretary, asserts that Obama's failure to act against Syria when it crossed the "red line" he had drawn against the use of chemical weapons "was damaging" and "sent a mixed message, not only to the Syrians, but to the world. And that is something you do not want to establish in the world: an issue with regard to the credibility of the United States to stand by what we say we're going to do."

Morris concludes: "As our involvement in Iraq and Syria escalates into a full-blown war — as it must now that our airstrikes are failing to do the job — the blame game will grow with it. Panetta's comments are an attempt to swat the blame away from Hillary Clinton.

"He will get his reward."

3. 'War on Women' Is Political Sloganeering: Poll

Despite Democrats' claims to the contrary, a majority of Americans believe there is no political "war on women" being waged by Republicans, a new Rasmussen Reports poll reveals.

"War on Women" is a phrase some Democrats use to criticize Republican policies that they maintain limit women's rights in areas such as abortion, birth control, and workplace discrimination, Rasmussen notes.

In a survey of likely voters, 59 percent say the "war on women" is primarily a slogan used for political purposes, while 22 percent say there is really such a political war going on, and 19 percent are not sure.

Even a majority of women believe the phrase is political sloganeering — 52 percent feel that way, as do 65 percent of men, while 24 percent of women and 21 percent of men think there is really a political "war on women."

Not surprisingly, just 8 percent of Republicans believe there is such a war, compared to 38 percent of Democrats and 20 percent of those with other affiliations, and 75 percent of Republicans and 42 percent of Democrats say the so-called war is a political slogan.

About half of those polled, 49 percent, say that generally speaking, women and men have mostly the same political interests, while 32 percent think they have separate political agendas.

When asked to name their chief political concern, 36 percent of women say it is the economy, compared to 13 percent citing national security and just 18 percent citing social issues and 14 percent citing domestic issues. Men are more or less in agreement with them on that question.

Genevieve Wood, senior contributor to Heritage Foundation's Daily Signal, agrees that the "war on women" is political posturing and says it doesn't reflect our current reality.

In an article for USA Today, she points out that for every 100 college degrees of all kinds earned by men last year, women earned 140.

Referring to claims that women make 77 cents for every dollar men make, Wood writes that "when you compare men and women in similar jobs, with similar experience, education, years in the workforce, and hours worked, the wage gap all but disappears."

She also notes that studies show women control more than 50 percent of private wealth in the United States, and over 40 percent of the 3 million Americans earning more than \$500,000 a year are women.

She concludes: "Women do face challenges today, just not the ones many on the left are trying to solve via victimhood politics and policies."

4. Cato: Top-Rated Governors Are All Republican

The Cato Institute has released its latest Fiscal Policy Report Card on America's Governors, showing that all top-rated governors are Republican — and all their lowest-rated counterparts are Democrats.

The report examines state budget actions from January 2012 to August 2014 and uses seven variables to grade the governors on their taxing and spending records.

"Some governors have pursued reforms to reduce tax burdens on families and make their states more competitive. Other governors have used rising revenues to expand programs," the report states.

Governors receiving an "A" are those who cut taxes and spending the most, while governors receiving an "F" raised taxes and spending the most.

Four Republican governors received an "A" grade.

Pat McCrory of North Carolina signed a major tax reform bill last year, replacing three individual income tax rates with a single lower rate. He also cut the corporate tax rate, repealed the estate tax, approved further tax cuts in 2014, and has kept spending under tight control.

Sam Brownback of Kansas signed a law cutting the top tax rate from 6.45 to 4.9 percent, reduced taxes on small businesses, and increased the standard deduction, while overseeing only small increases in spending.

Paul LePage of Maine engineered major income tax cuts in 2011 and has supported further tax and spending reforms since then. Government employment has decreased and LePage signed into law cost-cutting reforms to welfare programs.

Mike Pence of Indiana signed a 2013 tax package that cut the individual income tax rate, and repealed the state's inheritance tax. He has also approved cuts to the corporate income tax rate and to business property taxes.

Twelve Republican governors deserve a "B" grade, as do three Democrats, according to Nicole Kaeding, a budget analyst, and Chris Edwards, director of tax policy studies at the Cato Institute, a public policy research foundation.

Seven Republicans earned a "C" grade, as did one Democrat, while five Republicans and eight Democrats got a "D."

At the bottom of the grading scale, eight Democrats earned an "F" grade. (Two states were not included in the report.)

Jerry Brown of California received the lowest rating of any governor in the report. Cato noted that he pushed numerous large tax increases, backing a plan to increase tax revenues by \$6 billion a year and raising the top individual income tax rate to 13.3 percent. Brown also proposed spending increases averaging 6.8 percent annually over the last three years, more than twice the national average, and has supported a "boondoggle" high-speed rail system, according to Cato.

John Hickenlooper of Colorado also earned an "F." General fund spending in the state has soared from \$7.2 billion in 2012 to \$9.2 billion in 2015. State government employment has increased significantly since he came into office.

Deval Patrick of Massachusetts increased taxes on cigarettes and gasoline last year, and raised sales taxes. This year he has proposed higher taxes on corporations.

Other Democratic governors with an "F" grade are Pat Quinn of Illinois, Jay Inslee of Washington, Jack Markell of Delaware, John Kitzhaber of Oregon, and Mark Dayton of Minnesota.

5. Rich Man, Poor Man Among the States

New York has Wall Street, California has Silicon Valley, Texas has its oil wells, but the richest state in America basks in the financial glow of the nation's capital.

In Maryland, home to many government officials and federal workers, the median household income is \$72,483 a year, the highest in the nation, according to figures from 2013.

That is more than \$20,000 higher than the national median income of \$52,250.

Maryland has a high proportion of high-income households — 8.9 percent earn \$200,000 or more. The state has just 6.6 percent unemployment, and only 10.1 percent of households are below the poverty line, the third lowest in the nation.

The financial website 24/7 Wall Street identified the richest and poorest states using data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Close behind Maryland is Alaska with median income of \$72,237. Its percentage of households below the poverty line is just 9.3 percent, lower than every state except New Hampshire.

No. 3 is New Jersey, which has easy commuting access to New York City in the north and to Philadelphia in the south. Median income is \$70,165, and almost 10 percent of households have incomes of at least \$200,000, the highest rate in the country.

Hawaii's median income is \$68,020, although its cost of living is higher than any other state due mainly to the need to ship in many goods from the mainland. Just 10.8 percent are below the poverty line, and unemployment is a low 4.8 percent.

The fifth most affluent state is Connecticut, with median income of \$67,098. About 9 percent of workers in the state are in the finance, insurance, or real estate industries, and nearly one in 10 workers earns \$200,000 or more a year.

The poorest state in America is Mississippi, according to 24/7 Wall Street. Median household income there is \$37,963, barely more than half the income in the richest state, Maryland.

Mississippi has the nation's highest poverty rate, 24 percent, and 19.4 percent of households rely on food stamps.

The second poorest state is Arkansas, where median household income is \$40,511 and the poverty rate is 19.7 percent. Homes statewide are valued at just under \$110,000, more than \$60,000 below the national benchmark.

West Virginia is No. 3 with median income of \$41,253 and a poverty rate of 18.5 percent, followed by Alabama (\$42,849) and Kentucky (\$43,399).

6. One in Five US Households Got Food Stamps in '13

The number of Americans participating in the food stamp program hit an all-time high in 2013, averaging 47.63 million over the course of the year — and it has remained above 46 million for 35 straight months.

Participants in the program, formally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), first rose above 46 million in September 2011, and the figure has remained near that level ever since.

In July of this year, 46.48 million Americans were in the SNAP program, down only slightly from 47.63 million a year earlier, according to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The program hit an all-time monthly high of 47.79 million in December 2012, but that year's average was below the 47.63 million figure of 2013.

In fiscal year 2013, the 23.05 million households receiving food stamps represented 20 percent of all households, or one in five.

In 1969, just 2.87 million Americans were in the food stamp program, representing 1.4 percent of the population. Total benefits that year were \$228 million, and the monthly average benefit per person was \$6.63.

In 2013, 15.1 percent were in the SNAP program. Total benefits amounted to \$76 billion, and the average benefit per person was \$133.07.

The states with the most SNAP participants, as of Oct. 3 of this year, are California with 4.15 million and Texas with 4.04 million, followed by Florida (3.55 million), New York (3.17 million), and Illinois (2.04 million).

The state with the fewest participants is Wyoming with just 38,046 — lower even than Guam, which has less than a third of Wyoming's population.