

Cutting Edge: New ideas / Sharp opinions

Sunday, September 20, 2009

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

In love with Pittsburgh

Chris Briem at [Null Space](#) notes the glowing accounts of Pittsburgh's economic transformation in G-20 stories published overseas -- even before hordes of international journalists descend on the city this week. After observing that the positive, "earned" media the city already is getting from the G-20 dwarfs what it gets from big-deal sporting events, he says:

"You know things have gone off the deep end when the Wall Street Journal's [front-page] coverage of the G-20 conference extends to a newspaper columnist in Malta expressing herself via Pittsburgh-themed haiku. No joke, I am not creative enough to dream that up. ... So kudos to the Pittsburgh Filmmakers, who clearly win the award for the most innovative way to garner earned media out of the G-20 conclave." As for Chris:

Pittsburgh a story

Steel or no steel we repeat

What next I wonder

To the paddy wagons!

[The Pittsburgh Comet](#) is worried about groups promising to disrupt the G-20 summit and issuing veiled threats of violence. He contrasts them with local peace and activist groups, some of whom also are worried.

"As a thoroughly cowardly Pittsburgh bystander," the Comet says, "my hope is that groups like the G20RP are already infiltrated up to their nostrils, that the dangerous elements will disappear days before the summit, and the remaining 'leaders' will march the rest directly into waiting paddy wagons."

Public options galore

Lawrence S. Wittner, a professor at SUNY/Albany writes for [PeaceVoice](#): "There is nothing more controversial in President Barack Obama's health-care reform proposal than the 'public option.' In fact, there are numerous 'public options' in American life, with many of them rooted deep in the nation's history.

"In the area of education, there are public schools; in recreation, public parks; in travel, public roads; in fire-fighting, public fire departments; in law enforcement, public police forces; in culture, public libraries; in transportation, public bus and train lines; in mail delivery, the post office; in sanitation, public water supply, plumbing, and sewers; in energy, public power; in old-age security, Social Security; in nutrition, public school lunch programs. Where did the notion ever come from that public programs were somehow 'un-American'?"

Latinos vs. Lou Dobbs

Roberto Lovato at [AlterNet.org](#) says Latinos are tired of Lou Dobbs' anti-immigrant tirades:

"Latinos are increasingly making the connection between racism in the media and discrimination in their hometowns, and coming to a simple, yet historic conclusion: Lou Dobbs is the most dangerous man for Latinos in America. Which is why ... Latino organizations throughout the United States [are] demanding that CNN get rid of Dobbs. And we are not alone. In the coming weeks, CNN President Jon Klein will be inundated by a growing national chorus of calls ... demanding his network stop promoting Dobbs' brand of 'news.' "

Boiling mad

Carter Clews at GetLiberty.org noticed a Cato Institute article on federal pay scales "that will make most people's blood boil -- except, of course, for federal bureaucrats who are too busy dozing off in their easy chairs to read anything other than the occasional comic page and the union news ...

"You see, it turns out that Washington's pointy-headed, bottom-feeding bureaucrats -- whose sole job it is to run up everyone else's taxes by saddling us all with oppressive regulations and endless reams of red tape -- get paid on average \$30,000 a year more than those of you who actually work for a living and produce a useful product."

Death of a titan

In the category of an old, huge new idea ... Norman Borlaug's death last week was overshadowed by that of actor Patrick Swayze, hence this note from Guy Sorman at [City Journal Online](http://CityJournalOnline.com):

"Norman Borlaug, who [died last week] at age 95 in Dallas, was an exception among living Nobel Peace Prize beneficiaries: He actually deserved the award, which he received in 1970. This media-shy and extremely modest scientist, who served on the faculty at Texas A&M University, saved from hunger hundreds of millions of starving peasants around the world. Well known in Mexico and India as the Father of the Green Revolution, he never accepted this pompous title. He defined himself instead as a skillful plant breeder whose career had been defined by a tough childhood on an Iowa farm, where he first wondered why plants grew better in some places than others."

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First published on September 20, 2009 at 12:00 am