



Check out the new
Health Care Arena
An ongoing discussion on the health care debate

Oct. 23, 2009

Driving the Conversation:

Arena Ref: [Fred Barbash](#)

Is Obama "dithering" on Afghanistan (Cheney) or fulfilling his "solemn responsibility" (Gibbs)?

In the [Health Care Arena](#): Public option dead, alive or dead again

Noon author chat, Andrew Ross Sorkin, "[Too Big to Fail](#)"

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Roger Pilon

Vice President for Legal Affairs, Cato Institute :

President Obama got some **adult criticism this week from Dick Cheney, none too soon.** While the risk to American troops in Afghanistan grows, Obama dithers, unable to decide whether to get in or get out -- whether to be the one thing the Constitution authorizes him to be, Commander in Chief. Yet he finds time to fly off to Copenhagen to promote Chicago for the Olympics, to insinuate himself in local political campaigns, to go on "**Fox hunts**," yesterday excluding Fox News from the White House pool allowed to interview his executive pay czar, and now, we learn, to slash executive salaries at companies not only partially owned but simply regulated by the government. Are there no limits to the man's hubris?

Even the [Washington Post](#) this morning, no bastion of free-market fervor, noted that this "represents a signal moment in the history of the American economic experiment," moving us ever closer to the European model.

But it was Arena contributor [Allan Meltzer](#) who yesterday hit the nail on the head: "All the noise about pay and pay cuts is part of an effort to divert the public's attention from the main cause of the mortgage fiasco -- the role that Congressman Frank and others had in creating the mortgage crisis by refusing to limit the activities of Fannie Mae and Freddy Mac after 2003." That these regulators will be able to calculate the salary that is appropriate to discourage excessive risk-taking is simply comical.

And so we have here a textbook example of modern government: Obama fails to do or do well what he is authorized to do, yet he strides into matter far beyond his authority -- or competence. He seems not to understand the Constitution he once taught, and more recently promised to uphold.

Subject	Date
Today's Question: The pay czar's pay slash: A "very good thing," as Barney Frank says, or not? In Health Care Arena: Michael Cannon: "Yes, Mr. President. A free market can fix health care' Noon Friday author chat with Andrew Ross Sorkin, "Too Big to Fail"	Oct. 21, 2009
White House Strategy: Will Obama's effort to undermine critics undermine Obama instead? Is it overdue or overdone? In the Health Care Arena, stripping antitrust exemption from insurance biz Noon Thursday, Heritage live chat, David Kreutzer on the cost of Waxman-Markey Noon Friday, Andrew Ross Sorkin on "Too Big to Fail" Oct. 21, 2009	Oct. 21, 2009
Critics say Obama is punting on human rights? Agree or disagree? Fox News v. Obama continued Health Care Arena: Public support for public option 12.30 Weds., Brookings livechat, flu and the schools Oct. 20, 2009	Oct. 20, 2009
Is Fox News a "legitimate news organization?" Is the White House smart, or not so smart, to take on Fox? In the Health Care Arena: Health Care Reform: A Process, Not An Event, Maggie Mahar Oct.19, 2009	Oct. 19, 2009
Open Mic In Health Care Arena: Maggie and Greg shouldn't pop the champagne yet-James Gelfand Oct. 17-19, 2009	Oct. 17, 2009
ACORN: Underplayed or overblown? Dems Divided--in new Health Care Arena here Oct. 16, 2009	Oct. 16, 2009

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