

Every Intelligent Voter's Guide to Electioneering BUNK

You'll hear all the claims and allegations.
Now get the facts—culled from the pages of
America's most fearless and independent-
minded defender of democracy.

The Nation.

Bunk: There sure is a lot of it these days, isn't there?

Drivel about the economy; hooey in our
political discourse; hogwash about our
future; claptrap about our options.

The Nation is here to help – ready,
willing and able to debunk some of the
most prevalent myths you'll encounter
during the upcoming election season.

THE UNIONS ARE BREAKING US:

It's teachers and other unionized workers – and
their fat job packages – that are bankrupting states!

In Wisconsin, two-thirds of corporations pay
no taxes, and the share of state revenue from
corporate taxes has fallen by half since 1981.

The same is true in other states.

[John Nichols, *The Spirit of Wisconsin*]

THE LEFT'S SET OFF A 'CLASS WAR':

The Occupy movement and threats of higher
taxes on the "rich" are demonizing the wealthy.

In 1971, corporate lawyer (later Supreme
Court Justice) Lewis Powell, perceiving
an "attack on the American free enterprise
system," urged the Chamber of Commerce
to push the corporate agenda. Soon after-
ward, business-funded "think tanks, legal
foundations and front groups" launched –
in effect – "a call to arms for class war
waged from the top down." [Bill Moyers,
How Wall Street Occupied America]

REGULATION IS KILLING OUR JOBS:

Government rules stifle the country's "job creators"
(corporations) and discourage new investments.

A string of disasters – from oil spills and mine
explosions to the financial crash that threw

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8 million out of work, are actually due to inadequate (or unapplied) regulatory protections.

[Robert Weisman, *The GOP's Deregulation Obsession*]

FORGIVING MORTGAGE DEBT IS WRONG:

Letting failed borrowers off the hook encourages – even rewards – bad financial habits.

Forgiving the debtors is the right thing to do – not only because the bankers have already been forgiven but also because reducing principal will stop the destruction of so many communities, encourage those whose mortgages are currently “under water” to spend again, and make companies more confident about hiring.

[William Greider, *Debt Jubilee, American Style*]

THE PRESIDENT IS A FOREIGN POLICY WIMP:

Obama and his people have abandoned Bush-era tough policies for (in the words of Dick Cheney) “half-measures” and “compromise.”

The team of US Special Operations Forces who killed...bin Laden were led by elite Navy SEALs from the Joint Special Operations Command.... President Obama has taken concrete steps to once again integrate JSOC more fully into the broader US military strategy globally.... he has doubled down on the Bush-era policy of targeted assassination as a staple of US foreign policy.

[Jeremy Seahill, *JSOC: The Black Ops Force That Took Down bin Laden*]

AMERICANS ARE REJECTING THE LIBERAL AGENDA:

The Tea Party and the November 2010 Republican sweep show that Americans are moving to the right.

In referendums in Ohio, Mississippi and Maine, voters decisively chose to support abortion, immigrant and voting rights, and labor unions. And Kentucky and West Virginia elected Democratic governors. Says Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown: “The 99 percent is pushing back.”

[John Nichols, *The 99 Percent Election*]

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY IS A BIG BOONDOGGLE:

The Solyndra bankruptcy – after the feds guaranteed a \$535 million loan – shows that government has no business subsidizing private companies.

Yes, the Energy Department erred, but the whole point of industrial policy is to encourage ventures that might produce big breakthroughs but can't attract private investment because of the risk.... “The real lesson...is that in the area of renewables, the government should be giving big subsidies to wind, not solar.” [The Editors, *Tale of Two Scandals*]

CLIMATE CHANGE IS A SOCIALIST CONSPIRACY:

Scientists manipulate the data to get funding; lowering global emissions would require higher taxes and greater government intervention.

97 percent of the world's climate scientists stick by the data, but it is true that “there is simply no way to square a belief system that vilifies collective action...with a problem that demands collective action on an unprecedented scale and a dramatic reining in of the market forces that created and are deepening the crisis.”

[Naomi Klein, *Capitalism vs. the Climate*]

OUR NATIONAL DEBT IS ALL THE DEMS' FAULT:

Our \$14-trillion national debt was caused by free-spending – Democratic – congresses and presidents!

Big deficits began in 1981, with Reagan's fanciful “supply side” tax cuts. Federal debt was then about \$1 trillion. By 2007 it had reached \$9 trillion, thanks to George Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy and his two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.... The 2008 financial collapse and deep recession generated most of the remainder, as tax revenue fell drastically. Obama's pump-priming stimulus added to the debt too, but a relatively small portion.

[William Greider, *Obama's Bad Bargain*]

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TOO MUCH DEBT? IT'S THEIR OWN FAULT:

Those who borrowed more than they can now repay (or even service) were blinded by greed and by a hunger for goodies they couldn't afford.

For most working people, wage stagnation started in the 1970s and spread widely in the Reagan era. As incomes faltered (despite taking on more jobs), "families faced two bad choices – either go deeper into debt or surrender their middle-class standard of living. Naturally, most tried to hang on to what they had." [William Greider, *Debt Jubilee, American Style*]

OUR ONLY CHOICES: CUTS OR MORE TAXES:

To reduce the deficit we must slash social programs and/or raise taxes on working Americans.

This is a false choice. There is another option: accountability – meaning that the mess should be cleaned up by those who created it, rather than those who've been hardest hit by it. Furthermore, "the most effective way to reduce the deficit is to put America back to work." [The Editors, *Austerity vs. Accountability*]

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTHCARE?

WE CAN'T AFFORD IT.

Universal healthcare is a delightful fantasy that the US could never manage to pay for.

I was in Congress on September 10, 2001, and I know there was no money in the budget at that time for a war in Iraq. So...I will go to the people who found the money for that war and ask them if they could find some for healthcare. [Barney Frank, *Cut the Military Budget*]

OURS IS A CLASSLESS SOCIETY

BUILT ON MERIT:

Americans know that opportunity is equally distributed, that their lives will be better than their parents' and that their children's lives will be better still.

Everywhere you turn you'll find people who believe they have been written out of the story. Everywhere you turn there's a sense of insecurity grounded in a gnawing fear that freedom in America has come to mean the freedom of the rich to get richer even as millions of Americans are dumped from the Dream.

[Bill Moyers, *For America's Sake*]

Every issue of *The Nation* provides fresh ammunition – like this – for combating the bunk you're going to encounter during the upcoming campaign about the economy, gun laws, healthcare, voting rights, immigration reform, education and every other important issue.

Why not arm yourself with the hard facts, the valuable insights and the inspiration that will help you – better than ever – champion the liberal ideals that built this nation?

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