

# **YEAR-END SCOTUS RANT**

Living under the rule of Six Philosopher Kings  
means the end of self-rule

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## **TOM BARRACK APPEARS TO CLAIM TRUMP KNEW BARRACK WAS CATERING US FOREIGN POLICY TO THE EMIRATES**

As part of a discovery dispute, Tom Barrack has argued that rather than betraying Trump by ensuring that Trump would cater US foreign policy to rich Gulf Arab states, Trump knew (and apparently, approved) of his actions.

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## **SOME IMPORTANT HISTORICAL DETAILS MICHAEL COHEN PROBABLY SHARED WITH MUELLER'S TEAM**

Michael Cohen has probably given Mueller a great overview of Trump's sleazy business practices. But two past events, in particular, were probably particularly useful to the investigation: Trump's 2011 trial balloon for a presidential run (which was funded by Trump

Org), and the negotiations around the 2013 Miss Universe pageant.

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## **SHOULD TRUMP RUN: DON MCGAHN HAS BEEN COVERING FOR ROGER STONE'S PRO-TRUMP RAT-FUCKING FOR SEVEN YEARS**

In 2012, Don McGahn protected one of Roger Stone's pro-Trump rat-fuckeries, Should Trump Run. He probably never stopped protecting Stone's rat-fucking.

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## **THE UNLEARNED LESSONS OF OBAMA'S GUNS, GOD, AND RELIGION COMMENTS**

Hillary forgot one of the most important lessons of the 2008 primary: that you need to convince rural white voters – those famously clinging to their guns, god, and religion – of the importance of governance.

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# CUBA LIBRE! A MOMENTOUS SHIFT IN RELATIONS

Without any question, the news of the day is the direct turnabout in relations between the United States and Cuba announced this morning. There is a rather long list of areas in which many people, including me, have profound disappointment with Barack Obama over. Lack of accountability for torture is but the latest and greatest in the news consciousness of the attuned public. But today is not such a day; today Barack Obama has risen to at least part of his once heralded promise. Today, Mr. Obama has my love and affection. Today is one of the type and kind of foreign policy, whether toward middle east or other global neighbors, moments promised in Cairo and rarely, if ever, fulfilled in tangible deeds instead of words. So, today, sincere thanks and appreciation to President Obama.

Here are the basics from the AP:

The United States and Cuba have agreed to re-establish diplomatic relations and open economic and travel ties, marking a historic shift in U.S. policy toward the communist island after a half-century of enmity dating back to the Cold War, American officials said Wednesday.

The announcement came amid a series of sudden confidence-building measures between the longtime foes, including the release of American prisoner Alan Gross, as well as a swap for a U.S. intelligence asset held in Cuba and the freeing of three Cubans jailed in the U.S.

President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro were to separately address their nations around noon Wednesday. The two leaders spoke by

phone for more than 45 minutes Tuesday, the first substantive presidential-level discussion between the U.S. and Cuba since 1961.

Wednesday's announcements followed more than a year of secret talks between U.S. and Cuban officials in Canada and the Vatican. U.S. officials said Pope Francis was personally engaged in the process and sent separate letters to Obama and Castro this summer urging them to restart relations.

This news alone would have constituted something earth shattering, but there is much more than just that. In fact, the AP laid out the merest of backgrounds with that opening. There is much, much, more. I have the official press release, and

it is so good, and compelling, I am going to put it up, all here, right now (it is long, and makes this post long, so bear with me. If you want to, feel free to skip back down to analysis and thoughts):

Today, the United States is taking historic steps to chart a new course in our relations with Cuba and to further engage and empower the Cuban people. We are separated by 90 miles of water, but brought together through the relationships between the two million Cubans and Americans of Cuban descent that live in the United States, and the 11 million Cubans who share similar hopes for a more positive future for Cuba.

It is clear that decades of U.S. isolation of Cuba have failed to accomplish our enduring objective of promoting the emergence of a democratic, prosperous, and stable Cuba. At times, longstanding U.S. policy towards Cuba has isolated the United States from

regional and international partners, constrained our ability to influence outcomes throughout the Western Hemisphere, and impaired the use of the full range of tools available to the United States to promote positive change in Cuba. Though this policy has been rooted in the best of intentions, it has had little effect – today, as in 1961, Cuba is governed by the Castros and the Communist party.

We cannot keep doing the same thing and expect a different result. It does not serve America's interests, or the Cuban people, to try to push Cuba toward collapse. We know from hard-learned experience that it is better to encourage and support reform than to impose policies that will render a country a failed state. With our actions today, we are calling on Cuba to unleash the potential of 11 million Cubans by ending unnecessary restrictions on their political, social, and economic activities. In that spirit, we should not allow U.S. sanctions to add to the burden of Cuban citizens we seek to help.

Today, we are renewing our leadership in the Americas. We are choosing to cut loose the anchor of the past, because it is entirely necessary to reach a better future – for our national interests, for the American people, and for the Cuban people.

#### Key Components of the Updated Policy Approach:

Since taking office in 2009, President Obama has taken steps aimed at supporting the ability of the Cuban people to gain greater control over their own lives and determine their country's future. Today, the President announced additional measures to end our

outdated approach, and to promote more effectively change in Cuba that is consistent with U.S. support for the Cuban people and in line with U.S. national security interests. Major elements of the President's new approach include:

Establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba-

- The President has instructed the Secretary of State to immediately initiate discussions with Cuba on the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba, which were severed in January 1961.

- In the coming months, we will re-establish an embassy in Havana and carry out high-level exchanges and visits between our two governments as part of the normalization process. As an initial step, the Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs will lead the U.S. Delegation to the next round of U.S.-Cuba Migration Talks in January 2015, in Havana.

- U.S. engagement will be critical when appropriate and will include continued strong support for improved human rights conditions and democratic reforms in Cuba and other measures aimed at fostering improved conditions for the Cuban people.

- The United States will work with Cuba on matters of mutual concern and that advance U.S. national interests, such as migration, counternarcotics, environmental protection, and trafficking in persons, among other issues.

Adjusting regulations to more effectively empower the Cuban people-

- The changes announced today will soon be implemented via amendments to regulations of the Departments of the

Treasury and Commerce. Our new policy changes will further enhance our goal of empowering the Cuban population.

- Our travel and remittance policies are helping Cubans by providing alternative sources of information and opportunities for self-employment and private property ownership, and by strengthening independent civil society.

- These measures will further increase people-to-people contact; further support civil society in Cuba; and further enhance the free flow of information to, from, and among the Cuban people. Persons must comply with all provisions of the revised regulations; violations of the terms and conditions are enforceable under U.S. law.

Facilitating an expansion of travel under general licenses for the 12 existing categories of travel to Cuba authorized by law-

- General licenses will be made available for all authorized travelers in the following existing categories: (1) family visits; (2) official business of the U.S. government, foreign governments, and certain intergovernmental organizations; (3) journalistic activity; (4) professional research and professional meetings; (5) educational activities; (6) religious activities; (7) public performances, clinics, workshops, athletic and other competitions, and exhibitions; (8) support for the Cuban people; (9) humanitarian projects; (10) activities of private foundations or research or educational institutes; (11) exportation, importation, or transmission of information or information materials; and (12) certain export transactions that may be

considered for authorization under existing regulations and guidelines.

- Travelers in the 12 categories of travel to Cuba authorized by law will be able to make arrangements through any service provider that complies with the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) regulations governing travel services to Cuba, and general licenses will authorize provision of such services.

- The policy changes make it easier for Americans to provide business training for private Cuban businesses and small farmers and provide other support for the growth of Cuba's nascent private sector. Additional options for promoting the growth of entrepreneurship and the private sector in Cuba will be explored.

Facilitating remittances to Cuba by U.S. persons-

- Remittance levels will be raised from \$500 to \$2,000 per quarter for general donative remittances to Cuban nationals (except to certain officials of the government or the Communist party); and donative remittances for humanitarian projects, support for the Cuban people, and support for the development of private businesses in Cuba will no longer require a specific license.

- Remittance forwarders will no longer require a specific license.

Authorizing expanded commercial sales/exports from the United States of certain goods and services-

- The expansion will seek to empower the nascent Cuban private sector. Items that will be authorized for export include certain building materials for private residential construction, goods for use by private sector Cuban entrepreneurs, and agricultural equipment for small



farmers. This change will make it easier for Cuban citizens to have access to certain lower-priced goods to improve their living standards and gain greater economic independence from the state.

Authorizing American citizens to import additional goods from Cuba-

- Licensed U.S. travelers to Cuba will be authorized to import \$400 worth of goods from Cuba, of which no more than \$100 can consist of tobacco products and alcohol combined.

Facilitating authorized transactions between the United States and Cuba-

- U.S. institutions will be permitted to open correspondent accounts at Cuban financial institutions to facilitate the processing of authorized transactions.

- The regulatory definition of the statutory term “cash in advance” will be revised to specify that it means “cash before transfer of title”; this will provide more efficient financing of authorized trade with Cuba.

- U.S. credit and debit cards will be permitted for use by travelers to Cuba.

- These measures will improve the speed, efficiency, and oversight of authorized payments between the United States and Cuba.

Initiating new efforts to increase Cubans’ access to communications and their ability to communicate freely-

- Cuba has an internet penetration of about five percent—one of the lowest rates in the world. The cost of telecommunications in Cuba is exorbitantly high, while the services offered are extremely limited.

- The commercial export of certain items that will contribute to the ability of the Cuban people to communicate with

people in the United States and the rest of the world will be authorized. This will include the commercial sale of certain consumer communications devices, related software, applications, hardware, and services, and items for the establishment and update of communications-related systems.

- Telecommunications providers will be allowed to establish the necessary mechanisms, including infrastructure, in Cuba to provide commercial telecommunications and internet services, which will improve telecommunications between the United States and Cuba.

Updating the application of Cuba sanctions in third countries-

- U.S.-owned or -controlled entities in third countries will be generally licensed to provide services to, and engage in financial transactions with, Cuban individuals in third countries. In addition, general licenses will unblock the accounts at U.S. banks of Cuban nationals who have relocated outside of Cuba; permit U.S. persons to participate in third-country professional meetings and conferences related to Cuba; and, allow foreign vessels to enter the United States after engaging in certain humanitarian trade with Cuba, among other measures.

Pursuing discussions with the Cuban and Mexican governments to discuss our unresolved maritime boundary in the Gulf of Mexico-

- Previous agreements between the United States and Cuba delimit the maritime space between the two countries within 200 nautical miles from shore. The United States, Cuba, and Mexico have extended continental shelf in an area within the Gulf of Mexico where the

three countries have not yet delimited any boundaries.

- The United States is prepared to invite the governments of Cuba and Mexico to discuss shared maritime boundaries in the Gulf of Mexico.

Initiating a review of Cuba's designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism-

- The President has instructed the Secretary of State to immediately launch such a review, and provide a report to the President within six months regarding Cuba's support for international terrorism. Cuba was placed on the list in 1982.

Addressing Cuba's participation in the 2015 Summit of the Americas in Panama-

- President Obama will participate in the Summit of the Americas in Panama. Human rights and democracy will be key Summit themes. Cuban civil society must be allowed to participate along with civil society from other countries participating in the Summit, consistent with the region's commitments under the Inter-American Democratic Charter. The United States welcomes a constructive dialogue among Summit governments on the Summit's principles.

Unwavering Commitment to Democracy, Human Rights, and Civil Society

A critical focus of our increased engagement will include continued strong support by the United States for improved human rights conditions and democratic reforms in Cuba. The promotion of democracy supports universal human rights by empowering civil society and a person's right to speak freely, peacefully assemble, and associate, and by supporting the ability of people to freely determine their future. Our efforts are aimed at

promoting the independence of the Cuban people so they do not need to rely on the Cuban state.

The U.S. Congress funds democracy programming in Cuba to provide humanitarian assistance, promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, and support the free flow of information in places where it is restricted and censored. The Administration will continue to implement U.S. programs aimed at promoting positive change in Cuba, and we will encourage reforms in our high level engagement with Cuban officials.

The United States encourages all nations and organizations engaged in diplomatic dialogue with the Cuban government to take every opportunity both publicly and privately to support increased respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Cuba.

Ultimately, it will be the Cuban people who drive economic and political reforms. That is why President Obama took steps to increase the flow of resources and information to ordinary Cuban citizens in 2009, 2011, and today. The Cuban people deserve the support of the United States and of an entire region that has committed to promote and defend democracy through the Inter-American Democratic Charter.



The whole statement was put up here because every

type inch of it is worth knowing and pointing out. I wonder if this letter from "America's Society/Council of the Americas" didn't presage a lot of today's result (h/t Olivier Knox). Either way, it is nothing less than the formal ending of the cold war between the United States and Cuba, and that is one spectacular point in time. Cold War dead enders, and people whose hatred of the Castro regime supersedes their common sense and acceptance of a changed world, will decry today's move and slime Mr. Obama for having made it. Mental midgets, from both sides of the aisle of idiocy, such as Bob Menendez and Marco Rubio, have already done that. But they are the rotting rump of over 50 years of failed policy that has denied Cubans the very means and base from which to effect the very change the critics demand.

I think the press release is both elegant, detailed, and compelling. Other than bullheadedness, there hasn't been any good reason to not do this for a long time. to quote Ken Gude on Twitter:

Is there any real argument for not normalizing relations with #Cuba? It has been the single dumbest & least effective US policy for decades.

Yes, that is exactly correct. Hey, even the Pope was involved! And Americans who do travel to Cuba will be able to legally bring back cigars. So there is that too for "cigar aficionados", which undoubtedly, and illegally, have included some of the bellicose political humps in DC who have screamed against this for decades. Sorry backwards Beltway boobs, it is a new day now, and the American people, and even the Latino community in Florida, support the new day in substantial margins as shown in this Atlantic Council poll graph.

Okay, here are a few parting thoughts: First, Mr. Obama must immediately move his Administration to remove Cuba from the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism list. Secondly, the

Obama Administration should immediately seek out and work with Bob Corker, the incoming Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and a man who ought be far more responsible and approachable than the foreign relations belligerent that has been Democrat Bob Menendez. Thirdly, the Administration should immediately facilitate, in every manner possible, the collaboration between American and Cuban health officials and modalities, both to fight ebola, AIDS, and as to general medicine and treatment.

In closing, while there is still much to be done, and many deadenders to overcome, this is a beautiful day. The language from the opening paragraph of the Administration press release is a perfect close:

We are separated by 90 miles of water, but brought together through the relationships between the two million Cubans and Americans of Cuban descent that live in the United States, and the 11 million Cubans who share similar hopes for a more positive future for Cuba.

A more positive future for both sides of that 90 miles of water is in order. And a long time coming. Today is the first day of a new, and exciting beginning. Before I was born, my parents' favorite place to travel was to Cuba. It was not just my mother's love of Hemmingway, but both of their love for Havana and the people and places of Cuba. I very much look forward to seeing what they saw, and felt so strongly.

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## **THE DISTURBING PARADOX OF THE DAVID**

# BARRON NOMINATION

Barack Obama has a preternatural preference for ivory tower elites from Harvard when it comes to judicial and executive branch appointees, and David Barron is the latest



example. The White House is in the final stages of an all out push to insure David Barron gets confirmed to a lifetime Article III seat on the First Circuit.

In this regard, Mr. Barron has gotten exactly the kind of fervent support and back channel whipping the Obama White House denied Goodwin Liu, and refused to give to the nominee at OLC that David Barron stood as the designated and approved Obama acting placeholder for, Dawn Johnsen.

It turns out Mr. Obama and his White House shop really can give appropriate support to nominees if they care, which seemed to be a trait entirely lacking earlier in the Obama Presidency. And by giving the ill taken legal cover to Mr. Obama for the extrajudicial execution of American citizens, that Obama had already attempted once without, Mr. Barron certainly earned the support of the Obama White House.

It would be wonderful if Mr. Obama were to give support to candidates for judicial seats and key legal agencies who protect the Constitution instead of shredding it for convenience, but it appears to not be in the offing all that consistently. Obama has never been the same since blowback from the release of the Torture Memos when he first took office. Even Federal judges like Mary Schroeder and Bill Canby who,

less than a month after Obama took office, were stunned by the about face, and wholesale adoption, by Obama of the Bush/Cheney security state protocols. From a New York Times article at the moment:

During the campaign, Mr. Obama harshly criticized the Bush administration's treatment of detainees, and he has broken with that administration on questions like whether to keep open the prison camp at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. But a government lawyer, Douglas N. Letter, made the same state-secrets argument on Monday, startling several judges on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

"Is there anything material that has happened" that might have caused the Justice Department to shift its views, asked Judge Mary M. Schroeder, an appointee of President Jimmy Carter, coyly referring to the recent election.

"No, your honor," Mr. Letter replied.

Judge Schroeder asked, "The change in administration has no bearing?"

Once more, he said, "No, Your Honor." The position he was taking in court on behalf of the government had been "thoroughly vetted with the appropriate officials within the new administration," and "these are the authorized positions," he said.

Make no mistake, from my somewhat substantial knowledge of Mary Schroeder, that was the voice of shock and dismay. But it was an early tell of who and what Barack Obama, and his administration, would be on national security issues from there forward. And so, indeed, it has been.

What was unconscionable and traitorous to the rule of law and Constitution for Obama, and the



Democratic majority in the Senate, under George Bush is now just jim dandy under Barack Obama. It is intellectual weakness and cowardice of the highest order.

So we come back to the case of David Barron. Frankly, it is not hard to make the argument that what Barron has done is actually worse than the travesties of John Yoo and Jay Bybee. As unthinkable, heinous and immoral as torture is, and it is certainly all that, it is a discrete violation of domestic and international law. It is definable crime.

But what David Barron did in, at a minimum, the Awlaki Targeted Kill Memo (there are at least six other memos impinging on and controlling this issue, at a minimum of which at least one more is known to be authored by Barron, and we don't even deign to discuss those apparently), was to attack and debase the the very foundational concept of Due Process as portrayed in the Bill of Rights. Along with Habeas Corpus, Due Process is literally the foundation of American criminal justice fairness and freedom under our Constitution.

David Barron attacked that core foundation. Sure, it is in the so called name of terrorism today, tomorrow it will justify something less in grade. And something less the day after. Such is how Constitutional degradation happens. And there is absolutely nothing so far known in Mr. Barron's handiwork to indicate it could not be adapted for use domestically if the President deems it so needed. Once untethered from the forbidden, once unthinkable Executive Branch powers always find new and easier uses. What were once vices all too easily become habits. This is exactly how the once proud Fourth Amendment has disappeared into a rabbit hole of "exceptions".

This damage to Due Process occasioned by David Barron can be quite easily argued to be more fundamental and critical to the Constitution, the Constitution every political and military officer in the United States is sworn to

protect, than a temporally limited violation of criminal statutes and international norms on torture as sanctioned by Yoo and Bybee. But it is not treated that way by cheering Dems and liberals eager to confirm one of their own, a nice clean-cut Harvard man like the President, to a lifetime post to decide Constitutional law. What was detested for Jay Bybee, and would certainly be were John Yoo ever nominated for a federal judgeship, is now no big deal when it comes to David Barron. Constitutional bygones baybee; hey Barron is cool on same sex marriage, what a guy! Screw Due Process, it is just a quaint and archaic concept in a piece of parchment paper, right?

If the above were not distressing enough, the Barron nomination was supposed to, at a minimum, be used as leverage to get public release of the Barron handiwork legally sanctioning Mr. Obama to extrajudicially execute American citizens without a whiff of Due Process or judicial determination. Did we get that? Hell no, of course not. A scam was run by the Obama White House, and the Senate and oh so attentive DC press fell for it hook, line and sinker. We got squat and Barron is on the rocket path to confirmation with nothing to show for it, and no meaningful and intelligent review of his facially deficient record of Constitutional interpretation.

Barron cleared cloture late Wednesday and is scheduled for a floor vote for confirmation today, yet release of the "redacted memo" is nowhere remotely in sight. This framing on Barron's nomination, irrespective of your ultimate position on his fitness, is a complete and utter fraud on the American citizenry in whose name it is being played. And that is just on the one Awlaki Memo that we *already know* the legal reasoning on from the self serving previous release of the "white paper" by the Administration. Discussion of the other six identified pertinent memos has dropped off the face of the earth. Booyah US Senate, way to do your job for the citizens you represent! Or not.

Personally, there is more than sufficient information about David Barron's situational legal, and moral, ethics in the white paper alone to deem him unfit for a lifetime Article III confirmed seat on a Circuit Court of Appeal.

But, even if you disagree and consider Barron fit, you should admit the American citizenry has been ripped off in this process by the Democratically led Senate, and an Obama Administration who has picked a dubious spot to finally get aggressive in support of one of their nominees.

If Goodwin Liu and Dawn Johnsen, two individuals who had proven their desire to protect the Constitution, had received this kind of support, this country, and the world, would be a better place. Instead, Mr. Obama has reserved his all out push for a man who, instead, opted to apply situational ethics to gut the most basic Constitutional concept of Due Process. That's unacceptable, but at a minimum we should have the benefit of proper analysis of Barron's work before it happens.

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## **OBAMA WHITE HOUSE SPONSORS YOUNG AND RICH NARCISSISTIC 1% FUCKTARDS THAT WILL RUIN THE WORLD**

Proving it is never too late to shine your lame duck ass for a new generation of 1% oligarchs, Barack Obama laid open the real constituency of national politicians. And proved certain any inference that such was only the constituency and province of the GOP, Koch Brothers et. al is false.

If this is not stupid and ugly to the common Democratic fanchild, it is hard to imagine what is, or could be. From the New York Times hagiography:

On a crisp morning in late March, an elite group of 100 young philanthropists and heirs to billionaire family fortunes filed into a cozy auditorium at the White House.

Their name tags read like a catalog of the country's wealthiest and most influential clans: Rockefeller, Pritzker, Marriott. They were there for a discreet, invitation-only summit hosted by the Obama administration to find common ground between the public sector and the so-called next-generation philanthropists, many of whom stand to inherit billions in private wealth.

"Moon shots!" one administration official said, kicking off the day on an inspirational note to embrace the White House as a partner and catalyst for putting their personal idealism into practice.

"Moon shots!"

I guess the Obama White House couldn't fathom a better phrase for coming in their pants over big money.

If there is a more sick comment on the perverted state of US national politics, it is hard to imagine what it would be.

We are ruled by a bunch of oligarchs, and political handmaidens that kiss the oligarch's asses and hew their beck and call. If the fact the great once and forever symbol of the common citizen "hope and change", Barack Obama, is such a distant leader, constantly beholden to not only the future of the moneyed class, but the current too, then there is no reality for the American public.

The well-heeled group seemed receptive. "I think it's fantastic," said Patrick Gage, a 19-year-old heir to the multibillion-dollar Carlson hotel and hospitality fortune. "I've never seen anything like this before." Mr. Gage, physically boyish with naturally swooping Bieber bangs, wore a conservative pinstripe suit and a white oxford shirt. His family's Carlson company, which owns Radisson hotels, Country Inns and Suites, T.G.I. Friday's and other brands, is an industry leader in enforcing measures to combat trafficking and involuntary prostitution.

Oh my. And holy crap.

The New York Times penned a factual report of this sick instance. Will the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, or any of the other august opinion pages of national press, deign themselves honest enough to write opinion and/or editorial pieces recognizing this political cancer for what it really is?

If you did not view the video, and listen to the lyrics in the video above, do so. Because that is exactly the class of "super citizens" your elected leaders are beholden to. The handful of billionaires count for far more than the actual billions of people on this earth.

Want proof? Look no further than the "liberal", "socialist", "Democratic" Obama White House, who just demonstrated the problem in Technicolor.

And, before you chafe, of course it would be even worse with Republicans in charge. But the question is no longer just which party is in control of the levers of power (though it DOES matter for SCOTUS), but where the values of the country really are.

It is almost impossible to fathom the country's values are with the pimple faced, Bieber banded, teenager scions of billionaires the Obama White

House so calmly and coolly glad-hands.

[Seriously, watch the video from the one, the only, fantastic Tubes:

Young and rich  
Everything I desire  
Light bulbs with shades  
in every room  
And work is play—believe me  
Nothing must come too hard  
It comes in the mail  
most everyday

Maybe our leaders should find a more representative, and morally balanced, set of leaders for the future.]

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## THE RETURN OF THE NFL: IT'S ON!!!

[Hey there Lugnuts!! We are having a fundraiser here at Emptywheel. Help the effort out! We have been really hesitant about doing this in the past. To the best of my recollection, we have not done one at all since leaving FDL. Marcy will not toot her own horn, but I will. The level, depth, independence, and rationality, of what Ms. Wheeler does makes most “Main Stream” and other “blogs” look feeble. And it is not just her, Jim White, Rayne and, occasionally, I who also contribute. This is a valuable forum. We live for you, but we also need your help. To the extent you can give it, it would be remarkably well placed, and much appreciated. Thank you!]

I have been being heckled about this Trash Talk stuff forever. Marcy is just cranky jonesing for football and Jim White thinks the Devil Rays count. But this ain't called “Trash Talk” for nothing you know. Pre-season fake football and

baseball in the swamps are not enough. Nosirree. Not in a sophisticated joint like this.

But there was a little smattering of real college football last Saturday, so there was primordial Trash. But, now, my friends, there is REAL, professional grade, NFL football in the queue. Let it be known, unless I meet a bigger margarita pitcher and burrito that looks like this tomorrow night, there will by Saturday morning be additional MAJOR LEAGUE Trash for the weekend. NCAA, NFL and the F1 Circus at Monza (yes, that really may be the bigger story worldwide. Formula One rules; get used to it).

But, tonight, there are two games on the schedule. The biggest, of course, is a replay of last season's AFC Divisional Playoffs between the Denver Broncos and Baltimore Ravens. Ought to be a great game. Despite what the naysayers say, Peyton Manning's arm is turning bionic in its incredible strength. The Bronco's, however, are a bit wounded with Elvis Dumervil now on the Ravens and Von Miller suspended for the first six games. The Ravens have also lost a LOT of weight from last year's Superbowl team, including Ray Lewis and Ed Reed. As much as the media and fans have always focused on Ray Lewis, I cannot help but believe the absence of Ed Reed, one of the most incredible ball hawks in the history of the NFL, is every bit as big a loss. Broncos are at home and are PISSED about that last minute loss last year to the Ravens. My money is on Peyton and the ARM OF HULK.

Secondarily, and I, (maybe you?) will probably have to DVR this, but the ASU Sun Devils are opening their season tonight at 10:00 pm EST against Sacramento State. Okay, this won't be much of a game. But, GO DEVILS!!

That's it for now. More later as promised. This is the best blog in the world, if I do say so from my completely neutral perch! Rock and roll my friends. Today's music is by Government Mule. Because Donkos and Peyton rock...and, because, the US Government, collectively, are a bunch of War Pigs.

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# OPERATION BALLSACK LABOR DAY FOOTBALL TRASH TALK

Hello. Is there anybody in there? Just nod if you can hear me.

I am not sure how well the Trash Talk Machine is greased after such egregious neglect. But, we can only do what we do, and carry on. And those skilz have NOT been forgotten jack. So saddle up cowboys and cowgirls.

You would think being a blogger is an easy, Cheetos filled, lifestyle. Not the case. It is hard work, hard work I tell ya. I have suffered the indignation of Marcy and Jim yammering about wanting “trash this” and “trash that”.

Weeeeelllllll that is so much SPAM! So, as I said earlier, it’s not easy, you know. I get no respect!

To make a quick comment on the title of this 2013 football season opening trash, shit is truly fucked up and bullshit. We have Mr. Constitutional Nobel Scholar President agitating to make unilateral bizarrely unnecessary war on Syria...apparently because he screwed up and drew a moronic “red line” in the sand and now has to prove he actually has bolas, in addition to stupidity and hubris. The man who when seeking votes to be elected in 2007-2008 claimed war without Congressional assent was wrong, and whose Vice-Predident called such unsanctioned war bullshittery and an “impeachable offense”, now insists without the UN, without the Brits, and with a coalition of effectively one (one who were previously described as “cheese eating surrender monkeys” not that long ago in American lore). But that is where we are now. Which is why the best name for this clusterfuck is “Operation Ballsack“. Yes, it is all about



Obama's balls, and his desperate need to prove he actually has a primordial pair.

Huh? Oh, wait! This was supposed to be football Trash Talk wasn't it?!?!

Yikes, better get to that then. Last night was a pretty exciting open to the NCAA 2013 schedule. The 'Ole Ball Coach Spurrier and the 'Cocks did not seem all that animated, but still clocked a fairly solid NC Tarheel team. Looked like Vady was gonna take a bite off the 'Ole Miss Rebels, but Ole Miss tailback Jeff Scott let loose with a 75 yard TD romp with 1:07 left, giving the Rebels a 39-35 last minute win. Good stuff. In other news, Lane Kiffin proves the question of why he has not been fired yet is still very salient by coaching a narrow win for Tommy Trojan over the Rainbows. Mighty Troy barely made it over the Rainbows. Yay. If that is all USC has, even the Sun Devils are going to wax them this year (a game I will be attending by the way). also, from Friday night, let me just say that Sparty has some VERY sticky fingered defenders. Look out BIG.

Well, what else is up I wonder? Hmmm, appears some fella named "Manziel" was suspended half a game for something. Guess it wasn't anything bad, cause Dez Bryant got suspended a whole season for eating dinner with Neon Deion Sanders. I sign my name on things a lot too. I get paid to do so. Not sure who would sign thousands of items for zip, nuthin, free. Apparently the crack investigators and accountability specialists at the NCAA found no problem though. And you KNOW how sane they are, cause they banned Penn State from all bowls for four years without having any NCAA violation whatsoever present. Ugh.

Alright. Games. Real ones are being played this weekend. Battle manufactured where it should be. Naturally. By a nerd at ESPN instead of that fake Operation Obama Ballsack baloney.

The game of the weekend looks to be Georgia at Clemson. These are two top ten worthy teams, if

not potential national championship contenders. Special players abound everywhere on both teams, including Sammy Watkins the super receiver for the Tigers, and Tajh Boyd his quarterback. For the Bulldogs, Aaron Murray may be the best QB in the conference, and that includes Johnny Football. Awesome game to have so early. Alabama hosting Virginia Tech is another unusual one to start off with. The Tide will roll them, but there could be a struggle. should be a way better game than the Tide expected.

Honorable mentions goes to TCU and LSU in neutral Texas, Boise State/Washington and Cal versus Northwestern. Tell us what you have and why!

The one other thing I want to address is the noggins of the NFL. As you may have heard, there was a settlement this week, and it heavily favored the NFL. The craven plantation owners admitted nothing, gave up no liability findings, and gave up a ridiculously cheap total sum as hard settlement. By the time lawyer's fees and mandatory testing etc. is deducted, it is criminal how little was gotten for a class of at risk humans. Down the road, if these class members live, they and their representatives will be screaming bloody murder. Here is an outrageously great article laying out the factors, and doing so with the tart and sarcastic truth it deserves

This long Labor Day weekend's music is from the one, the only, Ms. Linda Ronstadt. I have a real affinity for Linda, and have seen her numerous times including a couple of very special ones. If there has ever been a better pure female vocal talent, I am not sure I have seen it. Pure, and with a range to die for. The singing voice may be silenced, but Linda is rocking on and fighting for the causes she believes in. And they are, and always have been, great, and the right, ones. Oh, also, in case you didn't notice, she had a backup band on the first video. Chuck Berry, Keith Richards, Robert Cray and some other chaps. The second is the band she

normally toured with (including Waddy Wachtel – but with Mike Botts on drums instead of Russ Kunkel, who I always saw) and, trust me, they were absolutely killer, and very cool people to boot.

That's it for now. Let Willis, and one and all, rock this joint. We are Livin In The USA. All things considered, it is still pretty fucking grand. Enjoy the holiday weekend my friends.