

JARED BERNSTEIN'S GLORIOUS DIARRHEA OF QUASHED IDEAS

I rarely post solely to recommend you follow a blog or twitter feed. But I am here.

You see, Joe Biden's economic advisor, Jared Bernstein, was recently liberated from the White House.

And, as part of that liberation process, it seems, he got himself a blog and twitter feed. His inaugural post explained he could do more and better on the outside, speaking truth.

Democrats lately seemed to be trapped in a position that amounts to: "sure, we have to cut and shrink—just not as much as the other guys want."

There's got to be a better way—a way to widen this terribly narrow debate.

Why couldn't I do more to help from the inside? One reason is that in order to move the ball forward, you need consensus, and in today's politics, that is particularly elusive. And that makes it especially hard to call out people and their arguments. There's a reason why Jon Stewart can speak truths that highly-placed elected officials cannot. When you're on the inside at a time like this, you're constantly balancing the risk of losing the support of people you need to lead.

So, not meaning to be at all grandiose, I'm going to try to do my part to improve the debate from the outside, to make sense out of the arguments, to go for truth over truthiness, to elevate the facts of the case in a way that's respectful to all sides of the case. It's also my hope that by dint of my

recent experience at the White House, I can imbue this blog with a sense of political realism that's sometimes missing in critical commentary.

And he's got all the smarts of Paul Krugman with—excuse me, the Shrill One—better voice.

But what's more fascinating to me is the way his blog reads like the exploding diarrhea of common sense ideas that were quashed within the Obama White House:

***Social Security
Benefits:
They're
Important!***

***The Correct
Diagnosis***

***Family Budget
Not Equal to
Government
Budget***

***This Just In:
Wars Are
Expensive***

***What's Going
Down with Real
Wages?***

Along with this line from a post on the auto bailout I heartily endorse:

You'd be hard-pressed to find a policy intervention that did as much good yet engendered so much disdain.

Partly I want to say “duh!”

Partly I want to cheer that someone with an economist badge is finally putting these ideas into circulation.

And partly I’m fascinated by the seeming free association going on at the moment, with every reaction a seeming opportunity to expound on something—it seems—that has been gnawing on Bernstein for the last two years.

Finally, there’s the recognition that the entire time the White House was shunning truth-tellers like Krugman and Joe Stiglitz, there was apparently someone on the inside speaking many of the same obvious truths.

And with that recognition, the evidence that Bernstein’s truth-telling didn’t do anymore good from the inside than Krugman and Stiglitz did on the outside.