

A pardon for Edward Snowden

by: Darryl W. Perry

For the second consecutive year, Edward Snowden appeared at South by South West in Austin, Texas, and once again, he was not able to attend in person. Snowden, again, appeared via internet stream, this time to a select group of people from the technology and policy world. The Verge reports, “Sunday Yokubaitis, president of online privacy company Golden Frog, described as a ‘call to arms’ for tech companies to foil spying with better privacy tools.” Adding that “Snowden said that as policy reform lagged, companies should adopt more secure technology that could block surveillance altogether or make it too difficult to pursue en masse. A big focus was end-to-end encryption, which would mean no one (including companies) could see the contents of communications except the sender and recipient.”

One topic not discussed was in regards to the former NSA contractor: the possibility of a fair trial. In early March, one of Snowden’s lawyers said, “[Edward] Snowden is ready to return to the [United] States, but on the condition that he is given a guarantee of a legal and impartial trial.” Jesselyn Radack, who also works on Snowden’s legal team, says a trial under the Espionage Act—the World War I-era law that Snowden is alleged to have violated —“would not be considered fair.” Radack reportedly said, “Snowden would be amenable to coming back to the United States for the kind of plea bargain that Gen.

[David] Petraeus received.”

Patraeus plead guilty to a misdemeanor charge of mishandling classified material and will serve no jail time for his actions. Unlike Snowden, who gave classified documents about mass surveillance to members of the media; Petraeus gave classified info to his biographer and girlfriend, Paula Broadwell. Patraeus then lied to the FBI about having given Broadwell access to the documents.

By contrast, Edward Snowden never lied about his actions, and even explained why he did it. We don’t yet know if Edward Snowden will ever be allowed to return to the United States, or if he will ever appear in a court. However, he should not have to appear in court, because he should be granted a full pardon.

I know that will not happen as long as Barack Obama is in the White House, because it was Obama’s Administration that sought espionage charges in the first place. Nor do I expect a Republican President to issue such a pardon either. Even the supposed libertarian Rand Paul has said that Snowden should spend “a few years in prison.”

It is clear that neither major party will do what is right, and will only serve to protect their own interests. Is it any wonder that both parties now have an approval rating below 40%?

Are Americans realizing government isn’t necessary?

by: Darryl W. Perry

A new survey from Gallup proclaims “Americans Name Government as No. 1 U.S. Problem.” This headline alone brought a smile to my face, until I clicked on the article and read the results, and began to think about what the results meant.

Many conservatives like to quote Ronald Reagan who, during his first inaugural address, said, “government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem.” These are the same people who then look for government solutions to what they perceive as problems: immigration, drugs, same-sex marriage, terrorism, and a myriad of other issues whereby they want government to find a solution.

On the flip-side, you have many liberals/progressives who think that government is not doing enough to solve a myriad of what they perceive as problems: campaign financing, unfair taxation, guns, drugs, terrorism, and a myriad of other issues whereby they want government to find a solution.

So, right off the bat you have two seemingly opposing sides who want government to find solutions to their

perceived problems, and both sides – which are really different feathers on the same bird – agreeing on some of the problems. The difference between them is they disagree on the solutions, which may explain why only 31% of respondents stated they were “satisfied with the way things are going in the United States at this time,” whereas 67% were dissatisfied.

But what about the survey title? Good question. Respondents were asked the open ended question: “What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today?” And nearly 1 in 5 (18%) gave some variant of the answer “dissatisfaction with government/Congress/politicians; poor leadership/corruption/abuse of power.” The next highest answer was some variant of “economy in general.” However, when specific economic issues are added to “economy in general,” economic problems account for 41% of what is viewed as the most important problem in the country, not government, but I digress.

I realize that some people will look at these results, and think that people are coming around to the realization that

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(location varies, check ShireCalendar.FPP.cc)

KEENE

Every Sunday – Social Sunday: McCue's Billiards & Sports, 12 Emerald St. – 6:00pm

LAKES REGION

Third Saturday of the month – Lakes Region Porcupine Meeting: New Hong Kong Buffet 12 Old State Rd Unit 3, Belmont – 12:00-2:00pm

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Last Tuesday of the month – Upper Valley Porcupines: Ziggy's Pizza, 254 North Plainfield Road, West Lebanon – 6:00-8:00pm

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MANCHESTER

Every Tuesday – Taproom Tuesday: Murphy's Taproom, 494 Elm St. – 5:00-7:00pm

MANCHESTER

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NASHUA

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Submit your events to editor@fpp.cc – please send event information by the final Sunday of each month.

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Indiana law has unintended consequence

by: Darryl W. Perry

I rarely discuss religious topics, however there are times when it must be done. The Governor of Indiana, Mike Pence, recently signed a "Religious Freedom Restoration Act" into law in the Hoosier State. Some people say the law will open the door to discrimination, such as allowing a baker or florist from providing service to a gay couple seeking a cake or flowers for their wedding, or allowing a pharmacist to refuse to fill a prescription for birth control. Supporters of the new law, including Pence, disagree. Pence said, "this law is not about discrimination. If it was, I would have vetoed it."

However, he has not explained how the bill does not allow discrimination, or even how the bill does allow one to exercise their religious freedom. On ABC's "This Week with George Stephanopoulos" Pence was asked six times whether under the law it would be legal for a merchant to refuse to serve gay customers, he refused to directly answer the question. Pence said, "This is not about discrimination, this is about empowering people to confront government overreach." He did say that he will look into a bill to clarify the law's intent, if the Legislature sends him such a bill.

If the intent needs to be clarified, does that mean the

Regulate everything like tomatoes: a guide to ending the drug war

by: Darryl W. Perry

In late February, the Colorado Department of Revenue Marijuana Enforcement Division released a reports stating, "On December 31, 2014, Colorado concluded a full twelve months of lawful retail marijuana sales to adults over 21 years of age. The State experienced many firsts, such as the implementation of the first-in-the-world comprehensive regulatory model overseeing cultivation, products manufacturing, and sale of marijuana for non-medical retail use."

These so called firsts were a result of the passage of a ballot initiative in 2012, in which voters amended the State Constitution to regulate cannabis like wine. Despite the difference between the cannabis regulations and the regulations concerning alcohol, primarily the regulation on the amount one can purchase or possess, the MED reports that over 17 tons of recreational cannabis were sold in 2014. Additionally, Reuters reports, "State tax officials say sales hit nearly \$700 million last year, with medical (cannabis) accounting for \$386 million and recreational (cannabis) bringing in \$313 million," which amounted to approximately \$76 million in revenue through taxes and

current language is vague? Absolutely! In order to have some understanding of the debate, I read the law. The first 7 sections of the new law are definitions and explanations of terms. The key elements are sections 5, 8, 9 and 11. Exercise of religion is defined as "any exercise of religion, whether or not compelled by, or central to, a system of religious belief." The law then says "a governmental entity may not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion, even if the burden results from a rule of general applicability." Except that "[a] governmental entity may substantially burden a person's exercise of religion... [if the burden] is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest; and is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest." If a person's "exercise of religion has been substantially burdened, or is likely to be substantially burdened" they may seek relief from the courts. However, the law concludes by stating "is not intended to, and shall not be construed or interpreted to, create a claim or private cause of action against any private employer by any applicant, employee, or former employee."

So on the one hand, you have a law stating that exercise of religion can mean pretty much anything; and that it can't

be substantially burdened. On the other hand, the law says that exercise of religion can be substantially burdened if the burden serves a compelling government interest (i.e. for the greater good) and is the least restrictive means of furthering said interest. Additionally, I see nothing in this law that states "a person may not substantially burden another person's exercise of religion." Which, to me seems to counter the claims that the bill allows a baker to refuse to bake a cake for a same-sex couple. However, laws are often construed after passage to mean any number of things that were not intended.

One thing that was definitely not intended by adoption of this law, was the backlash from various entities. The Indianapolis Star reports, the CEO of Angie's List "announced that his company will abandon a deal with the state and city to expand the company's headquarters in Indianapolis." And the AP reports, "The Indianapolis-based NCAA has expressed concerns about the law and has suggested it could move future events elsewhere."

Whether or not the new law in Indiana allows discrimination in the name of religion, it has shown that there are people willing to discriminate against the discriminators.

fees to the State of Colorado.

Some people argue that a regulatory structure such as that adopted in Colorado and Washington, where figures are not yet released, will be the beginning of the end of the drug war. While the statistics show that arrests for cannabis possession have declined in Colorado by 84% since 2010, and arrests for distribution of cannabis have declined by 90% in the same time period, arrests for public consumption have risen by over three and a half times in only 1 year (184 in 2013 to 668 in 2014).

However cannabis is only one aspect of the drug war. Aside from asset forfeiture, the other aspects of the drug war are more taboo, and less discussed in any serious manner. Additionally, one must define what is meant by "ending the drug war." Some would be happy to see only arrests for cannabis possession be eliminated, but would support the continued prosecution of unlicensed sales (regardless if they support licensing sales or not). While others believe that taxing and regulating cannabis, but keeping the "hard stuff" illegal is a good enough end to the drug war. Yet others believe that all substances should be

able to be manufactured, sold, possessed and or consumed without government intervention. I fall in the latter category, and do not believe that taxing and regulating a substance, any substance, can lead to the eventual abolition of that taxing and regulatory structure. I challenge you to think of something, anything, that has had a taxing and regulatory structure removed from it within your life time.

I long for the day in which all substances are as legal as tomatoes. What do I mean? To my knowledge, there are no laws regulating how many tomatoes a person can grow, purchase, sale or posses. There may be laws regulating business activity in general, but not tomatoes specifically. Thus, to truly end the war on drugs, the federal Controlled Substances Act needs to be repealed, and all state and local laws prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, possession and consumption of all substances must be repealed. By saying this, I am not advocating that anyone consume crystal meth, only that one should not be treated as a criminal for simply doing so. It is not only costly to treat people with vices like criminals, it is also immoral.

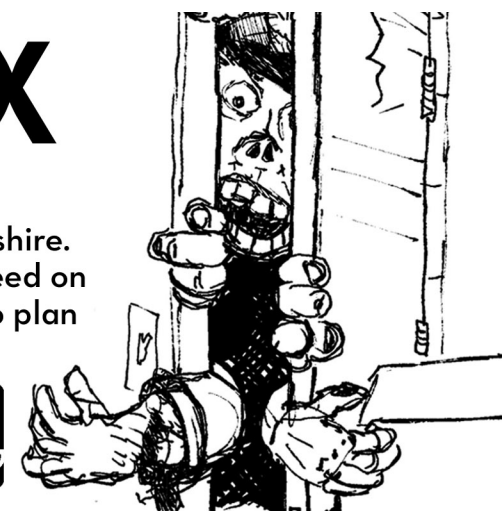


SURVIVOR MAX

by Davi Barker

11-year-old Max is surviving an undead plague alone in New Hampshire. Slow-moving and non-thinking, the "lamebrains" hunt the living to feed on their flesh. He must apply his Porcupine Freedom Scouts training to plan his escape, but first he must prove that he's too smart to die.

SurvivorMax.com



by: Conan Salada

Mention government corruption, wasteful spending, crony politics and most minds will undoubtedly go straight to the sleaze pit we know as Washington D.C. Try to convince your neighbor that that same ooze may lie closer to home at the municipal level and you'll likely run into some opposition. After all, we're talking about our neighbors. Our co-workers. These are local heroes who take time out of their busy lives to make ours better.

They are also human. Just as corruptible and just as likely to misuse public funds as the parasites in DC. Let me explain.

Last year the Keene School District unabashedly spent \$24,000 of our money to advertise its very controversial Article 1 that dealt with the acquiring of a \$13 million bond for school renovations and the subsequent closing of Jonathan Daniels Elementary. They placed pro-article 1 ads in the Sentinel, the Shopper, on WKBK radio, and blanketed the city in campaign signs. For those unaware, the act of using government property to influence the results of a vote is known as electioneering and is illegal in the state of NH (RSA 659:44-a). The school board justified this act by claiming a need to "educate" the folks on current affairs. This is nothing new, really. Governmental departments across the country are guilty of using public funds to perpetuate their own agenda. The problem is no one is calling them out on it.

When asked what he thought of this misuse of taxpayer money, KSD attorney, John Wrigley, had this to say: "I think the school board has an obligation to inform and to educate... In 30 years I've been doing this I've seen the

The "S" word: reclaiming personal liberty

by: Darryl W. Perry

During the 2015 NH Liberty Forum, the NH Liberty Party held its third annual convention. The NH Liberty Party is an avowed pro-secessionist party with a 5 plank platform that can not be changed "except by 100% of voting members at the annual convention." Of course, secession is only 1 plank in the platform, with the party also taking a staunch libertarian position on Self-determination, Non-aggression, Crime, and Voluntary Interaction. The reason for these libertarian planks, according to Ian Freeman, party co-founder and co-chair, is to exclude the bigots and xenophobes who may wish to seceded to then implement their bigotry.

Many people who advocate for secession will not use the word, seeing it as a third rail, of sorts. The Foundation for New Hampshire Independence, for example, talks about an independent New Hampshire, without using the dreaded "s-word," instead stating, "The Foundation for New Hampshire Independence believes that our state's future can be assured only by reclaiming our rightful status as a sovereign and independent nation. We seek to promote New Hampshire's peaceful separation from the United States through educational initiatives and the fostering of conversations between all New Hampshire citizens with an interest in freedom from the Federal government."

Some people who may be open to the concept of independence, may then be opposed to the idea of secession. This can partly be attributed to the pre-

Schoolhouse Shenanigans

board over-extend itself more than once. I sit there and I look at something and I say, "Whoa I hope no one asks me about that." But those are specific details that sometimes I trip across. I think on the whole, the board does it right, it has public hearings to inform and to educate. ...but, I think sometimes they over-extend themselves. But I think it's all in good faith...we're not talking about Richard Daley in Chicago and that sort of thing."

So in other words, it's ok to break the law as long as it's for the kids and as long as it's not Richard Daley level. Had you or I attempted this same stunt, we would be looking at fines and or imprisonment. It's true. Badges and titles do grant special privileges to some.

Need another example of how KSD spends your money?

On last year's election day the 26 session workers, who were paid between \$35 and \$100 for their services were also supplied lunch courtesy of the taxpayers. But no ham sandwiches for these heroes. They ate Luca's Cafe that day. The bill? A whopping \$1,037.

Question? How many Netbooks could have been purchased with that money? Of course, that wouldn't mesh with today's theme: never miss out on an opportunity to dine on great food at the expense of some clueless schmo (the taxpayers). And don't worry. No one will notice. This is just an infinitesimally small slice hidden within a monstrous \$63.7 million dollar budget.

But don't you dare recommend trying to reduce that budget any further, says your local bureaucrat. That would

judgmental attitudes that are associated with certain words. For many, the word "secession" invokes thoughts of Southern plantation owners claiming the right to own another human being.

In practice, there is no difference between a declaration of independence, and a declaration of secession. In fact, the word secession is defined by Merriam Webster's as meaning "the act of separating from a nation or state and becoming independent." And independence is defined as either "freedom from outside control or support" or "the time when a country or region gains political freedom from outside control." Which essentially means that when John Hancock, Thomas Jefferson and 54 other men signed the Declaration of Independence, they were making a statement that the 13 American colonies were seceding from the British Empire. If July 4 were referred to as "Secession Day," it is possible that the negative connotations connected to the word would be diminished.

Regardless of the baggage associated with the word, I believe that everyone who claims to support personal liberty, should also support the concept of secession – even if the person does not believe that the concept of a nation-state should exist. People who believe in personal liberty should "support individuals declaring independence from the... 'United States' and any other aggressive organizations," and the belief that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and have unalienable rights to life, liberty & pursuit of happiness."

be "dangerous and irresponsible." Think of the children. Never mind the declining student population. Never mind advances in technology that should actually be reducing the overall cost of education across the board. Never mind the negative impact an increased tax rate will have on future generations. The only solution is to spend our way to success.

This sort of corruption present in local politics may not be as apparent or even on the same level monetarily as the shenanigans that take place in DC, but I hope these two examples prove to you that they are one and the same. I know many of you will write these off as the necessary evil that is government and that there isn't any other option available to us. But there is. And voting one clown out in favor of some new blood isn't the solution. The answer is less government, less spending, more freedom.

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Gallup Poll

continued from page 1

governments aren't necessary, I've heard people make this claim in the past. However, I find it to be quite a stretch for a few reasons. We don't know the breakdown of the responses that were combined under the "government" label. Simply because someone is dissatisfied with Congress or politicians in general, doesn't mean they believe that Congress should be abolished. Because someone is dissatisfied with what they view as an abuse of power doesn't mean they would feel the same way if their preferred politician were carrying out the same policies. Dissatisfaction with corruption, poor leadership, or "the way things are going," again does not mean dissatisfaction with the very existence of government.

Maybe I'm being overly skeptical about what these results mean. Maybe I'm being realistic, and realize that it will take time to get people to realize that the reason government is the problem has nothing to do with the wrong people being in office, and everything to do with government being based on violence and forced consent!