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Subject: Greg Brown's Weekend Reading and Other Things.... 09/15/2013

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Attachments: Map_of_Ethnic_Groups_in_the_US_Mail_Online_September_1,_2013.pdf;
The_Largest_Ancestry_Groups_In_The_United_States_Liz_O'Connor,_Gus_Lubrin_&_Dina_Spector_Business_Insider_AUG_13,_2013.pdf;
Compromise_IS_a_dirty_word_Chris_Cillizza_TWP_September_4,_2013.pdf;
The_Student_Loan_Debt_Crisis_in_9_Charts_Mother_Jones_June_29,_2013.pdf;
Student_Loan_Debt_Is_a_Beast_Here_Are_Elizabeth_Warren's,_President_Obama's,_and_the_GOP's_Plans_to_Fix_It_Mother_Jones_Jun_3,_2013.pdf;
Delinquencies_On_Student_Loans_Surpass_Those_On_Credit_Card_Debt_Tyler_Durden_www.zerohedge.com-02_28_2013.pdf;
Summers'_End_Robert_Kuttner_The_Huffington_Post_09_16_2013.docx;
A_Plea_for_Caution_From_Russia_VLADIMIR_V.PUTIN_NYT_September_11,_2013.docx;
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Inline-Images: image.png; image(1).png; image(2).png; image(3).png

Dear Friends....

As some of you may know, both my PC and Laptop died last within the last three weeks and last week I was left without a working computer although I have four computers in my home and office, two fairly new. With this said, I am sorry for the delay in this week's readings and the fact that from my point of view, this week's offerings are a little thin, especially with all of the news worthy events that happened this past week, including President Obama asking for Congressional approval to attack Syria, that was trending toward defeat and Russian President Putin seizing on a comment made last week by Vice President Biden, offered a proposal that would rid Syria of its chemical weapons, which the Syrian government immediately embraced and which **The Jerusalem Post** called a masterstroke, that is only being booed by the Syrian Rebels who see their chance of overthrowing the Assad Regime diminish and neocons like Senator John McCain. who still embrace the desire of a full scale war to institute regime change, reminiscent to Afghanistan and Iraq.

It is delusional to believe that arming the Rebels will lead to democracy when there are more than 27 armed warring factions who range from wannabe war lords to Islamic zealots to former Assad government officials who John McCain supports, even though they have little support within Syria. As I pointed out last week, President Obama is one of the luckiest politicians ever, as his foe, Russian President Putin, in an attempt to bolster his international credentials, gave him a get-out-of-free card, with his proposal that is almost a win-win for everyone, especially those of us who believe entering into another war anywhere on the globe against a country who has not attack us or isn't an imminent threat, is just plain stupidity. I am not a fan of Vladimir Putin or Bashar al-Assad and I am definitely not a fan of gunboat diplomacy whether it be George Bush or Barrack Obama, but I have

to thank that cooler heads prevailed this week because if given his way, a President John McCain would have had the US embroiled in wars in Iran and now Syria, in addition to Afghanistan and Iraq, with Sarah Palin as Vice President.

Very rarely do I agree with Texas Republican and 2012 former presidential candidate, Ron Paul and other libertarians so when I ran across this video/interview with Ron Paul on the so-called "American Exceptionalism," to which Putin objected. Paul: *"Our liberty is what used to make us exceptional. But don't kid yourselves, says Ron. We lost that a long time ago thanks to those collectivists concerned more about promoting world governance than American liberty."*



Since the Republican primary more than a year ago — Ron Paul has warned his crowds that American exceptionalism is not an excuse for invading other nations in hopes of spreading U.S. values overseas. *"There's a move on in our country to excuse our intervention overseas, and they call it American exceptionalism. They distort this view, of course," Paul told the crowd of several hundred. "They say that America is exceptional, they know what is right, and they have this moral obligation to force it down the throats of other people, and if they don't take it, we're supposed to invade them and make them do exactly as we say."* Ron Paul has his own take on what it means to be 'exceptional'... it seems "inspire", and 'lead by example' is preferable to 'threaten' and 'attack'... and I agree.....

See video link: [\[REDACTED\]](#)

ALSO: Check out Pat Buchanan giving the real right-wing take on the Putin piece:



See Video Link: [\[Redacted\]](#)

On the other hand, in **Time Magazine** under the title: ***It is our exceptionalism — and our separation of powers — that has kept us out of war in Syria.*** Ron Paul's son, Senator Rand Paul issued a response to Russian President Vladimir Putin's op-ed last week in the **New York Times**.

 Rand Paul

By Sen. Rand Paul: Sept. 13, 2013

"A recent op-ed by Russian President Vladimir Putin has prompted me to respond. While his position that the Syrian conflict can and should be settled through a political and diplomatic solution is correct, virtually everything else in his writing should be taken to task. So I shall. I begin with Mr. Putin's disagreement regarding the exceptionalism of the United States of America. I could not more strongly disagree with him. While he is correct that God created every human being as an equal in His eyes, clearly the results of each of our efforts on this earth, individually and collectively, are not equal. America's exceptionalism is rooted in our founding documents and values. From the rights granted by our creator, but guaranteed by our Constitution. We should not shy away from saying so, especially when our actions are in keeping with this exceptional founding, as they were this week in our debate over going to war in Syria. Our constitutional checks and balances were on full display, largely resulting in the at least temporary halting of a rush to war.

Mr. Putin's second mistake is to focus on the speck in the eye of the United States, while ignoring the plank in his own. He accuses the United States of alarming interventions in foreign countries. While I certainly have my bone to pick with our foreign policy over the last 15 years, the Russian President is the least qualified person I can think of to make this argument with a straight face. We went to war in Afghanistan because they were harboring those who attacked us on 9/11. Mr. Putin's cohorts went to war there three decades earlier for no legitimate reason. The United States until now has resisted arming one side of the Syrian civil war – all the while the other side has been armed by Russia. The United States has used diplomatic pressure to attempt to resolve the ongoing situation with Iran – Russia has just announced a large arms sale that will escalate tensions in the region. Being lectured to on foreign intervention by Mr. Putin would be comical if it weren't such a serious example of a lack of self-awareness.

Nevertheless here we are. Sometimes the enemy of my enemy is my friend, or at least my temporary ally. As Mr. Putin correctly pointed out, the United States and Russia banded together to defeat the

menace of the Nazis a generation ago. And both countries certainly face real and present threats from Islamic extremists, both at home and in areas of strategic importance. American should not act militarily in Syria because it cannot and should not join the same side as Al Qaeda. Russia cannot and should not continue to support militarily the brutal Assad regime. And so, the dialogue that began this week must go forward, and it must be given a chance to succeed.

The issue of course, is with the participants and the details of the plan. Asking us to "trust them" is clearly not a palatable option, and we cannot act naively simply to bypass war. Any diplomatic solution must involve a clear plan to rid Syria of these weapons, with strong verification and enforcement mechanisms. As Reagan used to put it, Trust but Verify. So while I welcome the engagement of the Russians, and the dialogue Mr. Putin this week attempted to begin with our country, I remain to be convinced of the details. And I respond to him directly with the statement that yes, American is indeed exceptional. Our history has proved it so. While we all share the same Creator, we do not all share the same richness of history regarding human rights, freedom and democracy. There has been in the past 200 years a city on the hill that has shone brighter than all others. We will not be ashamed of that. May God allow us to continue to model this example to the world in these difficult times."

As one New Jersey journalist wrote, *Every conservative owes Barack Obama a debt of gratitude for exposing a reality that we conservatives have been trying to point out for years: There is no difference whatsoever between so-called "neo" conservatives and liberals. The president's wacky plan to enter the Syrian civil war on the side of Al Qaeda offered a classic example of liberal interventionism - the idea that the American military should be used to advance the interests of foreigners rather than to defend Americans. This sort of thing can be traced to Woodrow Wilson's disastrous decision to drag the U.S. into World War One - on the side of the imperialists, by the way.*

No conservative could ever support any military adventure that is undertaken for any reason other than the defense of America against attack. Promoting democracy and enforcing international norms do not meet that standard. Yet look who supported Obama's call for Syrian leader Bashir al-Assad to step down or be forced from power: Every major liberal newspaper in the country as well as all the standard "neo" conservative pundits. When neocons objected, it was only because the plan wasn't nutty enough. They wanted the U.S. to have ousted Assad yesterday. So it was funny to watch the neocons leap and hop around when Russian leader Vladimir Putin pointed out in that New York Times op-ed that the neocon conception of exceptionalism is a crock.

The map that shows where America came from: Fascinating illustration shows the ancestry of EVERY county in the US

- We are a country of immigrants and for those who chose to deny others the same rights that were given to their forefathers is unAmerican.
- Census data shows heritage of 317 million modern Americans
- Clusters show where immigrants from different nations chose to settle
- Largest ancestry grouping in the nation are of German descent with almost 50 million people
- African American or Black is the second largest grouping with just over 40 million people
- Almost 20 million people claim to have 'American' ancestry for political reasons and because they are unsure of their family's genealogy

 Inline image 5

A truly captivating map that shows the ancestry of everyone of the 317 million people who call the melting pot of America home can now be seen on a **U.S. Census Bureau** map. For decades, the

United States opened its doors and welcomed with open arms millions of immigrants who all arrived through New York's Ellis Island in the hope of a better life in America. Indeed, the inscription on the Statue of Liberty in New York's harbor reads 'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free' and the fascinating map identifies the truly diverse nature of the United States in the 21st century. Although the 2010 census left out questions about ethnicity, this map shows how it looked in 2000, according to **Upworthy**.

49,206,934 Germans

By far the largest ancestral group, stretching from coast to coast across 21st century America is German, with 49,206,934 people. The peak immigration for Germans was in the mid-19th century as thousands were driven from their homes by unemployment and unrest. The majority of German-Americans can now be found in the the center of the nation, with the majority living in Maricopa County, Arizona and according to Business Insider, famous German-Americans include, Ben Affleck, Tom Cruise, Walt Disney, Henry J. Heinz and Oscar Mayer. Indeed, despite having no successful New World colonies, the first significant groups of German immigrants arrived in the United States in the 1670s and settled in New York and Pennsylvania. Germans were attracted to America for familiar reasons, open tracts of land and religious freedom and their contributions to the nation included establishing the first kindergartens, Christmas trees and hot dogs and hamburgers.

41,284,752 Black or African Americans

The census map also identifies, Black or African-American as a term for citizens of the United States who have ancestry in Sub-Saharan Africa. The majority of African Americans are descended from slaves from West and Central Africa and of course have become an integral part of the story of the United States, gaining the right to vote with the 15th amendment in 1870, but struggling with their civil rights for at least another century. Predominantly living in the south of the nation where they were brought to work on the cotton plantations and as slaves in the late 18th to mid-19th centuries, Black or African Americans also have sizable communities in the Chicago area of Illinois and Detroit, Michigan.

35,523,082 Irish

Another group who joined the great story of the United States were the Irish and the great famine of the 1840s sparked mass migration from Ireland. It is estimated that between 1820 and 1920, 4.5 million Irish moved to the United States and settled in the large cities like New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago and San Francisco. Currently, almost 12 percent of the total population of the United States claim Irish ancestry - compared with a total population of six and a half million for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland today. Irish residents of note include John F. Kennedy, Derek Jeter and Neil Armstrong and 35,523,082 people call themselves Irish.

31,789,483 Mexican

And from 1990 to 2000, the number of people who claimed Mexican ancestry almost doubled in size to 31,789,483 people. Those with Mexican ancestry are most common along the Southwestern border of the United States and is largest ancestry in Los Angeles, Houston, Phoenix, San Diego, Dallas and San Antonio.

26,923,091 English

The next largest grouping of people in the United States by ancestry are those who claim to be English-American. Predominantly found in the Northwest and West, the number of people directly claiming to be English-American has dropped by 20 million since the 1980 U.S. Census because more citizens

have started to identify themselves as American. They are based predominantly in the northeast of the country in New England and in Utah, where the majority of Mormon immigrants moved in the middle 19th century. Notable American people with English ancestry are Orson Welles and Bill Gates and 26,923,091 people claim to come from the land of the original Pilgrims.

19,911,467 Americans

The surprising number of people across the nation claiming to have American ancestry is due to them making a political statement, or because they are simply uncertain about their direct descendants. Indeed, this is a particularly common feature in the south of the nation, where political tensions between those who consider themselves original settlers and those who are more recent exist. The figures reveal the changing face of the U.S., with the number of Hispanics up by 15 million by the 2010 census, from these figures in 2000. Hispanic children now account for one in four American youngsters as a portrait emerges of a country with an aging white population and rapid minority growth. While Hispanic communities cover a swath of states from California to Texas, American Indians are more dispersed, with pockets of populations in states including Arizona, New Mexico, Montana and the Dakotas, with a higher concentration in Alaska.

The map also reveals a concentration of people stating American as their ethnic heritage, mostly in the South. Many may have stated American on the census form as a political statement, or because they have a mixed or unknown heritage, according to **Business Insider**. While the United States has its roots in being a welcoming place for immigrants, that hasn't always been the case. As a wave of new arrivals flooded U.S. shores in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but a movement to restrict who was allowed into the country took hold as well.

 Ellis Island, Statue of Liberty National Monument, New Jersey, New York City, USA: Immigrants on line leaving Ellis Island waiting for ferry to ██████████

In 1882, Congress enacted the **Chinese Exclusion Act**, the first major federal law to put immigration limits in place and the only one in American history aimed at a specific nationality. It came into being in response to fears, primarily on the West Coast, that an influx of Chinese immigrants was weakening economic conditions and lowering wages. It was extended in 1902. Other laws followed, like the **Immigration Act of 1917**, which created an "*Asiatic Barred Zone*" to restrict immigration from that part of the world, and the **Emergency Quota Act of 1921**, which limited the number of immigrants from any country to 3 percent of those people from that country who had been living in the United States as of 1910. The 1924 Immigration Act capped the number of immigrants from a particular country at 2 percent of the population of that country already living in the United States in 1890. That favored immigrants from northern and western European countries like Great Britain over immigrants from southern and eastern European countries like Italy.

It also prevented any immigrant ineligible for citizenship from coming to America. Since laws already on the books prohibited people of any Asian origin from becoming citizens, they were barred entry. The law was revised in 1952, but kept the quota system based on country of origin in the U.S. population and only allowed low quotas to Asian nations. The American children of Italian and other European immigrants saw that law "*as a slur against their own status*" and fought for the system to be changed, said Mae Ngai, professor of history and Asian American studies at Columbia University. In fighting for change, they looked to the civil rights movement. The political leaders who agreed with them saw it in the same terms, as a change needed for equality's sake, as well as to be responsive to shifting relationships with nations around the world. Speaking to the **American Committee on Italian Migration** in June 1963, President John F. Kennedy cited the "*nearly intolerable*" plight of those who had family members in other countries who wanted to come to the U.S. and could be useful citizens, but were being blocked by "*the inequity and maldistribution of the quota numbers.*"

Weblink: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2408591/American-ethnicity-map-shows-melting-pot-ethnicities-make-USA-today.html>

Two years later, in signing into law a replacement system that established a uniform number of people allowed entry to the United States despite national origin, President Lyndon B. Johnson said it would correct "a cruel and enduring wrong in the conduct of the American nation." Stephen Klineberg, sociology professor at Rice University in Houston, said the civil rights movement "*was the main force that made that viciously racist law come to be perceived as intolerable,*" precisely because it raised questions about fairness and equality. For more information please feel free to read the attached **Business Insider** article by Liz O'Conner, Gus Lubin & Dina Spector – ***The Largest Ancestry Groups In The United States***

Human Mysteries

The human body is a treasure trove of mysteries and still confounds doctors and scientists about the details of its working. It's not an overstatement to say that every part of your body is a miracle. Here are facts about your body, some of which will leave you stunned!

- 1.** It's possible for your body to survive without a surprisingly large fraction of its internal organs. Even if you lose your stomach, your spleen, 75% of your liver, 80% of your intestines, one kidney, one lung, and virtually every organ from your pelvic and groin area, you wouldn't be very healthy, but you would live.
- 2.** During your lifetime, you will produce enough saliva to fill two swimming pools. Actually, Saliva is more important than you realize. If your saliva cannot dissolve something, you cannot taste it.
- 3.** The largest cell in the human body is the female egg and the smallest is the male sperm. The egg is actually the only cell in the body that is visible to the naked eye.
- 4.** The strongest muscle in the human body is the tongue and the hardest bone is the jawbone.
- 5.** Human feet have 52 bones, accounting for one quarter of all the human body's bones.
- 6.** Feet have 500,000 sweat glands and can produce more than a pint of sweat a day.
- 7.** The acid in your stomach is strong enough to dissolve razor blades. The reason it doesn't eat away at your stomach is that the cells

of your stomach wall renew themselves so frequently that you get a new stomach lining every three to four days.

8. The human lungs contain approximately 2,400 kilometers (1,500 mi) of airways and 300 to 500 million hollow cavities, having a total surface area of about 70 square meters, roughly the same area as one side of a tennis court. Furthermore, if all of the capillaries that surround the lung cavities were unwound and laid end to end, they would extend for about 992 kilometers. Also, your left lung is smaller than your right lung to make room for your heart.

9. Sneezes regularly exceed 100 mph, while coughs clock in at about 60 mph.

10. Your body gives off enough heat in 30 minutes to bring half a gallon of water to a boil.

11. Your body has enough iron in it to make a nail 3 inches long.

12. Earwax production is necessary for good ear health. It protects the delicate inner ear from bacteria, fungus, dirt and even insects. It also cleans and lubricates the ear canal.

13. Everyone has a unique smell, except for identical twins, who smell the same.

14. Your teeth start growing 6 months before you are born. This is why one out of every 2,000 newborn infants has a tooth when they are born

15. A baby's head is one-quarter of its total length, but by the age of 25 will only be one-eighth of its total length. This is because people's heads grow at a much slower rate than the rest of their bodies.

16. Babies are born with 300 bones, but by adulthood the number is reduced to 206. Some of the bones, like skull bones, get fused into each other, bringing down the total number.

17. It's not possible to tickle yourself. This is because when you attempt to tickle yourself you are totally aware of the exact time and

manner in which the tickling will occur, unlike when someone else tickles you.

18. Less than one third of the human race has 20-20 vision. This means that two out of three people cannot see perfectly.

19. Your nose can remember 50,000 different scents. But if you are a woman, you are a better smeller than men, and will remain a better smeller throughout your life.

20. The human body is estimated to have 60,000 miles of blood vessels.

21. The three things pregnant women dream most of during their first trimester are frogs, worms and potted plants. Scientists have no idea why this is so, but attribute it to the growing imbalance of hormones in the body during pregnancy.

22. The life span of a human hair is 3 to 7 years on average. Every day the average person loses 60-100 strands of hair. But don't worry, you must lose over 50% of your scalp hairs before it is apparent to anyone.

23. The human brain cell can hold 5 times as much information as an encyclopedia. Your brain uses 20% of the oxygen that enters your bloodstream, and is itself made up of 80% water. Though it interprets pain signals from the rest of the body, the brain itself cannot feel pain.

24. The tooth is the only part of the human body that can't repair itself.

25. Your eyes are always the same size from birth but your nose and ears never stop growing.

26. By 60 years of age, 60% of men and 40% of women will snore.

27. We are about 1 cm taller in the morning than in the evening, because during normal activities during the day, the cartilage in our knees and other areas slowly compress.

- 28.** The brain operates on the same amount of power as 10-watt light bulb, even while you are sleeping. In fact, the brain is much more active at night than during the day.
- 29.** Nerve impulses to and from the brain travel as fast as 170 miles per hour. Neurons continue to grow throughout human life. Information travels at different speeds within different types of neurons.
- 30.** People who dream more often and more vividly, on an average have a higher IQ.
- 31.** The fastest growing nail is on the middle finger.
- 32.** Facial hair grows faster than any other hair on the body. This is true for men as well as women.
- 33.** There are as many hairs per square inch on your body as a chimpanzee.
- 34.** A human fetus acquires fingerprints at the age of three months.
- 35.** By the age of 60, most people will have lost about half their taste buds.
- 36.** About 32 million bacteria call every inch of your skin home. But most are harmless or even helpful.
- 37.** The colder the room you sleep in, the higher the chances are that you'll have a bad dream.
- 38.** Human lips have a reddish color because of the great concentration of tiny capillaries just below the skin.
- 39.** Three hundred million cells die in the human body every minute.
- 40.** Like fingerprints, every individual has an unique tongue print that can be used for identification.

- 41.** A human head remains conscious for about 15 to 20 seconds after it has been decapitated.
- 42.** It takes 17 muscles to smile and 43 to frown.
- 43.** Humans can make do longer without food than sleep. Provided there is water, the average human could survive a month to two months without food depending on their body fat and other factors. Sleep deprived people, however, start experiencing radical personality and psychological changes after only a few sleepless days. The longest recorded time anyone has ever gone without sleep is 11 days, at the end of which the experimenter was awake, but stumbled over words, hallucinated and frequently forgot what he was doing.
- 44.** The most common blood type in the world is Type O. The rarest blood type, A-H or Bombay blood, due to the location of its discovery, has been found in less than hundred people since it was discovered
- 45.** Every human spent about half an hour after being conceived, as a single cell. Shortly afterward, the cells begin rapidly dividing and begin forming the components of a tiny embryo.
- 46.** Right-handed people live, on average, nine years longer than left-handed people.
- 47.** Your ears secrete more earwax when you are afraid than when you aren't.
- 48.** Koalas and primates are the only animals with unique fingerprints.
- 49.** Humans are the only animals observed to produce emotional tears.
- 50.** The human heart creates enough pressure to squirt blood 30 feet in the air.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

As a follow up to the earlier pieces and for those who have not read Russian President Putin's op-ed on September 11, 2013 in the **New York Times**, here it is.

A Plea for Caution From Russia

By VLADIMIR V. PUTIN

MOSCOW — RECENT events surrounding Syria have prompted me to speak directly to the American people and their political leaders. It is important to do so at a time of insufficient communication between our societies.

Relations between us have passed through different stages. We stood against each other during the cold war. But we were also allies once, and defeated the Nazis together. The universal international organization — the United Nations — was then established to prevent such devastation from ever happening again.

The United Nations' founders understood that decisions affecting war and peace should happen only by consensus, and with America's consent the veto by Security Council permanent members was enshrined in the United Nations Charter. The profound wisdom of this has underpinned the stability of international relations for decades.

No one wants the United Nations to suffer the fate of the League of Nations, which collapsed because it lacked real leverage. This is possible if influential countries bypass the United Nations and take military action without Security Council authorization.

The potential strike by the United States against Syria, despite strong opposition from many countries and major political and religious leaders, including the pope, will result in more innocent victims and escalation, potentially spreading the conflict far beyond Syria's borders. A strike would increase violence and unleash a new wave of terrorism. It could undermine multilateral efforts to resolve the Iranian nuclear problem and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and further destabilize the Middle East and North Africa. It could throw the entire system of international law and order out of balance.

Syria is not witnessing a battle for democracy, but an armed conflict between government and opposition in a multireligious country. There are few champions of democracy in Syria. But there are more than enough Qaeda fighters and extremists of all stripes battling the government. The United States State Department has designated Al Nusra Front and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, fighting with the opposition, as terrorist organizations. This internal conflict, fueled by foreign weapons supplied to the opposition, is one of the bloodiest in the world.

Mercenaries from Arab countries fighting there, and hundreds of militants from Western countries and even Russia, are an issue of our deep concern. Might they not return to our countries with experience acquired in Syria? After all, after fighting in Libya, extremists moved on to Mali. This threatens us all.

From the outset, Russia has advocated peaceful dialogue enabling Syrians to develop a compromise plan for their own future. We are not protecting the Syrian government, but international law. We need to use the United Nations Security Council and believe that preserving law and order in today's complex and turbulent world is one of the few ways to keep international relations from sliding into chaos. The law is still the law, and we must follow it whether we like it or not. Under current international law, force is permitted only in self-defense or by the decision of the Security Council. Anything else is unacceptable under the United Nations Charter and would constitute an act of aggression.

No one doubts that poison gas was used in Syria. But there is every reason to believe it was used not by the Syrian Army, but by opposition forces, to provoke intervention by their powerful foreign patrons, who would be siding with the fundamentalists. Reports that militants are preparing another attack — this time against Israel — cannot be ignored.

It is alarming that military intervention in internal conflicts in foreign countries has become commonplace for the United States. Is it in America's long-term interest? I doubt it. Millions around the world increasingly see America not as a model of democracy but as relying solely on brute force, cobbling coalitions together under the slogan *"you're either with us or against us."*

But force has proved ineffective and pointless. Afghanistan is reeling, and no one can say what will happen after international forces withdraw. Libya is divided into tribes and clans. In Iraq the civil war continues, with dozens killed each day. In the United States, many draw an analogy between Iraq and Syria, and ask why their government would want to repeat recent mistakes.

No matter how targeted the strikes or how sophisticated the weapons, civilian casualties are inevitable, including the elderly and children, whom the strikes are meant to protect.

The world reacts by asking: if you cannot count on international law, then you must find other ways to ensure your security. Thus a growing number of countries seek to acquire weapons of mass destruction. This is logical: if you have the bomb, no one will touch you. We are left with talk of the need to strengthen nonproliferation, when in reality this is being eroded.

We must stop using the language of force and return to the path of civilized diplomatic and political settlement.

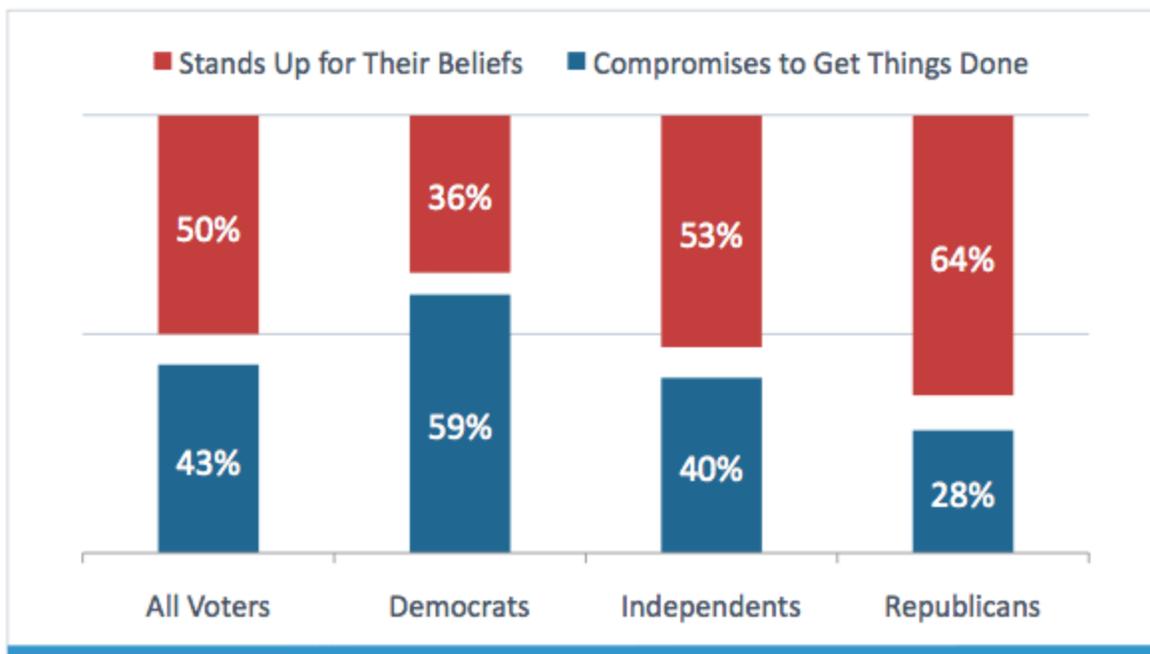
A new opportunity to avoid military action has emerged in the past few days. The United States, Russia and all members of the international community must take advantage of the Syrian government's willingness to place its chemical arsenal under international control for subsequent destruction. Judging by the statements of President Obama, the United States sees this as an alternative to military action.

I welcome the president's interest in continuing the dialogue with Russia on Syria. We must work together to keep this hope alive, as we agreed to at the Group of 8 meeting in Lough Erne in Northern Ireland in June, and steer the discussion back toward negotiations.

If we can avoid force against Syria, this will improve the atmosphere in international affairs and strengthen mutual trust. It will be our shared success and open the door to cooperation on other critical issues.

My working and personal relationship with President Obama is marked by growing trust. I appreciate this. I carefully studied his address to the nation on Tuesday. And I would rather disagree with a case he made on American exceptionalism, stating that the United States' policy is "what makes America different. It's what makes us exceptional." It is extremely dangerous to encourage people to see themselves as exceptional, whatever the motivation. There are big countries and small countries, rich and poor, those with long democratic traditions and those still finding their way to democracy. Their policies differ, too. We are all different, but when we ask for the Lord's blessings, we must not forget that God created us equal.

As Chris Cillizza pointed out in an op-ed last week in **The Washington Post** that in today's political environment especially in Washington, ■■■. – **Compromise IS a dirty word.** He continues, "Compromise" stinks. Not as a concept. But as a word. "Voters do not respond well to it, nor do they side with a candidate who is defined by it," according to a memo by Democratic pollster Jeff Pollock off of new nationwide poll conducted by his firm, Global Strategy Group. Asked whether they preferred a candidate who "stands up for what he or she believes" or one who "compromises to get things done", a majority (50 percent) choose the former option.



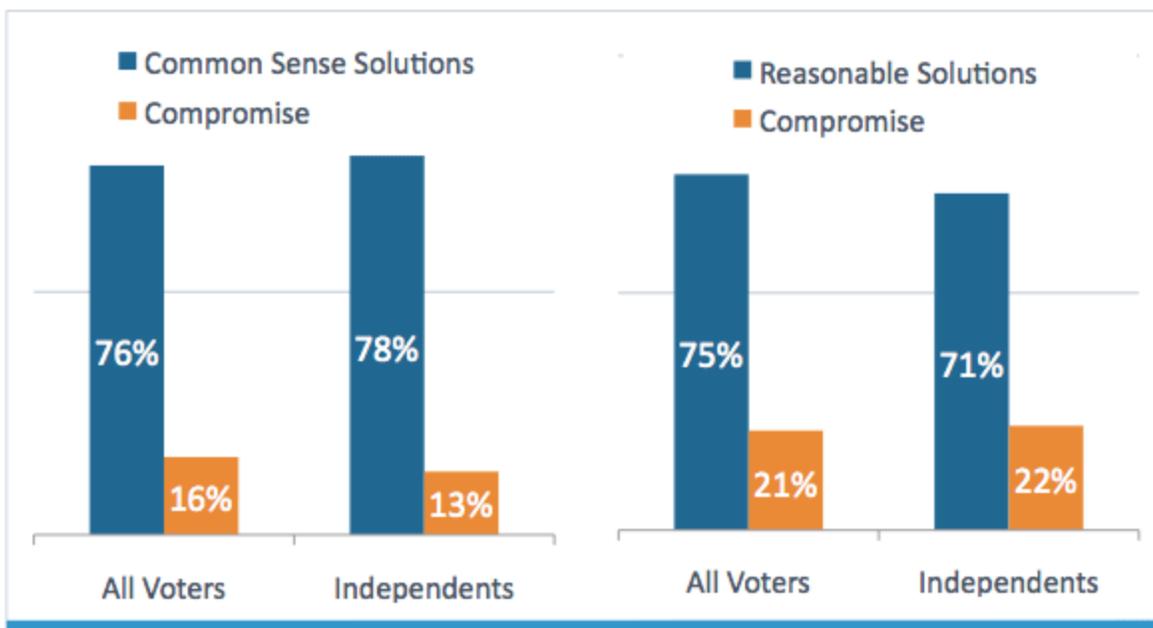
While the seven-point gap isn't massive, Pollock notes that *"its significance is underscored by the fact that the candidate standing up for beliefs wins the contest among every demographic group regardless of gender, age or region."* The conclusion from that data point, however, should not be that people prefer inaction to action, according to the memo. Instead, what should be concluded is that the word *"compromise"* — or *"consensus"* amounts to capitulation in many peoples' minds.

Consider this follow up question in which people were asked to choose between a candidate who *"finds middle ground"* and one who works to *"reach consensus"*. The *"find middle ground"* option won a majority of support. The margin was even wider when respondents were asked to choose between a candidate working to *"find a middle ground"* and one *"open to new ideas"* — with more than six in ten choosing the latter concept.

 Image courtesy of Global Strategy Group

"Voters clearly want leaders who listen and work together but reaching consensus somewhere in the middle ground between right and left is not good enough," reads the memo. "They want candidates with news ideas that go beyond the stale and stalled partisan agendas of both sides."

Now, a piece of that conclusion is patently obvious. People like new, fresh ideas — in their politicians and in every other aspect of their lives. New ideas are inherently more appealing than the ones we are familiar with already — whether or not they are better ideas. But, that point aside, the polling data makes a compelling case that *"compromise"* is a political loser as White House and Congress begin (*again, again*) to start talks about the possibility of a grand bargain around the budget deadline and debt ceiling.



"Compromise" is dead. Long live "common sense solutions".

A major unsung crisis in America is the out-of-control student debt which is growing exponentially and now exceeds the size credit card debt in the U.S. And unlike credit card debt, it can't be absolved through bankruptcy and will follow to you to the grave if not settled. The U.S. is one of few remaining countries in the Industrialized world that still saddles its citizens with huge amounts of student debts. And in a world where robots are replacing manual functions, education and job training are the escalators to better jobs and upward economic mobility. Both our politicians and public are consumed by the federal deficit, claiming that it is saddling future generations with enormous debt, while ignoring the fact that the 2013 Class of college graduates are facing an average of \$35,200 in college-related debt; **between student loans, credit cards and money owed to family members. More than 38 million Americans have outstanding student loan debt totaling more than \$1 trillion, and those numbers are rising fast, making it one of the most serious problems facing the country.**

 Inline image 1

The bulk of the class of 2013's debt is in government loans, with graduates owing an average of \$26,000. They also had an average of \$19,000 in private loans, \$18,000 in state loans, \$13,000 in personal and family loans and \$3,000 in credit card debt. After realizing the extent of their debt, 39% said they would have done things differently -- like saving earlier, more thoroughly researching financial aid or looking for ways to save more and spend less while at school -- that's up from 25% in 2011. A small group, or 12% of graduates, regretted their decisions entirely, saying their college education didn't justify the debt burden. But now they're forced to face reality. Half of respondents said tackling their student debt is a financial priority, and half said it will take them more than nine years to become debt-free.



The majority, or 92%, say they will pay back their debt using income from their job, 25% said they will get help from their parents or family, 24% will use their savings and 21% will get a second job. About 7% of graduates don't plan on ever being able to entirely pay off their loans. Others started taking action earlier to try to soften the blow. About 85% of college graduates contributed their own money toward college costs -- with 27% reporting that they contributed more than \$10,000. And 57% said they chose their major specifically because they thought it would land them a higher-paying job. But

the reality is that many of these students will still be paying off loans well into their 30s and 40s, causing many to put off marriage and families and leading to the current trend of 30 and 40 year olds moving back home with their parents.



The saddest thing is that it is the least affluent (bottom 25% in net worth) who owe the most, 58% of all student debt, while the Top 10% owe less than 3% of all student debt, even though they generally have the pick of the best and most expensive colleges and universities. As a result, the delinquency of student loan debt is soaring. This places a huge economic burden on those students and families who can least afford it.



Which makes perfect sense: because since the recession consumers have aggressively deleveraged their revolving balances and replaced them with cheaper forms of credit. The good news is that although the economy is not growing as fast as the rebounds of past recessions, we have enjoyed steady growth for the past 41 months and companies are now hiring again. But like healthcare, shouldn't education be a government priority, as it was the GI Bill in the 1950s that was the catalyst that ignited the biggest economic boom in America's history, and it was education that helped transform China into the second largest economic power on the planet in less than thirty years? The best investment that any government can make is in educating its people. So why are we saddling ours with decades of debt, which stifles education, especially for those who need it the most so that they can move upward economically?

For those who would like to read more I invite you to read the attached **Mother Jones** articles by Erika Eichelberger, Maggie Severns, and Brett Brownell – **Student Loan Debt Is a Beast. Here Are Elizabeth Warren's, President Obama's, and the GOP's Plans to Fix It** – as well as, **The Student Loan Debt Crisis in 9 Charts** – and **Delinquencies On Student Loans Surpass Those On Credit Card Debt** – by Tyler Durden on 

Most people have heard the name but if you asked the average American who is Larry Summers, few could answer the question, especially if you also asked what does or he did. Larry Summers has been a ally of Wall Street throughout his public service and finally Congress realized that this could not continue, mounting an opposition that led to him withdrawing his name from consideration to succeed Ben Bernanke as head of the Federal Reserve System in 2014.

Wikipedia: Lawrence Henry "Larry" Summers (born November 30, 1954) is an American economist. He served as the 71st United States Secretary of the Treasury from 1999 to 2001 under President Bill Clinton. He was Director of the White House United States National Economic Council for President Barack Obama from January 2009 until November 2010. Summers is the Charles W. Eliot University Professor at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. He is the 1993 recipient of the John Bates Clark Medal for his work in several fields of economics.

Summers also served as the 27th President of Harvard University from 2001 to 2006. Summers resigned as Harvard's president in the wake of a no-confidence vote by Harvard faculty that resulted in large part from Summers's conflict with Cornel West, financial conflict of interest questions regarding his relationship with Andrei Shleifer, and a 2005 speech in which he suggested that the under-representation of women in science and engineering could be due to a "different availability of aptitude at the high end", and less to patterns of discrimination and socialization.

Upon the nomination of Barack Obama as President in January 2009, Summers was appointed to the post of Director of the National Economic Council. In this position Summers emerged as a key economic decision-maker in the Obama administration, where he attracted both praise and criticism. There had been friction between Summers and former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker, as

Volcker accused Summers of delaying the effort to organize a panel of outside economic advisers, and Summers had cut Volcker out of White House meetings and had not shown interest in collaborating on policy solutions to the economic crisis. On the other hand, Obama himself was reportedly thrilled with the work Summers did in his first few weeks on the job. And Peter Orszag, another top economic advisor, called Summers "one of the world's most brilliant economists." According to Henry Kissinger Larry Summers should "be given a White House post in which he was charged with shooting down or fixing bad ideas."

In January 2009, as the Obama Administration tried to pass an economic stimulus spending bill, Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR.) criticized Summers, saying that he thought that President Barack Obama is "ill-advised by Larry Summers. Larry Summers hates infrastructure." DeFazio, along with liberal economists including Paul Krugman and Joseph Stiglitz, had argued that more of the stimulus should be spent on infrastructure, while Summers had supported tax cuts. In late 2008, Summers and economic advisors for then-President-elect Obama presented a memo with options for an economic stimulus package ranging from \$550 billion to \$900 billion. According to The New Republic, economic advisor Christina Romer initially recommended a \$1.8-trillion package, which proposal Summers quickly rejected, believing any stimulus approaching \$1 trillion would not pass through Congress. Romer revised her recommendation to \$1.2 trillion, which Summers agreed to include in the memo, but Summers struck the figure at the last minute.

According to the Wall Street Journal, Summers called Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT) asking him to remove caps on executive pay at firms that have received stimulus money, including Citigroup.

On April 3, 2009 Summers came under renewed criticism after it was disclosed that he was paid millions of dollars the previous year by companies which he now has influence over as a public servant. He earned \$5 million from the hedge fund D. E. Shaw, and collected \$2.7 million in speaking fees from Wall Street companies that received government bailout money.

Since leaving the NEC in December 2010 Summers has worked for hedge fund D. E. Shaw & Co, Citigroup and NASDAQ OMX Group. In June 2011 Summer joined the board of directors of Square, a company developing an electronic payment service, and became a special adviser at venture capital firm Andreessen Horowitz. He joined the board of person-to-person lending company Lending Club in December 2012.

Summers also has been authoring a column for the Financial Times. Upon the death of Milton Friedman, Summers wrote an Op-Ed in **The New York Times** entitled "**The Great Liberator**" arguing that "any honest Democrat will admit that we are now all Friedmanites." In it Summers wrote that even though Friedman's contributions to monetary policy had been highly lauded, his most important contribution may have been "in convincing people of the importance of allowing free markets to operate."

In 2013, Summers emerged as one of two leading candidates, along with Janet Yellen, to succeed Ben Bernanke as head of the Federal Reserve System in 2014. On September 15, Summers voluntarily withdrew his name from consideration for the position. Abe Lincoln was right, "*you can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.*" And the comeuppance that Larry Summers and his supporters realized this weekend. is that Abe Lincoln was and is right. Please feel free to read Robert Kuttner's article in **The Huffington Post** -- **Summer's End.**

As someone who has suffered two severe strokes due in part to high blood pressure, I took great interest when a dear friend sent me an article from **MailOnline** – **Garlic can lower blood pressure by 10%... but only if you take it in tablet form** – by Jenny Hope. Even if you don't have high blood pressure, I urge everyone to take blood pressure seriously and monitor it regularly, as high blood pressure can lead to many types of serious illnesses, including strokes, heart attacks, organ failure and loss of vision, among other things.

- Those with hypertension, or high blood pressure, could control their condition better by adding garlic to conventional medication
- Eating the real thing would not have the same effect - allicin is produced when raw garlic is crushed but much is destroyed during cooking
- Garlic could help cut blood pressure by 10 per cent – but only if you take it in the form of tablets, claim scientists.

Twelve weeks of treatment with garlic tablets led to a ‘significant’ cut in blood pressure, slashing the risk of a heart attack or stroke, according to a review of evidence.

Researchers claim those with hypertension, or high blood pressure, could control their condition better by adding garlic to conventional medication.

The review of 21 studies on humans found supplements of dried garlic containing a guaranteed dose of the active ingredient allicin consistently led to reductions in blood pressure.

But eating the real thing would not have the same effect, says the review. Although allicin is produced when raw garlic is crushed or chewed, much of it is destroyed during cooking.

The tablets also have the significant advantage of not producing the bad breath associated with eating fresh garlic.

The review looked at supplements with a guaranteed allicin yield of 1.8mg per dose.

The earliest authoritative clinical trial to be published in 1990 found taking Kwai brand garlic tablets led to a significant fall in blood pressure of 10 per cent within 12 weeks.

More studies conducted since 1990 have demonstrated significant blood pressure lowering effects from dried garlic releasing allicin at 1.8mg per dose.

Not all garlic preparations release allicin in significant, standardised amounts, says the review by nutritionist Dr Pamela Mason in the journal Complete Nutrition.

THIS WEEK'S QUOTES

Let us never forget that government is ourselves and not an alien power over us. The ultimate rulers of our democracy are not a President and senators and congressmen and government officials, but the voters of this country.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

True individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

THIS WEEK'S MUSIC

This week's I started out paying tribute to the many great male/female duos musical R&B groups of the 1960s and 1970s which led me into the 1980s, 1990s and the 2000s, as well as expanding into pop and country music and finally ending with a bonus track from Guns N Roses' Knocking – On Heaven's Door (Live in Tokyo), which I hope that you enjoy because the journey of compiling it was big musical fun and a wonderful trip through memory lane. One example, I remember sitting at Woody's table in the famed Elaine's restaurant with a group of gorgeous women and former NY Governor dropped by

my table serenading us singing, To All the Girls I've Loved Before, while his friend accompanied him by playing spoons on his knee.... To everyone's amazement, including Elaine. And that many of you from my generation probably remembers getting down to Peaches & Herb, Marvin Gaye & Tammi Terrell, grinding with your favorite girl or guy in those 60s basement parties that we all looked forward to every Saturday night. Donny, Roberta, Billy Syreeta, Rick, Teena, Luther, Mariah, Patti, Celine Pararotti and JayZ continued that tradition in their music genre so again, please enjoy this eclectic musical selection and I hope at least one song endears wonderful memories.

Peaches & Herb – **Reunited** -- <http://youtu.be/26J0uDIGErM>

Marvin Gaye & Tammi Terrell – **If This World Were Mine** -- <http://youtu.be/3Iiicq9r1U>

Donny Hathaway & Roberta Flack – **The Closer I Get to You** -- <http://youtu.be/rR40eUbVdQY>

Rick James & Teena Marie – **Fire & Desire** -- http://youtu.be/43DoDs_Zt5Q and <http://youtu.be/O17x0Xylenc>

Luther Vandross & Mariah Carey – **Endless Love** -- <http://youtu.be/Nu9RVPTpDyA>

Billy Preston & Syreeta – **With You I am Born Again** -- <http://youtu.be/QmM8aQar4Lg>

Luther Vandross & Cheryl Lynn Duet – **If this world were mine** -- <http://youtu.be/MaENjzt9b4>

Patti LaBelle & Luther Vandross – **If Only For One Night** -- <http://youtu.be/onoFIPOTG2I>

Patti LaBelle & Michael McDonald – **On My Own** -- <http://youtu.be/KsH63qJlIMM>

Celine Dion & Brian McKnight – **Beauty & The Beast** -- <http://youtu.be/LwSgXS8AnzA>

Mariah Carey & Luciano Pavarotti – **Hero** -- [v=██████████=share&list=PLB81504A356F5F6DD](http://youtu.be/v=██████████=share&list=PLB81504A356F5F6DD)

Mariah Carey & Boyz II Men - **One Sweet Day** -- [v=1zxvDf6usxY&feature=share&list=PLB81504A356F5F6DD](http://youtu.be/v=1zxvDf6usxY&feature=share&list=PLB81504A356F5F6DD)

Willie Nelson & Julio Iglesias – **To All the Girls I've Loved Before** -- <http://youtu.be/yi2AX14eRbk>

Jay-Z & Mary j. Blige – **Can't Knock the Hustle** -- <http://youtu.be/OBILx8NB-Uc>

JAY Z & Alicia Keys – **Empire State of Mind** -- <http://youtu.be/oUjsXo9l6I8>

Guns N' Roses – **Knocking On Heaven's Door** -- <http://youtu.be/X1ZRBPA8SKo>

Again, I am sorry for the delay and I hope that you have enjoyed this week's offerings as I wish you a great week.

Sincerely,

Greg Brown

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