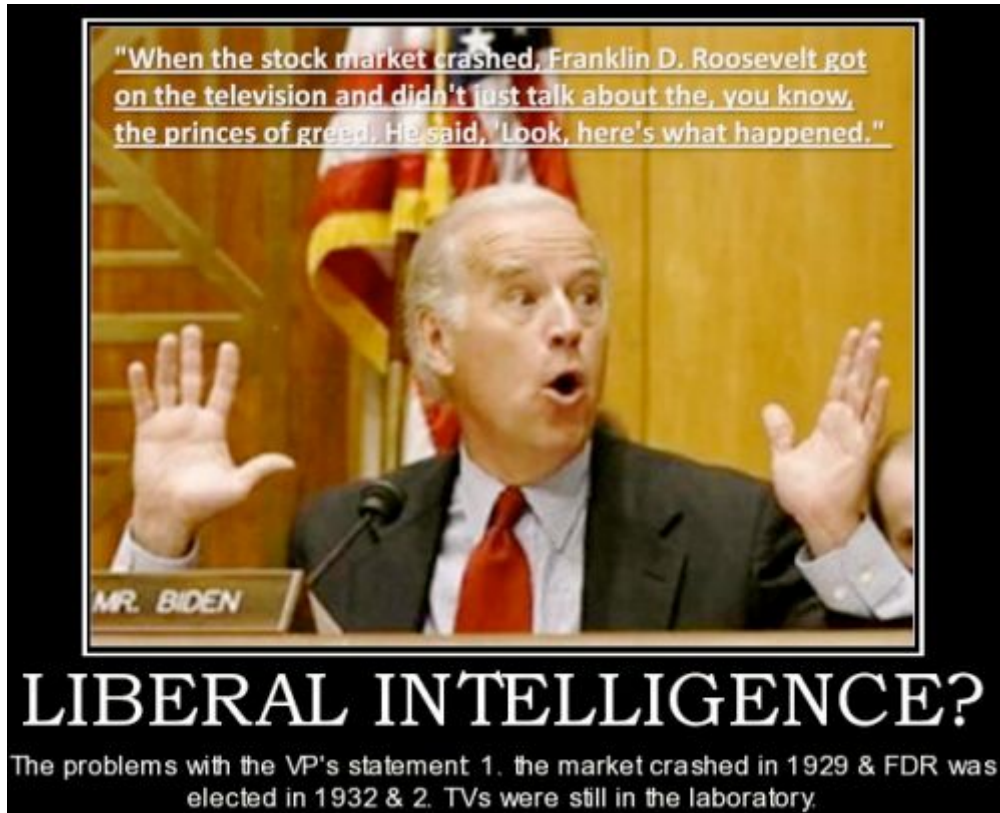


# Liberal Ignorance – Economics

By MacPundit



## Economics? Whats that?

For years, I have been fascinated by the high level of economic, political, and historical ignorance I have observed among American Liberals. It is a puzzling and mysterious phenomenon. I continue to encounter it in print, broadcast media, and in personal conversations and debates. While Liberals often self-describe as being more intelligent than people of other political persuasions, their lack of knowledge, which seriously undermines and distorts their arguments, belies this notion. To the contrary, based on the following universally accepted definition of intelligence, one can only conclude that they are, in fact, less intelligent.

intelligence [in-tel-i-juhns] noun

1. capacity for learning, reasoning, understanding, and similar forms of mental activity; aptitude in grasping truths, relationships, facts, meanings, etc.

## **2008 Zogby International Survey**

Below, is a summary of results of a December 2008 Zogby International nationwide survey, which gauged economic enlightenment of 4,835 American adults. The survey was designed by Daniel Klein, an economics professor at George Mason University, and Zeljka Buturorvic, a research associate at Zogby International. Ideologically centered questions were screened out, which left eight basic, core economic questions. In other words, none of the eight questions challenged typical conservative or libertarian policy positions.

### **Liberals and Progressives had the worst scores**

Adults self-identifying as “very conservative” and “libertarian” performed the best, followed closely by “conservative.” Trailing far behind were “moderate,” then with another step down to “liberal,” and a final step down to “progressive,” who, on average, got 5.26 questions out of eight wrong. Progressive/very liberal respondents got four times more wrong answers than libertarians.

The results of the survey did not surprise me. They aligned with my personal observations spanning at least 30 years.

### **Nor were these results surprising:**

Who the participants voted for in the 2008 Presidential Election and the number of economic questions they got **wrong** out of 8.

- McCain 1.60
- Obama 4.61
- Nader 4.92

Political party affiliations of the participants and the

number of economic questions they got **wrong** out of 8

- Libertarian 1.26
- Republican 1.61
- Constitution 1.94
- Independent 3.03
- Democratic 4.59
- Green 5.88

## **Economist, Ron Ross:**

*“The survey results demonstrate the strong connection between economic ignorance and interventionist enthusiasm. Those who are most determined to interfere with the economy know the least about it.”*

*“Liberals don’t seem to care that things are the way they are for some very powerful reason or reasons, which explains why unintended consequences are so common and why results are so often the opposite of intentions.”*

*“What’s always amazed me is that liberals don’t seem to be even the least bit curious about how the economy works. They love taking and using the wealth created by a market economy, but don’t care a whit about the necessary ingredients for creating that wealth – incentives, the price system, or the critical role of private property rights, for example.”*

## **What’s going on?**

It has been said for many years that the political left often fail to incorporate basic economic insight into their morals, and politics. Hayek’s compelling and wholly rational theory, which seems to be supported by substantial empirical evidence, provides an explanation.

*“The social-democratic ethos is an atavistic reassertion of the ethos and mentality of the primordial paleolithic band, a*

*mentality resistant to ideas of spontaneous order and disjointed knowledge.”*

In other words, their thought processes are a throwback to a primitive time in human development. They resist the inclusion of certain disjointed knowledge (apparently unrelated facts) and, therefore, cannot connect it with other knowledge in order to construct an orderly and reasonable hypothesis. Simply put: They don't connect the dots very well because they are not aware of or simply do not acknowledge some of the dots.

### **And there's this:**

To answer the question, “If they are more intelligent, why are liberals – especially those in Hollywood and academia – so much more likely than conservatives to say and do stupid things and hold incredulous beliefs and ideas that stretch credibility?” – Bruce G. Charlton, Professor of Theoretical Medicine at the University of Buckingham, offers an explanation. He suggests that liberals and other intelligent people may be ‘clever sillies,’ who incorrectly apply abstract logical reasoning to social and interpersonal domains. (Notice he said, “... liberals and other intelligent people.” Is it more than likely that Charlton is, himself, a liberal? I'd bet on it. In simple terms, he goes on to say that while humans have, over millennia, developed what we call “common sense,” liberals and other intelligent people lack common sense, because their general intelligence overrides it.

So their intelligence is a handicap? Oh my! Shouldn't there be a special government program for them? Or, wait, should they be allowed to vote, or for that matter, hold responsible positions in our government? After all, they have no common sense and look at all the damage they have done already! I mean they are too smart to function well. That can't be a good thing.

Oh well, at least one thing is clear; they don't question the

proposition that liberals are ignorant. They only attempt to explain why.

I suffer not an ounce of doubt that our current president will go down in history as one of our worst. It is painfully clear to knowledgeable Americans that Barack Obama either has no understanding of how our economy works or he does and is intent on transforming it into something quite different. Of course there is a third possibility: He does not know how it works but still wants to change it. Imagine that. The U.S.A. has been the most successful economy in human history, yet he would endeavor to destroy it. Yes, destroy it, for any meaningful alteration would, necessarily, destroy it.

That may appeal to the ignorant and naïve because they assume that what we have would be replaced with a better economic model, which takes us back to the theme of this post – liberal ignorance.

I'll leave you with this:

*Those who are most determined to interfere with the economy know the least about it.*