



The Daily Dish

The Campaign Simplified

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On Monday regulators released an “endangerment finding” stating greenhouse gas emissions from airplanes “endanger the public health and welfare of current and future generations.” The endangerment finding is the first step in regulating greenhouse gases emitted from aircrafts. The Environmental Protection Agency stated the new rule can be expected to be “at least as stringent” as the rules finalized by the United Nations in February.

A bipartisan group of lawmakers is pushing a bill aimed at protecting veterans’ credit scores from taking hits due to the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) inability to quickly process payments. The bill being championed by members in the House of Representatives will grant veterans in the VA program a one-year grace period before the payments are due, which is expected to give the VA enough time to make the requested payments. Representative Bill Hultgren (R-Ill) stated the proposal will ensure veterans “aren’t held responsible for bureaucratic ineptitude.”

Eakinomics: The Campaign Simplified

I have no idea what Donald Trump would do as president. I’m similarly prescience-crippled regarding Hillary Clinton. But I think I understand what they are up to now.

Recall that in 2007-08 then-candidate Barack Obama put together a winning combination of policy positions: (a) get out of Iraq/Afghanistan (head-in-the-sand isolationism), (b) anti-trade/pro-worker rhetoric (remember “renegotiating NAFTA”?), and a tax-transfer entitlement program for every problem. This framework was decidedly not grounded in conservative principles, ignored the realities of governing, and pretended to add up to a realistic budget. Enter reality: the administration has done a miserable job of defending U.S. values and weak around the globe, but it is still in Iraq and Afghanistan because of the facts on the ground. NAFTA remains untouched, and the president pivoted to Trade Promotion Authority and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) because trade is NOT the problem. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is the signature tax-spend entitlement program of a big spending, big government administration that got checked only because voters sent Republicans to the House and Senate to, well, stop it.

But it worked to get elected. So candidate Clinton is dialing back her foreign policy instincts (“force is a last resort”) and promising to complete the Obama agenda — whatever that is. It is not surprising that Democrat Vice-President candidate Kane has announced his opposition to TPP and the Clinton campaign has bashed trade at every opportunity. And as for tax-spend entitlements, let us contemplate a bigger Social Security program, expanded Medicare, expanded ACA, free college, pre-kindergarten instruction, family leave, day care, and a \$10 billion fund for anything that might get shouted out at a rally. This is the Obama playbook; everyday on the Clinton campaign is #TBT.

Ah, but here’s the rub: Mr. Trump is running exactly the same playbook — international isolationism (“pull out of NATO”), anti-trade/anti-immigrant, and big spending (trillions in infrastructure and no reforms to Social

Security and Medicare). He's even vaguely promised to make the rich pay more taxes. The Democrats are flummoxed by this development — as are many Republicans because it is decidedly against conservative principles — but there is no more sincere flattery than imitation.

Don't confuse this campaign with governing. It wasn't for Barack Obama and it won't be for either candidate in 2016.