

# What Reagan said and other things

February 28, 2011

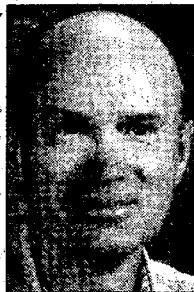
**O**utta the Zone ... It's once again time to dive into the crate beneath my desk to see what gems have accumulated. First up is Governor Rick Snyder's proposed budget. Snyder wants to get rid of the Earned Income Tax Credit. This is an odd stance for a Republican. The EITC is a Republican idea enacted by President Gerald Ford and then re-enacted and expanded in 1986 by President Ronald Reagan. In fact, Reagan called the credit "the best anti-poverty, the best pro-family, the best job creation measure to come out of Congress." Then again, by dropping the EITC Snyder can raise taxes on those at the bottom end of the economic spectrum without actually putting a tax increase measure before the legislature. Raising taxes without raising taxes is a pretty slick move.

Speaking of helping those at the bottom of the economic spectrum, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, 16 percent of adult homeless people are military veterans. Meanwhile, as I cited last week, this country spends \$500 million per year on military bands. Add to that the \$5 million the Army annually spends on drag racing. The Army will spend another \$7

million this year to sponsor Ryan Newman's Chevrolet in the NASCAR Sprint Series. Now, I know it's important to play "Hail To The Chief" every time Air Force One lands and a lot of youths will undoubtedly sign up for the military based on seeing Newman finish 22nd in the Daytona 500, but isn't it equally important to make sure our veterans live with a certain amount of dignity? Priorities.

As long as we're talking taxes, did you know that as a share of the nation's economy the federal government's take this year will be the lowest since 1950? The Congressional Budget Office says that for the third straight year American families will pay less in federal taxes than they did under President George W. Bush. Income tax payments will be 13 percent lower than they were in 2008 and corporate taxes will be one-third lower.

You know, though, when it comes to setting priorities on spending money, nothing tops college football in the state of Texas. Take Texas Tech,



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for example, where the state cut the university's budget by 8 percent. The students face a tuition increase and the faculty has been asked to take a pay freeze. However, head football coach Tommy Tuberville has been given a half-million dollar per-year pay raise and will get \$11 million guaranteed over the next five years. Tech's 2010 football team was 8-5 and finished second to last in the

Big 12 South standings. Imagine how much Tuberville's salary would have increased if his team had actually been any good.

Well, with all that going on, at least I got some good news this week. It was reported that holding a cellphone against your ear changes the activity in your brain. I've been reading the e-mails I get from conservative-leaning readers and they claim I have no brain activity anyway, so it looks like cellphone use can't hurt me. Besides, I only get about one call per month, which means I have 599 minutes left over on my 600-minute plan. Again, this means cellphone use can't hurt me;

having no friends is actually a big plus in this regard.

Also on the technology front, Chinese environmental groups have accused Apple of ignoring health and safety concerns at their factories. They say Apple is the least responsive to concerns among more than two dozen companies. Wow, this is really upsetting. I'd use my iPhone to register a complaint with Apple but every time I put the phone to my ear my brain seems to go blank.

Finally, as you may guess I'm a word guy. Recently, the AARP Bulletin scoured the four major English dictionaries and found several new words had been added. Here are five you may want to sprinkle into conversations. 1) Bargainous — Costing less than expected. 2) Catastrophize — To present a situation as worse than it is. 3) Green-collar — Workers in the environmentalist business sector. 4) Matchy-matchy — Excessively color-coordinated. 5) Sheeple — Unquestioning followers.

The whole 50-word list is at [http://www.aarp.org/entertainment/books/info-01-2011/50\\_new\\_words\\_2010.html](http://www.aarp.org/entertainment/books/info-01-2011/50_new_words_2010.html).

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