Trump, Shapiro and the War on Social Security

The death of "Entitlements"

DONALD JEFFRIES
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Ben Shapiro, the smarmy young elitist who co-founded conservative platform The Daily Wire, took a break from fondling the Wailing Wall the other day. Next to enthusiastically shilling for Israel, his key issue seems to be eliminating Social Security. You know, the primary income most retired people rely on.

Shapiro came out with both guns blazing, firing away at….American senior citizens. He called retirement itself a “stupid idea” and said it was “insane” that the retirement age hasn't been raised. This has long been a Stupid Party staple- just keep raising the retirement age. That way there will be less of the old, useless eaters to pay. Shapiro inaccurately referred to the fact that Americans are living longer, when actually the life expectancy rate in this country has been falling for the past several years. That's because of our crack Medical Industrial Complex, and our preservative/GMO-riddled food supply. Both of which Shapiro and his ilk undoubtedly think are wonderful.

Shapiro's ugly remarks came on the heels of Donald Trumpenstein declaring that “there is a lot you can do” in terms of cutting Social Security and Medicare. Naturally, Trump has repeatedly stated he would never touch them. A Trump spokesperson quickly walked back the comments, explaining, “President Trump delivered on his promise to protect Social Security and Medicare in his first term, and President Trump will continue to strongly protect Social Security and Medicare in his second term.” Yes, the Giant Orange Man didn't get rid of these crucial programs during his time as president. And, he won't get rid of them again if he's re-selected. Honest.

Shapiro comes from the Paul Ryan school of neocon RINOism. This strain of “conservative” worships the author/philosopher Ayn Rand. I had a brief fling with Rand's work as a young man. Then I started reading some of her morally empty quotes. Like how we have no obligation to help our neighbor. She, too, hated Social Security. But she accepted hers when it came time to collect. That's the kind of atheist a “Christian” conservative could love. When the Stupid Party elected Ryan as Speaker of the House, they advertised a commitment to this poisonous credo of unholy selfishness. Greed is good. He who dies with the most toys wins. The mantra became we have to “do something” about “entitlements.” This means, of course, eliminating Social Security and Medicare. Which are not “entitlements” in the sense the Rand cult means. But we are all certainly entitled to these benefits.

Actually, benefits isn't the right word, either. Every employee pays into the Social Security and Medicare funds through FICA payroll taxes. When you collect Social Security and Medicare, it's *your* money being paid back to you, very gradually. It's not a “welfare” style perk that lazy oldsters are unfairly receiving. But to the RINO-led Republicans, Social Security and Medicare- which is simply the incremental payback of forcefully withheld income- are the *first* priorities for spending cuts. Not foreign aid, including the unfathomable amount we continue to funnel to “democratic' Ukraine. Zelensky is more important that grandma. How about cutting all those worthless federal agencies? Department of Energy? Department of Education? Homeland Security? FEMA? Maybe if they raid Mar-a-Lago again, the FBI?

In the neocon world, all that stands between the United States and fiscal soundness are those “entitlements” that elderly Americans literally survive on. If you want to reform Social Security, start with all the illegal immigrants who never paid into the system getting money back through fake or stolen Social Security numbers. I went over the scandal of illegals, using their taxpayer identification numbers, exploiting the additional child tax credit loophole to claim $1000 per child, even when they're living in Mexico, in my book *Survival of the Richest*. That's if these children even exist. This fraud was estimated to be costing taxpayers some $4.2 billion annually, as of 2013. And the IRS has known about it for years. They don't do anything about it, because they're too busy auditing citizens who hold “extremist” political beliefs.

It's been confirmed that the beloved Biden administration is giving illegal immigrants $2,200 a month, plus free travel, housing and medical services. *No* American citizen is getting that deal. And the $2,200 alone is more than many elderly people get in monthly Social Security benefits. So, the Republicucks might want to eliminate that first. Some of our sterling Social Security Administration employees have been caught selling Social Security cards to illegals, which they can use later to collect benefits. If amnesty is granted to millions, which every neocon supports, then it is estimated that would cost an astounding $1.3 trillion to Social Security and Medicare, once they legally go on the rolls. Isn't cheap labor worth it?

Matt Walsh, who works for Shapiro's Daily Wire, also tweeted out similarly Ayn Randian comments. Walsh is great on cultural issues, but a typical Republicuck abomination on the economy. He is of the school that young people “don't want to work,” and that high-paying jobs are out there for the asking. If only they could get these worthless snowflakes away from their smart phones and video game systems. This is contrary to reality; a man in Florida applied for something like fifty entry level jobs a few years ago, and received one call back. The “Help Wanted” signs are for public relations purposes. I hear from people all the time who experience this rigged job market first-hand. They don't have any vested interest in concocting stories. To those like Walsh, seniors who didn't “build” substantial investments are just out of luck. Walmart always needs greeters. Like his boss Shapiro says, it's stupid to retire.

Social Security certainly isn't perfect. But it's entrenched within our society now. You can't engineer the elimination of private pensions, which is what gradually happened here over the past forty years or so, and then stop giving back retired citizens the money they paid into Social Security over the course of a lifetime. What are the elderly supposed to live on? Sure, those in the top twenty percent- who managed this collapsing mess with high paying jobs- will possess backup resources. And they are likely to have one of the dwindling number of private pensions left. Those pensions are not going to retirees who toiled at menial labor for fifty years. In other words, to those who would need it most. Yeah, I know- Marx said “to each according to his needs” or whatever. Our wealth is distributed in an ass backwards fashion.

So raise the retirement age. Bring back child labor. That way you'll have more years paid into the system, and will have to wait longer to collect even a small portion of it back. And the Shapiros of the world want to scrap the minimum wage. If we raise it, you'll be paying $100 for that precious Big Mac! But somehow those $50 million tax free year-end bonuses, and asinine golden umbrellas, don't impact the cost of your product. The public never has to pay to enable *that* kind of lunacy. Only if you give the hamburger flippers a few dollars more per hour. It's a crony capitalism thing, you wouldn't understand. It's the same corporate concept whereby a file clerk pocketing a company pen is a thief, but an executive taking a vacation on the company isn't. The Stupid Party brilliant strategy; raise the retirement age, scrap the minimum wage.

Mainstream Republicans- not the typical MAGA voter- support this monstrously wasteful and unfair system as heartily as the most deranged social justice warrior. They blanched at Trump's revolutionary 2016 campaign rhetoric. Fortunately for them, it was all scripted for him. He obviously doesn't believe his own rhetoric. But if Trump, or Shapiro, or any other member of the Stupid Party, is seriously considering cutting Social Security and Medicare, it would be the stupidest of all their many stupid historical moves. Imagine the impact on the economy that the elimination of these benefits would mean. It's not like the elderly with few other resources (the vast majority of them) could depend on family members for help. Decades of devastating cultural propaganda have created massive family dysfunction.

The Paul Ryans of the world, like their hero Ayn Rand, want to eliminate the social safety net altogether. However many of those on disability and other government programs were born with a legitimate problem, or had it enabled or even created by the corrupt system, there are many millions of Americans who are incapable of earning income. You can take the eugenicist's line, and say “tough luck.” Sucks to be you. And the ardent eugenicist would be excited over the prospect of all these “unfit” humans dying. That's what evolution is all about, isn't it? Weeding out the weak and the infirm? Nobody gave me anything, buddy! Lift yourself up by your own bootstraps, even if they're pink or purple. The Lord helps those who help themselves. That's not actually in the Bible, but *we* can tell what the Lord wants.

What would the elderly do without Medicare? They're mostly all chronically sick, thanks to their devotion to our putrid “healthcare” system, and deadly Big Pharma meds. Medicare is not a wonderful benefit; they still charge you a monthly fee, and then only cover eighty percent of your costs. Eighty percent of anything connected to the Medical Industrial Complex can potentially cause financial ruin. And if you aren't an illegal immigrant, the only group in the country that doesn't have to worry about medical costs, then the full bill for any medical procedure *will* financially ruin you. But the Randians worship the marketplace, and won't admit that's it's corrupt. So you gets what you pays for. Unless you can't pays for it.

The Left is so enamored of the present system that they treat it with a religious adoration. Bernie Sanders wants Medicare for all. Think about that; promoting this decidedly substandard system as if it's the greatest in the world. Since I seem to be the only one criticizing Medicare, sometimes I wonder if the oldsters even realize how bad it is. Do they not see the monthly payment taken out of their Social Security? Aren't they shocked to learn they'll still have to pay twenty percent of their medical costs? But never fear, capitalism fills the void with the supplemental insurance industry. So you'll have yet another monthly payment. And you'll need to have a serious condition, resulting in an expensive medical bill, in order to get your money's worth. You lose if you stay healthy.

This government doesn't give its needy citizens any great benefits. It does tax them. We pay enough taxes to run the world's largest socialist nanny state. But our government gives us back almost nothing in terms of services. Call the police at your own peril. Drive cautiously on our pothole-riddled roads. Leave a message for your local “representative,” who will never call you back. Enjoy the local DMV. Call any government agency for the full Affirmative Action experience. Vote early, often, and dead. You have your two selections- choose carefully. And if you dare to set foot inside a building your taxes pay for, you could be charged with trespassing. Maybe sedition. But the problem, conservatives remind us, is those citizens receiving Social Security.

With all the government fraud, waste, and abuse, it's really remarkable that the likes of Shapiro and Trump focused on one of the few expenditures that is absolutely necessary to the survival of millions. And the “expenditure” is only considered that because, starting with LBJ, and really accelerating under Reagan, the Social Security trust fund was comingled with the general budget. My realtor training tells me that comingling of funds is unethical. How about isolating the benefits each individual paid, in their own personal fund? Give people the option of taking a lump sum of their entire account? This would solve two problems; once the younger workers took the sum, the withholding process could stop. And because most people overall would take the lump sum, there would be no need for many future payments.

Yeah, I know the money's not there. Where exactly is it? Hiding in the secret budgets of the intelligence agencies? Funding some LGBQT++++ pottery class in India? Why can't we just create the money out of thin air, like our banks do with *every* loan they “give” you? When Israel or Ukraine need money instantly, they get it. The counterfeit fiat currency system could work in our favor just once, couldn't it? Corporations always look first at the bottom of the ladder; let's cut back on personal phone calls. No nonbusiness internet use. But we'll keep those six and seven figure tax-free bonuses, thank you. The Republicucks follow the same pattern. Don't stop waste or abolish the unconstitutional agencies. Just “debate” what to do about those pesky oldsters who live long enough to get their own money back.

I can hear the Libertarians calling Social Security a Ponzi scheme. It may be, but of all FDR's disastrous violations of the Constitution, it's the one that can only be undone with great difficulty. And tremendous hardship and suffering for millions. Not to mention the monumental unfairness of forcing all those workers to pay into a system, with the promise that you'll get the money back when you most need it, and then reneging. You could call it Indian giving, if that wasn't a Thought Crime. Before Social Security, families took in their elderly relatives. Most Americans today would be far more likely to rescue a dog or cat than give food and shelter to even their own parents. We can cut much of the budget without touching these “entitlements.”

When a usually lowly paid American misses a few car payments, it gets repossessed. It doesn't matter that the money wasn't really lent to them, as banks don't need to have it on hand to lend it. The same thing, on a grander scale, applies to real estate. You miss payments, you get foreclosed on. Maybe we'll have an exciting auction. Again, the money didn't exist that was lent to the homebuyers. If you can differentiate that from counterfeiting, please explain it to me. But when the government, which forced all workers to pay into the Social Security and Medicare funds, mulls over perhaps not paying them back, this is just sound fiscal policy that Ben Shapiros everywhere can admire. No “you have to pay your debts.” No castigation of “deadbeats” failing to meet their obligations. This is a distinction between conservatism and populism.

Because only a certain portion of income has always been taxed for these “entitlements,” the very wealthy pay an effective Social Security tax rate of something like one percent. As compared to your local janitor or high-rise window washer, who pays six percent. Presently, only about the *first* $160,000 of income is taxed. This is about as regressive a taxation as can be imagined. An anti-Huey Long nightmare. But you don't hear leftists complaining about it. You know, the rich not “paying their fair share” or anything. Just having all that One Percent income taxed alone would make Social Security solvent. This is a simple fix. Eliminate all that government fraud and waste. For once, redirect our priorities sensibly.

In 1992, Ross Perot talked about how ridiculous it was for people like him to collect Social Security. He floated the idea of voluntarily opting not to get the benefits, but he was shouted down by the AARP and other special interest groups. Why would the Bill Gates of the world possibly need a monthly Social Security check? To call it One Percent pocket change is offensive to all those who sometimes actually have to rely on real pocket change. As I documented in *Survival of the Richest,* the very wealthy actually pay a lower percentage of taxes across the board. They pay more cumulatively, but that's because their income is so astronomically higher. The whole point of a graduated income tax (and yes, I know that too comes from Marx) is lost when those with the most pay the lowest percentage.

One day we'll all be there. Waiting for that monthly Social Security check. I'm there now. I don't know what I would do without it. It certainly brings more income than all my books put together. I don't think the Stupid Party would really go through with something like this, because ultimately they are a do nothing bunch. Which in this case is a good thing. But the retirement age almost certainly will be raised. It's their traditional solution to problems. Just keep kicking the can down the road. Don't means test Social Security, or remove the income cap. But make sure the wealthy get a benefit they definitely don't need. If you have any *more* questions, I'll be at the local IHOP, where every Wednesday the entire menu is half price for senior citizens.

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"How about cutting all those worthless federal agencies? Department of Energy? Department of Education? Homeland Security? FEMA? Maybe if they raid Mar-a-Lago again, the FBI?"

You forgot to list the War Department...cut that by 90%. But the War Department is a great money laundering scheme, among many, for the rapacious megalomaniacs who control this country. This country is in the bowl, and the flush is on.

Thanks for the article

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Faithful Planner Fun Faithful's Substack Mar 15 · Liked by Donald Jeffries

I read Ayn Rand's "Atlas Shrugged" years ago, decades before I became a Christian. I liked it and thought it was great. Then I became a Christian and realized what an awful, cold and cruelly indifferent person Rand really was.

Good read, as always. You are correct on all points from where I sit.

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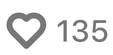 135 331

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