



**1968**

The real legacy of the Age of Aquarius was the **Reagan Revolution**

# THINKING MINNESOTA

CENTER OF THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT

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## Unearthing Prosperity



**How mining will bring**

**8,500 jobs and \$3.7 billion**

**to Minnesota's economy**

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How mining will bring 8,500 jobs and \$3.7 billion to Minnesota's economy

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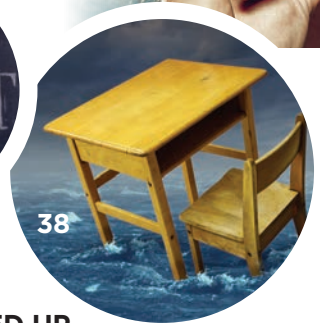


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## NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

# WHAT WOULD WINSTON SMITH THINK?

Edina persecutes a member of its own board of directors for disagreeing with extremist curriculum.

**C**atrin Thorman, one of American Experiment's new rock-star policy fellows, stood alongside 150 parents and community members outside a closed-door meeting in which members of the Edina School Board took five hours to deliberate the disciplinary fate of Sarah Patzloff, a five-year board member and its current vice chair. Catrin related her experience:

The community was there to support Patzloff, whose offense, it seems, had been to share a PDF document on a Facebook page for Edina parents. The document was written by radical English teacher Jackie Roehl and outlines the Pre-AP English 10 curriculum that caused a local and national outcry when exposed by American

Experiment's Katherine Kersten in the Fall 2017 edition of *Thinking Minnesota*.

"Read the attached PDF," Patzloff said. "It is Jackie Roehl's manifesto for the 10th grade LA class. It is frightening."

This single action prompted a five-hour disciplinary hearing.

Let's be clear: Patzloff was not leaking private information. The PDF document is actually a chapter Ms. Roehl wrote

for a book published in 2013 by Glenn E. Singleton called *More Courageous Conversations About Race*. Singleton is president and CEO of Pacific Educational Group (PEG), a "racial equity" consulting group based in California that

has trained Minnesota teachers and staff on "addressing race."

Most *Thinking Minnesota* readers will likely agree with Patzloff.

Roehl's essay admits that her Pre-AP English 10 class is a year-long indoctrination into racial identity politics and "critical race theory." According to Kersten, "The course teaches an extremist view of race that emphatically rejects the American ideal of

color-blindness put forward by Martin Luther King, Jr."

Roehl's document also described her eye-rolling annoyance with "questioning parents" who pushed back against the new focus of the course.

Catrin reports that several board members eventually emerged during the meeting and asked Patzloff's supporters to leave. Certain board members, they

*continued on page 4*



Ron Eibensteiner



*continued from page 3*

said, were “intimidated” by the supporters’ ongoing presence. Someone later threatened to call the police. The evening reached a comical low point when a janitor, brandishing a vacuum cleaner, accosted the group in an attempt to lock down the hallway.

More than 50 of Patzloff’s original supporters held out all the way to the end.

Around 12:15 a.m., when it appeared the meeting was coming to an end, supporters stood outside the door with their banners and “We are Sarah” t-shirts and began singing “God Bless America.”

This really happened. The Edina School Board met for **over 5 hours**, in private, to determine how it should respond to Patzloff’s purported misconduct. For several chunks of time within the inquest, Patzloff was isolated in a room behind *two locked doors* and a *security guard*. All this because she audaciously suggested that there might be more than one way to look at curriculum.

This incident is troubling—and weird—for a variety of reasons (some of which we’ll likely explore in an upcoming issue of *Thinking Minnesota*). But for now, I’d like to ask an obvious question: Why an English class?

I’ve always considered English to be the most essential component of an effective K-12 liberal arts education. Exposure to great literature teaches students the art of critical reading and independent thinking. English teachers help students hone their abilities to express logical arguments with consistent style and sound grammar. These are lifetime skills. A high school English classroom is a place where teachers should nurture curiosity and encourage original points of view. The Big Brotherish orientation of Roehl’s political indoctrination would prefer to turn her students into extremist robots. Frightening? Yes!

Speaking of Big Brother, I wonder how Ms. Roehl might teach George Orwell’s masterpiece, *1984*, especially in the context of the political witch hunt launched against Sarah Patzloff.

Most of us first met Winston Smith,

the literary protagonist of *1984*, in a high school English classroom. Smith quietly battled a totalitarian regime that had outlawed independent thinking and free speech in order to maintain fanatical control over its citizens.

The deadliest enemy of Big Brother’s machine was free thought. *Thought police* used high technology and firm control to ensure that none of its citizens

spoke up in ways that didn’t conform to the government’s worldview. They practiced “hate week” in order to direct the hostility of the masses against independent thinkers.

Orwell intended *1984* to be a prophetic warning, not a how-to guide. Observing many teachers and administrators in the Edina schools, one wonders: in the world of *1984*, whose side would they be on? ★



Watch Us

## IN THE ARENA

Center billboards greet delegates to NEA Convention.

The National Education Association, the nation’s largest teachers’ union, is holding its annual convention in Minneapolis this year. It will run from June 30 through July 5, and around 8,000 delegates are expected to attend.

To welcome NEA officials and delegates to Minneapolis, Center of the American Experiment has placed electronic billboards around the Twin Cities that celebrate the restoration of First Amendment rights to teachers and other public employees via the *Janus* decision. The Center has created two billboards, which will be placed, among other locations, on Highway 35W just before downtown Minneapolis, and on Highway 94 West just outside of downtown.

One billboard celebrates “teachers’ independence day,” courtesy of the *Janus* court. Teachers will no longer be forced by government to support unions against their will.

The other billboard calls the NEA out for being the most powerful obstacle to education reform in America.

For too long, public sector unions have dominated America’s civic landscape. In Minnesota, the Center is leading the effort to take power away from self-interested, partisan public sector unions and return it to individual citizens, where it belongs.





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# UP FRONT

Realpolitik

## SEVEN WORDS

Candace Owens explains what happens when you threaten the liberals' lock on African American voters.



Owens described her journey to conservatism before a sold-out audience at a quarterly lunch forum sponsored by Center of the American Experiment at the Minneapolis Marriott City Center.



In April, rapper Kanye West tweeted, “I love the way Candace Owens thinks,” seven words that appeared to blow up the internet. Owens is a young African American conservative who first turned heads as a video creator and conservative activist, and continues to do so as director of urban engagement for Turning Point USA, an organization that educates students about free market values.

Within moments, the twitter-verse exploded, as liberal entertainers, politicians and pundits disparaged West, some even questioning his sanity. And they simultaneously targeted their personal attacks on Owens. Media reports said she was the consigliere of a mob boss, a KKK sympathizer, and a white supremacist, among other things.

“It was all just amazing,” Owens said during a recent stop in Minneapolis. “My favorite thing was reading that I was a rich girl from Connecticut. If I am rich, please let my parents know.”

Barely two weeks after the tweetstorm thrust her into sudden national prominence, Owens described her journey to conservatism before a sold-out audience at a quarterly lunch forum sponsored by Center of the American Experiment at the Minneapolis Marriott City Center. Her recent publicity swelled the audience to more than 550 people, one of the Center’s largest lunch forum crowds.

“Of course, none of these journalists reached out for a comment, because these are no longer journalists,” she said. “These are hitmen. Their job is to, when they see something catching fire, make sure that they kill it before anybody else gets the idea that this person might be telling the truth.”

She appreciated the call out from West



ON AIR



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Mondays  
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Network



## UPFRONT



because his music, she said, “advocates for individualism. He wants people to understand that you don’t assign yourself to the collective. Be an individual. You want to know why a seven-word tweet broke the internet? It’s because culture and politics are not supposed to mix in this way, especially when we’re talking about conservative ideas.”

Owens said the rush to discredit her was prompted by a liberal establishment that doesn’t want its grip on African American voters to be threatened by honest discourse. “Show me a black person, I can show you someone that is a conservative and just doesn’t know it. The truth is that there has been a system built to make us think that we’re liberals and Democrats. I certainly fell victim to it myself. My entire life, I thought that I must be a liberal, and I must be a Democrat because that’s what I learned growing up.”

This system, she said, is constructed on liberal control of families, culture, and education.

Family influence is absent because families were broken by Lyndon Johnson’s “Great Society” programs in the ’60s—welfare programs incentivized black women not to marry the father of their children. “The government said, ‘I will give you a bigger check if you don’t marry him,’” Owens said. “Over time, the single motherhood rate in the

black community has jumped 72 percent since the 1960s, which is abhorrent. It’s terrifying to think that all of my cousins grew up without their fathers in the home. If you want to disrupt an individual, the first thing that you have to do is disrupt the family.”

In the absence of family, Owens said, “the rappers and the singers become mom and dad. That is why you see leftists and Democrats put up Jay-Z and Beyonce at every election cycle. They’re throwing concerts because they understand that we idolize these people. We say, ‘Okay, if Beyonce says I’m with her, then of course I must be with her, too.’”

The third influence, Owens said, is seen in how Democrats have locked down the education system. “I see this every single day at Turning Point USA,” she said. Owens described her visit to a college campus where a student verbally assaulted her by calling her a white supremacist because she advocated capitalism. “That’s a really scary place to be when capitalism and free markets are being considered white supremacy on campus, not only because she [the student] is saying it but because she has professors that are backing her up. These students actually believe that socialism is the answer. They can’t tell you why there are people fleeing from Venezuela to get to America.” ★



Energy

# Solar Flares

Minnesota adds expensive and unnecessary solar as electricity prices soar.

**M**innesota’s electricity prices have increased 26 percent more than the national average since 2007, yet we continue to add more expensive and unnecessary solar power. Adding more solar will increase our electricity prices even more.

The *Star Tribune* recently reported that Minnesota’s solar market added 105 megawatts of power during the first quarter of 2018, the fifth most among states during that time.

Minnesota has a total of 849.5 megawatts of solar capacity, enough power for 116,670 homes, according to GTM Research and the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), a trade group, the paper said.

Unfortunately, SEIA’s claims about how many homes can be served with solar power are misleading. Its figures reflect the maximum number of homes that could be served if the panels were operating at 100 percent capacity 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, which we know will never happen because the sun doesn’t shine at all hours of the day.

Furthermore, Minnesota’s need for electricity has been declining, not increasing, yet we continue to add electricity generating capacity that we simply don’t need. By doing this, we are paying twice for electricity generation and this is increasing costs.

It gets even worse, because community solar gardens are leading the way.

The *Star Tribune* further reported that the state’s solar growth over the past year has been driven by Minnesota’s Community Solar Garden program, administered by Xcel Energy.

“As of June 1, there were 105 community solar gardens operating in Minnesota, with a total capacity of 364 megawatts, according to Xcel. That compares to 25 sites with 80 megawatts a year ago,” the paper said.

Tom Steward of American Experiment has quoted Xcel Energy Senior Director of Customer Strategy and Solutions Lee Gabler as saying community solar gardens are twice as expensive as utility-scale operations:

“Community solar gardens aren’t cheap for Xcel,” Gabler said. “Solar energy from the gardens costs the company 12.5 cents per kilowatt-hour, almost twice as expensive as utility-scale electricity.”

It is important to remember the growth in solar has been propelled by the state’s solar energy mandate, not free markets. The mandate requires that 1.5 percent of electricity sales in the state be derived from solar.

The solar mandate will continue to cost Minnesotans dearly because it is requiring the use of an expensive, intermittent, and unnecessary form of energy. Removing this mandate should be a top priority of free market legislators in the future. ★

—Isaac Orr



**Growth in solar has been propelled by the state’s solar energy mandate, not free markets.**



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Scandal

## Is Welfare Fraud Funding Al-Shabaab?

\$100 million in cash was allegedly carried to the Mideast via MSP airport in 2017 alone.

**S**omething is rotten in Minnesota: our social welfare state is being leveraged by the U.S. State Department, and defrauded to fund Islamic terror abroad.

Prompted by an explosive Fox 9 News report, a Minnesota Senate committee last month heard testimony that Minnesota's welfare programs are being defrauded of tens of millions of dollars, with some ending up in the hands of terror groups, including Al-Shabaab in Somalia. The news report said that U.S. Customs reports show \$100 million in cash left via the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport (MSP) last year, on its way to Somalia and various Mideast destinations. Incredibly, you can take an unlimited amount of cash out of the country if you fill out the proper form with U.S. Customs.

The Fox 9 News report focused on a welfare program that provides child care to low-income parents. The Department of Human Services (DHS) disputes that the \$100 million flown out of MSP could all come from the child care program because the total budget for 2017 was \$248 million. DHS also told the *Star Tribune* that "payments on behalf of Somali children account for just 28 percent of the roughly \$250 million in annual payments..." It is interesting that DHS said "just 28 percent." That nearly a third of a welfare program budget is going to one refugee group, is startling.

Thirteen child care centers have been closed due to welfare fraud by DHS since 2014, and another ten are under active investigation. The Senate committee heard testimony that most of these centers are owned by Somali immigrants.

"Sources in the Somali community told Fox 9 it is an open secret that starting a daycare center is a license to make money. The fraud is so widespread, they said, that people buy shares of daycare businesses to get a cut of the huge public subsidies that are pouring in."

Since Somalia failed as a state in 1991, the U.S. State Department has arranged for a steady flow of Somali refugees to

because Minnesota has the largest number of identified recruits to ISIS.

In theory, some of the cash flown out of MSP represents the transfer of funds used by immigrants worldwide to help relatives, called "Hawala." Hawala avoids the costs and regulations of banks, and facilitates cash transfers to countries that banks stopped serving when two Somali-American women were convicted of wiring funds to Al-Shabaab. Most observers assume that Al-Shabaab



come to the United States. One of the main criteria for placement of refugees is a generous welfare system; another is the presence of "kith and kin." As a result, Minnesota is now the number one destination for refugees on a per capita basis in the nation.

Though no one agrees on the number, Minnesota has the largest population of Somalis in the country. The state demographer reported 46,693 in 2015. Hennepin County Sheriff Rick Stanek, however, told the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security in 2012 that he estimated the population at 80,000 to 125,000. He was testifying

takes a cut of Hawala cash in regions it controls.

Other Medicaid programs, like the personal care attendant (PCA) program, are also vulnerable to fraud. Former DHS investigator Scott Stillman told the Senate committee, "The dollar amount, particularly personal care attendant fraud, way exceeds the daycare fraud, but most of that money is going to extravagant lifestyles, drugs, large houses. Things of that nature. But there's no controls. I should say, they're inadequate."

State Senator John Jasinski (R-Faribault) told his colleagues that he did his own investigation; county employees told him that a family of five was getting

\$10,000 a month in welfare payments. When they tried to alert their supervisors, they were told, “We can’t bring this up.”

Scott Stillman testified that data privacy rules made it hard to report suspected fraud. He wrote detailed emails to his supervisors and even the governor, to no avail. Stillman, who quit his job, said the funds going overseas were “keeping him up at night.” After terror attacks here and abroad, he would wonder if Minnesota tax dollars had funded the operation.

Stillman called for a federal investigation, predicting it would reveal “other entities” who may be receiving “ben-

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Minnesota has been hit by a perfect storm of **federal indifference, state incompetence and a sinister brand of international fraud.**

---

efits” from this fraud that could impede a state-level investigation.

Welfare fraud is not new. Minnesota has had some spectacular instances of fraud committed by home-grown U.S. citizens, one of whom operated her business out of a prison on a government computer.

But this latest revelation suggests that Minnesota has been hit by a perfect storm of federal indifference, state incompetence and a sinister brand of international fraud. This fraud not only steals from the vulnerable, it violates the trust between citizens and the state. Moreover, if the allegations about funds going to Al-Shabaab are true, the refugee program is making it harder for Somalis at home and overseas, to bring peace to their war-torn country.

President Trump promised a full review of the refugee program. Mr. President, Minnesota would be a good place to start. ★

—Kim Crockett



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TOM STEWARD

## INHERENT RACISM

‘Resist Trump’ racial equity program pockets more than \$275k from MN taxpayers.

**M**innesota cities, counties and state agencies have spent more than \$275,000 in taxpayer funds on a provocative racial equity program led by a national leftwing advocacy group that urges local governments to “resist Trump” and bases its training for public employees on the premise that government institutions and workers are inherently racist, whether they realize it or not.

“The Alliance leads with race, with the recognition that the creation and perpetuation of racial inequities has been baked into government,” according to the Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE) website. “From the inception of our country, government at the local, regional, state and federal level has played a role in creating and maintaining racial inequity.”

The organization’s newsletter features hot button headlines like “3 ways Local Government Can Heed MLK and Resist Trump” and “Actions Local Jurisdictions Can Take to Protect Immigrants and Refugees.”

Discrimination may be illegal, “but ‘neutral’ policies and practices perpetuate inequity,” according to GARE’s instructional materials, implicitly rejecting a colorblind approach to race relations. GARE aims to “move beyond ‘services’ and focus on changing policies, institutions and structures.”

GARE appears to have a firmer foothold in Minnesota than any other state. Some 18 cities, three counties, five local governmental units and various state agencies have participated in GARE racial equity training in the last two years, all from the metro area, except for Duluth, Mankato and Red Wing.



Tom Steward

An American Experiment survey found the cost to taxpayers varies, depending on staff participation. Ramsey County (\$58,100), the Met Council (\$25,175) and St. Louis Park (\$20,300) rank as the top spenders among counties, government agencies and cities, respectively.

One glaring example of GARE’s influence on public policy: the Met Council’s racial toolkit tied to millions of dollars in park grants.

“Missing from the throngs of visitors were people of color in numbers proportional to their share of the region’s total population,” according to the Met Council website. “The shortfall is especially significant for recent immigrants to the Twin Cities area. In the future, the disparity may widen. People of color are expected to make up 40 percent of the region’s population by 2040, compared

to 24 percent in 2010.”

But at least one metro area government, suburban Dakota County, has announced staff will opt out of the controversial training next year, following an American Experiment inquiry about the program. Dakota County paid \$10,200 to enroll 12 staff members in the program in 2017.

“We will not be using GARE to assist us in this work next year, but will leverage our internal capacity and will evaluate use of other vendors where we need additional assistance,” said Matt Smith, Dakota County Manager, in a statement to American Experiment.

In fact, Dakota County’s “bio” appears to have been scrubbed from the GARE website. But the organization’s newsletter still has an online reference characterizing Dakota County government as a place where “more often than not, consciously or unconsciously, policies have benefited white communities while limiting opportunities and outcomes for communities of color.”

“We recognized the need for training and we went out and got it,” Smith said in an interview. “We started to understand a little bit later that there was some other baggage that came with that, that in our case at least certainly would make it more difficult to achieve the goals that we wanted to interally. So that caused us to reassess.”

Nevertheless, more than 30 local Minnesota governments and state and local agencies have participated in the provocative program to date, including the office of Governor Mark Dayton. ★

*American Experiment intern Joshua Kavanagh assisted in compiling this report.*



MNCongestion.com

## Traffic Congestion is a *Strategy*

American Experiment campaign highlights that the Met Council and MnDOT have no plan to relieve congestion. In fact, they like it.

**C**enter of the American Experiment recently unveiled its 2018 campaign to alert Minnesota commuters that increased traffic congestion “is no accident.”

The campaign’s opening volley is a pair of billboards located near the intersection of Highways 494 and 35W in Bloomington. A radio campaign is underway, and additional billboards will be added through the summer.

American Experiment launched its effort in May 2017 when it commis-

**“The only way to ease  
bottlenecks is by providing  
adequate traffic lanes.”**

—John Hinderaker

sioned a paper by nationally-acclaimed scholar Randal O’Toole, “Twin Cities Traffic Congestion: It’s No Accident.” The paper emphasized that Twin Cities congestion is largely attributable to poor, politically-motivated decisions by unelected bureaucracies. The Met Council, in particular, has prioritized trains and bicycle paths over highways and roads, thereby making congestion worse, not better.

The Center augmented the paper with an aggressive media campaign that included a website (MNCongestion.com), radio ads, billboards and bumper stickers.

O’Toole’s paper revealed that the Twin Cities is the 22nd most congested urban area in the United States, and home to four of the 100 most congested spots in the country, more than Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York. John Hinderaker,

American Experiment’s president, said 2018 research shows that the Twin Cities now have five of the country’s worst traffic bottlenecks. Only Atlanta and Houston have more.

Because of worsening congestion, average Twin Cities commuters spent four times as much time stuck in traffic in 2014 as they did in 1982.

“Our message is simple but powerful,” says Hinderaker. “The problem with traffic in the Twin Cities, which is much more congested than other comparable U.S. cities, is an inadequate system of highways and roads. Minnesotans have to use their vehicles to get where they need to go, and the only way to ease bottlenecks is by providing adequate traffic lanes. Bicycles and exorbitantly expensive fixed rail lines are never going to do the trick.”

“This is really a political issue,” he added. “We have unelected agencies who are trying to force us out of our cars and onto bicycles. They are taking away lanes

and putting in bike lanes. They are doing everything but the one thing they can do to relieve traffic. And that is adding more lanes of highways and roads.”

“Both the Metropolitan Council and MnDOT have said they are no longer trying to lessen congestion. That is no longer one of their goals,” Hinderaker said.

The Met Council’s 2030 transportation plan admitted that “the Council recognizes that congestion will not be eliminated or significantly reduced in the Metropolitan Area.” Instead of reducing congestion on the roads, the Met Council wants to take advantage of horrific commute times to force Twin Cities residents onto trains, buses and bicycles.

The Met Council’s 2040 plan calls for spending \$6.3 billion on “transitways,” principally light rail lines, and only \$700 million on increasing road capacities. Incredibly, the Council proposes that an equal amount—\$700 million—be spent on bike and pedestrian paths and safety enhancements. ★



# Advantage Badgers

Minnesota's economic growth has lagged Wisconsin's since Dayton and Walker took office.

**T**here's an old saying where I'm from: If something seems too good to be true, it probably is. The recent report by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) comparing the economic records of Wisconsin and Minnesota since Governors Scott Walker and Mark Dayton took office in January 2011, is a case in point.

But just as you should never buy a car without checking under the hood, you should never trumpet an economic report as proving your case until you have checked the numbers for yourself. If the folks who saw proof in the EPI's report that Governor Dayton's policies were so much better than Governor Walker's had done this, they would have found that on important measures Wisconsin's economy has actually outperformed Minnesota's.

The EPI report makes some strange choices on which data to use. For example, it uses annual data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis for 2010 to 2016 when quarterly data is available going into 2017. Using quarterly data is better because it allows us to select a more precise base period for our comparison, Q4:2010, the three months before the two men took office, rather than an average of all of 2010. It also allows us to add another year to our comparison.

Using the annual series, the EPI reported that "Minnesota's GDP grew by 12.8 percent in real (inflation-adjusted) terms, while Wisconsin's grew by 10.1 percent." But when we look at GDP growth using quarterly data covering Q4:2010 to Q4:2017, we find that Wisconsin's economy has grown by 11.9 percent and Minnesota's by 10.9 percent in real terms.

Wisconsin's economic growth under Governor Walker has outpaced Minne-



sota's under Governor Dayton.

As well as strange data selections, there are odd interpretations. The EPI notes that by December 2017, Wisconsin and Minnesota "have reached effectively the same unemployment rate, at 3 percent and 3.1 percent, respectively." But the EPI goes on to argue that "Minnesota was back at its pre-recession (December 2007) unemployment rate of 4.7 percent by September 2013, fewer than three years after Governor Dayton took office. In contrast, it took until December of 2014—15 months later—for Wisconsin to reach its pre-recession unemployment rate of 4.8 percent."

This is horribly misleading. The EPI fails to mention that in the race to these pre-recession levels of unemployment, Governor Walker was starting from a rate of 8.1 percent and Governor Dayton was starting from a rate of 7.1 percent. EPI's comparison takes no account of this handicap. In fact, from December 2010 to March 2018, Wisconsin's unemployment

rate fell by 5.2 percentage points to 2.9 percent, while Minnesota's fell by 3.9 percentage points to 3.2 percent.

The unemployment rate has fallen faster and further in Wisconsin under Walker than it has in Minnesota under Dayton.

Just as Wisconsin beats Minnesota on some measures, Minnesota beats Wisconsin on others. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows that the Gopher State has added more jobs under Dayton than the Badger State added under Walker. Minnesota's population also grew faster than Wisconsin's, at 5.1 percent from Q1:2010 to Q4:2017, while Wisconsin's has grown by just 1.9 percent over that period.

But, even here, given Minnesota's lower rate of GDP growth, Wisconsin's GDP per capita—what really matters for economic well-being—has risen by 9.8 percent in real terms compared to 5.5 percent in Minnesota, a substantial difference.

It is interesting to compare Minnesota and Wisconsin, but only up to a point. For each similarity the states have, there are differences too. Neither state—yet—is beating the other hands down over the last seven years. To say otherwise is to go against the data, which is why the EPI had to cherry-pick data to make that argument.

Whether a report supports bigger or smaller government, this or that economic policy, whichever way you lean, pop the hood and check the data for yourself. A bleeding heart is no substitute for an engaged brain. ★

—John Phelan

*This article first appeared in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.*



A \$720k press release

# Running on Hot Air

Behind Minneapolis' bogus renewable energy pledge.

**T**he Minneapolis City Council and Mayor Jacob Frey recently announced their unanimous pledge to achieve 100 percent renewable electricity for municipal facilities and operations by 2022 and citywide by 2030.

Here are three reasons why this pledge is an expensive fraud:

**1. It's not possible,** unless the city plans to run exclusively on hydroelectric power. Wind and solar can produce electricity only when the wind is blowing, or the sun is shining. Otherwise the city must purchase electricity from the grid, which is powered mostly by coal and nuclear plants. The city will likely muddy the issue by using an accounting gimmick called Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), which enables it to buy certificates from a renewable energy generator. In essence, the City of Minneapolis will not actually be buying green energy, it will just be buying the piece of paper that is associated with a given megawatt hour of renewable energy produced somewhere throughout the country.

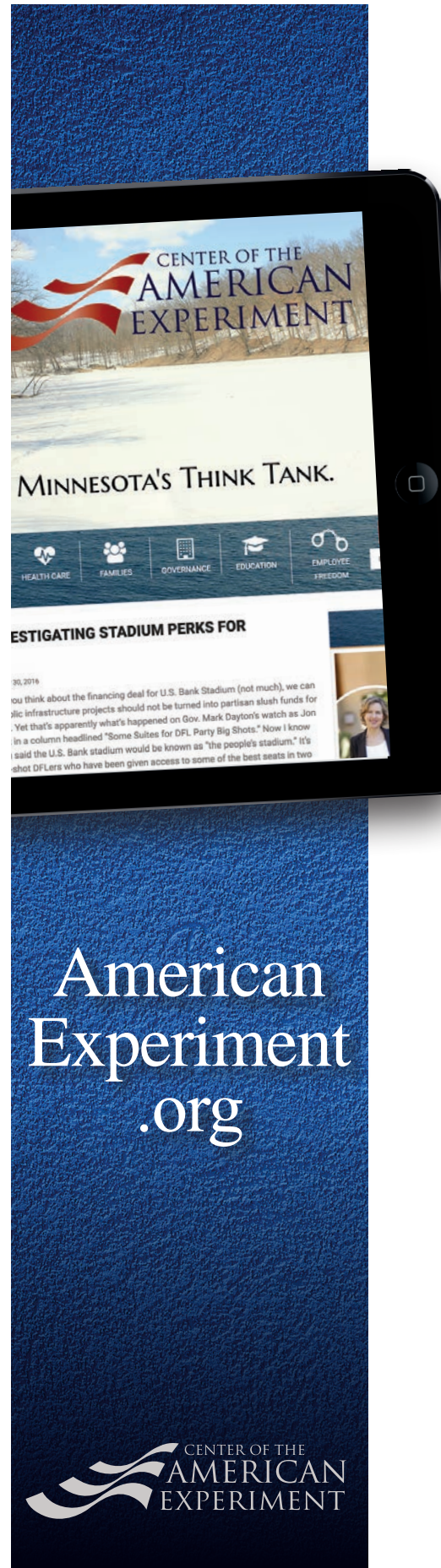
**2. Additional costs will be passed on to taxpayers.** Previous agreements to purchase renewable energy mean the city already pays a six to twelve percent premium for electricity. Businesses and families will have to pay more money in taxes so the city can purchase the same electricity they

would have bought anyway. Let's pretend Minneapolis buys their RECs from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation for \$8 per megawatt hour. The city government of Minneapolis uses about 90,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year. This means the city would be paying an extra \$720,000 ( $\$8 \times 90,000 = \$720,000$ ) for the same electricity they would have purchased anyway, but now there is an REC attached to it.

**3. The carbon dioxide offset by this measure would be globally irrelevant.** If the entire United States were to comply fully with President Obama's Clean Power Plan, it would only avert 0.019 degree C of potential future global warming by 2100, according to the climate models used by the previous administration. That number is an amount too small to be accurately measured with the most sophisticated scientific equipment. This means that Mayor Frey and the members of the City Council are asking Minneapolis taxpayers to pay an extra \$720,000 per year for a policy that is utterly irrelevant to global temperatures.

The claim of 100 percent renewable energy is incredibly misleading because the government buildings in Minneapolis will still be mostly powered by coal and nuclear plants, but citizens of the city will get to pay more in taxes so the mayor and city council members can pose for pictures and pat themselves on the back for "being green." ★

—Isaac Orr





# Inform *and* Engage

Scott Peterson tries to rally the business community to address the escalating labor shortage before it stunts Minnesota's economic growth.

**HR** executive Scott Peterson is more than a little alarmed when he describes how Minnesota's escalating labor shortages could reach catastrophic levels within only a few short years. And he's doing something about it.

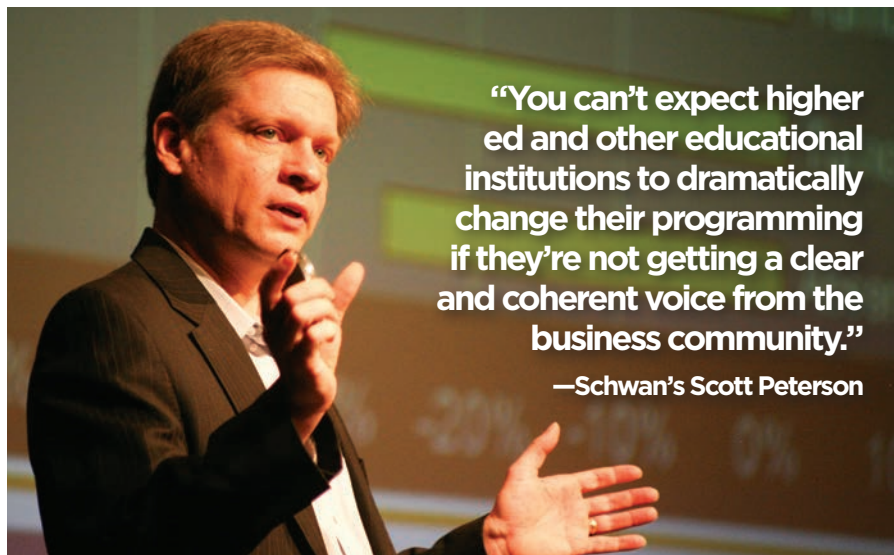
Peterson is executive vice president and chief human resources officer at the billion-dollar Schwan's Company, where he oversees a workforce of more than 12,000 personnel.

In 2013, he and Steven Rosenstone, then-chancellor of Minnesota State, co-chaired the Itasca Workforce Alignment project, he says, "to improve workforce alignment data and analytics to help ensure that Minnesota has a workforce fit to compete in the years to come."

That effort eventually evolved into RealTime Talent, a program of the Minnesota State Chamber that uses data-based insights to help create more informed, market-oriented decisions. Peterson chairs its advisory board.

The essence of the problem diagnosed by RealTime research, he says, is an imbalance between the skills that graduates have and what employers say they need. The net effect could be staggering. While there are some 60,000 unfilled jobs in Minnesota's economy today, Peterson says that number could increase to north of 200,000 by 2022. If realized, that worst-case projection could rip \$33 billion from the state's GDP and cost individual citizens \$12 billion in lost wages. On top of that, the state would lose out on more than \$2 billion in tax revenues.

"This is not just a crisis around filling jobs. It really challenges the fundamental prosperity of our state if we cannot find a way to improve our ability to gener-



**"You can't expect higher ed and other educational institutions to dramatically change their programming if they're not getting a clear and coherent voice from the business community."**

**—Schwan's Scott Peterson**

ate higher qualified employees in the numbers we need to meet the needs of employers," he says. "It's an important issue that really should command a lot of our time and attention."

Most important, Peterson emphasizes the business community needs to do more about the problem than waiting for someone else to solve it. "There are a lot of great efforts going on throughout the state—a lot of good, individual alliances and partnerships—but business as a community really has not aligned our efforts. You can't expect higher ed and other educational institutions to dramatically change their programming if they're not getting a clear and coherent voice from the business community."

Peterson was a speaker at an event sponsored by Center of the American Experiment in Minneapolis as part of its ongoing program, "Great Jobs Without a Four-Year Degree."

Earlier this year, Peterson used RealTime to initiate an employer-focused working group that includes the Itasca Group, Greater MSP, the Minnesota Business Partnership, and the Minnesota Chamber. They've been working together to forge a strategic framework to address some of these issues, be much more coordinated and, frankly, have a louder voice, a more impactful voice, to influence the supply side.

The group has identified healthcare, financial services, manufacturing, agriculture, IT, construction, and government as key sectors that are instrumental to Minnesota's economy. It is currently identifying leaders who will create business plans for their particular sectors to project the worker shortage and develop a plan, in conjunction with RealTime, to attract, develop, and retain the kind of workers each sector needs to actually meet the needs of the future. ★

# WAKE-UP CALL

Mosaic's departure should send a message about Minnesota's business climate.

I am a 40-year veteran of Cargill, Inc. and the founding CEO of the Mosaic Co. I brought Mosaic to Minnesota, creating 150 high-paying headquarters jobs here. We could have decided to locate our HQ in Chicago, where we already had a large office, but instead we closed it and moved to Minneapolis. We also considered locating in Tampa, Fla. We knew then that Tampa would be less costly to Mosaic and to its HQ employees but chose Plymouth to be close to our largest shareholder at the time, Cargill.

I am sure that having been born in Minnesota and having spent much of my life here working for a terrific company, I had a bias in that decision. That bias was enhanced when then-Gov. Tim Pawlenty called me personally to encourage us to locate in Minnesota. He couldn't and didn't offer any state-funded inducements, but just hoped we would make the right decision for the state.

Now Mosaic has decided to leave Minnesota and some of the coverage in the *Star Tribune* rationalizes it as no big deal (columns by Lee Schafer—"Loss of any corporate HQ is disappointing, but let's put it in context," May 16—and Neal St. Anthony, May 20). It is a big deal—a wake-up call for Minnesota, and here's why:

1. Unlike UnitedHealth Group (referenced in Schafer's column about context), Mosaic receives no support,

direct or indirect, from government.

2. Unlike UnitedHealth, Mosaic competes in a global marketplace with companies owned and subsidized or tariff-protected by their governments. China and Morocco are a couple of big examples.

3. Unlike UnitedHealth, Mosaic has to be the low-cost producer to survive. Unlike UnitedHealth, Mosaic has to watch every nickel to survive. The main May 16 news article about the move called the company "nicely profitable in the first quarter at nearly \$2 billion in sales." It wasn't nicely profitable; it earned \$42 million in the first quarter of 2018 on \$1.9 billion in sales. That's a 2.2 percent profit margin. Few businesses survive and thrive on 2 percent margins. In the first quarter of 2017, Mosaic lost money.

4. Minnesota's high state and local taxes, now not deductible on federal tax returns, make it more difficult to hire and retain top-quality executives to manage Mosaic. By comparison, Florida has no state income tax.

5. Minnesota's vaunted quality of life isn't that great, particularly in the winter. Don't forget that most days of the year, Florida has friendlier weather. That is a factor in many snowbirds' decision to head south. Don't delude yourselves. I know from experience. I am a snowbird, living in Arizona for most of the winter.

6. Minnesota is losing 150 well-paid executives. If the average salary of

Mosaic's headquarters office is \$175,000 and state income taxes are 9.85 percent, that is \$2.6 million. Property taxes these people pay probably average \$20,000 per person. That is another \$3 million lost until 150 other well-paid executives move to Minnesota. And these people spend more money than most others in Minnesota. And they are very generous people who give back to the community in many ways. Now Minnesota has to replace them—and the \$5 million to \$10 million they contribute to state government and communities every year. With high taxes and a forbidding climate, who is going to move to Minnesota when they have better choices in other states?

7. Maybe UnitedHealth and others may choose to grow elsewhere—in locations that are more welcoming in every way. Surely Amazon didn't give Minnesota a second look. Not even a follow-up phone call. And nobody at the *Star Tribune* and in government seemed to care. How many jobs has Minnesota failed to attract and because of its smugness doesn't even know or care?

Wake up, *Star Tribune* and Minnesota. Something is happening here! Consider this a sign of things to come, unless things change. Now, and dramatically. Get competitive or expect more MosaiCs and snowbirds to leave.

I wish Mosaic would stay in Minnesota, but the company is making the right choice. To be competitive in a very competitive global industry, it can't afford this wintry place when it can choose a lower-tax, warmer climate. ★

*This article originally appeared in the Star Tribune.*

Fritz Corrigan was the founding CEO of the Mosaic Company.

# 5 QUESTIONS

WITH  
JIM  
ADAMS

**Crystal Mayor Jim Adams presides over what has been called the only majority-libertarian city government in America. Elected in 2012 with a background in financial accounting, real estate investing and construction, he quietly brought what he calls ‘common sense’ to the city.**



**Do you agree with the description that you and the council are libertarian?**

We’ve been written up as being libertarian. We all have our own styles, but we are primarily non-partisan. We have our biases, and there’s no question they tend to be more liberty-oriented, more constitutional, and take a more common-sense approach to finances.

**Describe the evolution of ‘liberty-oriented’ thinking at the council.**

Six years ago (former council member) Casey Peak and I were the first people elected who weren’t part of the Democratic Party. We wanted to start having conversations out loud and in public, which was a new concept to the council; transparency increased dramatically. We started recording the work sessions and made them accessible online. Two years after I was elected, every single incumbent on the council was defeated by a margin of almost two to one. I think one reason was because they had to put their positions on the table, creating more public debate.

**What’s a good example that illustrates how you govern differently?**

We handle finances very differently. We are trying to become a debt-free city. We don’t issue bonds anymore, and we’ve shone the light of truth on assessments. We were assessing for street reconstruction that started in the ‘90s, and finished up last year. We realized that in any bonded project one dollar goes to the bank, and two dollars go to the project. We’re not a particularly wealthy city. Our tax capacity is based off primarily single-

family houses, which is the least profitable type of building to have in a city to levee against. We have to be very careful how we spend our money, and sending it to the bank is just not an option.

**You’ve carried that philosophy over to buildings, as well.**

We fought, kind of a bloody battle, over a public works building during the first couple years after I was elected. We had \$10 million in capital funds saved for buildings, but people still wanted to bond for it. They said, “Interest rates are so low, it’s practically free.” I was able to show that if we bonded for the entire project, we would’ve almost paid \$6 million more for a \$13 million project ... for “almost free” financing.

**Your city is also trying to get its arms around city codes and regulations.**

**How have you addressed them?**

We put together a citizen task force to go through and make ordinances simpler and easier to understand. As it turned out, we had about 15 people who thought it would be really cool to read, rewrite and reorganize the codes. The group includes Libertarians, Democrats and Republicans, and there was no partisanship in the discussions. Their work has produced a more efficient, updated code than probably any municipality in the metro area. There were a lot of very simple fixes. It’s now legal to have a clothesline in the back of your house in Crystal. The pool table in the community center is now legal, since we had an old law that didn’t allow pool tables within 500 feet of any city building. ★



New Employee

## Partnerships

Veteran organizer will use statewide coalition building to strengthen the impact of American Experiment’s issues agenda.

**C**enter of the American Experiment recently retained Bobby Benson to become its first Greater Minnesota coordinator.

Benson, 32, has extensive experience in organizing groups and individuals in support of public policies and politicians. He most recently served as director of

government affairs at the Minnesota Community Action Partnership in St. Paul. Prior to that, he spent three years as political director in the Minnesota office of Minnesota Congressman Tom Emmer. He has also taken on project work for the American Action Network and Collegians for a Constructive Tomorrow.

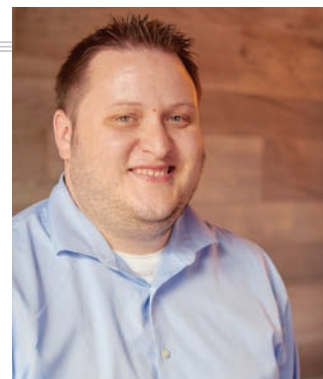
While on his way to obtaining a B.A. from Winona State University in 2011, Benson completed summer internships with the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) in Washington, D.C. and the Anti-Defamation League in Israel.

American Experiment is thought to be the first regional think tank to deploy an outreach director of this sort, which President John Hinderaker thinks is a natural extension of his Center’s increas-

ing influence on public policy in Minnesota, particularly at the legislature.

“An effective think tank has to do more than think,” Hinderaker says. “We want to be a crucial part of policy discourse wherever that may be.”

Hinderaker said Benson’s mission will be to connect the “network of individuals across Greater Minnesota that agree with the Center’s point of view—make a real difference in how our state is run.” ★



Bobby Benson

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≡ COVER STORY

Based on a paper by Isaac M. Orr  
Debra W. Struhsacker  
and John Phelan

# Unearthing Prosperity



**How mining will bring  
8,500 jobs and \$3.7 billion  
to Minnesota's economy**

**Editor's Note:** This article was adapted from a much more comprehensive policy paper by Isaac M. Orr, Debra W. Struhsacker, and John Phelan and released in July by Center of the American Experiment. The paper can be found at [AmericanExperiment.org](http://AmericanExperiment.org).



## What's in Your Phone?

To get a sense of how our modern lifestyles require ever-increasing quantities of raw materials, look at your smartphone. Like most people, you likely would struggle to identify just a few—if any—of the metals used to manufacture your phone, let alone the entire suite of raw materials that enable you to check your Instagram feed when, and where, you want.

Copper, nickel, cobalt, gold, silver, and silicon are all needed to make a smartphone. All of these materials can be mined in Minnesota. And if they are not mined here, they will be mined somewhere else. Congo, for example, is currently the source of most of the world's cobalt. Congo's cobalt is produced in substantial part by child labor, with few, if any, environmental protections.

Our lack of understanding of the raw materials that make up the goods we rely upon—and where they come from—extends beyond smartphones. Ask people what the pipes in their houses are made of, which elements were used to manu-

facture their refrigerators, and what materials were used to build their cars and the roads they drove to work on, and you are likely to draw similar blank stares.

The Minerals Education Coalition reports that every American born in 2017 will require an average of 3.188 million pounds of minerals, metals, and fuels in his or her lifetime. This equals approximately 40,500 pounds of new raw materials every year, per person.

Minnesota is well-positioned to help meet that demand.

The state's mineral deposits are massive: Minnesota mined \$3.18 billion in metals and minerals in 2017—primarily iron ore, sand and gravel, and dimension stone—making the state the sixth-largest producer of non-fuel minerals in the United States. But the state's mineral resources are largely untouched: the Duluth Complex, a massive rock formation in northeast Minnesota stretching from Duluth to Pigeon Point, holds some of the

world's largest undeveloped deposits of copper, nickel, platinum group elements (PGE), and ilmenite (the most important ore for titanium). It also contains elements such as cobalt, gold, and silver.

If Minnesota had been able to mine these resources in 2017, it would have regained its position as America's third-largest producer of minerals by dollar amount—a position it has not held since 2012. On top of that, these numbers could increase significantly if gold and silver are discovered in mineable quantities in the areas currently being explored in northern Minnesota.

## Thousands of Jobs for Decades to Come

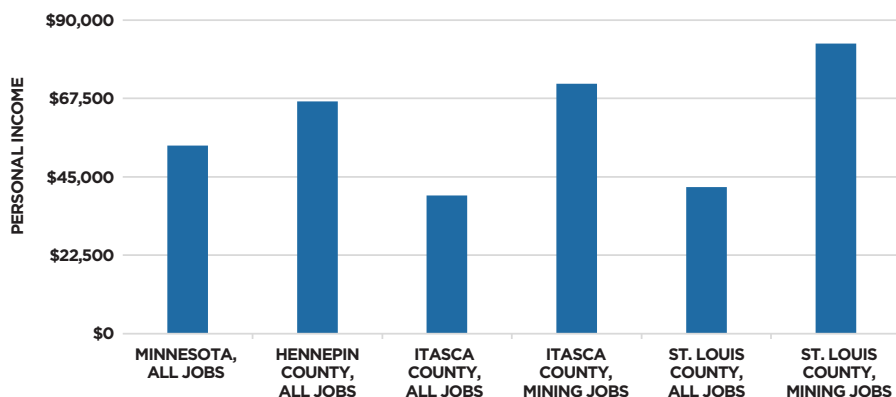
Minnesota's mining industry has a long record of creating high-quality, well-paying jobs on the Iron Range. This is why many Iron Range residents are eager for more mining.

The chart below shows the average annual wage for jobs in Hennepin, Itasca, and St. Louis counties, along with the average of all Minnesota counties. The average annual wage in Hennepin County is approximately \$66,600, far larger than the average income for non-mining jobs in northern Minnesota, where wages are \$12,000 lower than the state average.

Residents of the Twin Cities metropolitan area often take their relatively high wages for granted, but jobs paying more than \$66,000 per year are difficult

## Annual Average Wage

Mining jobs are desirable, high-wage jobs.





# THE DULUTH COMPLEX

A massive rock formation in northeast Minnesota holds some of the world's largest undeveloped deposits of copper, nickel, platinum group elements, and ilmenite.

**This map shows** how Minnesota's resources can help meet the increasing worldwide demand for minerals.

**Copper** is an essential component of electrical equipment used in construction, appliances and automobiles. The Duluth Complex could contain as many as 12.6 million tons of copper, enough to build 63 million homes. PolyMet Mining Corp. is seeking to develop the NorthMet deposit, and Twin Metals Minnesota wants to develop the Maturi deposit. Smaller deposits, such as the Tamarack deposit, are also being explored.

**Nickel** is used primarily as an alloy to strengthen and preserve steel products. The Duluth Complex contains eight million tons of nickel, the largest undeveloped nickel deposits in the world.

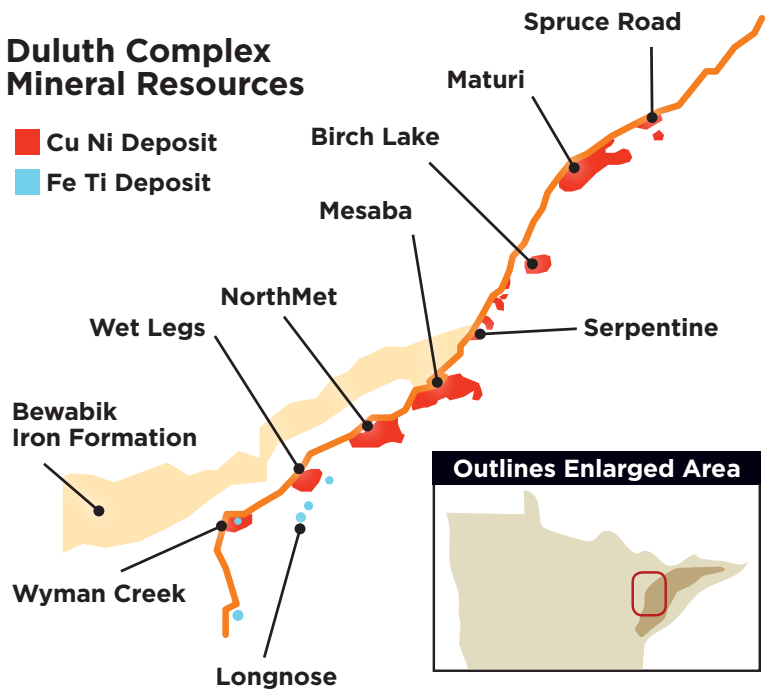
**Platinum Group Elements** include platinum and palladium, which are used primarily in catalytic converters in automobiles. Demand for these metals is expected to increase as more countries adopt stricter air-pollution standards. Minnesota has the largest undeveloped PGE deposits in the world.

**Cobalt** is used in rechargeable batteries, jet engines, prosthetic hips, knees, and dental products. Just three Duluth Complex deposits hold 47 percent of U.S. cobalt resources.

**Titanium** is used in paints, cosmetics, food additives, and pharmaceutical products, as well as in aeronautical manufacturing, jewelry, prosthetics, surgical tools, and high-end sports equipment. Minnesota could become one of the largest titanium-producing areas in North America. Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources says the Duluth Complex contains 13 known deposits of the mineral ilmenite, the most

## Duluth Complex Mineral Resources

- Cu Ni Deposit
- Fe Ti Deposit



important ore for titanium. One of these, the Longnose deposit, is the largest and richest ilmenite deposit in North America, with more than 100 million tons of ore. Processed ilmenite is valuable: titanium dioxide sells for approximately \$3,200 per ton, whereas processed taconite iron ore sells for approximately \$70 per ton.

**Gold and silver** have been found along with the copper-nickel deposits of the Duluth Complex, but northern Minnesota may also have significant gold and silver resources elsewhere. This is because Minnesota shares many geologic characteristics with gold-rich parts of Canada.

to come by in northern counties. The average income in St. Louis County, for example, is approximately \$42,000—and average mining jobs pay \$83,235, nearly twice that amount.

American Experiment used the economic modeling software IMPLAN to estimate how the expansion of mining will impact economic output, jobs, wages, and taxes. These estimates do not

include all potential mining, but are limited to the copper, nickel, and precious metal deposits associated with PolyMet's proposed NorthMet mining project, Twin Metals Minnesota's proposed TMM mining project, the Tamarack deposit, and the state's titanium resources.

In total, IMPLAN estimates that developing these resources would increase Minnesota's gross domestic product by

\$3.7 billion annually—the economic equivalent of hosting 10 Super Bowls per year. It would create approximately 8,500 direct, indirect and induced jobs with total wages of \$635 million. And it would add approximately \$198 million in tax revenue for state and local governments.

These projections are based on publicly-available data from mining projects in the preliminary planning stages,

but several of Minnesota's copper-nickel deposits, including the largest one, do not have public resource calculations available. Therefore, these numbers are a floor and not a ceiling.

It is not currently possible to model the economic impacts of gold mining in Minnesota because none of the companies exploring for gold have publicly available resource estimates. However, the New Gold mine in Ontario, Canada will employ approximately 400 people when production from the surface mine begins and 600 people when underground mining commences a few years later.

### What About the Environment?

Modern mines, like the proposed copper-nickel mines in Minnesota's Mesabi Iron Range mining district, are designed, built, operated, and eventually closed using effective and proven environmental safeguards that provide comprehensive protection for all elements of the environment. Minnesota's environmental regulations establish and enforce stringent environmental protection criteria and monitoring requirements for all Minnesota industries. Mining is no exception.

The environmental protection measures used in contemporary mines, including liners, covers, water treatment facilities, air emission control equipment, dust abatement measures and environmental monitoring systems, have successfully protected the environment at Minnesota manufacturing facilities, water treatment plants, industrial sites, construction projects, and businesses. They are used worldwide.

Minnesota's laws and regulations require that a proposed operation satisfy all environmental protection requirements. In order to secure permits to build and operate a Minnesota mine, companies must demonstrate that the proposed project will comply with all aspects of Minnesota's environmental protection requirements throughout the life of the mine and afterwards. They must submit detailed engineering designs and technical studies to show how environmental protection measures will successfully meet Minnesota's rigorous regulatory

requirements to protect surface water and groundwater resources, air quality, wetlands, wildlife, cultural resources, public health and safety, and socioeconomic values.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently concluded that the environmental safeguards in modern mining make it unnecessary for the industry to provide financial assurance to the Superfund (a federal program to clean up polluted sites), in addition to financial assurance that mines are already required to provide to state regulators, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the U.S. Forest Service. "The degree and duration of risk associated with the modern production, transportation, treatment, storage or disposal of hazardous substances by the hardrock mining industry does not present a level of risk

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**Mining in Minnesota would add \$3.7 billion to the state's GDP annually, the equivalent of hosting 10 Super Bowls per year.**

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of taxpayer funded response actions that warrant imposition of financial responsibility requirements for this sector."

The EPA's finding is important to the debate about copper-nickel-PGE mining in northern Minnesota because it discredits its efforts by mining critics to correlate environmental incidents in the bygone era of pre-regulation practices with alleged vulnerabilities in new, technologically sophisticated and highly-regulated mines.

In explaining its decision, EPA pointed out that since 1990—roughly the time when modern environmental protection regulations went into effect—the BLM has approved 659 mining plans and the Forest Service has approved 2,685 plans. Not one of these mines has appeared on the Superfund's National Priority List.

**Success Stories.** Two Upper Midwest mining projects illustrate how modern mining combines economic prosperity

with environmental safety. The Flambeau Copper-Gold-Silver Mine in Wisconsin and the Eagle Nickel-Copper Mine in Michigan demonstrate how today's mines are safe for the environment and good for local communities. Both mines use modern protective measures to effectively manage acid mine drainage and protect the environment.

The Flambeau Mine, a 35-acre surface mine located just south of Ladysmith in northern Wisconsin, illustrates how the environment and groundwater quality can be protected at an acid-generating mine. Over four years (1993-1997), the Flambeau Mine produced 181,000 tons of copper, 334 ounces of gold, and 3.3 million ounces of silver. At its peak, the mine provided nearly 100 family-supporting jobs and paid more than \$27.7 million in taxes into a state fund that was returned to the community to promote long-term business development.

Today the closed and restored mine site is an interpretive nature center, a recreation area, and a business park. Reclamation took about two years to complete and cost \$20 million, and produced a 150-acre site that includes four miles of nature trails and five miles of equestrian paths that wind their way through a beautifully restored open space.

The Eagle Mine, which started operations in 2014, is another excellent example of how modern environmental protection technology, state-of-the-art water treatment facilities, and strong environmental stewardship are successfully controlling acid mine drainage and protecting the environment at the nation's only primary nickel mine. The Eagle Mine also has an exemplary community engagement program to keep area residents well informed about the mine, and a unique Community Environmental Monitoring Program that pays for independent site environmental monitoring of its operations.

Copper, nickel, and cobalt are essential to many aspects of contemporary life. Minnesota has vast deposits of these metals, as well as others. Developing Minnesota's resources will not only bring tremendous wealth to the state, it will assure that mining is done in a safe and environmentally responsible manner. ★



≡ MINING

# SHOVEL READY

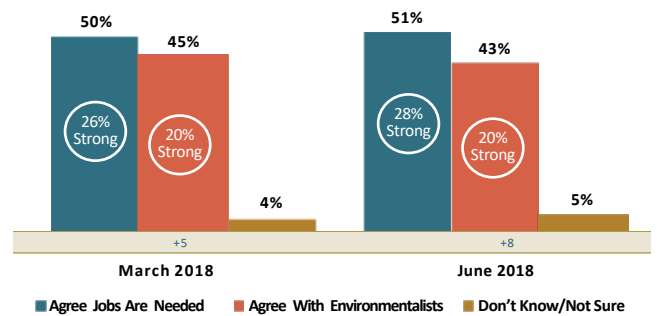
Assurances about job creation and environmental protections cause Minnesotans to embrace mining on Minnesota's Iron Range.





**FIGURE 1: MINNESOTANS PRIORITIZE JOBS AND ECONOMIC EXPANSION OVER ENVIRONMENTAL RISK WHEN IT COMES TO MINING.**

“Minnesota’s policymakers have debated whether to allow more mining in northern Minnesota. Some argue that Minnesota’s economy needs the jobs and economic expansion that mining will bring, while environmentalists argue that mining expansion is too risky for the environment. Thinking about what you know about the Iron Range, which ONE of the following viewpoints comes closest to your own...”



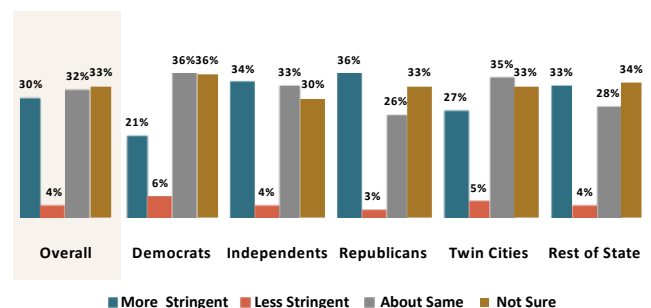
**FIGURE 2: REPUBLICANS ARE STRONGER IN THEIR SUPPORT OF THE ECONOMIC SIDE THAN DEMOCRATS ARE ON THE ENVIRONMENTALIST SIDE.**

Expanding Mining Operations On Iron Range By Party

	Base Democrats	Soft Democrats	Independents	Soft Republicans	Base Republicans
Strongly Agree Jobs	12%	19%	24%	37%	60%
Somewhat Agree Jobs, But Need More Info.	15%	16%	24%	33%	24%
Somewhat Agree Environmentalists, But Need More Info.	27%	26%	28%	20%	5%
Strongly Agree Environmentalists	42%	31%	17%	5%	4%

**FIGURE 3: ONLY 4% OF MINNESOTANS THINK THE STATE'S ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS ARE LESS STRINGENT THAN OTHER STATES' REGULATIONS.**

“Based on what you know, is it your impression that Minnesota’s regulations on protecting the environment and rules on copper, nickel, gold and platinum mining are more stringent than other states, less stringent than other states, or about the same as other states?”



A majority of Minnesotans statewide appear ready to embrace the prospect of developing their state’s mineral resources through expanded mining, especially when presented with information about the economic prospects for job creation and assurances about environment safeguards, according to the most recent *Thinking Minnesota Poll*, a quarterly research project underwritten by Center of the American Experiment.

The poll supplements the cover story of this month’s edition of the magazine, “Unearthing Prosperity” (page 20).

Meeting Street Research, a polling company based in Charleston, South Carolina, employed a mix of cellphone and landlines to interview 500 registered Minnesota voters between February 27-March 1, 2018. The margin of error for a sample size of N=500 is  $\pm 4.38\%$ .

Respondents statewide agree with the viewpoint that jobs and

**When told that mining would add \$3.7 billion to the economy and create 8,500 Minnesota jobs, respondents' support for mining grew from 54 percent to 73 percent, with “strongly favor” almost doubling from 23 percent to 45 percent. Only 11 percent oppose.**

economic expansion overshadow environmental risks when it comes to mining (Figure 1). Fifty-one percent prioritize jobs (28 percent strongly), while 43 percent agree with environmentalists. Among these groups, Republicans exhibit stronger support for jobs than Democrats show for the environment (Figure 2). Of the 84 percent of base Republicans who side with jobs, 60 percent do so strongly. Of the 69 percent of Democrats who preferred the environment, just 42 percent do so strongly.

Minnesotans display strong nonpartisan agreement that Minnesota’s environmental regulations are the same as (32 percent) or stronger (30 percent) than other states’ (Figure 3). Only four percent of Minnesotans think the state’s regulations are less stringent. Thirty-three percent are unsure.

**About the pollster**

Rob Autry, founder of Meeting Street Research, is one of the nation’s leading pollsters and research strategists.

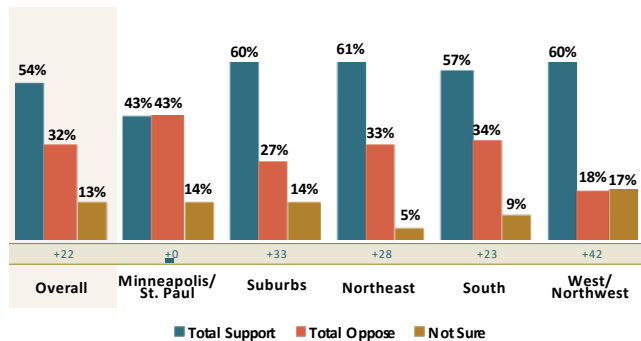
**FIGURE 4: THE MAJORITY OF REPUBLICANS SAY MINING IS VERY IMPORTANT TO THE MN ECONOMY, BUT MAJORITIES OF DEMOCRATS AND INDEPENDENTS DISAGREE.**

“Now, turning our attention to the issue of mining here in Minnesota. In general, how important do you think the mining industry is to Minnesota and its economy today?”

	Overall	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Twin Cities	Rest of State
Extremely Important	9%	6%	12%	9%	7%	12%
Very Important	30%	21%	24%	44%	28%	33%
Somewhat Important	53%	59%	59%	41%	56%	48%
Not Important At All	5%	9%	3%	3%	6%	5%
<b>Total Important</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>93%</b>

**FIGURE 5: THE MAJORITY OF VOTERS SUPPORT EXPANDED MINING, WHILE MSP VOTERS ARE DIVIDED.**

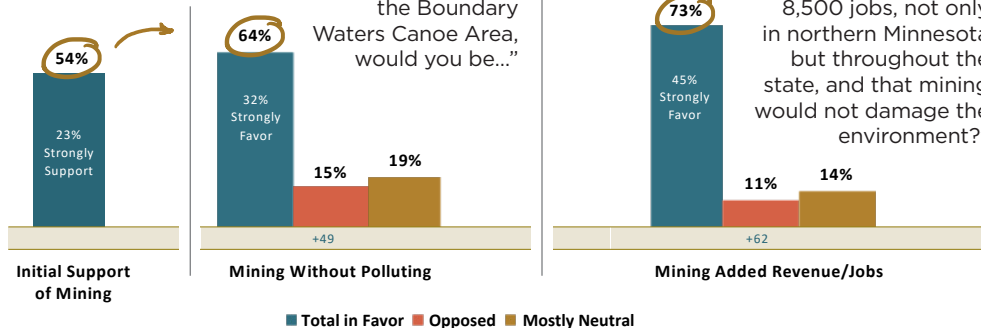
“In general, do you SUPPORT or OPPOSE potential copper, nickel, gold and platinum mining in northern Minnesota?”



**FIGURE 6: STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC MESSAGES INCREASE SUPPORT FOR MINING.**

“If you were convinced that copper, nickel, gold and platinum mining could be carried out in northern Minnesota without polluting the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, would you be...”

“And, if you knew that developing mineral resources such as copper, nickel, gold and platinum would add \$3.7 billion annually to Minnesota’s economy and create 8,500 jobs, not only in northern Minnesota but throughout the state, and that mining would not damage the environment?”



**OTHER ISSUES**

**Teachers’ Unions, the Janus Case and Legislative Job Approval**

**Teachers’ Union Issues**

As *Thinking Minnesota* went to press, the Supreme Court was expected to rule on *Janus v. AFSCME*, a case that might free public employees who choose not to join unions from paying “fair share” dues nonetheless. The ruling could have a dramatic economic impact on Education Minnesota.

The *Thinking Minnesota* Poll (Figure 7) revealed that a majority (54 percent to 40 percent) oppose requiring public employees to fund unions in order to keep their jobs. This result also includes a dramatic partisan split:

- Republicans oppose mandatory union fees by nearly a three-to-one margin (70 percent to 25 percent).
- A wide majority of Independents also oppose mandatory union fees (61 percent to 36 percent).
- Democrats support mandatory union fees by 22 percentage points (56 percent to 34 percent).

Figure 8 shows that three of four Minnesotans have heard of Education Minnesota. The union enjoys about a two-to-one favorability rating statewide.

**Legislative Performance**

Partisanship somewhat disappears when voters were asked to rate the productivity of the 2018 session of the Minnesota Legislature (Figure 9). When asked to assess the legislature’s performance, a total of 60 percent said, “not much accomplished.” This was evenly split between the parties, including Independents, with more pronounced partisanship about who was to blame.

**Virginia, Minnesota** is one of the Iron Range communities that is expected to benefit from an expansion of mining, both in terms of jobs and economic development.



There is also broad bipartisanship regarding the importance of mining to Minnesota's economy (92 percent) (Figure 4).

Voters show widespread support for potential copper, nickel, gold and platinum mining in northern Minnesota, with even more overwhelming support outside the Twin Cities (Figure 5). While support in the Twin Cities is split evenly at 43-43 percent, the rest of the state exhibits unmistakable support: suburbs (60-27 support), the northeast (61-33 percent), the south (57-34 support), and the west/northwest (60-18 support).

Perhaps most illuminating is the remarkable increase in support for mining when respondents were supplied with additional information (Figure 6). When asked whether they would support mining if they knew it could be carried out "without polluting the Boundary Waters Canoe Area," support climbs from 54 percent to 64 percent, with "strongly favor" increasing from 23 percent to 32 percent. The support/opposed disparity for "mining without polluting" grows to a whopping 49 percent.

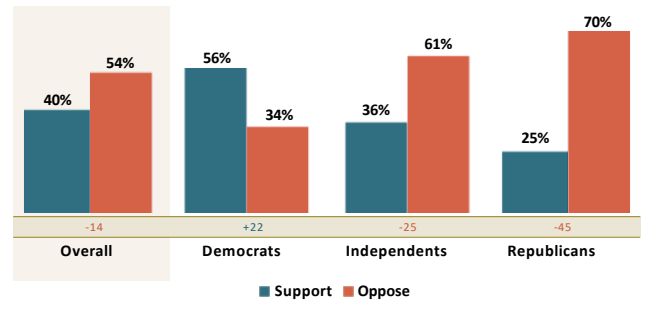
Most persuasive was the effect of economic messages. When informed that mining would add \$3.7 billion to the economy and create 8,500 Minnesota jobs, respondents' support for mining grew from 54 percent to 73 percent, with "strongly favor" almost doubling from 23 percent to 45 percent. The support/opposed gap for "mining with added revenue/jobs" grew to a whopping 62 percent. ★

**Voters showed widespread support for potential copper, nickel, gold and platinum mining in northern Minnesota, with even more overwhelming support outside the Twin Cities.**



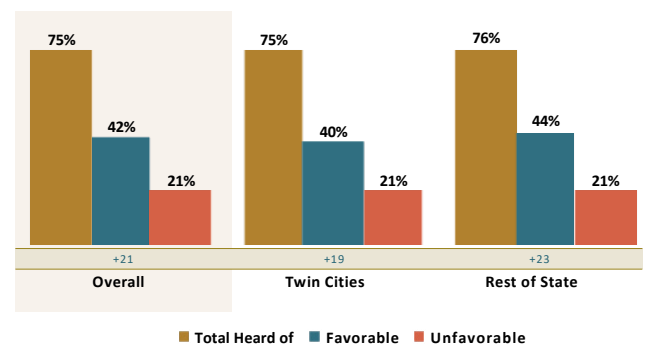
**FIGURE 7: ONLY DEMOCRATS SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES TO FUND A UNION.**

"In some states, public employees, including teachers, firemen, and policemen, are required to fund a union as a condition of employment. Do you SUPPORT or OPPOSE laws requiring teachers and other public employees to fund unions in order to keep their job?"



**FIGURE 8: THREE-FOURTHS OF VOTERS HAVE HEARD OF EDUCATION MINNESOTA, AND THERE IS NO REGIONAL DIFFERENCE IN VOTERS' OPINIONS.**

"Have you heard of Education Minnesota, the state teachers' union?"



**FIGURE 9: DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS AGREE NOT MUCH WAS ACCOMPLISHED LEGISLATIVELY THIS YEAR; THEY DISAGREE ON WHO'S TO BLAME.**

"Thinking about the recent state legislative session that just ended, please tell me which of the following comes closest to your opinion?"

	Overall	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
A Lot Was Accomplished	1%	1%	2%	0%
A Fair Amount Was Accomplished	19%	21%	20%	17%
Not Much Was Accomplished, And I Tend To Blame The Legislature More For That	33%	51%	33%	12%
Not Much Was Accomplished, And I Tend To Blame The Governor More For That	27%	10%	28%	47%
No Opinion/Not Sure	18%	16%	16%	23%
<b>Total Accomplished</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Total Not Much Accomplished</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>59%</b>



**NOT WHAT YOU THINK**

1968 may indeed have been the historical lynchpin in which the 'Age of Aquarius' transformed American culture, but not in the way retro celebrations want us to believe. The real-world impact of 1968 was the birth of the Reagan Revolution.

# The Real Legacy of 1968

BY  
JOHN  
PHELAN



# 1968

might be the most celebrated year on record. Every ten years, we see exhibitions and retrospectives in which ever older hippies show us fading pictures or film of themselves protesting, turning on, tuning in, or dropping out. They tell us that 1968 not only *was* an important year, but *remains* so because, not-too-deep down, they never gave up “the struggle.” In 2018, we’re at it again, with the Minnesota History Center hosting *The 1968 Exhibit*. What is so special about 1968?

## FROM HUE TO CHICAGO

In the United States, 1968 was dominated by the Vietnam War and the presidential election. Both were closely linked. On January 30th, Vietnamese Communists launched the Tet Offensive, a wave of coordinated strikes against American installations all over South Vietnam. The assault was a military disaster for the communists—50 were killed for every American lost at Khe Sanh—but it reaped massive political dividends. The American media went into meltdown. They falsely reported that the North Vietnamese captured the U.S. Embassy in Saigon and on February 27th, prominent CBS News anchor Walter Cronkite declared the war “unwinnable.” On March 31st, President Lyndon Johnson, elected in a landslide just four years earlier, stunned his party by announcing he would not seek re-election, throwing wide open the Democratic Party’s nomination for that November’s presidential election.

The Democrats had controlled politics in America for most of the period since Franklin Roosevelt’s first victory in 1932 through a powerful New Deal coalition that consisted of northern liberals, organized labor and white southerners. The aftermath of the 1964 presidential election saw this coalition as dominant as it ever had been. Conservative Republican Barry Goldwater had wrested the nomination from the GOP’s liberal wing only to be annihilated by Johnson, winning just 36 percent of the vote, the lowest share a major party candidate had won since the four-way election of 1824. *New York Times* columnist James “Scotty” Reston wrote that Goldwater “has wrecked his party for a long time to come and is not even likely to control the wreckage.”

But even this massive victory exposed signs that the coalition was fraying. At its August nominating convention in Atlantic City, the Mississippi Free Democratic Party—composed of mostly black civil rights activists—demanded to be recognized as the state’s

official delegation over the entirely white official one. After refusing attempts at compromise, they walked out, claiming that the system was hopelessly rigged. Even though the Johnson administration would pass a Civil Rights Act in 1964, a Voting Rights Act the following year, and vastly increase social spending as part of its Great Society program, activists like Stokely Carmichael of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee would claim that blacks “could not rely on their so-called allies.” The Democratic Party now included an aggrieved fringe of angry activists.



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Vietnam added to this. As U.S. involvement escalated after 1964, an increasing number of Democrats came to see a candidate’s attitude towards the war as the only criterion on which to judge him. In May 1967, 40 board members of Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), a key institution of the liberal left, passed a resolution to back any candidate in 1968 who was committed to ending the war, even a Republican. Older, establishment Democrats urged that the party take Johnson’s domestic record into account. Veteran union man Gus Tyler warned that the “monomania” with Vietnam risked isolating the ADA “from the mainstream of American politics, and from the vast body of liberal voters in America.” Tyler was backed by a number of union leaders, including Walter Reuther of the powerful United Auto Workers (UAW).

Nevertheless, by 1967, a young Democrat activist named Allard Lowenstein was running a “Dump Johnson” campaign which Joe Rauh, ADA vice president and chief counsel to the UAW, warned would wreck “the liberal-labor-Negro coalition that had elected every liberal president



and made possible every liberal advance since the 1930s.”

In July 1967, these groups convened at the Palmer House hotel in Chicago for the National Conference for New Politics, to “discuss bringing peace activists and civil rights activists together to influence and perhaps make inroads into the Democratic Party.” The event rapidly descended into farce. While Martin Luther King, Jr. opened the convention with pleas for a new coalition based on non-violence, young militants outside chanted, “Kill Whitey!” A splinter Black Caucus was formed that issued a set of demands including 50 percent black representation on all conference committees, efforts to “humanize the savage and beast-like character that runs rampant throughout America, as exemplified by George Lincoln Rockwell [head of the American Nazi party] and Lyndon Baines Johnson,” and acceptance of all resolutions passed at a Black Power conference which, Walter Goodman noted for the *New York Times*, “nobody in the Palmer House that Saturday had read.” The demands were accepted by a three to one vote. One attendee described the convention as filled with “white middle-class radicals with guilt feelings about Negroes.” Another attendee noted that the white delegates had “voted to castrate themselves as organizers... because they accepted the responsibility and guilt of American racism.” A third white attendee replied, “After four hundred years of slavery, it is right that whites should be castrated!”



Judged by their music, reading habits, or TV viewing, the majority of Americans in 1968 were a culturally conservative bunch, despite what the commemorations suggest. Most Americans in 1968 never made a peace sign or went to a love-in. They preferred Herb Alpert & The Tijuana Brass to Jefferson Airplane. They bought Arthur Hailey's potboiler *Airport* far more than Gore Vidal's gender-bending *Myra Breckinridge*. They made *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In* the top-rated TV show in 1968-1969, and otherwise stayed loyal to *Bonanza* and *Gunsmoke*, as well as *Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C.*, and *Mayberry R.F.D.*

With the election looming, anti-war Democrats were split between those who disdained any compromise with the Party and those who decided to give it one last go. Carl Oglesby, head of Students for a Democratic Society, lambasted the latter for selling out to the system of “corporate liberalism.” But the “Dump Johnson” crowd had found their candidate in Minnesota Senator Eugene McCarthy. They shaved and bought suits, going “clean for Gene,” and descended on New Hampshire for the March 12th primary. They were rewarded with a strong showing, 42

percent to Johnson's 50. This humiliation for a sitting president was a major factor in convincing Johnson to withdraw. But it also prompted Bobby Kennedy to enter the race. The anti-war Democrats were now split, bitterly so, between those who supported Kennedy as the most plausible candidate and those who stayed loyal to McCarthy and saw Kennedy as a spineless latecomer. Kennedy and McCarthy slugged it out that spring and summer. Then, on June 4th, Kennedy was shot dead by Sirhan Sirhan, a Jordanian immigrant apparently motivated by Kennedy's support for Israel.

Going into the convention in Chicago in late August, the fault lines in the party were brutally laid bare as McCarthy's anti-war liberals were confronted by New Deal traditionalist Hubert Humphrey and his “politics of joy.” Radical activist Tom Hayden, traveling to Chicago, announced, “We are coming to Chicago to vomit on the ‘politics of joy.’” Once in the Windy City, the anti-war activists set up camp in Grant Park. They raised the flag of the Vietnamese communists, who,



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*He worked in finance for ten years before becoming a professional economist. He worked at Capital Economics in London, where he wrote reports ranging from the impact of Brexit on the British economy to the effect of government regulation on cell phone coverage.*



at that moment, were killing working class American boys who, unlike the protesters, had neither the money nor the grades to get a draft deferment. The Chicago police, drawn from the same working class as many of those conscripts, on the orders of old school Democratic city boss, Mayor Richard J. Daley, were sent in to remove them. What followed was later described as a “police riot” as the cops clashed violently with activists. Hayden claimed that America was at the same stage as pre-Nazi Weimar Germany, a sentiment echoed in the convention hall by South Dakota Senator George McGovern.

Fresh from this beating, the activists then had to watch McCarthy lose to Humphrey. That November, Humphrey was defeated by Richard Nixon. It was more than most of them could bear.

## FROM ROOSEVELT TO NIXON

The Minnesota History Society says that it’s been 50 years since “the Vietnam War, protests, assassinations...peace signs, love-ins, psychedelic rock.” But these were the minority pursuits of the losers of 1968, the supporters of Kennedy or McCarthy and the protesters of Grant Park. Nixon won, but his supporters, and those of third party candidate George Wallace who took a swath of formerly Democratic southern states, are absent from these commemorations. There were more Okies from Muskogee than flower children.

Most Americans in 1968 never made a peace sign or went to a love-in. They preferred Paul Mauriat or Herb Alpert & The Tijuana Brass, both of whom scored number 1 albums that year, to Jefferson Airplane. They bought Arthur Hailey’s potboiler *Airport*, which outsold Gore Vidal’s gender-bending *Myra Breckinridge*. If they were feeling a little “freaky” they might have tuned in to *Rowan and Martin’s Laugh-In*, the top-rated show in 1968-1969, but otherwise they watched western series, *Bonanza* and *Gunsmoke* (starring Minnesota’s James Arness as Marshal Matt Dillon) which had been on the air since 1955 and 1959, respectively. The second rated show was *Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C.*, which chronicled the comic

adventures of a sweet-natured gas station attendant who joins the Marines. Like the fourth-ranked show, *Mayberry R.F.D.*, it was also a spin-off from *The Andy Griffith Show* which had been televised since 1960.

Judged by their music, reading habits, or TV viewing, the majority of Americans in 1968 were a culturally conservative bunch, despite what the com-



**Nixon called these forgotten Americans the “silent majority,” but it wasn’t so much that they were silent as that few in the media cared what they had to say. They still don’t.**

memorations suggest. Nixon appealed to them with a platform of “law and order,” which to this day liberals interpret as coded language and racist “dog whistles.” It rarely occurs to them that “law and order” meant just that. Considering that the homicide rate multiplied by two and a half times between 1957 and 1980, from a low of 4.0 per 100,000 to a high of 10.2, and with major race riots in Los Angeles in 1965 (34 dead), Detroit and Newark in 1967 (43 and 26 dead), and Baltimore and Washington, D.C. in 1968 (6 and 12 dead), it should. It is also understandable that so many ordinary Americans voted for it.

Commemorations of 1968 make little attempt to engage with this mainstream current of American life. In his book *Boom!*, Tom Brokaw reminisces about

the period with a string of old hippies like Jane Fonda, who in 1972 went to Vietnam and posed for photographs at the controls of an anti-aircraft gun that fired on American airmen. Nowhere does he speak to a steel worker, for example, a patriotic, working-class American whose family had been Democrats since Roosevelt, and who voted for Nixon out of disgust at the antics of activists, such as Fonda—someone like *Joe*, played onscreen by Peter Boyle in 1970. Their most eloquent spokesman was former actor and Democrat-turned-Republican governor of California, Ronald Reagan, who said: “I didn’t leave the Democratic Party. The party left me.” Nixon called these forgotten Americans the “silent majority,” but it wasn’t so much that they were silent as that few in the media cared what they had to say. They still don’t.

## FROM NIXON TO REAGAN

In 1966, Buffalo Springfield sang “There’s something happening here/What it is ain’t exactly clear.” 1968 was the year it started to become clear. What was happening was the political birth of Reaganism. That was the true meaning and legacy of 1968.

After 1968, many on the anti-war left diagnosed a particularly acute case of “false consciousness” among the American working class. Marvin Garson, once of the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley, said, “The next time some \$3.00 an hour AFL-type workers go on strike for a 50 cent raise, I’ll remember the day they chanted ‘Burn Hanoi, not our flag,’ and so help me I’ll cross their f\*\*\*ing picket line.” Some, like President Obama’s friend Bill Ayers, believed it incurable by political means and abandoned political action for terrorism.

Others stayed with the Democratic Party and, in 1972, they finally got their man, George McGovern, nominated. McGovern was christened the “Triple A” candidate—Abortion, Amnesty (for Vietnam draft dodgers), and Acid. Hunter S. Thompson liked him, but the general public was less keen.

That November, Nixon won every state but Massachusetts and the District of Columbia. Survivors of McGovern’s blowout, like Bill Clinton and Hillary

Rodham, decided that they needed to tack back toward America if they were ever going to win power again. When Jimmy Carter, a religious peanut farmer from Georgia, was elected president in 1976, it was on a Democratic platform vastly different from McGovern's.

But the changing politics were only the crust atop a shifting cultural magma below.

Bob Dylan had spent 1967's *Summer of Love* in a basement recording folk songs with The Band. In 1968, he emerged to release *John Wesley Harding*. Eschewing the psychedelic excesses of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, Dylan's album was a stripped down set of folk ballads and songs recorded with top Nashville session musicians. The following year he recorded a country album, *Nashville Skyline*. Other acts did the same. The Byrds followed 1967's psychedelic *Younger Than Yesterday* with the country-tinged *The Notorious Byrd Brothers*. Country rock became one of the dominant sounds of the 1970s.

In cinema, the "New Hollywood" era dawned with 1967's *Bonnie & Clyde*. It told the story of two Depression-era crooks played by Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway, a far more attractive pairing than the real-life version. The movie sided with them, even when they shoot an elderly bank teller in the face at point blank range. They are rebels, free spirits, mistreated, in *Bonnie's* case, by an abusive parent, and their death in a hail of bullets was portrayed as a tragic, romantic ballet.

But as the backlash grew, these films drew a response. In 1971, Clint Eastwood introduced Detective "Dirty Harry" Callahan to American cinema. A San Francisco cop trying to bring a serial killer to justice, he is hampered at every turn by laws stacked in favor of the killer. "Now, the suspect's rights were violated under the 4th and 5th and probably the 6th and 14th Amendments," Callahan is told at one point. "And Ann

Mary Deacon, what about her rights?" he asks. "She's raped and left in a hole to die. Who speaks for her?" Blunter still was *Death Wish*, released in 1974, the story of a mild-mannered "bleeding heart liberal," played somewhat implausibly by Charles Bronson, who turns vigilante on the streets of New York after his wife and daughter are brutally attacked. The blurb on the paperback version of the book asked, "What do you do when your life lies in ruins and fear clutches at your heart? Do you shun the city and flee from its violence? Or do you do what Paul did—get a gun, learn to use it and start fighting back?" Critics attacked both films. Pauline Kael opened a long running feud with Eastwood by branding *Dirty Harry* "fascist." Vincent Canby said of *Death Wish*, "It's a despicable movie, one that raises complex questions in order to offer bigoted, frivolous, oversimplified answers." Both were hugely popular with the public, and cheers broke out in cinemas whenever a bad guy was

dispatched.

On television, 1971 saw the debut of *All in the Family*, which served up the blue-collar bigot Archie Bunker, played by Carroll O'Connor, as the butt of jokes by his clever, liberal son-in-law, played by Rob Reiner. The theme tune, *Those Were the Days*, ran:

*Boy, the way Glenn Miller played  
Songs that made the hit parade  
Guys like us, we had it made  
Those were the days!*

*And you knew where you were then  
Girls were girls, and men were men  
Mister, we could use a man like Herbert  
Hoover again*

*Didn't need no welfare state  
Everybody pulled his weight  
Gee, our old LaSalle ran great  
Those were the days!*

But, to the producers' shock, lots of Americans felt like this and Bunker struck a chord with them. They had expected the country to snigger along with Reiner. Instead it nodded along with O'Connor. On November 2nd, 1980, two days before Ronald Reagan was elected president, millions wept along with Archie as he confronted the death of his beloved wife, Edith. Things came full circle in 1982 when *Family Ties* debuted. Here, the target of the humor was the grumpy dad, an aging hippie who

worked for public television. He was constantly bemused, as Archie Bunker had once been, by his son Alex Keaton, played by Michael J. Fox, an ambitious, would-be millionaire entrepreneur who quoted Milton Friedman.

**Producers had expected  
the country to snigger  
along with "Meathead."  
Instead it nodded along  
with Archie Bunker.**



## HERE'S TO THE SILENT AMERICANS OF 1968

1968 did not usher in the Age of Aquarius. That is probably why it is so celebrated. Its veterans can look back on it as the Revolution Betrayed, the stirrings of a new dawn snuffed out

by Tricky Dick and a couple of hundred Chicago cops.

For a year so commemorated, 1968 is misunderstood. Mayor Daley and President Nixon didn't snuff out the revolution. They were just symptoms. Instead, a majority of Americans, silent because nobody wanted to listen to them, saw what was going on in Watts, the Palmer House hotel, and Grant Park and said, "No thanks." And they were right. From the glimpses we got, like the Man-

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**Clint Eastwood's *bête noire* Pauline Kael supposedly said after the 1972 election, "I can't believe Nixon won. I don't know anyone who voted for him!"**

---

son Family and Altamont, the Age of Aquarius would have been the ultimate bad trip. As it was we got stagflation and disco, which was bad enough.

Barry Goldwater's candidacy in 1964 might have been the first step on the road to 1980, providing the ideas with which Reagan would eventually win. But 1968 was another crucial step on that road. The voters who swung it for Reagan were the old "silent majority" Nixon had won that year.

In 1711, the Anglo-Irish satirist Jonathan Swift wrote, "It is the folly of too many to mistake the echo of a London coffee-house for the voice of the kingdom." It's the folly Clint Eastwood's *bête noire* Pauline Kael fell for when she supposedly said after the 1972 election, "I can't believe Nixon won. I don't know anyone who voted for him!"

Familiar faces get to tell us again about how groovy 1968 was because, deep down, they are still in the struggle. The silent Americans of that year remain unheard. To understand that tumultuous year, to really commemorate it and grasp its significance, lend them your ears. ★



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# SECOND CLASS CITIZENS

# NO MORE

The U.S. Supreme Court says public employees must affirmatively consent to the deduction of union fees.

by Kim Crockett and  
Catrin Thorman

The voices of millions of Americans who believe government employees should decide for themselves whether to financially support a union have been heard. In a case with far-reaching implications for the teaching profession and education reform, the United States Supreme Court overturned a 1977 decision by the Court called *Abood v. Detroit Board of Education* that forced government employees to pay “fair share” fees to a union to cover the cost of collective bargaining.

Mark Janus, a social worker employed by the State of Illinois, convinced the Court that the *Abood* decision violates the First Amendment (*Janus v. AFSCME*).

The High Court’s decision was a fully anticipated restoration of the First Amendment rights of public employees who chose not to join a union but who have nevertheless been forced to finance union activity as a condition of employment. But the opinion went further than expected, underlining the fundamental na-

ture of speech rights, by requiring unions and employers to get the *affirmative consent* of employees *before* deducting any fees from paychecks.

The High Court said, “States and public-sector unions may no longer extract agency fees from nonconsenting employees. The First Amendment is violated when money is taken from nonconsenting employees for a public-sector union; employees must choose to support the union before anything is taken from them. Accordingly, neither an agency fee nor any other form of payment to a public-sector union may be deducted from an employee, nor may any other attempt be made to collect such a payment, unless the employee affirmatively consents to pay.”

Center of the American Experiment and others had argued in *amicus* briefs that overturning *Abood* was not enough, and asked the

Court to change the default for employees from an “opt-out” to an “opt-in.” The Center pointed out, for example, that Education Minnesota raised dues for teachers to finance a membership “renewal” campaign aimed at trapping teachers, even those who did not belong to the union, in perpetual membership, thus taking fees without consent.

The Court’s ruling makes it clear that employers should *immediately* stop deducting so-called “fair share” fees from non-members; as for members who have signed union cards, it remains to be seen whether cards will be treated as a form of consent. Now that the Court has restored the First Amendment rights of employees, these kinds of union agreements are not expected to survive, but sorting that out will take time.

In the interim, the Center cautions employees not to sign renewal cards. (Aside from new terms, the teachers’ card asks for the last four digits of social security numbers and other personal contact data that the union does not need. If the data



is hacked teachers could be vulnerable to identity theft.) Employees who sign cards still have the right to resign from membership.

Mr. Louis Abood, a teacher from Detroit, would certainly be pleased, had he lived to see *Janus* win. He and a group of Detroit school teachers made the same argument following the unionization of teachers in Michigan in the late 1960s. They said forcing teachers to pay agency fees to cover the cost of collective bargaining violated their speech rights because collective bargaining with a public body is inherently political.

The Court in 1977 agreed that the state could not force public employees

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**The *Janus* decision will help restore professionalism to teaching and empower educators to more freely communicate what they need to educate tomorrow's leaders.**

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to become dues-paying members of a union, but ruled that forcing employees to pay the costs of collective bargaining was an acceptable “impingement” of the First Amendment. This solved the “free rider” problem and appeased threatened labor unrest.

The problem? Collective bargaining affects all things political: taxes, spending and the size and policies of government, such as teacher licensure, salaries and pensions, K-12 curriculum and student discipline. The Court admitted its error; America will no longer sacrifice the speech rights of public employees to the false god of “free riders” on the altar of labor peace.

Mark Janus’s victory came with the help of previous legal cases, most notably veteran California teacher Rebecca Friedrichs’s case against the California teach-





The Center's Kim Crockett announced the Supreme Court's decision in *Janus v. AFSCME* and its implications for Minnesota during a press conference in the Minnesota State Capitol.

ers' union. She came before the Court to make the same argument just two years ago. All observers, including government unions, said she won her case, but Justice Scalia died before the opinion was published. (That is why the unions have been preparing to lose, for the second time.) So, Mark Janus picked up the baton to continue the race.

"The *Janus* decision is great for education—for children, for families, for the teaching profession. For over forty years educators have been forced to financially subsidize the social, sexual, and political agenda of the teachers' unions—against our wills, behind our backs, and as a condition of employment. And children are the victims," said Friedrichs, founder of For Kids & Country.

It is hard to overstate the importance of teachers, and the impact of the educational system, on our country. The *Janus* decision will help restore professionalism to teaching and empower educators to more freely communicate what they need to educate tomorrow's leaders.

"We're finally free; free to stand together, empower our profession and uplift our schools. Educators have been given a gift—the freedom to reject state and

national unions. I hope teachers will opt out in large numbers, and stand together to reject state and national union bullies and reorganize into local-only associations. That would lead to real education reform," Friedrichs continued.

Imagine what will happen now that powerful state unions like Education Minnesota, and its national affiliates, the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), will have to earn the support of teachers.

Unions have had guaranteed revenue for decades, no matter what quality of service they deliver. As a result, unions have grown disinterested in teachers, arrogant and highly political. This has not been good for the women and men they represent or for the students and parents who must live with the results.

With this taken-for-granted approach, teachers' professional needs have drowned in a political maelstrom. Nonetheless, teachers have tried valiantly to solve educational challenges like the achievement gap, or propose innovative ideas for K-12 curriculum, only to be met with opposition from teachers' unions and their administrative and political allies. Real freedom is having a voice and choice on the job—not being silenced for pushing back against policies that are not working.

The Center has interviewed dozens of teachers who love teaching, but admit the

job is getting harder, and less safe, every year.

One St. Paul teacher, Aaron Benner, lost his job after he and other teachers were assaulted by students; he went to the school board after the school failed to discipline the students. His union, after twenty years of taking his dues, failed to defend him. Instead, it sided with the "restorative justice" policies of the district and against Benner.

But a win at the Supreme Court does not mean the road ahead is clear. While the NEA and other unions announced major budget and staff cuts before *Janus* was decided, unions are also trying to expand membership to include non-teachers, and re-define who qualifies as a member to shore up revenue and political clout. At the NEA convention in Minneapolis this summer, delegates will consider the following amendment:

*To open NEA membership to public education allies while preserving NEA governance positions for education professionals and active equivalents.*

In other words, the unions are not sitting still. And Governor Dayton, who has pushed the limits of constitutional law to expand the revenues of government unions, has not yet said how he intends to comply with *Janus*.

In an interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota, said about the renewal union cards, "We're having a kind of 'This is who we are, this is who you are, how can we better serve you?' conversation." Notice how Specht said, "*this is who you are*" not "*tell us who you are.*"

Union executives like Specht have no experience being customer focused; they have not made the institutional shift to thinking of teachers as customers and professionals, instead of captives to take for granted. Education Minnesota and its national affiliates, the NEA and AFT, are still having a one-way "conversation."

But, as Rebecca Friedrichs pointed out, if teachers use this gift from the Supreme Court, and exercise their restored rights, the union will not have a choice. It will have to learn to respect teachers. ★



**About the Authors:** *Kim Crockett is Vice President and Senior Policy Fellow at Center of the American Experiment; Catrin Thorman is a Policy Fellow at Center of the American Experiment and a former classroom teacher. They are co-directors of EducatedTeachersMN.com, an online resource for teachers in Minnesota.*



# WHY I SUPPORT Center of the American Experiment

The American Experiment reminds me of the old TV show that opened with “Fights the never ending battle for Truth, Justice and the American Way.”  
We need that.

**Name:** Joe Remley

**Occupation:** Retired

**Alma Mater:** Arkansas State University

**Calling:** Conservative Activist. Among other accomplishments, Joe has organized the 1st Tuesday Conservatives, a group of up to 70 people in White Bear Lake that invites conservative speakers for lively conversation. Guests have included three from American Experiment.



A photograph of a wooden desk and chair floating in turbulent blue water. The desk is in the foreground, and the chair is partially visible to the right. The water is dark blue with white foam from the waves. The sky is a dark, overcast blue.

**A NOTE TO MINNEAPOLIS**

# WASHED UP

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans dramatically replaced its corrupt and failing public school system with charter schools. The results have been impressive.

**By Catrin Thorman**





It has been over 25 years since Minnesota became the first state to spark the fastest growing engine of change for public education: the charter school revolution.

By passing the nation's first charter school law in 1991, Minnesota pioneered a model for the rest of the country to follow. The state's charter school statute structurally reformed public education's governance system to better serve students most in need of new opportunities.

Minnesota's breakthrough in its provision of education services triggered other states to follow suit with charter-

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**New Orleans's  
groundbreaking reforms  
shook the foundation of  
American education and  
represent a model  
worth following.**

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linked innovation aimed at addressing educational challenges and improving public education.

But Minnesota cannot run on past success. Its historic charter school movement has not maintained momentum, and other states have surpassed Minnesota's once-revolutionary ap-

proach through unprecedented strategies that tackle education shortcomings.

None have had more breadth or depth than the school reform efforts in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005 and decimated the New Orleans public school system. By replacing a traditional school system with charter schools, New Orleans launched the largest and most complete experiment in charter school success.

With a history of failing schools, low academic performance, misuse of finances, and leadership problems that predated the natural disaster, the New Orleans Parish school district had nowhere to go but up, and an all-charter school system led the way.

New Orleans's groundbreaking reforms shook the foundation of American education and represent a model worth following.

### **Before the Storm**

Prior to Katrina, the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) governed all New Orleans's public schools. The elected board set district policies and selected superintendents, but power struggles between district administration and the OPSB caused leadership to suffer a high rate of turnover. Board members succumbed to bribes, and checks were inappropriately issued to retired, fired, or even dead employees.

In 2004, the FBI indicted dozens of board and district employees for criminal offenses involving millions of dollars in fraud and theft against the district. The district was on the verge of bankruptcy and faced hundreds of millions of dollars in debt.

But OPSB's legacy of corruption came with an even higher cost: students were captives in a failing school system and were not being given the education they deserved. New Orleans public schools were made up of predominantly minority and low-income families whose school choice was limited by financial constraints and determined by



**About the Author:** *Catrin Thorman is a Policy Fellow at Center of the American Experiment. Thorman has previous experience in education and policy research at The Heritage Foundation and the California Policy Center. She spent two years teaching 5th grade general education and 6th grade Latin in Arizona through Teach for America.*

*She graduated summa cum laude from Azusa Pacific University in California, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science.*





attendance zones.

Poor academic performance caused the Orleans Parish public schools to consistently rank as one of the lowest performing school districts in Louisiana. More than half of the schools OPSB governed were deemed “academically

unacceptable” by Louisiana accountability standards. Mathematics and reading test scores were in the bottom tier across the state and the country, and the graduation rate was 10 percentage points below the state average. New Orleans was the second-lowest ranked district

in the second-lowest ranked state in the country.

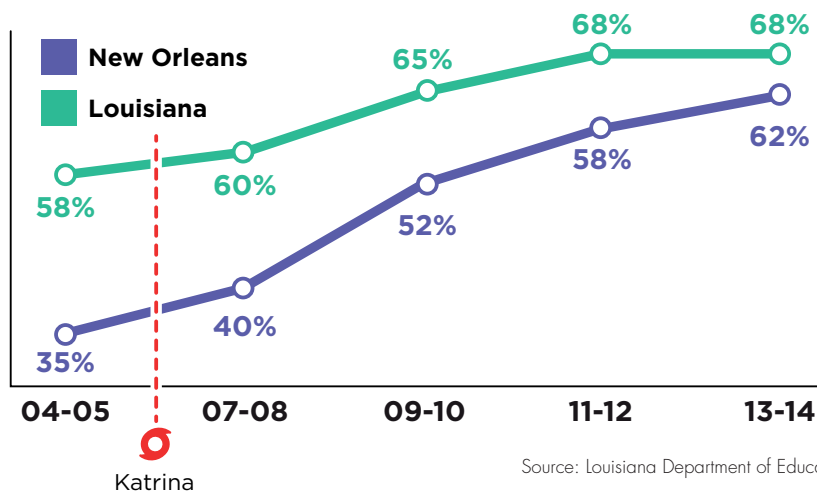
In the months leading up to Katrina, signs of rehabilitating the school system’s inadequacies emerged. New board members were elected to the OPSB and certain schools showed state test score improvement. But these developments did not create the catalyst of change the city needed.

New Orleans public schools remained a broken, top-down system. Its long-standing poor educational performance was failing its students and their families.

Then a natural disaster devastated the city and its public schools.

Amidst the tragedy, New Orleans found a silver lining: the chance to start over and rebuild its school system literally from the ground up.

### Percentage Proficient on State Tests (all students, all grades, all tests)



### The New Model

In Katrina’s wake, the Orleans Parish school system shut down. All 64,000 New Orleans public-school students



were displaced and teacher contracts expired without renewal. All school district employees were laid off.

Unshackled from long-established bureaucracies and union rules, New Orleans could focus on creating a school system that fostered student achievement.

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**In Katrina's wake, the Orleans Parish school system shut down. All 64,000 New Orleans public-school students were displaced and teacher contracts expired without renewal.**

**All school district employees were laid off. Unshackled from long-established bureaucracies and union rules, New Orleans could focus on creating a school system that fostered student achievement.**

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The Louisiana governor and legislature quickly transferred all “failing” public schools (which were almost all public schools in the district) from OPSB’s control to the Recovery School District (RSD)—a special school district established in 2003 that is run by the state to reconstruct chronically low-performing schools. RSD began gradually converting these traditional public schools to charter schools, and OPSB was left to run the few better-performing schools in New Orleans.

By 2014, 92 percent of the public



## A MINNEAPOLIS MAKEOVER

**Minneapolis spends twice the state average to educate a student and still yields a 40 percent dropout rate. Time for change?**

The Minneapolis Public Schools district serves nearly 36,000 students. Just over 60 percent are from minority and low-income backgrounds. There is great responsibility on the school district to provide educational excellence to a high-needs population.

But students are not gaining and maintaining the skills necessary to be academically successful, as evidenced by less than half of the student body showing proficiency in math or reading, and less than half labeled “on track for success,” which has been a trend for at least the past five years.

Also, only around 20 percent of Minneapolis students are ready for college or a career after they graduate and 40 percent of its students are not graduating at all. Yet Minneapolis spends roughly \$24,000 per student (compared to Minnesota’s average of \$12,000 per student). Throwing more money at the system has not resulted in academic improvements, nor has it prevented the district’s projected deficit of \$33 million.

Could Minneapolis benefit from an overhaul of its public system like New Orleans? Granted, Minneapolis has not faced and overcome a tragic natural disaster, but it is struggling to close a more than 50-percentage point achievement gap and improve student outcomes. Minneapolis has lost one-third of its school-age children to charter schools or public schools in other districts. Of the students leaving, about 70 percent are headed to charter schools.

Fall 2017 enrollment numbers showed 9,000 black students (more than half of the districtwide total) abandoned Minneapolis schools, citing lagging academics and discipline and safety concerns as the top reasons for student flight.

The district plans to win students back with a makeover that focuses on new literacy programs and “social-emotional learning,” but this isn’t the first time school leaders have vowed to improve academic performance. Consistently low test scores and lack of academic growth do not support its lofty pledges.

If the Minneapolis Public Schools district truly wants to improve its education system, it does need a makeover, but one that uses different products.





schools in New Orleans were charter schools.

Why did state leaders choose charter schools?

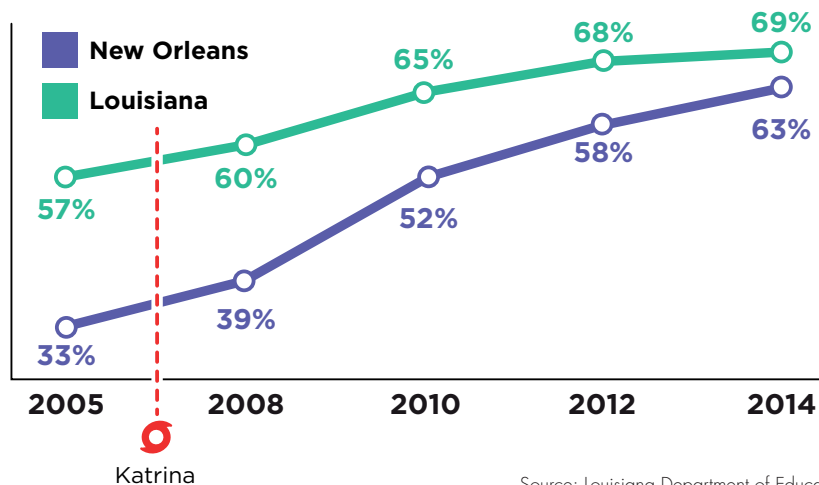
With all the schools destroyed, the city needed a way to quickly get the district up and running to serve its students. The RSD was best equipped with the resources to make this possible, and it endorsed a charter strategy to do so.



**In 2004, the FBI indicted dozens of board and district employees for criminal offenses involving millions of dollars in fraud and theft against the district. The district was on the verge of bankruptcy and faced hundreds of millions of dollars in debt.**

While charter schools are publicly funded, they are independent of the local school district's control and allowed to innovate. As a charter school system, the governance structure of New Orleans schools shifted from a centralized model of education to a decentralized model. No longer would a single entity (the district) operate schools and per-

### Percentage of Students Proficient on LEAP and iLEAP



Source: Louisiana Department of Education

form all other functions. New Orleans eliminated the conflict of interest that is created when the same organization has all the responsibility.

Nonprofit charter school organizations became the operators of the schools, the OPSB and the RSD were the overseers, and the government was the regulator. New Orleans schools now had more than one pair of eyes holding them responsible for promoting student achievement.

Because charter schools come with higher accountability, they are held to higher academic, financial, and organizational standards. Charters must meet pre-determined academic benchmarks to stay active. They are subject to regular reviews, and if the schools fail the students, they are shut down. New Orleans has had to revoke a school's charter and replace it with a better one, something the school system was not able to do in the past.

Charter schools come with higher autonomy. School operations can be managed on-site. School leaders are free to make decisions over staffing, curriculum development, and budgeting. Financial barriers are eliminated, and schools can distribute education

funds to best serve their students. Without tenure or a teachers' union in New Orleans, there was more freedom to hire and retain great teachers and fire mediocre ones.

Charter schools also come with more choice. New Orleans students were freed from attendance zones. Teachers and principals could choose to teach and work at schools that fit them best, and those schools could offer a variety of academic approaches and programming to meet diverse needs.

A balance of accountability, autonomy, and choice equals true charter school success.

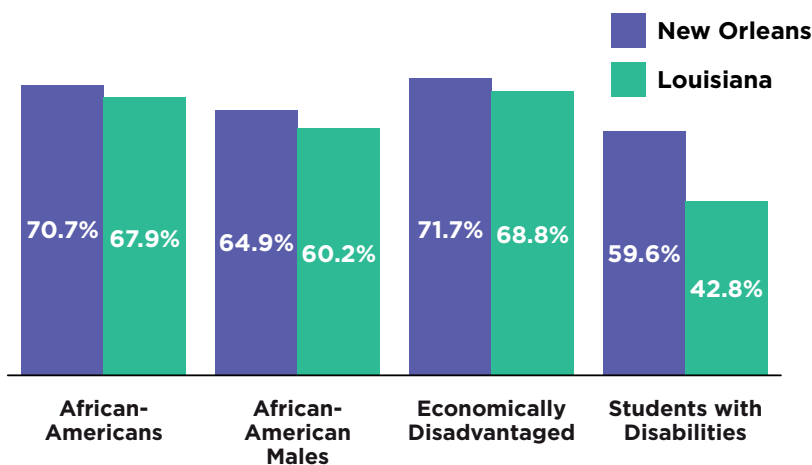
### Effects on Academic Achievement

Reconstructing the public-school system dramatically transformed student achievement in New Orleans. The performance of New Orleans students rose steadily, compared to their peers in other Louisiana districts also affected by Katrina.

It is important to note that New Orleans did experience a loss in enrollment after the hurricane, but the type of students the school system served did not change. New Orleans continued to



## Class of 2014 Subgroup Graduation Rates



Source: Louisiana Department of Education

serve a student body largely made up of minority and low-income students. The percentage of New Orleans students who were economically disadvantaged was actually greater in 2014-15 (84 percent) than before the charter school conversion in 2004-05 (77 percent).

Within eight years of the system overhaul, the percentage of New Orleans students who were proficient on all state tests for all grades nearly doubled (35 percent in 2004-05 to 62 percent in 2013-14).

Within eight years of the system overhaul, the percentage of New Orleans elementary and middle school students who were proficient on state assessments—LEAP and iLEAP tests—nearly doubled (33 percent in 2004-05 to 63 percent in 2013-14).

Within eight years of the system overhaul, the 25-percentage point achievement gap between New Orleans students in grades K-8 and their state peers closed to a 9-percentage point difference. In 2005, only 33 percent of elementary and middle school students in New Orleans performed at grade level or above. By the end of the 2013-14 school year, 60 percent met or exceeded grade level expectations.

Within eight years of the system overhaul, New Orleans charter schools learned how to better support students with disabilities. Proficiency on state tests increased by 38 percentage points, and schools were more accountable to meeting these students' needs.

Within eight years of the system overhaul, New Orleans high schools graduated more historically underserved students than the state. This included African American students, African American male students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. A year later, New Orleans's overall graduation rate surpassed Louisiana's.

And, in 2013, a study by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) found New Orleans charter school students received more learning and outpaced the academic progress of their traditional public school peers in a year's time. Greater learning growth was evident in both reading and math and was present among historically underserved students, as well.

Improvements in such a short time produced an upward change in the trajectory of student success that is nothing short of remarkable.

## The Future of Chartering

It is worth reiterating that while these results are encouraging and impressive, there is still plenty of room for growth in public education in New Orleans and Louisiana as a whole. Long-term gains in New Orleans are evident, but it will be important to maintain this pace of growth. New Orleans is still a below-average school district in a low-performing state.

Nonetheless, the transition from traditional public schools to charter schools has altered the course of public education in the city. New Orleans schools are now more than ever a hub of equal opportunity in education for its entire community. No student in New Orleans is forced to attend a particular school, and parents have the right to seek admission to any school in any neighborhood. There is a commitment to citywide choice, where solutions no longer come from a school district's central office.

The city's progress shows what is possible for its future. While the system layout is likely to change (the RSD transferred oversight authority of five schools back to OPSB in 2016 and nine in 2017), the structural reform established in New Orleans over 10 years ago triggered a much-needed cycle of improvement in public education.

The default way of delivering public education does not work for all communities, and centrally controlled school districts are certainly not the only possible approach to educational excellence.

Will the New Orleans model of urban-education reform spread? Could Minnesota reclaim its innovative charter school history by revamping its struggling urban schools in a similar way?

Overhauling an education system takes time, and not all schools will succeed. But New Orleans proves other cities can harness the benefits of a charter system while tailoring this structure to meet specific needs. ★



INTERVIEW

In a wide-ranging interview with American Experiment's **John Hinderaker**, Fox News host **Tucker Carlson** explains how Donald Trump is 'a living middle finger' wagging in the face of Washington elites—and how they should respond.

# THE FAILURE OF THE WASHINGTON ESTABLISHMENT



**Y**ou started out in print media. You wrote for a number of magazines.

Tucker Carlson: Yes. For years. My father was a journalist. So I went into journalism. I was in print journalism for over ten years: newspapers, magazines, wrote a couple of books. And then kind of got sucked inexorably into television, really by accident, actually.

**When you were writing, did you ever think you'd wind up hosting television programs?**

Never. I never thought I would do TV. My father was a print guy who went into television. He was an ABC News guy. And I assumed I would never do that. He always made fun of TV. He was a literate person, and he considered TV an inferior medium. I never thought I would, but I had a ton of children and low income and wound up doing it on the side, and then enjoying it.

It's a difficult medium to get ahold of. It's hard to do it, actually, harder than most print people think it is, or at least harder than I thought it would be. I've done it for about 20 years, and I'm just starting to figure it out.

**You've had shows on all three of the main cable news networks, starting out on CNN, then MSNBC, finally Fox. How would you compare them?**

They're completely different. Cable news is different. Cable news occupies a much more central place in the conversation than it did when I started, when magazines and newspapers really were the forums for people to hash out issues of the moment. Television had a role, but it was more an entertainment function at the time that I started. Now, for a bunch of reasons, some of which I don't fully understand, cable TV has moved front and center in the public debate.

**You were at MSNBC at the time it was transitioning to a far left news source.**

I was hired as the main anchor on MSNBC from CNN. The plan was to mimic Fox and make it a kind of Pepsi

to Fox's Coke. And then a number of things happened. Keith Olbermann started attacking Bush and getting great ratings, and so MSNBC decided to change to the Leon Trotsky channel, which is what it is today. They were very nice to me about it. They just said, "Look. We're changing our format, and you don't fit. We're firing you." Which they did.

doesn't work, you should abandon it. **What are some examples of where you've changed your thinking in recent years?**

I always thought that the dividing line between liberal and conservative was economic. And that conservatives were champions of the free market and liberals were very suspicious of it. That really was the



**When I think back to your CNN days, I see Tucker Carlson wearing a bow tie. It may just be my perception, but it seems to me that the second incarnation, Tucker Carlson with the long tie, became a different persona: more aggressive, more hard-hitting. Is that right, or just my imagination?**

I don't know. I'm not very self-aware. I wore a bow tie from childhood. That's how un-self-aware I am. I didn't realize how much people hate you when you wear one. People scream obscenities at you in the train stations. I just thought it's not worth being judged for my neckwear, so I changed it.

I can tell you this: that my views have changed a lot over the years. I feel like the same person, but I doubt I am. I don't think any of us is over time. You change a lot. But America has changed a lot, and so a lot of things I believed 10 years ago, I no longer believe. And I'm happy about that because I think it's important to compare your ideology to its results, and if it

dividing line for a long time. There were other demarcations, but that was the main one. And I think the free-market argument won. It did, thanks to a lot of things, but liberals during the Clinton years joined in celebrating market capitalism.

I'm still for the free market, but the middle class is dying, and that's not one man's opinion. That's a fact rooted in data. It's shrinking in size. The life expectancy of blue-collar America is declining. That's never happened. So you have to ask, what did we get wrong? What assumptions did we have that turned out to be untrue? Free trade brings prosperity? Yeah, but not to everybody.

Here's the bottom line. In order to have a functioning democracy and a functioning market economy, you have to have a robust middle class. You have to be a middle-class country, period. It doesn't work unless you have that, and we're moving away from that, which is imperiling democracy itself. And why? I've been in D.C. for 35 years. I don't know five



people who are thinking about that. A lot of smart people, but deeply unwise and unwilling to revisit their previous conclusions.

### **What you're describing is why we have President Trump.**

Exactly why. I just wrote a book on this (*Ship of Fools: How a Selfish Ruling Class Is Bringing America to the Brink of Revolution*, to be published Oct. 2). Happy countries don't elect Trump. Desperate people elect Trump. I'm not criticizing anybody. My wife voted for Trump. I'm just saying when Trump gets elected, it's a sign. You need to stop what you're doing and ask, "How the hell did this happen? Where did we go wrong?" The people in charge failed. That's why Trump got elected. He is a living middle finger wagging in their face. They should pause and reflect upon their failure, and they haven't.

### **It's amazing to me that when I start talking to people who hate the president, the first thing they talk about, invariably, 100 percent of the time, is his tweets.**

The great thing about Trump is that often, without knowing it, he clarifies who's on what side and what they really believe. The truth is the people in charge of every institution in the country other than the White House, and a lot of people in the White House who work for Trump but hate him and seek to undermine his agenda, they're totally opposed to the America that I grew up in and the one that I loved and the one that was valuable to me and the one that served its own citizens. When I got to D.C. in 1985, I never heard one person debate immigration or trade. Not one time. There was an ironclad consensus from both sides that both were good and more of both was always better. Trump forced a conversation. No matter what you think of those, those are real issues. They're much bigger than Stormy Daniels. No one would be talking about them if it weren't for Trump, so God bless him.

### **What should we do differently?**

In every decision, we should think through the most fundamental question in democracy, which is, what's the best for the most? How do you help the middle class? That is the beating heart of the country, not how do you make Amazon return a higher dividend to its shareholders or whatever. You want people making between 150 and 35 grand. That's your sweet spot.

When they start to die of obesity-related diabetes or fentanyl OD ... 60,000 died that way last year, more than who died during the entire Vietnam War. That's a siren going off, saying, "Whoa. Your policies are not serving the people they need to be serving." The rich are fine. The poor, as Jesus said, will always be with us. The middle class is your concern. It was the concern of every successful president from FDR to Eisenhower to Bill Clinton, and all of a sudden, after Clinton—and I'm including Bush in this, by the way—the middle class dropped off the list of concerns for our elites.

**Tucker Carlson Tonight is one of the top-rated shows on cable TV. I think one of the reasons you're so popular with conservatives is that you have a lot of liberals on your show and you're effective in taking them on over key issues. Why do you think they keep coming on your show?**

I let them talk. The purpose is not to beat them in a debate. I'm a professional debater. I can beat them in a debate. That's what I do for a living. That's not the point. The point is to elucidate what they think. Sometimes, I call them ahead of time to try to convince them to come on, and I tell them exactly what I'm going to ask because it's not a magic trick. I'm not tricking anybody at all. No one's getting fooled. I ask the dumbest possible questions, and I let them answer. If they prevaricate, I jump on them a little bit, but then I try to let them talk if they've got something to say. I want to hear it because I think the public needs to hear it.

One of the main things I've learned is the left is not interested in debating at all, and not just the left, either. I would put the Republican leadership in the same category. The people who are benefiting from the status quo do not want to explain why these policies

are good for the country, because they're not good for the country. That's why. And they don't want to admit that. They would rather just shout you down and say, "Shut up, racist." That's the first arrow in their quiver. "You're a white supremacist. You're evil. You're going to hell. I'm virtuous. You're sinful." Okay, great. That's the theological debate. Let's get to the policy questions. Why is this good for 320 million Americans? "Shut up, racist." That's kind of the course of the conversation most nights on my show, but I don't want that. I really try to get articulate people who are not sideshow freaks who represent only themselves, but mainstream people who disagree with me and explain what they think. That's really the goal. I do this every night. I don't need to be dominant over some idiot every night. I don't. I

have a happy marriage. I have four children I love. I don't need the self-esteem. I mean it. I really want to hear what they have to say.

**How often do you encounter liberals on your show who are serious about issues, and who are willing to talk about them in a rational way?**

Very rarely. *Very*. I run into some very well-meaning and nice liberals or progressives, whatever. But I almost never encounter any who've thought through the implications of what they're suggesting or willing to face them head on and be honest about them. I think it's pretty hard to justify, for example, their position on immigration except to the extent it helps them. In other words, what we're doing doesn't benefit most Americans. It benefits a small number of Americans who want cheap housekeepers, and that's kind of what everyone in my neighborhood has got. They're happy about that, and they don't want that to be challenged in any way.

But you can't say that the average person is getting anything out of this. It's destroyed schools across the country. It's made the country itself unstable. Forty-four percent of all California house-

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**A lot of things I believed 10 years ago, I no longer believe. And I'm happy about that because I think it's important to compare your ideology to its results, and if it doesn't work, you should abandon it.**

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Tucker Carlson headlined American Experiment's annual gala, which was sold out a full ten days before the event.

holds don't speak English at home. How do you have a cohesive country with that? It's caused a ton of problems here in Minneapolis, I'm aware. And no one's allowed to say anything. Shut up and obey. Maybe you think we need to move all of Mogadishu to Minneapolis. Maybe we do. Maybe there's some justification for that, but here's my only point. Tell me what it is. Explain it to me. How am I going to be happier and more prosperous when we do that? When the last Mogadishan lands at Minneapolis-St. Paul, why should I celebrate? And "shut up, racist" is not a real answer. That's all I'm saying.

**You said earlier that the free-market argument really was over.**

Oh, it's over. Capitalism lost because the people in charge didn't pay any attention to the effects at all, and so with the average millennial it is far less likely that his parents are married or own a home, he owns his own car or they own two cars. We've saddled people with overwhelming levels of debt—student loan debt primarily, but other kinds, too—that we've basically crushed an entire generation of kids. And they're really angry.

When people don't get married and don't buy homes and aren't rooted in the society long term, they're volatile and scary, and their politics tend to be crazy. It's really bad. You don't want to ever let that happen. We let it happen. We didn't pay any attention at all. All of that money was transferred to the Baby Boomers, and they're about to feel the effects of that because economic populism is the future. I don't want it. I'm just telling you. I'd bet my house on it. Bernie Sanders is going to seem moderate compared to the next guy.

**What should we do about entitlements?**

I think it's over. I think we're going to get some kind of revolution, actually, because of this. Hopefully, it will be a soft economic revolution. Conservatives actually are implicated in this. There was a debate in the early '80s when economists said, "Actually, you can't afford this." Reagan said, "Well, you can if you increase the debt load," and that's what he did. Conservatives bought into that, and supply-side justified it. I was for it. I'm not attacking it. I'm just being honest about it. The truth is economics is a species of physics. It's natural law, and you can't continue doing the impossible forever.

So I don't really know. I don't think we'll ever adjust our expectations downward except by force. And so at some point, the government's going to be insolvent, and China will be

entirely in control. I don't know what happens then.

**You used the phrase "white supremacist" a little while ago. I assume, like most people on the right, you've been called a white supremacist at some point. The bar for that is really low.**

I don't even know what it means, actually. To the extent I understand it, obviously I'm nothing like that. I don't feel that way at all. I don't see the world primarily through the lens of race. The left does. On college campuses across the country, there is segregated housing, segregated eating spaces, which the administrations of various schools defend. Really? Did they miss the whole civil rights movement?

The people pushing racial separatism, who are pushing racial conflict, are almost exclusively on the left. And because everything is Freudian transference, they blame the other side for it. In other words, if you want to know what the left is like, listen to what they say about the right, and it's them completely. "Oh, they're fascists. They're racists." Really?

Are conservatives the ones saying that we ought to award jobs and college admissions and contracts on the basis of race? Really? Our whole government, our private sector, every big company, every university, is organized around racial discrimination explicitly, and nobody says anything about it. You're like, "Oh, you can't talk about that." Really? Because why? It's insane, actually, and here's the reason it's bad. I'm not saying this because I'm obviously on the wrong end of it, though that's a perfectly fine reason to be against it as far as I'm concerned.

But no. The real reason to be against it is it inculcates tribalism, which is the thing that you don't want in a diverse society. The question our elites should be brooding on, but they're not because they're selfish and stupid, but if they weren't, is this: what holds us together? A country with no common history or language? Religion? Why do we remain a country? What do we have in common? Countries don't hang together by inertia. They break apart.

If you're going to make the country super diverse, you need to think about what is the glue? And they haven't. Instead, they've picked at the race scab consistently because it helps them maintain power, and it keeps the population from asking obvious questions like, "Why is the tax code fair? Why are we taxing capital at half the rate of labor?" "What? Shut up, racist." It's a way to make people be quiet. It's a way to move their attention on to something else. It's a distraction, but it has terrible consequences in the end. ★



# JOBS. JOBS. JOBS.

More information helps Minnesotans support the expansion of mining.



John Hinderaker

**Does Minnesota want to add \$3.7 billion to our annual GDP and create 8,500 high-paying jobs? Is that a trick question?**

Should Minnesota pursue an economic opportunity that could add \$3.7 billion annually to the state's economy, generate 8,500 jobs paying more than \$600 million in wages, and yield hundreds of millions in state and local tax revenues?

Is that a trick question?

Apparently not. Minnesota is sitting on some of the world's largest and most varied mineral deposits, but the state's authorities seem ambivalent, at best, about allowing—let alone encouraging!—mining of copper, nickel, cobalt, platinum and other minerals to proceed.

This apparent reluctance does not reflect the views of Minnesota voters. Our *Thinking Minnesota Poll* shows broad support for mining. In a survey completed just a few weeks ago, 54 percent of respondents said they “strongly” or “somewhat” support copper, nickel, gold and platinum mining in Northern Minnesota. Answering a different question, 28 percent said they are strongly in favor of developing Minnesota's non-ferrous mining resources for the sake of the state's economy, while 20 percent are strongly opposed on environmental grounds. (More on that in a moment.) Most intriguing is that nearly half of Minnesotans lean one way or the other, but want more information in order to make up their minds.

That is where the Center comes in. Our about-to-be-published report titled “Mining In Minnesota: Unearthing Prosperity” finds, as the cover story in this issue of *Thinking Minnesota* relates, that expanded mining will greatly benefit Minnesota's economy. Importantly, *all* Minnesotans will benefit from jobs in support industries that are created around the state, and by the tax revenues an expanded mining industry will generate. You should support non-ferrous mining if you live in Willmar, Winona or Eagan, not just if you live in the northern

mining region.

Perhaps most important of all, the Center's report shows that mining development can be carried out while fully protecting the environment of northern Minnesota.

Modern mining is technically sophisticated, environmentally sensitive, and heavily regulated. Neighboring states like Wisconsin and Michigan have shown that using modern technology, mining projects can co-exist happily with the environment. Around the country, hundreds of mines are operating without adversely impacting the environment.

Many of us have an image of mining that, if we think about it, goes back to the 19th century. My own mental picture of a mine owes a lot to black-and-white Saturday westerns of the 1950s and 1960s. But mining has changed a great deal since then. The fact is that not a single U.S. mine permitted since 1990 has experienced an incident causing it to be added to the EPA's National Priorities List. (The National Priorities List is “the list of sites of national priority among the known releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants throughout the United States and its territories. The NPL is intended primarily to guide the EPA in determining which sites warrant further investigation.”)

For most Minnesotans, putting environmental worries to rest makes mining an easy decision. Our *Thinking Minnesota Poll* finds that 73 percent would support expanded mining, compared with only 11 percent opposed, if they knew it would provide billions of dollars in increased output and would not damage the environment.

So let's get moving. The time to create many billions of dollars in wealth, while helping to meet our country's need for copper, nickel, and other important metals, has come. ★



You have 99 problems, but we're not one.

(Unless you're on the other side.)

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