



SPOTLIGHT

Is There a Doctor in the House?

Actually, there are 20 - 16 in the House of Representatives and four in the Senate - plus five dentists. There are also two pharmacists, three nurses, one EMT, and one psychologist in the House and one ophthalmologist, Dr. Rand Paul, in the Senate.

And so, should someone suffer a medical emergency while Congress is in session, he or she should be in relatively good hands.

Unfortunately, the same could be said about needing an attorney to represent you in a divorce, a personal injury case, or some other legal matter because an astonishing 30% of House members (roughly 130) have law degrees while a whopping 51% of Senators have practiced law.

It's no wonder we are so screwed up - and litigious - as a country!

Meanwhile, 352 House members (80%) and 82 Senators have held previous public office, some of them for decades. In other words, they left the "real world" behind and entered the hallowed halls of Congress when Joe Biden still had hair and before Al Gore invented the internet.

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America Needs More Daniel Boones

As a child of the 1960s, I grew up watching black and white reruns of The Lone Ranger starring Clayton Moore as the title character, The Rifleman starring Chuck Conner as rancher Lucas McCain, and Combat starring Vic Morrow as Sgt. "Chip" Saunders. They, along with the starting lineup of my beloved New York Yankees, were my heroes, my idols, and my role models... all rolled up in one.

And once our family bought a color TV, I was glued to the set each week as Fess Parker portrayed that great American folk hero and frontiersman, Daniel Boone, in a series of the same name.

Ed Ames co-starred as Mingo, Boone's half-Cherokee friend, and football star Rosie Grier also made frequent guest appearances as did country music singer (and sausage maker) Jimmy Dean. But it was Fess Parker's manly portrayal of Daniel Boone that caused me to tune in week after week... and to this day I can still sing the show's theme song by heart.

Here are a few choice excerpts...

Daniel Boone was a man, yes, a big man!



With an eye like an eagle and as tall as a mountain was he!

Daniel Boone was a man, yes, a big man!

He was brave, he was fearless, and as tough as a mighty oak tree!

From the coonskin cap on the top of ol' Dan to the heel of his rawhide shoe

The rippin'est, roarin'est, fightin'est man, the frontier ever knew!

Daniel Boone was a man, yes, a big man!

And he fought for America to make all Americans

free!

What a Boone! What a doer! What a dream come-er-true-er was he!

I was reminded of that TV series - and of the real Daniel Boone - last week when I engaged in a back-and-forth conversation with someone on Substack. I am not sure how the dialogue got started, but I know where it went as well as where it ended up.

Basically, the gentleman who commented on my original post couldn't say a single nice thing about the United States. Meanwhile, he went on and on about how wonderful things were in Sweden, Finland, and

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other Scandinavian countries. From their “free” education to their “free” healthcare, he portrayed those Nordic nations as a virtual paradise where gun violence is unheard of, new parents are granted a year off from work, and retirees haven’t a care in the world.

I countered with a simple question: at what cost?

Most Swedes, for instance, only pay a local income tax that averages between 29% and 35% of their annual income. A bit steep for sure, but there are those aforementioned benefits, right?

Not so fast. If your income exceeds a threshold set by the ominous-sounding national Tax Agency, you are also required to pay an additional 20% state tax. Ouch! We’re starting to get a little pricey.

So, we’re up to 50%-55% of our annual income being confiscated by the local and federal governments to pay for all the “free” programs we enjoy throughout the year. O.K., at least we still have almost half of our income to live on, so it’s still a pretty good deal, right?

Nope! Sweden, like most European countries, has a Value Added Tax (VAT) otherwise known as a national sales tax that adds a whopping 25% to the cost of virtually everything you buy.

GULP!

All of a sudden, our annual take-home pay is down to a piddling 20% or so. Unless, of course, you realized some capital gains this year, which are taxed at 30%... or you are a small business owner (look out for the 20.6% corporate tax)... or you live in Stockholm or Gothenburg, in which case you are hit with a “congestion tax” for living in a high-density area.



In other words, in exchange for the “cradle to grave” care that you so desperately

wanted, you have basically signed over not only your paycheck but also your personal sovereignty to the State.

Here is where it gets really crazy...

When I shared that information with the gentleman on Substack, he was fine with that arrangement. Oh, and he was also OK with forfeiting his right to own a firearm because he trusted the federal government to protect him and his family.

Which brings us back to Daniel Boone.

I can’t imagine “the rippin’est, roarin’est, fightin’est man, the frontier ever knew” handing over his Kentucky long rifle to anyone, let alone the federal government. Nor can I picture the man who opened America’s western frontier by blazing the Wilderness Road through the Cumberland Gap relying on anybody or anything other than his own wit, skills, and hard work to provide for himself, his wife Rebecca, and their 10 children.

Self-reliance is the American way... period. It is what made our country great, and it is what has kept our country strong for 249 years and counting.

Trading it away for a soft bed and a warm meal is not an option. Not for Lucas McCain, not for Sgt. Chip Saunders, and most definitely not for me.

(Editor’s note: Teddy Roosevelt never knew Daniel Boone, but apparently, they were both cut from the same fine American-made cloth. Here are two quotes from our 26th President that are both apt and inspiring...

“The things that will destroy America are prosperity-at-any-price, peace-at-any-price, safety-first instead of duty-first, and the love of soft living...”

“The first requisite of a good citizen in this republic of ours is that he shall be able and willing to pull his own weight.”)

Want more?

Read more of Dale Glading's political blog posts at www.daleglading.com

"I Like Ike, but Apparently Not Everybody Does"

"Some Great "What Ifs" of American History"

"Headscratchers and Heartbreakers"

"Uncle Sam Needs Marriage Counseling"

"The Lamest of Death Row Excuses"

The Race for 2028 Has Already Started

2028 is a L-O-N-G way away, but there are already some interesting developments starting to form on the political horizon, some of which have both state and national implications.

In the presidential race, a lot depends on how Donald Trump fares during the remaining three-plus years of his second term. If he leaves office with approval ratings above 50%, the Republican nomination is probably JD Vance's for the taking. But if President Trump is underwater in the polls, some potential rivals will sense an opening and be sure to throw their hats in the ring.

Chief among them is Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis who, due to term limits, will vacate the governor's mansion in January 2027 with no place to go. He won't run against Sen. Ashley Moody when she comes up for election in 2026, because he just appointed her in January to fill Marco Rubio's unexpired term; and he can't run for Sen. Rick Scott's seat until 2030 because the 72-year-old Scott was just re-elected in 2024. That leaves DeSantis with very few options other than to make a second run for the White House. Otherwise, he will have to wait until 2032 at the earliest when he will be a still-young 54 years old but having been out of office (and the public eye) for five long years.

Others who may join the fray include second-timers Ted Cruz, Rand Paul, and Tim Scott, but I'm more inclined to think they will sit tight in the Senate and allow a couple of the younger bucks to have a go at it, specifically Tom Cotton of

Arkansas and Josh Hawley of Missouri, both of whom have very strong upsides. Marco Rubio could also use his position as Secretary of State as a springboard to the nomination, but only if Vance isn't the automatic frontrunner.

On the Democrat side, the big question is whether the party will continue its pathological death march to the Progressive left or lurch back towards the more "moderate" center, which is still pretty radical. If they really want to win - and common sense prevails - look for the Dems to anoint either Gavin Newsom of California or Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan as their nominee with both Josh Shapiro of Pennsylvania and Andy Beshear of Kentucky also in the mix. Historically, governors do better with voters than senators... and once elected, they usually govern better, too.

Another potentially interesting race is the one for Chuck Schumer's senate seat in 2028. Schumer, the current Senate minority leader, is up for re-election that year and a recent poll by the liberal firm Data for Progress shows him trailing Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez in a potential match-up by a 55%-36% margin. That's not good news for Chuckie, who seems to have lost his mojo - and much of his clout - at the age of 74.

Stay tuned, folks. There is still a lot of runway between now and November 7, 2028, but presidential campaigns don't take off overnight. Potential candidates are already jockeying for position while collecting promissory notes from deep-pocketed donors. Can forming exploratory committees be far behind?

How I long for the days when can-

didates announced for the presidency at the beginning of the year in which the election was actually held. I am currently reading *Countdown 1960* by Chris Wallace, which recounts the 1960 presidential race between Sen. John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts and Vice President Richard Nixon. Kennedy didn't announce his candidacy until January 2, 1960, at a press conference in the Senate caucus room. As for Nixon, he never did declare his candidacy. It was just assumed that as the sitting vice president, he was the heir apparent to President Dwight Eisenhower, who was still popular after eight years in office. When New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller decided not to enter the race, the nomination was Nixon's by default.

I know we will never return to those simpler times, let alone the days when it was thought unseemly for a person to actually campaign for the presidency. Somehow, William McKinley was elected in 1896 by sitting home in Canton, Ohio and hosting scores of visitors in his unconventional but highly successful (and dirt-cheap) "Front Porch Campaign". Meanwhile, his Democratic opponent, William Jennings Bryan, spent \$500,000 on a cross-country whistlestop campaign that drew large crowds but not enough votes.

Ironically, Richard Nixon ended his unsuccessful 1960 campaign with a whistlestop train tour of his own, visiting small towns across America's heartland in a last-ditch effort to win the presidency, a prize that eluded him that November but which he eventually claimed eight years later.

Who wins in 2028 - and how they do it - should prove interesting to say the least.

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Sadly, there are only five ministers in the entire 535-person Congress (.93%). Conversely, six of the 91 members of the First U.S. Congress in 1789-1791 were clergymen (6.6%).

And we wonder why America is going to hell in a handbasket.

Likewise, just five members of that original Congress were career politicians. Idealists to the core, they were under the assumption that a representative was supposed to be a well-respected member of the community who was tasked by his fellow citizens to represent their interests in Washington D.C. for a few months per year... and then come back home. After a term or

two, he was also expected to pass the baton to someone else so that no one person became too powerful, too estranged, or too corrupted by the political process.

Potomac Fever, they call it, and it has stricken the most well-intentioned public servants who overstayed their welcome in the Washington swamp. Term limits, anyone?

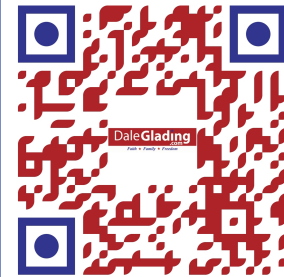
Our Founders had it so right... and we have gotten it so wrong.

Somehow, we have allowed a closed clique of legal eagles to make our laws and then trusted and empowered them to enforce them, too. That's like asking the fox to guard the hen house... and being surprised to discover that the roosts are empty and there are feathers everywhere.

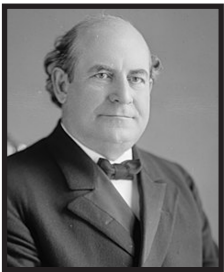
Until 80% of the American people

are lawyers, 80% of our elected officials should not be practicing attorneys. Instead, our representatives should represent a broad cross-section of our population, including business owners who have signed the front of a check and not the back, farmers and ranchers who have raised the food we eat, and veterans who have defended the freedoms we hold dear.

A healthy 27% of the First Congress held one of those three jobs and if you add doctors and ministers, that percentage rises to 38%. And if you ask me, they did just fine without getting so many lawyers involved.



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