



Written by [Dennis Behreandt](#) on July 12, 2010

Santa and Frank

The reason this same scene remained funny, despite how often it was repeated, is that in the later repetitions Charlie Brown would express suspicion at Lucy, recalling how she had tricked him before. She would then come up with some claim that she wasn't going to do that any more- and of course she did.

There is a similar routine that has been repeated many times in Washington, over the years, with the Democrats playing Lucy and Republicans playing Charlie Brown.

It goes like this: Democrats start spending money wildly, handing out goodies to a wide range of people who they want to vote for them, while Republicans complain about deficits and the national debt. Then, when the public becomes alarmed about the debts that are piling up, the Democrats get the Republicans to vote for higher taxes to deal with the debt crisis, in the name of "fiscal responsibility."

Sometimes the deal is sweetened by the Democrats promising to make spending cuts if the Republicans vote for higher taxes, so that there can be one of those "bipartisan" solutions so beloved by the media. But, after the Republicans vote for the tax increases, and come running up to find the spending cuts, the Democrats snatch away the spending cuts and the Republicans fall right on their backsides, just like Charlie Brown.

This old trick is now being unveiled by the Obama administration, like so many other old political tricks used in this "change" administration.

In one of President Obama's many prissy little sermonettes, complete with finger wagging, he has declared: "Next year when I start presenting some very difficult choices to the country, I hope some of these folks who are hollering about deficits step up. Because I'm calling their bluff."

There is already a bipartisan commission set to provide political cover for the Democrats' wild spending that has increased the national debt from 63 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product in 2004 to 83 percent in 2009- and official estimates of more than 90 percent this year, with more increases in sight.

Why Republicans join such transparent attempts to rescue the Democrats from the political consequences of their own actions is one of the many unsolved mysteries of human nature in general and the Republican Party in particular.

What this political game boils down to is that Democrats get all the political benefits of playing Santa





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Claus to all sorts of groups and special interests, while Republicans who vote to raise taxes to pay for all this are cast in the role of Frank Nitti, the enforcer for the mob.

Many elections have confirmed that Santa Claus is more popular than Frank Nitti, surprising as that may be to some people.

Republicans are not the only suckers in this game. The voting public's willingness to believe fancy rhetoric and ignore hard facts is a crucial part of this scam.

When the Obama administration said that it could provide health insurance to millions of additional people without increasing the national debt, shouldn't common sense have told you that somebody was just insulting your intelligence?

When the two thousand page bill was rushed through Congress too fast for anybody to read it, shouldn't that have made you realize that you were being played for a sucker?

When this bill that was passed with lightning speed was scheduled to take effect only after the 2012 election, didn't that suggest that they didn't want you to find out how it works in practice in time to turn against Obama when he is up for reelection?

Recent polls show that a lot of people are against ObamaCare. But there are still a lot of other people, though not as many, who are for it.

Even more amazingly, there are still Republicans lured by the siren song of "bipartisanship" and apparently unaware of the difference in popularity between Santa Claus and Frank Nitti.

Thomas Sowell graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University (1958) and went on to receive his master's in economics from Columbia University (1959) and a doctorate in economics from the University of Chicago (1968). He is the author of 28 books including his most recent, *Intellectuals and Society*. Currently he is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. His Web site is www.tsowell.com.

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