




REPUBLICANS' 60-DAY SOCIAL SECURITY ROAD SHOW: BUSH SELLS PRIVATIZATION, BUT THE PUBLIC DOESN'T BUY IT



<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MARCH</u></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">SUNDAY</p>		1	2	3	4	5
<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DAN BARTLETT PUSHES DOWN ON THAT PESKY BAR AGAIN...</p> <p>Dan Bartlett: "We're still in the early phases of educating the public about why there needs to be change...once that is cemented, then members of Congress will feel the pressure that they need to do something." [Fox News Sunday, 3/6/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE, PART I</p> <p>"Just over a third of Americans, 37 percent, approve of Bush's handling of Social Security, an Associated Press poll [taken March 7-9] found... A majority of Americans, 56 percent, say they disapprove of Bush's handling of Social Security." [AP, 3/12/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE, PART II</p> <p>"The heart of President Bush's plan for Social Security, allowing younger workers to create personal accounts in exchange for a lower guaranteed government benefit, is among the least popular elements with the public, Republican pollsters told House GOP leaders Tuesday." [AP, 3/8/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">9</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COMPTROLLER WALKER RAINS ON THE PRIVATE ACCOUNTS PARADE</p> <p>Testifying March 9th, GAO Comptroller David Walker tells Congress that "creating private accounts financed by payroll taxes, as Bush has proposed, would 'exacerbate' Social Security's problems." [Baltimore Sun, 3/10/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRESIDENT'S PLAN RAISES FISCAL RED FLAGS</p> <p>Robert Bixby, executive director, Concord Coalition: "When you set out the problem as being a long-term funding gap and then say, 'My solution is private accounts,' there's a gap in the logic." [Baltimore Sun, 3/10/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">11</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DAY 10...BUSH HASN'T EVEN CONVINCED HIS OWN PARTY</p> <p>"[I]n a sign of the trouble he faces on the issue, [Bush] is increasingly using his travels to buck up -- or even win over -- members of his own party." [New York Times, 3/11/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BUSH EVENTS AT ODDS WITH REALITY</p> <p>"In state after state along President Bush's Social Security road campaign, hand-picked audiences cheer him, leaving the impression that the nation wholeheartedly backs his ideas for reform. The reality is different." [AP, 3/12/05]</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EVEN THE RED STATES REJECT PRIVATE ACCTS</p> <p>Lexington (KY) Herald Leader Editorial: "It's time to speak frankly. Social Security is in trouble, and private accounts won't save it or us." [Lexington Herald Leader, 3/13/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">14</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMOCRATS MAINTAIN UNITED FRONT AGAINST SOCIAL SECURITY PRIVATIZATION</p> <p>"Conservative Democratic Lawmakers, Citing Deficits, Oppose Plan for Private Accounts." [Wall Street Journal, 3/14/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">15</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT FOR MOYNIHAN</p> <p>John Hambr, Social Security advisor for the late Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY): "The attempt to transform the late senator into a supporter of the Republican plan to undermine Social Security does a disservice to the memory of one of the country's staunchest and most articulate defenders of the Roosevelt legacy." [Letter to Washington Post, 3/15/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">16</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SO WHY IS HE STILL PUSHING PRIVATIZATION TO THE PUBLIC?</p> <p>Bush admits that "Personal accounts do not solve the issue [of solvency]." [White House Press Briefing, 3/16/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CAN'T HANDLE THE HEAT? REPUBLICANS GET OUT OF THE TOWN HALL</p> <p>"Republican leaders say they are chucking the open town-hall format" due to the bad reception they got over the President's Day recess. [USA Today, 3/17/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">18</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BUSH PROPOSAL DRAWS BIPARTISAN OPPOSITION IN THE HEARTLAND</p> <p>Prof. Max Skidmore (U. of MO), on a lecture at the Dole Institute: "It's a nonpartisan institute and it tends to bring out Republicans, and yet I would say the audience was overwhelmingly skeptical of private accounts." [AP, 3/18/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">19</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMOCRATS HOLD MORE TOWN HALLS, REPUBLICANS HEAD FOR THE HILLS</p> <p>"Democrats are taking President Bush up on his suggestion to spend Congress' two-week recess talking to folks in the heartland about Social Security... Republicans, after raucous earlier town hall meetings, are more wary." [AP, 3/19/05]</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">20</p> <p>THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE, PART III</p> <p>"A USA TODAY/ CNN/Gallup Poll taken March 18-20 found just 40% approved of [the President's] approach to the problem." [USA Today, 4/1/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">21</p> <p>THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE, PART IV</p> <p>A Pew Center poll taken March 17-21 shows "support [for Bush's plan] has dropped over the last month among Americans under age 30." [USA Today, 3/24/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">22</p> <p>THREE WEEKS IN AND EVEN SUPPORTERS STILL HAVE QUALMS</p> <p>"President Bush has been talking about Social Security for weeks, but even some of his supporters have misconceptions and qualms about his plan to overhaul the retirement system." [USA Today, 3/22/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">23</p> <p>THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE, PART V</p> <p>A new Badger poll shows support for Bush's plan in Wisconsin has dropped from 49 percent to 44 percent in just three months. [AP, 3/23/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">24</p> <p>THE NUMBERS STILL DON'T LIE, PART VI</p> <p>"A March 22-24 poll for <i>Time</i> magazine found 31% approved of Bush's handling of the issue, down from 40% in mid-January." [USA Today, 4/1/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">25</p> <p>ROADSHOW AND POLL NUMBERS CONTINUE DOWNHILL SLIDE</p> <p>Polls show Bush's approval rating "has fallen to 45 percent, the lowest point of his presidency." [USA Today, 3/25/04]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">26</p> <p>TEXAS PAPER QUESTIONS BUSH PRIORITIES</p> <p>"Social Security indeed has a problem, but arguing over it and the president's proposal for private accounts has masked the even more painful day when the United States must confront hard questions about just how much medical care we can afford and how to pay for it." [Austin American-Statesman Editorial, 3/26/05]</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">27</p> <p>GRASSLEY CAN'T SELL PRIVATIZATION TO THE GRASSROOTS</p> <p>"Assigned to put President Bush's Social Security ideas into a bill that can pass Congress, Charles Grassley is finding little clamor for it among the people who have kept him in the Senate for 25 years." [USA Today, 3/27/05] "I think it's very difficult for me to say today that we'll present a bill to the president." [Washington Post, 3/28/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">28</p> <p>FORMER SSA COMMISSIONER POKES HOLES IN PRIVATIZATION</p> <p>Gordon Sherman, former SSA regional commissioner for eight southeastern states: "The problem is that the private personal accounts will not do anything to improve the financial outlook." [Atlanta Journal Constitution, 3/28/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">29</p> <p>BUSH TAKES DIFFERENT IDEAS OFF THE TABLE – AND OUT THE DOOR</p> <p>Three people are forced to leave a Bush Social Security event in Denver due to a bumper sticker critical of his foreign policy. [Washington Post, 3/30/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">30</p> <p>NEARLY HALF WAY THROUGH, REPUBLICANS STILL MEETING RESISTANCE</p> <p>"Heckling, catcalls and frequent interruptions greeted U.S. Rep. Wally Herger and a top Social Security official Wednesday as they tried to pitch President Bush's reforms for the nation's retirement plan." [Record Searchlight, 3/31/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">31</p> <p>BUSH'S TARGET AUDIENCE SAYS PRIVATE ACCOUNTS MISS THE MARK</p> <p>"[S]upport for Bush's plan among Americans age 18 to 29 sharply dropped from 66 percent in February to 49 percent in late March." [South Florida Sun-Sentinel, 3/31/04]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">1</p> <p>APRIL DAY 30...AT THE HALFWAY POINT: "BUSH FACES CHALLENGING SALES JOB ON THE ROAD"</p> <p>"[Bush's] poll numbers have declined. Opponents claim momentum. And the president has been forced to focus on maintaining support among Republicans; he has yet to sway a single Democrat in Congress." [USA Today, 4/1/05]</p> <p>"House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) has acknowledged that President Bush's call for completion of a Social Security bill this year could be unrealistic and that the legislation might have to wait until 2006." [Washington Post, 4/1/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2</p> <p>BURNS GETS BURNED BY SUPPORT FOR PRIVATE ACCOUNTS</p> <p>"Sen. Conrad Burns, R-Mont., faced an agitated and sometimes angry audience Saturday in Kalispell as he gathered input about how to fix Social Security's impending financial woes." [The Daily Inter Lake, 3/3/05]</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">3</p> <p>INVESTOR CLASS OPPOSITION IN BUSH'S OWN BACKYARD</p> <p>Of the eight members of an investing club near Bush's Texas ranch, only two "expressed unqualified support for the president's personal account proposal." [LA Times, 4/3/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4</p> <p>DIFFERENT RECESS, SAME RESULTS: AMERICANS REJECT PRIVATIZATION</p> <p>"Republican lawmakers are set to return to Washington more convinced than ever that President Bush's Social Security plan isn't ready for launch...The fact that Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite is generally a loyal Republican makes her refusal to commit to Bush's plan particularly troublesome to some in the GOP." [Boston Globe, 4/4/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">5</p> <p>35 DAYS AND ANOTHER RECESS = NO PROGRESS ON PRIVATIZATION</p> <p>"I believe it's about where we left off two weeks ago," Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R-IA) said at the end of the recess... Grassley said the president's Social Security plan would swell the national debt tremendously if the move is not accompanied by significant cuts to promised benefits." [Washington Post, 4/5/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">6</p> <p>SNOW RAINS ON THE GOP'S PARADE</p> <p>Des Moines radio host, Jan Mickelson, after interviewing Treasury Secretary John Snow during the White House's Social Security "Radio Day": "It seems, from a ratings standpoint, not to be doing him a lick of good. The more he talks about it, the less people seem to like it." [Chicago Tribune, 4/7/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">7</p> <p>AMERICANS THINK MEDICARE IS A BIGGER PROBLEM</p> <p>Tim Russert, speaking about a new NBC/WSJ poll: "The position now, only 35% think [Bush's plan] is a good idea. 55% think it's a bad idea. And, in fact, people who we polled tell us they think Medicare is more of a problem than Social Security." [NBC, 4/7/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">8</p> <p>SUPPORT KEEPS FALLING; OPPOSITION KEEPS GROWING</p> <p>A new AP-Ipsos poll showed that only 36% of those polled support Bush's approach to Social Security, while 58% oppose it. [Associated Press, 4/8/05]</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">9</p> <p>SLIP SLIDIN' AWAY</p> <p>According to a Bush administration advisor, "On the role that personal accounts play as part of the solution — I don't think we've gotten anywhere. In fact I think we've probably backslid." [LA Times, 4/9/05]</p>

<p>10</p> <p>TAXPAYERS FORCED TO FOOT THE BILL FOR A POLICY THEY DON'T EVEN BUY</p> <p>“The Bush administration has spent millions of dollars in the past two months on its campaign to overhaul Social Security, narrowly skirting laws that prohibit spending of taxpayer funds to indirectly lobby Congress...Although no hard figures on costs are available, rough calculations show the White House and other agencies have spent at least \$2.2 million on the campaign so far.” [CBS MarketWatch, 4/10/05]</p>	<p>11</p> <p>RED STATE REVOLUTION AGAINST PRIVATIZATION</p> <p>“Among the recent defectors [of Bush supporters]: residents of rural areas, Southerners, blue-collar whites, and older men, who ‘...feel they are being squeezed by the economy, health-care costs, and gas prices, and they worry about the risks of Social Security reform.” [Business Week, 4/11/05]</p>	<p>12</p> <p>TEXAS PAPER CALLS FOR SOME ADMINISTRATION STRAIGHT TALK</p> <p>“President Bush and Cabinet members are amid a nationwide swing to convince Americans that Social Security’s in a jam. When the talk-a-thon ends in the next few weeks, the country needs plain-speak about how the president actually would overhaul the program. With the exception of personal Social Security accounts, Americans are not hearing specific answers.” [Dallas Morning News Editorial, 4/12/05]</p>	<p>13</p> <p>ON SOCIAL SECURITY TOUR, BUSH IS AN ‘UNEASY’ RIDER</p> <p>In a CBS Poll taken April 13-16, only 25% of respondents said they were confident in Bush’s approach to Social Security; 70% said they were ‘uneasy’ about it. [CBS, 4/13/05]</p>	<p>14</p> <p>CHENEY PREACHES TO THE PARTISAN CHOIR</p> <p>“If Vice President Dick Cheney really wants to convince South Jerseyans to support President Bush’s plan to alter Social Security, he ought to speak to those who aren’t sold on the plan. Instead, the local audience he’ll address Friday seems destined to be primarily partisan supporters already behind the overhaul.” [Courier-Post Editorial (Cherry Hill, NJ), 4/14/05]</p>	<p>15</p> <p>CHENEY GETS SNUBBED IN NEW JERSEY</p> <p>“U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo, R-Ventnor, has said he will be meeting with the Cape May County chapter of AARP during Cheney’s town hall meeting [and issued a statement saying that] ‘Currently there is no consensus on a solution, but I made it clear I will oppose any plan that would reduce the amount of Social Security that current retirees or those close to retiring would receive.’” [Courier-Post (Cherry Hill, NJ), 4/15/05]</p>	<p>16</p> <p>BUSH SKIRTS THE TOUGH ISSUES</p> <p>At a stop in Ohio, “Mr. Bush did not address the criticism that the creation of individual accounts would do little to resolve the issue of the system’s fundamental long-term solvency. And on Friday, while discussing the benefits of greater investment freedom, he did not discuss in detail the risk that assets in those accounts could shrink in a down market.” [New York Times, 4/16/05]</p>
<p>17</p> <p>AN ECONOMICS LESSON FROM THE HEARTLAND</p> <p>Notre Dame economics professor Teresa Ghilarducci: ““There are unintended consequences of the president’s plan that haven’t been thought through...One is the impact on the states...[states] aren’t prepared to protect another group from poverty’ by maintaining the elderly’s standard of living above the poverty level.” [South Bend Tribune, 4/17/05]</p>	<p>18</p> <p>BUSH’S CREDIBILITY GAP</p> <p>At an editorial board meeting with the Rochester Post-Bulletin, Rep. Gil Gutknecht, R-Minn, “said many people think the president underestimated the cost of the Iraqi war, then overestimated the benefits of Medicare’s prescription drug plan. ‘ And now, all the sudden, they wonder why people are a bit skeptical of their ... plan on Social Security. It’s partly a credibility problem.’” [AP, 4/18/05]</p>	<p>19</p> <p>HOUSTON CHRONICLE SEES THROUGH WH SALES PITCH</p> <p>“The president is barnstorming the country to sell the idea of diverting some Social Security taxes to personal accounts, an idea he acknowledges won’t fix Social Security’s approaching cash crunch. Given this ... there’s little wonder the president’s ideas often have fallen on barren ground.” [Houston Chronicle Editorial, 4/19/05]</p>	<p>20</p> <p>BUSH’S PLAN HITS THE ROCKIES</p> <p>“A panel of [Colorado] state lawmakers spent nearly two hours Tuesday debating President Bush’s plan to reform Social Security - and the majority came down against it.” [Denver Post, 4/20/05]</p>	<p>21</p> <p>REPUBLICAN BIPARTISANSHIP BITES THE DUST</p> <p>“The chairman of the Senate Finance Committee said Wednesday he will try to craft a plan for overhauling Social Security that has only Republican support.” [USA Today, 4/21/05]</p>	<p>22</p> <p>MAINE-STREAM OPPOSITION TO PRIVATIZATION</p> <p>A new poll shows that 73 percent of Mainers were opposed to the president’s plans for privatizing aspects of Social Security. [Bangor Daily News, 4/22/05]</p>	<p>23</p> <p>BUSH’S TOUR ON ITS LAST LEG</p> <p>“A wobbly stock market, public concern about tinkering with the nation’s universal retirement program and slow-motion deliberations by an anxious Republican Congress are stalling - if not killing - the president’s second-term drive to overhaul the Social Security system.” [Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 4/23/05]</p>
<p>24</p> <p>BUSH REGISTERS NO SUPPORT IN IOWA</p> <p>A new poll in the Des Moines Register shows that “Fifty-two percent of those polled opposed Bush’s plan to allow workers to place some of their Social Security payroll taxes in a private investment account, while 38 percent favored it.” [AP, 4/24/05]</p>	<p>25</p> <p>BUSH SUPPORT IS TANKING</p> <p>“Support for Bush’s vision of individual investment accounts has ebbed; a USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup Poll taken this month shows nearly twice as many Americans oppose the idea as support it.” [USA Today, 4/25/05]</p>	<p>26</p> <p>BUSH ENDS THE TOUR AT AN ALL-TIME LOW...</p> <p>“The Washington Post-ABC News poll found that 64 percent of those surveyed disapproved of the job Bush was doing on Social Security and his overall approval rating was 47 percent, which matched his all-time low.” [AP, 4/26/05]</p>	<p>27</p> <p>AND NOT ENOUGH VOTES IN THE SENATE.</p> <p>“A hearing in Washington made plain he lacks support where he most needs it -- in the Senate Finance Committee... ‘He doesn’t have the votes for carve-out personal accounts,’ financier Robert Pozen said after the hearing, where he had been a witness.” [Wall Street Journal, 4/27/05]</p>	<p>28</p> <p>BUSH BOTTOMS OUT</p> <p>“Bush has traveled the country trying to unite Americans on Social Security, and polls indicate that he’s succeeding, if not quite in the way he had in mind. Opposition to Bush’s handling of Social Security jumped from 56 percent to 64 percent between March and April. [Atlanta Journal-Constitution, 4/28/05]</p>	