Washington's dirty little secret: No one is running the show

After Barack Obama got his stimulus passed on the promise that there were millions of "shovel-ready jobs," the stimulation never quite materialized as planned, and the shovels tended to stay in the shed



JONAH GOLDBERG

ne of the hardest lessons for young, idealistic and educated people to learn when they come to Washington -- and some never learn it -- is that nobody is running things. Sure, they know how to hold a press conference or write a law or conduct a study. But no person or group of people has the power to impose their will on society. There are just too many chefs making the soup.

In other words, people have the power to try stuff in the same way generals have the authority to send troops into battle, but as Gen. James Mattis likes to party or hostile voters, but life -- that vast realm of existence governed as much by Murphy's Law as Washington's laws. Facts are stubborn things. The world is complicated.

After Barack Obama got his stimulus passed on in Des Moines, Iowa. All we had to do was resist blame oil companies for "gougin



The United States Capitol building

the promise that there were millions of "shov- the urge to act like dogs returning el-ready jobs," the stimulation never quite materialized as planned, and the shovels tended to stay in the shed. Obama later insisted that the theory behind the stimulus was right, but "the problem is that spending it out takes a long time, because there's really nothing -- there's no such thing as shovel-ready projects.

This is a hard lesson for people who put immense faith in government to do big, important things. The technocratic New Dealers were sure they were smart enough to allocate resources better than the market. To that end, in 1933, when millions of Americans were going hungry, the government and communal. But in a world w slaughtered some 6 million pigs and threw away the a bag of rice from India is influe say, "The enemy gets a vote." And in politics and meat in an effort to drive up pork prices. Secretary public policy, the enemy isn't merely the opposing of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace was convinced America was on the verge of creating a new society.

"Only the merest quarter-turn of the heart separates us from a material abundance beyond the extra 50 cents is silly. But it's still fondest dream of anyone present," he told a crowd

capitalism."

Capitalism nauseates because v world with programming for a ception of clan life" as economist puts it. Our brains are wired to to be in charge. When bad things be because someone intended it. perceived slights, inconvenience and our anger needs a target.

This wiring was perfectly adapt world where resources were finite economic transactions were essen turmoil in Indonesia and heavy r never mind the overproduction of stitute for expensive rice) in Rus erlands, blaming your local groce

When gas prices are "too high,"



A dead sperm whale that washed ashore that had nearly six kilograms (13.2 lbs) of plastic waste in its stomach, in Wakatobi National Park in Sulawesi province, Indonesia

We need an urgen

The impact of plastic on the environment and marine life is welldocumented – but, for the first time, its effects on human health are revealed



DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

oday, it has become clear that plastic is having a devastating effect not only on wildlife but on ourselves. It is now polluting every corner of our planet. I have seen first-hand, how it is choking our oceans

It entangles animals with lethal effect. It causes perforated stomachs and starvation. Mammals, birds, fish and marine invertebrates – over 180 different species in all – have been identified accidentally eating it.

But the impact on humans is less well known. Now a report published jointly by the conservation organisation Fauna & Flora International and others highlights for the first time the effect of plastic waste on the health of the world's poorest people.

It shows that 400,000 to one million people are dying every year as a result of mismanaged there are also waste. If the upper end of this estimate is correct, then one person is dying every 30 seconds as a consequence of this dreadful pollution.

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The United gramme has developing ec A lack of waste collection in developing lution of the