



CONSERVATIVE BATTLELINE ONLINE

The "Bold Colors" Conservative Voice in Washington

January 24 , 2007

[Bush Iraqi Gamble](#)

From the Battle Line

[Bush Iraqi Gamble](#)

by Donald Devine

[Peaceful Muslim Victory?](#)

by Daniel Pipes

[Muslim Courage](#)

by Lisa Fabrizio

Culture Wars

[Demand Food Irradiation](#)

by Dennis Avery

[Weather Insanity](#)

by Alan Caruba

[Safely Cloning](#)

by Alex Avery

Media Pass in Review

[Retiring At Age 21](#)

by Hans Zeigler

[Kissy-Face on Obama](#)

by Vincent Fiore

[Nock on Shaw](#)

by Thomas Brewton

Political Front

[Give Democrats a Reason](#)

by David Keene

[Value of Obstruction](#)

by Paul Weyrich

[Wal-Mart Left Politics](#)

by John Carlisle

Government Maneuvers

[Dems Drugs Cost More?](#)

by John Goodman

[Years To Build a House?](#)

by Nathan Tabor

[Virtue of Gridlock](#)

by Thomas Lindama

Reader Backfire

[Iraq New Year](#)

[Wanted for 2008](#)

by Kerry Thomas

[Reader Comments](#)

Bush Iraqi Gamble

by Donald Devine

With no good options facing him, President George W. Bush has taken a big gamble with his new Iraq policy. With Democrats in control of both houses of Congress, looking for a fight, and the majority of Americans thinking the war lost, he could not add more military forces through the appropriations process. So the president could only squeeze 21,500 more soldiers by posting those in Iraq and on the way to longer tours of duty.



Supporters of more troops to win the war in Iraq such as Frederick Kagan claimed that 50,000 more troops were needed to guarantee success. The very pro-war Wall Street Journal editors wrote in supporting the president's new plan that they were concerned whether the addition of only 600-1,000 new forces to each Baghdad district "is enough to do the job." This is the gamble--that stability in Iraq can be accomplished on the cheap because given the domestic U.S. political realities it is not possible to surge by more than 22,000.



There is much to admire about the president's new approach. He took full responsibility for the lack of recent progress. His White House, generally loath to directly confront mistakes, went to the highly unusual length for any administration of providing a chart presenting both the previous key assumptions about the war and the new ones, highlighting past errors in thinking. The new assumptions are clearly superior even to one who warned against an involvement that included nation-building because it would bog down in ethnic conflict. Rather than aiming at democracy or freedom in Iraq, the more achievable goal of order and stability are now settled American policy.

Frederick Kagan

Still, the addition of so few troops is problematical. The president's plan would raise the force level to only 153,000, below the highpoint of 165,000 in December 2005 when that higher number was insufficient. President Bush has liberalized the rules of engagement, presumably to be less sensitive to concerns about collateral damage to civilians, and that might make a difference in effectiveness. On the other hand, even the Journal editors had earlier acknowledged that the previous Donald Rumsfeld strategy of a "light footprint" and sensitivity to such damage had been "right for most of the country." Its abandonment in Baghdad and Anbar could have negative repercussions there too as collateral damage increases.

The biggest part of the gamble might end up being the president's overriding the recommendations of his top uniformed military advisors, the Joint Chiefs of Staff. After previously having maintained that a president should follow military advice from his top generals, he was careful in his speech to the nation to say that they have "reviewed" the plan to assure it "addresses these mistakes" of past policy and "they report that it does." He did not say the Chiefs supported the new approach, and they do not.



From the very beginning, the generals have planned a quick turning of authority to Iraqis and a fast exit; but increasingly idealistic goals set by the political leaders and the State

Department did not allow it. The original plan was to withdraw within six months. That was clear from interviews with the military leaders when I visited in November 2003. Later, the idea was changed to stay and help the Iraqis draft and ratify a constitution and elect new leaders--and the exit was extended twelve months. A year later, it was moved again to the end of 2006, now to ensure the Iraqi army was fully self-sustaining before exit. But the 2006 election changed the military thinking too as things began to remind them of Vietnam's endless changing goalposts and troop increases, including Gen. Creighton Abrams increase of 200,000—not increasing troops to that level but bringing in that many more. Increasing by a mere one-tenth of that level did not seem like a winning way.

The now outgoing Central Commander, Gen. John P. Abizaid, told Congress two months ago that more troops were not the answer for Iraq. He specifically said that he had met personally with all of the commanders in the field and all agreed that more soldiers would not help. An anonymous "Army officer who recently commanded a brigade in Baghdad" told the Washington Post bluntly, "The plan will fail." The "surge" in forces was too small and it did not accord with Iraqi politics because Prime Minister Nouri "Maliki must protect [Moqtada] al-Sadr," who heads the largest, most aggressive and anti-U.S. Shiite militia but holds 30 seats supporting Maliki's coalition government.



Gen. John P. Abizaid

Each of the Shiite, Kurd and Sunni factions still believe they can prevail at least in slightly larger homelands and have no reason to be reasonable. Based on efforts in Yugoslavia and Lebanon the State Department types think any decent order would take six to 12 years to impose. The generals want none of this. While supporting an increase in troops, cracking down on death squads and ethnic militia, and imprisoning more insurgents, hawks Bing West and Elliot Cohen put the real problem facing the president well. "The paradox of American strategy in Iraq is this: President Bush can achieve success only by threatening to do something he is morally opposed to doing—leaving swiftly and risking chaotic civil strife. If the president showed the same iron will toward Mr. Maliki that he does toward Congress and public opinion, Mr. Maliki would blink first."

Perhaps; but everyone knows Mr. Bush will not budge. His plan could work but it is a long-shot gamble against expert advice that even the president admits will result in more U.S. and Iraqi casualties and no guarantee of success.

Donald Devine, the editor of Conservative Battleline Online, was the director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management from 1981 to 1985 and is the director of the Federalist Leadership Center at Bellevue University.

Peaceful Muslim Victory?

by Daniel Pipes

After defeating fascists and communists, can the West now defeat the Islamists?

On the face of it, its military preponderance makes victory seem inevitable. Even if Tehran acquires a nuclear weapon, Islamists have [nothing like the military machine](#) the Axis deployed in World War II, nor the Soviet Union during the cold war. What do the Islamists have to compare with the Wehrmacht or the Red Army? The SS or Spetznaz? The Gestapo or the KGB? Or, for that matter, to Auschwitz or the gulag?



Daniel Pipes

Yet, more than a few analysts, [including myself](#), worry that it's not so simple. Islamists (defined as persons who demand to live by the sacred law of Islam, the Sharia) might in fact do better than the earlier totalitarians. They could even win. That's because, however strong the Western hardware, its software contains some potentially fatal bugs. Three of them – pacifism, self-hatred, complacency – deserve attention.

Pacifism: Among the educated, the conviction has widely taken hold that "there is no military solution" to current problems, a mantra applied in every Middle East problem – [Lebanon](#), [Iraq](#), [Iran](#), [Afghanistan](#), the [Kurds](#), [terrorism](#), and [the Arab-Israeli conflict](#). But this [pragmatic pacifism](#) overlooks the fact that modern history abounds with military solutions. What were the defeats of the Axis, the United States in Vietnam, or the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, if not military solutions?

Self-hatred: Significant elements in several Western countries – especially the United States, Great Britain, and Israel – believe their own governments to be repositories of evil, and see terrorism as just punishment for past sins. This "[we have met the enemy and he is us](#)" attitude replaces an effective response with appeasement, including [a readiness to give up traditions and achievements](#). Osama bin Laden celebrates by name such leftists as [Robert Fisk](#) and [William Blum](#). Self-hating Westerners have an out-sized importance due to their prominent role as shapers of opinion in universities, the media, religious institutions, and the arts. They serve as the Islamists' auxiliary *mujahideen*.

Complacency: The absence of an impressive Islamist military machine imbues many Westerners, especially on the left, with a feeling of disdain. Whereas conventional war – with its men in uniform, its ships, tanks, and planes, and its bloody battles for land and resources – is simple to comprehend, the [asymmetric war](#) with radical Islam is elusive. Box cutters and suicide belts make it difficult to perceive this enemy as a worthy opponent. With [John Kerry](#), too many dismiss terrorism as a mere "nuisance."

Islamists deploy formidable capabilities, however, that go far beyond small-scale terrorism:

A potential access to weapons of mass destruction that could devastate Western life.

A religious appeal that provides deeper resonance and greater staying power than the artificial ideologies of fascism or communism.

An impressively conceptualized, funded, and organized institutional machinery that successfully builds credibility, goodwill, and electoral success.

An ideology capable of appealing to Muslims of every size and shape, from Lumpenproletariat to privileged, from illiterates to Ph.D.s, from the well-adjusted to psychopaths, from Yemenis to Canadians. The movement almost defies sociological definition.

- A non-violent approach – what I call "[lawful Islamism](#)" – that pursues Islamification through educational, political, and religious means, without recourse to illegality or terrorism. Lawful Islamism is proving successful in Muslim-majority countries like [Algeria](#) and Muslim-minority ones like the [United Kingdom](#).
- A huge number of committed cadres. If Islamists constitute [10% to 15% of the Muslim population worldwide](#), they number some 125 to 200 million persons, or a far greater total than all the fascists and communists, combined, who ever lived.

Pacifism, self-hatred and complacency are lengthening the war against radical Islam and causing undue casualties. Only after absorbing catastrophic human and property losses will left-leaning Westerners likely overcome this triple affliction and confront the true scope of the threat. The civilized world will likely then prevail, but belatedly and at a higher cost than need have been.

Should Islamists get smart and avoid mass destruction, but instead stick to the lawful, political, non-violent route, and should their movement remain vital, it is difficult to see what will stop them.

*Mr. Pipes (www.DanielPipes.org) is director of the Middle East Forum and author of *Miniatures* (Transaction Publishers). This column will be on hiatus for the next 15 weeks, until mid-April, while Mr. Pipes teaches at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California.*

Muslim Courage

by Lisa Fabrizio

They say that the Lord works in mysterious ways. Last year's remarks by Pope Benedict XVI--when he spoke of the Qur'an's commands to spread Islam by the sword as incompatible with reason--were met with the usual rage from many in the Muslim community and their sympathizers. Though it did not immediately seem so, this might just have signaled a watershed event in the global struggle against those who are most willing to use that sword.



Lisa Fabrizio

Soon after the Pope's remarks, rare yet un-isolated cases of common sense seem to be breaking out all over and resistance, armed and otherwise, to the Islamist threat has manifested itself in some unexpected places. And although these voices still represent a woeful minority, they are no less welcome or hopeful.

When typical Islamist outrage threatened the cancellation of a Berlin staging of Mozart's *Idomeneo* which depicted the severed head of the Prophet Muhammad--along with those of Jesus Christ, Buddha and the Greek god Poseidon--German politicians reacted swiftly. Said Berlin Mayor [Klaus Wowereit](#), without naming names:

Our ideas about openness, tolerance and freedom must be lived out on the offensive. Voluntary self-limitation gives those who fight against our values a confirmation in advance that we will not stand behind them.

But Bavarian state premier Edmund Stoiber went further [adding](#), "We must never give up our constitutional freedoms out of fear of Islamist thought-terrorism." Quite a remarkable reaction and one that was partially responsible for newly scheduled performances of the opera--with the offending scene still included--taking place without incident this month.

Meanwhile, deep in the heart of old Europe, Robert Redeker, a French philosophy professor, is still on the run in fear of his life from you know whom. His crime? An op-ed in the newspaper, *Le Figaro*, a translation of which is [here](#). And although most of his countrymen have not been terribly forthcoming in his defense, the threats on Redeker's life were condemned by his fellow French philosophers who published a [letter](#) reading:

A handful of fanatics brandishes alleged religious laws to jeopardise our most basic freedoms. To which threats are now added the murmurings audible across Europe about the 'provocations' we must avoid in order not to antagonise these supposed foreign sensibilities. Times are getting tough in Europe. Now is not the moment for cowardice.

In Great Britain, Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly [announced](#) that funding will be cut off to Muslim groups that teach hate: "It is only by defending our values that we will prevent extremists radicalising future generations of terrorists." While Home Secretary [John Reid](#) added, "You don't have to love everything George W Bush stands for to hate everything that Osama Bin Laden stands for."

And most recently in Somalia, Ethiopian forces have deposed the radical Islamic Courts Union which had controlled much of the country since early last year. On Monday, U.S. forces launched air-strikes against terrorist elements there and the USS Eisenhower and three other warships have been dispatched to the Somali coast to block any retreat by sea they might seek.

Typically, Al-Qaeda's number-two man, Ayman al-Zawahiri released a [statement](#) urging "all Muslims to respond to the appeal for jihad in Somalia." But in the face of this, returning Somali president Yusuf Ahmed has [vowed](#) that there will be no negotiation with the fleeing Islamists. Most encouraging though, is the response of brave Somali Muslims, like Bashir Goth who [wrote](#) of the vanquished Islamists:

[A]s is often the case with all self-aggrandizing megalomaniacs, they fizzled into thin air when the hour of truth has arrived and all their bravado had ended into a farcical denouement. While they threw the young children they recruited in the name of jihad into the fray, the Islamist leadership took flight like scared chickens. None of them was reported to have died heroically fighting at the front. They just burst like a bubble. Even their prolific website [qaadisiya.com](#) fell silent. Although its editors have spewed enough hatred against the West and sang daily hymns for the Sept. 11 suicide bombers and all jihadist martyrs of the world, they couldn't dare to sign off the last chapter of their fantasy medieval caliphate.

Now it is time for the people of Mogadishu to reclaim their freedoms and their true religion. Time to read the Koran with piety and not with politics; ...It is time to throw away the Arab head rags; the sign of the shabby dressed Islamists; and time to be proud of our native names, cleansing our ears of the alien Arab noms de guerre of the Islamists. It is time to let our women come out to the sunshine and swim with their children in the lido beach; time to shave the beards, watch cinema, and let our youth revel, sing, dance, and ring in the New Year with Mohammed Suleiman's eternal lyrics 'Be a year that brings us good fortune and high expectations.' Amen.

[Lisa Fabrizio](#) is a columnist who hails from Connecticut.

Retiring at Age 21

by Hans Zeiger

For awhile I have contemplated writing this column but haven't had the full sensibility to do it yet. I began submitting columns online at age seventeen, back in the year 2002. I began the process with the hubris of a budding pundit and kept the habit until now, with a declining sense of the value of this kind of writing. Now I am twenty-one and about 21 percent half-educated.



I now know at least this: I don't know enough to be weekly offering my opinions as though possessed of some eminence. There is a thousand times more sense in one of Seneca's ancient moral sketches or Joseph Addison's essays three hundred years ago than in the freshest columns I could put forth on any topic. Wisdom is better nurtured in the memorization of Solomon's Proverbs than the attempt to produce new proverbs for the age of YouTube and iPod. The Bible is better for the soul than the morning newspaper.

Liberals are the ambitious ones by nature; I think I have a liberal nature. A sense of proportion that results from education and experience moderates opinions and makes a mind conservative. Not that I wasn't politically conservative at age seventeen when I started on this present course, but it was conservatism wild and liberal.

Regret is not the word for lessons learned. I have learned that punditry, for all of its good sense every now and then, is not my calling.

I may write again, soon, but without regularity. And without the hastiness that is the temperament of the internet.

The internet is a splendid and dangerous thing. It is good because it spreads information, facilitates communication, breaks some old barriers, introduces some new economic possibilities. It is troubling because, although meant to save us time, it busies us with fresh concerns, attachments, and attractions. There are utterly diabolical neighborhoods on the internet. And information itself isn't all good; there is much we shouldn't know about the universe.

Many in our generation live and move and have their being on the internet, or at least they think so. "Is Google God?" Thomas Friedman asked a year ago. Many of our relationships are internet relationships, kept alive on Instant Messenger or through Facebook messages. Friendship is now a Facebook status, not a flesh and blood relationship. And I fear that I've lived too much on the internet.

When I was seventeen I decided to write online columns because it looked like a way to make a name for myself. I suppose I do have something of an online name now, but that isn't as valuable to me as I once thought it would be. The valuable things in life, which cannot always be expressed in words until we have experienced them in reality or accepted them on faith, are demanding my attention.

In most activities of life, silence is the prudent thing. If words are to be used, let them be about the Savior of mankind whose incarnation we have just celebrated. Of Him, may we speak as fervently, as humbly, to one soul as we write to thousands.

*Hans Zeiger is a student at Hillsdale College and author of Reagan's Children:
Taking Back the City on the Hill and Get Off My Honor: The Assault on the Boy Scouts of America.
www.hanszeiger.net.*

Kissy-Face on Obama

by Vincent Fiore

You would almost have to be comatose not to have noticed the oohs and aahs regarding the freshman senator from Illinois, Barack Obama.

Ever since his "coming-out party" in 2004 as the keynote speaker at the Democratic National Convention in Boston, Massachusetts, Obama has garnered much fawning praise, and is now considered as a contender for the White House in 2008.

Pardon me for sounding decidedly contrarian when speaking of Obama's presidential aspects, but I would sooner believe that Howard Dean had become the Archbishop of Canterbury.

But what of Mr. Obama himself? Do you think he believes it? Well, he might upon seeing his name so celebrated after barely being sworn in on January 4, 2005. On April 18, 2005, Time Magazine designated Obama as one of "The World's Most Influential People," citing Obama as a "Leader and Revolutionary."

On October 17, 2005, writer Andrew Stephen of the influential British journal, New Statesman, lists Obama as one of "10 people who could change the world."

Time Magazine strikes yet again, with liberal soothsayer Joe Klein penning the October 23, 2006, cover story that reads: "Why Barack Obama could be our next President."

Further accolades include honorary doctorates from no less than four major universities, like Northwestern and Xavier. Why, there is even talk of canonization within the holy halls of the Vatican for Saint Obama.

And all this for a man who has barely reached the two-year mark in the Senate.

But on a serious note, the public knows much about Barack Obama. Well, let me rephrase that. The public knows about as much about Obama as the mainstream media allows. And what is allowed is as follows:

Barack Obama is young. He is energetic. He is oh-so-comfortably and confidently religious. He is "above" the usual party labels like "liberal" and "conservative." He is handsome. And, he is black.

Now, it seems I heard a lot of these superlatives applied to another recent contender for the White House in 2008. With the exception of being black, former Senator John Edwards was feted with much the same.

Mr. Edwards is back, and this time he brings his "two America's" campaign without the baggage of 2004 Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry, who inspired no one in 2004, and matters even less today. Edwards has learned a lesson, and maybe he will learn a few more in time for 2008. But more on that in a moment.

For all his media-trumpeted attributes, Barack Obama is a Senate "back bencher" who has done virtually nothing in the scant two years that he has been there. Aside from becoming the media's present-day darling and poster boy for perceived political even-handedness, Obama has--so far--had an unspectacular career.



Barack Obama

We have seen the media play kissy-face time and again--even to Republicans. Arizona senator and 2008 presidential wannabe John McCain was touted as a great "moderate and farseeing voice of reason," but that was yesterday. Obama is today.

So why all this attention given to Obama? My guess has always been that he is a work in progress, and that work is the media's making of a vice-president. Maybe this is obvious to some, but far too many see Obama as presidential material, and brother, he just can't fill those shoes as of yet.

It is preposterous to think that a man of no experience in a chamber consisting of 100 Senate-sized egos can snatch the presidency of the United States, overzealous media aside. Rather, put Obama with someone who has the money, organization, and seasoning to be a presidential contender.

Surely, everyone knows that I am talking about Hillary Clinton. Or am I? Hillary has all of the above in plenty, but also has something else aplenty, and that is considerable negatives. While Hillary may attract the hard left vote (which she will get), Democratic Party legacy voters, and a sizable contingency of women voters, she will not make it without someone like Obama to dull her shrillness, and the polarization that a Hillary Clinton candidacy has inspired around the country.

Obama can mitigate this, and bring the minority vote home in a big way, as minorities will only see a minority, and not an unqualified candidate. Obama will attract new voters to offset what is sure to be a surge of other new voters simply out to vote against Hillary.

This puts two-year Senator Barack Obama in a powerful position, possibly much more so than Hillary desires.

Without Obama, or someone so hubristically celebrated as he, Hillary Clinton may never get out of the primaries. If Hillary feels the pressure, and sees her poll numbers mired in the upper-thirties to low-forties, it will be "vice presidential" running mate Barack Obama.

This can happen very easily, unless...

Unless that other once-upon-a-time media darling, John Edwards, is bold enough--or desperate enough--to take a risk here and take Obama and run with him.

The media will not be able to resist the temptation and desire to crown such a political duo as America's "New Politicians." Young, handsome, cutting-edged informed, and of course, non-partisan.

The media hyperventilating will be of epic proportions. It would be as if George Clooney and Leonardo DiCaprio had come to inhabit 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue--intellectually gifted, of course. It might even be described as close to nirvana as America can get!

Well, it would be something like that.

Is Barack Obama presidential material? No. Will he declare as a candidate for 2008? No. Is he being thought of as a vital key for 2008, and the Democrats "triumphant and long-overdo" return to power in the White House? Indeed.

Obama may be an empty political suit to all who really take a moment to actually look at what he's done, but he fits the bill quite nicely in this, the latest round of mainstream media

kingmaking, or more personally put, the ornament that adorns the arm of Hillary Clinton, or John Edwards.

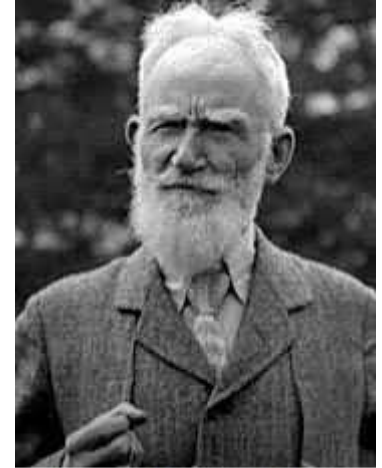
Vincent Fiore is a freelance political writer who lives in New York City. His work can be seen throughout the Internet, including the American Conservative Union Foundation, GOPUSA, Human Events, and theconservativevoice. Vincent is a staff writer for the New Media Alliance and a contributing writer for NewsBusters.org.

Nock on Shaw

by Thomas E. Brewton

Most people today who know of playwright George Bernard Shaw at all probably acquired that acquaintance indirectly via the hugely successful Broadway musical "My Fair Lady," which was an adaptation of Shaw's "Pygmalion." To appreciate Shaw's role outside the literary field, it's necessary to understand a bit more about the late Victorian period in England and its impact upon political and economic doctrine in the United States.

Shaw was a founder in 1883, along with Beatrice and Sidney Webb, of the Fabian Society, which aimed at replacing the British constitution with the planned and top-to-bottom-managed economy of socialism. The essential difference between the Fabians and Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who had written the notorious Communist Manifesto in England forty years earlier, was the Fabians' tactic of gradualist rather than revolutionary implementation of socialism.



George Bernard Shaw

Fabian gradualism was the model emulated in the United States during the same period under the banners variously of Populism in the 1890s, Progressivism from the 1890s into the 1920s, and liberalism in the 1930s under Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Among its earliest exemplars was Teddy Roosevelt, an 1880 graduate of Harvard, which was in the process of abandoning its historic mission of training Christian ministers and turning wholly toward the atheistic materialism that now dominates all of the Ivy League and most other colleges and universities today.

Teddy's young cousin Franklin Roosevelt, graduating from Harvard in 1904, got a full-throttle indoctrination in the materialistic conceptions of socialism. Graham Wallas, one of the early Fabians, taught at Harvard, where his star pupil was 1909 graduate Walter Lippmann, president of the Harvard Socialist Club and later co-founder with Herbert Croly of The New Republic, one of the most influential liberal publications before World War II. Mr. Lippman in later years, observing the wreckage of socialism in practice, became an adherent of our original constitutionalism.

Celebrated libertarian analyst Albert Jay Nock's "The Socialism of Mr. Shaw" gets him just right.

Mr. Shaw is a Socialist. In his view the extreme of collectivist Statism is a cure for all ills, like the old grandmother's pennyroyal. In politics it will abolish the party system, simplify procedures, and ensure the keeping of good and capable men in office. Mr. Shaw's State will establish equality of income, provide the right kind of education for children, settle the land-question, control production and distribution, keep everybody at work, and so forth and so on; and all in the public interest. Mr. Shaw unsparingly diagnoses the various ills to which the body politic is heir; his diagnosis is complete and correct; and for each and every ill he prescribes the one remedy - State action.

In 1797, ten years after our Constitution was drafted, Chief Justice Jay said in a letter to a friend that every political theory which does not regard mankind as being what they are (the italics are his) will prove abortive. Just this is the root-trouble with Mr. Shaw's theory and with all other forms of collectivist Statism; they do not regard mankind as being what they are.

The fundamental, and by now almost permanent, damage to constitutionalism in the United States was the collectivization of power in Washington, at the expense of state and local governments, that eliminated the most important of James Madison's "auxiliary precautions"

against concentration of power. Since the New Deal, the Bill of Rights has become, in effect, a discretionary document to be set aside whenever state-planners find it conflicting with individual rights such as private property, religious freedom, and the right to bear arms. It all goes back to socialism and progressivism and Shaw had a good part in undermining the old order.

Thomas E. Brewton is a staff writer for the New Media Alliance, Inc. The New Media Alliance is a non-profit (501c3) national coalition of writers, journalists and grass-roots media outlets.

Dems Drugs Cost More?

by John Goodman

Nancy Pelosi and many other Congressional Democrats want the federal government to negotiate drug prices for Medicare enrollees. think this will lead to lower prices. But as Alan Enthoven and Kyna explain in the latest NCPA Brief Analysis, drug prices for seniors may go down. They may even go up.



John Goodman

They
Fong
not

away
have
But

The key to tough negotiations is the willingness and ability to walk from the table with no deal. Clearly the VA system does this. Veterans access to only one-fourth the number of drugs that Medicare covers. the wrath of senior voters and the lobbying power of pharmaceutical companies may make it impossible for Medicare to emulate the VA's approach.

A drug company with a (patent rights) monopoly has an incentive to price discriminate among private buyers - charging lower prices to some and higher prices to others. But if the government negotiates a single price for everyone, the resulting price is likely to be higher than lowest prices paid by private buyers.

Under one common tactic, government links the price it will pay to the prices paid by other buyers - for example, by insisting on paying the lowest price paid by any buyer. But instead of lowering the price paid by government, such a strategy may instead lead to higher prices charged to private buyers. This appears to be what happened in Medicaid.

The full analysis can be viewed at: <http://www.ncpa.org/pub/ba/ba575/ba575.pdf>

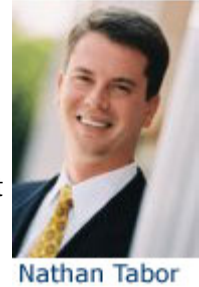
John C. Goodman is President of the National Center for Policy Analysis.

Years To Build a House?

by Nathan Tabor

Try to remember that time not so long ago when celebrities were flooding the airwaves, begging for help for victims of the tsunami. Only the most heartless of Americans could have possibly turned down those impassioned appeals.

Now comes word from the BBC that half of the billions of dollars pledged by individuals, businesses, and governments around the globe for tsunami aid has not yet been spent—two years after the disaster. It should come as no surprise, however, that a number of foreign governments have completely reneged on their promise to send aid. Others have only given a small percentage of what they promised.



Nathan Tabor

All told, some 6.7 billion dollars was pledged, but only 3.4 billion has been spent, according to the BBC report. Among the biggest deadbeats—China, which pledged 301 million dollars to Sri Lanka, but has actually given only a paltry million...France, which promised 79 million, but has forked over just a little more than a million...and Spain, which pledged 60 million, but has actually donated less than a million. With friends like these, the tsunami victims need no enemies.

The BBC reports that the European Commission owes 70 million; Britain, 12 million. Meanwhile, the United States has donated about 38 percent of

the dollars it promised. The Red Cross, one of the most trusted relief agencies in existence, promised to build 50,000 homes, but has finished only about 8,000.

The British Red Cross is defending its post-disaster performance, with spokesman Matthias Schmale telling the BBC: "It is incredibly difficult...we said from the beginning, this is happening in very difficult circumstances. We raised the money knowing it was difficult. It will take time to spend this money in a responsible manner."

Schmale admitted that the speed at which houses are being built sounds like "slow progress." However, he noted that the tsunami also swept away identity papers and legal documents, creating a bureaucratic storm.

However, an official with the United Nations, Miloon Kothari, sees the excuse-making as uncalled for: "It should really not take this long to build permanent housing," Kothari told the BBC.

Kothari added, "I do not accept the explanation that it is going to take four to five years, in some cases, seven. I'm an architect, I know how long it takes to build a house."

It was the day after Christmas in 2004 that an earthquake measuring 9.3 in magnitude sparked a tsunami that resulted in the loss of more than 200,000 lives.

Obviously, it can take a long period of time for those who survive such a disaster to recover. But when promised money is inexcusably slow in coming...when pledges made are not kept...and when snail-paced bureaucracy is involved...recovery is not only hindered—it can actually grind to a halt.

If ever there was an effective argument against nationalized health care, the tsunami relief fiasco is it. If it takes more than two years for a centralized authority to build a house, imagine

how long it could take for you to find a surgeon to remove your gall bladder-if the federal government were in charge of the entire health care system.

There are some things that the private sector is simply better equipped to handle. Home building, food service, economy-building, and health care are just a few of them.

Nathan Tabor is the author of [The Beast on the East River](#).

The Virtue of Gridlock

by Thomas Lindaman

With the change of power in Congress from Republican to Democrat comes the possibility of something big government types dread.

That something is gridlock. For those unfamiliar with the term, gridlock refers to when Congress can't do its Constitutionally-mandated job of passing bills because the two major parties can't agree on what needs to be done. Why does this bother big government types? Well, when you consider their veins run red with bureaucratic tape of the same hue, having Congress unable to pass more laws makes them edgy. Think crack addicts with fashions by Brooks Brothers.



the
Tim Johnson

Gridlock also tends to force the two major parties to work together to pass bills that will pass muster with their constituents. That's something we haven't had a lot of in at least 12 years because one party has held Congress and the White House. With the Democrats taking control, some of the right's favorite pet projects will have to take a back seat or be altered somewhat to bring it more to the center. In short, funding for faith-based programs designed to teach the 14-toed sloth of the Upper Lower Middle Amazon River basin how to speak in tongues is going to have to wait a bit.

However, it's not just Republicans who will have to count their nickels and dimes. Democrats are in the same boat because their pet projects will be held under the same scrutiny. In short, funding for a refuge for gay 14-toed sloth of the Upper Lower Middle Amazon River basin who were taught to speak in tongues will also have to wait. Instead, we might have more sensible spending, like a study on why we're spending so much money on 14-toed sloth in the first place.

Even though the House controls spending bills, and Democrats hold a decent-sized majority in the House, there's a possibility that gridlock in the Senate could curtail any wild ideas from the House. In the Senate, the split is 49 Democrats, 49 Republicans, and 2 Independents who plan to caucus with the Democrats. Then, factor into this situation the fact that South Dakota Senator Tim Johnson (who just happens to be a Democrat) has been sidelined by a medical condition. That reduces the vote count to 99 instead of 100. Democrats would have to get both Independents to vote for anything they propose, or else they don't get what they want, and that's if votes are along strict party lines to begin with. Given some of the squirrely Democrats and Republicans there, it's not a lock by any means, but for the sake of argument (and since it's my column), let's say it happens.

Even if Senator Johnson comes back and votes, the ever-unpredictable Joe Lieberman could break ranks with the Democrats, leaving a 50-50 tie. And guess who gets to break the tie. Vice President Dick Cheney. Oops. That alone may make Senate Democrats more willing to either work with Republicans or not work at all. You know, just like John Kerry does.

There is one downside to gridlock. If there's a highly charged bill, those who want to see it defeated can easily get it bogged down in Congress to the point that whoever proposed the bill will withdraw it instead of watching it get voted down. With some bills, like the PATRIOT Act or appropriations bills for the war on terrorism, gridlock can doom even the best bills if the political fortunes don't shine upon it. But, like I said earlier, it also guarantees horrible bills may go the way of Britney Spears's chances of being Mother of the Year, so you have a tradeoff to consider.

As a big believer in small government, I'm enamored with gridlock. I think it's the greatest manmade political concept since the Electoral College (which, once again, was snubbed by the BCS for a bowl game). Sure, if gridlock happens, we'll be paying Congress for not doing their jobs, but how exactly is that different from the way things are right now?

Thomas Lindaman is a Staff Writer for the New Media Alliance, Inc. and NewsBull.com. The New Media Alliance is a non-profit (501c3) national coalition of writers, journalists and grass-roots media outlets. He is also Publisher of CommonConservative.com.

Demand Food Irradiation

by Dennis Avery

Here's a New Year's Resolution to add to your list: "I resolve to protect my family more effectively from dangerous bacteria in their food."

Hundreds of people were recently sickened, and some twenty died, from eating bacteria-contaminated spinach and pre-cut lettuce. Bacteria have always been with us but the growing popularity of time-saving pre-cut salad mixtures offers more cut surfaces and therefore more opportunity for the bacteria.



Dennis T. Avery

The Centers for Disease Control estimate that Americans suffer 76 million cases of foodborne illness per year-and more than 5,000 deaths. The CDC says a large proportion of these are caused by such bacteria as E. coli, campylobacter, salmonella and listeria that lurk in our food. When these bacteria get into our kitchens, they often contaminate counter-tops, refrigerators, and cutting boards, thereby spreading the bugs to other foods. Often the bacteria hide in kitchen sponges, which then contaminate everything the sponges touch.

The "consumer advocates" on TV say we're helpless-unless every farm is inspected by government agents and bacteria sources are destroyed. But bacteria are everywhere and they have countless natural opportunities to attack our food. Federal officials linked a recent outbreak of deadly E coli: O157 to wild pigs, which may have carried the bacteria half a mile from a free-range cattle farm to a spinach field. Can we expect farmers to put night-vision cameras around their fields-and shoot every wild creature that digs under their fences?

Here are four ways you can protect your family more effectively from bacteria than government farm inspectors ever could:

First and foremost, refrigerate your foods. We all get exposed to a few bacteria, but they don't multiply in near-freezing temperatures. If they can't multiply, they'll represent much less danger to you and your kids.

Second, run kitchen sponges through the dishwasher after use. The hot water and detergent will kill most of the bacteria. Substitute paper towels for sponges whenever you can.

Third, write to the Food and Drug Administration and demand federal approval for irradiation of fruits and vegetables. This low-dose "cold pasteurization" kills 99.999 percent of the bacteria, and causes no significant changes in the foods. There is no other sure way to safely use pre-cut greens. There is no other known way to kill bacteria in and on fruits and vegetables without destroying their freshness. Irradiation, instead, actually extends the fresh taste and shelf life of the produce!

So far, a few self-appointed "consumer watchdogs" have prevented irradiated foods from reaching the consumer. They rant publicly about "radioactivity," and claim that the farmers should eliminate all the bacteria on their farms instead. How?

Irradiation has been endorsed by the American Medical Association, the World Health Organization, the FDA, and dozens more food safety authorities. It's already approved for meats, and the meat industry is readying major facilities to "cold-pasteurize" hamburger. Now, however, we're finding that we need irradiation of our fruits and vegetables as well. The FDA needs to go one step further.

Irradiation won't even raise your food prices because it will sharply reduce spoilage losses, in the marketing chain and in your home. Who's not in favor of reducing spoilage?

Fourth, write your supermarket manager a note, telling him/her you want this safety service. Otherwise, the supermarkets will be afraid to stock irradiated products, and the "consumer advocates" will keep getting on TV to fret uselessly over more ineffective farm inspections- instead of eliminating the problem.

Americans enjoy the safest food delivery system in history, and a many of the remaining dangers can by eliminated by using common sense practices in our own kitchens and insisting on food irradiation.

Dennis T. Avery is a senior fellow for Hudson Institute in Washington, D.C. and is the Director for Center for Global Food Issues (www.cgfi.org). He was formerly a senior analyst for the Department of State. Readers may write him at Post Office Box 202, Churchville, VA 24421.

Weather Insanity

by Alan Caruba

It's official. America is now totally insane over the weather.

Even the Weather Channel that used to simply provide reasonably accurate, short-term information about the weather is now telling everyone we're doomed because global warming is going to destroy the Earth. Why not just rename it the AIGore Channel?

The weather used to be the concern primarily of farmers and ranchers. It determines how well or not crops would grow and herds will thrive. As America became more urbanized, the rest of the population wanted to know whether to bring an umbrella or what to wear. Now it is a source of daily anxiety over the fate of the Earth.

To make matters worse, people are being told and actually *believing* that what they do or not can affect the weather in ways to keep the seas and temperatures from rising. It is no longer the domain of the sun, the oceans, volcanoes and clouds. These puny things are nothing compared to what kind of car you drive or what you use to heat your home.

That is a definition of insanity. It is so far removed from reality that Hollywood has to conjure up films showing New York under miles of snow or so-called documentaries demanding that industry must come to a stop in order to save the Earth.

I suggest we need to save the Earth from the legions of fear mongers who are seeking to control our lives for the crime of having abundant food, longer life spans, technological and scientific advances, or that permits you to get on a jet and be anywhere in the world within hours. We take for granted that trucks, the heart's blood of an economy, will deliver anything you purchase on Monday by the following Wednesday. Try to imagine our nation without cars?

Let me provide an example of how far we have come since I was a child nearly seventy years ago. We had an icebox, not a refrigerator. A man would come and provide a big block of ice to keep food cool for a day or so. Air conditioning meant opening the window and turning on a fan. Washing clothes involved using a washboard and then hanging them out to dry in the sun. There was no television, no computers, no iPods, and no cell phones. Milk was delivered by a horse-drawn wagon during World War II because gas was scarce. Polio crippled thousands of people, including then-President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Do you really want to return to those "good old days"? In essence, that is exactly what the Global Warming Gestapo wants to inflict on every American these days.

The single most insipid phrase that any environmentalist or politician says is "climate change" because they actually believe humans are responsible for the change and ignore the fact that climate is *always* in a state of change.

None of us can read a newspaper or a magazine, or turn on the radio or television, without being told that we are just years, if not months, from the horror of global warming. A few weeks ago Colorado was digging out from three horrendous blizzards the likes of which have not been seen in a lifetime, while the East Coast had temperatures in the 70s.

The definition of weather and climate is "chaos."



Alan Caruba

Mother Nature has a message for you: Get out of the way! Here comes a flood, a blizzard, a tornado, a tsunami, a hurricane, a wildfire or an earthquake. Get out of the way!

The wisest climatologists who study weather trends over hundreds of years have no idea why mini-Ice ages or warming spells occur and meteorologists with access to the most sophisticated computer models cannot tell you with any certainty what the weather in your area will be a week from now!

In Congress, the newly empowered Democrats are getting ready to impose an insane program of "caps and credits" on so-called greenhouse gas emissions that is straight out of the UN's Kyoto Protocol that totally exempts China and India, home to more than two billion of the six billion people on Earth.

Meanwhile, those same greenhouse gases are being emitted globally by millions of livestock that are responsible for 9% of anthropogenic CO₂ (Carbon dioxide) emissions, 37% of methane emissions, 64% of ammonia emissions, and 65% of global nitrous oxide.

When you add in the methane and other emissions of the world's swamps and forests, and all the chemicals emitted by the world's active volcanoes, plus the fact that every human on Earth exhales two pounds of CO₂ every day, the notion of crippling every element of the nation's economy to "control" such things is, well, insane.

Carbon dioxide is not a "pollutant" no matter how many times Speaker Pelosi, Senator Boxer, Governor Schwarzenegger and a legion of global warming alarmists say it is. It exists in the Earth's atmosphere and, other than the oxygen that keeps us alive, is the single most important part of our environment because all vegetation, forests and crops, depend on it.

Is there more of it around? Yes, since 1850 the Earth's population has increased 600%! Is it a bad thing? No. The Earth has had periods of far higher CO₂ concentrations in the atmosphere and life thrived.

Right now, that eminent body of scientists, the Supreme Court of the United States, is deciding whether CO₂ is a pollutant. That is insane.

Finally, during the last 100 years, the *average* global temperature has increased *less* than one degree centigrade. Some places like the poles remain encased in ice and snow all year. Other places like the deserts remain arid all year.

What we do not lack is a legion of "scientists" who cannot wait to run out in the streets and announce that their research conclusively proves we are doomed. We have others who run around saying that our weather is unusual or getting worse. It's the *weather!* The weather is *always* in a state of change.

Are we supposed to return to the days when virgins were thrown into volcanoes or hearts were cut from living bodies in order to appease the gods that "control" the weather? Or are we all going to fall victim to those in Congress and elsewhere who insist we ruin our lives in order to achieve "control" over the weather?

It's the weather! Get over it!

Alan Caruba writes a weekly column, "Warning Signs", post on the Internet site of The National Anxiety Center, www.anxietycenter.com. His new book, "Right Answers: Separating Fact from Fantasy", has been published by Merril Press.

Safely Cloning

by Mr. Alex A. Avery

The world is awash in self-appointed "consumer" groups who purport to look out for you and me. But the reaction of these meddlers to the Food and Drug Administration's recent draft report declaring that meat and milk from cloned animals is safe reveals their narrow, anti-consumer political agenda.

Carol Tucker Foreman, the doyenne of the "consumer advocacy" mob, responded to the FDA's report first by citing polls showing many consumers believe animal cloning is "immoral." Setting aside the question of using morality as a basis for government food safety policy, morality didn't seem to stop Ms. Foreman from representing one of the country's largest pro-abortion groups when she ran a consulting firm in the 1980s and 90s.

Ms. Foreman then wrongly claims that the FDA ignored "the fact that more [cloned animals] suffer pain, deformity and disease." In fact, the FDA specifically addressed this issue, noting that the exact same abnormalities and birth defects (collectively called Large Offspring Syndrome) occur with other commonly used livestock reproductive technologies, such as in vitro fertilization. The FDA noted that the rate "at which LOS is observed in clones has been decreasing" just as happened with in vitro fertilization and LOS "hasn't been seen in pig or goat clones."

Understand that clones aren't what you see in Hollywood, where full-sized animals (or body parts) grow up overnight in artificial electronic wombs. That's just a sci-fi caricature. In the real world, cloned embryos are implanted in a real mother animal, develop in a real womb, and are born just like any other natural animal.

Foreman knows she doesn't have a scientific leg to stand on, so she tries one last political smokescreen by claiming livestock cloning is just a back door to eventual human cloning. Again, these aren't consumer issues, they're political - nor is the claim accurate.

Jean Halloran, whose organization publishes Consumer Reports, responded by saying "There is significant concern that we will be getting animals that are more prone to disease." Again, the FDA has directly addressed this concern, noting on its "cloning myths" website that "If clones survive the first few days after birth, they become as strong and healthy as any other young animals" and that "When they're young adults, they're completely indistinguishable by appearance and blood measurements from conventional animals of the same age."

The innocuous-sounding Center for Food Safety bills itself as an "environmental and public health organization" but employs no actual food scientists of any kind. It's run by lawyers who specialize in filing lawsuits against government agencies for daring to let science, not politics, guide food safety policy.

Joseph Mendelson, CFS's "legal director" called the FDA's ruling "a lose-lose decision for consumers."

Really? Because it costs roughly \$20,000 per animal, cloning won't be used to replicate hamburgers. Instead, the technique will be used to expand the number of elite breeding stock, thereby improving the health and productivity of the overall livestock herd. This will allow farmers to produce higher quality products at lower cost and with fewer natural resources. In exactly which part of that equation do consumers lose? Sure sounds like a win-win to me.

The final hat-tip to the "consumer" gaggle's purely political agenda is their universal insistence on mandatory labeling of any food product derived from clones (or biotechnology in general).

The CFS's Mendelson told the Washington Times, "Consumers are going to be having a product that has . . . a whole load of ethical issues tied to it, without any labeling."

Nonsense. If consumers are interested in "clone-free" foods, the FDA has already made it perfectly clear that there is nothing to stop food companies from labeling their products as such if the label is "truthful and does not imply it is safer than other products."

And that's the rub. These so-called "consumer advocates" know that a mandatory label will be seen by the public as a de facto warning label and that a voluntary "absence" label will, in contrast, be seen as an empty, self-serving marketing ploy. Hence the full-court press for mandatory labeling even though there isn't a shred of scientific evidence anywhere that milk and meat from animal clones is any different from milk and meat from naturally-created animal.

The world today is experiencing the most rapid growth in demand for meat and animal protein products in human history - much to the benefit of overall human health and consumer happiness. But as a recent UN report noted, livestock for food occupy a third of the earth's land area. By 2050 the world's farmers will need to double their output to meet consumer demand, yet do so in a way that minimizes our impacts on the environment. Cloning and other biotechnologies will be critical tools in this important environmental struggle - if the political activists cloaked in consumer clothes get out of the way.

Alex Avery is director of research and education at the Hudson Institute's Center for Global Food Issues and author of the new book, [The Truth About Organic](#).

Give Democrats a Reason

by David Keene

Political analysts have been pawing through the results of the November elections to find out just why the Republicans lost and, just as importantly, whom they lost.

Conservative leaders had been warning the Bush White House for several years that the President's policies both at home and abroad were alienating significant parts of the conservative GOP base. They agreed that unless steps were taken to solidify that base, there would ultimately be electoral consequences as voters who share Republican or conservative values, but aren't Republicans first, decide to abandon the GOP or simply to stay home.



David Keene

Mainstream GOP leaders dismissed these concerns and seemed to honestly believe that if they could simply raise and spend enough money and put together a state-of-the-art "get-out-the-vote" campaign they wouldn't have to worry about what policies they were pursuing. They were proven tragically wrong.

The GOP raised and spent a lot of money. In addition, they funneled billions of dollars in taxpayer funds to targeted House districts and states in which their Senate candidates were in tight races, and then organized thousands of volunteers to make calls to targeted Republican voters.

The volunteers making those calls in the few days before the November election began to realize that even their targeted voters weren't always with them. One volunteer who made hundreds of calls as part of the GOP's vaunted "72-Hour Program" told me that a small but significant number of previously loyal GOP voters were telling her they would vote, but not for Republican candidates.

"Too many of our voters felt betrayed and were ready to lash out at those who they blamed for the betrayal," she said. Thus, even in areas where the Republican machinery was making the contacts their "book" told them they needed to win, they found themselves falling short at the polls.

Some deserters were traditional Republicans of long standing, but many were newer Republicans attracted to the GOP during and immediately following the Reagan years. They came from Democratic families and were part of the voter group once called "Reagan Democrats" who were attracted to "the party of bold colors" that Ronald Reagan led into the '80s.

The winning electoral coalition that Reagan put together in 1980 and that survived into the new century consisted not just of traditional Republicans, but of Republicans and Democrats who shared the Reaganite concerns about big government, high taxes, cultural degeneration and the need for strength in a dangerous world.

The move to the GOP was not an easy one. Their parents and grandparents were, in most cases, strong Democrats. Many of them were union members or lived in areas where voting anything other than a straight Democratic ticket was considered heresy. But millions of them did move. They were attracted by Reagan's personality and, more importantly, by his ability to articulate shared values that convinced them that he and his new Republican Party were worth supporting.

[David Keene](#) is the chairman of the American Conservative Union and a managing associate with the Carmen Group, a Washington, D.C.-based governmental-affairs firm.

Value of Obstruction

by Paul M. Weyrich

The ancient saying that "time flies" was never truer as the 110th Congress convened this year. It was 40 years ago exactly that this eager 24-year old edged into Washington. I had been delayed a few days by then the largest snow storm in history. I stayed overnight in a hotel which now houses the Heritage Foundation. There was no one to tell me that I would one day be its first President. My only concern was where to park my car. I had not yet been to my office, in the suite of Senator Gordon L. Allott (R-CO) and his staff. The opening of the 90th Congress was at hand. Republicans had done better than expected during the 1966 elections. The air, with Lyndon B. Johnson in the White House, was that Republicans would win the 1968 elections. LBJ had become unpopular due to the war. He now had lost politically. The GOP had picked up 46 House seats and five Senate seats.



Paul M. Weyrich

Republicans, especially in the House, with Representative Joe Waggoner's (D-LA) conservative Democrats, were sufficiently numerous to create political defeats for the White House. I was eager to learn. I had no doubt that my mentor, Senator Allott, got tired of being peppered with questions although he never indicated such. He seemed almost as eager to touch as I had been to learn. For example, the Senator unexpectedly agreed, against the wishes of his entire senior staff except yours truly, to transfer to the newly created Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee. The only reason for his doing so was my indicating in a staff meeting to discuss the subject that this was my area of interest. So he dropped in my lap the best present I possibly could have.

He put me in a position of authority in the one area of my own expertise. Suddenly at age 24 I was mature beyond my years. Now I didn't have only him to teach me but also a bevy of senior staff transferred because of the creation of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee to mirror the newly created Department of Transportation. I mention all this because I just witnessed the installation of the brand new Congress. Everything is almost the mirror opposite as when I arrived here 40 years ago. The Democrats had done better than expected in the Congressional elections. This was especially true of the House. In the Senate the GOP had not done quite as well. LBJ was mired down in the Vietnamese War, as President George W. Bush in Iraq. The Democrats are morally certain they are going to win in 2008; the same was true of the Republicans in 1968. In fact, the effort of Senator Robert P. Griffin (R-MI) to defeat Supreme Court Chief Justice nominee Abe Fortas was precisely due to the belief in GOP circles that our candidate should name the new Chief Justice. Granted Fortas had enough liabilities to assure his defeat, but I can tell you in my discussions with both Senators Allott and Griffin that a GOP victory in 1968 was very much a motivating factor in the Fortas defeat. (Justice Fortas, of course, resigned, following ethics disclosures.)

True, there was talk of bipartisanship. But LBJ had shoved the Great Society down the throats of legislators and if he knew how to compromise he didn't show it. As a result all of the talk I heard in those early days was of payback time to LBJ. If we could defeat him we wanted to do so. The same attitude exists among the liberals in the House. Bush and the Republicans had often shut them out of the legislative process. Now that they have the majority they want to stick it to Bush, regardless of the issue. The talk of bipartisanship today is worth as much as it was then.

Somewhere there is an eager 24-year old staffer who is getting his start with the opening of the 110th Congress. Perhaps his Senator is able to shift over to the Homeland Security Committee, against the advice of his senior staff but because he wanted to give that eager 24-year old a chance.

Of course, the one thing which is different today is Speaker Nancy Pelosi. She has been dubbed "Queen for a Day" by some of the media. Certainly the liberal media is lapping her every move. John W. McCormack (D-MA), who succeeded Sam Rayburn (D-TX), as Speaker, was a very modest man. He indulged none of the pomp associated with his becoming Speaker that Mrs. Pelosi has promoted.

The problem is Republicans. They haven't figured out who they are. After a dozen years in the majority, they have not adjusted to minority status. They come off as whining juveniles who have been deprived of something they think should be theirs.

The Senate Minority Leader told some interested parties that he has a lot of ability to stop bad legislation in the Senate and he would not hesitate to use whatever means were necessary. That is well and good. Perhaps Republicans will start acting like Republicans. But the more I thought of what Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) said the more I thought that perhaps there would be a better way. It takes only 41 Senators to obstruct the Majority's agenda – the more so because Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD) is months away from casting a vote on the Senate Floor. But if Senator McConnell defeated legislation in that manner the media coverage would be negative and confusing.

If Senator McConnell could secure an absolute commitment from the President to veto bad legislation it would be preferable to fight the legislation, then let it pass with the votes of all of the Democrats and a few Republicans who always want to do the wrong thing. Then if Bush vetoed bad legislation the event would receive enormous and very clear coverage. President Ford vetoed some 60 bills in his short time in office. Only three were overridden. However, he garnered such good will from doing so that venerable conservatives such as Carl T. Curtis (R-NE) and Clifford P. Hansen (R-WY) ended up in the Ford camp instead of that of Ronald Reagan in 1976.

If McConnell blocked bad legislation he would cause Senator Harry M. Reid (D-NV) and the Democrats to charge that he was obstructionist. They then would campaign on the theme that additional liberal Senators were needed to override the obstructionist majority. But if McConnell could get Bush to veto the same legislation it would be a wholly different ballgame. The President, even with a hostile press, always can get clearer cut coverage for vetoing a bill than a minority of Senators can obtain in voting against cloture. The problem will be to get Bush to commit to veto the bad legislation. Many legislators voted for the infamous McCain-Feingold campaign legislation, which clearly restricts free speech. Bush said he thought the bill was unconstitutional but he was sure the Supreme Court would strike it down. The Court did not invalidate the law despite language in the First Amendment to the Constitution that "Congress shall make no law ...[abridging] the freedom of speech..." But if 41 Senators needed for a filibuster would petition the White House to veto the legislation our guys could fight the legislation and vote against it. It would pass by the narrowest of margins. Then a Bush veto would make a tremendous difference. I know Bush doesn't like to veto legislation. He had the excuse these past six years that he didn't want to go against a Republican Congress. Those days are over.

I hope and pray that the Senators can implement this strategy and that Bush will agree to it. If he were perceived as weak in the past this is a way for him to go out looking strong. The more things change the more they remain the same. That absolutely can be said of this Congress, despite Mrs. Pelosi. She will be a passing fad for a time. Meanwhile, Congress will begin to act like Congresses past. If Bush will open the door a new chapter in our nation's history can be written. The chapter I propose is unlikely but possible if we all sing off of the same song sheet.

Paul M. Weyrich is Chairman and CEO of the Free Congress Foundation.

Wal-Mart Left Politics

by John Carlisle

Wal-Mart has begun a national television ad campaign to counter allegations from union-funded activists that it mistreats its workers. Less visible is a separate Wal-Mart campaign to co-op some of its critics by embracing and funding liberal political and social causes. Over the last three years, the company has become a booster of environmental alarmism, racial preferences, and special rights for homosexuals.



Supporting these controversial policies is not likely to buy Wal-Mart the peace it desperately seeks. The corporation is finding out the hard way that the more it tries to appease activist groups, the more they demand.

In October 2005, Wal-Mart CEO Lee Scott unveiled Wal-Mart's sweeping environmental agenda in a speech at the company's headquarters. Declaring that the planet was confronted with stark ecological challenges such as the scientifically unproven threat of man-made global warming, Scott announced that Wal-Mart plans to invest \$500 million annually in technologies to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent.

Wal-Mart recently donated \$75,000 to Al Gore's "Climate Project" which aims to train 1,000 activists to frighten the public into supporting drastic reductions in carbon dioxide emissions that could cost over a million American jobs - and put a mighty big hole in the pockets of Wal-Mart customers.

Important environmental groups are also lending their support to Wal-Mart, including the World Wildlife Fund and Environmental Defense, a recent beneficiary of a \$1.1 million donation from the Walton Family Foundation. But the Sierra Club and other environmental activists keep up a drumbeat of criticism.

Jesse Jackson is an especially strong critic of Wal-Mart. In an apparent attempt to quiet Jackson, Wal-Mart placed African-American businessman Christopher Williams on its board in 2004. Williams is a longtime Jackson associate who was a founding member of the Wall Street Project, the Rainbow/PUSH corporate shakedown operation.

Wal-Mart also implemented a de facto quota system that gives preferences to promoting women and minorities. At Wal-Mart, if 50 percent of applicants for management positions are women, then 50 percent of those promoted to management must be women. Wal-Mart goes so far as to cut the bonuses of executives by up to 15 percent if they fail to meet their hiring quotas. Jackson has repaid this concession with even more strident criticism of the company, even calling it a "Confederate Economic Trojan Horse."

Likewise, Wal-Mart's effort to placate the homosexual lobby by endorsing its goal to legitimize same-sex marriage, an idea large majorities of voters have emphatically rejected, is backfiring. In 2005, Wal-Mart took an incremental step in recognizing same-sex partners as a legitimate family when the company filed an employee conflict-of-interest policy with the Securities and Exchange Commission that included homosexual couples in its definition of "immediate family."

The Human Rights Campaign, a homosexual lobbying group, applauded the decision but insisted that the retailer needed to extend the same healthcare benefits to homosexual couples that it offered to regular families. Wal-Mart's refusal to do so has angered homosexual activists, squandering any goodwill it thought it had won.

Wal-Mart's surrender to the Left is simply bad politics and bad business. The liberal constituencies Wal-Mart is trying to co-opt cannot be won over. The company would do better to steer clear of noisy activists lest it risk alienating the "Middle America" shopper that has made it so successful.

John Carlisle is the Director of Policy at the National Legal and Policy Center, a nonprofit foundation dedicated to promoting ethics in public life. He is the author of a just-published Special Report on Wal-Mart.

Iraq New Year

Dear Mom,

It is kind of hard being a floater, essentially going from team to team as people go on leave because you are a member of every team, but not really a part of any team. I don't know how much sense that makes ... like that saying "a jack of all trades but a master of none." I have been a gunner, a driver, dismounted security, paperwork bitch, and assorted other things, but my job isn't steady and neither is my location. I just did another temporary move to backfill for a guy out on leave. I've worked with this team before (I was their driver for about a month during the summer) so I knew the area I was going to and the people I would be working with.



The day started off fairly normal. In fact, given that we didn't have to come in until 1000 it started off pretty well. I slept until about 0830 and woke up to brush my teeth, get dressed, clean my weapons, inspect my equipment and check our truck for any problems. Everything seemed to be in order, so we started setting the truck up for the mission, checked and double checked everything, and went to link up with our patrol around 1230. Since our teams only have three people and an interpreter, we need to go out in sector with other people to have the proper security. The deal works like this, we provide PSYOP support for their mission, and they provide security for us. Of course, we are all riflemen first, and PSYOP soldiers second. With 80 odd days left in country, at this point the most important thing is getting in and out alive. We met up with the patrol inside the gate and headed out.

Our sector is al Dora, with the exception of Ramadi, the most dangerous area of Baghdad, and the worst area for sectarian violence. Dora is what they call a Sunni stronghold. They say that because the country is mostly Shia, and the Shia tend to kill off the Sunnis if they find them by themselves, so while Sunni and Shia used to be spread out amongst each other, in the past year and a half to two years they have been self segregating within the city. There are Shia neighborhoods and then there are Sunni neighborhoods right next to them, with the fault lines between them.

It's neighborhood vs. neighborhood in Baghdad, not family vs. family: Furat & Jihad, Dora & Abu Tschir, Ameriyah & Ghazaliyah-you can't see the lines when you're standing in the area, but everyone knows they are there. One area kidnaps and kills, then rushes to the other and dumps the bodies; small death squads go into the opposing neighborhood to kill, and then hurry back to the safety of their ghetto. People fire rockets and mortars from a couple of streets over, indiscriminately killing anyone in the area. After all, if they live on the other side, they must be the enemy.

The great equalizer is their hatred for us, though I'm not saying that this in any way unifies them. It just means that, if given a choice between blowing up a truck full of Sunnis or a truck full of US soldiers, a Shia might think twice about killing the Sunnis ... I mean they can always kill them later when we aren't around, right?

I'm straying off topic -- the point is that working in a Sunni neighborhood after we just killed off Saddam Hussein, is not a place you want to be.

We rolled out the gate and on to the main road. The plan was fairly simple. We were to go by one of the National Police checkpoints in the area and do a drive-by check on them, then go into the Muhallas (residential areas) and do a little PSYOP. We rolled through the checkpoint, but the volume of cars lined up to go through prevented us from taking the first turn into the Muhalla, so we went down one street to an unimproved (translate: dirt)road to go in that way.

Our truck was the second truck in the patrol, and the moment that we turned onto the street an IED exploded, striking the vehicle directly in front of us. It was only about 15 meters in front of us and it was one of the bigger IED blasts I've seen in my time here. Our trucks weigh in at about 9,000 lbs straight from the factory, and with armor they weigh around 12,000 lbs. Lately, we have added additional armor supplements throughout the truck. Fully loaded with personnel and equipment, our trucks weigh anywhere from 17,000-18,000 lbs. That's a lot of truck. The IED that went off lifted the truck in front of us into the air about 5 ft and ripped off the turret shield and the mounted weapon. When the truck slammed back into the ground, the driver's door and 2 tires fell off.

Everyone stopped for about a millisecond, figuring the guys inside were dead and trying to integrate the event into their brains. Then everyone moved, going in to get the guys, responding to incoming gunfire, moving to pull security 360 degrees around our position. I pulled our truck out and moved to set up a roadblock. We were securing the north end of the street and taking fire from the north and west. We had guys out trying to retrieve casualties and attempting to hook up the downed vehicle so it could be towed back to a more secure location. It took about 15-20 minutes to bring the vehicle back to the checkpoint (only about 50 meters behind us) and we were taking fire the whole time. We pulled back to the checkpoint and set up our position.

One soldier standing behind our truck was crouched behind a jersey barrier looking north. The report of a sniper rifle is very distinct and we all heard it as the soldier went down. The round hit him in the head, through and through and then lodged itself into another soldier's kneepad. Someone yelled for a medic. I grabbed the aid bag and my boss wrapped the guys head up with a bandage. There wasn't a lot of blood ... usually there's more but there wasn't that much this time.

Someone brought a stretcher and the guy was loaded up. We were still taking fire, and the only protection was those short jersey barriers. Rounds were impacting everywhere. The wounded soldier started throwing up and his bandage fell off, poor bastard. Bullets were impacting all around us as we loaded the stretcher into our truck. Military stretchers are too long to fit in a military vehicle and this very situation had presented us some problems in similar situations in the past. This time, we had to close the 1,000 lb door with a bungee cord and hope it held long enough to get to the hospital.

Our gunner had to sit on top of the casualty and hold the bungee cord while they drove to the Combat Support Hospital (CSH, known as the CASH.) Because the medic and the wounded soldier were in our vehicle, me and our terp (interpreter) had to stay behind. I got the terp into a truck, and went to pull security. It had been an hour since the attack began and we were still taking heavy fire from two sides. It was like a game of whack-a-mole: a guy would pop out, then back, and another guy would pop up, and then down. They called everyone to get into the trucks and used the machine guns for about 20 minutes, and then we dismantled again. Two guys came out on the street with weapons and fired on us and the guy next to me shot off a high explosive round from his grenade launcher. Those two guys didn't shoot at us again.

I spotted two more in ski masks on a rooftop and fired on them, and damned if they didn't fire right back at me. I fired back, as did the machine gunner right next to me. The shots continued all around us as a kid ran out in the street and lit a car on fire. No one killed the kid. No one wanted to be the guy on TV that was going to jail because he shot an unarmed kid. We had broadcasted in Arabic after the first 45 minutes that even coming out onto the street was an act of aggression at this point. The kid lived but we probably should have shot him because he was lighting the car on fire to provide a smoke screen for more people to shoot at us and to go in and out of the mosque that was right in front of us.

After a hot second, we just fired through the smoke so we could suppress the incoming fire from that direction. We all got on line and fired for about 5 minutes, then launched a grenade for good measure. Another sniper shot went off but no one went down. At this point we had been fighting for 2 hours and it was decided that anyone who was even the least bit sane would not be near a window, so we fired on windows at random, hoping to catch the sniper off guard before he could get another one of our guys. We had called in attack aviation as a show of force and the F18 did two flyovers, then the Apaches came in looking for people running away, or on rooftops. After another 30 minutes of intermittent fighting, we loaded up and went on our way.

In my time here, I have never seen such a sustained fight. Ordinarily, a gunfight only lasts about 15-20 minutes, then everyone has either left or been killed. This one dragged on for almost 3 hours. It was ridiculous. Our convoy had loaded up the downed truck on a wrecker and we were escorting it back to the base when the F18 came overhead one more time.

I've never seen an Iraqi move as quickly as when a jet flies low through an area. I saw it on a mission once a while back and it amazed me then too. People get out of dodge when a jet flies by. It is a knee jerk reaction when you got the shit bombed out of your city three years ago, I guess. It felt good to have the birds around, even if it would take an act of congress for them to actually help us out when we are under attack.

We had five wounded in action that day. The thing that bothered me the most about the whole day was that I didn't flinch when the IED went off ... during the firefight I was about as stressed out as I would be reading a book or cooking dinner. Let me just say that I don't mean this to imply that I'm so "tough" or any of that crap, it just is. I don't like it either. Stress like that hits you later. Weird things set it off- when people speak Arabic, my hands shake. It happens in situations that don't make sense, like kids asking for chocolate or a soccer ball.

On New Year's Day we cordoned off an IED and waited for Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) to come make it go away for us. Then, we got called out to support an SKT (Small Kill Team-sniper team) that had witnessed a guy emplacing an IED and, instead of killing him from a distance (which they had every right to do) left the relative safety of their nest and pursued him down the main road on foot. They tackled him and roughed him up a bit, then called for help because their position had been compromised.

We were called in to tactically question the men about terrorist activities in the area (al-Qaeda has a big presence in Dora.) Now, this is not interrogation, it's tactical questioning and there is a fine line between the correct tactical question and jail time so that's all I am going to say about that.

When we were finished, we had the Iraqi National Police bring the detainees to their barracks for holding to wait on another patrol and we went on our way. Acting on intelligence, we went in search of something first in our vehicles, then on foot through the Muhalla. We went to every house and searched behind every gate on the block. We never found what we were after, but (shock) we did find a weapons cache full of military grade weapons and bags of home made explosives during our search. Then we waited around for EOD to collect the stuff. A fairly uneventful day, only a couple of random gun shots, no dead people, and a lot of hurry up and wait.

When we returned, it was to the news that one of our guys had been killed and two wounded while we were out. Now, our first act as a unit for the New Year will be attending a memorial service. Battlefield memorial services are the most depressing thing in existence, FYI.

Yesterday we picked up some dead people and then collected some new al-Qaeda propaganda to analyze. Al-Qaeda is big on intimidation, leaving death threats and spray painting on walls

at night, that kind of thing. The day was fairly uneventful, but for it being frickin freezing, and we were happy to return to the base that night. Once again, we returned to bad news: three more of our guys wounded in action.

Our numbers don't sound so bad when you compare them to other units. The thing is that PSYOP is a family. There aren't many of us and we are spread out thin. Our company supports the entire city of Baghdad and the surrounding rural areas. There are only about three PSYOP soldiers per every 1000 regular Army soldiers. We are so spread out that a loss of two people is the largest number of people killed in any one PSYOP company during a deployment. There was one other unit that lost two soldiers in the same attack.

Like any family, we take the loss of one of our own pretty hard. Go ask an infantryman how many infantry have been killed, ask him to list names and dates, ask him if he went to their services, their funerals, did he know them all? PSYOP soldiers know each other, even in other units, we know names and dates, and go to the funerals. It's what you do for family. PSYOP has lost 8 soldiers since 2001, I knew 5 of them. I am really tired of memorial services. The ones that we attend for people that we work with here are hard, but when it is a PSYOP soldier, it is a very whole different kind of hard.

Love [her daughter]

Wanted For 2008

by Kerry Thomas

Representative Republic seeks fiscal conservative to lead country for four or eight years. Must be at least 35 years of age, and a natural born citizen.

Adherence to the Constitution is a prerequisite. Prefer some experience in governing, but not required. Applicant should be able to demonstrate excellent communication and leadership skills. Formal education is preferred, but not required.

SALARY: \$400,000/year plus benefits, housing and travel. Post employment pension is \$200,000/year.

Your responsibilities will be to preserve and protect the Constitution from all enemies, foreign and domestic. You will assume the duties of commander-in-chief of all armed forces. You will be managing more than 1.8 million employees, and a \$3 trillion budget. Some travel and public appearances will be required. Your duties will not include being minister of morality, wet nurse to the populace, or arbiter of fairness.

Send many letters of interest to the American voters. Low-cost high-tech methods of effective communication are a must.

Democrats need not apply, as that entry has already been filled by Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. They are expected to spend \$100 million to try to buy the position. Also, Republicans with long careers in politics, party loyalists who've simply put it their time and are now at the top of the pecking order, and RINOs need not apply.

Republicans should present a plan outlining their positions on such topics as the federal budget, taxation, education, employment, health care, terrorism, international affairs, Social Security, and immigration.

Prospective candidates should concentrate on lowering taxes to stimulate economic growth; reducing the size and scope of the federal government; maintaining a strong military capable of defending the nation; sunseting Social Security for younger citizens while ensuring it remains strong for those who are already in the program; streamlining the legal immigration process and assimilating those who are already here; and educating our citizens about the history and traditions that have made America the shining beacon of light for the oppressed peoples of the world.

Candidates should be champions of liberty and justice for all citizens. Those who seek to use the position to restrict citizens' liberties or to divide the populace need not apply. Candidates should encourage every citizen to pursue their destiny, with as little interference from their government as possible.

Candidates should not use phrases like "family values," "working families," "for the children," "investment," "fair share," "working wage, living wage, fair wage," "global village," or "United Nations."

The interview process has already begun, and preliminary selections will be made starting December 2007. Final selection will be made November 4, 2008, and the winning candidate will assume office on January 20, 2009. *Kerry Thomas is at kerrythomas.com.*



Reader Comments

Editor: Your "Reagan Shows the Way" was simply EXCELLENT. Jim Cavanaugh, e-PRO
www.JimCavanaugh.info

Editor: As your "Reagan Shows the Way" demonstrates, President Reagan was a great man. I wanted to know your opinion on George W. Bush. Is he the biggest spender & squanderer of money America has ever known? As an Independent I'm curious to know your take. Thanks for you time. Best Regards, Martin E Smith III

Editor: That the GOP lost its way is demonstrated by the fact they gerrymandered their districts, essentially choosing their own electorates, and still lost power in 2006. That is a very ominous indicator for 2008 and beyond. Bush has failed, both as a president and as a leader. His administration needs to be regarded in that harsh light of reality. The GOP needs to completely re-assess strategy. George Bush played politics with education, taxes, entitlements, election laws, etc. Bush received high praise from the media (probably because they knew he was mindlessly skipping down their 'road paved with good intentions' -- the one that leads to straight to hell). Conservatives in DC should have been more outspoken in their criticism of Bush. Instead, conservative groups engaged in shameless White House support (like many others --including some people in my own family) which, in effect, ratified Bush's incredibly poor decisions. There is no way that GOP can win by rallying around Bush at this point. None of the likely or leading GOP presidential candidates have made even a plausible case (never mind a credible one) that they should be elected in 2008. Dump them and find a strong conservative candidate behind which to rally (it may take a Barry Goldwater like candidate losing to someone like Hillary Clinton (Hillary the Klingon?) to wake up the GOP party leadership). A return to principles is needed, otherwise the GOP will be reduced to "playing politics" in 2008 -- and losing as they did in 1976 (to a peanut farmer). Respectfully, with regrets, Brian Lynch, Austin TX

Editor: Here are some sobering facts from "The Hotline" daily news summary about the popular vote for the House of Representatives from 2000 to 2006. Alan Roth

	Republican Votes	Democratic Votes
2000	47,238,467 (50.3%)	46,701,783 (49.7%)
2002	37,428,113 (52.5%)	33,905,437 (47.5%)
2004	56,112,869 (51.4%)	53,128,318 (48.6%)
2006	35,904,068 (45.9%)	42,291,298 (54.1%)
Total	176,683,517 (50.1%)	176,026,836 (49.9%)

Editor: Thank you for Paul Weyrich's article "Pinochet Legacy" in your last edition. Americans seem to have forgotten how important Pinochet was in saving Chile from communism, and

launching it into a free market, capitalist, democratic model. He proved he was not a dictator when he held the referendum and upon the negative result, stepped down voluntarily. No other "dictator" in history ever did that, anywhere in the world! I am a Republican, born in Cuba who detests communism, especially the Castro variety, which has enslaved the people of Cuba for 48 years. I am a journalist and would like to contribute to Conservative Battleline. I will translate your article on Pinochet into Spanish, giving you and your publication credit, for broadcasting into Cuba through the U.S. owned Radio Marti Program, where I contribute 20 stories weekly. Hilda Inclan, Publisher/Editor-in-Chief and Owner, Independent Publishing Company, Inc. and Cruise 'n Travel - En Espanol Magazine

Editor: Rhetoric from the right and from the left is all too idealistic, perhaps, too partisan, to really grapple with the complex issues involved on getting Iraq right. I believe in the end we are going to have to pick a side, and subjugation / relocation of the other side may be an unfortunate evil in this devolving mess. American history depicts quite graphically, especially during the constitutional convention, what kind of measures and compromises may be necessary for the union of politically and religiously diverse states to take hold. As far as troop escalation, it is easy to say that increasing our resource level of troops will have no effect, but how do we know this? Increasing troop strength works, and even Lincoln had to fight an incredible amount of political opposition for pushing drafts, but thank god the union held. A war of resources, if we are committed, can have a positive outcome. If we rely on public opinion polls to fight our wars instead of our generals, God help us. The consequences of failure in Iraq are so imponderable and dangerous not just for America, but for all of the world.
Larry Barrett

Editor: I imagine there are a lot of others like me who want to print the entire issue of ConservativeBattleline with one click, to be read later. How about offering a pdf of the entire issue with a button that says "Print the Entire Issue Now -- click here"? Easy to do and it might increase readership. Jameson Campaigne [*Editor responds: Thanks. We will try this in our next edition.*]

Editor: Richard Viguerie and I haven't always agreed, especially in recent years, unlike the early days of the movement when we were two sides of the same coin. But this time Richard in his new book "Conservatism Betrayed" has it right. Conservatives should heed his advice. We had a third force as late as the Reagan years, although it was somewhat diminished. In 1994, when the GOP took control of the House of Representatives after 40 years and of the United States Senate after eight, I witnessed the demise of the third force entirely. I watched almost helplessly as conservatives muted their criticism of the White House and Congress because they might not get their picture with the Speaker of the House or some other perk which goes with the majority. I kept asking the question, "If Democrats were in control what would we be saying?" The answer usually was an acknowledgement that if Democrats were in control we would be shouting from the rooftops but they are not in control so out of some misplaced loyalty to the Republicans we must keep our mouths shut. Another Viguerie point with which I agree is that our movement needs to work with both political parties by pulling them to the right. If we are a true third force we will do just that. Anyway, it is time to return to creating this third force. If you are old enough, as Richard Viguerie said, you get to do things twice. This independent force would be respected by both sides if and when it became sufficiently powerful. Viguerie made it clear he was not talking about a third party. Whatever, the third force needs to back Senator Thomas Coburn M.D. (R-OK) in his efforts at fiscal sanity. But we

must oppose spending, which is utterly out of control. I wish Viguerie well on his new book. Promoting the third force on his book tour absolutely will help the conservative cause. Paul M. Weyrich