



CONSERVATIVE BATTLELINE ONLINE

The "Bold Colors" Conservative Voice in Washington

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Conservatives Lose

by Donald Devine

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The radical leftist Alexander Cockburn "demonstrated during his ten years as Huckabee is a progressive, with substantive action on immigration, sales taxes, education of poor kids and convicted criminals." As governor he state education association union generally, he received the NEA for president.



Alexander Cockburn

New Hampshire GOP winner John Bush tax cuts in 2001 and again in Administration's amnesty immigration Behind educational centralization act. speech-limiting McCain-Feingold enthusiastic supporter of more fields as securities, automobiles and communications, among others.

said of the Iowa Republican victor: as the governor of Arkansas, [Mike] enlightened views and a record of public health, the regressive nature of the possibility of redemption for was so "enlightened" in following the agenda and with increasing spending endorsement of the New Hampshire

McCain voted against the George W. 2003. He supported the bill. He supported the No Child Left He was co-sponsor of the free-campaign finance bill. He is an government market regulation in such

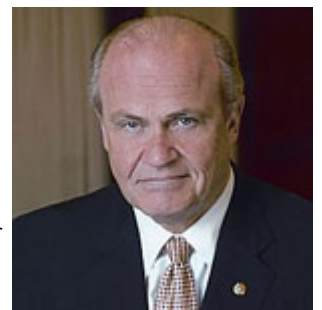
Ronald Reagan would be appalled! Although a miracle is remotely possible, the likelihood is that Reagan conservatism is dead for this election.



Sure Gov. Huckabee is strong on conservative social issues and Sen. McCain is a war hero and often a leader against wasteful spending and earmarks. But Ronald Reagan insisted that conservatism was a triad of limited national government taxes, regulation and spending, a commitment to traditional social values, and a strong but pragmatic foreign policy. The closest to the Reagan tripartite formula is Fred Thompson but he came in a weak third in Iowa and had one percent in the Granite State. Ron Paul is strong on cutting spending and supporting traditional social issues but, although he recognizes proper limits on foreign entanglements, goes to the extreme of voting against almost all defense appropriations and sees little need for any foreign military presence at all.

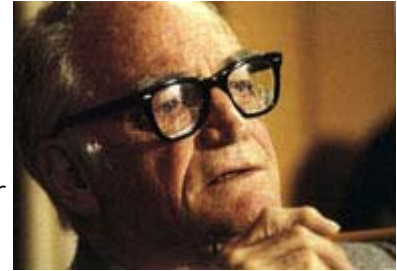
While Mitt Romney mostly says things President Reagan would agree with, he has not been able to convince most people he is sincere and as a result received disappointing results in the early states, including his home state Michigan, after large leads in early polls. The only other candidate registering in the nomination contests is Rudy Giuliani, who is questionable on all three of the Reagan criteria. So the chances a Reaganite can win are slim and none.

Even at its lowest ebb, conservatism had hope for the future. Barry Goldwater lost the 1964 election by a landslide. But conservatives considered him the winner because his ideals eventually triumphed under President Reagan. Although his opponent won overwhelmingly, by the end of Lyndon Johnson's term he was so unpopular he could not even seek re-election. His Great Society ended in the 1970s with both colossal inflation and economic stagnation. In contrast, Sen. Goldwater's idea of limited constitutional government became the Republican platform and rallied the imagination of the generation that nominated and elected Reagan, resulting in a 9.7 percent reduction in non-defense discretionary spending, with total domestic spending down from 17.9 to 16.4 percent of GDP during his tenure.



The only one with any claim to be a future Barry Goldwater is Rep. Paul; but he has some real problems and will certainly not follow his predecessor and win the GOP nomination. This is understandable because the limited government cause is now actually at an even lower ebb. Long gone are the days of President Reagan's absolute reduction in discretionary spending over his eight years or even the limited Congressional reductions immediately following the 1994 election. The George W. Bush presidency has resulted in the largest percent increases in domestic national spending of any eight years since the early New Deal—and, of course, in inflation-adjusted dollars, absolute spending has increased many times more even than under Franklin Roosevelt with much greater market regulation and control over state and local governments.

Even worse, over these years most young Republicans now consider federal standards to control education, energy, commerce, agriculture, etc. as the proper positions of their party, rather than policy areas for state or local government or the private sector, as for Goldwater and Reagan. Many others think empire should be the foreign policy goal, while Reagan's Weinberger Doctrine set narrow limits on the use of military force. In an era when a presumably conservative president says that "when someone hurts, government has to move" no leader is speaking for a Reagan-like limited government and the young assume big government is the only solution.



The young people who provided the Goldwater movement with its energy and became the adult leadership for Reagan came predominately from an organization called Young Americans for Freedom. Its now aged alumni were asked their opinion of Rep. Paul and particularly what they would have thought of him if they were now as young as they were when they were first attracted to Goldwater. Twenty-seven percent were so opposed to his anti-war positions that they would not even consider him a conservative. Yet, while only 38 percent were actually supporting Paul for president, 72 percent thought they would have been attracted to and inspired by his limited constitutional government message when they were young.

Rep. Paul's position that American forces should not be involved beyond its shores does go well beyond even traditional non-interventionism. YAF's mission statement allowed foreign intervention based upon the "just interests" of the U.S., not on abstract non-interventionism (nor upon abstract intervention, for that matter). From the earliest years of the new Constitution, the U.S. was in Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, the French high-seas, British Canada and Spanish Florida, to say nothing about against (foreign) Indian tribes. George Washington's warning was against entangling, permanent alliances, not about rejecting foreign relationships per se. It is true, as Paul likes to quote, that John Quincy Adams spoke of America's heart and how it should act in world affairs in the following terms.



Ron Paul

Wherever the standard of freedom and independence has been or shall be unfurled, there will her heart, her benedictions and her prayers be. But she goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own. She will commend the general cause by the countenance of her voice, and the benignant sympathy of her example. She well knows that by once enlisting under other banners than her own, were they even the banners of foreign independence, she would involve herself beyond the

power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom. The fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from liberty to force. The frontlet on her brows would no longer beam with the ineffable splendor of freedom and independence; but in its stead would soon be substituted an imperial diadem, flashing in false and tarnished lustre the murky radiance of dominion and power. She might become the dictatress of the world; she would be no longer the ruler of her own spirit. . . . Her glory is not dominion, but liberty. Her march is the march of the mind.

Yet, Paul omits Adams' immediately following words.

She has a spear and a shield: but the motto upon her shield is, Freedom, Independence, Peace. This has been her Declaration: this has been, as far as her necessary intercourse with the rest of mankind would permit, her practice.

Paul's foreign policy views limit his future appeal. Even Adams held that America does have a spear as well as a shield and she can be aloof from foreign engagement only to the degree "her necessary intercourse with the rest of mankind" allows. Adams, of course, himself was the author of the rather aggressive Monroe Doctrine setting terms for all of South America, as well as of the transcontinental treaty with Spain and new relationships with Denmark, Mexico, the Hanseatic League, the Scandinavian countries, Prussia and Austria. One can even agree with Paul that it was not in U.S. interests to invade Iraq but with Adams not to reject it on abstract principle but upon whether it was necessary or not, or whether it should not have degenerated into nation-building. It should be noted that even Rep. Paul voted for the initial engagement in Afghanistan.

On the other hand, there is no question that Paul has reached deep into popular passions at least among active citizens. His packed early rallies exploded with placards reading "liberty, liberty." John Derbyshire says they might be "crazy, as some colleagues tell me" and "perhaps they are, to be shouting for liberty in 2007, after decades of swelling federal power and arrogance, of proliferating taxes, rules, and interests, of gushing transfers of wealth to politically connected elites from working- and middle-class grunts, of the college and teacher-union scams, of the metastasizing tort-law rackets, of ever more numerous yet ever more clueless intelligence agencies, of open borders and visas for people who hate us, of widening cracks in our sense of nationhood ("Press one for English ..."), of speech codes and race lobbies and judicial impositions." One might even say it is as "crazy" to be for limited constitutional government today as it was in 1964.

Political movements are built on enthusiasm and whatever the Paul supporters are, they are fervent. Talk is cheap but writing checks and activism show commitment. In fact, it was Barry Goldwater who was the first to support a presidential campaign predominantly on small contributions and this prefigured his influence. Paul's fundraising is phenomenal. In November, Paul surpassed the all-time on-line record by raising over \$3 million in a single day, from over 37,000 contributors, celebrating Guy Fawkes' rebellion against English oppression of all things, asking only \$100 each. On Boston Tea Party Day he doubled that again with \$6 million. Thousands contribute \$25 per week. His fourth quarter 2007 fundraising of \$18 million surpassed all other candidates and included many more individual contributors. While this does not represent a majority or even close to one, it does represent an army of activists—again following Goldwater.



Ron Paul
REVOLUTION

Except for foreign policy, Paul is very much in the Goldwater and Reagan conservative tradition. Even there, Reagan committed U.S. troops much less than his successors, Republican and Democratic, and Paul's admonitions against empire could fit into a new comprehensive Reaganite limited government platform. On domestic policy, Paul's nickname regarding government spending is "Dr. No," voting against most spending bills in Congress. He is for sound money, eliminating government bureaus, federalism and privatization. He is against abortion, a national ID card, and an environmentalism that does not respect property rights. All matters not given to the national government in the Constitution should be exercised by the states or the people, he insists, mimicking the much neglected 10th Amendment.

Even if the Republican nominee wins the 2008 election, which is unlikely, the idea of limited government would not be high on his agenda and even if it were would be frustrated by a Democratic Congress. Meanwhile, Paul's more passionate supporters will mature. There are nuts in any political movement—and there surely were in the 1960s—but mostly only the sound personalities persevere. Youthful enthusiasm is the lifeblood of any political movement and the only place it now exists on the right is with Mr. Paul, whatever his limitations. If the idea of limited

government is to survive, it can paradoxically only come from a new generation of leaders motivated at least partially by a seventy-two year old Congressman.

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.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Fascistic Liberalism

by Daniel Pipes

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

Liberal fascism sounds like an oxymoron – or a term for conservatives to insult liberals. Actually, it was coined by a socialist writer, none other than the respected and influential left-winger [H.G. Wells](#), who in 1931 called on fellow progressives to become "liberal fascists" and "enlightened Nazis." Really.

His words, indeed, fit a much larger pattern of fusing socialism with fascism: [Mussolini](#) was a leading socialist figure who, during World War I, turned away from internationalism in favor of Italian nationalism and called the blend Fascism. Likewise, Hitler headed the National *Socialist* German *Workers* Party.



Daniel Pipes

These facts jar because they contradict the political spectrum that has shaped our worldview since the late 1930s, which places communism at the far left, followed by socialism, liberalism in the center, conservatism, and then fascism on the far right. But this spectrum, Jonah Goldberg points out in his brilliant, profound, and original new book, [Liberal Fascism: The Secret History of the American Left from Mussolini to the Politics of Meaning](#) (Doubleday), reflects Stalin's use of *fascist* as an epithet to discredit anyone he wished – Trotsky, Churchill, Russian peasants – and distorts reality. Already in 1946, [George Orwell](#) noted that *fascism* had degenerated to signify "something not desirable."

To understand fascism in its full expression requires putting aside Stalin's misrepresentation of the term and also look beyond the Holocaust, and instead return to the period Goldberg terms the "fascist moment," roughly 1910-35. A statist ideology, fascism uses politics as the tool to transform society from atomized individuals into an organic whole. It does so by exalting the state over the individual, expert knowledge over democracy, enforced consensus over debate, and socialism over capitalism. It is totalitarian in Mussolini's original meaning of the term, of "Everything in the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State." Fascism's message boils down to "Enough talk, more action!" Its lasting appeal is getting things done.

In contrast, conservatism calls for limited government, individualism, democratic debate, and capitalism. Its appeal is liberty and leaving citizens alone.

Goldberg's triumph is establishing the kinship between communism, fascism, and liberalism. All derive from the same tradition that goes back to the Jacobins of the French Revolution. His revised political spectrum would focus on the role of the state and go from libertarianism to conservatism to fascism in its many guises – American, Italian, German, Russian, Chinese, Cuban, and so on.

As this listing suggests, fascism is flexible; different iterations differ in specifics but they share "emotional or instinctual impulses." Mussolini tweaked the socialist agenda to emphasize the state; Lenin made workers the vanguard party; Hitler added race. If the German version was militaristic, the American one (which Goldberg calls *liberal fascism*) is nearly pacifist. Goldberg quotes historian Richard Pipes on this point: "Bolshevism and Fascism were heresies of socialism." He proves this confluence in two ways.

First, he offers a "secret history of the American left":

- Woodrow Wilson's Progressivism featured a "militaristic, fanatically nationalist, imperialist, racist" program, enabled by the exigencies of World War I.
- Franklin D. Roosevelt's "fascist New Deal" built on and extended Wilson's government.
- Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society established the modern welfare state, "the ultimate fruition" (so far) of this statist tradition.

- The youthful New Left revolutionaries of the 1960s brought about "an Americanized updating" of the European Old Right.
- Hillary Clinton hopes "to insert the state deep into family life," an essential step of the totalitarian project.

To sum up a near-century of history, if the American political system traditionally encouraged the pursuit of happiness, "more and more of us want to stop chasing it and have it delivered."

Second, Goldberg dissects American liberal programs – racial, economic, environmental, even the "cult of the organic" – and shows their affinities to those of Mussolini and Hitler.

If this summary sounds mind-numbingly implausible, read *Liberal Fascism* in full for its colorful quotes and convincing documentation. The author, hitherto known as a smart, sharp-elbowed polemicist, has proven himself a major political thinker.

Beyond offering a radically different way to understand modern politics, in which *fascist* is no more a slander than *socialist*, Goldberg's extraordinary book provides conservatives with the tools to reply to their liberal tormentors and eventually go on the offensive. If liberals can eternally [raise the specter of Joseph McCarthy](#), conservatives can counter with that of Benito Mussolini.

Mr. Pipes (www.DanielPipes.org) is director of the Middle East Forum.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Phony Green Lightbulbs

by Timothy Carney

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

Had [Thomas Edison](#) employed the same business strategy as his 21st-Century heirs at General Electric, he would have lobbied Congress to outlaw the candle in 1879 when he perfected and patented the light bulb.

He surely could have masked his self-interested lobbying in some public interest claim, such as fire prevention or the need for wax conservation. Today, the mask is environmentalism.

Earlier this month, Thomas Edison's [GE](#), together with [Sylvania](#) and Philips won a legislative victory when Congress passed an energy bill that would outlaw sale of the standard light bulb by 2012.



Tim Carney

Sylvania is the leading light bulb maker worldwide, and GE is tops in America. These two companies, together with Dutch-based [Royal Phillips Electronics](#), concede they basically wrote the new light bulb law. It goes without saying that they stand to profit from it — at consumer expense.

As reported previously in this column, the energy bill was loaded up with all sorts of favors for energy companies, manufacturers and other corporate bigwigs. The light bulb law follows the same pattern: A regulation touted as an environmental boon that will have dubious benefits to the planet, real costs to consumers and guaranteed profits for a handful of well-connected corporations.

The provision would make it illegal for American retailers in most cases to sell light bulbs that do not meet certain standards of efficiency — that is, a bulb in 2012 as bright as today's 60 watt incandescent must get by with 42 watts of electricity.

Today, the clear successor to Thomas Edison's incandescent bulb is the compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). CFLs are more expensive, but they last longer and use less electricity. They have real downsides, however.

First, the light is not as attractive to many consumers — a problem with which the industry has struggled for years. Second, they take a little time after you flip the switch to reach full brightness.

Third, most CFLs can't be used with dimmer switches or three-way fixtures. Fourth, the bulbs contain mercury, creating a potential health hazard in case of breakage and an environmental hazard for disposal.

This is where Philips Electronics enters the picture. Earlier this year, the company released its Halogena — an incandescent bulb (thus giving off more pleasing light and not having mercury) that meets the efficiency standards (by transforming some of the bulb's heat into light using technology the firm calls "EcoBoost").

These EcoBoosting Halogena bulbs are expensive (about \$4.50 a pop compared to today's incandescents, which can run as cheap as 31 cents each), but currently they're the only incandescent bulb that meets Congress' standards. If Philips didn't readily concede they wrote the law, you could guess as much.

GE is only a couple of steps behind, announcing earlier this year that in 2010 it will release an incandescent bulb that's even more efficient than Philips' Halogena. On Dec. 18, the day the bill cleared its biggest hurdle and passed the Senate, GE's stock jumped 8.8 percent, and Philips jumped 2.1 percent.

These companies will get rich thanks to energy bill, but it's not clear the public or the environment will share the windfall GE and Philips will experience. GE makes its CFLs and other fancy light bulbs in [China](#), while it makes its incandescents in the [United States](#).

The light bulb law will ship more American jobs offshore, shift manufacturing to China's dirtier and less efficient factories, and increase shipping distances. Add in the mercury, and it's not clear how good this law is for the environment. Its clearest benefit is to the companies who lobbied for it.

Democrats came to [Washington](#) promising to end the influence of big business lobbyists. The energy bill — with its gifts to aluminum giants such as [Alcoa](#), ethanol moguls such as [Goldman Sachs](#) and [Archer Daniels Midland](#), and now GE, Sylvania and Phillips — shows that the doors of power are as wide open to corporate lobbyists as they have ever been, as long as the lobbyists are dressed in green.

Washington Examiner columnist [Timothy P. Carney](#) is senior reporter for the Evans-Novak Political Report. This first appeared in his Examiner column.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Charlie Wilson's War?

by Spencer Warren

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan beginning on Christmas Eve, 1979 marked the end of détente. The baldness of the Soviet aggression, its first such overt aggression of the Cold War, following recent interventions in Ethiopia and Angola and a massive nuclear and conventional military build-up, shocked the American public out of its post-Vietnam malaise and helped lead to the election of Ronald Reagan eleven months later -- with fatal consequences for the Soviet Empire, which collapsed only a decade later.

Given Hollywood's leftist bias, it is not surprising that little has been done about this dramatic period of recent history. Not that they are not interested in history: Filmmakers like Oliver Stone in *Platoon* (1986) have given an out-of-context account of alleged U.S. wrongdoing in Vietnam while ignoring the Communists' systematic barbarity and aggression. And a bandwagon of films attacking our alleged immorality in Iraq has just flopped at the box office. (See my last review essay

<http://acuf.org/issues/issue97/071207med.asp>.) But these leftists have had nothing to say about the truly Nazi-like decade-long rape of Afghanistan by the Red Army. The only film I can identify on this subject is the excellent *The Beast* (1988), a drama about a Soviet tank trapped by the mujahideen (freedom fighters), which did depict Soviet atrocities against the civilian population. An estimated one million Afghans, the vast majority civilians, were killed before Soviet withdrawal in 1988-89.

Enter, years later, *Charlie Wilson's War*, about the wild Texas congressman who used his position on the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee to, according to the film, force the CIA to increase drastically its covert aid to the mujahideen. Wilson (Tom Hanks) first becomes interested in their plight when he sees a Dan Rather report from Afghanistan at a Las Vegas strip club, where he has been enjoying himself in a hot tub with some of the "hostesses," all nude. The fire inside him intensifies with the attentions of a wealthy lady Texas conservative Christian activist, Joanne Herring (Julia Roberts), with whom he has an affair. Wilson is angered to learn the CIA is providing minimal aid just to keep the war going at a low level, to "bleed" the Russians. Over the next few years, with the help of an anti-establishment CIA officer, Gust Avrakotos (Philip Seymour Hoffman), he plays a leading role (or the leading role) in increasing covert aid from a few million dollars per year to about \$500 million, a sum which was matched by Saudi Arabia. Armed with advanced anti-aircraft missiles, the mujahideen are able to shoot down the Soviet helicopter gunships that were slaughtering civilians, and shooting up their villages and their livestock as part of a deliberate Soviet strategy that sent millions of refugees fleeing across the frontier into Pakistan and Iran.

Charlie Wilson's -- "Good Time Charlie" -- wild ways with women and booze -- and cocaine -- spice up the story. But the first problem is that Tom Hanks, though a superb actor, is miscast as Wilson. He has none of the Texan's manly swagger; in fact he has no credibility as a tall Texan and is an empty shell at the heart of the film, although Ms. Roberts and especially Mr. Hoffman are excellent in their roles. More important, Mike Nichols's direction is soulless. Nichols is one of the few directors to have succeeded in maintaining a career over a span of four decades, going way back to Hollywood's youth revolt with *The Graduate* (1967). But unlike long-lasting figures such as John Ford, Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock, and, today, Martin Scorsese, Nichols's work is striking for its lack of personal engagement with his projects. He has made some respectable films, like *Working Girl* (1988) and *Regarding Henry* (1991), but from a creative standpoint, his long career is a cipher. And so it is here. The film is mechanical, or one could say it is on auto-pilot: even the scenes of the young Afghan victims of the Russians' "toy" mines, visited by Wilson at a refugee camp in Afghanistan, lack feeling and show no special care with the shots. The only time the film really comes to life is when a



few mujahideen shoot down several enemy helicopters with the new anti-aircraft missiles Charlie got for them through the CIA. You want to stand up and cheer. It may be, however, that a second-unit director did this scene, not Nichols.

The script, from the book by CBS News producer George Crile, is written by Aaron Sorkin, creator of TV's "The West Wing" and a Hollywood liberal. As is often the case, conservatives must approach such productions with care: they pretend to be patriotic but in fact have another agenda. Thus, Sorkin has Avrakotos brag he helped install the military junta that overthrew Greece's democratic government in 1967, when in fact there is no evidence of such CIA action, according to the sources I checked. (And what does that have to do with this film anyway?) Worse, the film ends blaming our aid to the mujahideen in the 1980s for 9/11, the plan for which we know was hatched by Al Qaeda in its safe haven in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. Thus, after the Russian withdrawal, Wilson is seen failing to persuade members of his committee to approve economic reconstruction aid to Afghanistan. And the film ends with a quotation on the screen from Wilson stating (his choice expletive deleted here) that the U.S. messed up the aftermath of the war. Sorkin reportedly had written an even more critical postscript that was filmed but mostly deleted from the final release print after protests by Wilson and Ms. Herring.

The resolute and astonishingly courageous fight against the Soviet invaders by the Afghan mujahideen – initially equipped with little more than ancient rifles – ranks as one of the extraordinary resistance struggles in all of history. The Soviets' ten year, losing war in Afghanistan, along with the worsening economic failures of their Stalinist system, rising nationalism among the empire's subject peoples in Eastern Europe, Ukraine and elsewhere, and President Reagan's massive aid to the mujahideen, his ideological offensive and huge military build-up (including Star Wars), caused the once mighty Soviet system to collapse under its own weight. Its internal contradictions (as Marx liked to say of capitalism), could not be resolved by the belated reformer Gorbachev. This defeat and collapse of the mighty evil empire, which occurred without violence internally, is one of the most extraordinary events of history.

But all Sorkin can try to do is muddy this great success of U.S. policy. He betrays not only his bias but also his liberal fantasy that the government can direct, control and solve any problem it wishes, however complex, even in an alien land halfway around the world. After the Soviet withdrawal, the Afghans fought a civil war, which perhaps was not surprising in light of the country's historic severe ethnic and clan divisions. The fundamentalist Taliban emerged in the 1990s, seizing power in 1996-98. Bin Laden had fought in Afghanistan in the 1980s (according to reports) and later returned when the Taliban gave him sanctuary in the country in 1996. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia had the most foreign influence in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal. It is sheer 20-20 hindsight (actually, 15-15, it is so perfect after the fact) to tie our policies, which helped lead to the collapse of the Soviet Empire, to our current terrorism dangers.

Sorkin also is at fault for omitting entirely the leader behind U.S. policy. Ronald Reagan is not mentioned in Sorkin's script. (He was, after all, only the President at the time.) The broad context of Reagan's reversal of détente and of the period of relative U.S. post-Vietnam decline, and his stirring challenge to Soviet legitimacy, is unmentioned. Further, according to a report by Bill Gertz in the Washington Times, Reagan administration officials are upset by the left-wing slant of the film. Then Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Dr. Fred Ikle says the film slights the role of Reagan, CIA Director William Casey and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger in supporting the Afghan resistance, including our provision of the Stinger missiles that proved decisive against the vicious Soviet helicopter gunships. The film makes it appear Wilson deserves all the credit.

The film also ignores the staunch opposition by most of Wilson's Democrat colleagues in Congress to Reagan's anti-Soviet policies. While he was throwing down the gauntlet, they were whining about his "Evil Empire" speech and essentially taking the Soviet position in the nuclear arms control negotiations that Reagan delayed until we had fully rearmed. Thereafter, Reagan's proposals on nuclear reductions and eliminating an entire class of weapons (the intermediate-range INF missiles in Europe), which liberals had ridiculed as not serious, were accepted by the Soviets by the end of

Reagan's term. This is the pacifistic, partisan "thinking" that governs the Democratic Party today: here is the connection of the events in *Charlie Wilson's War* to 2008.

Spencer Warren is ConservativeBattleline's media critic.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Parent Movie Editors?

by Paul Weyrich

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

I continue to be amazed by today's advances in technology, especially that available for the mass-consumer market. One area where technology has made incredible advances is computer-editing. Millions of new Mac users will discover two software programs that come built-in with each new Apple iMovie and Garage Band. The programs are really amazing – and as many teenagers have discovered, are a lot of fun. Their user friendly design allows any 10-year old to become a music producer, or film director or editor, and make videos at a quality unheard of only a few years ago. This creativity is fueling the rise of next generation Internet sites like YouTube.



Paul M. Weyrich

While millions of consumers are now realizing how easy it is to make and edit professional home movies, some are wondering why consumers aren't able to edit out the objectionable parts of movies they want to watch in the privacy of their own home. If editing films is now as easy as a few mouse clicks, they ask, why can't parents take out the 60-90 seconds of raunch that makes the PG-13 movie an R-rated movie? If they were allowed to make these quick edits, families could watch more movies together without the embarrassment or discomfort when younger children are present.

Some would-be entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley are asking the same thing. Companies poised to bring user-friendly home-editing software packages to market to help families edit the DVD's they buy don't dare because of a special-interest favor that Hollywood lobbyists have inserted into copyright law.

This special-interest favor creates the discrepancy between how copyright law treats CDs and how it treats DVDs. CDs aren't encrypted so they are allowed to be copied onto your computer as a backup copy (in case the CD gets scratched) or downloaded into your I-pod. But DVDs are encrypted, which prevents legitimate and noncommercial consumer uses like moving your DVD to your iPod. Thanks to Hollywood's lobbyists, any attempt to unlock this encryption – even for entirely legal purposes -- is punishable by a \$150,000 fine. So the result for the consumer is an all-or-nothing equation. Once you buy the DVD you have to watch it the way Hollywood tells you, even though you own it.

This is inconsistent with both the Fair Use Doctrine and common sense. Hollywood has to clean up its movies to put them on TV, or for viewing on an airplane but Hollywood and Congress refuse to allow parents to have the ability to clean up the movies for their own kids in the privacy of their own homes.

Representatives Rick Boucher (D-VA) and John Doolittle (R-CA) believe this is wrong. They have introduced legislation, the Fair Use Act, which would empower parents to edit movies without risking a huge fine. It would also allow the companies that make editing technologies to manufacture these products without fear of the nuisance lawsuits which Hollywood is using to intimidate companies from bringing these products to market.

There are lots of movies that we'd like to show the entire family. Many are almost, but not quite, suitable for family viewing. Taking a few minutes of carnage out of Braveheart could render it viewable for children – it could inspire our kids while sparing them the gore that we don't want them to see at a young age. Why can't parents be allowed to edit their own movies?

It's only fair.

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

**E-mail the
Editor**

Media Warming Ethics

by Joseph Bast

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

One of the saddest things I've observed in 23 years as the head of a "think tank" is the decline in the quality of American journalists. If you think I'm being unkind or too judgmental, read on.

In early November, I asked my friend Dan Miller if he would send a letter to other journalists asking them to "keep an open mind" on the issue of global warming. He agreed to do so.



Dan is one of the country's most respected and accomplished journalists. He began his career as a reporter for the now-defunct *Chicago Daily News*, then was editor and associate publisher of *Crain's Chicago Business*, and then served as chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission from 1994-1998.

For one year, from 1998 to 1999, Dan served as publisher at The Heartland Institute, and then he became business editor of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, one of the nation's largest-circulation daily newspapers. In 2006 he was inducted into the Chicago Journalism Hall of Fame.

Dan agreed to send two DVDs on global warming — Al Gore's propaganda film, "An Inconvenient Truth," and the far superior British documentary film by Martin Durkin titled "The Great Global Warming Swindle" — with a "dear colleague" letter to some of his fellow journalists. This sort of thing is done all the time and is considered a professional courtesy in every profession except, apparently, *journalism*.

On November 18 the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Sun-Times'* cross-town rival, ran a column by Phil Rosenthal, who (interestingly) was dropped by the *Sun-Times* a few years ago, accusing Dan Miller of violating journalistic ethics. The column starts with this snarky line: "Chicago Sun-Times Business Editor Dan Miller apparently believes this paper doesn't have enough editors to guide its staff."

Rosenthal admits Miller's letter "does not explicitly urge a stance," but he then quotes Bob Steele, "an ethics scholar at the Poynter Institute," saying Miller "is actively urging a particular examination, and I would suggest a point of view, on a substantive public policy issue. He's also pitching it in a problematic way to other journalists, using his journalistic connections in doing so."

According to Steele, Miller's offer to share both sides of a controversial issue with other journalists "raises serious ethical concerns."

Could it really be unethical for a newspaper editor to communicate with editors and reporters at other newspapers? Is asking people to "keep an open mind" the same as advocating "a point of view"? It seemed incredible to me.

So I sent Steele an email posing these questions. On November 20 Mr. Steele called me, and we had a long and interesting conversation. Steele said it is indeed unethical for an editor at a newspaper to communicate with reporters or editors at other publications about any issue that might have public policy implications, except perhaps in "one-on-one conversations."

But other professionals communicate all the time with their colleagues on work issues, I said. It's how they learn and improve their skills. Editors, he told me, are different. When editors communicate with other editors and with reporters, it creates the appearance of taking an advocacy role, which is contrary to the "independence" that is so important to the role of journalists in society.

Steele said "I don't have a doubt in my mind" that Miller was "advocating a position" by sending out the letter and DVDs. I asked what position Miller was advocating, and he couldn't say. I asked if

there was anything in the letter that expressed anything other than a neutral stance on global warming. He couldn't name a word or line. Nevertheless, he was "absolutely sure" Miller was "advocating something."

How could he be so sure Miller was "advocating something" if he couldn't name it or even point to where the letter "crossed the line" into advocacy? Because, he said, Miller chose a product of The Heartland Institute, and Heartland is an advocacy group. But, I said, he also chose a product by Al Gore, who anchors the left side of the global warming debate. Doesn't that speak equally to his motives? He demurred, saying he wasn't familiar enough with the global warming issue.

At one point Steele delivered a long monologue on the meaninglessness of "objectivity." I always thought journalists were supposed to be objective, and I thought being "open minded" was a necessary first step toward being objective. Apparently not anymore.

Facts are no obstacle to someone who believes his or her perspective or "narrative" ought to be validated, no matter how wrong-headed it is. An advocate's knee-jerk response to a fact that contradicts his or her world view is not to think "maybe I'm wrong," but to reply "yes, but" or "well, anyway," and finally and more currently, "yeah, whatever."

Is this how we want journalists to behave? Steele apparently thinks so.

I've concluded that the *Tribune's* Rosenthal is just a disgruntled former *Sun-Times* employee who sought to stir up trouble for Dan Miller, and he found a head-in-the-clouds "ethicist" to make his case. But reactions to Dan's mailing by other journalists show they are not alone.

Eric Berger, a science writer for the *Houston Chronicle*, wrote on his blog, "As a journalist I can say the last person I would expect to receive such a package X-Hotmail-From: from is another journalist. It would not surprise me if Miller gets fired for this. Oh, and I already have an open mind about global warming, thank you very much."

Odd that someone with an "open mind" would then call Heartland "essentially a right-wing policy institute" and then repeat Steele's brainless *non sequitur*, "In this case Miller didn't actually endorse a position, but it's pretty clear what his motives were." Odd, too that rather than link to Heartland's Web site, where people could judge for themselves what our perspective is, he linked to Sourcewatch.org, a left-wing front group devoted to attacking all groups to the right of Greenpeace. One wonders if Sourcewatch paid him to do that.

Far worse than Berger is Craig Pittman at the *St. Petersburg Times*, who blogged, "the content [of Miller's package] was dictated by a right-wing group called the Heartland Institute that has relentlessly questioned the existence of global warming."

"The institute gets a lot of its funding from ExxonMobil," Pittman writes. "A lot"? Try less than 5 percent. "An ExxonMobil executive serves as Heartland's 'government relations advisor.'" Utterly false. Five minutes on Heartland's Web site would have shown him the error of both assertions.

Pittman goes on: "A Heartland-created website asserts there is no scientific consensus on global warming and features a list of experts and like-minded think tanks, many of whom have received funding from ExxonMobil and other polluters."

I'm reminded of the saying, attributed to Lyndon Johnson, that "even a blind pig can find an acorn sometimes." Yes, our Global Warming Facts Web site lists 66 experts, with bios, who say global warming is not a crisis and has links to an international survey showing fewer than half of climate scientists believe human activity is responsible for the modern warming. None of them is on ExxonMobil's payroll.

Either Pittman was too lazy to write that, or including this information would have contradicted his biased opinions on global warming. Is that ethical journalism?

My favorite response was from Tina Lam, an environment reporter for the *Detroit Free Press*, who wrote to me to say, "I was stunned to get [the DVDs] in the mail, and on stationery with no return address, email or phone number, making me wonder if he was even a real person or just someone Heartland invented. Unfortunately, I see he is a real person. I'm donating mine to our annual freebies sale, since as ethical journalists, we never keep such stuff."

So I spent some time reading Lam's articles for the *Free Press* and was "stunned" to discover that, so far as I can tell, she has never written a balanced article on an environmental issue, not even one. She's alarmed by dioxin in rivers, pollution from mining and coal-burning electric plants, etc. etc. etc. But she never cites experts or data showing, e.g., plummeting levels of dioxin, advancements in mining technology, and the *de minimis* threat to human health posed by coal-burning electric plants.

Lam shamelessly cheerleads for politicians who announce initiatives to combat global warming and who oppose industries using more water or planning to "dump more pollutants into Lake Michigan." You would think a reporter would ask politicians tough questions about whether or how their plans would work, rather than simply rewrite their news releases, but not Lam. Their word seems to be Gospel, so long as it promises a cleaner and safer environment. Is that ethical?

The Founding Fathers thought a free and skeptical press was essential to the preservation of our political and economic liberties. The First Amendment is first for just that reason. What would they think of today's generation of reporters who hide from the truth, parrot the slogans of left-wing advocacy groups, fail to do their own research, and routinely give politicians a free ride?

My guess is they would be stunned.

Joseph L. Bast (jbast@heartland.org) is president of *The Heartland Institute*. This originally appeared in *The Newsletter of The Heartland Institute*, December 2007

**E-mail the
Editor**

Rationing Health Care

by John Goodman

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

Most of what has been written about nonprice rationing of health care is descriptive, not analytical. In fact, I don't believe anyone has developed a real theory about it.

What makes this so amazing is that almost nowhere in the developed world is health care really rationed by price.

Here are five principles about nonmarket (socialist) systems that I offer without proof.



John Goodman

Principle No. 1: Where excellence exists in socialist systems, it tends to be distributed randomly.

When the NCPA studied public education in Texas, we found excellent teachers, excellent campuses and excellent school districts. But excellence was not correlated with spending, class size or any other objective variable. I found the same pattern in socialist health care systems. A hospital might have a modern laboratory side-by-side with an antiquated radiology department. A team of top cardiac surgeons might be practicing in the same hospital with mediocre physicians in other specialties.

Since there is no financial reward for excellence and no financial penalty for mediocrity, excellence tends to be the result of the enthusiasm, energy and leadership of a few people scattered here and there.

Principle No. 2: Access to excellence is not random.

Even though socialist systems are supposed to treat everyone alike, they rarely do. Higher income people get more services and better services - usually in absolute terms, and certainly relative to their needs.

Have you ever heard of children of high-income parents attending a really rotten public school? I haven't either. Yet the children of poor parents routinely end up in bad schools. The same pattern emerges in health care. Those senior citizens who cash the largest Social Security checks are the ones who spend the most Medicare dollars - even though health needs are inversely correlated with income.

You can even make an argument that in Britain, New Zealand and Canada socialized medicine has led to more inequality in health care than would have existed otherwise.

Principle No. 3: The skills that allow people to be successful in a market system are the same skills that make them successful in a nonmarket system.

Granted, the skill sets do not perfectly overlap; but they are more similar than most people realize. Think of life as posing a series of puzzles. In a market economy, you have to figure out how to earn a high income in order to enjoy high consumption. In a socialist system, you have to figure out how to overcome bureaucratic obstacles to achieve the same outcome.

Principle No. 4: Diverse people tend to make triage decisions in the same way.

In a typical socialist health care system, rationing decisions are often made by doctors. Suppose you were one of them:

If you had to choose between a young patient and a retiree, whose life would you save?

If you had to choose between a highly productive patient and one who is unproductive, whose life would you save?

If your choice is young over old and productive over nonproductive, you are like most other people.

Here is the Goodman theory of triage: If you instructed doctors to make rationing decisions based only on the goal of maximizing GDP, their decisions would be very similar to the decisions they are making today.

Principle No. 5: People at the bottom of the income ladder almost always do better in a market system.

If a doctor charges \$120 an hour in a market-based health care system, all you have to do is come up with \$120 (less than what smokers spend on cigarettes every month) to buy an hour of her time. For \$60, you can have half an hour. For \$30, you can have 15 minutes.

It doesn't matter who you know. Or what you know. Or whether you can even speak English. But in Canada, where these other things matter a great deal, it is against the law to pay a doctor for her time!

Do the poor benefit from nonmarket redistribution? Maybe. But they would benefit tenfold more if they gained control of the dollars and could spend them in a real health care marketplace.

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

**E-mail the
Editor**

Public Employee Union Cheating

by Bill Sizemore

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

Several times now, public employee unions have sued my organization (and me personally) in an effort to stop me from placing on the ballot a measure that prohibits the use of the public payroll system to collect political money. Judging by the amount of the legal fees unions have expended trying to shut me down and the obscene amounts they have spent on media campaigns, this issue makes for a pretty high stakes game.



Bill Sizemore

Over my years in politics, I have placed on the ballot (and passed) measures to lower taxes billions of dollars. I have placed on the ballot measures to require voter approval for tax and fee increases and measures to require that teachers be paid based on their job performance rather than their seniority. Once, I even placed on the ballot (and passed) a measure to rein in the excesses of the public employee retirement system, which is clearly a very hot issue.

None of those measures got me sued.

Public employee unions spent millions opposing all those measures and attacking my name and assassinating my character during the campaigns, but the only measures that got me sued and threatened with a stint in jail were the ones relating to the use of the public payroll system to collect political funds.

Obviously, there is something special about this issue. (I should say in the interest of full disclosure that although I was not personally sued over the public pension measure, my wife and children and I received several pretty nasty and graphic death threats over that one.)

I find it fascinating that you can cut taxes and tinker with the salaries and pensions of public employee union members, but when you do something that threatens the political clout of union leaders, they sue your pants off. This suggests to me that union leaders are a lot more interested in their own political clout than the interests of their members.

Notwithstanding all of the union legal threats, I have submitted to the Oregon Secretary of State what should be enough signatures to place on the 2008 Oregon ballot a measure that prohibits the use of any public resource to collect money that is used for a political purpose. This will be my third round with the unions on this issue.

In the two previous rounds, the public employee unions spent millions of dollars opposing this issue and in both cases they barely won, even though our side spent nothing or close to nothing defending the measures. This suggests that 2008 will be another expensive and nasty fight. But the haunting question remains: Why is this such a big issue to the unions? Why are they willing to ask a Portland judge to throw me in the hoosegow to stop me from merely qualifying this measure for the ballot?

Doesn't it seem like the American thing to do to require government to remain neutral in elections? Stopping government from collecting political money for the benefit of just one side of the political debate only makes it a fairer fight. Right?

Besides, from a purely practical perspective, why should taxpayers allow their government to collect millions of dollars in campaign funds for the side of the debate that consistently tries to increase their tax burden and grow government spending?

In most states, public employee unions are the 800 pound gorilla of politics, especially the teachers unions. They are generally the largest donors to state legislative races and most local government

and school board races. In states like Oregon, they literally control the process with union leaders and activists even staffing the governor's office.

Most politicians, even the conservative ones, live in fear of the public employee unions, and usually for good reasons. If public employee unions decide to take you out, they have the money to flood the airwaves with nonstop attack ads and to fill your constituents' mailboxes with direct mail attack pieces. In politics, that's clout.

Public employee unions have that clout, however, because they cheat. First, they use the public payroll system to collect their political funds, which is a grossly unfair advantage; and second, unions take money from employees' paychecks for politics without first obtaining the employee's permission.

That's it in a nutshell. If public employee unions had to play the game straight up, if they had to raise their political money the way the rest of us do, i.e., by collecting checks from willing donors, they would have only a fraction of the political money they currently have. That is precisely why union bosses will fight to the death to retain these advantages. They like the political power. They enjoy rubbing shoulders with powerful politicians who owe them because of all of the political donations they have made.

Think about this for a moment. Only about eight percent of Americans are members of unions and yet unions are among the most powerful forces in American politics. How could unions have such disproportionate power, if they didn't have some kind of unfair advantage?

I am sure that union fanatics will bombard my email for saying this, but I know this to be true. Public employee unions are powerful only because they cheat. When states stop unions from taking money out of employees' paychecks without first obtaining written permission or stop the use of the public payroll system for collecting political funds, union political donations drop by about 90 percent. In other words, when workers have the choice of not donating to union political coffers, they choose not to. End of argument.

Yes, I expect a war next Fall when my measure comes up for a vote. From liberal editorial boards to Democrat officeholders to the public employee unions, the entire political left in Oregon will attempt to skewer me. (Like they can find a place on my body not already having a skewer in it.) Nonetheless, this time, I think we will win. I think voters finally are willing to acknowledge that it is outside its proper role for government to collect campaign contributions for one side of the political debate.

It promises to be an interesting fight. Who knows, the teachers unions might even sue me a few more times. They've already blown close to \$2 million on legal fees fighting me. Why stop now?

Bill Sizemore is president of the Oregon Taxpayers Union.

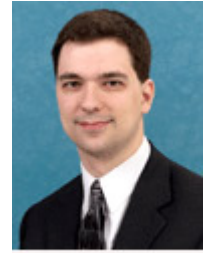
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Editor**

Scrap Farm Bill

by Brian Riedl

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

Record farm incomes provide a welcome opportunity to reform the antiquated, Depression-era system of expensive farm subsidies. Regrettably, the Senate farm bill (H.R. 2419) fails to modernize these programs. If the bill is enacted, Americans will continue paying \$25 billion in taxes and another \$12 billion in higher food prices annually for a program that distributes most of its benefits to millionaires. Additionally, these subsidies would continue to damage the environment (by promoting overproduction), undermine trade (thereby raising consumer prices and restricting U.S. exports), and promote poor diets (by subsidizing the sources of sugars and fats rather than healthier fruits and vegetables).



Brian Riedl

Organizations representing taxpayers, consumers, environmentalists, international trade, global antipoverty advocates, and even farmers agree that the current farm subsidy system is failing and in dire need of reform. Nonetheless, the current Senate bill retains this expensive and broken system. Lawmakers should scrap this bill and start over.

Retaining a Broken System

The case against the current farm subsidy system is strong:

- Farm subsidies are intended to alleviate farmer poverty, but the majority of subsidies go to large commercial farms, which report an average income of \$200,000 and a net worth of nearly \$2 million.
- Farm subsidies are supposedly needed to keep farmers afloat. Yet 90 percent of all subsidies go to growers of just five crops (wheat, cotton, corn, soybeans, and rice). Farms producing the majority of farm products (including fruits, vegetables, beef, and poultry) reliably survive without farm subsidies.
- Farm subsidies are intended to raise farmer incomes by remedying low crop prices. Instead, they promote overproduction, lowering prices even further. Expensive programs to restrict plantings are then implemented to raise prices back up.
- Farm subsidies are intended to help struggling family farmers. Instead, they harm those farmers by excluding them from most subsidies, financing the consolidation of family farms and raising land values to levels that prevent young people from entering farming.
- Farm subsidies are intended to be consumer-friendly and taxpayer-friendly, but they cost Americans billions of dollars each year in higher taxes and higher food costs.
- The Senate farm bill does not address any of these shortcomings. If it is enacted, Washington will continue spending approximately \$25 billion annually to subsidize a small, elite group of farmers through policies that do not help the farm economy.

Farm Incomes Shatter Records

The Department of Agriculture estimates that the 2007 net farm income will reach a record \$87.5 billion--a 48 percent increase over the 2006 level of \$59 billion. The average household income for farmers is expected to reach \$83,622, well above the national average. Additionally, crop land values have soared another 14 percent this year, bringing them to *double* their 2000 levels. Farmers are now wealthier than ever.

The main drivers of this surge in farm incomes have been the rise in exports and the steep increase in crop prices. Specifically, the ethanol mandate has pushed up the prices of not only corn but also crops such as soybeans that have been abandoned by many farmers during the corn gold rush.

Overall, between October 2005 and October 2007:

- Corn prices leaped 81 percent, from \$1.82 to \$3.29 per bushel;

- Soybean prices jumped 51 percent, from \$5.67 to \$8.58 per bushel;
- Rice prices surged 54 percent, from \$6.94 to \$10.70 per hundredweight;
- Cotton prices increased 10 percent, from \$0.48 to \$0.53 per pound; and
- Wheat prices soared 141 percent, from \$3.32 to \$8.02 per bushel.

Despite the price increases, large subsidies for these five crops would continue under the Senate farm bill. This would make as much sense as subsidizing Silicon Valley businesses during the peak of the dot-com boom.

A Step Backward

Given the record-setting farm incomes, the Senate's drive to *increase* farm subsidies is baffling. The Senate bill does the following:

1. **Raises farm subsidy payment rates.** The Senate farm bill raises subsidy rates for the countercyclical and marketing loan programs. These programs disburse subsidies whenever crop prices dip below the target prices set in the law. Raising those target prices means that any drop in crop prices would trigger subsidies faster and cost taxpayers far more than under current law. The Senate bill also adds four new crops (dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas, and large chickpeas) to the countercyclical program. These are stealth spending increases, because they do not show up in the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO's) cost estimate of the bill. It could also bring a challenge from the World Trade Organization for distorting global trade, potentially leading to retaliation from U.S. trading partners that would deplete American exports.
2. **Continues direct payments that are paid regardless of crop price.** No matter how high corn prices soar, the Senate would force taxpayers to send \$2.1 billion in direct payments to corn farmers every year. Wheat farmers would receive \$1.1 billion in annual direct payments, and farmers of other crops would receive a combined \$2 billion in annual direct payments. These payments are not based on farmer incomes, crop prices, or any standard of need. In fact, farmers are not even required to grow the listed crop to get a subsidy; the law would only require that they have grown it at some point in the past. There is simply no rationale for these subsidies. Yet the Senate rejected an amendment by Senators Richard Lugar (R-IN) and Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) that would have redirected these payments into conservation, nutrition, and deficit reduction.
3. **Raises taxes to create a new, permanent disaster aid program.** The Senate Finance Committee has approved legislation to spend an additional \$5 billion on a permanent farm disaster aid program. Farmers already receive approximately \$20 billion in annual commodity and conservation subsidies, plus an additional \$3 billion in crop insurance subsidies. Under this proposal, many farmers who suffer crop losses would automatically collect crop insurance payments *and* disaster payments, essentially double dipping. This new pot of money--funded through new taxes on businesses--would encourage Congress to declare "emergencies" regularly in order to release these funds.
4. **Continues targeting subsidies to large agribusiness.** The Senate bill fails to impose *any* income limit on farm subsidy eligibility for full-time farmers. Part-time farmers would see an income limit of \$750,000 by 2010 (likely \$1.5 million for a married couple filing income taxes separately). By limiting subsidies only for the wealthiest "hobby farmers," this woefully insufficient reform would not significantly reduce the share of farm subsidies going to large agribusinesses. Farm subsidies would remain America's largest corporate welfare program.

President Bush has proposed limiting farm subsidies to those earning less than \$200,000. Senator Amy Klobuchar's (D-MN) proposed income limits of \$750,000 for full-time farmers and \$250,000 for part-time farmers. While not as strong as the President's cap, Senator Klobuchar's proposal would be an improvement over the status quo.

Finally, Senators Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and Charles Grassley (R-IA) reportedly plan to offer an amendment limiting farm subsidies to \$250,000 per farm and requiring that recipients be "actively engaged" in farming. As happened with a similar amendment to the 2002 farm bill, this amendment is expected to pass and then quickly be dropped when the Senate bill is

merged with the House bill. Such symbolism is not enough; Senators should see this reform through to enactment.

5. **Retains a loophole to increase subsidies even further.** The marketing loan program (which includes loan deficiency payments) compensates farmers for low crop prices. Amazingly, farmers are not compensated for the actual price at which they sell their crops. Instead, farmers can select the market price on any day of the year and, even if they do not sell their crops that day at that market price, receive a subsidy based on it. So farmers can sell their crops at high prices and still be subsidized as if they had sold them at low prices. President Bush has proposed closing this loophole, and the original Senate farm bill called for subsidies to be based on the actual prices that farmers are paid for their crops. Yet Senator John Thune (R-SD) successfully offered an amendment in committee to put this loophole back in the bill. Thus, farmers would continue to be "compensated" for low market prices that bear no relation to the actual price at which they sell their crops.
6. **Adds \$22 billion to the budget deficit.** Despite Congress's Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) rule requiring that entitlement and tax legislation remain deficit neutral over 10 years, the CBO has identified numerous gimmicks that would increase the budget deficit by \$22 billion. The bill shifts \$10 billion in costs for crop insurance and a new average crop revenue (ACR) program just outside the 10-year window, where it does not count against PAYGO. Additionally, \$12 billion in spending is hidden with fake sunset provisions, meaning that Congress requires scorekeepers to unrealistically assume that new nutrition and disaster aid provisions will suddenly be eliminated after five years. Only through blatant gimmicks does the Senate farm bill appear compliant with PAYGO; in reality, it will increase the budget deficit.

Back to the Drawing Board

With crop prices soaring, farm incomes setting records, and Congress pledging to reduce the budget deficit, now is an opportune time to reform the bloated and outmoded farm subsidy programs. The Senate farm bill fails to seize this opportunity. It would continue to spend \$25 billion annually on many farmers who do not need subsidies.

Lawmakers should reject this bloated version of the status quo and adopt a farm policy that fits today's farm economy. Yearly income fluctuations--not poverty--is the chief financial challenge to farming. Rather than funding an expensive income-support program for wealthy farmers, Congress should focus on farmers' yearly income fluctuations that result from unpredictable weather and pests. Crop insurance and farmer savings accounts can better smooth out the boom and bust years in ways that keep farmers closer to their healthy annual average incomes, at minimal taxpayer cost. Canada and Australia have already implemented these types of programs. The first step to modernizing farm policy is rejecting the Senate's status quo farm bill. Otherwise, President Bush should make good on his veto threat for this irresponsible legislation.

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**E-mail the
Editor**

Adapting To Climate

by Paul Driessen

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The mantra is repeated daily. There is consensus on climate change. Global warming is real. It will be a disaster. Humans are to blame. We have to do something – immediately.

The United Nations and its Climate Cataclysm army of 15,000 in exotic Bali were not about to let even one fact prevent them from promoting climate scares and a successor to the Kyoto treaty. Gloom-and-doom scientists and bureaucrats owned Bali's podiums. Radical environmentalists fumed and staged stunts. Al Gore denounced President Bush, repeated myths that enthralled the Academy and Nobel committees, and demanded sacrifices – by others.



Paul Driessen

Meanwhile, respected climate scientists were barred from panel discussions, censored, silenced and threatened with physical removal by polizei, if they tried to hold a press conference to present peer-reviewed evidence on climate, such as:

Climate change is natural and recurrent. The human factor is small compared to that of the sun and other natural forces. There has been no overall global warming since 1998, and most local and regional warming trends have been offset by nearby cooling. One degree of net warming since 1900 (amid many temperature ups and downs) does not foreshadow a catastrophe. Recent glacial retreats, sea-level rise and migrations of temperature sensitive species are all within the bounds of known natural variability.

The best approach is to adapt, as our ancestors did. Money and resources devoted to futile climate prevention actions would be better spent on malaria, AIDS, poverty and other pressing problems. Most important, no country can progress or prosper without abundant, reliable, affordable energy that would be in short supply if draconian climate laws are implemented.

UN alarmists would not tolerate such heresies. They blamed every regional weather and climate blip on human emissions, and trotted out computer scenarios that they insist "prove" we must take drastic actions to avert Armageddon.

But computer models do a poor job of incorporating our still poor grasp of complex and turbulent oceanic, atmospheric and solar processes. They are based on conjecture about future technologies and emissions, and cannot predict climate shifts even one year in the future, much less 50 or 100. They simply produce "scenarios" and "projections" of what might happen under assorted assumptions – enabling alarmists to trumpet the most alarming outputs to support drastic action.

Those scenarios are evidence of climate chaos the way "Jurassic Park" proves dinosaurs can be cloned from DNA trapped in prehistoric amber.

However, Bali negotiators insisted that the world faces a climate crisis that can be averted only by slashing greenhouse gas emissions. Ultimately, they agreed only to "deep cuts" by 2050, with definitions to be written later by countries that are not about to commit economic suicide. Many environmentalists and members of Congress nonetheless continue to demand that CO² be reduced up to 40% below current emission levels by 2020 – and 80-95% by 2050.

It'll be easy, they insist. Rubbish. Even a 25-40% reduction over the next twelve years would impose huge sacrifices on families, workers and communities, especially poor ones – while leaving no room for population or economic growth.

Fossil fuels provide 85% of the energy we use. Slashing emissions by even 25% means slashing the use of these fuels, paying vastly more to control and sequester emissions, and radically altering lifestyles and living standards. Families will do so voluntarily, or under mandatory rationing systems, enforced by EPA, courts, climate police and "patriotic" snitches. Getting beyond 25% would require a "radical transformation" of life as we know it.

Senator Joe Lieberman admits his "climate protection" bill would cost the United States "hundreds of billions" of dollars. Economist Arthur Laffer calculates that "cap-and-trade" schemes would reduce economic growth and penalize average American families \$10,800 in lost income by 2020.

That's on top of the \$2000 in higher energy costs that US families have endured since 1998 – and the 11% extra that *USA Today* says average households will pay this winter compared to a year ago. Higher energy costs will increase the price of everything we eat, drive, buy and do.

Reaching or exceeding 25% targets could require transformations like these.

Parking your car – and riding a bike. You'd get to work and the grocery in better shape – and guilt-free if you don't exhale.

Disconnecting air conditioners and setting thermostats to 50 degrees all winter. Swim suits and UnderArmour are excellent substitutes.

Shutting down coal and gas power plants, and replacing them with new nuclear plants or forests of gargantuan wind turbines. Blanketing Connecticut with turbines could meet New York City's electricity needs, and covering Texas and Louisiana could satisfy US needs, at least when the wind is blowing (about eight hours a day, on average), says Rockefeller University professor Jesse Ausubel.

Closing paper mills and factories. Perhaps newly unemployed workers could find jobs in China and other developing countries, where the tough emission standards won't apply – or in the new carbon-free economy that politicians promise will magically arise once energy-killing climate bills are enacted.

Closing dairy and poultry farms. Producing meat accounts for 18% of all greenhouse gas emissions, so this would make both greens and PETA happy.

Eating all leftovers. Seattle has decreed that by 2009 single-family homes must recycle all table scraps – because their decomposition generates greenhouse gases – or have their garbage collection terminated.

Adopting "sustainable green technologies," like the treadle-powered irrigation pumps environmentalists are sending to poor countries, to replace diesel pumps. An Indian villager toiling on his eco-bicycle for three years could offset the CO² from one jetliner full of environmentalists heading to Bali.

Requiring that climate confabs be via video-conference – from Albania or Zambia, to discourage attendance by hordes of bureaucrats and activists. We might also insist that Al, Hillary, Nancy and other politicians eschew private jets and take Smart Cars to campaign and global warming rallies.

Meanwhile, China is adding the equivalent of another Germany every year to global greenhouse emissions, says climatologist Roger Pielke. Thus, if CO² really does cause climate change, all these sacrifices might prevent global temperatures from rising 0.2 degrees.

Adapting to whatever heat, cold, floods, droughts and storms nature (or mankind) might bring seems a much saner and less costly course of action.

Paul Driessen is senior policy advisor for the Congress of Racial Equality and Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise, and author of Eco-Imperialism: Green power · Black death (www.Eco-Imperialism.com)

**E-mail the
Editor**

Things Getting Better?

by Alan Caruba

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

The beginning of a new year is a good time to consider the many things that differentiate this new century from the last.

I'd like to recommend that everyone read "It's Getting Better All the Time: Greatest Trends of the Last 100 Years" by Stephen Moore and the late Julian L. Simon. It was published in 2000 by the Cato Institute and is singularly the best reference for anyone and everyone who assumes we have always had electricity, global telecommunications, abundant food, and extraordinary medical treatment.



Alan Caruba

By way of comparison, consider the American Civil War that cost the lives of 620,000 men who fought on both sides of the conflict. On December 24, 1864, Gen. Sherman sent President Lincoln a message by telegraph offering him Savannah, Georgia as a Christmas present. By April 1865, Gen. Robert E. Lee would tender his surrender to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox. All the parties arrived on horseback and while the use of rail travel played a minor role, there were no trucks, no tanks, nothing that involved the invention of the internal combustion engine.

The inventions we take for granted would largely wait until the 20 th century. In the 100 years between 1900 and 2000, the improvement of the human condition would progress at a rate unknown in the whole history of mankind.

Ironically, the automobile, which is blamed for "pollution" and as a contributor to the bogus "global warming", brought to an end an era in which cities and towns were filled with horse dung and garbage. Before the modern era of sewage systems and plumbing, cities were places of pestilence. In 1918-1919, an epidemic of influenza killed more than 700,000 Americans and another 20 million to 100 million around the world.

In 1900 Americans had barely a 50-50 chance of surviving a trip to the doctor or, worse, the hospitals of the time when the simple act of washing one's hand before surgery was unknown.

At the beginning of the last century, life expectancy was barely into the 40's. Today, Americans can expect to live to an average of 78 years and, as anyone can see, Americans are living routinely into and beyond their 80's. The "obesity epidemic" is the result of an economy that produces more food than ever before. The invention of genetically modified seeds not only insures that more crops will be grown but that forests will not be sacrificed to produce it.

The authors note that, "Most important of all, almost every great tragedy of the 20 th century has been the result of too much government, not too little...Nazism, socialism, communism, Marxism, and apartheid were all simply fancy names for statism—for unreasonable government control over the lives and liberties of the citizenry."

The last century marked a major departure from previous ones becoming one of widespread abundance in almost every sector of life. "Today's farmer feeds three times as many people with one-third as many total farmers on one-third less farmland than in 1900." American farmers are about 40 percent more productive than their European counterparts.

Few, if any, Americans can think of a time when there was no radio, but it only came into being in the 1920s. Television didn't begin its claim on our attention until the 1950s. As recently as the 1960s, most shows were in black and white and Americans had only three or four channels from which to choose.

While the nation goes through the problems associated with the failures of the banking system to take greater care in lending for mortgages, in 1900 about 50 percent of Americans owned their own homes. Today that has risen to about two-thirds. One of the primary goals of environmentalism is to drive people back into cities and off the roads, but such progress cannot be thwarted. What the nation—now with more than 300 million citizens—requires is housing development, not a return to an era when one in five families lived in housing with three persons per bedroom.

To demonstrate how idiotic the demand is that we “conserve” electricity instead of developing more sources, such as nuclear power, Congress recently passed an “energy” bill that bans the sale and use of incandescent light bulbs beginning in 2012. By contrast, in 1900 barely two percent of homes had electricity. Progress demands *more* electricity, not less, nor will it be supplied by such notions as wind or solar power that are utterly dependent on whether the wind is blowing and sunlight is constantly available.

What today’s American takes for granted is largely the result of an incredibly inventive 20 th century. Its major inventions included refrigeration, aspirin, electric heating, the telephone, the electric railroad, movies, radio, television, air conditioning, fuel efficient automobiles and so much more that they cannot be listed, but can be found at prices that make them available to working people throughout the nation.

Today we live with pollution myths spun by environmentalists, but our air and water is cleaner as the result of regulations introduced in the 1970s. Despite a five-fold increase in population, the percentage of land space that is covered by our forests has remained constant at about one-third of the land area of the United States. This is generally true throughout the world as well, but in the nation today vast efforts are being made to put more and more land off-limits to every form of development, whether it be for mining or the extraction of oil and natural gas. They take the form of so-called “heritage” areas.

What Americans are not doing is the job of maintenance. When a bridge can fail in Minnesota and hundreds more are at risk, we are failing to maintain the nation’s vital infrastructure. This is especially true of the electrical transmission system—the grid—that is in urgent need of upgrade and expansion. Too many of our highways, many built in the 1950s, are in need of improvement. Some American roadways are being put on the auction block to foreign ownership.

The great task of this new year is to remove the nation’s educational system from the death grip of the federal government and the teacher’s unions that have imposed a system that renders America’s children ignorant of the fundamentals needed for an advanced society and economy. Education must be returned to local governance.

When the new century began in 1900, America was not committed to a vast military whose presence is now found throughout the world. The maintenance of peace has become the job of the United States as nations relinquished this necessity while guarding themselves with the development of nuclear weapons. This is occurring as our military has shrunk in size and become entirely voluntary.

At the same time, we have witnessed the growth of international institutions like the United Nations that has not only failed to meet its original goal, but evolved into a corrupt organization of self-serving bureaucrats more interested in lavish conferences than the hard work of real progress versus the fairy tales of “global warming”, i.e., tending to refugees, and bolstering democracies. Similar groups like the European Union further enlarge governance over sovereign nations that should be more responsible for their own affairs and agreements that serve their own interests. Globalization is coming with a price that reduces individual liberty and freedom.

The scourge of communism—another term for big government—has been pushed aside by the evident failure of this and other socialist economic systems, though it remains a threat. It has been replaced by the resurgence of Islam, a religion invented in the seventh century to serve the interests

of Bedouin societies for whom conquest and theft was a way of life. Today, a large portion of Islam feels under attack at the same time it strikes out against modernity and its benefits. It must either reform itself or continue its long record of failure to move into this and preceding centuries.

The new century is at war with the past and its weapons are those of mass destruction. While there is much for which to give thanks, given the progress of the previous century, there is much to fear that such progress will be either reversed in a global holocaust or that massive governmental institutions will strangle it in favor of exercising authoritarian power over the lives of everyone on earth.

Alan Caruba writes a weekly column posted on the Internet site of The National Anxiety Center, www.anxietycenter.com. His blog is <http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com>.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Food Politics

by Sharon Hughes

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

Well, the 'Green Grinches' are at it again.

[The BBC reports](#) that A carbon footprint equivalent to 6,000 car journeys around the world, or 51,000 tons of carbon dioxide, would be produced by Christmas dinner in the UK.

Cranberry sauce alone, which is normally [imported to Britain](#) from North America, contributes half the carbon footprint related to transport, as calculated by those doing the study on the production, processing and transportation costs of the festive ingredients, for the one third of the UK population that they estimate eats a typical Christmas dinner.



Professor Adisa Azapagic, from the [University of Manchester](#), said: "Food production and processing are responsible for three quarters of the total carbon footprint, with the largest proportion - 60% - being related to the life cycle of the turkey. All stages in the supply chain have been considered, including raising the turkey, growing the vegetables, food storage, consumer shopping, cooking the meal at home and waste management. This includes the emissions of carbon dioxide due to energy consumption along the turkey supply chain and the emissions of methane and nitrous oxide generated due to the agricultural activities to raise the turkey." Read the Full Story [here](#).

I'm speechless.

You know what's really unbelievable about this? These folks get paid, get grants. Get big bucks! to do this kind of research.

What's next? Who knows. These "Green Grinches" also don't want sweethearts to give roses on Valentine's Day. But that's another story.

Happy Eating!

Sharon Hughes 2007. Sharon Hughes is Founder and President of The Center for Changing Worldviews and a radio talk show host on KDIA in San Francisco, NPLR, RIGHTTALK.com, and online at Salem Web Network's [Oneplace.com](#).

**E-mail the
Editor**

Immigration Third Rail

by Marc Rotterman

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

Immigration is the new "third rail" of American politics. I know, because I remember the old third rail. The old third rail, of course, was Social Security. Touch it, and die politically.

Back in the eighties the Republican Party would routinely come up with plans in Congress to "reform" Social Security.

Like clockwork -- when the next Congressional election came around - - the Democratic Party led by then Speaker Thomas "Tip" O' Neil would demagogue the issue; and pronounce with TV ads that Republicans wanted to privatize Social Security and, by the way, cut or eliminate grandma's benefit check.



Marc Rotterman

Now, it's the Democrats' turn to touch the new third rail, immigration. It's happening to the Democrats nationally, and it's happening to them here in North Carolina.

Congressional Republican incumbents were forced to play "defense"; as the late Lee Atwater used to say, "If you're defending in campaigns-- you're losing!"

During the "Gingrich revolution" of 1994 Republican challengers in congressional districts throughout America were schooled that "words mattered" and that the "best defense was a good a good offense." So the Republican message reflected the will of the majority of Americans that the Social Security contract must not be broken. And the phrasing in speeches and advertising reflected the will of the majority.

A key phrase was that many Republican used and continue to use today is this -- "We need to preserve, protect, and strengthen Social Security." Republican incumbents and challengers alike were encouraged to "inoculate" on the issue -- in essence to preemptively strike with a positive message prior to being attacked.

Still, and until this day, social security reform remains a volatile issue with the American electorate and to some degree a net plus for democrats. One only look at George W. Bush's 2005 proposal for personal savings accounts for younger workers. It was "dead on arrival" in Congress and it fell on deaf ears with the American public.

It seems to me that in the 2008 election the new emotional and substantive issue that the elite politicians did not grasp (John McCain's amnesty bill) but now is squarely in their face -- is illegal immigration with all its ramifications. Securing the borders and national sovereignty are issues that neither party can ignore.

One only look at how Hillary Clinton "flubbed" the question in a recent Democratic debate regarding New York Governor Spitzer's decision to issue drivers licenses to illegal aliens to see the impact this issue can have on ones national standing and poll numbers. (And by the way -- the a directive was recently rescinded under intense public pressure by Governor Spitzer.)

In the Republican presidential primary both Rudy Giuliani and Mitt Romney have tried to out do each other on the issue but both have little credibility with the voters based on past performances while in office.

"Sanctuary cities" have been the main topic of discussion between the two campaigns.

In the last Republican debate both Mr. Giuliani and Mr. Romney chose to attack each other rather than to offer substantive solutions. On the campaign trail both have been supportive of a physical fence and or virtual fence but with no date certain for completion.

The winner in Iowa and leading the polls in South Carolina is former Governor Mike Huckabee who has laid out a detailed plan for border security and enforcement. His plan also includes a date certain for completion of a physical fence.

Here in North Carolina, many Republican legislators in the General Assembly are trying to hold the Easley Administrations feet to the fire with respect to the rule of law and Easley's constant attempts to circumvent the process when it comes to issuing drivers licenses to illegal aliens.

And recently -- the community college system's lawyer issued a directive violating the law and admitting illegals aliens to community colleges if they pay out of state tuition. Debate is ensuing within the UNC system along the same lines.

What is clear is that illegal immigration is becoming the defining issue of the 2008 election.

Those who stand for amnesty, drivers licenses for illegal aliens, in state or out of state tuition for illegal aliens at our institutions of learning and open borders will pay a price at the polls. Conversely those who respect the rule of law, our sovereignty and the will of the American people will be rewarded politically when the citizens of this country cast their votes in the fall.

Marc Rotterman worked on the national campaign of Reagan for President in 1980, served on the presidential transition team in 1980, worked in the Reagan Administration from 1981-1984, is a senior fellow at the John Locke Foundation in Raleigh, NC and a former member of the board of the American Conservative Union.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Predicting 2008

by Bill Mosley

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

The last paragraph of last issues' editorial, "Predicting 2008," says it all! Frankly, there isn't a Roosevelt, Lincoln, or Reagan among any of the candidates.



But, while your prediction that conservatives will stay home if Rudy Giuliani is the candidate may be accurate, it would be a huge mistake. I see that as a vote for Hillary Clinton, still the presumptive nominee, a national disaster waiting to happen.

John McCain is weak to abysmal on immigration and has not represented the conservative Republicans that elected him in Arizona for years. The campaign finance reform he helped sponsor is a lot of baggage also.

Personally, Mitt Romney's Mormonism bothers me. And he changes his positions easily.

Mike Huckabee's appeal as a Southern Baptist diminishes when you look at his performance as a governor. Anyone that gets favorable comments like,

But on many substantive matters demonstrated during his ten years as the governor of Arkansas, Huckabee is a progressive, with enlightened views and a record of substantive action on immigration, public health, the regressive nature of sales taxes, education of poor kids and the possibility of redemption for convicted criminals.....

This is by the radical leftist Alexander Cockburn, the co-editor of the muckraking newsletter CounterPunch and tells me Huckabee cannot be seriously considered the right man for the job.

I think Fred Thompson is the best all around candidate, but his campaign doesn't seem to be going anywhere.

But, if people stay home, do they think the Democrats will appoint a Scalia or Thomas to the Supreme Court? Do they think taxes will not be raised? Having read several books about her, I'm convinced that Clinton is a Marxist Socialist trying to create this "moderate" persona when, in fact, she is the most liberal of the candidates.

I urge your readers to support the Republican nominee, even if they have to hold their nose.

Bill Mosley

**E-mail the
Editor**

Huckabee and Homeschoolers

by Warner Huston

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

In an article that is ostensibly supposed to be about the many Iowa homeschoolers that are supporting Mike Huckabee, the Washington Post pins the reason to the fact that homeschooling parents must hate Mormons!

This has easily become the media's favorite theme as they try to divide and anger portions of the GOP primary voting base against each other. In this mainstream media meme, anyone who votes against Mitt Romney or questions the relative Christian merits of the Mormon faith is a bigot who hates Mormons and won't vote for Romney merely because he is one. They are also unanimous in pinning support for Huckabee to an anti-Mormon sentiment. The media is doing its level best to start a religious war on the right.



Mike Huckabee

In the Post's article, religion is the central theme of pro-Huckabee homeschool advocates. Here the Post reveals the efforts of a homeschooling Mother named Julie Roe (bet they chose her for her familiar name: Roe) who has stumped for Huckabee by making homemade buttons and making numerous phone calls.

Julie Roe, an early believer in Mike Huckabee, worked with what she had... With no buttons, no yard signs and no glossy literature from his nearly invisible Iowa campaign, she took a pair of scissors and cut out a photograph of the former Arkansas governor. She pasted it on a piece of paper, scribbled down some of his positions, made copies and launched the Huckabee for President campaign in rural Hardin County.

So, why Huckabee?

Huckabee's name is no longer a mystery to Iowa's Republican voters, in large part because of an extensive network of home-schoolers like Roe who have helped lift his underfunded campaign from obscurity to the front of a crowded field. Opinion polls show that his haphazard approach is trumping the studied strategy of Mitt Romney, who invested millions only to be shunned by many religious conservatives such as Roe, who see the former Baptist preacher from Hope, Ark., as their champion.

But, even the Post contradicts this religious basis only a few paragraphs later.

While early attention focused on Romney and other better-known and better-funded opponents, home-schoolers rallied to Huckabee's cause, attracted by his faith, his politics and his decision to appoint a home-school proponent to the Arkansas board of education. They tapped a web of community and church groups that share common conservative interests, blasting them with e-mails and passing along the word about Huckabee in social settings.

It was the endorsement by prominent national home-school advocate Michael Farris that helped propel Huckabee to a surprising second-place finish in the Iowa straw poll in August. And it was the twin sons of a home-school advocate in Oregon who helped put Huckabee in touch with television tough guy Chuck Norris, who appeared alongside him in an attention-getting TV spot and on the campaign trail.

Sorry, Washington Post. It isn't really Huckabee's religion that the homeschoolers are excited over. It is the fact that he handed homeschoolers a big plum when he was Gov. of Arkansas. It isn't the religion of the matter as the Post tries to make it seem, but just good old fashioned politics.

Huckabee has given the homeschoolers power and they are paying him back for that past support of their cause. It's just that simple.

Yes, Huckabee is of the same basic religious background of the great preponderance of homeschooling parents, but if Mitt Romney had handed the homeschool lobby such a choice state job in Massachusetts, HE would have gotten their notice just like Huckabee did.

In reality it has little to do with religion. After all, how many pundits or supporters of other candidates have you really heard say they won't vote for someone based on their religion? Hardly anyone and certainly no one in the chattering classes!

Yet, here we have the Washington Post fanning the flames of religious bickering. Why is that do you think?

The answer is, of course, to divide and conquer the GOP candidates. If the media can hurt both Romney and Huckabee at the same time with the religious angle, so much the better to help their favored Democrat candidate win at a later date.

Get the factions to bicker and they won't be united later. It's an ages old strategy and the mainstream media is trying their hearts out to employ it.

Warner Todd Huston is a Chicago based freelance writer, has been writing opinion editorials and social criticism since early 2001 and is featured on many websites such as newsbusters.org, townhall.com, New Media Journal, Men's News Daily and the New Media Alliance among many, many others. Additionally, he has been a frequent guest on talk-radio programs to discuss his opinion editorials and current events. He has also written for several history magazines and appears in the new book "Americans on Politics, Policy and Pop Culture" which can be purchased on amazon.com. He is also the owner and operator of publiusforum.com.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Nugent on Guns

by Daniel Roberts

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

I loved the article by Ted Nugent on the lady who shot dead a madman who was blazing away inside a Colorado church.

My heart was thumping as I read the affirmations that we are a people who are free to act as opportunity provides the chance.

What took place in that church, I believe, is only the start of what can be expected in the future. We may soon see Islamo-facists in America attack the civilian population. Also, gang members discharged from the military (honorably or not) will be taking world class tactics, if not weapons, back to their turfs for use against police and other gangs.

These thugs will NOT be afraid of the police once engaged and most likely will have them outgunned and outmaneuvered long before a SWAT or CERT team can arrive. Remember that bank robbery in California where a gunman had a fully automatic assault rifle and body armor? He just mowed most everyone down until police got what they needed from local gun shops.

I don't think the gunman was gang affiliated, but SO WHAT! That kind of fire power in the hands of crooks is deadly.

Am I for "gun control"? You bet! Use BOTH hands whenever possible to help insure a single shot kill! That robbery was definitely a wake up call! I hope it wasn't wasted.

Thank you for speaking the truth, Ted. You ROCK in every way.

Daniel T. Roberts, Portland, OR.



Ted Nugent

**E-mail the
Editor**

Party of the Rich?

by Daniel Looby

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

I have enjoyed reading many of the articles from The American Conservative Union Foundation in ConservativeBattleline and have generally agreed with almost all, and found few reasons for disagreement.

I have until now just enjoyed without comment. But, I have to write about the article "Party of the Rich" by Paul Weyrich. WOW! I have for so many years tried to convince people of exactly what Mr. Weyrich said.

I am sixty-one years of age, a union member all my working life, and now a retired U.A.W. member. One of the things that have saddened me over the years about unions is their insistence on backing Democrats. When I was younger and easier to fool, I went along with the unions, but as time went on, I found that the Democratic Party was less and less for the working man, less and less in agreement of my beliefs of what the role of government should be, and showed little if any regard for Christianity.

I am amazed by the number of people that continue to live under the dark cloud of Democratic hopefuls' propaganda that they and their party are for the working class.

The Democratic Party should rename itself as the "Socialist Party"! They have come to represent everything the true socialist stands for. As a resident of the Great Lakes State of Michigan, I can attest to the fact that socialism is alive and growing in the Democratic Party. We will leave it at that, as anyone who is familiar with what is happening in Michigan can testify to the sad state of this state, and I will not get in to naming names, or name calling.

I will add this, I do not consider myself Republican or Democratic, I only consider myself Catholic and Conservative!!!

Daniel J. Looby, Shelby Twp. MI



**E-mail the
Editor**

Reader Comments

Issue 99 - January 16, 2008

Editor: I liked your "Predicting 2008" and request permission to reproduce it. I publish a small newsletter for Republican Women. I would like to use the article in our January issue. Lois L. Beres, Ridgecrest, CA

[Editor replies: Any ConservativeBattleline editorial may be reprinted at no cost by simply asking permission]

Editor: Your "Predicting 2009" is disturbing and sad that our country has reached the level of decadence and apathy that it has attained. However, it is no mystery. We have become a Godless society. When a nation reaches this level without God there is nothing left but the folly of man. Even so called Christians play church. They do not obey God's will in their everyday existence. There are no standards, only political correctness that has never benefited many people. I hate to say it but the November election will probably reflect this nation's apathy and ignorance when Hillary Clinton is elected. When this happens it might just wake up people and embrace our founding fathers' values. Jim Allen, Bremen, Ga.

Editor: Regarding "Predicting 2008," I am so sick of hearing that Fred Thompson is "pro-abortion," "lazy," "liberal," and "dumb," I could scream! But I've written an essay instead, titled: "Fred Thompson: Looking Beyond the Surface" (available from karen_norling@roadrunner.com) I've written this essay to set the record straight about Fred's staunch conservatism. I am praying to God that Fred becomes the nominee this time around, and I'm doing everything I can to see that he does. Sincerely, Karen Norling, Middlefield , OH

Editor: Re your "Predicting 2008," this life long Republican is voting for Ron Paul. Ron Paul is the only conservative. I may not like his "War" stance but on everything ELSE he's A+++++++ in my book. And the way I see it - if we can get Ron Paul in by taking the "War" issue away from the DEMS. THEN that's better then getting Rudy, Mike or Mitt who are socialists. This War the WAY Pres. Bush has run it is stupid - and the immigration stance of all of the Republican Candidates will be NO Better then Bush's which is to let everyone single illegal in and not stopping them. Get Real and Start encouraging the base to Rally around Dr. Paul. It will be a landslide of 65% for him over any of the Democrats in the general election. Sincerely, Brigid, NH

Editor: I enjoyed "Predicting 2008." However, if Mike Huckabee wins in Iowa, he can lose in New Hampshire as predicted and still go on to win South Carolina and Florida. I just don't understand why the conservatives don't get behind him now - he needs money, attention and support. Can you explain their reluctance? Thanks, a staunch conservative in the liberal sate of Connecticut! Corinne Margulies

Editor: Thanks to "Predicting 2008" for keeping Fred Thompson's name in the mix. I still think he is the best for all conservatives to rally to. Not sure how we pull off re-starting that rally, but I'm looking for the opportunity. Eric Rohrbach, Washington State

Editor: Regarding your "Predicting 2008," will there ever be a real Conservative nominated? The Clinton family plays dirty. At present I favor Mitt Romney yet I do not feel the deep respect for him as I had for Ronald Reagan. I fear for the future of America. I have never stayed away on election day, at least not yet. Sincerely, Rich Kato, Houston, TX

Editor: I was wondering what your group's opinion of Duncan Hunter is. He gets no publicity—even in your "Predicting 2008"—but seems dead-on with regard to every single issue that conservatives deem significant—War on Terror, Iraq, Abortion, 2nd Amendment, Border Security, Illegal Aliens, Taxes and Spending. He also has never backed away from criticizing Democrats as the liberals they are or pointing out that the media is in their corner. Is there a way for this man to climb to the forefront what with the front-runners seemingly unable to convince all conservatives that each is THE guy to vote for? Thanks. Steve Ellers, Long Island, NY

Editor: Regarding "Predicting 2008," OH POOP YOU JUST CAN'T WIN IN POLITICS. IT ALWAYS DISSAPOINTS YOU. Ingrid Justice

Editor: Thank you for highlighting the fundamental thinking behind Catholic social justice in "Religion at Christmas 2007." We have a moral obligation to protect those vulnerable, weak and voiceless and yet we support limited government and see empowerment of the individual as the prime goal. A vibrant private community of strong families and involved members brings about the optimal health and welfare of the community. Best regards, Lisa Miller

Editor: Regarding Ted Nugent's "Jeanne's Gun Stops Shooter," I was a NYC policeman for more than 17 years. The only thing I can state with any certainty is that the police usually arrive after you have been killed. They then prepare a report. Jeanne Assam changed all of that by being armed and shooting the crazed gunman before he killed others. She acted with the courage of a guardian angel. Danny Wright

Editor: Yes, God Bless Ted Nugent, his "Jeanne's Gun Stops Shooter," and God Bless Jeanne Assam. Thank you for sharing Ted's story about Jeanne. As much as I don't like hearing that anyone had to be shot dead, better the "bad guy." From a fellow Life Member of the NRA! Karl Zimmer III, Plainfield, IN

Editor: Thank you for printing Ted Nugent's "Jeanne's Gun Stops Shooter." I believe that Ted Nugent still embodies the thinking and feeling of the majority of Americans in this great country. Again, thanks for sharing this. Ray Adkins

Editor: Ted Nugent-- "You rock, Ted (and Jeanne Assam, too). Just keep telling it like it is!!
madmemere1

Editor: Great article. Ted Nugent's article "Jeanne's Gun Stops Shooter" hit the nail on the head so to speak. I have been trying to make Law Enforcement and Security officers and the public aware of exactly what this brave lady did has to be responsive and not hide and wait till it comes to you. Thanks a lot for saying it in places you can get to that those of us try but cannot. Buford Tune, Academy Of Personal Protection and Security

Editor: Wonderful article by Ted Nugent (also an accomplished actor as two classic "Miami Vice" episodes proved), and a reminder to everyone that the NRA needs support in backing the DC's District Court's ruling that a ban on gun ownership is unConstitutional. The matter has been appealed will be heard by the Supreme Court. Renny Hartmann

Editor: Regarding Ted Nugent's "Jeanne's Gun Stops Shooter," remember that America's guns save lives--and don't you forget it! SUPEREXCELLENT2U

Editor: I agree with Ted Nugent's ideas about the right to bear arms but we need to get our facts correct when we use news stories to make a point. Jeanne Assam was not just a member of the church but also a security guard hired by the church. She did not shoot the gunman dead. She wounded him twice at which time he shot himself in the head. Keep up the good work.

Editor: Ted Nugent's "Jeanne's Gun Stops Shooter" is an excellent article. Mark C Rauen

Editor: Right on, Ted Nugent in "Jeanne's Gun Stops Shooter." We need more outspoken people like Ted to tell the truth to the "Woozies" who try to be all things to all people. Keep up the good work. Dan Richards, USMC (Ret), NRA Member.

Editor: As usual, Mr. Nugent is in the "10-ring" with his commentary. Thanks to him and ACUF for this excellent article. Steve Hatch, Centreville, VA

Editor: Ted Nugent's "Jeanne's Gun Stops Shooter" is a great read and so true. I wish there were a Jeanne Assam every 100 ft as well. Lyle E. Binns – Instructor, Lincoln Electric Welding School

Editor: As usual Ted got it right about Jeanne. We need more people to be prepared to take out anyone who interferes with the freedom of Religion by taking a rifle into the Church to do harm to worshippers. Jim Nugent

Editor: Thanks for having the stones to print Ted Nugent's "Jeanne's Gun Stops Shooter." I bet there are at least a hundred of us out here who agree with what he said. I bet in the MSM there aren't even ten. I wonder how they would feel if 20 or 30 of the MSM were gunned down by one of these maniacs. Too bad it wouldn't be right to find out, or even to think what would that be like. You see, even though we believe in protecting ourselves and the innocent from these murdering maniacs, even through returned violence, we don't believe in considering harm to those who disagree with us - unlike some others. Thanks again Ed Galicki, San Diego, Ca.

Editor: Dennis Avery's article "E-Coli is Organic " underscores one and the same reason behind all the fads, whether they are in food consumption, energy consumption, climatology, politics (supertolerance, democracy, encouragement of the illegal invasion of the US, etc.): all of them serve the same purpose to fatten the pockets of the people who constantly either cry wolves or shed crocodile tears on account of the plight of the "oppressed". Unfortunately, our high school education churns out (and one cannot escape the thought that it is done on purpose) the graduates who are both gullible and ignorant representing the best mixture for all kind of demagogues, from Jesse Jackson to Al Gore, Hillary Clinton, Obama , etc. This contributes to the decline and fall of America. In contradistinction to the ancient Rome it is not going to take 300 years, but only a couple of decades. Sincerely, Aleck

Editor: Sorry I don't buy Dennis Avery's article "E-Coli Is Organic." I would much rather buy my meat from grassfed farming that does not use antibiotics, steroids, hormones in their meat or milk. Are you working for Monsanto or someone similar? Elaine Claudio

Editor: I read "Harassing Charity" by Bob Barr about the EEOC suing the Salvation Army. This is totally ridiculous on their part. I agree one hundred percent with what you said. Thank you for giving me this information. Terry Foster

Editor: As one who is totally opposed to abortion, I wish to point out that approaching the issue as a "states rights" issue as Lisa Fabrizio writes in "Abortion to the states" is laudable, provided we have the right man in the oval office. Bush senior gave us Justice Souter, while "W" sent Miers for confirmation. Even when we elect so-called conservative presidents we still seem to get liberal Supreme Court judges, to say nothing of federal judges at all levels. The GOP will have been in power in the White House for 20 of the 28 years since 1980 and we still have one of the most liberal judiciaries. The "odious" litmus test needs to be applied to ALL Republican candidates for president; otherwise, we get their running to the right and governing on the left, at least in their appointment of judges. Had Bush senior appointed another conservative, in the mold of justice Thomas, instead of Souter, we wouldn't be having this discussion, at least with regard to the Supreme Court. In election after election we are advised to vote Republican to get conservative judicial appointments, only to be repeatedly disappointed. I, for one am getting tired of it. Thank you.

Editor: Spencer Warren's review of Robert Redford's visual polemic, "Lions for Lambs", was quite good, as a movie critic's insight into the entertainment value this recent "cinematic" release. It would have been an excellent movie review, had he tempered the urge to "play the part" of "military strategist" and left out the last two paragraphs - his failed attempt to be a "pundit". First, his critique of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's performance during his term in office, probably one of the finest SecDef in history military was totally over the top. The plans for both the Afghanistan and Iraqi phases of the on-going "War on Islamo-fascism" were simply brilliant, as his "conventional arms combat" successes show any objective observer. Of course, the spectacularly successful plans for the conventional combat triumphs, which Rumsfeld approved, were really the work of military types at the Pentagon, although the Pentagon must share the design for Afghanistan campaign with J. (Joseph) Cofer Black, Director of the CIA's Counterterrorist Center. The ONLY major failure of the conventional warfare plan for the Operation Iraqi Freedom was a failure of the State Department, and not the Pentagon. The plan approved by Sec. Rumsfeld was a "two-front" campaign, with the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized) attacking Iraq from the North across the Turkey border. Secretary of State Colin Powell had assured the Pentagon he would get Turkey to allow US troops to assault from the North. If Rumsfeld is guilty of any fault in the conduct of the post "conventional combat" phase in Iraq it was letting the State Department take over the management of the country before it was properly "pacified". By the way, Mr. Warren reinforces several myths. Myth: Most Vietnam veterans were drafted. Actually, 2/3 of the men who served in Vietnam were volunteers; 2/3 of the men who served in World War II were drafted; approximately 70% of those killed were volunteers. Myth: A disproportionate number of blacks were killed in the Vietnam War. Actually, 86% of the men who died in Vietnam were Caucasians, 12.5% were black, 1.2% were other races. Neal J. Lang, Boca Raton, FL

[Mr. Warren responds: Senator John McCain, General Anthony Zinni (head of Central Command in the Middle East from 1997-2000) and a large number of other respected military authorities agree that Rumsfeld was responsible for our failing military policies in Iraq until the surge began after he left office. Mr. Lang does not appear to have read the widely quoted, and critical, books by Bernard Trainor and Michael Gordon, and by Tom Ricks.]

Editor: What is Lee Ellis thinking in "What Kind of Change?" He writes: "With oil jumping to 98 dollars a barrel and no new refineries being built, we are still relying on oil from foreign countries. Why? Because too many of our liberal congressional members keep voting against drilling in Alaska, in the Gulf and at other American sites." The U.S. is using more than 21 million barrels of oil a day, and 60% of that is being imported. Lee Ellis implies that if drilling were permitted "in Alaska, in the Gulf and at other American sites" there would be enough oil that we could quit importing from OPEC. That's laughable. If we were to shut off oil imports from OPEC and begin using only oil pumped from existing American wells, onshore and in the Gulf of Mexico and current production in Alaska, plus the "new" oil that Ellis believes would be found "in Alaska, in the Gulf and at other American sites," the U.S. would grind to a halt in 10 years or less. Oil deposits have pretty well been used up in the U.S., and to suggest that we could do without OPEC oil is just plain silly. As far as "no new refineries being built," Motiva is expanding its crude throughput at its Port Arthur, TX, refinery by 325,000 barrels a day. This is the equivalent of a large new refinery. Valero has a large expansion underway at its Norco, LA, refinery, and Marathon has a large expansion at its Lions, LA, refinery. Both of those are also the equivalent of two new large refineries coming online. However, with no crude oil from OPEC to feed into those refineries, they would simply be rusting hulks, like the steel mills and auto factories in the northern states. Ideologues simply refuse to view the world as it is. John S. Perilloux

**E-mail the
Editor**