



John McCain

CONSERVATIVE BATTLELINE ONLINE

*The "Bold Colors" Conservative Voice in
Washington*

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

[Support McCain?](#)

From the Battle Line

[Support McCain?](#)

by Donald Devine

[Budget Cuts Spending](#)

by Brian Riedl

[Bush Budget Problems](#)

by Paul Weyrich

Media Pass in Review

[Anti-American Oscars](#)

by Spencer Warren

[Easy on Anti-Jesus Slur](#)

by S.T. Karnick

[No Beef at "Times"](#)

by Alan Caruba

Government Maneuvers

[No Tax Cuts for Rich](#)

by John Goodman

[Government Energy Arsenic](#)

by Roy Innis

[No McCain Cap-and-Trade](#)

by Myron Ebell

Culture Wars

[New Political Music](#)

by Joseph Barrett

[Britain's Islamic Law](#)

by Daniel Pipes

[Real Environmental Justice](#)

by Paul Driessen

Political Front

[Waiting For McCain](#)

by David Keene

[Questions For McCain](#)

by Lisa Fabrizio

[Focus on the Senate](#)

by J.B. Williams

Reader Backfire

[What Kind of U.S. Culture?](#)

by Judith Richie

[E. Victor Milione, R.I.P.](#)

by Lee Edwards

[Reader Comments](#)

Support McCain?

by Donald Devine

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

Should conservatives support John McCain? One would like to take him at his word, especially seeing him in uniform. But he is a puzzle. How about if he set-up a think tank and raised millions of dollars to support it? Would you assume he believed in the principles it espoused?



In 2001 after his defeat for the Senate, McCain announced the formation of the McCain Reform Institute with his former finance chairman Merrill Lynch chief counsel Trevor Potter. Sen. McCain's manager, Rick Davis, became the finance operator Carla Eudy, his former press secretary Crystal Benton and his Hispanic outreach director Juan Hernandez all went on the payroll, the manager at \$110,000 per year. This was McCain's team and he became the Institute's Honorary Chairman, featured in its materials and promoted by its media releases.

Republican nomination, the Arizona the Reform Institute with his former Herb Allison and former campaign previous and present campaign Institute chief executive and his top former press secretary Crystal Benton

What were the principles of this McCain Reform Institute? Here is its agenda as outlined on its website <http://www.reforminstitute.org>:



Herb Allison

- Campaign Finance Reform. Not surprisingly, the number one priority is to support the principles behind the McCain-Feingold campaign finance law, to regulate "special interest" money in elections. It also "works to plug the loopholes created by the FEC including the 527 political organizations," to reform the "defunct FEC with an independent agency that has the tools to enforce the nation's campaign laws" and to promote "state-based comprehensive campaign reforms that include soft money bans, 527 reforms, disclosure, and public campaign funding." Of course, most conservatives have opposed these laws as serious infringements on First Amendment rights to the most important free speech, political participation and advocacy, especially against extending these restrictions to the states. Conservatives are concerned that "regulating special interests" really means keeping citizen groups from scrutinizing incumbent politicians too closely and exercising their 1st Amendment right to influence their government's policies and candidates.
- Democracy and Elections. The Institute's second priority is to "break down restrictions on voter registration" and to provide "hotlines" for those claiming discrimination in voting, to promote open primaries, to ban signature requirements to gain ballot access, and other "progressive" reforms. These reforms grew out of McCain's supposed inability to get his "nonpartisan" campaign on the ballot during the 2000 nomination process. Conservatives have supported reasonable restrictions on voting such as registration, and proof of citizenship and residence to prevent fraud, and have favored closed primaries so that each party can reflect the values of its own adherents.
- Homeland Security. This program actually promotes "innovative technologies being enlisted in the effort to defend the nation, featuring technologies from established companies such as Google, Motorola, Sprint Nextel, GE and Alcatel Lucent, as well as from smaller firms such as Planet Associates, Inc., Communications-Applied Technology and ICx Technologies, Inc." Although technology has no ideological implications, the reason for this priority will become apparent below.



- Immigration. The Institute supports “comprehensive” immigration reform along the lines supported in the McCain-Kennedy Immigration bill opposed by most conservatives. The Institute offers an annual prize for expressing views on the “border fence” issue. Its current prizewinner pictorially advocated tearing down the Mexican-American border wall.
- Climate and Energy. This is a new program that seeks a “centrist” energy policy between the positions of the two political parties. Sen. McCain has declared that global warming is a serious problem and presented comprehensive solutions to limit energy production in his McCain-Lieberman bill mostly supported by Democrats. Conservatives question the degree to which manmade energy production contributes to global warming and chose market solutions that do not hobble productivity and cost American jobs rather than government dictates.
- Economic Policy. This is another area emphasizing “nonpartisan” solutions. For Social Security it would “maintain intergenerational equity” and “promote a multi-ethnic, intergenerational dialogue” that produces consensus; it would set priorities and promote “accountability, transparency, efficiency, and fiscal responsibility in the budget process,” and it would increase “fiscal literacy” to increase retirement savings. How these competing priorities are to be balanced is not stated but presumably solutions agreed to by all would be impossible to find, muddled or very expensive—or all three. The Institute also proposes to create a new health plan that all are required to join and to pay premiums, provide additional support for post-secondary, college, early and continuing education programs, and more aid for retraining those affected by global competitiveness—all involving more spending rather than fiscal responsibility. The only study with specifics concerns the subprime housing crisis. Its two main conclusions are for more government funding for regulation of and enforcement over the mortgage lending “special interests” and supporting the interests of mortgage appraisers when these two disagree. Conservatives believe all of these activities are better regulated by the market by allowing those interests which properly satisfy consumer demand to prosper and those that abuse them to fail, and government prosecution of fraud under existing laws to punish abuse. It is interesting that special interests are criticized in the study but that appraisers are singled out for help--and that the Appraisal Institute is a major contributor to the Reform Institute, and is even cited positively by name in the notes to the report.

This is a progressive liberal agenda if there ever was one. In fact, when interviewed by the New York Times Sen. McCain himself did not object to the reporter’s description of the program as “progressive” but simply defended it as being nonpartisan. His campaign manager even admitted that the Institute’s “issues are sort of counterproductive to John McCain becoming president” because they would be opposed by conservatives who form a majority of the nomination electorate.

The New York Times

The Appraisal Institute was not unique. The largest contributor to the Reform Institute at \$200,000 was Cablevision’s CSC Holdings, a donation that was solicited one week after its chief executive testified before Senator McCain’s Commerce Committee. Chairman McCain also pushed the government and CSC’s competitors to adopt Cablevision’s “a la carte” pricing methodology and program, which would give CSC a large competitive advantage as the others spent time and resources to catch up. Other major contributors among the top dozen with obvious Commerce Committee business were Echosphere Communications, Web Services and American International Group.

Condemning special interests and soliciting special interest contributions is just business-as-usual Washington back-scratching hypocrisy. Conservatives should be even more concerned about the Reform Institute’s ideological support. Among its largest contributors were the progressive Carnegie Corporation and the OSI Constitution & Legal Policy Program, an organization founded by leftwing billionaire philanthropist and Democratic 527 political organization impresario, George Soros. Other

large contributors were the “reproductive justice” promoting Tides Foundation, the anti-abortion supporting Educational Foundation of America, the pro gay marriage Proteus Fund and the global warming promoting Environmental Defense Fund.

It is often said in Sen. McCain’s defense that his American Conservative Union lifetime rating for his votes in Congress is 82 percent. Yet, what they do not say (full disclosure, your reporter has been closely involved in the ratings for many years) is that 80 percent is the organization’s minimum rating to be considered a conservative at all--and that in recent years Sen. McCain has often fallen below even that minimal standard (with a 65 in 2006 and a 73 percent last year, for example), and his lifetime score is below that of 90 percent of his fellow Senate Republicans. He opposed both of the Bush tax cuts, is the major sponsor for cap-and-trade restrictions and taxes on energy development, and has been a leader in regulating telecommunications and health insurance markets on his Commerce Committee.



George Soros

What is a conservative to do about a presumptive Republican presidential nominee who received significant support from the radical leftist George Soros? Many conservatives will object to mentioning these matters as a threat to winning the presidential election. But conservatism is not about winning elections. That is for the political parties. Indeed, sometimes it is good to lose an election. If Gerald Ford won in 1976, there would have been no Ronald Reagan and we would still probably have stagflation. The job of the conservative is to conserve America’s heritage and pass it on. Of course, conservatives would like to both win and conserve but even Jimmy Carter knew the wisdom about life in this world sometimes not being fair.

The story will get out anyway. It was The New York Times (on March 8, 2005, as well as the Associated Press) who first exposed the Reform Institute and the Cablevision contribution. The Times would be content keeping quiet to allow a progressive to win the Republican nomination but anyone who thinks the Times will not resurrect both the issue confusion and the fundraising problems for the Fall election is living on another planet. Just last week after essentially winning the nomination, the Times exposed the less important news about the Senator’s supposed romantic links to Cablevision’s lobbyist. The bigger story of the contributions to the Reform Institute was actually underplayed because of the Times’ attempt to be too cute about the less important sex charge. But the main will charge will be raised again by the media and will make a telling contrast against a Barack Obama running to change the culture of Washington’s special interests.

John McCain gave a great conservative speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference last month. Maybe he is so cynical that he can switch from the progressive agenda of the Reform Institute to that of CPAC without missing a step. There is some history here. He did oppose the first Gulf War against Iraq initially but switched and criticized President George W. Bush for not pushing strongly enough in the current war. He has changed his stated position on immigration and taxes too, so who knows? Or maybe he is simply confused. He told the Boston Globe “The issue of economics is not something I’ve understood as well as I should.” He has pointed to Jack Kemp, Phil Gramm and Pete Peterson as examples of those he would rely on for economic advice—but Peterson opposes tax cuts until after the budget is balanced and future entitlements paid for, Kemp is uninterested in spending cuts and supports tax cuts immediately and at all times, and Gramm wants both tax and spending cuts.

Conservatives only hope is that Sen. McCain is either a hypocrite or confused and will appoint people like Gramm rather than Peterson. Only one action of his really counts before the election and that is his vice presidential choice. In response to a question whether he would choose a conservative, he told one rightist leader that his closest friend was Tom Ridge, the former moderate governor of Pennsylvania. Another favorite supposedly is Gov. Tim Pawlenty, who reneged on his no tax increase

pledge and is a big global warming regulator. The nominee's selection of his VP will tell conservatives all they need to know about what they should do in November.

Let's see who he picks—and let's see what his convention and platform look like. To support Sen. McCain before he selects a VP tells him he can do whatever he wants and conservatives will follow like sheep. He may be the best of a bad lot but we should have no illusions about where he will lead the nation.

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Budget Cuts Spending

by Brian M. Riedl

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008



Brian Riedl

President Bush's budget request for fiscal year (FY) 2009 restrains domestic discretionary spending, halves earmarks, extends the tax cuts, and reforms Medicare to contain its surging costs. Unfortunately, Congress is not likely to address major entitlements or tax cuts in an election year. Instead, Congress will most likely shorten the congressional calendar; address the appropriations bills; and possibly reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), farm subsidies, and No Child Left Behind. Therefore, the most legislatively relevant aspects of the President's budget may be where he draws the veto lines on must-pass legislation.

Yet, it is vital that Members of Congress heed the President's call to address the long-term costs of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. The budget deficit is projected to hit \$390 billion in FY 2012 and \$788 billion in FY 2018, but even those totals are a small fraction of the long-term costs of ignoring entitlements. In the absence of reform, lawmakers would eventually have to choose between permanently raising taxes by a staggering 10.3 percent of GDP (the equivalent to \$11,000 per household today) or eliminating every other federal program in order to fund Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. The President's budget focuses mostly on Medicare reform, which faces the most serious funding challenges. Responsible lawmakers should seriously examine the President's proposals to bring long-term sustainability to entitlement spending.

The following is a list of observations and recommendations concerning the President's proposals and the larger budget picture:

1. **The 2012 budget deficit is not the issue.** President Bush has pledged to put federal finances on the path toward a balanced budget by 2012. However, whether the federal government runs a deficit of \$100 billion, \$50 billion, or zero dollars in 2012 is not particularly important. Even if Washington enacts the necessary short-term budgetary tweaks, spending on Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid would quickly push the budget back into a deficit shortly thereafter. If lawmakers put entitlement spending on a sustainable path, the short-term budget picture will take care of itself.
2. **The President's budget includes responsible restraints on domestic discretionary spending.** The President's budget request increases total discretionary spending by a generous 4.9 percent. It balances larger increases for defense, homeland security, international programs, and veterans' programs by limiting the growth of domestic discretionary spending to just under 1 percent. Domestic discretionary spending--which has leapt by 48 percent (22 percent after inflation) from 2001 through 2008--can certainly afford this near-freeze for one year. Congress should offset any additional, high-priority spending with cuts to lower-priority programs.

In particular, the 46 House "Blue Dog" Democrats, who describe themselves as deficit hawks and fiscal conservatives, should applaud the President's call to limit domestic discretionary spending. The Blue Dogs have emphasized Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) rules that limit budget deficit increases caused by tax cuts and entitlement spending hikes. They should not ignore the discretionary spending hikes that also add to the budget deficit.

3. **The President excludes the war against terrorism and the patch for the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT).** The President's budget includes only a partial estimate of funding for the war on terrorism in FY 2009, and no estimate for years thereafter. While its costs are difficult to project, the President should have included at least a ballpark estimate for the sake of long-term budgetary planning (allowing that evolving circumstances may alter the estimate over time). Of course, Congress should fully fund the remaining FY 2008 funding request for the war against terrorism and begin examining the estimated costs for FY 2009.

While there are legitimately differing views on American foreign policy, all lawmakers should agree that defunding the troops and putting them in harm's way would be a dangerous and irresponsible way to express those views.

Additionally, the President's budget excludes any revenue effects from extending the patch beyond 2008. During the 2007 AMT debate, President Bush argued successfully that Congress should not raise other taxes as the price for maintaining current AMT policy. Consistent with last year's view, his budget request proposes to extend the patch in 2008 without revenue offsets. But after 2008, he proposes a revenue-neutral AMT patch; in effect, he proposes that Congress raise revenues elsewhere to offset the revenues from the patch. In other words, President Bush follows his own advice for 2008 but recommends that Congress raise taxes after he leaves office. There is no way to square that circle logically. This approach to AMT is basically a gimmick to make future budget deficits appear smaller.

4. **The budget extends the tax cuts.** The President proposes making permanent the successful 2001 and 2003 tax cuts. By increasing incentives to work, save, and invest, reduced tax rates played a key role in the expanded business investment, job growth, and the stock market gains of recent years. Furthermore, tax revenues currently stand at 18.8 percent of GDP--well above the historical average--and are projected by the CBO to rise to a record 22.8 percent of GDP by 2050, even if the tax cuts are made permanent. Letting the tax cuts expire--or worse, repealing them--would hit millions of Americans with a major tax increase. Raising tax rates would harm families and businesses, and the resulting economic slowdown would minimize any revenue increase. Furthermore, the uncertainty of whether tax rates will soon increase is undoubtedly preventing some businesses and investors from undertaking new multi-year investments--and, consequently, contributing to the current economic slowdown.

The federal budget's problems do not stem from Americans being undertaxed, but rather from Washington spending too much. In order to prevent one of the largest tax increases in American history, Congress should follow the President's lead by extending the current tax policies.

5. **The President should enforce his earmark pledge.** Last year, Congress ignored its own reform pledges by including 11,738 earmarks in the appropriations bills--the second-highest total ever--at a cost of \$21 billion. President Bush has pledged to veto any appropriations bill that does not cut in half both the number and cost of earmarks.

Earmarking is a corrupting process. Earmarks give individual lawmakers a pot of tax dollars to distribute to organizations of their choosing. Consequently, politics and campaign contributions now play a larger role in the distribution of government grants at the expense of statutory formulas and priorities and competitive application processes. Lobbyists promote their matchmaker role, effectively auctioning government grants to the highest bidder. The FBI has launched several corruption investigations to determine whether lawmakers based earmark decisions on personal profit.

Since 1996, the number of annual earmarks has leapt from 958 to 11,738. Taxpayers should welcome President Bush's veto threats to rein in earmarks.

6. **The President's budget does not jeopardize social spending.** In what has become an annual ritual, the release of the President's budget has been followed by interest groups decrying alleged cuts to social and education spending. The facts do not match the rhetoric.

By any reasonable standard, President Bush is the biggest antipoverty, health, and education spender in American history. Under President Bush, federal antipoverty spending has topped 3 percent of GDP for the first time ever. Federal education spending has leapt 9.7 percent annually--compared to 2 percent annually under President Clinton. Health research and regulation has grown by 9.5 percent annually.

Under the FY 2009 budget request, discretionary education funding would increase an additional 3.5 percent, health research spending would be approximately frozen, and antipoverty spending would increase 4.2 percent. Given how much these programs have already expanded in recent years, the President's proposal is more than sufficient.

7. **The budget addresses Medicare overspending.** Medicare spending has leapt by 51 percent over the past four years and is projected to continue growing at unsustainable rates for several decades. The President's proposal would lower Medicare's growth rate to 5 percent annually and shave one-third off the program's staggering 75-year unfunded liability of \$34 trillion. Failing to take up the President's Medicare challenge would mean kicking the can down the road, when the necessary reforms will become even more expensive.

Moreover, Medicare's perilous spending trends have triggered a provision from the 2003 Medicare Modernization Act requiring President Bush to offer reform legislation to rein in the program. There is no better time for Congress and the White House to come together on this vital issue.

8. **The budget addresses key reauthorizations.** This year, Congress may once again try to reauthorize SCHIP. President Bush proposed increasing the program's funding by \$19 billion over five years, which is more responsible than the \$35 billion increase passed by Congress, much of which would cover non-poor families and would displace private insurance coverage.

The President's budget also does not include the large increases in farm subsidies and related taxes passed by Congress last year. Driven by the ethanol boom, farm incomes and net worths are shattering records. Furthermore, more than half of all farm subsidies go to large commercial farms, which report an average income of \$200,000 and a net worth of nearly \$2 million. There is no reason to raise taxes and enlarge the budget deficit in order to expand farm subsidies even more.

Finally, the No Child Left Behind Act may be reauthorized this year. The President's budget does not include a comprehensive reauthorization proposal but *does* include another hike in discretionary education spending.

Given the Democratic control of Congress, and the short election-year calendar, it is easy to dismiss the legislative relevance of the President's budget proposals. However, the President can still use his veto authority to restrain domestic discretionary spending, rein in earmarks, and prevent reauthorizations from busting the budget. His budget draws a line in the sand on those costs and tax increases. In the long-run, the most important part of the budget is the President's challenge to Congress to finally address the unsustainable long-term costs of entitlements. The longer lawmakers wait to enact the necessary reforms, the more painful those reforms will be.

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Editor**

Bush Budget Problems

by Paul Weyrich

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

President George W. Bush has finally acknowledged the corruption and fiscal irresponsibility of the earmark process by signing an executive order directing Federal agencies to ignore any future earmarks included in report language, although not in the actual text of appropriations legislation, which is generally how earmarks receive their designation. It seemed as though President Bush finally had realized the value of fiscal restraint.



Paul M. Weyrich

On Monday, February 4, President Bush released his budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2009, which begins October 1, 2008. The \$3.1 trillion budget proposal, the first time in history the Federal Government will spend more than \$3 trillion in a 12-month period, is a disappointment for those who thought fiscal restraint would prevail. The budget proposal does contain some positive features but also would increase the deficit significantly.

Among the praiseworthy features of the proposal are plans to eliminate 151 government programs, 47 of which are in education, to save \$196 billion over five years in Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare, and to extend his tax cuts through 2013. (Currently they are scheduled to expire in 2011.)

Yet even with the reduction in spending for entitlement programs, particularly Social Security and Medicare, spending is projected to rise 6% overall in 2009 as more "Baby Boomers" retire. Nor does the proposal account for the cost to fix the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) past 2009. AMT, a parallel tax system enacted in 1969 to ensure that the wealthy paid income tax, increasingly affects middle-class families, many of whom are suffering under its onerous code. Instead of aggressively pursuing the permanent elimination of AMT, Bush includes the cost of a fix for 2009. After that, however, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that fixing AMT in 2012 would cost \$118 billion. American taxpayers safely can assume that it will become increasingly more difficult to eliminate this unfair tax as the loss of revenue to the Federal Government increases. Therefore, President Bush should act now to abolish AMT permanently instead of incorporating a one-year AMT fix into the budget.

Additionally, Bush's proposal includes only \$70 billion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan for FY 2009 and no money after that. Costs for the wars may reach \$200 billion next year and likely will continue past FY 2009. This oversight, whether or not intentional, means that Bush's assumed deficit of \$407 billion for FY 2009 will be much higher.

The projected deficit is significantly higher than the \$162 billion incurred last year. In addition to military spending, the increase can be explained by the \$145 billion stimulus package of tax refunds for individuals and businesses which Congress is expected to pass soon in order to combat the looming recession. What President Bush and Congress must learn is that for every tax cut they enact an equivalent spending cut should be made concurrently.

What President Bush's FY 2009 budget proposal reveals is that many of our elected politicians fail to understand the consequences of profligate spending. The American economy potentially is facing a recession in large measure because too many Americans sought to live beyond their means through deficit spending. The same is true of the downturn in the housing market and the disaster in the subprime mortgage market.

The Federal Government will face greater challenges in the years to come as more Baby Boomers retire, straining the already overburdened Social Security and Medicare programs, and as the middle class suffers under increased tax burdens. As with every American citizen, the Federal Government must bring its spending under control while permanently reducing (and perhaps simplifying) taxes. Living within one's means is not easy and sometimes it is painful to make the necessary cuts but for

the sake of the American economy, both short-term and long-term, President Bush and Congress must begin to make such cuts instead of increasing the deficit as usual.

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Editor**

Anti-American Oscars

by JSpencer Warren

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

Oscar time in a presidential election year offers a litmus test of the attitudes of liberals like the two Democratic contestants, their spouses and many other liberals and radical leftists, who received their education from renowned left-wing movies. From their release in the late sixties-early seventies Clinton generation, many liberals became radicalized and the Democratic Party, led by George McGovern, turned leftist and anti-American. These "Oscar" films of the left often reflect the profound alienation and even hostility toward our country's history that Michelle Obama just gave voice to, when she said the other day: ". . . for the first time in my adult life, I am really proud of my country."

Here are our nominees:

1. *The Graduate* (1967)

This watershed film embodies the youth revolt that erupted at Berkeley a few years earlier. The Greatest Generation is presented as callow materialists whose only aim in life is lounging around their swimming pools and making money in "plastics." The new college graduate Benjamin (Dustin Hoffman) knows better. Initially seduced (metaphorically and literally) by the bored, cynical Mrs. Robinson (Anne Bancroft), the mother of the girl, Elaine, he loves (Katharine Ross), Benjamin storms into Elaine's arranged wedding and runs off with her, imprisoning the contemptible Greatest Generation in the church by jamming a crucifix into the door handles of the sanctuary (as the young audiences cheered). Such blasphemy was verboten under the Hollywood Production Code (written by a Jesuit, Father Daniel Lord), which governed Hollywood films from 1934 until its replacement by the ratings system in 1966, with disastrous consequences for American culture and morality. Ironically, the immoral Mrs. Robinson (immortalized in the Simon and Garfunkle song), prefigures what some in Benjamin's generation and their children have turned into, conscience-less hedonists unmoored from transcendent morality.

2. *Easy Rider* (1969)

ow the Vietnam War radicalized the Clinton generation can be understood in this film, perhaps the definitive totem of the "Sixties Generation." A motorcycle odyssey across "Amerika" by two drugged out hippies (Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper) who pick up along the way an "awakening" middle class dropout (Jack Nicholson, in the film that helped make his long career). At the end, having spent part of the film doped up on cocaine and LSD, and much of the rest of the film on marijuana, to the accompaniment of hard rock, they are wantonly gunned down by evil Americans represented by two men driving a pick-up truck. The film was co-written by Hopper and Fonda and directed by Hopper, who today – sweet irony – is making a living as the face of Ameriprise Financial in the company's TV commercials. Along with Oliver Stone's *JFK* (1991) – see below – *Easy Rider* is perhaps one of the two most viciously anti-U.S. movies ever made.

3. *MASH* (1970)

Robert Altman is the most hateful anti-American director along with Stone. He made the famous crack after 9/11 that he was disgusted by the sight of the Stars and Stripes. This gross comedy of a medical unit of wise-guys who employ black humor to keep their "sanity" against the madness of war in the Korean conflict was Altman's first big hit and hugely popular during the Vietnam War era on college campuses (as were the first two films listed here). The film mocks religion and patriotism. Interestingly, this attack on America's noble stand against communist aggression near the outset of the Cold War was written (adapted from the novel by Richard Hooker) by the unrepentant Communist and former party member Ring Lardner, Jr., who had been blacklisted (perhaps with good reason, in retrospect) in the late 1940's. Lardner was one of the original Hollywood Ten, most of whom were Stalinists. (See my essay on this subject at



<http://acuf.org/issues/issue94/071022med.asp> .) It bears repeating: this much loved film of the Sixties Generation was written by a Communist.

4. *Little Big Man* (1971)

This burlesque of that most vulnerable of American myths, Custer's Last Stand, becomes an assault on the American experience. The story is told in flashback by one Jack Crabb (Dustin Hoffman, who would never have been a movie star before the 1960s), now aged 120, who witnessed the events. Custer -- who, let us remember, was a courageous cavalry officer whose boldness was instrumental in cutting off Lee's retreat at the end of the war, leading to his surrender at Appomattox -- is portrayed as something of a dunce. Just about every other white person in the film is venal or worse, and the film implicitly attacks our settlement of this continent. Further, this supposed de-mythologizing film furthers a myth beloved of the left, the alleged massacre by Custer's Seventh Cavalry of a peaceful Indian encampment along the Washita River in the Oklahoma Territory in 1868. In fact, braves from this encampment had been attacking and killing settlers and Custer's men were defending them. The picture was directed by Arthur Penn, who had directed the watershed counter-culture *Bonnie and Clyde* in 1967, ushering in the explicit buckets of blood exploitation of violence which has ruined movies and afflicted our culture and society ever since. Penn's nihilism didn't take him far and by the end of the seventies his career was dead. The screenplay was written by Calder Willingham, who also did the adaptation of *The Graduate*.

McCabe and Mrs. Miller (1971)

Having disposed of the Korean War, Robert Altman then turned his attention to deconstructing that most American and heroic of genres, the Western. The noble knight on horseback protecting the new oasis of civilization in the wilderness is replaced by Warren Beatty's bordello owner, whom Altman also depicts as a stand-in for American entrepreneurship. At the "climax" which provided the moral catharsis of the classic Western, he is shot to death, helpless, stumbling in a blizzard. Altman's deliberately formless, even nondescript, direction, is a conscious revolt against the beautiful, noble classicism of the traditional Hollywood greats like John Ford and other paragons of the Western, such as Anthony Mann, Budd Boetticher and Delmer Daves. By comparison with their rich legacy, Altman left a desert of mediocrity

6) *Heaven's Gate* (1980)

One of Hollywood's legendary mega-million box office disasters, this monstrosity was the culmination of the trend of anti-Westerns that had begun in the late 1960's as part of the counter-culture revolt. (See my essay, [Rediscovering the Classic Western](#), which also traces the decline of this genre down, yes, to Clint Eastwood.) It virtually killed off the movie Western, which before, into the early sixties, had been the most popular movie genre (and on television as well). Written and directed by Michael Cimino, whose once promising career (see his 1978 *The Deer Hunter*) was virtually killed off as a result, this would-be epic film turns the real-life Johnson County War between settlers and ranchers in 1890's Wyoming into a neo-Marxist assault on the entire American Western experience. Its original 219 minute running time quickly was cut by more than one hour, but nothing could save this fiasco. The film also wrecked United Artists.

7. *Dances With Wolves* (1990)

Westerns experienced a brief revival following the success of this Kevin Costner film, which became the first Western to win the Academy Award as best picture since *Cimarron* in 1931. Costner plays a Union officer who finds no meaning in fighting the Civil War, so he takes a post out West in Indian country, where he goes native and finds Indian "civilization" much superior to America's. Costner also directed this overbaked, self-regarding travesty in which, again, whites are portrayed with a clichéd hostility that is as obvious as the treatment of cardboard villains in juvenile movie serials of the 1930's.

8) *JFK* (1991)

Oliver Stone served in the Vietnam War, winning a Bronze Star and the Purple Heart, and he has been taking it out on the USA ever since. His Vietnam War movie *Platoon* (1986) won the Academy Award as best picture and he won as best director. This film could be substituted for *JFK*: it centers on the killing of civilian villagers by U.S. troops, an atrocity which was the exception to the rule,

while ignoring the widespread, systematic killing of tens of thousands of civilians by the communists (e.g. the Hue Massacre during the 1968 Tet offensive, which, unlike the isolated U.S. My Lai Massacre, is not widely known because, like all communist atrocities, our brilliant television reporters were not present to film it). Further, and typical of the immature left (see *MASH* above), the film focuses on the subjective, personal experiences of Stone's U.S. soldiers (not to be minimized) while ignoring the broad political and moral context. By this approach, service in the Civil War or World War II also could be portrayed as a waste.

In any event, *JFK* has done far more damage than *Platoon* because it is most responsible for reviving and perpetuating the unproven claim – now a myth – that the CIA and other Cold War warriors at the highest reaches of the U.S. government participated in a conspiracy to murder John F. Kennedy. In Stone's fevered brain, he and his fellow soldiers in Vietnam would have been spared their hell because had he lived, President Kennedy would have averted direct U.S. military involvement. This is unproveable and open to much doubt, inasmuch as Kennedy sharply escalated indirect U.S. involvement by sending thousands of advisors and acquiescing in the overthrow of Vietnamese President Diem. But Stone long ago abandoned any rational approach to the subject.

JFK is one of the most dishonest films ever made. It is pure propaganda. Stone interweaves factual material, such as the famous home movie of the assassination by a bystander, Abraham Zapruder, with his fictional film, and he falsifies many important details to back up his conspiracy claim that Lee Harvey Oswald was not acting alone. Stone denies his falsifications, and justifies the film in any event on the ground of dramatic license. But his use of factual material (some of which only a well-informed student of the subject would recognize) goes way over the line of dramatic license. Joseph Goebbels would be proud of Stone's work on this outrage.

Following is a list of some of the film's falsehoods, presented through the person of Kevin Costner, trashing his country this time by playing New Orleans D.A. Jim Garrison, who in 1967 brought the only prosecution in connection with the assassination, of local businessman Clay Shaw (Tommy Lee Jones):

a. Oswald was not a good enough shot to get off the third, fatal, shot in the time available before the presidential limousine would have driven below an overpass, which would mean the fatal shot was fired by a second gunman, from the side at the Grassy Knoll, according to Stone and other conspiracy theorists. But the fact is that Oswald's record as a rifleman in the Marines was excellent. An 89-year-old medical doctor, using the same type of rifle as Oswald and sitting at the Texas School Book Depository window from where Oswald fired, demonstrated how he could easily do what he did, in an ABC documentary shown several years ago (shown since on the History Channel). FBI demonstrations further confirm this.

b. The second bullet, which according to the Warren Commission passed through Kennedy's back and then Governor John Connally's chest, could not have done so because Connally was not seated directly in front of the president; he was at the wrong angle. The bullet would have had to zig zag, according to Costner/Garrison's argument at the trial. Unfortunately, the film's model used in the trial shows Connally in a false position; in truth, he was perfectly seated in front of and below Kennedy for the bullet's trajectory to hit both men as it did. (If this second bullet did not hit both men, it would have meant four bullets were fired, hence two shooters and a conspiracy.)

c. Kennedy's head is seen in the gruesome Zapruder film thrusting backward as the fatal bullet strikes. Stone presents as fact that this means the bullet was fired from the front or side. But a victim's head can react this way when struck by a bullet from behind, according to medical and ballistics experts. Further, the autopsy showed the fatal bullet entered from the back of the president's skull, and that all the bullets fired came from Oswald's rifle.

There are other examples of Stone's falsification of the record. Also noteworthy: the key prosecution witness, Perry Russo, had failed a police lie detector test, yet Garrison went ahead with the trial and put him on the witness stand. Shaw was acquitted in less than one hour. Of further interest, Stone's

hero, Garrison, had been found by an Army doctor to be rather unbalanced mentally and unfit for duty when he was serving in the National Guard in the early 1950's. And Stone gives Costner/Garrison a speech of his own radical views at the end of the trial, concerning the nature of our government, which was never given.

This tissue of falsehoods has been found to be responsible for the large number of Americans who believe Stone's thesis, for which no credible evidence whatsoever has ever been produced. Nor has any credible evidence ever been produced that anyone other than Oswald killed President Kennedy.

9) *Gangs of New York*(2002)

It is 1863. Our country is fighting for its survival in a terrible civil war. Americans of all walks of life, including many new immigrants, are dying in record numbers and suffering unimaginably to save the one democracy in the world, the hope of the human race. So when he turns to this period, what does the renowned Martin Scorsese make of it? He films a perverse buckets of blood story about primitive ruffians slaughtering one another over some turf in a Manhattan lower class district. And he includes a shot of newly arrived immigrants serving only as cannon fodder for the – presumably – pointless war. Another descent into the nihilist world of Scorsese, who appears to have some serious mental hang-ups. (See my essay on Scorsese's career at <http://acuf.org/issues/issue83/070504med.asp> .)

10) *Letters from Iwo Jima*(2006)

As I wrote in detail last year (<http://acuf.org/issues/issue78/070216med.asp>), this Clint Eastwood film represents the nadir of moral equivalence. It places the U.S. and Imperial Japanese on the same level, when in fact the latter was in the same league as the Nazis in the millions of innocents its army killed and tortured. Not to mention Japan's treachery at Pearl Harbor. Like some of the war films above, it substitutes the subjective and personal for the objective historical situation. And it is based on profound, if not willful, ignorance of historical fact. It is made to fit the left's radical egalitarian dogma that there is no objective moral truth, that no country or civilization is better than any other, because that would make one superior and thus violate the one true precept: total equality of all peoples and cultures, everywhere, and its derivative, absolute "tolerance." The film is joined in this perversity by Eastwood's companion film, *Flags of Our Fathers* (2006). (See my review essay at <http://acuf.org/issues/issue73/061211med.asp>.)

Undoubtedly readers will have other nominees for this list of lamentable movies, which provides incontrovertible evidence of the Culture War now dividing America and threatening our future. And it all grew out of the Sixties counterculture, which in many quarters today is the dominant culture.

Spencer Warren is www.ConservativeBattleline.com's movie critic.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Easy on Anti-Jesus Slur

by S.T. Karnick

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

Providing further proof that America's elites are delighted when people of low mental ability use Christians and Christianity as punching bags, ESPN has suspended sports-show anchor Dana Jacobson for one week after she indulged in a drunken, foul-mouthed public tirade that included an astonishingly vulgar curse directed at Jesus Christ.



The one-week suspension is very revealing of the mentality of the management team at the Disney-owned sports network, given that the same behavior would have gotten anyone not in the media fired, and it would have gotten a media person fired had it been delivered against an accredited victim group—cf. the termination of radio host Don Imus and basketball commentator Tim Hardaway last year.

At a Jan. 11 roast for fellow ESPN personalities Mike Greenberg and Mike Golic, Jacobson, reportedly very drunk, launched into "a rambling speech that included vulgar references about Notre Dame," according to [a Chicago Tribune story](#).

Jacobson, a University of Michigan grad, often exchanges on-air taunts with Golic, a Notre Dame alum, about the two schools.

According to the *Chicago Sun-Times* report, the audience was not amused:

An article in The Press of Atlantic City the next day said that Jacobson "made an absolute fool of herself, swilling vodka from a Belvedere bottle, mumbling along and cursing like a sailor as Mike & Mike rested their heads in their hands in embarrassment." She was booed off the stage.

All of that would be enough to get an ordinary person fired, of course.

Jacobson then went on to say (using expletives indicated by first letter only here):

F— Notre Dame, F—Touchdown Jesus, and F— Jesus!

Clearly, the only reason Jacobson was not fired and subjected to the same kind of universal condemnation directed at Tim Hardaway and Don Imus last year is that her words were directed at Christians and their God.

If you think for even a moment that this is not true, imagine what the results would have been if Jacobson had targeted a different group.

Imagine that she had said the following: F— Gambling, F— Eddie Robinson, and F— Martin Luther King!

Or that she had said this: F— the Middle East, F— Mecca, and F— Muhammed!

Or that she had said this: F— the Democrats, F— Hillary Clinton, and F— abortionists!

She wouldn't survive a day.

But because she chose to offend Christians, she'll be back at work in a week.

Compare this with the firing of [Stephen Coughlin from the U.S. military's Joint Staff for daring to observe that *jihad* is inherent in Islam](#), and [the death threats against Geert Wilders](#) and the murder of Dutch columnist and filmmaker Theo Van Gogh for making similar observations.

Jacobson is getting a free ride because her despicable tirade was directed against Christians.

I am very tempted to say,

F— ESPN, F— the mainstream media, and F— Dana Jacobson!

But I am too polite to do so.

S.T. Karnick is the editor of American Culture, where this first appeared. <http://stkarnick.com>

**E-mail the
Editor**

No Beef at Times

by Alan Caruba

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

The New York Times is often pointed to as an exemplar of the highest standards of journalism. So what are we to make of "Rethinking the Meat-Guzzler" by Mark Bittman, in its January 27, 2008 edition?

Bittman writes for the "Dining in and Dining Out" section and is identified as the author of "How to Cook Everything Vegetarian," along with the disclaimer that "He is not a vegetarian." Strange.



Alan Caruba

His commentary is a cornucopia of assertions and cherry-picked facts that beg to be rebutted, but I shall choose just a few, starting where he started. "Like oil, meat is subsidized by the federal government." By subsidized, the reader is asked to assume that the raising, packaging, and distribution of meat products depends on government subsidies to exist and that the oil industry does as well. Unlike the European Union, those engaged in either industry in the United States are expected to make a profit on their own without such dependence. It's called capitalism.

"Finally—like oil—meat is something people are encourage to consume less of, as the toll exacted by industrial production increases, and becomes increasingly visible." Visible to whom? Do supermarket sections offering abundant choices of meat products suggest anything other than the fact that people want meat as part of their diet? Does anyone really give any thought to how it got there?

The only people recommending we eat less meat are vegetarians. Indeed, they would have us not eat any meat! But Mark Bittman, we are duly informed "is not a vegetarian." And Santa Claus does not live at the North Pole. (In 2000, The New York Times reported that it was melting and had to later retract this absurdity.)

The heart of his screed about meat is this: "These assembly-line meat factories consume enormous amounts of energy, pollute water, supplies, generate significant greenhouse gases and require ever-increasingly amounts of corn, soy, and other grains, a dependency that has led to the destruction of vast swaths of the world's tropical rain forests."

Where to start disassembling this environmental horror story? Let's begin with the fact that there are now more than 300 million Americans, most of whom enjoy a good hamburger, a tasty barbeque, a thick steak, a slice of ham, a rasher of bacon, the endless ways chicken can be prepared, ad infinitum. Millions more around the world have adopted our food preferences, just as we have adopted theirs.

If parts of the rainforest, in Brazil for example, are being destroyed, the Wall Street Journal recently informed us that the U.S. mandate requiring more ethanol has driven up the price of corn and soy. Brazilian ranchers and farmers want to cash in as well. As the leading exporter of meat, ranchers "looking for pasture land are clearing forests, accounting for about two thirds of the loss..." Brazilian Farmers want to plant more corn and soy. This is what is meant by unintended consequences.

Since the day when the Pilgrims got off the boat at Plymouth Rock, Americans have been totally obsessed with what they eat. Other than the Fourth of July, the most quintessential national holiday is Thanksgiving, a huge feast to celebrate the good fortune of being American.

Does it take energy to raise, butcher, and transport meat? Yes, but it also takes energy to light our cities and towns. Does this generate greenhouse gases, i.e., carbon dioxide and methane? Yes, but humans exhale about two pounds of CO₂ every day. Cows also contribute in their own way. How much of the earth's atmosphere is represented by its CO₂ content? Somewhere in the vicinity of 0.038 percent.

Bittman piled "fact" upon "fact" to demonstrate the horror of meat production and consumption, but a funny thing is happening around the world as economies in China and throughout Asia are now improving, putting more money in the hands of more people, many of whom are now buying and consuming meat.

Bittman, of course, attributed "heart disease, some types of cancer, diabetes" in part to our enjoyment of meat. Other than the morbidly obese, the American preference for meat as part of our diet, does not point to any specific disease factor.

For example, the Japanese eat a very low fat diet and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans. The French eat a high fat diet and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans. The Japanese drink very little red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans. The Italians drink a lot of red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans. You cannot connect the dots because there is no connection.

How much and what we eat is largely a matter of economics and when there is plenty, Americans and others around the world eat across the entire spectrum of food.

It is only the crypto-environmentalists and vegetarians who are making claims that eating meat is bad for the environment.

In November, Associated Press reporter, Seth Borenstein, wrote that " America's obesity epidemic and global warming might not seem to have much in common. But health experts suggest people can attack them both by cutting calories and carbon dioxide at the same time." This is pure quackery. It's absurd nonsense, based on the increasingly discredited hoax called global warming.

As Dr. Jon Robinson who holds a doctorate in health education and exercise physiology, and a master of science in human nutrition, noted several years ago, "We are in desperate need of a serious serving of common sense when it comes to eating. Viewing foods as weapons of mass destruction is scientifically unsound and psychologically destabilizing. In fact, our burgeoning fear of foods has actually spawned a new eating disorder—orthorexia nervosa—the obsession with eating only 'healthy' food."

I will not cite any more nonsense from the Bittman article, but I call attention to it to remind you that your stomach is designed to eat meat, while other organs are herbivorous.

Meat is meat. It is part of the environment, not its enemy, and neither are you. Eat! Get some more exercise. Enjoy life and pay no mind to The New York Times.

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

**E-mail the
Editor**

No Tax Cuts For Rich

by John Goodman

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

Suppose we did need more money to add to our annual \$2.1 trillion health care spending spree. Where could it come from?

Real health reform does not cost money. It saves money. Conservatively, I would guess we could reduce health spending by one-third and raise quality and increase access to care at the same time. That's \$7,000 for every U.S. household. Since government spends almost half the money, we could all get an annual economic stimulus check for \$3,000 - leaving \$50 billion behind for government to mop up any remaining problems.



John Goodman

Alas, hardly anyone is in favor of real reform. For a lot of people, reform doesn't even count as reform without sacrifice and atonement. Think of California liberals and global warming. Nothing they do will have any perceptible impact on the climate. But they don't feel good about themselves unless they are enduring pain and discomfort.

In the Democratic primaries, here is the standard mantra: tax cuts for the rich are depriving government of revenue which we desperately need for health reform. All of this is exclaimed with almost religious fervor and a level of hysteria that is hard to top, unless you count this morsel from Paul Krugman in The New York Times: "for 30 years American politics has been dominated by...Robin Hood in reverse, giving unto those that hath, while taking from those who don't."

Now for an uncomfortable look at the facts. For the past 30 years, there has been no lasting tax cut for the rich. And far from being deprived of revenue, the federal government's share of national income today is exactly where it has been, on the average, for the past 60 years. The penultimate sentence in the preceding paragraph deserves repetition and emphasis: There has been no lasting tax cut for the rich.

What we have done, beginning in the Reagan administration 25 years ago, is cut tax rates for the rich. But every time we cut rates, total taxes paid by the rich went up, not down. As Art Laffer explained in The Wall Street Journal the other day, the top 1% of taxpayers are on the wrong side of the Laffer curve, and they have been there for almost the entire sorry history of the income tax.

Every Republican tax rate reduction for the wealthiest taxpayers as well as every Democratic one (both Kennedy and Clinton) has led to more revenue for the Treasury. In Clinton's case, approving a Republican capital gains rate reduction (from 28% to 20%) in 1996 is what produced surpluses at the end of his presidency - surpluses that Clinton's own Treasury Department never predicted! Unlike ordinary mortals, the rich have enormous discretion over how they receive their income - as wages, as dividends, as realized capital gains or even as unrealized (untaxed) capital gains. So the way to get the most money out of them is not to push rates up to 70% or 90% (where they once were), but to lower them in order to coax the wealthy into realizing more taxable income.

Furthermore, almost every time tax rates for the wealthiest have been reduced, millions of low-income taxpayers have been removed from the tax rolls. So that today almost half the population pays no income tax. The upshot is that virtually every tax change in recent history - whether Democrat or Republican - has made the tax code more progressive.

Since noneconomists often wonder whether they are being statistically hoodwinked in these discussions, let us be clear: Over the past two decades the income tax system has become increasing more progressive, no matter how progressivity is measured. So here are the takeaways: (1) government revenues today as a fraction of national income are equal to their historic average,

(2) we are collecting more income taxes - both in total dollars and as a percent of the total - from the wealthy than ever, (3) the tax system today is more progressive by far than at any time in modern history and (4) repealing the Bush rate reductions for high-income taxpayers is unlikely to produce any extra revenue for health reform.

John Goodman is President of the National Center for Policy Analysis For Michael Stroup's demonstration that Republican tax cuts have made the income tax system more progressive than otherwise, go to <http://www.ncpa.org/pub/ba/ba606/>

For Steven Moore's demonstration that capital gains rate cuts always produce more capital gains tax revenues go to <http://www.ncpa.org/pub/st/st307/st307.pdf>

For Art Laffer's explanation of all of this, go to <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/1959323/posts>

**E-mail the
Editor**

Government Energy Arsenic

by Roy Innis

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

Congress and the White House, Democrats and Republicans finally agree on something!

We need a stimulus package, they intone. The economy is stagnating, unemployment is climbing, families can't pay their bills. We have to prime the pump, reduce interest rates, increase unemployment benefits, provide temporary tax relief.



Roy Innis

These unlicensed physicians are prescribing aspirin to counteract the poisons they routinely inject into our economy, while they prepare even bigger doses of arsenic.

Every one of these supposed shots of economic adrenaline is counteracted by toxic policies that drive up prices, cause layoffs and put families on energy welfare. It would be laughable, if it weren't so hypocritical.

Oil, gas, coal and other resources on America's citizen-owned public lands could meet US energy needs for centuries. Developing these resources – with full regard for ecological values – would generate jobs, economic growth and tax revenues, stabilize energy prices, and reduce our need to buy oil from unfriendly countries.

Onshore and offshore public lands could hold enough oil to produce gasoline for 60 million cars and fuel oil for 25 million homes for 60 years – and enough natural gas to heat 60 million homes for 160 years.

But Energy Killer legislators, regulators, courts and eco activists have made most of them unavailable to the workers and families who own them. In addition, a Utah area with a trillion dollars worth of public coal was placed off-limits by President Clinton. Nuclear power has been in a regulatory stranglehold for decades. And activists blocked construction of dozens of coal-fired electricity plants in 2007.

The "energy" legislation President Bush just signed doesn't foster the production of a single drop of oil, whiff of natural gas, or kilowatt of new coal or nuclear power. No wonder OPEC ministers rejected his plea to increase oil production. Instead, the bill:

- Adds \$6,000 to the price of new cars, while reducing passenger safety in collisions with trucks, trees and other large objects, by forcing manufacturers to downsize cars to meet 35 mpg ratings;
- Replaces billions of incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lights, necessitating expensive recycling facilities that can safely handle the mercury in each CFL;
- Increases ethanol production to 35 billion gallons a year – five times what we produced last year from corn grown on an area the size of Indiana, using 42 billion gallons of water and 5 billion gallons of petroleum (for fertilizers, pesticides and fuel);
- Promotes wind power – although generating enough electricity to power New York City requires huge turbines across an area the size of Connecticut, and they only work eight hours a day on average.

Because they keep our oil and gas locked up, these actions mean every barrel of oil "saved" via these "eco-friendly" measures is offset by reserves we use up and don't replace. They create a huge energy gap between what we need – and what politicians let us have. Between real energy from fossil fuel, nuclear and hydroelectric power (96% of today's energy) – and imaginary energy that politicians promise will someday come from wind, solar and ethanol (less than 1% today).

Worse, every ounce of "stimulus" is offset by a pound of new government arsenic.

Some 22,000 magnificent polar bears now roam the Arctic, and their numbers continue to increase. But bureaucrats and environmental activists want the bears designated as a "threatened" species.

Doing so would put courts and bureaucrats in charge of any activity that produces greenhouse gases: heating, cooling, transportation and manufacturing ... bakeries, dry cleaners, hotels, office and apartment buildings, cement plants and dairy farms. The price of everything we do, eat, drive and wear would soar; jobs would disappear; and for millions the American Dream would slip out of reach.

Energy Killers justify these demands by pointing to computer models that conjure up disaster scenarios in which rising carbon dioxide causes icy habitats to melt 50-100 years from now, driving polar bears to extinction. However, hundreds of climate scientists emphasize that these models can't forecast accurately even one year in advance, much less 50. They say there is no evidence that Earth's moderate warming of the past century will turn into a disaster, or that CO² is the primary cause of climate change.

Empirical evidence, they argue, demonstrates that climate change is driven primarily by solar energy output, cosmic rays and other natural causes. Indeed, average global temperatures have been stable since 2001, despite steadily rising CO² levels.

Costly, punitive efforts to cut CO² will likely have zero to minimal benefits. They would also affect crop and wild plant growth, which improves as atmospheric carbon dioxide levels increase.

Nevertheless, the same models and alarmist reasoning are being used to promote legislation to slash carbon dioxide emissions and establish complex cap-and-trade systems. Politicians claim the legislation will stabilize a climate that has changed repeatedly over the ages.

Senator Jeff Bingaman's bill is the least draconian. But the EPA says even it would send gasoline prices up an extra 57 cents a gallon, spark a 20% increase in electricity prices, and cut up to \$370 billion from our Gross Domestic Product.

These sacrifices would reduce global CO² levels in 2050 by 1.5% and average temperature by perhaps 0.05 degrees.

Other bills would be vastly more expensive. Senator Joe Lieberman admits his bill would cost "hundreds of billions" of dollars. Others demand that we eliminate up to 80% of CO² emissions by 2050.

All would give bureaucrats control over virtually every aspect of our lives. All would make reliable, affordable energy a distant memory – even with an all-out program to build more nuclear power plants, which is anathema to many greens and legislators. All would force industry to spend trillions of dollars to capture, pipeline and store carbon dioxide. Experts say forcing the CO² into high pressure subterranean storage could trigger small earthquakes, and ruptures could cause gas leaks and mass asphyxiations.

To quell concerns about US jobs and riches heading to China and India, the Administration is prodding them to take "measurable actions" to cut CO² emissions. But their focus is properly on reducing poverty through economic growth, and cleaning up filthy air and water. Speculative climate catastrophe is a low priority.

Congressional and other "physicians" who are experimenting on our energy, economy and lives need to abide by the Hippocratic Oath: First, do no harm.

Affordable, reliable energy transforms constitutionally protected rights into actual rights and opportunities for better jobs and living standards. Restricting energy supplies rolls back civil rights gains.

CORE is not going to let politicians do that. Neither should you.

*Roy Innis is chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality (www.CORE-online.org), one of America's oldest civil rights organizations, and author of *Energy Keepers - Energy Killers: The new civil rights battle*.*

**E-mail the
Editor**

No McCain Cap-and-Trade

by Myron Ebell

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

Now that Senator John McCain (R-Az.) is the presumptive Republican presidential nominee and either Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) or Senator Barack Obama (D-Ill.) is going to be the Democratic nominee, I expect there will be a lot of big companies pleading with Congress to pass a cap-and-trade bill this year. Their reasoning is that they should negotiate a cap-and-trade scheme that “they can live with” now rather than be faced with a political climate next year that is more favorable to a cap-and-trade bill with much more onerous targets and timetables.

I think this is foolish, and I hope that the opponents of energy rationing and global warming alarmism won't buy into it.

In my view, a “reasonable” cap-and-trade bill this year will only set the stage for a much bigger bill in the next Congress. That is the pattern of major environmental legislation. First, pass a bill that nearly everyone agrees is reasonable and achievable, and then use that agreement as the staging ground to demand much more.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 was preceded by acts of 1966 and 1970. The 7.5 billion gallon ethanol mandate enacted in 2005 was replaced by a 36 billion gallon mandate when Congress overwhelmingly passed and President George W. Bush enthusiastically signed the anti-energy bill in December. That bill also included a significant increase in Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards for new vehicles. But already environmental pressure groups have announced that CAFÉ was just the beginning of their efforts to force automakers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Rather than pre-emptive capitulation, I think the correct strategy is to resist cap-and-trade legislation while the realities of energy rationing sink in. It will be more difficult to enact cap-and-trade in the next Congress, even if the new president and more members of Congress support it, because the high costs are becoming ever more apparent in the European Union.

While I think we can win by waiting this one out, there are unfortunately all too many defeatists in the business community who can't resist the temptation to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

Myron Ebell is director of energy and global warming policy for the Competitive Enterprise Institute



John McCain

**E-mail the
Editor**

New Political Music

by Joseph Barrett

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

There is not one campaign, one ideological faction, one party or one anything else that can say with any credence "the American people are saying this or that or want such and such". There is not one person or group who can say that the "American people have spoken."

Everything is on the table, every thing, every idea is at risk and the American people are divided six ways to Sunday.

The only conventional wisdom is that there is no conventional wisdom. Nobody speaks for anybody. And there ain't no one listening to nobody.

Here are several things that are very obvious, if you are watching, and it doesn't take any genius to see them.

1. Endorsements from famous people have no shelf life other than the 30 minutes or so that it takes for people to go on to the next event. No one has any durable credence.
2. Talk radio as a medium for fermentation and fomenting dissent is alive and well. Talk radio as far as talk jockeys being the formers of political action is not all that alive and well.
3. There is no prevailing philosophy of political or self governance that holds the loyalty of even a significant plurality of the people. There are no terms that catch the imagination of even a plurality of the people. The purveyors of such have lost the heartbeat of most Americans
4. The people are listening to each other via email and friend to friend and family member to family member. There is a communication revolution.
5. Pundits and talking heads don't have any idea of what is occurring. They are five steps away from what significant segments of the people are thinking or about to do, and falling behind.
6. There are no significant leaders who have a hold on the majority of the people. No one seems to know the pulse of the people, only various segments of it, if that.
7. The terms liberal, conservative, moderate etc have no viable meaning. They are terms of self description. Each individual knows what he or she thinks they are and why. It differs for person to person. Each individual has his or her meaning of who and what they are.
8. Rejection of what is. People just do not like the current way of doing the business of the people. There is no national collective wish list of what should be. But there sure as hell is an overwhelming rejection of what has been and is, and who has been doing all the posturing and talking.

There are growing new forces in contention for the American political soul. In the GOP there are three groups so far. Nationalism, represented by John McCain, Christian populism represented by Mike Huckabee, and corporate and market conservatism—Mitt Romney, Rush, Fox News etc.

Within the Democratic Party—the party of client statism—there is Hillary Clinton and the vested Democratic interest groups, the dream seeker with Barak Obama and others, and finally the leftist anti nationalists and rejectionists—the vestiges of the intellectual and Hollywood/New York cultural elite.

No one has given or is attempting to give intellectual structure to all of this—yet. But soon some will try...

For the first time in a long time, large groups of Americans are, on their own, individually seeking their own political truths and viability. History and politics abhor a vacuum. Some folks somewhere very soon are going to put the words to the music.

"have you heard the people sing"
it is the song of angry men—"

You know the rest-- it is going to be a bumpy ride. I wish I will be around to see what happens.

No one but an idiot or a fool gives battle on a terrain without scouting out the area. No one but a clown yells "charge" when they have no followers. But the history of man is full of such people.

We are living in very interesting times.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Britian's Islamic Law

by Daniel Pipes

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

Beneath the deceptively placid surface of everyday life, the British population is engaged in a momentous encounter with Islam. Three recent developments, each of them culminating years' long trend – and not just some odd occurrence – exemplify changes now underway.

First, the UK government has decided that terrorism by Muslims in the name of Islam is actually unrelated to Islam, or even anti-Islamic. This notion took root in 2006 when the [Foreign Office](#), afraid that the term "war on terror" would inflame British Muslims, sought language that upholds "shared values as a means to counter terrorists." By early 2007, the [European Union](#) issued a classified handbook that banned *jihād*, *Islamic*, and *fundamentalist* in reference to terrorism, offering instead some "non-offensive" phrases. Last summer, Prime Minister [Gordon Brown](#) prohibited his ministers from using the word *Muslim* in connection with terrorism. In January, Home Secretary [Jacqui Smith](#) went further, actually describing terrorism as "anti-Islamic." And last week the [Home Office](#) completed the obfuscation by issuing a counter-terrorism phrasebook that instructs civil servants to refer only to *violent extremism* and *criminal murderers*, not *Islamist extremism* and *jihadi-fundamentalists*.



Home Secretary Jacqui Smith describes terrorism as "anti-Islamic."

Second, and again culminating several years of evolution, the British government now recognizes polygamous marriages. It changed the rules in the "[Tax Credits \(Polygamous Marriages\) Regulations 2003](#)": previously, only one wife could inherit assets tax-free from a deceased husband; this legislation permits multiple wives to inherit tax-free, so long as the marriage had been contracted where polygamy is legal, as in Nigeria, Pakistan, or India. In a related matter, the [Department for Work and Pensions](#) began issuing extra payments to harems for such [benefits](#) as jobseeker allowances, housing subventions, and council tax relief. Last week came news that, after a [year-long review](#), four government departments (Work and Pensions, Treasury, Revenue and Customs, Home Office) concluded that formal recognition of polygamy is "the best possible" option for Her Majesty's Government.

Third, the archbishop of Canterbury, [Rowan Williams](#), endorsed applying portions of the Islamic law (the Shari'a) in Great Britain. Adopting its civil elements, he [explained](#), "seems unavoidable" because not all British Muslims relate to the existing legal system and applying the Shari'a would help with their social cohesion. When Muslims can go to an Islamic civil court, they need not face "the stark alternatives of cultural loyalty or state loyalty." Continuing to insist on the "legal monopoly" of British common law rather than permit Shari'a, Williams warned, would bring on "a bit of a danger" for the country.

[Prime Minister](#) Brown immediately slammed Williams' suggestion: Shari'a law, his office declared, "cannot be used as a justification for committing breaches of English law, nor can the principle of Shari'a law be used in a civilian court. ... the Prime Minister believes British law should apply in this country, based on British values." Criticism of Williams came additionally from [all sides](#) of the political spectrum – from Sayeeda Warsi, the Tory (Muslim) shadow minister for community cohesion and social action; Nick Clegg, leader of the Liberal Democrats; and Gerald Batten of the United Kingdom Independence Party. Secular and Christian groups opposed Williams. So did Trevor Phillips, head of the equality commission. The Anglican church in [Australia](#) denounced his proposal, along with leading members of [his own church](#), including [his predecessor](#), Lord Carey. [Melanie](#)

[Phillips](#) called his argument "quite extraordinarily muddled, absurd and wrong." The [Sun newspaper](#) editorialized that "It's easy to dismiss Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams as a silly old goat. In fact he's a dangerous threat to our nation." It concludes acerbically that "The Archbishop of Canterbury is in the wrong church."

Although widely denounced (and [in danger of losing his job](#)), Williams may be right about the Shari'a being unavoidable, for it is already [getting entrenched in the West](#). A Dutch justice minister announced that "if two-thirds of the Dutch population should want to introduce the Shari'a tomorrow, then the possibility should exist." A German judge referred to the Koran in a routine divorce case. A parallel Somali *gar* courts system already exists in Britain.

These developments suggest that British appeasement concerning the war on terror, the nature of the family, and the rule of law are part of a larger pattern. Even more than the security threat posed by Islamist violence, these trends are challenging and perhaps will change the very nature of Western life.

Mr. Pipes (www.DanielPipes.org) is director of the Middle East Forum. © All rights reserved by Daniel Pipes.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Real Environmental Justice

by Paul Driessen

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

"Environmental justice" is often used to benchmark corporate social responsibility.

"People of color and low-income populations are disproportionately impacted by pollution," argues Leslie Fields, Sierra Club director of environmental justice.

It's unjust that people lose their jobs when companies merge or downsize, to cut costs or boost profits, activists claim.

"Every time a child dies as a result of floods in Bangladesh, an airline executive should be dragged out of his office and drowned," for causing global warming, rants UK firebrand George Monbiot. Government leaders "should go to jail" for failing to act more quickly to prevent planetary climate cataclysm, insists Canadian eco-zealot David Suzuki.

These assertions range from simplistic to outrageous to straight out of Lewis Carroll.

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," Humpty Dumpty replied, "who is to be master. That's all."

Indeed, activist terminology often guides public policy – and dictates who is to be master: those who must live with the consequences of their personal choices – or those who must live with policies imposed by others. That reality underscores why policies must be founded on full and fair assessment of risks and benefits, especially to the poor and powerless, rather than on what advances political agendas.

A few years back, mostly black residents of Convent, Louisiana welcomed the construction of a modern plastics factory that would have brought 2,000 construction jobs and 165 permanent positions that paid double the wages of working in sugar cane fields, plus health benefits and a stronger tax base. The local NAACP also supported the facility.

But Sierra Club activists opposed the plant, claiming Shintech, Inc's factory might increase allegedly high cancer rates, in violation of environmental justice principles. The factory was built elsewhere, in a mostly white community, and Convent remained poor.

Allegations of high cancer rates turned out to be false. In fact, cancer rates might well have declined, because workers with medical benefits would have discovered the disease in time to get treatment. But activist notions of "environmental justice" had prevailed. They were the masters, and Convent's residents never had a choice. By the time the truth came out, the activists were off lambasting other facilities.

Losing a job is always a wrenching experience. Capitalism 's forces of "creative destruction" are as powerful today as when horse-and-buggy craftsmen were laid off by automobile makers – and mountains of manure were replaced by exhaust from internal combustion engines. Mergers and



Paul Driessen

acquisitions fueled by innovation, competition and profit-seeking clearly create jobs, though they also destroy jobs.

However, corporate decisions affect a limited number of workers – whereas government policies affect millions. The drive to eliminate fossil fuels, switch to a CO2-free economy and prevent computer-generated climate disasters might create some new jobs, but it would also cost countless jobs and impact families all across America.

European industries are already reevaluating investment decisions and cancelling projects, largely because of an increasingly strict and unpredictable regulatory climate in the EU, according to World Energy Council vice chairman Johannes Teyssen. New power plants are being put on hold, threatening to hike electricity prices even further and exacerbate a growing energy shortfall – and companies are pondering relocation to China and India, as it becomes harder to get building and expansion permits.

Similar anxieties are increasing in the United States, as Congress considers a dozen tough climate change bills. Not one of them acknowledges the uncertainties inherent in climate models and predictions of catastrophic warming. Not one considers recent solar magnetic readings that some researchers fear could reflect a downturn in the sun's energy output, which could trigger a planetary cold spell, severe weather and widespread crop failures.

Will legislators and eco agitators be as outraged about widespread job losses caused by such legislation, as they have been about comparatively minor " injustices " perpetrated by capitalists? Will they restore funding to the FutureGen coal project that was to evaluate the economic and technological viability of carbon sequestration initiatives on which so much climate change policy relies?

Will they reverse land use policies that have driven tens of thousands of blacks from San Francisco and other California cities – and reject proposals to limit how many miles workers can drive each year to get from affordable homes to jobs in those cities?

Drownings in impoverished Third World countries are tragic, but no more so than far more numerous deaths from malaria, dysentery, malnutrition and lung disease among children in those nations. But environmental justice agitators are among the perpetrators of these unnecessary deaths.

They pressure countries and aid agencies not to use DDT, insecticides or larvacides, causing disease, death and eventual resistance by mosquitoes to pyrethrum in bednets and by parasites to ACT drugs. They oppose biotech crops and medicines, which could reduce blindness, malnutrition, intestinal disease and deaths – and enable Third World farmers to grow more nutritious crops, with less water and fewer pesticides, under widely varied climate conditions.

Eco-alarmists tell impoverished Africans that global warming is the greatest threat they face – when Al Gore uses more electricity in a week than 100 million Africans together use in a year. Those people rarely or never have electricity and must burn wood and animal dung, resulting in lung diseases that cause millions of deaths annually. Yet alarmists oppose fossil fuel power plants, as well as nuclear and hydroelectric projects – guaranteed that Africa's poverty and death toll will continue.

Should we demand that eco-imperialists be jailed or drowned every time children die because of these policies? Certainly not. But we should demand real environmental justice. We should demand an end to the censorship and intimidation practiced by the United Nations and many colleges, as documented by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education and Evan Maloney's provocative film, " Indoctrinate U."

We should insist that the US government begin developing our publicly owned energy resources, as Congress of Racial Equality chairman Roy Innis suggests in his new book, "Energy Keepers - Energy Killers: The new civil rights battle."

We should define “environmental justice” to recognize economist Indur Goklany’s finding that “future generations will be better off in even the richest but warmest” IPCC scenarios, and under worst-case scenarios presented by the Stern Review. If communities have abundant, affordable energy to sustain economic growth and technology, they will enjoy better health and be able to adapt to whatever climate changes nature (or humans) might bring.

We need kilowatts, not Killawatts – and reliable, affordable energy, not anti-energy policies that force poor families to rely on BeggaWatts.

Paul Driessen is senior policy advisor for the Congress of Racial Equality and Committee For A Constructive Tomorrow, and author of Eco-Imperialism: Green power - black death (www.Eco-Imperialism.com)

**E-mail the
Editor**

Waiting For McCain

by David Keene

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

Those who hoped, feared or believed Arizona Sen. John McCain's (R) problems with conservative activists and voters would vanish with front-runner status are coming to the stark realization that McCain has bridge-building and fence-mending to do. The GOP presidential nominee will need conservatives for their enthusiasm and volunteerism this summer and for votes in November.

Fortunately, as his speech at this year's Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) demonstrated, McCain sounded like he has come to that realization himself and seems willing to do something about it. Gone was the imperiousness of those of his advisers who have in the past either dismissed conservative queasiness about McCain as irrelevant or argued that since conservatives "have no choice," they ought to shut up and get on the McCain bandwagon.



David Keene

McCain himself over the course of the last year or so has suggested that his problem is not with conservative voters, but with "inside-the-Beltway, self-appointed" conservative leaders who speak for no one but themselves. That notion has been undermined by the fact that in primary after primary, McCain has had difficulty winning support from self-identified conservative Republican voters—even in his native Arizona.

Even President Bush, while praising McCain, warned him that he has some work to do if he is going to solidify his base support among conservatives before taking on the eventual Democratic nominee. The president hasn't always pleased conservatives, but has accepted their disagreements with him and made certain at every step of the way that he considers them and their support important.

During the course of the CPAC event, some 1,500 attendees filled out a straw poll that asked, among other things, whether respondents would vote for McCain if he is the party nominee, sit out the election or vote for "someone else."

Something like 10 percent of those responding said they wouldn't vote, and another 20 percent indicated that they would like to vote for "someone else."

There was, however, more than a little good news for McCain in these results. Ballots filled out after Romney's withdrawal were 10 percent more likely to vote for McCain, with very few CPAC attendees moving in protest to former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee or Rep. Ron Paul (Texas), his two remaining primary opponents. This would seem to indicate that under the right circumstances, McCain may be able to capture conservatives and Romney supporters, but it also indicates that the base isn't ready to support the Republican front-runner yet.

Following former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney's withdrawal, several of McCain's harshest critics, along with a number of conservative icons, addressed the CPAC attendees, urging them to think about the alternatives before deciding to join the "bitter-enders" like Ann Coulter or those who might just decide to sit this election out. Their number included former U.N. Ambassador John Bolton and columnist George Will, who by his own admission has probably written more columns critical of McCain than anyone else on Earth.

They make a strong case based on their fear of the policy consequences of a liberal victory and on their belief that on a number of major issues, McCain and even those conservatives who have been most critical of him share common interests—that on truly crucial questions as diverse as the make-up of the Supreme Court and the war on terror, conservatives would be far happier if McCain wins in November. Their case is a strong one, but is one that must ultimately be made by John McCain himself over the next few months.

What McCain has to do is reassure conservatives who still distrust him. He has to convince them not that they "owe" him their allegiance and enthusiasm, but that he deserves their support because he and they are involved in a common enterprise that must succeed. McCain staffers have in the past attacked the motives of their boss's conservative critics and are even now privately and publicly demanding that conservatives throw in with McCain out of a sense of the very "party loyalty" he has spent a lifetime disparaging. These folks need to be told to come up with new and more convincing arguments.

McCain's first steps have won him the attention of most conservatives, including some of his harshest critics. However, to seal the deal with these folks, he needs to combine his "straight" talk with real action. It will take a few more steps to convince them they should clamber aboard the McCain bandwagon.

They are waiting for those steps.

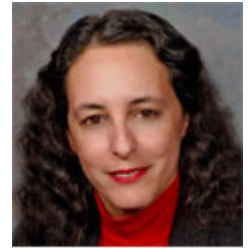
David Keene is the chairman of the [American Conservative Union](#).

**E-mail the
Editor**

Questions For McCain

by Lisa Fabrizio

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008



Lisa Fabrizio

Dear John : How we got here we're not really sure, but the reality seems to be, august Senator, you will be our nominee in the 2008 presidential election. Yes, I was at the Conservative Political Action Conference and heard your well-reasoned and fairly well-received [speech](#) and yes, you did press some of the right buttons. You spoke of your lifelong commitment to pro-life issues and your intention to reduce the size of the federal government; of your opposition to nationalized healthcare and your admiration for Justices Roberts and Alito and your pledge to win the war in Iraq.

But Senator, I also listened to the rest of the voices at the conference, some of which, shall we say, damned you with faint praise, and at this point, that is all that I can muster myself. Some of those voices suggested that, should we all coalesce under Ronald Reagan's Eleventh Commandment and support your candidacy, we can only do so in good conscience by holding your feet to the fire on what you called "positions that have not met with widespread agreement from conservatives." You vowed to "seek the counsel of my fellow conservatives," and so I write in the spirit of compassionate conservative counseling.

Senator McCain, you said in your CPAC speech that, "the proper object of justice and the rule of law in our country is not to aggregate power to the state but to protect the liberty and property of its citizens." Yet you are on record as supporting, and even sponsoring legislation that would cripple the liberty and property of our citizens through excessive and needless carbon cap-and-trade policies, oppressive gasoline taxes and exorbitantly increased energy bills; all to serve an agenda that is based, at best, on questionable scientific evidence.

So Senator, as most conservatives feel that the whole man-made global warming canard, or as it is now more conveniently called, climate change, is nothing but the left's latest attempt to hamstring and thereby socialize our economy, I ask you to repudiate your support for the McCain-Lieberman Act and to distance yourself from your Democratic opponents--both of whom hold nearly identical views as yours--on this issue,. And while you're at it, can you please clarify your [position](#) that drilling for oil in ANWR would be equivalent to drilling in the Grand Canyon?

You also told the folks at CPAC that, "we share a conception of liberty that is the bedrock of our beliefs as conservatives," and that that liberty, "as Burke warned, it can be 'nibbled away, for expedience, and by parts'." Well Senator, I wonder if you realize that most conservatives hold you personally responsible not for nibbling, but for chomping off a great deal of our Constitutional rights with your McCain-Feingold bill. Will you own up to the fact that protecting political free speech is at the core of the First Amendment?

Senator McCain, these are but two of the all too many disagreements you spoke about at CPAC that might separate your conservative brethren from you on Election Day. I hope you don't mind that I'll be writing you from time to time to remind you of the others. As you probably know, you came in second to Mitt Romney in the [CPAC straw poll](#), even after the former Massachusetts governor announced he was dropping out, with 29% of poll respondents claiming they would not vote for you.

The great majority of the folks at CPAC, although crushed by the fact that they no longer seem to have a dog in this fight, treated you for the most part with civility and an openness to be convinced that you truly seek to court them and address their concerns. The ball is now in your court. I urge you to pick up that ball with the graciousness of a winner and treat us with the respect and lack of contempt you have often not shown us. Remember, the Eleventh Commandment goes both ways.

Thanks for your attention. You'll be hearing from me again, real soon, Lisa

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

**E-mail the
Editor**

Focus on the Senate

by J.B. Williams

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

While the MSM polling data published by the Republican national Committee aims to make John McCain look like the best they can, the real numbers say something quite different.

At the time of Mitt Romney's withdrawal, the Republicans had completed 30 state primaries. John McCain lost 19 of the 30. A little over 16.5 million votes had been cast in Republican primaries and only 4.9 million of those were for McCain, 30.9%, with 69.1% of all Republican voters having voted against him.



Obama carried his home state of Illinois with 65% of the vote. Clinton carried her adopted home state of New York with 57% of the vote. McCain won his home state too, but with only 47% of the vote, less than half of his constituents. The only states McCain broke above 50% in are liberal stronghold states, Connecticut, New Jersey and New York and in all three cases, both Clinton and Obama defeat him in these states by more than a 2 to 1 margin.

28 states have completed both RNC and DNC primaries thus far. By popular vote, Obama won 14, Clinton 10 and McCain only 4. McCain lost the RNC primary in 3 of those 4 states, averaging only 14% support from Republican primary voters in each. He is at best secure in only 2 of the 4 states, Alaska and Iowa. In the general election, he can indeed lose both Arizona and Nevada.

This is the "winner" RNC heads think they can defeat Democrats with in the fall? How???

All Republicans combined have garnered 16.5 million primary votes in 30 primaries. Democrats Clinton and Obama alone have garnered 17.6 million primary votes in only 28 primaries, 1.1 million more than all Republicans combined. If McCain could unite 100% of Republican voters behind his campaign, and Clinton - Obama only keep their 78% of the Democrat votes, McCain still loses by over 1 million votes. And he can't unite 100% of Republican voters, no way - no how!

Of more than 22.5 million primary votes cast and counted to date, Clinton has 40% of those votes while Obama has 38% and McCain has but 22%. McCain is not even in striking distance of either Clinton or Obama. Who can McCain invite to share his ticket that will unite GOP voters and deliver the kind of excitement currently found across the political aisle? I can think of no one.

So, the Senate is where conservatives must now turn their attention in a BIG way!

Taking back control of the Senate, which must confirm all Supreme Court nominees and pass all legislation, must now become job #1 for all conservatives. The House is not realistically in play, but the closely divided Senate is.

Use the energy and money you were prepared to put into Thompson, Huckabee, Paul, Hunter, Tancredo, Romney, Giuliani or any other Republican, to make certain that a conservative is sitting in your Senate seat after November.

If you can't put a conservative in your Senate seat this year, take a look at other Senate races where you can help other states pick up a conservative seat in the Senate and put your resources to work there. We're talking saving a nation here.

Whether Clinton, Obama or McCain sit in the Oval Office for the next four years, who controls the U.S. Senate will be vital to protecting and preserving conservative values and principles for the next ten or twenty years. If conservatives can't unite around this one, they deserve what they get!

J. B. Williams notes that he is a business man, husband, father, and a writer. His website is at <http://www.jb-williams.com>.

**E-mail the
Editor**

What Kind of U.S. Culture?

by Judith Richie

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

S.T. Karnick, in "What Kind of US Culture?" Issue 101, Feb. 13, 2008, has raised some interesting questions (and answers) regarding U.S. Culture.

He begins with, "It is a truism that the right has been losing the culture for the past few decades." He concludes with, "The pursuit of a culture of liberty is the critical first step in reclaiming the American culture." Any conservative would be hard put to contend with his opening or conclusion. However, there appear to be some "ladder links" missing within his discussion, probably by logical "accidents" of both commission and omission.



He states, "What kind of culture we should want is actually an important question that has yet to be answered satisfactorily." I'd say a definition of "sanity" has never been put forth either, yet most of us know what we mean by it and choose to endeavor to remain sane. Similarly by "a conservative culture," what most of us want is a sane culture, where the liberties of none are legally privileged to impose upon the liberties of any. That is what was meant by "liberty and justice for all under the law," as well as "a government of law and not of men." Our Preamble to our Constitution states the legal purposes and responsibilities of our Federal government.

Were it working to provide "a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity," there would be no need to discuss or question what sort of culture American people should want. American culture would take care of itself, as it did prior to leftist subterfuge posturing as "law!" And yes, there must be censorship in the public market, for the liberty of all to live in a common decency culture supersedes the privilege of the few who love to publicly thumb their noses at majority pursuit of happiness sensibilities.

I further contend that those capable of reading and understanding our Constitution know precisely what sort of culture we want, one which cannot possibly flourish under leftist "antinomianism" to use his term, generously called "leadership," which controls our legislatures, justice system, commerce, taxation, so called "education," plus government sponsored national and international charity, neither of which was ever intended to be a part of our Federal government's "culture." This includes, as well, imposing on us a vast international migration of visiting hordes (who stay unaccounted for), and who have no idea nor interest in "American culture, or government" beyond how to work the system to gain something for nothing on the backs of a slave-rendered US population.

Mr. Karnick defines culture as "a place." He apparently fails to note that culture is both a noun and a verb. To "culture," says Webster's, is to "produce, develop, improve," all once a very large part of the American culture (and economy) before leftist control. Culture is also "emotions, interests, manners, taste," all of which under Federally controlled education have fairly well "gone with the wind." Finally, culture is "ideas, customs, skills, arts, of a given people in a given period of time." Given leftist "social diversity engineering," and migrant swamping, creating mini-cultures, and cultures against cultures, who can say what any of the above are in terms of "American culture" today? Thus, it seems that under leftist control, American culture per se is either underground, or a thing of the past, and in order to be nurtured it's going to take a whole lot of soul searching and "cross pick up and carrying" by a great many value based Americans, many of whom are immigrants who did not come to America expecting to find themselves living in Asian or Mexican culture.

Furthermore, "value" brings up one more little bone to pick with Mr. Karnick's thoughts on culture: A "value" is not "an idea." Borrowing from Ayn Rand's definition, as good as any, "A value is that

which one acts to gain and/or keep." Thus a value is not a passive thing, not an ideal in the mind, but something one is actively engaged in pursuit of achieving, and willing, if necessary, to fight to achieve. Our Founding Fathers understood this! The values of modern America seem to be largely materialistic, as promoted by mainstream Media, Press, and Hollywood. Further, we've become a drug culture, illegal and legal drugs, a "fix it Doc" culture, which is a sign of a sick culture, physically, psychologically, and spiritually. This is predictable in a anarchist, leftist society, which fails to educate or promote anything more important than abortion and contraception; encouraging promiscuity throughout all communication avenues including public education, grades 1-12, and onward to university level, plus failing to assure that crime doesn't pay.

Today we have government anarchy at all levels, with little dictatorial mayors creating city states reminiscent of ancient Greece; little dictatorial governors, and too many dictatorial presidents and congresses, all subjectively writing law antithetical to the American culture, not to mention little dictatorial judges writing law from the bench.

A government which understands, respects, and honors, the value of liberty, and again is willing to fight and lead the fight for it, is essential before we can hope to regain a culture of liberty. I sometimes wonder in how many languages the words "liberty" and "justice" even exist as concepts. This nation was born under them, once signifying the singularly most significant aspects of the American culture.

Judith Richie, Mountain Grove, MO

**E-mail the
Editor**

E. Victor Milione, RIP

by Lee Edwards

Issue 102 - February 27, 2008

E. Victor Milione was the guiding force of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute for thirty-five years, from 1953 through 1988. As executive vice president and then president, Milione initiated ISI's most important programs, including the Weaver Fellowships, the Intercollegiate Review and other publications, the campus clubs and lectures, the seminars, the summer schools, and the regional offices. He oversaw the steady increase of the institute's annual budget from a miniscule \$12,000 in its first year of operation to just under \$1 million in his final year.



E. Victor Milione

Under his leadership, ISI forged enduring relationships with students, professors, trustees, and donors that enabled the Institute to survive the apathetic fifties and the revolutionary sixties and attain significant influence in the receptive Reagan years. Through all the ups and downs, it was Vic Milione who ensured that ISI stuck to its mission of educating for liberty, of helping students and professors to acquire the knowledge and understanding of the values and institutions necessary for a free society to endure.

Born in Penfield, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia, Milione attended public and private schools and served in the air force during World War II. He graduated from St. Joseph's University in 1950 with a B.S. in political science. He worked for Americans for the Competitive Enterprise System before meeting in 1953 the libertarian author-journalist Frank Chodorov, who persuaded him to become the first campus organizer of a new youth organization—the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists (the name was changed to the Intercollegiate Studies Institute in 1966).

Although not a trained political philosopher, Milione more than held his own in correspondence and conversation with the prominent intellectuals associated with ISI. He became known for providing apt quotations from thinkers and writers such as Richard Weaver, Jose Ortega y Gasset, Jacob Burckhardt, Jacques Barzun, and John Henry Newman.

On ISI's tenth anniversary, newly installed President Milione stated that liberty could only be maintained if the people "accept individually the responsibilities" that liberty imposes. ISI's primary emphasis was on youth, he explained, because as Alexis de Tocqueville wrote, "Every fresh generation is a new people." Whenever he was asked for the answer to the problems of the academy—whether the radicalism of the sixties or the political correctness and postmodern nihilism of the nineties—Milione always had the same answer: "stand firm upon the truths, standards, and institutions of our culture that are time-tested and of proven worth."

Lee Edwards is the Distinguished Fellow in Conservative Thought at the Heritage Foundation and an adjunct professor of politics at the Catholic University of America.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Reader Comments

Issue 101 - February 13, 2008

Editor: I just wanted to drop you a line and say I particularly enjoyed your most recent article, "Conservatives Agree on Democracy?" It was truly first rate. It could not be more timely given the fact we are approaching an administration change. Keep up the good work! Ashley Emans

Editor: Regarding "Conservatives Agree on Democracy?" Madison put his finger to the very heart of the problem with democracy. It is not only NOT the ideal way of Government, but mainly the source of all tragic problems whose stark examples were provide by the 20th and the present centuries. In 1933 Hitler's National Socialists were voted DEMOCRATICALLY and FREELY into power. Quite recently, in Iran the representatives of the ideology (of world dominance) and practice of intolerance, not very different from the National Socialists of the past, have been elected in FREE ELECTIONS. In view of these harsh and tragic lessons of history, do we need to spread democracy throughout the world? The answer is resounding NO!! The U.S. foreign policy must always follow the dictum of Lord Palmerston, who famously said we have no permanent allies and no permanent enemies, only permanent interests. Sincerely, A.Granik, Prof. Emeritus

Editor: The answer to "Conservatives Agree on Democracy?" is short and sweet, and Aristotle said it best: good men can muddle through the worst of constitutions. Bad men can wreck the best of them. Please note the emphasis on the virtuous people everywhere in our history, e.g. Federalist 57. "Diversity" it ain't!! Best, Dr. Christopher Manion, Front Royal, VA

Editor: I do not have a large difference with "Conservatives Agree on Democracy?" when it begins by quoting James Madison on the mischief that can be caused by pure or direct democracy. But still, James Madison, as fortunate as he was in life, did not know the eccentric joys of growing up in my hometown in west suburban Chicago in the 1950s. We had something close to pure democracy in what we called school board elections. They were good old-fashioned neighbor against neighbor blood lettings. So this conservative, like many, harbors some mixed emotions about the different nuances of democratic processes. Director and screen writer Ken Hughes made up an anecdote about Oliver Cromwell that is not true but should have been. Richard Harris, playing Cromwell, has just dissolved the Rump Parliament in 1653 so that Cromwell can appoint himself Lord Protector. Hughes writes a great line for Harris at the end of the 1970 movie: "By God, England will have democracy if I have to rule it myself." Mark Rhoads, Chicago

Editor: The term "democracy" is used today in varying, inconsistent, and confusing ways. In its broadest sense it means the whole bundle of Western political principles and values to which your essay "Conservatives Agree on Democracy?" refers, including the positing of freedom as the highest political value and the limiting of government through a variety of means, including the rule of law and the establishment of processes by which political decisions are made, some of them involving majority rule and some of them involving other, prudently-selected mechanisms. If that's "democracy", conservatives are for it. In a much narrower, but more original, sense, it denotes majority rule pure and simple, which is quite a different thing. There is nothing inherent in the process of majority rule which limits the subjects on which a majority may rule. Context is

everything. Majority rule can be the means by which a free people choose their representatives and legislate on matters that are, by the just consent of the governed, delegated to the majority to decide. Tyrannies can operate by majority rule, too, and as a process of decision-making it may do nothing to protect the legitimate rights of minorities, whether the minorities are defined by religion, race, ethnicity, or anything else, including the individual conscience. Out here on the prairie, by the way, there was a time when we used the word "Democracy", with a capital "d", to refer to the Democratic Party. In those days opposing slavery and opposing "Democracy" went hand in hand. Joseph Morris, Chicago

Editor: I would agree with what you have stated in "Conservatives Agree on Democracy?" The original Founding Fathers of this country would be appalled by what has happened to our democratic government, or rather some of them would have predicted what happened, but all would have been saddened by it. The slow loss of personal freedoms, due to increase in government regulations and the idea that the government has the right to socially engineer society is a far cry from the personal freedom and small government that was established. Furthermore, many governments around the country, from city to state to the federal government, have gone from being staffed by people from industry to professional bureaucrats who have left the ideal of fiscal and personal responsibility in the way that they find and fund projects and legislation. A recent example in Illinois is indicative of the removal of public opinion from tax policies. When the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) was running out of money the state came to the rescue by increasing taxes and fees (predominantly paid by people not living in Chicago). At the same time it was reported that the average wages for the CTA were in the upper end of all transit pay in the country. Nothing was said about cutting waste inside the CTA, reducing salaries or management, or balancing service to reduce costs, the simple answer that most governments are now going to is simply raise fees, taxes, or assessments. The same can be said of the all-too-common practice of charging high or special taxes at airports for car rentals, hotels, etc. in metro areas to pay for civic improvements (i.e. new stadiums generally, or renovations to areas of the metro area not directly at the airport or hotels visitors are staying at). This basically is taxation without representation. With the ability to do this government bodies have been emboldened by the idea that increased taxation can always be justified and easily passed through to an unsuspecting, or increasingly apathetic populace. Keith Donaldson, Buffalo Grove, IL

Editor: I admire Mr. Madison's words as they are recorded favorably in "Conservatives Agree on Democracy?" However with all due respect, we have been losing our democracy since the days of Lincoln and his autocratic rule during the civil war (or properly, the war between the states)-- suspension of habeus corpus the ordering of Justice Taney's arrest, the illegal war and invasion of another sovereign state, the illegal drafting of men for the war the summary shooting of deserters during said illegal war. Although we have been taught in school that Lincoln freed the slaves, he did no such thing. Teddy Roosevelt was no better, declaring a war against a weak nation such as Spain just to take away their territories in the Pacific and the Caribbean. To say nothing of Mr. Bush's illegal war in the Middle East or Nixon's war in the far east. There is nothing in the Constitution that approves of welfare, social security, income tax, the Federal Reserve or any of the alphabet soup departments like the IRS, FBI, BATC, FEMA, etc. With the exception of a few terms in between, we have had very little democracy since Lincoln. I won't even begin to soil this diatribe with the terrible Democrat Presidents who were possibly worse! CS

Editor: I am damn tired of this "Democracy" nonsense language. What ever happened to the "Republic"? Democracy, Democracy; it is the next step to socialism. Using the term democracy does nothing more than steer people away from the founding of this nation as a REPUBLIC, A SOVEREIGN REPUBLIC. Maybe I am too damn patriotic but that is the way I see it! Bob Copley

Editor: "Conservatives Agree on Democracy?" The problem with this country is that since Ronald Reagan our last real republican ,we have elected only liberal internationalist that are committed to bringing this country down and bringing us into the world government. Now we have three more in line for this job. What we need is a real conservative. Is there one out there? Ron Paul would have gone a long way in straightening out our problems but the government news media complex did its job by demonizing him out of the race. Support John McCain if you must but me, no way. Gary Norman

Editor; Regarding your "Conservatives Agree on Democracy? We have voted in a government that is rotting at the core, appointing Godless Judges who throw reason out the door. You think GOD is not angry that our land is a moral slum? How much longer will He wait before His judgment comes? Smoky K

Editor: Hey Guys and Girls, Why don't you get it straight for once and for all. This great country is NOT A DEMOCRACY! This great country IS A CONSTITUTIONAL REPUBLIC! The very word DEMOCRACY (rule by a majority) is totally repugnant to our CONSTITUTION, OUR FOUNDING FATHERS, AND OUR CITIZENS. Our CONSTITUTIONAL REPUBLIC (rule by our Constitutional Law and through the Citizens) is what our founders intended. I get disgusted when people who purport to know what's going on bandy this word Democracy about and delude others into thinking that this is what our country is. If conservatives don't truly know and tell people what this country is, then we are in real trouble. Susan Improta

Editor: Daniel Pipes has the nail hammered square-on in his "The Family Affiliation Culture." Nothing short of a complete reform of Islam across the board, coupled with an equally complete demolition and reconstruction of Middle Eastern culture from the foundations up will even begin to "make things better." The question is: Do we have the will and the wherewithal to go through with it? A good question. Does anybody out there have a good answer? Regards, William Barry, Wake Forest, NC

Editor: I want to commend you for publishing this superb piece, Chris Robling's "Remembrance of Lev Dobriansky." Writing like this is all too uncommon these days. Thank you. Robert W. Smyth, Jr., Chicago, IL

Editor: regarding Thomas Lindaman's "Is the Problem Us?" I have been voting for about 40 years. I don't ever remember an election where there was no one to vote for. Voting in 2008 will be voting for the lesser of two evils. I have talked to a lot of people who say the same thing--all rah rah rah.. and avoid the real issues that anger Americans. It reminds me of Ross Perot when he described 'sound bytes'. I sure wish Ross Perot were campaigning this year. MG, FL

Editor: Regarding "Debating Future Conservatism," our party's been successfully hijacked by those we thought we'd vanquished in 80, 84, and 94: the country club Republicans and the mainstream media. As detestable as McCain is, we can't allow the Dems to claim any further foothold – i.e. the White House – and we still must support local officeholders who will return the party to greatness and America to its prosperity that can only be enjoyed under a conservative regime. If we don't, we're doomed to another couple of decades or more of socialistic misbehavior. We're the party of honest optimism, not false hopes. Remember what Ronald Reagan said over 20 years ago: "Whatever history may say about me when I'm gone, I hope it will record that I appealed to your best hopes, nor your worst fears; to your confidence rather than your doubts. My dream is that you will travel the road ahead with Liberty's lamp guiding your steps and Opportunity's arm steadying your way." Jim McAlister, Tampa, FL

Editor: Regarding "Debating Future Conservatism," I cannot figure out why some Conservatives seem to abide a Hillary or an Obama while pillaring John McCain. I am 64, I cast my first ever vote for Barry Goldwater. I was a foot soldier in the Young Republicans and YAF while living in NYC, voted for William F. Buckley for Mayor and marched in support of the Vietnam War before I was drafted to serve. I have more "street cred" as a conservative than just abstract passionate beliefs. I don't agree with John McCain on all of his positions but agree with the Liberals on NONE of their positions. He would simply be a better President for OUR COUNTRY than either of them would be. That should be enough for people who profess high principles and love of country above all. Would I like to have a more energetic, youthful, appealing, dynamic, charismatic conservative as our nominee? Sure! Am I going to get one this time around? No! Do I pout about it, stamp my feet, whine and stay home on election day? I think not! Not me! This is a crucial election on our history and we have to keep the Liberals out of government AT ALL LEVELS! To cut off "my nose (candidate)" to spite my "face (country)" is a uniquely Liberal tactic. I will not allow them to be my teacher! I will not emulate the nearly treasonous America-hating crowd of politicians on the other side. They MUST be stopped in this election. This is one conservative who will not only pull the lever for McCain and all other Republicans, but will talk up the vote proudly and enthusiastically. To do anything else would betray my roots and my strongly held convictions that my country counts above anything else. John Nevola

Editor: Senator McCain stated he needs the support of conservatives, and I hope your organization will not accommodate him. Gov. Huckabee would be a better choice, Romney would be the best.
Fran Rafanovic

Editor: Re "Debating Future Conservatism," I understand the gnashing of teeth in regards to McCain's social agenda. I disagree with him on immigration, global warming, Gitmo and energy policies along with some other things. I join organizations because they believe in the things that I believe in. I don't join them for any other reason. As a staunch conservative the simple fact is, although not perfect, in a two party system the Republican Party holds closer views to my ideals than the Democratic party. I don't quit organizations because they go astray. I try to redirect them back into the norms from which they strayed. Not to vote for someone that believes at least 75% the way you do is foolish. Not voting and allowing someone else be elected to the office that doesn't believe the way you do at all is just plain suicide. So conservatives need to get a grip and work on McCain to move him our way. He is a politician and understands the winds of war when they are blowing in his face by his party base. If McCain wants to win in November he better wake up to the fact that it is not the independents or moderates that will work to get the vote out it is the conservative base. Independents are just that! They don't take sides or push a candidate they just vote. The same is mostly true with moderates. The low turn outs on the Republican side during the primaries and caucus's attest to that fact. If McCain's advisors are dumb enough not to select a

conservative VP the base turnout will be low and John will loose. I will vote for the Republican nominee but my lack of enthusiasm will not bring out other voters. He needs to reach out to the party's conservative base or unfortunately his arrogance and disdain for conservatives will impact the voter turnout. I would hope what happened with his amnesty bill gave him knowledge and not resolve to get his way. His advisors need to set aside the cool aid and recognize without his conservative base he is a goner. Dean Jenniges

Editor: Regarding "Debating Future Conservatism," I cast a "vote-by-mail" in the California primary a few weeks ago for Ron Paul, the only Republican with whom I had substantial agreement (including getting out of Iraq as quickly as possible) among all the stodgy candidates in the race. Bill Boerum

Editor: Regarding "Debating Future Conservatism," Democrats voted 14 million in Super Tuesday turnout and Republicans 8 million. Since the McCain-Feingold bill overhauling campaign contributions, Democrats are reaping donations with a virtually similar 2 to 1 advantage...and McCain calls himself a conservative. In 2000 Bush set a record drawing in about \$80 million in donations. Today Obama raises that much in 3 months. And isn't it funny that McCain's bills always have a Democrat attached (Feingold, Kennedy, Kerry). Is McCain a mole? Al, Lemon Grove

Editor: Regarding "Debating Future Conservatism," John McCain is not a conservative candidate, and I will not vote for him. He votes with Democrats too often to be a true Republican, and as far as I am concerned bi-partisan is another word for collaborator. He will never get my vote. He is no better than any "other" Democrat as far as I am concerned. Any Republican who co-authors a bill with Ted Kennedy is my enemy!!! Leo Ryan

**E-mail the
Editor**