

CONSERVATIVE BATTLELINE ONLINE

The "Bold Colors" Conservative Voice in Washington

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

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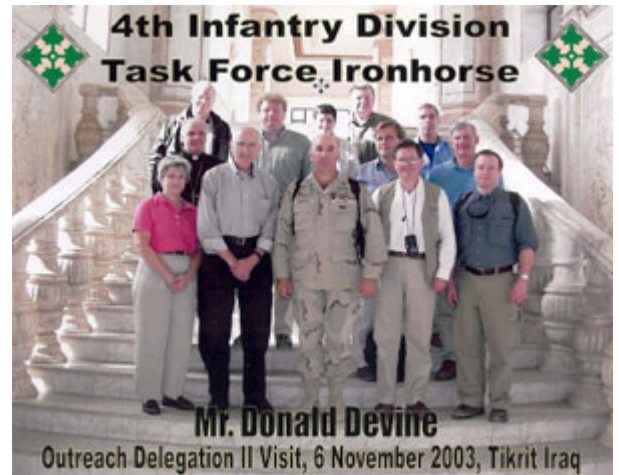
Congratulations General Odierno?

by Donald Devine

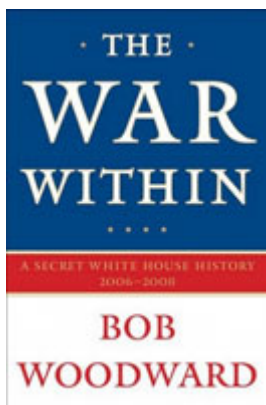
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General Ray Odierno bowls you over. He is not that big but is trim, solid-looking and radiates toughness – he epitomizes leadership, competence, energy, resourcefulness, even thoughtfulness, honor and bravery. You know immediately why men follow him into battle.

While Gen. David Petraeus deserves full credit for stabilizing the military situation in Iraq and his promotion to regional commander for doing so, his deputy Gen. Odierno has been in charge of daily battlefield operations and has borne the burden of the fight, to which Petraeus himself is witness. Bringing the Iraq war to a successful conclusion could not be in better hands than the man who has just been promoted as its new commander.



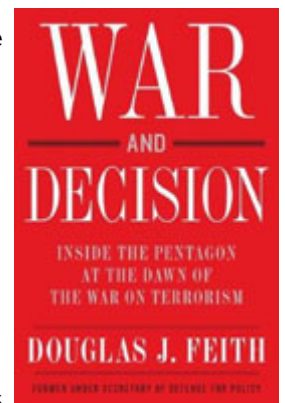
I saw him in operation in 2003 when I visited Iraq when he was also deputy to Petraeus, then as 4th Infantry Division commander, responsible for Saddam Hussein's homeland around Tikrit. He was equally comfortable on the battlefield, in a helicopter, training Iraqis, and planning operations in the dictator's former palace. He was clear that his job was to get the Iraqis in shape to take over the war so that U.S. and coalition forces could transfer daily operations to the locals and withdraw U.S. troops to fortified locations as merely a reserve to the Iraqis.



Sometime thereafter the mission was changed to nation-building. Or had been already changed and not yet filtered down the chain of command - since the other regional commanders reported the same limited goal. With the publication of former Defense Undersecretary Douglas Feith's, Bob Woodward's and the other new books and articles by the insiders, it is clear just what happened. The original blame for expanding the mission to nation-building and democratization was aimed at the crowd of neoconservatives surrounding Defense Policy Board former chairman Richard Perle. In light of fellow neocon Feith's book, that is no longer credible. The neocons surely used their influence to move policy in that direction but they, like Perle, were in advisory or in staff positions in the White House or otherwise outside of the chain of command and were of secondary influence at best.

From the conversations and memos reflecting the thought of former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in the Feith book, it is clear he warned against nation-building, recommending an immediate turnover to Iraqis, and was even reluctant to invade Iraq if it meant committing large U.S. forces (unlike Afghanistan, which used mostly special forces). For what it is worth, in several meetings I (with several others) had with him at the time, while he was discreet, it was clear to me he favored a limited operation. In fact, that was what inspired me to accept the Defense Department offer to go to Iraq to see if his subordinates held the same views, which it was thereafter clear to me that they did.

Feith blames the State Department and, directly, Iraq administrator L. Paul Bremer – who was nominally under Rumsfeld but also reported to former employer State and, critically, to the White House directly - for changing the mission. Bremer responded to Feith's charge by saying it was President George W. Bush himself who told him to stay until he made Iraq peaceful and democratic. With wide access to the inside players, Woodward's book seems to confirm this. Former Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker – apparently speaking for the entire Joint Chiefs of Staff – is quoted as confronting President Bush himself with: "I don't think you have the time



to surge and generate enough forces for this [Iraq] thing to continue to go." The president was quoted to respond, "Pete, I'm the president and I've got the time," to which Schoomaker replied "Fine, you are the president."

Now even the President's time is running out and he might well be succeeded by a President Obama who apparently does not want to spend the time. The military bureaucracy, moreover, never wanted to spend the time and resources, although it formally submitted. Yet, from the two successive chairmen of Joint Chiefs of Staff at the very top, Gen. Peter Pace and Adm. Mike Mullen, to the regional commanders Adm. William Fallon and Gen. John Abizaid overseeing Iraq, to Iraq commanders Gen. Ricardo Sanchez and Gen. George Casey, all opposed expanding the mission to a long term occupation and nation-building. As Feith now reveals, the uniformed officers were joined in this view by most of the Pentagon political appointees.

National War College Professor Mackubin Owens calls this opposition the most blatant attempt by the military to undermine a president "since General McClellan tried to undermine Lincoln's war policy in 1862." It certainly is unusual that all of the nation's military expertise is arrayed against the opinions of one civilian and the latter prevails but, of course, he happened to be the president. Boston University Professor of International Relations Angelo Codevilla argues in *The American Spectator* that the honorable solution was to resign, especially for the political appointees. As a matter of ethics he is undoubtedly correct but just imagine the incredible chaos if all of those who disagreed down the line - especially in the uniformed military chain - resigned! Who would be left to run the ship and what would be the consequences for the soldiers on the ground much less the U.S. military as an institution?



It was not just the Pentagon. As Feith and Codevilla make clear, State and the CIA opposed and undermined presidential policy as much or more. Feith presents evidence these people were dishonest in not properly expressing their exact policy concerns. Instead, they presented subterfuges that were tactically effective to delay but not reveal their true positions. Codevilla, using information presented by Feith, but not so interpreted by him, shows that Defense did this too - and that all of the bureaucratic and political parties to the debate were disingenuous in not presenting the president with the real alternatives he should choose between. Should the leaders of all three bureaucracies have resigned?

But it goes even deeper. It was National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice who devised the decision-making process that integrated the views of the contending bureaus into a single "consensus" document that Codevilla demonstrates forced the views of all parties into a vague phrasing that did not allow the president to make real choices beforehand and did allow the different bureaucracies afterwards to interpret them as they saw fit. Should she have resigned too? But it was the president who wanted a consensus view from the "experts" and was therefore the true initiator of the process.

The cascading implications of culpability from top to bottom, is why Codevilla focuses upon the resignation of Sec. Rumsfeld. As he correctly notes, Rumsfeld was "intellectually far above the other top officials" and as such he alone could have forced the president to make the tough decisions. As an insider in such high-level decision-making, and with some acquaintance with the secretary, I suspect he knew what the president would choose; but he also knew that the military bureaucracy opposed the president's own policy prescription and to highlight this division between the uniformed commanders and the commander-in-chief would cause more damage than allowing the ambiguity. I eagerly await Rumsfeld's memoir.

Bureaucratic decision-making in a democracy is a tough thing. Democracy and politics will have their way. But bureaucracy has its own dynamics and integrity. Take the case of Gen. Jack Keane, the former vice-chief of staff of the Army. He was among the minority in the military who supported the Iraq surge. In fact, even after the surge, he still considered troop levels "too low." Unable to convince his military superiors about the surge, he went with leading civilian neoconservative

American Enterprise Institute scholar Frederick Kagan to a fellow neoconservative high White House official to argue the case against his own chain of command. How is a military or other bureaucracy supposed to operate when subordinates act against the organization in such a manner? Democracies need functioning bureaucracies too, especially military ones. What happens when insubordination seeps down to soldiers under fire?

The Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines constitute America's most important bureaucracies. They have their failings as do all bureaucracies but over time they have developed traditions that allow them to transcend to a great extent those limitations. The outside political forces intrinsic to democracies intrude on them - yes to limit them from exceeding ultimate civilian authority but politics also undermines their effectiveness. When politicians, including presidents, overrule considered and widespread expert opinion on military matters it can have disastrous effect as it did under Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon in Vietnam. If politicians' opinions are to overcome all on military policy, why do we have West Point, Annapolis and the rest - together with their knowledge and traditions?



Back in the real world Gen. Odierno is now tasked with leading America's finest in an extremely dangerous military environment with his president, the incoming president, a fractious Congress, and divided and conflicting bureaucracies and peoples all warring in the rear. Pity him – but do him and his troops the great honor they deserve for being able to succeed at all under these impossible conditions.

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

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Editor**

Reagan Right on Government

By Scott Rasmussen

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

In his first inaugural address, President Ronald Reagan delivered a line succinctly capturing the sentiment that elected him: "Government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem."

A generation later, that attitude still resonates with a solid majority of Americans. A new Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey finds that 59% of voters agree with Reagan, and just 28% disagree.

Support is found across a wide range of political and demographic groups. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of men agree with Reagan, as do 52% of women. A majority of voters in all age and income groups agree.

The only demographic group to disagree with Reagan's statement are those who identify themselves as politically liberal. Just 35% of liberals agree that government is the problem, but 46% disagree. Moderates embrace the Reagan view by a 61% to 25% margin, and conservatives are even more enthusiastic.

Republicans overwhelmingly embrace Reagan's view, and 55% of unaffiliated voters agree as well. Democrats are a bit less enthusiastic, but 49% agree with Reagan while 34% disagree.

Those who plan to vote for Barack Obama this November are evenly divided: 44% agree with Reagan, and 40% do not. Supporters of John McCain agree by a 74% to 16% margin.

The fact that most Americans still agree with Reagan helps explain the ongoing public resistance to the bailout bill and the fear of many voters that the federal government will do too much rather than too little to deal with the current economic situation.

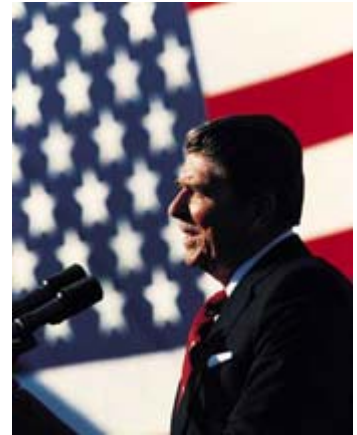
The lasting resonance of Reagan's quote was recently noted in a column by [Arianna Huffington](#) who wrote "Twenty-seven years later, in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, and seven-plus years into the reign of Bush and Cheney, Reagan's anti-government battle cry should be on trial. But, stunningly, it is not."

Huffington believes the candidates should be asked about Reagan's view in their next debate.

Alaska Governor Sarah Palin paraphrased Reagan's view approvingly during the vice presidential debate. "Patriotic is saying, government, ... you're not always the solution," Palin said. "In fact, too often you're the problem so, government, lessen the tax burden on our families and get out of the way and let the private sector and our families grow and thrive and prosper."

During his term in office, former President Bill Clinton was forced to acknowledge the reality defined by Reagan when he famously declared "the era of big government is over."

In his 1981 speech at another time of economic turmoil, Reagan also took a swipe at the elitism embraced by many in Washington. "In this present crisis," he declared, "government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem. From time to time we've been tempted to believe that society has become too complex to be managed by self-rule, that government by an elite group is superior to government for, by, and of the people. Well, if no one among us is capable of governing himself, then who among us has the capacity to govern someone else? All of us together, in and out of government, must bear the burden. The solutions we seek must be equitable, with no one group singled out to pay a higher price."



Scott Rasmussen, president of Rasmussen Reports, has been an independent pollster for more than a decade. Rasmussen Reports is an electronic publishing firm specializing in the collection, publication, and distribution of public opinion polling information.

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Wall Street Protectionism

by Timothy Carney

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

Who knew Wall Street shared the economic views of steel workers, domestic manufacturers, and buggy-whip makers when the automobile was invented? Just like those industries threatened by market realities and a changing economic landscape, Wall Street is calling on Congress to intervene in order to preserve the status quo.

I guess we only call it protectionism when it's men in hardhats who are at risk of losing jobs. When it's men in pinstriped suits worried that their industry might dry up, we call it "stabilization."

Protectionism is the right word for the bailout. Without a bailout, we are told by the people who got us into this mess, the entire economy would melt down. Pittsburgh steel workers also told us that without a domestic steel industry, all of America would suffer.

Capitalists have always retorted that the steel industry was just trying to keep things static in a changing world—capital could be more efficiently and more wisely allocated without government intervention, and unfortunately for Americans trained for steel work, keeping those jobs here didn't make sense. They were just going to have to adapt.

But today, when the invisible hand is winding up to give a strong whack to the barons of Wall Street, banking, and real estate, our lawmakers—and not just the avowed big-government advocates like Rep. Barney Frank, D-MA, and Sen. Barack Obama, D-IL, but also the Republicans versed in laissez-faire talking points—inject themselves into the economy in order to preserve the way things were.

No doubt, we're headed towards bad times economically, and everyone is to some extent tied up with Wall Street's fate. But imagine Congress rejected the bailout, and ask yourself this: What would the economy look like in five years?

Will we all be out of work? Will we all be struggling to feed our families? Or is the U.S economy more resilient than that? We will bounce back. But some things wouldn't bounce back from a credit meltdown and a stock-market crash.

Workers would no longer pour all their savings into the stock market through 401(k)s and IRAs anymore—we now understand the risk, and we might save instead by paying down debt, investing in tangible things like gold, or investing in a friend's small business that is not listed on the New York Stock exchange.

Housing prices and pace wouldn't return to their 2004 heyday. Folks wouldn't be willing to pay as much or able to borrow as much. Maybe we would start buying houses we can afford. The same might be true of cars, home improvements, and school: maybe we'll stick closer to buying only what we can pay for.

"But what kind of economy is that," the "capitalist" might ask? Sure, a world of tighter credit would be less flashy, and would be more austere for many. But for those who are actually dedicated to economic liberty—as opposed to those in fact dedicated to a soaring Gross Domestic Product and a "booming economy"—a less free-wheeling financial world also has the virtue of being a freer market.

The economy we have today—built on debt and free-flowing capital—is the economy our government built for us. As Sen. Jim DeMint, R-SC, explained before voting against the bailout, "We wanted our



Tim Carney

economy to grow faster, and so we allowed the Federal Reserve to create easy and cheap credit.... We wanted every American to own a home, and so we created Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac."

He could have gone on about Congress's hand in this economy: We wanted people to invest in the stock market, and so we made special carve-outs in the forms of 401(k)s and IRAs where they could avoid being hit twice by the high tax rates we made.

We wanted them to buy houses on credit, and so we made their mortgage interest tax deductible, while not affording the same privilege to rent (or paying outright for your home).

DeMint's point was that government programs—often supported by "pro-growth" conservative Republicans, and, as lobbying reports suggest, often drafted by lobbyists representing Wall Street, realtors, developers, and banks—have built up this economy to the point where it is teetering. If it toppled, and we were left to our own decisions, we would all build the economy in a different way—and that's the threat to real estate developers, banks, and stock brokers.

Where "pro-growth" Republicans tell out-of-work steel workers they have to adapt to a changing economy, today, they tell Wall Street, "don't worry, we're taking care of you. You'll be all better soon." It's protectionism, all in the name of capitalism.

Timothy P. Carney is editor of the Evans-Novak Political Report and a Washington Examiner columnist, where this first appeared.

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Editor**

You Tube Election Revolution?

by Mark Rhoades

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I saw two very funny speeches by Sen. John McCain and Sen. Barack Obama speaking to the 63rd Annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Dinner in New York. But I did not attend the dinner or watch it on TV. I watched it in a way that was not possible just four years ago when President George W. Bush and Sen. John Kerry were the candidates. Instead I watched a video clip of the dinner on You Tube, a venue that did not exist in 2004 but now offers 5 billion videos per month to about 92 million viewers according to SearchEngineWatch.com and comScore. From all internet sources, more than 12 billion videos will be seen this month.



John McCain

This November will be the first national You Tube election and no one yet knows how this new wild card might affect our voting. I do know that if I were an advisor to the McCain-Palin campaign, I would encourage them to post the Al Smith dinner talk on their web site and send the link to as many email addresses as they have while at the same time asking supporters to forward the link to their own email lists of people on their Christmas card list or fellow members of their, church, temple, club, alumni, and friends. The Smith Dinner video shows Sen. McCain in a very positive and humorous light that he has not had many chances to project before.

On Feb. 15, 2005, three friends who had worked at Pay Pal--Steve Chen, Chad Hurley and Jawed Karim—purchased the domain name for You Tube and by late April the first video was posted. By the end of the next month 30,000 viewers per day came to You Tube to see the beta site. In October of that year, a CNN interview with Jon Stewart drew more viewers on You Tube than on CNN itself. By March 2006, viewers were watching 25 million videos per day and new content was coming online at the rate of 20,000 new videos per day. In 2007 when Google purchased You Tube it was the fourth most visited website in the world serving 100 million clips per day.

On broadcast TV and cable, which was the dominant medium in 2004, the Obama-Biden campaign is outspending the McCain-Palin campaign on commercials by about three to one. But no one knows if all that spending by the Obama campaign has reached a point of diminishing return. You Tube on the other hand, is mostly a free medium for users and it has been a great equalizer so far in this campaign with low barriers to entry for political advocates. Also of importance it the fact that You Tube has been an incubator for TV stories that came out on broadcast networks later. You Tube offered videos of the incendiary comments of Rev. Jeremiah Wright, Sen. Obama's pastor, many weeks before ABC News picked up the story in March.

What no one can yet measure regarding the impact of You Tube videos on the presidential campaign is how the venue distributes political ideas. People create videos that might be professionally done to broadcast standards, or junk, or anywhere in between. You Tube viewers find them over the transom during searches or because a friend or group has sent them a link. We have no idea how many individual Americans are sending You Tube political links by emails to each other but the numbers are very large if we judge by anecdotal indicators. Partisans on both sides seem to be much better informed on "inside baseball" details of the campaigns that would not have been common knowledge in the pre-You Tube campaign of 2004. In the last two years, the former media stars of broadcast TV and cable have lost a great many viewers to the often better balanced venue of You Tube where people make their own choices about what stories they want to see.

At first, many reporters thought that You Tube was the ideal venue for young liberals. That perception started to change with a July 27, 2007 article in the Tech President Personal Democracy Forum that showed more self-identified Republicans were watching You Tube than Democrats. To be sure, the Republicans were looking at different content, classic movies and TV shows instead of

music videos for example. But Republicans were also learning the skills of YouTube production and distribution. How many views can YouTube serve up for a video? Everyone was impressed when the Welsh tenor Paul Potts broke records in 2007 with more than 20 million views if not viewers. Now popular music videos reach more than sixty million views. That's why the first "Obama Girl" video actually made some sense as a political campaign device since the numbers were large enough to notice. Earlier this year an alternative to YouTube has also been launched called Eyeblast TV. [CLICK HERE](#) to see the Eyeblast TV home page. Eyeblast encourages specific conservative content.

YouTube is not the only source of videos on the internet but it is the largest. Last March the Comscore service indicated that American watched 11.5 billion videos that month on all Internet sources and YouTube viewers on average downloaded 50 videos per month. Many people now watch more video on the internet than they do on the older network and cable TV venues. The reason is more choice and better content. Formerly limited to short clips, YouTube has just started offering hour-long TV shows with commercials that are no longer in syndication.

YouTube is the wild card of this election because nobody can measure its impact in persuading and motivating voters who get video links from their friends. The impact could affect every traditional factor of campaigns from donations to likely voter turnout models. YouTube is not a top down model but a peer to peer model of distribution that has made even minor candidates such as Ron Paul famous among certain segments of viewers. With all the money and a hurricane of factors at the back of Sen. Obama, maybe the YouTube wild card is one reason that Main Stream Media has not yet been able to put the crown on his head. Maybe, just maybe, they no longer have that kind of power.

The fact that YouTube could be an equalizer for candidates who do not have a lot of money could be a hopeful sign. In 1979 when maverick Jane Byrne defeated the Chicago machine for mayor, her campaign budget was only \$100,000 for one commercial critical of the lack of effective action by Mayor Michael Bilandic to plow the streets of the city and remove the snow. Four years later her war chest of ten million dollars—100 times her previous budget, could not help her to successfully win re-election even with all the advantages of incumbency. The candidate with the most money has an advantage, but it is not a guarantee of a win. Now in the age of YouTube, we are returning to a time when the right message counts for more than money.

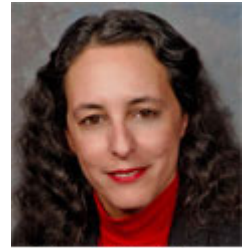
Mark Q. Rhoades is a former state senator and current blogger in Illinois.

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The Women

by Lisa Fabrizio

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008



Lisa Fabrizio

Many movie fans consider 1939 the greatest ever in the history of American filmmaking and it would be hard to argue the point. In the days before Hollywood degenerated into the trash heap it is today, one could expect productions that would appeal in some way to different segments of society while entertaining the whole family at the same time. And 1939 was the acme and epitome of all that made up old Hollywood.

There were gallant swashbucklers sure to enliven the dreams of young boys everywhere like *Beau Geste*, a tale of mystery, gallantry and the French Foreign Legion starring the manly Gary Cooper. And my father's boyhood favorite, *Gunga Din*, a terrific action-adventure movie with golden temples, bloodthirsty savages, elephants and military glory for the boys, and Cary Grant and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. for the moms.

Women's movies, or 'weepers' as they were known, also abounded that year. Bette Davis bravely faced blindness and death in the arms of George Brent in *Dark Victory*, while suave Charles Boyer and the delicious Irene Dunne kicked off the doomed and oft-remade *Love Affair* genre. And what woman didn't long to fall under the dark yet dreamy allure of Laurence Olivier's Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*?

There were epics like *Gone With the Wind* that celebrated the bygone glory of the Old South and gems like *Ninotchka* whereby Greta Garbo's stern Soviet title character is seduced by the charms of Melvin Douglas, Paris and capitalism. Do you think we'll ever hear a line like this from Hollywood again: "The last mass trials were a great success. There are going to be fewer but better Russians."?

John Wayne, future bane of liberals everywhere, made his starring debut in John Ford's *Stagecoach*, which is always worth watching if for no other reason than to recall how devastatingly good-looking the Duke was in his heyday. Likewise, *The Wizard of Oz* always gets me misty, not because of the story line, but for the sweet sadness of the sixteen year-old Judy Garland.

1939 marked the last of the Ginger Rogers/Fred Astaire pairings for RKO, *The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle*, and the onset of World War II signaled the end of an era. The Great Depression was over and therefore so was one of the most treasured of movie gimmicks: lampooning the lives of the idle rich.

RKO and other studios had made millions filming musicals and 'screwball comedies' which lifted the hearts of suffering Americans. The plots didn't much matter when you had screen giants like Grant and Gable and real movie queens like Rogers, Garbo and Hepburn reciting snappy dialogue while dressed to the nines.

One of the last movies to skewer the idle rich was 1939's *The Women*; a torrid romp through two years in the lives of a group of selfish, pampered, Manhattan socialites. The main objective of their lives is, of course, to snag a rich husband. Achieving this, they spend their days shopping, taking exercise classes, being pampered at health spas, seeing analysts and gossiping.

The all-female cast boasted an unprecedented lineup of Hollywood's elite ladies; Norma Shearer, Joan Crawford, Rosalind Russell, Paulette Goddard and Joan Fontaine topped the bill. Based on a play by Clare Booth Luce and directed by George Cukor, the script crackled with sparkling dialogue and one-liners tossed off expertly in a manner unseen in modern movies.

And so it was with amusement and dismay that I heard that a remake of *The Women* was released this month. It is, as to be expected, everything the original was not. Where the original featured

spoiled housewives--with the exceptions of gold-digger perfume clerk Crystal Allen and cynical author and spinster Nancy Blake--the remake is of course mostly populated with independent working women. The idea that the lives of these gals hinge on acquiring and keeping a husband makes the whole premise worthless.

Where the 1939 flick sizzled with witty repartee, the 2008 [trailer](#) alone contains five instances of vulgarity; that which passes for clever dialogue in modern Hollywood. Predictably, the cynical author is now gay, negating one of the original's best lines: "[I'm] what nature abhors. I am an old maid, a frozen asset."

In 1939, nearly all of the major characters in *The Women*, even the saintly Mary Haines at the end, were the antithesis of American womanhood--aggressive, self-centered, catty, materialistic and vacuous--and therefore, profoundly unhappy. Today, they represent the aims of the average woman; at least according to Hollywood and the rest of the media. Indeed, were the 1939 group around today they would, each and every one of them, have their own talk or reality shows.

With few disastrous exceptions, most of today's filmmakers haven't dared to tread the sacred waters of the 1939 classics by sullyng them with modern remakes. Do yourself a favor, skip the remake of *The Women* and rent the glorious original; a starkly prescient glimpse into Hollywood's future.

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

**E-mail the
Editor**

Real Library Censors

by Brett Bozell

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

As part of the microscopic scrutiny applied to Sarah Palin's record, the public has been told that as the incoming Mayor of Wasilla, Alaska in 1996, Palin dared to ask the town librarian what would happen if anyone objected to an inappropriate book. She merely inquired, but "anti-censorship" activists, perpetually filled with visions of a trash can full of burning books, exploded.

At the time, the Anchorage Daily News captured the librarian, one Mary Ellen Emmons, putting up her First Amendment dukes. "I told her clearly, I will fight anyone who tries to dictate what books can go on the library shelves," she said. "And I told her it would not be just me. This was a constitutional question, and the American Civil Liberties Union would get involved, too."



Brett Bozell

Not one book was jostled. June Pinell-Stephens, a long-time chairwoman of the Alaska Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee, had no evidence of banning or any record of any phone conversations with Emmons about the issue back then. Emmons was president of the Alaska Library Association at the time.

As is so often the case, the horrified reactions were almost the only voices heard in the recounting of this old tale. The Governor laughed it off, as well she could, as it became clear that faked lists of Wasilla's banned books were just baseless Internet babble. But it's worth underlining the Emmons call to arms: "I will fight anyone who tries to dictate what books can go on the library shelves."

In public libraries across America – public institutions funded wholly or in large part by taxpayer money – the librarians have appointed themselves the Czars of Acceptable Information. Any citizen daring to question their unfathomably deep taste and literary judgment are mysteriously designated as the bullies and the authoritarians. Does this sound like democracy in action, the free exchange of ideas? It sounds more like the librarian glaring at the taxpayers and gesturing at them to pipe down, rowdy children, pipe down.

In reality, they are the authoritarians; the bullies are often the lawyers from the ACLU.

Take the case of Nampa, Idaho, where the Nampa Public Library Board made the decision by a vote of 3 to 2 in June to respond to a parent's complaint and move the graphically illustrated books "The Joy of Sex" and "The Joy of Gay Sex" to the library director's office, where only those who specifically requested the tomes could see them. The parent activist, Randy Jackson, was stunned to hear in 2005 that these books were lying around on the library tables for any child to page through. "The Joy of Gay Sex" has a chapter in it entitled "Daddy/Son Fantasies." Other chapter titles include "Exhibitionism and Voyeurism," "Fisting," and "Sex with Animals."

Immediately, one wonders: Who were the two who felt it appropriate to display this garbage in a public library, in front of children?

No matter. That split decision was quickly overturned. The American Civil Liberties Union of Idaho sent a threatening letter to the library on August 25 demanding that the books be put back on display since any restriction on graphic sex books "violates the constitutional rights of library visitors." The library board unanimously caved to the demand, since the city attorney warned that it could cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to fight the deep-pocketed "anti-censorship" bullies.

It's apparently now a national consensus that any taxpayer challenge to a taxpayer-funded librarian's unilateral decision "violates the constitutional rights of library visitors." The librarian's original decision to stock the books and display them, in Nampa or anywhere else, is never to be

questioned. But if the librarian chooses not to select and display a title, then apparently the constitutional rights of library visitors are never violated.

It's that time of year when the American Library Association hosts Banned Books Week and many libraries schedule events where "banned" books are proudly read aloud. Let's hope none of those self-congratulating First Amendment guardians will read the aforementioned "Sex with Animals" section of Nampa's most favored sex book.

But perhaps it's time for someone to make a list of the Most Ignored Books by librarians. It might make interesting reading to see what public libraries never choose to display. With an estimated 170,000 new books in the United States each year, the librarians are "censoring" an enormous amount of material. Not only that, they're regularly removing books from the shelves for being out of date or suffering from a low check-out rate. Aren't they doing a lot more book disposal than any censorious citizen with an imaginary book-burning torch?

Mr. Bozell is president of the Media Research Institute

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Editor**

McCain and Obama Health

by John Goodman

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

Here are two radically different approaches to health reform:

- The [McCain health plan](#) subsidizes, dollar-for-dollar, the core insurance everyone should have, forcing people to buy additional coverage (all the bells and whistles and items of questionable value) with their own funds.
- By contrast, a Commonwealth-Fund-Center-for-American-Progress-and -maybe-also-Barack-Obama approach forces people to buy core insurance with their own funds, leaving them free to purchase the bells and whistles and items of questionable value with taxpayer money.



John Goodman

You might think this second idea was produced late at night after too many glasses of wine. But no. I found it at their Web sites [here](#) and [here](#) in the sober light of day. It has even been in Health Affairs here [\[gated but has abstract\]](#). (Whatever happened to peer review?)

For ease of exposition, let's call the Commonwealth-Fund-Center-for -American-Progress-and-maybe-also-Barack-Obama approach the Axis of Goodness idea, in honor of Milton Friedman's observation that most bad laws are the result of trying to do good with other people's money.

Creating a Parallel Market. For people who do not get insurance from an employer or Medicare or Medicaid, etc., the Axis would create a parallel market---organized like the federal employee health benefits program. Private plans would compete, along with a Medicare look-a-like plan. What concerns us here are not the plan specifics but the costs.

Limits on Spending. The idea behind the Axis approach is to limit everyone's out-of-pocket cost to 5% or 7½% or 10% of income, depending on the version---with 5% reserved for the poor and the higher numbers for everyone else. Once these income thresholds are met, taxpayers will be responsible for the remainder. I know what you're thinking: Where did these numbers come from? I second that question.

Just to remind, the nation as a whole is spending 16% of national income on health care. The average family is spending 19% of its consumption dollars on health care. That's worth repeating: we are spending almost one out of every five consumption dollars on medical care.

Disguising Spending. Of course, the average family doesn't know it is spending one-fifth of its consumption on health care. The reason: the bulk of that spending is hidden in non-ear-marked taxes, lower wages, and cost-shifted health insurance premiums. But isn't that the whole problem? Of all the things that are not transparent in the health care system, the one thing that is the least transparent is how much each of us spends. The McCain plan is transparency par excellence. Every family will have to be aware of the first \$5,000 of spending (in order to claim their tax credit) as well as all subsequent dollars (because that's out-of-pocket). By contrast, the Axis approach would make real costs less transparent than they are now---disguising as much as three-fourths of what people actually pay.

Subsidies for Everyone. What exactly are we talking about here? Since the average cost of employer family coverage is \$12,000, income would have to be \$160,000 before a family would have to pay full fare. In other words, 95% of the population in the parallel market would have their premium payment capped!

Perverse Incentives. The current system encourages people to wastefully overinsure. The reason: employer-paid premiums escape income and payroll taxes. Given a 25% federal income tax rate, a 15% payroll (FICA) tax and a 6% state and local tax, government is paying almost half the cost of

the insurance. Put differently, a dollar of insurance needs to be worth only 55 cents in order to be preferable to a dollar of taxable wages.

The McCain plan completely removes this perverse incentive, since marginal insurance dollars are not subsidized at all. By contrast, the Axis would raise the subsidy to 100%. An additional dollar of insurance could be almost worthless and still look attractive to the buyer.

Eroding Employer-Based Coverage. The McCain approach creates a level playing field under the tax law for individual and group insurance. Employers will offer insurance only if they can provide something people cannot get on their own (e.g. cheaper and better insurance, say, because of economies of group buying). By contrast, the Axis would keep the current system in place for group insurance and create a parallel market where the income caps are operative. Yet these caps amount to a 73% subsidy, say, for a \$60,000-a-year family---far more generous than the current system's tax subsidies at work.

Even with a pay-or-play mandate on employers (of the type advocated by Commonwealth), I have calculated [[see link](#)] that most people would be better off if their employers dropped their current coverage; paid cash wages instead; paid income and payroll taxes; and paid the pay-or-play fine!

John Goodman is President of the National Center for Policy Analysis

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Editor**

Phony Energy Bill

By Roy Innis

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

Remember The Sting, Oceans 11, Entrapment?

The “marks” were a bit unsavory, or rich guys or banks that “could afford” to get ripped off. The con artists were affable rogues, administering payback or playing Robin Hood. We rooted for the good guys, enjoyed the suspense, relished the climax, and had some laughs along the way.

Fraud and theft aren't so enjoyable, however, when the marks are you, your family, your job, your investments and pension. The fun disappears when fiction becomes reality, and the sting is engineered by lobbyists, environmentalists and members of Congress.

That's exactly where we are on energy – the foundation of our jobs, health, living standards, and everything we eat, drive, wear and do. We're being set up for an elaborate sting that will benefit the few, at the expense of the many, and leave families, businesses and entire industries struggling to survive.

Since publication of my book, *Energy Keepers - Energy Killers: The new civil rights battle*, millions of Americans have become aware that this country has vast untapped energy resources.

Three-fourths of US voters now support expanded onshore and offshore drilling. A bipartisan coalition in Congress wants to increase domestic petroleum, coal and nuclear power, while fostering conservation and wind, solar and other energy opportunities.

They have been blocked at every turn by liberal Democrats, many of whom are working with radical environmentalists to eliminate proven hydrocarbon and nuclear technologies that provide 93% of our energy, and replace them with systems that currently generate less than 1% of the energy that safeguards our jobs, homes, security and prosperity.

However, political realities and voter outrage over soaring gasoline, food and heating costs forced House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority leader Harry Reid to devise an elaborate hoax. It had the trappings of a pro-energy bill – but was as authentic as the betting house and announcer in the classic Newman-Redford film, *The Sting*.

Their legislation “expanded offshore leasing” – but only beyond 100 miles off most of our coasts, and 50 miles off four states that would get no revenues from leasing or production, and thus would have no incentive to permit leasing. In other words, it allowed leasing only where there was no petroleum, or where drilling and production would be so far offshore and so expensive that no sane company would do it. The bill made 88% of our nation's offshore oil and gas permanently off limits – along with jobs and some \$800 billion in revenues that development would generate for state and federal governments.

The pseudo-energy bill also imposed new subsidies to promote unreliable wind and solar power – paying for them with higher taxes, higher electricity rates and new taxes on oil companies, which then would have less money to drill in the few places that aren't off limits. It mandated that utilities magically increase their wind and solar electricity generation from 1.5% today to 15% in 2020.

Drafted largely by environmentalists and lobbyists, the legislation would have undermined our free market system and given Congress and bureaucrats the power of Roman emperors to give thumbs up or down to companies, industries and jobs. It would have made lobbyists and pressure groups



Roy Innis

more important to business success or failure than quality products and services, innovative R&D or sound management.

It narrowly passed the House on a party-line vote. But Senate Democratic leaders knew they didn't have the votes to override a threatened veto. So they let the bill die. However, Congressman Steny Hoyer says restoring the offshore oil drilling ban "will be a top priority" for Democrats in 2009.

They hope we won't still be angry about this attempted swindle and soaring energy prices. I wouldn't bet the rent money on that.

Americans know better than ever before how important abundant, reliable, affordable energy is to our national security, way of life and civil rights.

We know what soaring fuel prices are doing to our airline, tourism, manufacturing and other industries, Meals on Wheels volunteers, and our ability to buy food, heat and cool our homes, take a vacation, and save for college and retirement. We know higher prices will make it impossible for many of us to give more to charity than Senator Paying-Taxes-Is-Patriotic Joe Biden's lousy \$328 a year.

We know what our businesses, schools, hospitals and lives would be like if the electricity went off every time the wind stopped blowing. What Phoenix, Dallas and Miami would be like without affordable air-conditioning. What Green Bay, New York and Toronto would be like without affordable heating.

We *can* "visualize a planet without cars" – as some urge us to do. It would mean taking hours or days to get anywhere, on foot, bicycle or bus, living with Calcutta-like urban congestion, maybe even going back to 1900 New York City and streets clogged with horses and horse manure, urine and carcasses.

We're already in the midst of the biggest financial crisis this great nation has faced in many decades. We don't want to make it infinitely worse.

In one year, we could double offshore oil production from California, just by issuing leases and permits to drill from platforms that already exist right off the Golden State coast. As the world's third largest oil consumer – right after the USA and China – California can and should produce more petroleum.

We could go to the Eastern Gulf of Mexico – near Florida, another big oil and gas consumer, not far from where the Cubans and Chinese are talking about drilling just 45 miles off the Sunshine State coast. In a few years, we'd have significant production – without harming the environment. Ditto off the Virginia coast, out West, and in Alaska's Chukchi Sea and Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Our energy woes have nothing to do with technology or the will of oil companies to lease and drill. They're due to politics, moratoriums, lawsuits and anti-drilling pressure-group tactics that block drilling everywhere we turn. We're fed up with it.

This anti-energy insanity has to stop. We're the only country on Earth that deliberately locks up its own energy resources, and then spends \$700 billion a year (the price of the Wall Street bailout) to import substitutes. We're driving up energy prices and forcing poor families to choose between buying a gallon of milk or a gallon of gasoline.

If Congress can't get its act together this year, we'll make darn sure it gets religion next year.

Roy Innis is chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality and its Stop the War on the Poor campaign.

**E-mail the
Editor**

English Allowed in Private Schools?

by Renny Hartmann

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

Finally, the judiciary, specifically Federal Judge Thomas Marten, in Kansas (isn't that where Candidate Obama says he learned his middle class values?), ruled requiring English in a school is not undemocratic (according to Nancy Pelosi, our esteemed majority leader of the House) or racist (from Senator Reid, the more venerable Senate majority leader).

"St. Anne's is fully within its rights as an educational institution to curb bullying, profanity, and exclusionary behavior among its students by requiring that English be spoken,..." said Pro English director K.C. McAlpin, concerning the Wichita case. It was filed by a bilingual student who already spoke English. So, this was evidently one of those test cases, like the San Francisco father's suit to stop "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance, except he brought his case on behalf of his daughter who was not in his custodial care; ergo, the US Supreme Court ruled he had no standing to file.



Unfortunately, this particular lawsuit is only one of the few supporting the traditional and customary values of middle class America. Recently, in California, naturally, verdicts have supported teachers' unions over home-schooling parents and denied parents any right to knowledge of or influence on the content of their child's public education. New Jersey, and other states, already had the anti-parent non-notification of abortion for girls as young as twelve. Sometimes, it would seem that even as far as minors are concerned, and/or their parents, that the entire US is out to end thousands of years of practice and accepted wisdom in favor of untested and often unaccepted social theories promoted mostly by leftist or radical elements in sociology and psychology.

Unfortunately, in this particular instance, St. Anne's is a private and not public school. In so-called public education, bi-lingual education (a boondoggle that has sucked billions of precious tax dollars) has lumbered on for nearly forty years with almost no research support and even opposition among Hispanic parents. But it has been pushed relentlessly by ethnic special interest groups and teachers' unions. (Some bi-lingual teachers receive extra pay and even "bounties" from desperate schools.) The method with the most academic backing is immersion, allowing students to be "immersed" in English in schools as they would be in water in a pool. Studies among French-speaking students in Canada support such an idea as being successful.

However, the so-called compassionate among the educalse crowd have suppressed achievement among Hispanics for decades by stalling them in bilingual classes that are sometimes not even taught well in any language, let alone Spanish.

Students from Mexico and elsewhere who come to the US from Spanish-related ancestry should not be treated like outsiders too dumb to learn English and too inept to see the advantages speaking and writing in English. Special interests like La Raza do not have students' best interests at heart. They have their organization's bottom line, which is to return California and the Southwest to Mexico (and Spain?) and otherwise to increase funding for their agenda of keeping a separate Hispanic community in the US.

In the late 1970s in a neighboring town, a girl whose parents were refugees from the fall of Saigon was valedictorian in Brick High School. English was her third language, after her Vietnamese and

French. I doubt students who arrive speaking Spanish are any less able to overcome language obstacles. All over Europe, small children speak German, French, English, Italian, and even some Japanese and Arabic, merely to sell postcards and maps to tourists.

Surely, young Spanish-speakers are as bright as the average child cab-hailer in Greece.

Renny Hartmann is an adjunct college professor in New Jersey and was formerly a high school teacher.

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Editor**

Counting Islamists

by Daniel Pipes

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

The [recent distribution](#) of some 28 million copies in the United States of the 2005 documentary [Obsession](#) has stirred heated debate about its contents. One lightning rod for criticism concerns my on-screen statement that "10 to 15 percent of Muslims worldwide support militant Islam."

The Muslim Public Affairs Council declared this estimate both "utterly unsubstantiated" and "completely without evidence." Masoud Kheirabadi, a professor at Portland State University and author of children's books about Islam, informed the *Oregonian* newspaper that there's no basis for my estimate. Daniel Ruth, writing in the *Tampa Tribune*, asked dubiously how I arrived at this number. "Did he take a poll? That would be enlightening! What does 'support' for radical Islam mean? Pipes provides no answers."



Daniel Pipes

Actually, Pipes did provide answers. He collected and published many numbers at "[How Many Islamists?](#)" a weblog entry initiated in May 2005.

First, though, an explanation of what I meant by Muslims who "support militant Islam": these are Islamists, individuals who seek a totalistic, worldwide application of Islamic law, the Shari'a. In particular, they seek to build an Islamic state in Turkey, replace Israel with an Islamic state and the U.S. constitution with the Koran.

As with any attitudinal estimate, however, several factors impede approximating the percentage of Islamists.

How much fervor: Gallup polled over 50,000 Muslims across 10 countries and found that, if one [defines radicals](#) as those who deemed the 9/11 attacks "completely justified," their number constitutes about 7 percent of the total population. But if one includes Muslims who considered the attacks "[largely justified](#)," their ranks jump to 13.5 percent. Adding those who deemed the attacks "somewhat justified" boosts the number of radicals to 36.6 percent. Which figure should one adopt?

Gage voter intentions: Elections measure Islamist sentiment untidily, for Islamist parties erratically win support from non-Islamists. Thus, Turkey's Justice and Development Party (AKP) won 47 percent in 2007 elections, 34 percent of the vote in 2002 elections, and its precursor, the Virtue Party, won just 15 percent in 1999. The Islamic Movement's northern faction won 75 percent of the vote in the Israeli Arab city of [Umm el-Fahm](#) 2003 elections while Hamas, the Palestinian terrorist organization, won 44 percent of the vote in the Palestinian Authority in 2006. Which number does one select?

What to measure: Many polls measure attitudes other than application of Islamic law. Gallup looks at support for 9/11. The [Pew Global Attitudes Project](#) assesses support for suicide bombing. [Nawaf Obaid](#), a Saudi security specialist, focuses on pro-Osama bin Laden views. Germany's domestic security agency, the [Verfassungsschutz](#), counts membership in Islamist organizations. [Margaret Nydell](#) of Georgetown University calculates "Islamists who resort to violence."

Inexplicably varying results: A [University of Jordan](#) survey revealed that large majorities of Jordanians, Palestinians, and Egyptians wish the Shari'a to be the only source of Islamic law – but only one-third of Syrians. Indonesian survey and election results led [R. William Liddle and Saiful Mujani](#) in 2003 to conclude that the number of Islamists "is no more than 15 percent of the total Indonesian Muslim population." In contrast, a 2008 survey of 8,000 Indonesian Muslims by [Roy Morgan Research](#) found 40 percent of Indonesians favoring *hadd* criminal punishments (such as cutting the hands of thieves) and 52 per cent favoring some form of Islamic legal code.

Given these complications, it is not surprising that estimates vary considerably.

On the one hand, the Islamic Supreme Council of America's [Hisham Kabbani](#) says 5 to 10 percent of American Muslims are extremists and Daniel Yankelovich, a pollster, finds that "the hate-America Islamist fundamentalists ... averages about 10 percent of all Muslims." On the other, reviewing ten surveys of [British Muslim](#) opinion, I concluded that "more than half of British Muslims want Islamic law and 5 percent endorse violence to achieve that end."

These ambiguous and contradictory percentages lead to no clear, specific count of Islamists. Out of a quantitative mish-mash, I suggested just [three days after 9/11](#) that some 10-15 percent of Muslims are determined Islamists. Subsequent evidence generally confirmed that estimate and suggested, if anything, that the actual numbers might be higher.

Negatively, 10-15 percent suggests that Islamists number about 150 million out of a billion plus Muslims – more than all the fascists and communists who ever lived. Positively, it implies that most Muslims can be swayed against Islamist totalitarianism.

Mr. Pipes (www.DanielPipes.org) is director of the Middle East Forum and Taube distinguished visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution of Stanford University.

**E-mail the
Editor**

No Oil For America

by Alan Caruba

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

So Democrats decided to allow the quarter-century ban on drilling for oil off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts to expire? That's not the same as lifting the ban. Moreover, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md) is on record saying that, if the Democrats retain control of Congress, restoring the ban "will be a top priority for discussion next year."

So much for so-called "energy independence." When Democrats say that, they are talking about wind and solar power, and biofuels, not oil, natural gas, and coal.



Alan Caruba

I cringe every time I hear the Democrats attack "Big Oil" because, as Michael J. Economides, co-editor of Energy Tribune, points out in the current issue, other than some small companies, there are just three large U.S. oil companies left; Exxon Mobil, Chevron, and ConocoPhillips. There are three other Western oil companies headquartered outside the U.S.; BP, Shell, and Total. Other than these six, all the others are national or state-controlled.

As Economides points out, "The truth is that even with record profits (but by no means record returns on investment) Big Oil is in a heap of trouble. And as Big Oil goes, so goes America."

Data from the office of Congressman John Shadegg (R-AZ) reveals how Big Green is trying to throttle any hope of Americans benefiting from our own vast oil reserves. In this case, it is 487 leases in the Chukchi Sea Sale 193 in February 2008. Every single one of the leases has been challenged.

Here are the names of those environmental organizations that don't want you to pay less at the pump: The Center for Biological Diversity, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Sierra Club. There are others, but these are the leaders in the effort to keep oil reserves off northern Alaska from ever being tapped. These are the groups that challenged the entire 2007-2023 five-year national outer continental shelf leasing program!

When the Bureau of Land Management issued leases in New Mexico, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, the Western Environmental Law Center and the Wild Earth Guardians, preemptively, on July 1, 2008, challenged all 78 leases.

It is instructive that, when President Bush began to talk about lifting the ban on offshore drilling, the global price of oil dropped precipitously. As of this writing, it has begun to fall and, if U.S. oil companies are permitted to explore and drill, the purpose of those leases, it will not only remain at current levels, but it will drop even more.

It is the Democrat Party and radical environmental organizations that stand between the discovery and provision of new oil and natural gas. It is the Democrat Party that is trying to push through a bogus "energy" bill that would put billions in the hands of those involved in "clean energy" projects that would barely provide the electricity America needs now, nor future needs.

The Chukchi Sea is offshore of northern Alaska, one of several seas that border the Arctic Ocean. The potential of oil in the Arctic is such that Russia is making noise about extending its claims in the Chukchi Sea.

If Congress should ratify the Law of the Sea Treaty, the United States would lose its claim to the vast reserves that potentially exist in the Arctic and you don't need three guesses to figure out which

political party supports ratification. That would be high on the agenda if it remains in Democrat control and if Sen. Obama were to be elected.

As outrageous as the effort is to stop exploration and extraction of oil offshore of Alaska is, the fact remains that environmental groups devote themselves to stopping Americans from having access to any kind of energy source.

Even with the expiration of the offshore ban, you can be sure environmental groups will challenge every single effort to access our national reserves of oil and natural gas, offshore or on. The now classic example is their opposition to drilling for oil in Alaska's ANWR despite the potential for billions more barrels of oil.

An offshore, floating terminal that would be 20 miles east of Manasquan, New Jersey, has been proposed by Exxon Mobil. Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) tankers would use the terminal to link to the shore with an undersea pipeline. A Calgary-based conglomerate, Excalibur, wants to build an anchorage 15 miles off Asbury Park for a comparable pipeline.

The two projects will be officially proposed to the U.S. Maritime Administration and Coast Guard next year. An environmental group calling itself Clean Ocean Action has mobilized to insure that neither project comes to fruition.

The United States currently has only two offshore LNG facilities, one off Boston, and the other is 116 miles off the coast of Louisiana. During hurricane season, the latter is subject to being shut down.

Instead, environmentalists in New Jersey, while opposing LNG terminals, love the idea of putting hundreds of wind turbines offshore despite the fact that this "clean energy" source is unreliable, would require back-up from onshore traditional plants generating electricity, and could only be built because they would be heavily subsidized with taxpayer and energy consumer dollars.

In the comic strip "Pogo", the main character uttered the now-famous line, "We have met the enemy and they are us." We have met the enemy and they are the environmental groups that are determined to keep the citizens of the United States from having access to affordable energy, no matter what or who produces it.

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

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Editor**

Anti Energy Agenda

by Paul Driessen

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

The quest to be “green” has spawned countless proposals, programs, laws and advertising campaigns. In Washington, DC a “Green Jobs Advisory Council” is promoting policies for green buildings, energy efficiency, renewable energy, city infrastructure, and lower carbon emissions.

Better sequencing of traffic lights speeds commuters to their workplaces, saves gasoline, cuts pollution, and reduces accidents. Better insulation reduces energy expenditures, and pays back investments in a few years. Concentrated juice, detergent and other products reduce packaging, shipping and storage costs.

Redesigned systems and energy-efficient computers and servers mean big savings in power-hungry data centers that facilitate banking, You Tube, Internet searches and modern business operations.

Initiatives like these also create jobs – “green-collar jobs” in the vernacular of activists, politicians, PR firms and companies. Renewable energy and energy efficiency (RE&EE) industries already generate 8.5 million jobs in the United States, claims a 2007 [report](#) from the American Solar Energy Society, and could create “as many as 40 million jobs by 2030.”

That may happen, or may be wishful thinking. It depends on how terms are defined – and whether hype and hope are distinguished from reality, practicality and unintended consequences.

The ASES report includes direct and indirect employment associated with retrofitting buildings, installing insulation or solar panels, constructing transmission lines from wind farms, producing biofuels and fuel-efficient vehicles, designing and manufacturing supplies for projects – even accountants, lawyers, salesmen, repairmen, truck drivers, landscapers, bureaucrats and lobbyists.

Many projects represent sound economics and should be pursued vigorously. Others would not survive without mandates, renewable energy standards and taxpayer-financed subsidies that the *Wall Street Journal* says are 100 times greater per unit of energy produced than those enjoyed by oil and gas

Moreover, money and time spent by governments and citizens on green-collar initiatives isn't available to address critical problems like teenage mothers, absentee fathers, crime, AIDS, drug abuse, dropouts from failing schools, soaring gasoline and heating bills, or dilapidated apartment buildings, roads and bridges.

Some opportunities are limited by the nature of a community's business sectors. Washington, DC's government-centered sector, for instance, cannot easily take advantage of new technologies that enable smelters and factories to recycle waste heat to power turbines and generate electricity for the plants and nearby customers – or for power grids, if regulations and equipment permit such hookups.

Other opportunities are more myth than fact. Solar panels to heat water or generate electricity have a maximum lifetime of 30 years – but a century of energy savings is needed to equal the panels' installation cost, says the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

Wind farms require large swaths of land to generate intermittent electricity – and eco activists often oppose the transmission towers and lines needed to carry their power to distant cities and factories.



Paul Driessen

Ethanol requires huge amounts of land, water and natural gas, to replace a tiny portion of our gasoline demand with an expensive fuel that drives up the cost of food and gets cars 10% less mileage per tank.

Compressed natural gas vehicles represent only 120,000 of America's 235,000,000 cars and light trucks. Honda's CNG-powered Civic costs \$7000 more than the regular model, but has half the range. Converting an existing vehicle to run on CNG costs \$3000. And opposition to drilling on federal lands means increasing demand for natural gas (for cars, home heating, factories, electricity generation, fertilizers, petrochemicals, wind-power backup and ethanol production) will send prices even higher.

An even bigger problem with the green-collar vision is its ultimate goal: ending our "addiction" to fossil fuels and mandating "sustainable," hydrocarbon-free lifestyles. This agenda is promoted by Senator Barack Obama, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the Apollo Alliance, a coalition of environmentalists, labor unions, civic groups and companies that want the United States to run only on conservation, efficiency and "clean energy," through government control of energy and economic decisions.

[Their agenda](#) covers every conceivable facet of our homes, businesses, infrastructure and lives. Its consequences – good and bad, intended and unintended – would affect every sector of society.

Fossil fuels provide 85% of all the energy Americans use; nuclear power an additional 8%; hydroelectric another 3 percent. Wind and solar produce a minuscule 0.5% of total US energy.

Conservation, efficiency and renewables will not bridge this enormous energy gap, certainly not in one decade and probably not in four. To decimate the energy system we have – and claim we can replace it with technologies that don't yet exist – is delusional and irresponsible.

Creating millions of green-collar jobs, via legislative mandates and taxpayer-funded subsidies, will require trillions of dollars (and vast mineral resources) to dismantle an existing infrastructure that works – and replace it with one that is mostly experimental. It will pink-slip tens of millions of direct and indirect jobs that depend on abundant, reliable, affordable energy from hydrocarbon and nuclear power.

Paul Driessen is senior policy advisor for the Congress of Racial Equality, a member of the board of scholars of DC Progress, and author of Eco-Imperialism: Green power · Black death.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Advice To Governor Palin

by Angelo M. Codevilla

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

Dear Gov. Palin:

Congratulations on having survived your introduction to national politics. You left nothing to be desired as you spoke the lines that your handlers in the McCain campaign gave you. Those lines, however, are the kind that would turn almost anyone into Dan Quayle. The following is to warn you against the substance-free, image politics that your handlers practice. To make the contribution to our country that you seem able to make, and to retain your integrity, you must lead the Republican Party's so-called professionals -- not be led by them. So here is an object lesson.

I knew Dan Quayle, and you're no Dan Quayle. As a matter of fact, neither was Dan Quayle the byword for unseriousness that he became from the moment he started running for vice president. A good politician, he beat Indiana's towering political figure Birch Bayh in 1980. In the Senate, he did his homework. On missile defense, I found his mind agile and his judgment sound. Attractive in every way, he was a logical choice for Vice President.

His fatal mistake was to regard the handlers that George Bush gave him as his superiors and teachers, as men he had to please. Even after the American people elected him, he still thought that the likes of Jim Baker, Brent Scowcroft, and Dick Darman outranked him in every way. Whereas in fact they were hirelings with no political base, he saw himself as working for them. Even after Quayle hired a staff that was intellectually far superior to Bush's -- people who were to be listened to because of the substance of what they said rather than because of the jobs they held -- Quayle still lacked the intellectual and political confidence to think and speak for himself.

That explains his now famous "deer caught in the headlights" look: it is the look that comes naturally upon anyone who is trying to speak as someone else wants him to, who is trying to imitate, to say things he only half believes. Doing that is very, very hard, and demeaning. As a professor, I've seen graduate students bungle oral exams when they try to finesse the feelings and prejudices of the examining committee's members. "Speak for yourself!" has been my invariable advice. Because Quayle stopped thinking and speaking for himself once he stepped on the national stage, he became a bad imitation of unserious people.

Don't you do that. If you were to internalize the briefing books that are now your sad lot, you would become just another Republican loser. We have so many already who utter platitudes but refuse to say "yes" or "no" and explain why. It is entirely possible to explain the fundamentals of economic or foreign policy in plain English. But doing so requires saying in public the kinds of things said around your house. Doubtless, you know why the banks gave so many "subprime" loans: there was a law that required them to, a law that gave "community organizers" the power to compel them, the very law that started Mr. Obama in politics. If you think such things, say them. As for foreign affairs, is "nation building" a good thing, or not? What is Saudi Arabia to us? On these and countless matters, regardless of who poses the question, you should answer as you think best and defend what you say in your own terms. To the extent you worry what your handlers will think of you, you are cooperating in your own DanQuaylization.

For our country's sake and your own, please keep in mind that these folks are likely your intellectual and moral inferiors. Moreover, once you were chosen, you became their political superior. You rose from private citizen to governor of Alaska by your judgment. By their judgment, they have taken leading roles in wrecking the Republican Party, as well as most of the candidates they have touched. If John McCain wins the campaign they have run, it will be a miracle, in part of your doing.

But, win or lose in 2008, will Sarah Palin survive as the force in American politics that she appeared to be on August 29? She will, to her and her family's honor and to the good of her fellow citizens, if

she stops trying to imitate the Republican professionals. Doing so before and after the election will give America the kind of leadership it has not had since Ronald Reagan.

Angelo M. Codevilla is professor emeritus at Boston University and a senior editor of The American Spectator, where this first appeared.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Election Confusion

by Paul Weyrich

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

There is now less than a month before voters cast their ballots in the Presidential election. Senator Barack Hussein Obama has a significant lead at this point. In fact, no Presidential candidate equally far behind as McCain a month out has won the Presidency. Obama, upon that basis, should be breaking out the champagne. But Obama is not, in light of the Bradley Factor. That refers to the gubernatorial campaign in California during which the Mayor of Los Angeles polled far ahead of the Attorney General of California. However, when the votes were counted Mayor Tom Bradley was defeated by 50,000 votes.



Paul M. Weyrich

The reason? Respondents to polling firms wanted to be politically correct by saying that Bradley was their candidate. When they got into the privacy of the voting booth they voted the other way. Obama worries about the Bradley Factor because in several primary contests he over-pollled the actual result.

It may not only be the Bradley Factor which has caused the Obama camp to pause. Former Clinton advisor Dick Morris believes that Obama has peaked too soon. He has forecast that Obama support will begin to decline in another week and that by election day the race will be dead even again. Of course, Morris is not always correct in his analysis. He thought McCain's move to suspend his campaign in order to work on the bailout was "brilliant." It turned out the public viewed this as somewhat of a gimmick. McCain's support declined each day from the time he suspended his campaign.

University of Virginia political guru Professor Larry Sabato said normally Obama could expect to be elected given the current circumstances but given this volatile year any day could produce a game changer, so voters should not draw any conclusion yet.

Fourteen percent of the electorate is said to be undecided. Should that group break strongly toward one candidate or the other it could produce a landslide for Obama or a very close election with McCain having a slight edge. And then there are the Congressional elections. Voter outrage may continue through November 4. If so, how would it translate in the elections? Would voters turn out of office those who supported the bailout? That is unclear. Or could voters resent those who voted no on the ground that something had to be done and they rejected that opportunity?

Before all this turmoil I had suggested that we might have some surprises on Election Day. It is impossible to know how exactly the outrage on the part of the electorate will translate into votes. We do know that the Democrats have a superior ground game (voter ID and turnout) just as the Republicans had a superior ground game in 2004 which resulted in that party gaining four Senate seats. Now on paper the Democrats appear to gain a minimum of five Senate seats. That is unless voter outrage changes that outlook.

Pack a good picnic brunch and prepare for an all-night marathon election night and the morning after. Unless we have a landslide in the making we are likely to have a marathon election with many confusing results. Why not? Think of what already has happened this year.

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

**E-mail the
Editor**

Ayers and Obama

by Jeffrey Folks

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

As I write in early October, Sarah Palin is reminding America of Barack Obama's long association with William Ayers, a Chicago professor with a long and unabashed allegiance to radical causes. Obama has denied knowing of his friend's involvement in the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Weatherman Underground. What he knew, and who he knew it, should be the crucial issue of this presidential campaign.

The facts about William Ayers are there for anyone to read in *Destructive Generation*, by Peter Collier and David Horowitz, in which there are over a hundred references to Ayers and Dohrn. Ayers and Dohrn, pursued by the FBI, were on the run for a decade. The record is there of their involvement in bombings, violent demonstrations, political support of murder and robbery, campaigns designed to "smash monogamy" through the imposition of communal sex, and unstinting praise for other violent organizations including the Black Liberation Army.



Sen. Barack Obama

Not only was William Ayers involved in violent radical causes in the past, it would appear that he remains unrepentant. In an interview published on September 11, 2001—a remarkable irony, given his connection with past acts of terrorism—Ayers stated that he did not regret his actions in the past and wished he could have done more. As Collier and Horowitz assert, "More than anyone else, Ayers and Dohrn embody the odd mix of characters and politics that propelled the Weatherman onto the center stage of the American scene in the late Sixties."

One can get a good sense of what Ayers stood for by reading the "Port Huron Statement of the Students for a Democratic Society," a forty-page document published by the SDS in 1962. The Port Huron Statement is replete with boilerplate leftwing positions, including a very troubling communist-inspired insistence on collectivization of possessions and "public groupings" of all sort. It hints at the future violence of the SDS with its assertion that "human brotherhood must be willed" and with its fondness for the word "smash." Members of the SDS are encouraged to "smash" the "invisible framework that seems to hold back chaos." The SDS aims at the elimination of private property and "privilege." It attacks America as what it views as a complacent, hypocritical, criminal nation.

Most important in relation to the candidacy of Barack Obama, however, is the urgency with which the Port Huron Statement calls for "change." From its first paragraph on, the Statement propounds the need to "organize for change." America "fears change," we are told. America is too wealthy and complacent to wish for "change." Yet "something can be done to change circumstances in the school, the workplaces, the bureaucracies, the government." The SDS appeals to the "engine of change," that is, a growing anxiety about America's role in the world, an unease regarding its future direction. The Port Huron Statement is dedicated, in sum, to "changing the conditions of humanity."

Did Barack Obama lift his call for change from the Port Huron Statement? He did not need to do so. The SDS platform was no different from every other credo of the radical left. Was Obama schooled by William Ayers in the political rhetoric of the left? Perhaps he was, but again he did not need to be so schooled. Ayers and Obama share common goals, and, though no one imagines Obama running about setting off bombs, their political rhetoric and tactics have all too much in common. Intimidation, group action, mass meetings, direct democracy: these are Weatherman tactics that have found their way into the hearts of many Obama supporters.

Still, there remains the pressing question of Obama's actual dealings with William Ayers. If Obama did know of Ayers's radical past while carrying on a decade-long association with him, this fact in

and of itself should disqualify Obama for the presidency. If Obama did not know of Ayers's past and present radicalism, his naiveté should disqualify him as well. I am quite certain that every other well-informed member of Obama's social circle knew of it: how could Obama fail to know. Perhaps it is like attending Rev. Wright's Unity Church for twenty years and failing to comprehend his pastor's sermons. It suggests an extraordinary capacity for incomprehension, enough to raise doubts not only about Obama's qualifications for the presidency but even about his sanity. Obama has surrounded himself with individuals who engage in acts of terrorism, who do not regret what they have done, who continue to deride and ridicule their own country, and yet he does not find these individuals objectionable. Just the opposite: he has been eager to benefit from their counsel and political support.

I find it impossible to believe that Obama was unaware of Ayers's radical past, given the fact that Ayers's story has been told and retold in best-sellers such as *Destructive Generation* and even featured in a documentary film, *Underground*. As if this were not enough, Ayers's wife, another person well known to the Obamas, is Bernadine Dohrn, the most famous (and infamous) of all female radicals of the 1960s.

These revelations about Obama's friendships with admitted terrorists and anti-American pastors are deeply disturbing. This is not what we want or need as president of the United States.

Jeffrey Folks

**E-mail the
Editor**

Slavery If No U.S.?

by Mike D'Virgilio

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

Several weeks ago on *The View*, Whoopi Goldberg questioned John McCain about whether he wants to select judges who interpret the law based on the original intent of the founders: "Should I be worried about being a slave again?" This is what the founding of America means to a large portion of the left. The very idea of America is tainted and thus illegitimate because of slavery.



Forget that slavery existed in the colonies for well over a hundred years prior to the Declaration, that the economy of the colonies, especially the southern colonies, was inextricably intertwined with that despicable system of subjugating a whole class of human beings, that without compromise on that issue America would most likely never have come into being, and that America paid the price of well over six hundred thousand lives to eradicate slavery from our land.

Imagine history without the compromise with slavery that made America possible. Can you? To my knowledge this has never been attempted in any kind of work of fiction, but I would argue it is sorely needed. The left, indicative of Ms. Goldberg's comment, is fundamentally ashamed of the American experiment, and anger toward America infuses the basic assumptions of many and probably most who identify themselves as liberal. I would argue as well that many black Americans, more understandingly, harbor this same animus. Not only is this a misplaced discontent, it's also poisonous. Long-term anger is a toxic motivation.

How do we address such misguided thought? What is more powerful in the public imagination, and thus the beliefs and attitudes of the American people: a polemic or academic argument in book or documentary form, or a great movie with popular actors? There is obviously an important place for the former, but the latter has a much more powerful, immediate and even long-term affect on real people in everyday life.

Here's what I'm looking for: Someone to write an historical novel that will be made into a blockbuster movie about what the history of the last two hundred might have looked like without the compromise with slavery that made the United States of America possible. Some, maybe many, maybe most on the left would cheer no United States of America, and a left-wing vision of such a place would of course be idealistic and bear no semblance to reality.

In fact without that compromise there would likely have been no [Louisiana Purchase](#), or no [Missouri Compromise](#). There almost certainly would have been no Civil War and thus slavery would have continued throughout the 19th Century and maybe longer on the continent. Much of the southwest and California would likely be Mexico, and maybe much of the Midwest and northwest Canada. However the west was settled the Indians would still probably have gotten a raw deal. There would have been no America to come to the rescue of the allies in WWI, or to help defeat the Nazis and Japanese in WWII. And the Soviet Union would most likely still exist.

The case could be made artistically that the world would be a much less friendly and prosperous place without the United States of America, drastically much less friendly. Most normal, non-leftwing Americans know and believe this already. But the left still gets away with staying stupid stuff like Whoopi did. Most students in our public schools and universities get anti-American propaganda right in line with Whoopi's sentiments every day. Not to mention everywhere else in popular culture. A great work of popular fiction would reveal the utter tendentious stupidity of such sentiments and one day possibly even make them much less prevalent.

There have been many great books and movies about the founding of America, like the wonderful [John Adams series](#) recently on HBO. Most Americans love this country and its founding, which is why

Democrats, the party of the left, are often on the defensive about their patriotism.

But no one in any imaginative, and surely no popular way has challenged the left on this fundamental assumption of their worldview, that somehow America would be better or even exist if the founders had not compromised with the South. That the world would be a better place either way. It wouldn't. So we need someone to step up the plate and get to writing.

Any takers?

Mike D'Virgilio is Founder and Executive Director of the The Culture Project
<http://thecultureproject.org/>

**E-mail the
Editor**

Congress Fix Financial Mess?

by Doug Walters

Issue 118 - October 22, 2008

"End of Capitalism?" in the last issue was a good article, but I think you missed one! When we elect our representatives to Congress and the White House, we expect, no, we demand that those people be diligent in doing all that can be done to protect us from a variety of things including a financial crisis.

Obviously, this has not been done by Congress or the White House. The boys of Wall Street and the Banking industry have not been responsible to America either and have been at this criminal activity for some time, bending the rules and taking big profits and salaries. You and I didn't cause this problem. They did, all of them. Congress, the White House, Wall Street, the banks are all party to the folly that created this financial issue.



When we vote for a representative to Washington, we do not send them a blank check. No amount of tax payer dollars paid to save the money boys is acceptable. Not now, not ever. These people have abused the system of free enterprise, need to spend some time in jail, Congressmen need to return with interest the money they received from Freddie and Fannie and Congress needs to admit they failed us. They broke it and they can fix it, but not with my money, not now and ever. Pay-out solutions are not acceptable. Laws that failed to continue to exist to protect the citizens of this country are the responsibility of Congress and the White House and all of those people need to be held accountable. Not you and me.

I do not approve the use of my money to bail out anyone. Not in the form of tax payer obligations as proposed or money already in the budget. That money was designed for running the country, not covering the butts of brainless idiots in Washington or Wall Street. When my business failed a few years ago due to outside influences, no one was there to bail me out. No one should be there to bail out any of these people either.

Congressmen who have received funds from Fannie and Freddie including Mc Cain and Obama should have to admit they got them, return them with interest and pay the price of being guilty to contributing to the problem this country faces right now. Anything less is unacceptable.

We have a Congress full of brainless idiots, most of whom, but not all, are Democrats. We have a president who is too preoccupied with the war in Iraq to pay attention to what's going on with our borders and our financial institutions. And we have a population in this country too stupid to see and understand what this administration and our Democratic Congress have done to us all. And now, they think this is a socialist country where the mass of us are responsible financially for the failure of the few. Not on my watch buddy.

After the Congress and the President messed it all up they ask two things from all the rest of us. One, to pay for this mess and two, to trust them to get it right this time. Yah, sure! Give me a break. Congress can't even run a cafeteria without going broke!

Doug Walters lives in Oklahoma

**E-mail the
Editor**

Reader Comments

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Editor: "End of Capitalism?" is a great article. It is unbelievable that so many conservatives bought into an increase in government involvement as an antidote to failed government intervention. It is great to have you holding up the torch of freedom. Pat Nolan, former Republican leader of the California Assembly

Editor: Congratulations on your brilliant historical essay about the current crisis, "End of Capitalism?" F.A. Hayek, Ludwig von Mises and Milton Friedman had it right--the more government intervenes the more serious the crisis becomes. And of course the Left will call for even more intervention. Well done. Lee Edwards, The Heritage Foundation

Editor: Great article in Battleline on the bailout, the "End of Capitalism?" Even better was the con man letter, "Letter From an American Friend." I hope all goes well. Myron Ebel, Director, Energy and Global Warming Policy at the Competitive Enterprise Institute

Editor: "It is not as if no one foresaw what would happen in face of these governmental actions"--from your editorial "End of Capitalism?"—this says it all! Donna Wiesner Keene

Editor: "End of Capitalism?" was an absolutely wonderful article! You hit the nail on the head. Thank you. Bob Edmons, Anacortes, WA

Editor: Great piece in the new Battleline "End of Capitalism?" and hilarious "letter from Paulson" from Joe Morris. Larry Hart

Editor: Regarding the "End of Capitalism?" funny how the folks responsible for the mess think that it is just another day of scr--ing America and trying to be reelected???? As John F. Kennedy said: "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable." Dale Alumbaugh

Editor: Your piece the "End of Capitalism?" was great. Showed what true conservatism is! Thanks for the cite. All the best, John Berlau

Editor: Regarding the "End of Capitalism?" where do I go to let my opinion on this subject of the bailout be known to those responsible for trying to rush it thru without public scrutiny, especially in the Senate; And to give my support to conservatives in the House who are trying to stop it? Tommy

Helean [*Editor responds: You may go to the House Republican Study Committee web site to identify those who fought against it.*]

Editor: "End of Capitalism?" was a very good article. I just don't see why people have not gotten it yet. I am so afraid for our country. I feel we are doomed. I may not see the end but my grandchildren will. Patty

Editor: As always, splendid analysis of the current fiasco in "End of Capitalism?!" We quite agree and thought perhaps you might find our take on the issue amusing. Cheers, Charlie at www.churchillsparrrot.com

Editor: Regarding the "End of Capitalism?" the entire meltdown of our great nation began approximately 75 years ago. The general population of the United States went to sleep and left everything up to the corrupt government they created then and now. I, like so many others I know, began waking up from this coma about 20 years ago. Unfortunately, so many remain asleep and even comatose today. The American dream stopped in 1933 and has digressed to even lower levels since then. One could safely say that the very people we have elected over the past 75 years (and will continue to elect) have literally *STOLEN* the American Dream! Washington has an out-of-control "staff" infection and will die sooner or later. Unfortunately, they have infected a nation of people who don't even get it! How long will Americans tolerate this? We need "new blood" that has a track record of fiscal prudence and those who will consistently vote for constitutional limitations of government, the reduction of big government, the shutdown of the private bank called the Federal Reserve and with it the Internal Revenue Code along with a constitutional amendment for a mandated balanced federal budget and holding EVERYONE in Washington accountable and, when justified, prosecuted to the full extent of the law and imprisoned! It doesn't get any more black and white than that. Sincerely, Catherine Abbitt

Editor: I admire your bluntness and that of your other authors. Thank you. I am totally in agreement with Mark Hendrickson's article "Government Not Market Failed." For the past 16 years I have been battling the government from the "takeover" of my corporate entity. The news media (by court order) has denied me access to the public airwaves about this takeover. What has recently occurred with the banks forced to accept government money was similar in nature as to the takeover of my business (and while I'm at it, I wish to point out that I'm not the only corporation who was taken over years ago). My corporation was bought and sold (like a slab of beef) by creditors (both legitimate and fraudulent) and the courts did NOTHING because the players were government officials who profited through these creditors in the same manner that public officials profited from Fannie and Freddie. I agree with Dr. Hendrickson's statement that "Regulators forced lenders to abandon financial prudence in subservience to a political goal". That political goal was a "cash cow" for the politicians without regard to the consequences of a free market. We are ALL now faced with a COMMUNIST regime which IS and HAS BEEN the political goal all along. Sincerely, Ann I. Mural, Cicero, Illinois

Editor: I love the quote in Mike Pence's "Stop Bailout Plan": "To have the freedom to succeed, we must preserve the freedom to fail." It will go on my door today! Jeffrey Barth, CPA

Editor: "To Dear American Friend" by "Henry Paulson" is wonderful parody. Rick Barton

Editor: Regarding Kevin Hassetts' statement in "Dems Killed Crisis Solution," why isn't McCain bringing out evidence that he in fact was one of three who warned about this. He should have done a powerpoint presentation yesterday to show the American people how Obama is misleading it was deregulation that was the problem and the people he aligns himself with. It's like he doesn't want to win! Candie (Dulce) Suarez

Editor: Thank you for John Nevola's "CEOs Make Too Much?" I have been saying for years now that why do liberals always seem to denounce corporate executive salaries when in fact the Hollywood elite crowd (all mostly liberals) make outrageous sums of money for just reading a script. Corporate executives have so much more responsibilities than any of those rodeo clowns in Hollywood. That also goes for mega buck sports figures and talking heads on TV. I couldn't agree more with your article. Peter Fraedrich

Editor: With all due respect to the usually insightful Alex Castellanos in his "Obama Needs a Second Act," Obama has another much more serious problem. His bottom up "change" was a dishonest cover for his top down socialist philosophy. What has happened is that people are now seeing through that. More interesting is the slick way he is laying all the blame for the financial crisis on free market reform when he, as a "community organizer" or agitator, actively participated at the leftist pandering roots of the problem. It reminds me of the man who killed his parents and then demanded the court's clemency on the grounds that he was an orphan. McCain doesn't seem to get this. Dick Morris says campaigns turn on short, easily stated slogans. How about: My opponent is about change. Bigger government, higher taxes and less freedom sounds like bad change. How about good change like less government, lower taxes, and more freedom? Jack Dixon

Editor: Regarding your "The Palin Hope," does she support or reject big government? She said both during her debate with Sen. Biden. "Get out of the way Government" vs. "The federal government must have strong oversight over the banking industry." I'm confused on her stance? Also, could you please send me a list of what constitutes "Traditional Values"? I want to make sure I qualify in case I seek a local Pennsylvania GOP nomination. Thanks in advance. Andy Murray

Editor: Thank Alan Caruba in his "A New Ice Age?" for his scientific views. Al Gore should not be mentioned in any scientific connection. G. Nelson

**E-mail the
Editor**