



CONSERVATIVE BATTLELINE ONLINE

*The "Bold Colors" Conservative Voice in
Washington*

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Conservative Counter Attack

by Donald Devine

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

If President Barack Obama and his Democratic Congress aggressively pursue the leftist programs of their dreams, they will fail. If conservatives do not believe this, they do not trust their own philosophy and have no business so calling themselves. The President-elect will have overwhelming Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress, the united power of the Executive Branch including a sympathetic bureaucracy and their supporting labor unions, and a fawning and complaint mainstream media. What could possibly stop them anyway? Re-electing John Boehner as Republican House leader after heading a disastrous election effort probably will not do it.



Conservatives tried to warn President George W. Bush and the GOP from the beginning that big domestic government "conservatism" is not only oxymoronic but cannot work. They did not listen. Six months of stimulus have failed. When the Treasury Secretary marched in the nation's nine biggest bank CEOs on October 13 and told them the government was going to buy shares in their firms and there would be no arguments about it in spite of opposition from the three healthiest firms, the fate of the Bush Administration, the John McCain campaign and probably the nation – to say nothing of U.S. capitalism - was sealed. By not allowing the market to bottom out and thus turning a recession into a depression, President Bush has set the nation's course and now only President-elect Obama can possibly correct it.



John Boehner

The danger of an Obama presidency to institutional conservatism and especially Republicanism is not that it will be socialistic. After President Bush has nationalized the bank, finance, insurance, "no child" education, elderly prescription drug, and energy (partially) industries (probably followed by the auto companies), how much further could President Obama go? The danger to the political right is that President Obama will become capitalistic and let the market hit bottom and work.

Why might President Obama go right? First, President Bush will have exhausted every New Deal trick imaginable by the time President Obama enters office in January. The only solution left will be to let the market bottom out, the one that will work as President Ronald Reagan proved in both 1981 and 1987. Sooner or later, even fighting against his heart, the odds are that President Obama might figure this out. Remember, one of the President-elect's advisors is Paul Volker, who as Federal Reserve Chairman led Reagan's successful effort to wring out the market in 1981.

Second, there will be no money. It is estimated that the Bush Administration has spent \$2 trillion on the bailout so far (some of which could be repaid) and is reported ready to spend much more. The deficit for the final Bush year could be the first in a one year period to total a trillion dollars. It will be impossible to tax the rich enough to make it up. As a result of the economic downturn, revenues are down already. One expert estimates that even if Congressional Democrats increased the capital gains tax to what they would like, because of the decline in asset values, it would raise much less revenue (even on static assumptions) than the current rate did last year. Even more important, the entitlement spending explosion will arrive immediately on the heels of the depression. The spending party is over.

Finally, even if the leftists in the Executive Branch wanted to ignore this and proceed, Congress probably would not let them. Certainly, Speaker Nancy Pelosi is by far the most left-wing person

ever to hold her office. Her liberalism is very important to her, more so than ideology is for most Republican leaders. Yet, there is one thing more important – her Speakership. She knows she needs to protect the Democrats elected in Republican-leaning districts in the last two elections to keep her job. Indeed, she had promised the 2006 Class not even to bring up popular conservative issues for a vote at their expense and kept her word.



Nancy Pelosi

Underlying all of this is that America remains more conservative than not. When Pelosi's own left of center state supported a referendum restricting marriage to one man and one woman, what other proof is required, especially since the most supportive groups were African and Hispanic Americans? Thirty states have now done the same thing. It speaks volumes that in a post election debate with his counterpart at the National Press Club, the Republican Party chairman was asked how his party could do so poorly and the conservative referenda so well, and he disclaimed knowledge of the matter. For Democrats, gays in the military is an unlikely early priority and anything major on abortion is too. Likewise, all the polls

show people do not want their taxes increased.



Yes, the Democratic president and Congress will do bad left-wing things. But they will be few, on low-visibility issues and on only the most important matters to them. They will push a payoff to the unions eliminating the secret ballot in representational elections because they cannot do without union power. There will be attempts to rig the 2010 election with districting and apportioning tricks. There will be grants to every leftist organization imaginable. Executive Orders on embryonic stem cells and overseas abortions may go but there will not be legislation on major populist conservative issues. Many are worried about the reintroduction of the Fairness Doctrine as a way to weaken conservative

talk radio. But Rush Limbaugh has already promised to turn out a million listeners in Washington if they try. It would mobilize the right in a manner not seen in ages. Unfortunately, the Democrats are not that dumb – at least during President Obama's early years.

The real challenge to the conservative movement is if President Obama and his Congress let the market work and hit bottom, are careful about spending, and keep away from hot-button social issues. Conservatives who understand their philosophy know that this strategy will work and President Obama will be successful and elected to a second term with an even stronger Democratic Congress, when all of their worst fears will indeed come to fruition.

Paradoxically, only the leftist intellectuals who dominate the mainstream media and the universities can save conservatives from this wrenching dilemma. Nobel economic winners Paul Krugman of Princeton and the New York Times and Joseph Stiglitz of Columbia and the Wall Street Journal op-ed page both have encouraged the President-elect to spend and regulate his way out of the economic crisis. They admit the conservatives have been right that the Great Depression lingered a decade because of the New Deal policies but it was because Franklin Roosevelt refused to spend enough. The lesson for President Obama is to spend enormously more and to put much greater controls on business and the marketplace. It is an appeal that would rend any leftist heart.



Paul Krugman

The left is an incredibly closed world. Study after study has proved that few conservatives exist in the academic or mainstream media universe to provide a counter argument. In a media where self-described progressive David Brooks is hired as the "conservative" voice of its most prestigious newspaper outlet and its most serious TV newscast, left intellectuals just might convince Democrats to go against their own best judgment. In a recent "debate" with Bill Clinton's favorite progressive Washington Post columnist E.J. Dionne on NPR, both he and Brooks agreed that

the only way the Republicans can recover from the 2008 election or even to survive is to become progressives like the Democrats. It is comforting (and blinding) to think both left and right believe this.

If the intellectual media can convince the Democratic pols who control Congress and the Executive that in fact there is no thinking person to the right of Brooks, why not go for the whole leftist agenda when they have the power to do so? Anyone who knows spending and controls will not work and wants an early Republican revival should reply, bring on the biased leftist media when we really need them. But it is a dilemma. Do conservatives root for the leftist intellectual program and so prove this philosophy is nuts and be ready for a big comeback in 2010 - or do they root for President Obama to follow President Reagan, which will result in quick recovery but also a Democratic future as far as the eye can see?



David Brooks

Either way conservatives are pretty much irrelevant to the outcome. The first move is all up to Mr. Obama and Mrs. Pelosi. In that sense, re-electing Mr. Boehner as the GOP leader perfectly fits the situation we are in. Maybe the best initial attack strategy is to play dumb.

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

**E-mail the
Editor**

Against "Caring" Intervention

by John Bolton

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

The central problem with the case for humanitarian intervention is that the arguments advanced in its favour are largely incoherent. All will agree that there are situations of human suffering that deserve attention, but most are far removed from even the most expansive definition of "national interests." What's more, proponents of interventionism rarely explain to the citizens of countries like Canada why their sons and daughters are to be put in harm's way, albeit for noble purposes.

So, what precisely are these advocates proposing to do, and what is the utility in grouping such disparate examples together under the label of humanitarian intervention? Proponents are never sure who they are going to save, but consider the situations in Sudan , Somalia and Burma .

In Sudan , we see a genocidal civil war. What began as a conflict between the government and the indigenous population in Darfur now risks spreading to the neighbouring countries of Chad and the Central African Republic . Hundreds of thousands of people have died.

In Somalia , there has been a near-complete breakdown in central government authority. In the south, this has resulted in fractious warlordism. In the north, in Puntland and Somaliland , we see a state of near secession. For almost 20 years, the country has verged on anarchy.

In Burma , a long-standing dictatorship has recently blocked international humanitarian assistance following a major natural disaster. There is no doubt that thousands died unnecessarily due to the inaction of the military junta.

Each of these cases represents a humanitarian crisis, but the circumstances vary dramatically. What precisely do advocates of intervention wish to be done in each of these vastly different situations? More importantly to the debate about humanitarian intervention, what clarity is there in lumping them together under one set of norms and actions?

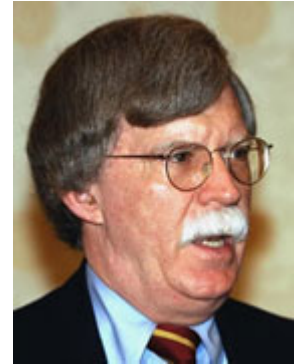
Secondly, what do advocates of humanitarian intervention mean when they say the "international community"? Is it the United Nations we are speaking of? If so, the UN's track record on each of the aforementioned countries is hardly reassuring.

On Sudan , UN authorization of an African Union peacekeeping force has faced constant obstruction in the Security Council. China and Russia have threatened vetoes at every step - why would anyone think they will change their ways?

As for Somalia , in the early 1990s, the United States intervened unilaterally to try and open the channels of humanitarian assistance, but within two years of turning the mission over to the UN, the country had again descended into chaos. Why would the UN do better in Somalia this time than it did last time?

Where Burma is concerned, the Bush administration fought hard just to get its discussion on the Security Council's agenda. We ultimately prevailed, but it was certainly not easy, and the resulting council action was marginal.

Are these three cases emblematic of the much vaunted "international community?"



Third, I have found that many who advocate the doctrine of "responsibility to protect," and particularly military intervention, are very casual with other people's blood. It is much easier to advocate for the use of force when you are not the one doing the heavy lifting.

The reality of international military capabilities is that when observers on the sidelines express high ideals for what the international community should be doing, they are generally referring to the United States. And as tragic as the situation is in Darfur, in a democracy we have to be able to explain to American citizens why they should put their sons and daughters at risk where there are no vital U.S. interests, even in an area of undoubted humanitarian tragedy.

There has been much talk about creating a standing volunteer rapid response force that can act in the name of the "responsibility to protect," but this force will be faced with the very same logistical restraints as any national army. If under the UN, it will be subject to all of the UN's limitations. Once deployed, it is entirely unclear how the "rapid response" force would ever be able to extract itself from what are often intractable, long-term conflicts.

I am afraid that in the end, the principle of the responsibility to protect remains fundamentally aspirational. And aspirations do not make a foreign policy.

John Bolton is former U.S. ambassador to the UN, and a participant in the Dec. 1 Munk Debate on humanitarian intervention (www.munkdebates.com).

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Editor**

Afghanistan Like Vietnam?

by Alan Caruba

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Contrary to their differences during the campaign on Iraq, Barack Obama and John McCain both expressed support for more U.S. engagement in Afghanistan. Now President Obama must decide whether to withdraw our troops from Afghanistan or expand our involvement there. Having lived through the long years of the war in Vietnam, I can tell you that Afghanistan looks and smells like Vietnam. It is the classic wrong war in the wrong place.



Alan Caruba

In late October, I read a small news item about Parwiz Kambakhsh, 24, an Afghan journalism student who had downloaded and circulated an article about women's rights under Islam. The news was that his sentence of death had been overturned by an appellate court that reduced it to a mere twenty years in prison on the charge of blasphemy. He can still appeal to the Supreme Court of Afghanistan. This is the state of freedom of speech, press, and thought in Afghanistan.

If you want to know what life was like in the seventh century, Afghanistan is the place to go. It is largely devoid of anything passing for modernity, by which we mean medical facilities, schools, roads, and such. Never mind the telephones and other detritus of modern life, the conversations have not changed in centuries.

Afghanistan shares a long border with Pakistan and Iran. Also bordering it is Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Turkistan, and Tajikistan. None of these places is a tourist destination. All are Islamic.

The only reliable element of Afghanistan's economy is poppy cultivation for the opium trade which the CIA estimates generates "roughly \$4 billion in illicit economic activity." This is another way of saying that none of this money reaches what passes for a central government except in the form of bribes. It is a major source of funding for the Taliban.

Few Americans were interested in Afghanistan until September 11, 2001. We have had a military presence there for seven years, along with NATO nation components. Much like the "military advisors" that initiated our involvement in Vietnam, today's generals are calling for more troops.

Afghanistan has been conquered and occupied since the days of Alexander the Great. Nothing much comes of it. It remains a mystery why they bothered. Putting too few or too many troops into Afghanistan does little except to demonstrate the futility of trying to impose one's will on people who have resisted every such effort for centuries.

Founded as a nation in 1747 when Ahmad Shah Durrani unified the Pashtun tribes, Afghanistan was primarily seen as a buffer between the British and Russian empires. Democracy, as in most Middle Eastern nations, has never taken root there.

It became the graveyard of the Soviet empire after they intervened militarily in 1979 to support a tottering Afghan Communist regime. After they withdrew in 1989, the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. It is now known as the Russian Federation. It is still run by the former KGB. And one wonders why anyone in the U.S. government thinks any good can come of being there?

The Taliban took control after the Russians left and Osama bin Laden found a congenial place in which to plan 9/11. That's why the first U.S. response to the attack occurred in Afghanistan as U.S., allied, and an anti-Taliban Northern Alliance of tribes were able to drive the Taliban across the border into the frontier provinces of Pakistan and elsewhere.

The U.S. effort to create a democratic government there began with a new constitution and, in December 2004, the election of Hamid Karzai as president. He barely controls Kabul, the capitol. The southern and eastern regions are still beyond control.

In essence, the rule of law barely exists in Afghanistan, if at all, unless you factor in Sharia law which reflects a seventh century approach to justice. The government and all aspects of official life in Afghanistan are so corrupt that even President Karzai's brother is allegedly on the take.

I am not a military strategist, an expert in foreign affairs, or can lay claim to much more than common sense, so I confess it defies my understanding why the United States and our NATO allies are in Afghanistan. Expecting democracy to succeed in such a primitive and hostile place seems more a justification for military occupation than anything else. The whole place is tribal.

Other than his distaste for our invasion of Iraq and disposal of Saddam Hussein, it is baffling that Barack Obama says that Afghanistan is the "central front" against al Qaeda. The CIA says it has no bases there. The Taliban—outsiders just like us--have their own agenda as seen in their effort to render the place a complete and total Islamic hellhole.

Little wonder, therefore, that word keeps getting out that both English and French military leaders regard Afghanistan as virtually beyond any hope without putting a far greater number of troops there. Millions are being spent as it is. Between 2002 and 2007, Germany spent \$80 million to reform its police corps. The U.S. has budgeted \$800 million for 2008 to assist its security forces.

In early October, General Jean-Louis Geogelin, France's military chief, confirmed that British Brigadier Mark Carleton-Smith remarks that "there is no military solution to the Afghan crisis" reflected his own views. The Brigadier recommended that NATO lower its expectations regarding a happy outcome to the conflict. It was, he said, "unrealistic and probably incredible" to think that the multinational forces in Afghanistan could rid the country of armed bands.

There are two occupations available to the Afghans. One can either be a farmer raising poppies or one can join an armed band, be it either the government's, one's tribe, or the Taliban's.

In an October 1, 2008 Christian Science Monitor article, it was reported that "The U.S. military is working to put a new strategy in place for Afghanistan and Pakistan that could allow it to expand airfields, preposition military forces and equipment, and prepare for a more robust effort soon against Islamist extremists in the region." Four more U.S. brigades are poised to be sent to Afghanistan, including one that will deploy in January.

I have my own military strategy. Let's pull our troops out of Afghanistan and, with their permission, let's keep enough troops in Iraq to ensure that its government can maintain its security and as a deterrent for any conflict Iran might initiate in the region.

The United States of America has a full plate of problems right now. Expending troops and treasure in Afghanistan strikes me as a bad investment in a very nasty place. It is an invitation to repeat the all the errors of Vietnam.

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>.

**E-mail the
Editor**

National Review RIP

by Mark Rhoads

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Like you I was sad to hear about the recent passing of the Spirit of National Review so quickly in the same year after we lost William F. Buckley, Jr. I first became a fan of the Spirit in the summer of 1962 after I finished my freshman year of high school. Some anonymous donor gave me a gift subscription and I never found out who that kind person was.

The magazine and its spirit opened me to a new world of politics, arts, travel, literature, philosophy, and theology based on core western values and a celebration of the American ideal of personal liberty and the rule of law under a cherished Constitution. I loved the authors, some of whom were tough former Communists, who knew how to deal with psychological warfare operations and could identify and counteract them without breaking a sweat. To me, Willmore Kendall, William A. Rusher, Russell Kirk, Frank S. Meyer, Harry Jaffa, Whitaker Chambers, L. Brent Bozell, Sr. - these were giants who showed us the way.



I remember in 1964 when, after only nine years in publication, NR finally got a chance to support a conservative in a run for president. The recent loss of a murdered president and the skills of guile developed by his successor did not permit a climate in which Barry Goldwater could win. But while he was on the firing line, editors and writers boosted the ideas of Barry we all shared. They did not carp at him from the sidelines for every single misstep or foolish remark of an aide. His running mate Bill Miller of New York was certainly not my cup of tea by a long shot, but he was doing his hard work on behalf of Barry and those of us who had doubts about him during the campaign presented a united front, without sacrificing our own integrity or honest opinions, or engaging in mindless cheerleading. As best we could, we tried to help our team advance the ball down the field toward a goal of greater human freedom and we did not publicly before the fact engage in pointless recriminations that might demoralize our own troops needlessly.

Building on the base formed by a loss and not a win, The Spirit of National Review continued to sustain us another 12 years when the philosophical children and spiritual heirs of Barry were ready to launch another effort in 1976 to compete against an incumbent president, who had chosen Gov. Rockefeller as his VP so he could shake loose Ronald Reagan. Our candidate, Gov. Reagan, made many eccentric political mistakes from our point of view such as the odd selection of a liberal GOP senator from Pennsylvania named Richard Schweiker to shake loose a few more delegates from that state when Reagan was only 60 delegates short of the goal. But we held our fire and did not carp at Ronnie from the peanut gallery when his back was up against it. We knew where he wanted to take us and even though we in our youth considered him to be very old at 66 to run, we still offered a united front to people who opposed most of what we stood for.

In 1980 when Ronnie was even older and tried again, we had no part in any effort to dishearten the conservative base when Ronnie trailed Carter in polls only nine days before the election. We did not throw bricks at his back but we encouraged him and his team to stay true to principle and fight the good fight. He did, we won, and we reaped many benefits for the cause of liberty from which Americans can still draw comfort today.

Even at times when a candidate who was conservative, but not of our movement, we always tried to offer encouraging words for George H.W. Bush or the sometimes philosophically nescient Bob Dole who was also advanced in age when he ran. But we knew in relative terms to his opponent he stood for more liberty and thus his cause was temporarily at one with our cause. He also made some bad

decisions on a tactical level but we did not publicly go after his scalp while he was leading our battle. We thought that was common sense.

But for some reason the Sprit of NR got lost along the way in recent years. It was not because there was a generational change. Youth and energy and idealism are all good things and that combination can be great. But immaturity without idealism and worse, snobbishness or looking down one's nose at Americans who have a different geographic and cultural background or accent, or who have gone to less prestigious colleges, but who still love the Lord with all their hearts and try to serve His purposes, that is not the Sprit of NR that I knew and was so proud of for almost half a century.

So to my older long-time friends of 40 years and more who know what I am talking about, I mourn the passing of that once great NR Spirit of generosity which was inspired by the late WFB but that had legions of other boosters as well. Maybe out there right now there is some young man or woman or group who has recently graduated from an Ivy League school--or even a junior college in Kansas--who will once again take up that Sprit of NR but at some publication or TV network or blog as yet unknown. Working for freedom can generate a lot of enthusiasm when young people are first inspired by American dreams. If able, I look forward to sending a check to some such young and humble and generous in spirit group who might labor in a new vineyard where the Spirit of NR as I recall it can rise again.

Mark Rhoads is a former state legislator from Illinois. (A former Illinois pol still in recovery)

**E-mail the
Editor**

W

by Spencer Warren

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A shallow and simple, if earnest, man, in over his head, resulting in tragic consequences. That is basically the theme of Oliver Stone's *W*, his potted film biography of George W. Bush.

The film was expected to be a hatchet job, but it is better than that. Stone and his screenwriter, Stanley Weiser, take us through the first part of *W*'s (James Brolin) presidency --- up to the invasion of Iraq in March 2003 -- with frequent flashbacks portraying "highlights" of *W*'s earlier years. These begin with his fraternity hazing at Yale and proceed through his heavy drinking and carousing, his aimless wandering from one job to another (oilfield worker, helping in his father's 1988 presidential campaign), and the conflict with his father inspired by his boozing, direction-less life. ("You're a Bush, not a Kennedy," the father scolds him.) Finally, he meets the proper Laura Welch (Elizabeth Banks) and then goes through his born-again experience, as a result of which he forswears drinking and turns his energy to public service -- as governor of Texas, then president.



The presidential years focus not on 9/11 but the decision to invade Iraq and depose Saddam Hussein. We see this hatched in the White House situation room, with a supporting cast including Vice President Cheney (Richard Dreyfuss), Secretary of State Powell (Jeffrey Wright), National Security advisor Condoleeza Rice (Thandie Newton), CIA Director "slam dunk" George Tenet (Bruce McGill), Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld (Scott Glenn) and Deputy Secretary of Defense and neoconservative supremo Paul Wolfowitz (Dennis Boutsikaris). Cheney not surprisingly plays the eminence grise through the film, manipulating the out-of-his league *W* and bending him to Cheney's will. Later, Cheney reveals his ultimate reason for war, one sure to please every conspiracy nut (such as Stone): oil. Stone's villains are Cheney and Rice, who is depicted as the ultimate yes-woman and doormat. Powell, of course, is the hero.

These scenes are reasonably convincing, even though the process inevitably is boiled down for dramatic purposes. The acting is quite good, especially Richard Dreyfuss as Cheney, shedding his adolescent air and convincing as the heavyweight of the group (aided by superb make-up). Stone suggests *W* is motivated in part by a desire to prove himself the equal or better of his doubting father (James Cromwell, who plays the elder Bush with dignity and substance, perhaps more than he deserves) by finishing the job in Iraq that his father shied away from in the 1991 Gulf War. *W* also is influenced by what the film presents as Cheney's falsifications of intelligence, with the acquiescence of Tenet. Stone further portrays *W* as needing to find personal meaning and vindication in the applause of the crowd -- he suggests this with a rather clumsy image of *W* pretending he is making a spectacular catch in an empty baseball stadium. (*W* was an owner of the Texas Rangers team, although this is not featured in the film.)

This brings us to the heart of the film: *W* himself. Who and what is George W. Bush? Is he an unintelligent preppy with a Napoleon complex whose position in life is due entirely to the accident of birth, as many critics fanatically believe? Is he an "inarticulate semiboob" as others insist? Or is he a good, decent Christian being unfairly maligned by his legion of enemies in the press and the Democratic Party, whose reputation will recover and be viewed decades from now, through the lens of history, as far-sighted, courageous and statesmanlike -- just as President Truman's reputation has risen sharply?

A motion picture is not the medium for such complexities. As portrayed in the film, *W* is unintelligent and something of a boob who is utterly unqualified to make judgments about initiating a war and

sending men to their deaths in combat. Yet he also is portrayed as well-meaning and, after his born-again experience, decent. (W's religious experience, taking place under a tree on his ranch, is an unimaginative, weakly directed scene by the non-believer Stone). Indeed, at the end of the film he is seen in a somewhat sympathetic light, the victim of larger forces and of the scheming Cheney and inept Rice.

Before we can know the real George W. Bush, there will have to be more memoirs, including his own (if, unlike his father, he ever writes them), as well as de-classification of national security documents decades from now. But seen from this vantage point, in the wake of an electoral debacle for which W bears most of the responsibility, one can take note of certain facts. One is the widely reported story that in the run-up to his 2000 election campaign, W is reported to have told Texas evangelist James Robinson: "I feel like God wants me to run for President. I can't explain why, but I sense my country is going to need me." (Is this the talk of an intelligent, humble Christian?) A second is W's complimentary comment, the first time they met in June 2001, about Russian autocrat Vladimir Putin, the former communist KGB functionary: "I looked the man in the eye. I was able to get a sense of his soul." A third is W's long sponsorship of the incompetent Alberto Gonzalez, who was forced out as Attorney General when Republicans in Congress as well as Democrats recognized he was scarcely up to the job, and apparently untruthful as well. A fourth is W's attempt to ram through his counsel and crony Harriet Miers as a Supreme Court justice, an extremely consequential position for which she was totally unqualified, not to mention she was not the conservative he promised voters he would appoint. A fifth is his stunt, landing on an aircraft carrier in a fighter jet, as if he had been a combatant, to celebrate victory in Iraq; instead, due to his lack of knowledge and the Defense Department's incompetence, the easy invasion turned out to be the prelude to a horrible guerrilla war that undermined support for his policy.

The question arises: Can one take such a person seriously, particularly as President of the United States? In this connection, W's appalling lack of leadership skills and his exceedingly banal limitations with the English language – this from a graduate of Yale and Harvard – are revealing. Indeed, they call to mind a perceptive observation about W and his father by Lawrence Auster of the View from the Right website: both are "crude and unconvincing." Remember Bush senior's "kinder and gentler" rebuke to President Reagan in 1988, and his remark about his inferiority to President Reagan when he spoke about "the vision thing"? Again, one has to wonder how such well-born Ivy Leaguers could manage to be so pedestrian with words; this certainly seems to reflect their lack of conviction and philosophic depth.

This lack is clear from the failed presidencies of both men. History will record that it is the Bush family – seekers after power, like a kid running for high school president, just because they wanted to be somebody, rather than actually achieve something – who destroyed, with the invaluable assistance of the big spending and unprecedented earmarking by the Republican Congress of 2001-06, the handsome legacy bequeathed by Ronald Reagan. The years 2001 to 2006 were the first time since the 1920s that Republicans enjoyed practical working control of Congress with their own man in the Presidency – and they blew it, opening the door to the election of the first left-wing radical in American history as president, and discrediting the good name of conservative, for how long we do not know.

With W, we appear to have a shallow man, unmoored from any solid political grounding, who turned out to be, unthinkingly (no doubt), not a conservative, but a neoconservative, i.e. conservative liberal. He blackened the conservative brand that had been so popular thanks to Ronald Reagan's historic achievements. Indeed, he moved his party well to the left. The evidence lies in his liberal policies: his record domestic spending increases; his expansion of federal power in education and pricing of prescription drugs (the first new entitlement since the Great Society); his refusal until later in his term to enforce border security while sending our men to die in Iraq and Afghanistan, also resulting in hundreds if not thousands of American civilians being murdered by illegal aliens and recent legal immigrants, or killed by them in drunk driving accidents – this too is the responsibility of Bush and his allies in Congress like Senators McCain and Kennedy. There is also Bush's support, against the majority of his party and a majority of public opinion, of amnesty and virtually unlimited Hispanic and third world immigration that will over time destroy our country's historic national

identity, not to mention making liberalism a permanent majority – Bush and McCain thus tied the Republicans' hands, preventing them making this a major winning issue in the 2008 campaign.

We also have Bush's adoption of liberal Woodrow Wilson's utopian policy of promoting democracy worldwide, even with U.S. military intervention, regardless of America's interests and capacity, not to mention the suitability of other countries for democracy; his failure to use his office to mobilize public opinion on revolutionary social/cultural issues such as the suppression of freedom of speech at universities and the attack on marriage, as well as the promotion of these and other radical changes by liberal judges' usurpation of democratic legislative authority; his failure also to use his office to focus public attention on the growing left-wing and radical homosexual-rights assaults on Christian institutions; his endorsement of multiculturalism (including his ban on profiling of Muslims in airline travel, even though, in hindsight, this would have prevented 9/11, not to mention sparing American travelers huge burdens); his support of liberal affirmative action in the Grutter University of Michigan admissions case; and his signing of the McCain-Feingold campaign spending law with its restrictions on freedom of speech.

W's great achievement is that the country has not experienced another terrorist attack since 9/11. He appointed John Roberts and, under duress, Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court. And W can be proud of his courage in backing General Petraeus and ordering a major force increase in Iraq – the surge -- in the face of a rising chorus of surrender and the contrary recommendations of the fatuous Baker-Hamilton report. To date, W's order has turned the war around from the failure of the preceding four years. This failure, alas, also is W's responsibility, due to his evident lack of grip over strategic decision-making as commander-in-chief. But the surge equals the aftermath of 9/11 as his finest hour.

In conclusion, liberals and radicals like Stone owe gratitude to W because he helped make their Obama possible and buried the Reagan revolution. It is the real conservatives who have the biggest gripe with W and his neocon policies; it is they, for the sake of their future and our country's future, who have to examine and come to terms with the real W and what he has wrought.

Spencer Warren is ConservativeBattleline On Line's media critic.

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Editor**

Remembering Football's "Express"

by Gordon Jackson

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

The movie "The Express" tells the story of Ernie Davis, who made both illustrious and tragic history within a span of a very few years. He was the first Black to win college football's coveted Heisman Trophy. A glorious and volatile slice of his career and life occurred before, during and after the 1960 Cotton Bowl Classic, scenes from which are highlighted in the movie.

The way the game was covered by the local media at the time gives interesting and sometimes conflicting perspectives. A mid-game fight based on a racial slur clouded Davis' heroics. And so did a controversy surrounding the post-game awards banquet, where Davis was to pick up his Most Valuable Player trophy.

The film stars emerging actor Rob Brown as Davis and veteran actor Dennis Quaid as Syracuse head football coach Ben Schwartzwalder. Darrin Dewitt Henson, best known as Lem in the "Soul Food" television series, plays the legendary Jim Brown and Charles Dutton plays "Pops" Davis, Ernie's grandfather. The movie chronicles most of Davis's life, from his upbringing in west Pennsylvania to his Heisman Trophy award. That includes the January 1, 1960 Cotton Bowl game between Davis's undefeated Syracuse Orangemen and the Southwest Conference champion, the University of Texas Longhorns.



Dallas Morning News sportswriter Bill Rives wrote at the time: "The 1960 Cotton Bowl game was one of the most exciting and controversial of the long list of those classic contests. We sincerely hope that the ruffled feelings which exploded between the teams will not leave any scars."

Close to 75,000 fans saw Davis score 16 of Syracuse's 23 points. On the second play from scrimmage, he took a short pass and scampered 87 yards for a touchdown. He went on to score another touchdown and score two-point conversions for both scores. Aside from his 87-yard scoring pass play, Davis rushed for 57 yards on 8 carries. Also playing defense, he intercepted a pass and made four tackles. He was easily named the game's Most Valuable Player.

Syracuse's 23-14 victory over the Longhorns gave the team their first and still only national college football championship. Many of those interviewed back then called the game one of the best Cotton Bowl games to that date. "I think it's the greatest show we've ever had," said then Cotton Bowl board chair Robert B. Cullum told the *Dallas Times Herald*. "It had more spirit, not only among the players, but among the fans than any previous game."

Most however, chose to downplay, or even ignore, Davis's individual performance.

"I've seen better individual performances than those of Ernie Davis and the others, but Syracuse had as much balance as anyone we've had here," said Ed Fite, the United Press International sports editor.

Varying perspectives were given on the fight that broke out between players just before halftime. The *Dallas Times Herald's* Jan. 2, 1960 article reads: "And suddenly Syracuse's John Brown, a 220-pound Negro tackle, took quick offense at a remark by Texas' towering Larry Stephens. So Brown took a swing in Stephens' general direction. " Texas' Babe Dreymla, looking like Tom Thumb Among the Amazons, jumped in the big middle, and both benches quickly emptied."

The *San Antonio Express-News* reported in an recent article: "According to author Lou Maysel, in his definitive UT football history "Here Come the Texas Longhorns," UT lineman Larry Stephens – "possibly the most even-tempered player on the Texas team" – then said: "Keep your Black a**

(Maysel, in 1970, used 'bleep') out of it. Brown swung at Stephens. Other players threw punches. Both benches at least partially emptied. After the game, Al Baker, a Black fullback for Syracuse, said: "Oh, they were bad. One of them spit in my face as I carried the ball through the line." The *Times Herald*, under the headline, "Syracuse Anger Lingers," had Brown quoted as stating: "No kidding. You come down here hearing about the fine sportsmanship and then something like this happens. But I guess we were all excited. I'm sure Darryl Stephens didn't mean what he said to me."

There are conflicting accounts as to what exactly happened in regards to the post-game awards banquet. Several reports stated that Davis was told by Cotton Bowl officials that he would have to leave the banquet as soon as he got his MVP trophy, causing the entire predominantly white Syracuse team to boycott the dinner. However, Longhorn player Jack Collins, one of the defensive players who covered Davis on his 87-yard touchdown play, told the *Dallas Morning News* three years later: "And I remember he made a real impression with everyone that night at the banquet. When he got his trophy for being the outstanding player, he was very humble about it and said how sorry he was there had been trouble."

Davis maintained his stellar form through his senior year in 1961, when he averaged 7.8 yards per carry, rushed for 877 yards, which included rushing for 100 yards in six of nine games. He was awarded the prestigious Heisman Trophy, the first African American to win the award.

High hopes to see Davis excel in the National Football league scaled even higher after he was picked No. 1 by the Washington Redskins in the 1962 Draft, but then was immediately traded to the Cleveland Browns. Football fans were eager to see Davis run in the same backfield alongside the great Jim Brown, who preceded Davis at Syracuse. Davis had also proudly worn Brown's college jersey number, 44.

Davis would never play another down. In the summer of 1962, he was diagnosed with acute monocytic leukemia, then an incurable disease. His health deteriorated in spite of several medical treatments. Davis died May 18, 1963, at the age of 23.

While Davis's Cotton Bowl performance was downplayed by the media during game-time coverage, the *Morning News* underscored it in an article printed on May 19, 1963, one day after Davis' death: "Ernie Davis left a fine, indelible memory on the Cotton Bowl and Dallas – one that will long outlive bitter memories of a bitter football game."

However the movie or local press depicts such highlighted accounts of Davis today, he showed on that day of the Cotton Bowl, and throughout his brief life, the best way to overcome racial adversity is through unadulterated excellence mixed with dignity and class.

The day he almost single-handedly beat the Longhorns in the 1960 Cotton Bowl, overcoming blatant racial obstacles, should no longer be downplayed or ever forgotten.

Gordon Jackson is managing editor of The Dallas Examiner and a longtime sports journalist .

**E-mail the
Editor**

Health Quality At One-Tenth Cost

by John Goodman

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

Sundays at the Goodman household tend to include the New York Times crossword puzzle, the Dallas Cowboys football game....and (not to be missed)....an e-mail press release from Health Affairs, describing their latest, most interesting and most newsworthy offerings.

Yet by far the most interesting, informative and [valuable article](#) [gated, but with abstract] I've ever read in Health Affairs didn't make it into any press release. Nor did it get covered in any of the mainstream health policy media outlets. It was an article about a country with institutions that produce health care quality as good or better than what we have, at a fraction of the cost! It describes how and why this happens and what institutions keep similar innovations from occurring in the United States.



John Goodman

So why the news blackout? Hard to say. As in art, food and sex, perhaps in health policy there's no way to explain the diversity of human interests.

The country is India, where fewer than one in seven people purchase health insurance. Yet two-thirds of Indian households rely on private medical care --- a preference that cuts across classes and even extends to rural and paramedic care. Not to put too fine a point on it, but India appears to have the largest free market for medical care found anywhere in the world.

Because Indian patients are paying for health care out-of-pocket, providers necessarily compete on price and quality. Because even middle-class incomes are quite low, Indian hospitals have to keep costs down to make care affordable. Because these hospitals also compete in an international marketplace, the quality must be very high. The result: open heart surgery that would cost \$100,000 in the U.S. is offered for \$6,000 at Indian hospitals that rival their U.S. counterparts on quality measures.

How do they do it? By using the same continuous quality improvement techniques capitalist entrepreneurs employ in other businesses around the world:

- Keeping services patient-centered by importing routines from the hotel industry.
- Redefining job descriptions to delegate tasks to nurses and physicians' assistants where M.D.-level skills are not required.
- Maximizing the use of capital equipment --- through continuous use, say, of scanning devices and efficient operating room turnover.
- Managing the supply chain by finding the lowest-cost items (subject to quality control) in a world market.
- Vertically integrating where appropriate, including one hospital group that manufactures its own stents and diagnostic catheters.
- Investing in information technology and telemedicine.
- Using real-time monitoring of provider behavior to reduce unexplained variations in clinical practice.

Above all, these institutions have discovered that cost reduction and quality improvement often go hand in hand. Minimizing adverse events achieves both objectives. As one executive explained, "we can't afford to have complications."

So, what's keeping the United States from copying the Indian experience? Government. Insurance companies. Pete Stark. Trial lawyers. All the usual suspects.

John Goodman is President of the National Center for Policy Analysis

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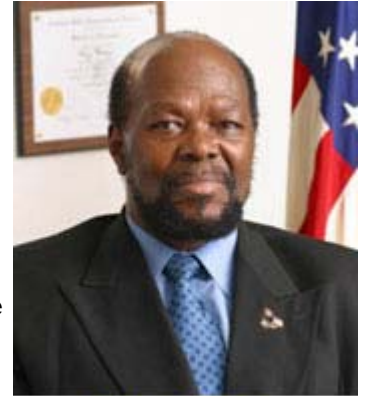
Nuclear Works

by Roy Innis

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

Abundant, reliable, affordable energy makes our jobs, health, living standards and civil rights possible.

Remember that when you read about people losing their jobs or having to choose between heating, eating, paying the rent or mortgage, giving to charity, or covering healthcare, college, car or retirement costs. Remember it when Congress makes more hydrocarbon energy off limits – or puts more obstacles in the path of nuclear power that generates a fifth of America's electricity.



Roy Innis

I recently visited nuclear power plants and a fuel reprocessing plant in France, which gets almost 80% of its electricity from uranium. And I've read some shockingly ill-informed claims about nuclear power and its supposed alternatives. Here are some essential facts.

Reliability. Nuclear plants generate electricity over 90% of every year, shutting down only occasionally for maintenance, repairs and changing fuel rods. Wind turbines can be relied on just 30% of the time, on average – and just 10% of the time during hot summer days, when air conditioners are on high, but there's barely a breeze.

Operational safety. Three Mile Island was the "worst accident in US history." But it injured no one and exposed neighboring residents to the radioactive equivalent of getting a CT scan or living in Denver for a year. It led to major improvements in nuclear plant management, operation and training.

The Chernobyl disaster was due to its shoddy design, construction, maintenance and management. According to the World Health Organization, "fewer than 50" people died as a direct result of this massive meltdown and fire, and nearly all were employees and rescue workers.

Storage of used nuclear fuel. The Energy Department spent 25 years and \$10 billion studying the Yucca Mountain site in Nevada, before concluding that it will meet all safety standards. In fact, the largest expected annual radiation dose for someone living near this geologically stable site would be less than 1 millirem – compared to 1,000 millirem from an abdominal CT scan.

America's 104 nuclear plants generate enough electricity for nearly 75,000,000 homes – and produce about 2,000 tons of "spent" uranium fuel annually. So Yucca will be able to hold all the used fuel from the past 50 years, plus another 35 years of used fuel, without expanding on the original design.

Spent fuel and other wastes (high-level defense wastes, plus low-level wastes like protective clothing) are solid materials. There is no liquid that can leak into rocks or groundwater. Liquid wastes, like water used in reactors, are treated and reused.

Transportation safety. Shipping containers are constructed from layers of steel and lead, nearly a foot thick, and carried on trucks or rail cars. (The 25 to 125-ton containers are too heavy to go in airplanes.) They've been slammed into concrete walls at 85 mph, dropped 30 feet, burned 30 minutes in 1475-degree fires, and submerged in water for hours. They haven't broken or leaked.

Over 3,000 shipments of spent fuel have traversed 1.7 million miles, with no injuries, deaths or environmental damage. Only one significant accident occurred. A semi-truck overturned while

avoiding a head-on collision, and the trailer and attached container crashed into a ditch. No harmful releases of radioactivity ever occurred.

That hasn't stopped imaginative writers from saying "catastrophic" accidents could put "millions" of Americans at risk of exposure to "deadly radiation" or even death, especially if an airplane crashed a cargo of nuclear wastes into a city. They've been watching too many Hollywood movies, where every car accident becomes a raging inferno.

Theft and terrorism. The notion that spent (or even fresh) power plant fuel could be stolen and turned into a powerful bomb is likewise more Hollywood than reality.

Those pesky little atomic numbers and enrichment levels are confusing, but important. Weapons grade materials are plutonium, uranium 233 and highly enriched (better than 20%) U235. Power plant fuel is slightly enriched (under 4%) U235. Spent fuel is U238, which cannot cause a chain reaction.

Turning spent fuel into a bomb would require sophisticated reprocessing facilities, which terrorists are unlikely to have. Even a "dirty bomb" (radioactive materials around a non-nuclear explosive) would cause more fear than actual damage. And the US nuclear industry's commitment to safety applies to plant design and management, shipping and storing wastes, and guarding against theft and terrorism.

The bottom line? We need the electricity that nuclear power provides, and we can get it safely. Just try to imagine life without all the things that require electricity. Remember the pain, inconvenience and financial losses you or people you know suffered when storms or blackouts knocked out the electrical power.

Roy Innis is chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality, co-chair of the Campaign to Stop the War on the Poor, and author of Energy Keepers - Energy Killers: The new civil rights battle.

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Editor**

Postal Future?

by Don Soifer

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Much has been written about the rise of electronic messaging, and its inherent threat to render letters and postcards as obsolete in the United States and Europe as oil lamps and carbon copies. But, with apologies to Mark Twain, truly one of America's greatest letter writers, for the present at least, the news of the written letter's demise has been greatly exaggerated.

American households sent and received some 15 billion pieces of written correspondence in 2006. According to a 2008 report published by Pitney Bowes, even amidst sharp surges in email usage, per capita postal mail overall has held steady over the past few years in both the United States and in Europe.



But as any mailbox-owning consumer knows, the composition of the mail has changed considerably in recent decades. U.S. households receive seven times as much mail as they send, while some 85 percent of what they receive is sent by businesses. As one of the Postal Service's senior decisionmakers observed in Congressional testimony last year, "First-Class Mail, particularly single piece First-Class Mail, is no longer growing steadily. Standard Mail, which contributes significantly less than First-Class Mail to the Postal Service's institutional costs, now comprises the majority of our volume."

This is largely the result of a strategy by Postal Service executives to "grow the mail" through the use of volume discounts to corporate mailers including advertisers, financial institutions and nonprofit fundraisers. According to USPS management, the worksharing system holds benefits for not only the Service, but for mailers and the mailing industry, and the nation's consumers. So while European nations gradually pursue liberalization of the postal sector, worksharing and new technology have become the major reform strategy of postal decisionmakers in the United States.

The advent of Intelligent Mail, for instance, is often described as perhaps the foremost innovation embracing both strategies. Introduced in 2006, the use of intelligent barcodes has advanced to where all mailers seeking automation discounts will be required to use them beginning in January 2009.

Meanwhile, the shifting composition of the mail, among other factors, dictates an evolving role for the Postal Service. As the agency's officials have noted in public statements, two economic sectors which have endured the sharpest downturns in the United States over the past year, the housing and financial sectors, are, unfortunately, prime drivers of postal mail volume.

Throughout the changing postal landscape, Americans, when asked, have continued to express their preference for preserving the Postal Service, with its universal service obligation, in largely its present form. While political realities have made the closing or consolidation of local post offices a near impossibility, these preferences extend to daily mail delivery as well. A recent survey by the Pew Research Center indicates that 75 percent of American adults send or receive email, at least occasionally. But only 61 percent of households with annual incomes under \$30,000 do, only 56 percent of African-Americans, and only 37 percent of adults over 65. Such consumers especially depend on the Postal Service, and on the timely and reliable delivery of its market-dominant products.

So, given this changing landscape, how best can the agency adapt to meet the needs of its customers and consumers in the future? And what role will technology play in supporting that role?

The Postal Service continues to invest in technology to expand automated mail processing to improve efficiency and service. The USPS' initial letter automation efforts date back to roughly three decades ago, with efforts to sort mail to major destinations and post offices. In 1993, the Postal Service began using high speed automated equipment to sort letters in the precise order they are delivered. Currently, the Service utilizes over 7,000 machines sequencing nearly 120 billion letter pieces, annually generating savings of \$5 billion. Enhancements to this technology continue with the recent addition of an automated forwarding system upgrade which can intercept and forward mail enroute for those pieces where the recipient has moved.

Its flat mail automation system began taking shape at the turn of the new millennium with the deployment of Advanced Flat Sorting Machines. Today, 534 of these machines are automatically sorting mail down to the carrier level throughout the country.

Perhaps even more impressive are recent efforts to use automation to also place flat-shaped pieces into the precise order that they are delivered. The first of 100 new Flats Sequencing Systems has just been deployed which can place mail in delivery sequence at a rate of 16,500 pieces per hour or about 6 pieces per second.

But to what extent will the Postal Service be permitted to make the necessary structural changes to achieve meaningful savings from avoiding labor costs -- in effect making the technology investments sound ones for its consumers? The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act signed by President Bush in 2006, the first major Congressional action to reform the Postal Service in three decades, has dictated some fundamental changes in strategy. Among its major provisions include a formal distinction between market-dominant and competitive product offerings, and a hard rate cap for market-dominant products pegged to the rate of inflation.

Efforts to realize lower operating costs as the result of increased automation are complicated by additional factors. One is that 90 percent of the Service's career employees are paid according to contracts that are negotiated through collective bargaining agreements between its management and four major unions. These agreements often make it prohibitively difficult for Postal management to realign or reduce its workforce beyond attrition or early retirement inducements. The system also seldom permits regional pay differences that compensate for varied costs of living. Further, postal management is required by federal law to consult with its unions whenever it is considering outsourcing or subcontracting new functions.

One union leader described the current state of affairs recently by proclaiming that we have entered "a new world where management continually seeks to reduce costs through the use of non-union, non-career, cheap labor." But, in reality, realizing labor savings to offset investments in automating technology has become increasingly problematic for Postal Service executives. The leaders of the major postal labor unions have vowed to continue seeking Congressional intervention to proposed outsourcing plans. Complicating matters further, Members of Congress, representing both political parties, have intervened regularly when the Postal Service has attempted to consolidate or close facilities.

One option open to policymakers to break this impasse could be the adoption of a panel process such the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC). Over 4 rounds, the BRAC process resulted in nearly 100 base closings and over 50 major realignments, resulting in tens of billions of dollars in savings to taxpayers. This option was recommended by the 2003 Presidential Commission on the Postal Service, but was dropped from the 2006 legislation by lawmakers during negotiations.

Don Soifer is Executive Director of the [U.S. Consumer Postal Council](#).

Atheistic Superstition

by David Gordon

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

Richard Dawkins, the Oxford biologist and prominent atheist, argues in *The God Delusion* that belief in God is outdated. Before 1859, it was reasonable to think that life on earth had been designed. As Archdeacon William Paley pointed out, the marvelous adaptations that many animals display, such as the way the human eye is intricately constructed to make vision possible, strongly suggest that a creative intelligence has been at work. But, Dawkins maintains, Charles Darwin changed all that. He showed that adaptations could be explained by natural selection. No appeal to an intelligent designer is required. Darwin thus made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.



Professor Edward Feser

Professor Edward Feser argues in his brilliant new book *The Last Superstition: A Refutation of the New Atheism* (St. Augustine's Press, 2008) that Dawkins has it all wrong. God is not a hypothesis, to be replaced if a more satisfactory theory comes up. Quite the contrary, Feser suggests, the existence of God can be proved by rationally compelling arguments. He thinks that not only is Dawkins wrong about this but so are his fellow atheists Christopher Hitchens and Sam Harris, all three of whom are frequently subject to humorous and telling remarks.

Feser's is a bold claim indeed, one very much out of philosophical fashion. In mainstream Anglo-American philosophy, the dominant position is that Hume and Kant long ago showed that the theistic proofs do not work. To overturn this verdict is a formidable task, and to accomplish it Feser needs to present a great deal of background material. The principal reason, he holds, that modern philosophers reject the theistic proofs is that, since the Enlightenment, they have accepted a truncated notion of causation. Today, philosophers think of a cause as one event, preceding another in time that brings it about. As an example, if I light a match, these philosophers would take this to mean that the event of striking the match is followed by the event of the fire's appearance.

This departs from Aristotle's delineation of four causes, efficient, final, formal, and material. Aristotle's efficient cause corresponds most closely to the modern view, but even here the resemblance is not very strong. Aristotle thought efficient causation involved a substance rather than an event: I, not the event of striking the match, cause the fire.

To grasp Aristotle's doctrine of causation, developed and extended by Thomas Aquinas and other scholastics, Feser needs to go back to Plato to explain the famous problem of universals. He argues against the view that universals are merely words or concepts in our minds. Instead, he favors the moderate realism of Aristotle and Aquinas. All this may sound abstract, but it is essential to understanding the way in which Feser thinks that God's existence can be proved. Readers who are willing to cope with this rather difficult material will gain something else, besides being in a position to understand the theistic proofs. They will learn a great deal about the history of philosophy. I have never seen the topics that Feser discusses presented so clearly. It is an effort well worth the effort.

With this background in place, we can understand why Dawkins's arguments against God do not work. Dawkins thinks that since Darwin, we do not need God to explain adaptations. But his target is Paley's argument, and Paley accepted the modern account of causation that leaves out the agent or substance involved in causation that Feser rejects. Paley, just as much as Dawkins, thought of causation as changes in matter bringing about other such changes. The issue between Paley and Dawkins is whether certain of these changes can be explained by natural science. Feser takes no

stand on this: he does not claim, like supporters of Intelligent Design, that natural selection cannot fully account for biological change. (He does, though, accept the traditional view that the human soul cannot be explained through naturalistic evolution.) Feser says, on the contrary, that Aquinas's "design" argument, the fifth way of the *Summa Theologica*, involves formal and final causation.

Feser has illuminating things to say about the other theistic proofs as well. The famous argument to a First Cause does not, he says, rest on the claim that one cannot have a chain of causation that extends infinitely backward into the past. Instead, cause and effect are simultaneous. Once more, a correct understanding of causation is crucial.

The book is by no means confined to discussing the theistic proofs and the background needed to understand them. Feser is a specialist in the philosophy of mind, and he assails fashionable materialist dogmas in this area. Paul and Patricia Churchland, both influential philosophers of mind, defend the odd view that their subject does not exist. They are "eliminativists", who think that the existence of beliefs belongs to outdated "folk psychology". Feser expertly demolishes them and in the process has great fun at their expense.

The Thomistic perspective that Feser defends extends to ethics and political philosophy, and Feser presents the essentials of Thomistic natural law in brief compass. Once more, Aristotle's four causes are crucial. Human beings have a natural end: to understand what this means, one needs to bring in formal and final causes. Given this natural end, we establish a basis for human rights. Feser's view of natural law is very much in line with traditional Thomism, and he rejects the influential "new natural law" theory of Germain Grisez and John Finnis.

In defending traditional natural law, he does not hesitate to take a stand on controversial issues. He holds, for example, that the debate over "gay marriage" is misconceived. The issue is not one of conflict between those who think homosexuality wrong, and thus oppose gay marriage, and those inclined to stress liberty or tolerance. Rather, "gay marriage" cannot exist, any more than there can be a round square. Marriage, by its very nature, is a union between a man and a woman. Agree with him or not, anyone who reads *The Last Superstition* will learn a great deal about philosophy.

David Gordon, Ludwig von Mises Institute

**E-mail the
Editor**

California Votes Marriage

by Maggie Gallagher

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

As I traveled across California and the country making the case for Proposition 8, I was often asked, "Why do you care about restoring marriage?"

It's a good question, and not just for me. Why did so many Californians rush to street corners to hold up "Yes on 8" signs, enduring petty vandalism, and even pettier insults, to make the case for voting yes on Proposition 8?

It's simple: Government did not create marriage. Marriage is older than the U.S. Constitution, older even than the Bible or the Koran. Marriage's deepest roots are in human nature and human experience. Marriage, as a judge on the Connecticut Supreme Court wrote in his compelling dissent to that court's recent ruling allowing gays to wed, is rooted "in biology, not bigotry."

Marriage is a virtually universal human social institution with a certain recognizable shape: It is a public union, not just a private union; it's a sexual union and not some other kind of union; it's a union in which the rights and responsibilities of men and women toward each other -- and toward the children of their union -- are publicly defined and supported, not merely left up to individuals to figure out privately.

Why do so many diverse societies arrive at this core marriage idea? There is something special about unions of husband and wife.

The answer is not hard to see. When a baby is born, a mother is bound to be somewhere close by. But if we want fathers to be there for children, and the mothers of their children, biology alone will not take us very far. We need a cultural mechanism to connect fathers to the mother-child bond. We also need an institution that communicates to the next generation -- in the throes of its own erotic and romantic dramas -- how seriously society takes the need to discipline those dramas so that children do not get hurt.

The word for the way society makes this connection, not only in California but in virtually every known human society, is "marriage." Marriage is a union of husband and wife because these kinds of unions are distinctive and necessary to the whole society.

If Californians had voted no on Proposition 8, the great historical cross-cultural meaning of marriage would have been replaced by a new government dogma on which gay marriage is based: There is no difference between same-sex unions and opposite-sex unions; anyone who thinks otherwise is just a bigot.

Our children would have imbibed this new dogma in hundreds of ways, and the old marriage idea -- marriage matters because children need a mother and a father, long for a mother and a father, deserve a mother and a father -- would have been publicly discredited as discriminatory. Fortunately, a majority of California voters voted to pass Proposition 8 and to define marriage as between one man and one woman.

Victory for Proposition 8 did not deprive same-sex couples of a single practical right or benefit under California state laws. Civil unions will continue to provide legal protections for same-sex families. But



the people of California did reclaim from four state Supreme Court justices the right to define marriage as a union of husband and wife, for generations to come.

Maggie Gallagher is president of the National Organization for Marriage, which is a major contributor to the "Yes on 8" campaign.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Alaska's Glaciers Grow

by Dennis Avery

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

Alaska's glaciers grew this year, after shrinking for most of the last 200 years. The reason? Global temperatures dropped over the past 18 months. The global mean annual temperature has been declining recently because the solar wind thrown out by the sun has retreated to its smallest extent in at least 50 years. This temperature downturn was not predicted by the global computer models, but had been predicted by the sunspot index since 2000.

The solar wind normally protects the earth from 90 percent of the high-energy cosmic rays that flash constantly through the universe. Henrik Svensmark at the Danish Space Research Institute has demonstrated that when more cosmic rays hit the earth, they create more of the low, wet clouds that deflect heat back into outer space. Thus the earth's recent cooling.

Unusually large amounts of Alaskan snow last winter were followed by unusually chilly temperatures there this summer. "In general, the weather this summer was the worst I have seen in at least 20 years," says Bruce Molnia of the U.S. Geological Survey, and author of *The Glaciers of Alaska*. "It's been a long time on most glaciers where they've actually had positive mass balance (added thickness)."

Overall, Molnia figures Alaska had lost 10–12,000 square kilometers of ice since 1800, the depths of the Little Ice Age. That's enough ice to cover the state of Connecticut. Climate alarmists claim all the glaciers might disappear soon, but they haven't looked at the long-term evidence of the 1,500-year Dansgaard-Oeschger climate cycles. During the Little Ice Age—1400 to 1850—Muir Glacier filled the whole of Glacier Bay. Since then, the glacier has retreated 57 miles. But the Little Ice Age was preceded by the Medieval Warming, the cold Dark Ages, a Roman Warming, and a whole series of moderate warmings and coolings that extend back at least 1 million years based on the evidence of the microfossils in the world's seabed sediments.

The real question is whether today's warming is different than the previous Dansgaard-Oeschger warming cycles. I think that the difference, if any, is slight. Most of our Modern Warming occurred before 1940 and virtually all of our human-emitted CO² came after that date. The temperatures in 1998—the recent peak—were only 0.2 degree C higher than in 1940. After the temperature drop of the past 18 months, the temperatures are now cooler than in 1940.

The 1,500-year cycles usually start with a sudden shift of 1–2 degrees—in temperate zones—and double that in Alaska. Then temperatures erratically rise and fall with the sun's total irradiance changes, often in 11-year cycles. At the end of the warming, comes another Little Ice Age; or, every 100,000 years, a Big Ice Age that will drop temperatures about 15 degree C. That's when insulation will truly become the most important invention in history.

The sunspots are now predicting a 30-year cooling of the earth. That would thicken the Alaskan glaciers somewhat, but probably wouldn't refill Glacier Bay with ice. That'll have to wait for the next icy age.

The sunspot index has a 59 percent correlation with our temperatures (with a roughly ten-year lag). CO² has only an "accidental" 22 percent correlation with our temperatures, which should be grounds for dismissing CO² as a major climate player.

All this is radically different from the 5-degree C warming predicted by the computer models. However, the scientific rule says: if actual observations tell you something that's the opposite of your theory, change your theory.



Dennis T. Avery

Dennis Avery is a senior fellow for the Hudson Institute in Washington, DC and is the Director for the Center for Global Food Issues. (www.cgfi.org) He was formerly a senior analyst for the Department of State. He is co-author, with S. Fred Singer, of Unstoppable Global Warming Every 1500 Hundred Years

**E-mail the
Editor**

Obama Will Overreach

by Ronald Kessler

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

As polls just before the election showed Barack Obama winning, Dave Keene, president of the American Conservative Union, paid a visit to columnist Robert Novak at his home. His longtime friend was chuckling, and Keene asked him why.

"Well, my Democratic friends think they've died and gone to heaven," Novak said. "If they'd been around as long as I have, they'd realize that it isn't heaven, and they don't have a permanent invitation to stay anyway."

In fact, Keene tells Newsmax, Obama did not win for the reasons he thinks he did, and he can be counted on to overreach, helping to return Republicans to power.

When it comes to astute political observers, Keene has few peers. A bulwark of the conservative movement, Keene has headed the American Conservative Union since 1984. With one million members, the ACU is the country's oldest and largest conservative grassroots lobbying group. It runs the Conservative Political Action Committee's (CPAC) annual conference in Washington and publishes an annual Rating of Congress, the gold standard for ideological assessments of members of Congress.

Keene notes that whenever Republicans lose, the press runs stories proclaiming the death of the party.

"This is only the third time in a half century that a Democratic presidential candidate has gotten 50 percent of the vote," Keene says. "The last two times were 1964 and 1976. And following those Democratic victories, there was in each case more than a spate of stories and analyses saying the Republican party was a thing of the past and that conservatism was dead."

Each time, Keene says, Republicans have picked themselves up and won major victories. This time, it will be more difficult because Democrats will try to rejigger the playing field. They are intent on passing so-called card check legislation, doing away with the secret ballot when employees decide whether to be represented by a union. If that legislation passes, unions will have a resurgence, and Democrats will garner more contributions.

The Democrats also want to restore the Fairness Doctrine, which would require broadcasters to give equal time to both conservatives and liberals. To date, few if any liberal talk shows have been commercially successful.

"A fairness doctrine will help shut up their opponents and cut off conservative communication," Keene says. "I think they've concluded they can't necessarily win a debate on issues. What they have to do is shut up the enemy because their arguments too often prevail."

Democrats may also come up with an amnesty measure for illegal aliens.

"That will bring them in and make them citizens to enlarge the Democrats' electoral pool and voter pool," Keene says. "I would not be surprised if there was a very early move to make the District of Columbia a state, giving it full representation in Congress. That would give the Democrats two more safe Democratic senators."



David Keene

House Republicans also believe Democrats will move to change rules for considering legislation to make it harder for the minority party to influence bills.

Given human nature, Democrats can be counted on to overreach, Keene predicts.

"In 1994, some reporter asked Newt Gingrich whether he thought the Democrats were more corrupt than Republicans," Keene recalls. "He said no, but they're human beings, and they've been in power, and power corrupts. And he said the same thing could happen to Republicans, which it did more recently. You remove them and you start over. And you go back to basics and you retrieve your brand, put it together, and you come back. That's happened before; it'll happen again."

Moreover, Keene says, "Winners always misread the reason for their victory. Winners always assume that voters voted for them for the reasons they wanted them to vote for them. They always assume that the voters were saying: Do what you want to do."

While Obama may be too smart to fall into that trap, "The people around him and the pressure groups that exist as part of the Democratic base are going to say, okay, they've rejected free markets, they want capital gains taxed more, they want to go after the rich, they want us to — as Barney Frank says — cut the defense budget by 25 percent. Well," Keene says, "if they voted for those things, they did so without knowing that that's what they were voting for."

In part because of that tendency to misinterpret the reasons for their victory, politicians tend to overreach, Keene says.

"Clinton overreached, Gingrich overreached," he says. "And it's one of the reasons why the pendulum starts to swing pretty quickly. Then if they're there long enough, the kinds of things that happened to the Republicans and the Democrats for being in too long take hold. They become part of the problem rather than part of the solution."

The other reason the pendulum swings back quickly is that each party promises that they're "going to solve all your problems." Yet, a few years later, people say, "God, I elected him, but I've still got all these problems." Indeed, Keene was on National Public Radio when a caller said to him, "I feel now that we can cure cancer, because Obama won."

Another problem for Obama is that he and his people really believe that they've transformed the political landscape.

"In fact, if you looked at exit polls and things, Obama ran, not as the socialist he may be and that McCain tried to describe him as, but as somebody that was opposed to national health insurance and ran saturation ads saying that he is the candidate most likely to cut your taxes," Keene says. "And being a typical liberal, he doesn't like the war we're in. He wants a different war in Afghanistan or Pakistan, which he won't like once he gets into it."

Rather than transforming the political landscape, Obama actually won yet another close election. Until the plunge in the market, John McCain was ahead in the polls.

"So you're a voter out there who just lost a third of your pension fund and a quarter of your house value," Keene says. "It'll all come back, but that is not the formula for a successful election. Yet they believed their own hype, and so do a lot of the Republicans, that there was going to be this huge turnout of new people that was going to swamp the Republicans."

In fact, Keene says, "Young people didn't turn out in any great numbers. The absolute vote was up from last time on both sides, but it's not the highest turnout. You know they were saying it was the highest turnout since 1908, well it wasn't true. Black turnout was higher, but only by a little bit."

Keene believes Obama's selection of Rahm Emanuel as chief of staff is a sign that Obama will govern from the left. As outlined in the Nov. 7 Newsmax article *Rahm Emanuel Is the Real Pit Bull*, the selection conflicts with Obama's claim in his election night speech that he wants to put aside the "partisanship and pettiness and immaturity that has poisoned our politics for so long."

"If you're a unifier and a bridge builder, you don't hire Rahm Emanuel to build your bridge," Keene says. "He after all is the guy who said Republicans can f--- themselves. And that's in his kinder moments."

Ronald Kessler is chief Washington correspondent of Newsmax.com, where this originally appeared.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Target Talk Radio

by Paul M. Weyrich

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

Is there growing opposition to re-imposition of the so-called Fairness Doctrine or is there a clever effort - maybe a plot? - to convince opponents of the doctrine that they need not worry?

I have been feeling rather blue. Those who know me know that I never give up without a fight. My problem is with the so-called "Fairness Doctrine," which represents the opposite of fairness. Talk Radio, as we now know it, represents one of the very few weapons in the conservative media arsenal. 630 WMAL's brilliant commentator, Chris Plante, has declared that 2008 is the year that true journalism died in the United States of America. I agree with him. The national media overwhelmingly supported Sen. Barack H. Obama, all but carrying his bags as he goes abroad? With the exception of the Fox News Channel the television media is all in the hands of the left. Fox itself is more Republican than conservative. The left also controls nearly all of the print media.



Paul M. Weyrich

So I reviewed conservative options for the next Congress. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid, D-Nev., have two ways to achieve their objective, which is to pass the Fairness Doctrine. First, they can deny opponents the opportunity for an up-or-down vote (which they have done in the present Congress). They do so because they correctly fear that anti-Fairness Doctrine members would prevail. Test votes have so indicated. Second, they could wait for the Democrats to win complete control of the Federal Communications Commission and then let it reinstate the doctrine. It took President Ronald Reagan seven years to accomplish de-regulation. Rush Limbaugh launched nationally in 1988. My guess is that the Democratic leadership will not want to wait that long, lest opposition grow throughout the country.

I did not see a way out of this situation until I interviewed Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ken) on the "Right Hour" program on the Right Talk Radio Network. McConnell pointed to the record of the Supreme Court under Chief Justice John Roberts. In ruling after ruling the court is suspicious of any legislation which tries to limit political free speech and our First Amendment rights. McConnell has been the plaintiff in the most important cases before the court. He believes that with a few more rulings and McCain-Feingold Campaign Finance Reform will belong to the ashbin of history.

I had not considered the Supreme Court's role in the Fairness Doctrine. There is little doubt that if the Fairness Doctrine is re-instated by congress it immediately will attract many free-speech lawsuits. Seldom is it that a United States Senator says anything to cheer me up. Congratulations, Mitch McConnell. You managed to just do that.

The Fairness Doctrine is nothing but censorship. In substance, a talk-show host either must advocate both sides of an issue or accord those who disagree with his or her view the opportunity to present their opposition on the talk show.

There now are reports that many prominent news figures and high-profile Democratic leaders oppose re-imposition of the doctrine. Former CBS anchor Dan Rather is reported to be opposed. Because most liberal candidates for federal office favor the doctrine it truly would be news - and most welcome news - were a significant number of them opposed to the doctrine. This especially would be meaningful with the next administration and Congress so strongly under liberal leadership.

Are these reports anywhere near accurate? Is there really a significant movement among leaders of the left and others, if any "others" there be, to oppose re-imposition? Or is some or all of the noise created to lull opponents of the Fairness Doctrine into forgetting about it so the proponents can combine their forces and ram it through?

Whichever applies, all of us who believe in free speech must continue to be vigilant. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty . . ." and also the price of freedom of the airwaves. More than once in all my years in Washington I have seen a movement organize itself quietly and effectively and successfully. Well and good when it's a movement for freedom or another good cause. Wrecking talk shows by curbing their free speech is censorship and danger. Let us continue our vigilance.

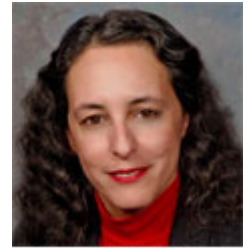
Paul M. Weyrich is Chairman and CEO of the Free Congress Foundation.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Identity Politics Now?

by Lisa Fabrizio

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008



Lisa Fabrizio

I have a brother who revels in an old joke; so that when the gender of a family newborn is announced, he asks: "What does that make me, an aunt or an uncle?" As corny as that sounds--if you only knew my brother--it is, like all jokes, based in part on a kind of reverse reality.

The notion that a particular happenstance should determine your identity is, of course, silly and therefore funny. But how about the opposite? The idea so popular with pollsters and pundits--especially in this presidential election--that what you are should determine your political ideology and how you vote is equally inane, yet inexplicably and sadly a way of life in modern America.

Whereas our founders were able to put aside their conditions in life, whether innate or acquired, in order to form a more perfect union and ensure a just and prosperous way of life for their posterity, this no longer appears to be true. Identity politics and class warfare have further polarized an already divided nation, especially along the lines of gender, race and religion. But does it have to be this way? I decided to conduct a poll of one likely voter: myself.

I am a woman, so what does that make me? On the one hand, I was supposed to vote for John McCain because he had the courage to make Sarah Palin his running mate. She 'looks like me', ergo I must vote with my own kind. Except that, as the liberal sisterhood tells me, no real woman could vote Republican since they refuse to support women's 'reproductive rights'. Sorry, but I'm not buying either pitch; my own kind is the human race, and abortion has as its aim the destruction of the most helpless of that race for the sake of convenience.

I am also a single woman which should make me, in the eyes of popular culture, either an unhappy shrew or a lesbian, or both. In either case, this should most definitely make me a man-hater. But of course I am neither. I'm just a woman who has simply waited for the good man that God has finally sent me. Far from hating men, I adore truly manly men, particularly those who are man enough to want to fight to protect me and the country we love.

I am a New Englander and unfortunately I know what this is supposed to make me: a knee-jerk liberal. Living as I do in Connecticut, a state which traditionally is at the top of the list of states paying out the most per capita in federal taxes and receiving the least back from Washington, I know all too well that I am virtually surrounded by the left. Yet, I choose to follow in the footsteps of the great New England patriots who railed against unfair taxation and government officers who "harass our people, and eat out their substance."

I am a Catholic, and worse yet, a faithful one. So this makes me either one of the millions of Christians who, like the founders of our country, believe in our national motto, "In God We Trust," or a dangerous, religious fanatic. Until the last decade or so, Catholics were a reliable Democratic voting block, but since then, more and more have refused to follow that party down the path toward a culture of death. And unlike John Kerry, Joe Biden and Nancy Pelosi, I am secure and joyful in the practice and knowledge of my faith.

I am a white person of European ancestry and, were I not a woman (or a liberal), that would make me a racist, domineering, greedy pig. So, to assuage the guilt I must surely feel about all of this, I would have had no choice but to vote for Barack Obama instead of John McCain who 'looks like me'. Of course, our black brothers and sisters are exempt from this redemptive process since racism in this country is a one-way street. Except that I am not ashamed of my heritage and therefore feel zero guilt, and I resent those who advise otherwise.

In summary, this voter loves liberty as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and hates Communism, Socialism, Nazism, Fascism and any other form of government that values human beings only as tools of the State and would dispose of those whose lives have no value in their eyes. I believe in a greater good than that which enriches only my social stratum or my pocketbook. And that makes me an American.

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

**E-mail the
Editor**

Young Counter-Revolution

by William Haun

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

Well, that only took nearly two years. To say the least, it is a relief to have the 2008 presidential election finally come to a close. Nevertheless, I am left disappointed that after the longest, most expensive presidential campaign in the history of the world, America settled for an empty promise of change over an equally absurd promise to put "country first."

The disease that has so incapacitated our national discourse has several causes, and several symptoms, all of which were on display throughout the presidential campaign. And while much could be said of Obama's political victory and its path, my focus will be on where my heart lies: with the Conservative Movement, and its way forward after the George W. Bush years and the John McCain campaign.



First and foremost, Sen. McCain's loss is due to him running a poor campaign, which lacked a message, and was based on horrible premises about the Republican Party and the Conservative movement that he has acted under for some time.

By earning his reputation as a Republican who irritated fellow Republicans, not by being more Conservative, but by being more self-righteous, McCain made it hard for himself to get the support of fellow Republicans. This is not surprising, and no Republican should apologize for any reservations they had about John McCain. It is a common rule of human interaction, when people seem not to like you, you will find it hard to like them. McCain's attempts to woo Conservatives by flipping on the Bush tax cuts, downplaying his support for amnesty and cap-and-trade, flipping on off-shore drilling while being quiet on ANWR, and reforming his position on the overturn of Roe while silencing his support for embryonic stem cell research all meant that what had made him such a media darling was going to alienate him from his former "base" (what McCain called the media in 2000).

This, of course, is all conventional wisdom. But I would argue that McCain's problems, and his detrimental effect on the national conversation, runs a bit deeper than that. McCain's chief problem throughout his campaign was that, for as much as he attempted to run away from the legacy of President Bush, he could never avoid the fact that he was, out of all the candidates, the most logical successor to where Bush has left the GOP and Conservatism.

Like Bush, he is completely disinterested in Conservative principles, preferring instead to see political issues through his own personal prism through which he tried to brand the party (honor, integrity, trusting government etc). Like Bush, he has continued the populist trend of "Conservative identity politics" whereby we judge candidates not by their understanding of their issues or qualifications but by how much they celebrate mediocrity (Joe Sixpack), if their accent sounds folksy, if they talk the pro-life talk, and if they own a gun. It is embarrassing because for so long Conservatives chastised the Left for the same thinking. Like Bush, he puts superficial notions of "bipartisanship" and "comprehensive solutions" over convincing the opposition by establishing Conservative principles and taking on the merits of their argument in the way our system provides. Like Bush, he fails to articulate anything Conservatives believe reasonably well, relying instead on a personal narrative to persuade.

Instead of charting an actually Conservative course, which would not have only contrasted him clearly from Barack Obama, but also appropriately from President Bush, McCain continued to pursue the celebration of grand empty gestures and conservative identity politics so endemic in the Bush years. Two of the key moments in this campaign epitomize this, and not coincidentally, they were

the two moments that sealed McCain's political fate. The first is McCain's reaction to the financial bailout bill. The second is his nomination and pick of Sarah Palin.

The issue over how the government should respond to the financial crisis was by far the biggest test of leadership either candidate received. McCain, in what was quickly and correctly labeled political calculation, suspended his campaign only to come back to Washington to make no meaningful contribution to the legislation outside of his vote. He looked like someone aiming to take credit for a compromise, and in its place, voted for legislation that eliminates any credibility he had on the need for spending cuts and responsible use of the tax payer's money. You don't get to call yourself a "fiscal Conservative" when you vote to nationalize the U.S. financial sector while wasting 100 billion dollars in tax payer money on giveaways to make said nationalization a "bi-partisan effort". Instead of siding with the fiscally responsible alternatives to the bailout, McCain, in spite of all of Obama's political ties to those who caused this crisis, became seen as complicit in a supposedly Bush-caused financial meltdown.

The second indication that McCain was willing to follow the conventional wisdom of the Bush years was the picking of Sarah Palin and the corresponding reaction to Conservative disappointment. Initially, I liked Sarah Palin. She has been, by all counts, a great governor and takes positions I agree with (like any other person that matters to me in candidates). What I came to notice however, is that for as much as I liked the concept of Sarah Palin on the ticket, I came to see her as a representation of the current and growing chasm between the intellectual establishment of Conservatives who are desperately needed to chart new ideas for 21st century problems, and the Conservative grassroots, who are needed to bring those ideas into political office.

Conservatives today, have mistaken the anti-elitism inherent to Conservatism to mean anti-intellectualism. I don't need a presidential or vice presidential candidate to hold a PhD., but I would like them to be able to actually answer "what other Supreme Court cases do you disagree with besides Roe?" I would like them to be able to describe what they mean when they call themselves a "Federalist." And, as a resident from the supposed "elitist northeast" I would like the party that has won 49 states not once, but twice, in the modern era to not write-off the support of an entire region of the country because they do not fit the conception of the thus far elusive "Joe Sixpack." In a time when Americans face the single greatest collection of challenges to its prosperity since the Great Depression, finding voters based upon their penchant for beer and football is an indication of how unserious the Republican Party has become.

The most successful Conservatives in American national politics have been unapologetically that, Conservative. Whether you wish to point to Calvin Coolidge, Barry Goldwater, Ronald Reagan, Newt Gingrich, or any other, the Conservatives that successfully rallied the American people to the Conservative cause are the true believers in it. William F. Buckley, founder of the modern Conservative movement, did not inspire people to Conservative ideals by talking about how bi-partisan Republicans should be. He was sick of Republicans who were all the Democrat with none of the label. He wanted Americans to "stand athwart history and yell 'Stop!'," not figure out ways where we could all work out our differences. "Appealing to moderates" and "Reaching across the aisle" do not build a movement, nor do they represent a principle to fight for. They are tactics, sometimes preferable, sometimes necessary, sometimes futile, often superficial, and hardly transformational.

John McCain, like President Bush, utterly failed in actually being Conservative, and this failure was, I believe, central to his loss of the presidency. Like it or not, elections, and politics in general, are about choices: you are for this, they are for that. For as much as individuals may like the idea of the mushy, cushy middle, where everyone is right, and we can all live happily ever after, that is not how politics works. The first person to define themselves, their opponent, and the turf on which the election is fought is the one who wins. Obama's mastery at making the words "hope" and "change," which in a political context mean absolutely nothing, stand out as a serious political message defined the election. And whenever McCain attempted to play on that turf by trying to "out-Change" Obama, he lost. After all, why would anyone vote for a not-as-authentic version of something when they have a choice between authenticity and a wannabe? Simple. There is no good reason. The political

middle may get you over the finish line, but only when they are convinced your side is correct. McCain, for partly strategic, and partly personal reasons, never felt comfortable running a campaign based on being a Conservative. Instead, he ran a campaign based on slogans that never distinguished him.

It would be foolish to say then, that this election is somehow a rejection of Conservatism. It would be correct to say this election was a rejection of the Republican Party. If anything, this election was a vindication for Conservatism within the Republican Party. What was rejected in this election was the largest expansion of the federal government since the Great Society. What was rejected in this election was the pathetic, despicable, mismanagement of foreign wars and the basing of foreign policy upon progressive "nation building" instead of maximizing strategic interests. What was rejected in this election was the arrogance of political power once synonymous with the decades-long congressional Democratic majority, and the celebration of American mediocrity through identity politics in lieu of intelligent principles designed to persuade and lead. Conservatism in no way endorses these kinds of blunders. If anything, it is a philosophy designed to prevent them from happening by limiting government power, emphasizing careful, not expansive international prowess, and politicians that do not see themselves as master social engineers, capable of legislating utopia, but rather as restrained public servants, who ensure the people possess their due authority.

It is on this distinction that I believe Conservatives can build from the failures of the Bush years and the McCain campaign. To begin this dialogue, I think we need to establish a few facts:

1. The American People are still, by and large, fundamentally Conservative:

No polls about the size of government show any kind of massive shift to a preference of larger government, if anything, most demonstrate that views on the issue have been the same since the 1980's. Conservative grassroots groups, like Americans for Prosperity for example, are propping up all over the country. The success of various ballot measures in this election in particular have vindicated the massive support of Conservative causes.

2. Even in the Minority, Conservatives are not powerless:

Polls have showed strong support for the alternative bailout proposals that so many of the "party first" Republicans shunned. Conservatives were able to organize mass oppositions that killed the amnesty bill not once, but twice. Conservatives were able to kill the first bailout proposal and lobbied for the inclusion of some Conservative proposals in the final legislation in spite of being in the minority and having no national spokesperson (imagine if we did).

3. There is a large Conservative intellectual and grassroots structure entirely independent of the impotent GOP leadership. And this independent infrastructure has inspired Republican Party chairman across the country to take back the GOP from the death grip that recent failures have placed on it. The race for RNC chair should bring many of these issues to light, igniting the debate our party should have had years ago.

The surest defense for Conservative principles, and the surest way to re-build a Conservative majority will be in creating a modern Conservative "fusion": the "fusion" of the increasing number of college educated Americans and working class voters. It is troubling to me that these two groups have grown equally disparate within the Right as of late. For as disappointed as I am in the "Joe Sixpack"-type of identity politics preferred by the Sarah Palin's and George W. Bush's of the GOP, I am equally disappointed in the not-so-thinly-veiled disdain for the rank-in-file Conservative in some of the columns of David Brooks and David Frum. A successful, new Conservative majority will be based on the premise that all of these individuals have a role in achieving a governing coalition. The growing number of college educated Americans, and the dwindling numbers of registered Republicans amongst them, emphasizes the importance for a refreshing look at Conservative first principles, an effort that will likely be lead by the "intellectuals" within the movement. But such a revisiting is meaningless if the current suspicion between the intellectuals and the grassroots remains. The new ideas and approaches to Conservative principles need to be dispersed to the grassroots, and debated constructively. Both sides will need to recognize the need to work together

to apply Conservative principles to new policy challenges, and ultimately, make them successful at the ballot box.

As Edmund Burke famously said, "example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other." If we really believe that the American people will suffer at the hands of higher taxes, socialized medicine, defeatism abroad, and an entitlement culture at home, and if we really believe the American people will be sensible enough not to vote for policies once they are proven to be harmful, then what do we have to be afraid of? Truly, there is something inherently un-Conservative in thinking that whoever runs Washington runs our lives. It's time to get back to principles, to the states, the grassroots; here our understanding of Conservatism can expand, inform new policies and inspire new leaders. Conservatism is, at its best, a counter-revolution revolution. Let's begin one today for a new generation of Americans.

William J. Haun is a student at the American University School of Public Affairs, Class of 2009

**E-mail the
Editor**

GOP Platform On Bailouts

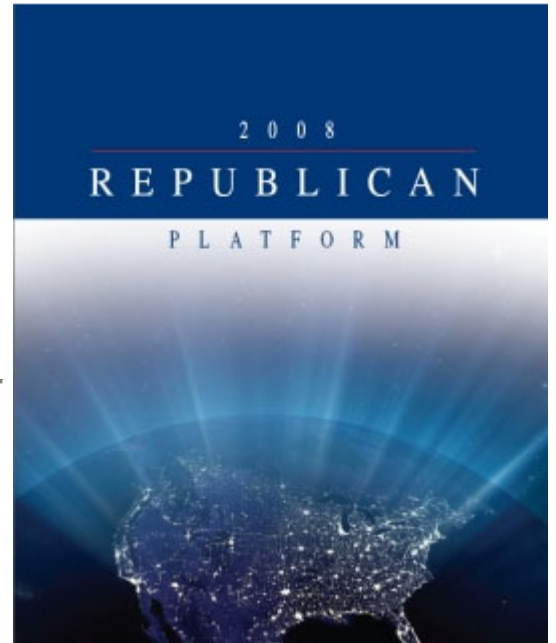
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From the 2008 Republican Party platform:

"We do not support government bailouts of private institutions. Government interference in the markets exacerbates problems in the marketplace and causes the free market to take longer to correct itself. We believe in the free market as the best tool to sustained prosperity and opportunity for all."

With thanks to David Franke

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Editor**



Reader Comments

Issue 120 - November 19, 2008

**CONSERVATIVE
BATTLELINE
ONLINE**

Editor: Regarding Governor Mark Sanford's "No More Bailouts," where has this guy been? We need him to run for President!! Kathy Cunningham, San Angelo, Texas

Editor: Read your piece "Who Plays Herbert Hoover" this morning about how the Depression got hung on the Republicans and why we have paid the price for that ever since. You are one of the few writers who comes to these issues from a unique and informed viewpoint that is not the usual stuff. The pendulum has swung and the Reagan Era is over. I suspect Americans will want the Obama era to be over with as quickly as possible as things go south here for the next few years. Regards, Alan Caruba

Editor: Regarding "Who Plays Herbert Hoover," our return has just begun!! Let's just keep our heads clear and our eye on the goal. We have much to do and if you believe in a Higher Power.....much to pray about also. We are not down. Keep on keeping on. GOD bless you. Patricia Maura Gibbons, Sarasota, Florida

Editor: Regarding "Who Plays Herbert Hoover," do you know we have an opportunity to go on offense--right now, immediately? Barack Obama won by 7 million votes or so (well subtract about a million for voter fraud) and he won huge in the Electoral College. I would say that definitively ends the idea of America being a racist country, and as such, the U.S. Congress and all 50 States should take immediate action to remove ALL laws regarding preference in government contracts, affirmative action etc. etc.? If we make that our number one priority - the complete and total removal of Affirmative Action, it will put the Democrats on a very hard position, trying to justify "why" we still need Affirmative Action when an African-American can be elected President of the U.S. Spending time and resources to defend that policy will also derail the first 100 days of their socialist agenda. I think it only works if it gets momentum immediately and it only works if we get those 45 U.S. Senators of ours on board. This may well be a rare opportunity to get rid of a long standing asinine program. Best Regards, Michael Sibert, Chariton, IA

Editor: Regarding "Who Plays Herbert Hoover," what's next? I enjoy reading all the articles at AUCF. My question is how are we going to grow our side? We need to pull together and start attacking the State and Local Governments, as well as the House and the Senate. When will we find our next leader? I feel if we don't start now, we will lose again in 2012 as well as the next Congressional election. IMO I think everyone needs to pull together and help each other out, no matter what State you are from. Even if it's only a small donation to the candidates' campaigns. Patrick Budowski

Editor: Regarding "Who Plays Herbert Hoover," the American people let us Vets down big time. You let this election slip away and now we must pay for your mistakes for 4 years. We will more than likely lose our right to own a gun and we will be pressed into Socialism or worse. Thanks folks for all you have done. Please don't do us any more favors. I don't know how we would thank you! What indigent person do I send my retirement money to? You know the ones that sit and do nothing their whole life. The ones with their hands in my pockets. Walter E. Klinka, a Korean Vet

Editor: Regarding "Who Plays Herbert Hoover," those who are conservatives and believe in the ideals of Goldwater and Reagan need to start recruiting and teaching the new generation. For those of you who were not around when we took back the Republican Party from the moderates in 1964: Barry Goldwater snippets from his acceptance speech:

Now, my fellow Americans, the tide has been running against freedom. Our people have followed false prophets. We must, and we shall, return to proven ways-- not because they are old, but because they are true.

We must, and we shall, set the tide running again in the cause of freedom. And this party, with its every action, every word, every breath, and every heartbeat, has but a single resolve, and that is freedom.

Freedom made orderly for this nation by our constitutional government.

Freedom under a government limited by laws of nature and of nature's God. Freedom balanced so that liberty lacking order will not become the slavery of the prison cell; balanced so that liberty lacking order will not become the license of the mob and of the jungle.

But, ladies and gentlemen, first we must renew freedom's mission in our own hearts and in our own homes.

Those who seek to live your lives for you, to take your liberty in return for relieving you of yours, those who elevate the state and downgrade the citizen, must see ultimately a world in which earthly power can be substituted for divine will. And this nation was founded upon the rejection of that notion and upon the acceptance of God as the author of freedom.

It is further the cause of Republicanism to remind ourselves, and the world, that only the strong can remain free: that only the strong can keep the peace.

Thus do we seek inventiveness, diversity, and creative difference within a stable order, for we Republicans define government's role where needed at many, many levels-- preferably, though, the one closest to the people involved: our towns and our cities, then our counties, then our states, then our regional contacts, and only then the national government.

That, let me remind you, is the land of liberty built by decentralized power. On it also we must have balance between the branches of government at every level.

The beauty of the very system we Republicans are pledged to restore and revitalize, the beauty of this federal system of ours, is in its reconciliation of diversity with unity. We must not see malice in honest differences of opinion, and no matter how great, so long as they are not inconsistent with the pledges we have given to each other in and through our Constitution.

Our Republican cause is not to level out the world or make its people conform in computer-regimented sameness. Our Republican cause is to free our people and light the way for liberty

throughout the world. Ours is a very human cause for very humane goals. This party, its good people, and its unquestionable devotion to freedom will not fulfill the purposes of this campaign which we launch here now until our cause has won the day, inspired the world, and shown the way to a tomorrow worthy of all our yesteryears.

Please read the above and visit the web site and listen to the speech [here](#). Bill Boltinghouse, Council Bluffs, Iowa

Editor: You people are nuts in "Who Plays Herbert Hoover"! Impeach George Bush and Dick Cheney for undermining democracy in America and by socializing our economy. They are the enemy of the conservatives of America. Keith L. Morgan

Editor: "Who Plays Herbert Hoover," is misplaced. It is not about who plays Hoover but Hitler or Uncle Joe Stalin, and who will be his Himmler? That I believe is much more on point or did you miss the speech where Barack Obama called for a new SA to be called a National Security Force reporting to him directly? Bill Ford

Editor: Regarding "Who Plays Herbert Hoover," the tragedy of George Bush is his mixed-up, confused "compassionate conservative" philosophy, that has made him vulnerable to criticism from left, right and e v e r y b o d y. Gary Bauer tried to warn us in the '99 Presidential race that conservatism... is...compassionate. I wasn't sure then but I see now it's the most compassionate system known to man, incorporating free market VOLUNTARY EXCHANGE of goods & services, which amounts torandom chance.. that rewards without prejudice. Otherwise you're stuck with a socialist system of prejudiced people who decide what "social justice " means & the meaning of "fair" & the meaning of "is" & the meaning of "global warming" & "obesity", the solution to traffic congestion; where the bottom line always degenerates into "how can we best hold onto power for ourselves". Socialism works for the bureaucrats whereas conservatism empowers the people...while the New York Times tells us the opposite. Is it any wonder we elected a socialist when it's their policies that created our crises? What keeps socialism rolling is that it takes long enough for the damage to occur so that people have forgotten the original source of the problem. Al, Lemon Grove

Editor: Regarding "Who Plays Herbert Hoover," please do not use the term "Republican" as a synonym for "Conservative"! It is NOT! It is long past the time to form (or take over) a real Conservative political party! We the People need a "home" party, not one we are only tolerated in at election time. "If the [Republican] party "were a dog food, they would take us off the shelf." [Rep. Tom Davis] Agreed! Let us separate our Conservative cause from a failed brand and a failed leadership! It is a waste of our resources to continue to do CPR on Humpty Dumpty. Joseph Klein, Santa Barbara, CA, Castle Hulls, Texas

Editor: Regarding Alan Caruba's "States Pass Warming Taxes" [these videos](#) show a few examples of what is really wrong with the atmosphere.. How dare they blame everything on us and even make up things to blame on us? The people who go to work everyday are the ones that pay twice for everything. First we pay to heat and cool our own homes, then we have to give to the lazy people (family included) and pay to heat their homes after we have also bought their groceries. Then we have to buy gas tax, road tax, car inspection, car tags and property tax on top of the taxes that are

stolen out of every paycheck before we get it. Thanks for telling the TRUTH!
OUTSOURCE CONGRESS. An angry Woman! D Caldwell

Editor: I agree with Elaine Coyle's letter in response to Daniel Pipes' "Counting Islamists" that it's difficult to estimate the number of radical terrorists but that the number who exhibit radical behavior is much higher. Roy S Gillinson

Editor: Regarding Paul Weyrich's "Joe Plummer Politics," no one cared about how much Senators Dodd and Obama received from Fannie; no one cared about Barney Frank and the garbage in the basement of his house, no one cared.....but they cared when Trent Lott said something silly at a birthday party, and look what they did to Tom Delay. Joe the Plummer is the one with my values and good old fashioned "horse sense". Let's elect him in 4 years. Patricia Kessinger

**E-mail the
Editor**