

Conservative Review

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A Digest of this Week's News and Views

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Christmas Wishes from the Left

I received a "Christmas Card" the other day which was a take off on *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, with the line:

They [Democrat presidential candidates] poked
Bush's eye, and **kicked at his head,**

Since Karl Rove was gone they had nothing to
dread.

Isn't this just humor? Isn't this just hyperbole? Would conservatives send out Christmas greetings which speak of curb stomping Obama or kicking Hillary in her uterus? I don't care how clever the poem would be, such a line would be absolutely repulsive. Don't liberals and Democrats, many of whom are former love-your-enemies hippies, understand this?

For the past 7 years, I have received piles of email essentially calling President Bush *stupid* and every synonym for *stupid*. This is a president whose academic credentials match or exceed almost every president in our history; this is a president who is probably more well-read than any previous president.

Did Bush make some miscalculations with respect to Iraq? Certainly, he did. Obviously, the surge would have been better to have begun 2 years earlier. In my opinion, when we had greater political pull there, we should have demanded a bill of rights being written into their constitution; a bill of rights to include religious freedom. Furthermore, a tip of the hat to an old liberal friend who suggested that maybe the Iraqis are

unable to appreciate a Democracy (although, the voter turn out would seem to suggest otherwise). It is easy to make judgments after the fact. Had we done nothing, where would Iran and Libya be with regards to weapons of mass destruction? How many more tens of thousands of people would be dead by the hand of Saddam Hussein? These are questions of theory at this point. Saddam is listed as the 13th highest killer of human beings in the 20th century (<http://www.scaruffi.com/politics/dictat.html>). I personally think that getting rid of him was a good thing; and we know that this had a profound effect on M. Qadafi.

Gallup Poll: Upsurge in Bush Popularity

I am sure you did not hear this in the news, but Bush's approval ratings moved up 6 points (from 31% to 37%). This is a great rise in popularity and is probably a result of our military successes in Iraq. The Congress remains stuck at 22%, hovering close to historic lows already set by this same Congress.

The Mortgage Crisis

I mentioned last issue how Congress is to blame for the current mortgage crisis. While waiting on an appointment, I picked up a real estate magazine. There was a full page ad from a mortgage company advertising a **government program** looking for people with bad credit and no money down. This **government program** was designed to deal with these problems. If you buy a house, and you have not got any money in it, and you have bad credit, and a foreclosure means 4-6 month's of free rent, what are you going to do?

How News is Twisted

You no doubt have heard that Presidential hopeful Huckabee (R) questioned Mitt Romney's faith, by asking the question "Don't Mormons believe that Jesus and the devil are brothers?" That's the headline. The context is, this comes from a 13 page interview, which was in Sunday's NY Times Magazine. Huckabee made only one or two statements about Romney's faith, however, his interviewer made many statements about Mormonism during the course of the interview. This was simply a question which Huckabee asked of someone who seemed to have some knowledge in this area.

Olbermann Still Hates Bush

I also received a link to a very angry Olbermann article on Bush, demanding to know [what a surprise!] *what did he know and when did he know it* with regards to the NIE report. He concludes by telling Bush that he has no business being president (either because he is too stupid or too duplicitous). Some of the lines in this op ed piece are:

We have either a president who is too dishonest to restrain himself from invoking World War III about Iran...or we have a president too transcendently stupid...A pathological presidential liar, or an idiot-in-chief...a president manifestly unfit to serve, and behind him in the vice presidency an unapologetic warmonger...it is inescapable that Dick Cheney is either this president's evil ventriloquist or he thinks he is...Would that we could let this president off the hook by seeing him only as marionette or moron...though he may not be very good at it, he is, himself, still a manipulative, Machiavellian snake-oil salesman...You, Mr. Bush, are a bald-faced liar...And moreover, you have just revealed that John Bolton and Norman Podhoretz and the

Wall Street Journal editorial board are also bald-faced liars...

What amazes me is, there are a significant number of Democrats who believe that (1) this kind of language is reasonable and reasoned political discourse; and (2) that this is how Republican candidates and conservative talk show hosts speak about Democrats. I personally know of liberals who, when reading this, would be thinking, "Yeah, that's right; you tell him!" Quite honestly, I don't know how to reach across the aisle and point out that, this sort of vituperation is actually wrong.

Education and Politics

Although candidates from the left and right offer a radically differing opinions with respect to most of the issues, education most clearly demonstrates these differences. Furthermore, having been in education for nearly 30 years, I believe I have some reasonable insight to this issue.

Democrats, for the most part, believe that more money, higher salaries, merit pay, and more government involvement/regulation is what is needed. Bear in mind that liberal philosophy has been the dominant force in our educational system for the past several decades. Although the candidates do not generally say this, public education has become a clearing house for a number of liberal programs e.g., diversity education and sex education.

Republicans believe in innovation and private enterprise, and believe that individuals often provide solutions and services superior to what the government provides; and therefore, most Republican candidates support some form of school choice. That is, a combination of private schools, public school, charter schools, and home schooling. Most Republican candidates believe that some assistance should be provided for

parents who choose to go an alternate route to the public school system, whether it be a voucher or a tax credit. The idea is, we pay high taxes for a failed system; why can't the consumer use this money to find a better system for their kids?

Some Republicans have spoken in favor of merit pay; whether that is lip service or a fundamental position, I could not say.

Education is an issue which exposes the fundamental differences between conservatives and liberals. Liberals believe that more tax dollars, more taxes, more federal involvement will solve the problem of a rapidly degenerating educational system. Democrats almost invariably receive strong support from the NEA and other teacher unions who prefer the status quo. Republicans believe that if our public schools were more like our college system, where all parents, rich or poor, have a greater choice of where to send their kids, that performance and scholastic achievement would be greatly improved.

What I personally support would be that the money a school receives because of its enrollment travel with the student, and be directly applied to whatever school they attend. Whether they want to attend a public school across town, or a charter school down the street, that should be their choice. When a school does not perform then parents will stop sending their children there, and that school will shut down. So far, no Republican has suggested this system exactly, but such an approach is more in line with Republican philosophy than it is with Democratic philosophy. By the way, this system is used in Belgium and it is quite successful there.

I think that most Republicans and most Democrats would agree that education is one of the most important issues of any generation. Do you like the direction our schools are heading? Just keep electing Democrats and you will get

more of the same, except that it will increasingly cost more and more money.

This is one area where I am most disappointed with President Bush and I did not care for his approach to education when he was governor of Texas either. He takes a very liberal approach to education, as he does to many policies, and I believe that is his greatest weakness. The problem is more fundamental and more complex than a failure at the executive level, but this is an area where he should have led us in a more conservative direction, and he did not do so.

One more comment on merit pay: it does not work. It sounds great on paper. Pay better teachers higher salaries and get rid of the bad teachers. Who could argue with this? It sounds so logical and so reasonable. Yea for the good teachers; boo for the bad teachers. I lived under merit pay for most of a decade and actually setting up a system to determine who the best teachers are is quite difficult if not impossible. I am not speaking from sour grapes, as I was at the top of the pay scale with regards to merit pay while it was in effect (apart from the first year). However, the mechanism to determine who the best teachers were was cumbersome, very expensive, ineffective; and, to be frank with you, when I did not get it the first year, I was pissed off. I was not encouraged to do better; I was pissed off. Many teachers, when they were going to be observed, set up sort of a dog and pony show of their best lesson, even though that lesson might not even reflect where they were in the curriculum. Some of our worst teachers got merit pay; some of our best teachers did not. I can think of 2 teachers in particular at my old high school who were outstanding teachers. The difference in our approaches to teaching kids was dramatic; our personalities and backgrounds could not have been any more different. However, in talking with a number of students, I believe that these 2 teachers, along with myself, were 3 of the best teachers at my high school—and yet our styles and approach were

vastly different. I am sure that some of you think that you know the answer and you know some way of objectively measuring a teacher's ability, but, in my opinion, in practice, it would be unfair and it would not work. Philosophically, it is a great concept; practically, it does not do what it purports to do.

Religious Candidates Political Coverage

Notice how the media portrays the various candidates. Although the media has been fairly kind to Huckabee, over and over and over again, he is portrayed as a religious type. The man has more executive experience than any other candidate, left or right; but how often do you hear that? If memory serves, he was last involved in Christian service as a pastor 17 years ago; however, to read all the media, you would think he just stepped out of the pastorate yesterday.

Same deal with Mitt Romney. Ask any American voter what is his religion and ask them what state was he a governor in. More people would know his religion than would know where he governed.

Huckabee did, in one ad, for 2 seconds, flash the words Christian leader on the screen. Part of what is going on here is, until a couple days ago, Huckabee has had no real political advisors. He has been winging his campaign. He isn't scripted, except by himself, and he hasn't quite mastered what he ought to say and what he ought not to say.

Notice the debates: the Republicans get incessant questions about their religion, about the Bible, about evolution...things which have little or nothing to do with policies, philosophies or governing history. The Republican FoxNews debate was probably the only debate where the moderators which did not go overboard on asking religious questions (I don't think they asked any?).

I have seen pretty much every debate (I missed one Democratic debate, if memory serves). I can only recall one question ever posed to the Republicans about their education policies. I have heard question after question after question posed to them about religion. Incidentally, these questions are often posed by people who believe that religion has little or no place in the arena of politics.

On the other hand, even though Hillary Clinton will speak in far more churches than will any of the Republican candidates, she will rarely get any questions about religion. By the way, in case you did not know, Bill Clinton spoke in far more churches on the campaign trail than did George Bush (either Bush).

What is happening is clear. There is an attempt to portray as many Republicans as possible as religious zealots, and the Democrats as clear-thinking, pragmatic individuals.

Hillary and Obama

At this point in time, these are obviously the top 2 candidates for the Democratic party. Obama, prior to running, made sure to get every bad thing that he has ever done out there in the public forum. This was made clear when the Clinton campaign had to go all the way back to Obama's grammar school years to find a statement to impugn his character.

Hillary expects the presidency. I think that more than any other candidate, she believes that she is entitled to this position and that she is the best person for the job. My only question is—and I am operating under the aforementioned assumption—is, *how far will she go? If she loses the first 3 states in the primary [and I believe that she will], how far will she go to be the presidential nominee?* Now, I may be wrong in this assessment of her, and I might be attributing a greater power lust to her than she really

possesses. But, if she loses to Obama in the first 3 states and if there is no way to impugn his character (because he has already put it all out there), then how far is she willing to go to become president?



Testicles

Rush Limbaugh continually makes references to Hillary Clinton and her testicle lockbox (this is a play on Al Gore's lockbox). A lot of people listen to Rush, although they would not like to admit it. However, it sometimes just comes out. Here is from Rush's show:



RUSH: I want to listen to this sound bite. Cookie tells me that there was a pronunciation faux pas in this. Contessa Brewer at PMSNBC reporting -- this is yesterday -- reporting about a new poll of Iowa Democrats.

BREWER: The latest MSNBC-McClatchy poll of Iowa Democrats shows Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama in a sta-testicle (pause) dead heat.

RUSH: Whoa, she did say it! She did! (laughing) Play that again.



BREWER: The latest MSNBC-McClatchy poll of Iowa Democrats shows Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama in a sta-testicle (pause) dead heat.

Why Isn't Al Gore Running?

RUSH: This first paragraph here, folks, is going to make you retch. It's by Michael Hirsh, Newsweek, an [Internet exclusive](#). "There he was again on the world stage -- in Oslo this time -- celebrating his Nobel Peace Prize with singer Melissa Etheridge and actress Uma Thurman, the Hollywood hottie who called him 'adorable' and said listening to him talk was 'like watching a beautiful racehorse run.'" Retch time. "But Al Gore isn't running. Which raises the question: maybe Gore's gotten a little too adorable -- too comfortable in his role as a globe-trotting guru. What about his own damn country? ..." Writes Michael Hirsh: "What about his own damn country? Why isn't Al Gore -- Nobel laureate and enviro rock star, embodiment of the alternative history that never was, winner of the largest popular-vote total in US presidential history [sic] -- seeking the job that many people still think should have been his in 2000? Yes, we've all heard that Gore's reached a kind of peace within himself," blah, blah, blah. But Mr. Hirsh says, "The White House is the place to battle global warming." Mr. Hirsh, if I may be so bold as to educate and inform you, **I'm going to tell you as I did yesterday precisely and exactly why Al Gore will never run for president, certainly not in 2008. You can make book, and it is precisely because he would have to debate global warming, and he will not do it, because he cannot win the debate. Global warming is a religion. It is not subject to debate. It is a hoax.**

Therefore, it's a trick. It's not subject to debate. He will not debate it. That is the only reason, or the big one, why he will not run. Get over it, Mr. Hirsh.

Democrats and Torture

You realize, of course, that waterboarding is not something which the Democrats just found out about in the past couple years and were abhorred when they heard the details. Nancy Pelosi and other Democrats were briefed on waterboarding back in 2002, and they had a virtual tour of the detention sites. At least two of them were concerned that the coercion techniques were not tough enough. [Washington Post](#)



Caller Catches Rush in Lie

RUSH: Ron in blue state New York. Nice to have you with the EIB Network, sir. Hello.

CALLER: Yes. Mr. Limbaugh?

RUSH: Yes.

CALLER: My name is Ron. I'm an outsider. I usually attack the outsiders. Asking us why do we call. I'm an outsider. I'm a non-dittohead, but at 12:27 you misinformed the public about how crude oil is -- how it, it -- where it really comes from. And I challenge you as to -- on the air right now as to --

RUSH: What did I say about where it comes from?

CALLER: Yeah, you made a claim on -- you made a claim that --

RUSH: What I said was we need to look at oil as a crop.

CALLER: I challenge you to actually grow crude oil, and I challenge you right now on the air to grow crude oil and that's what you claimed at 12:27.

RUSH: I can show you the --

CALLER: I'm a volunteer for Media Matters!

RUSH: I can show you --

CALLER: I'm a volunteer for Media Matters! In fact, a couple days ago I --

RUSH: I knew it! (laughing) He's a volunteer for Media Matters. "Limbaugh says oil is a crop, challenged by Media Matters volunteer to show where we can grow oil." (laughing)

Mohammed Teddy Bears

<http://www.teddybearmuhammad.com/>

They're real and you can buy them.



Al Sharpton outside of Obama's Headquarters

<http://mfile.akamai.com/5020/wma/rushlimb.download.akamai.com/5020/New/revalvsobama3.asx>



The View on Rush Limbaugh

RUSH: I've got the transcript of it here. I'm in stunned disbelief. I actually was praised on The View today. Let's just listen to it. It's Joy Behar and Sherri Shepherd and Whoopi Goldberg, and here's the exchange.

BEHAR: You know who gave me the best advice? Rush Limbaugh. Imagine that.

GOLDBERG: What did he say? What did he say?

BEHAR: He said to me when I was fired from the radio, he said, "Whatever you do now, Joy, be bold." That's what he said.

GOLDBERG: He had to tell you that?

BEHAR: Yeah, I guess he was -- he wanted to -- he wanted to -- and I was bold against him, and he said that. I give him credit for that.

GOLDBERG: Well, we like Rush. Rush is interesting. He has some interesting stuff to say. Not all the time, but sometimes.

RUSH: That's Whoopi Goldberg. Something's not right here. I know it's Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Ramadan. (laughter) These things happen, and you can't make sense of them. You take it for what it is.



Economy Stronger than Expected

This kind of story is almost a weekly occurrence; Rush references one of these stories and says:

RUSH: "Retail sales suggest the economy may be stronger than expected." Who is doing this expecting? "US retail sales surged during November making a surprisingly strong broad-based climb that suggests the economy might not be as weak as feared." By whom? "Meanwhile, US wholesale prices soared last month at their fastest pace since the Nixon administration. That's spurred by record gains in energy prices, a worrisome sign for Federal Reserve officials. Price pressures appeared to seep beyond just energy and risk becoming embedded deeper in the production pipeline." Inflation! So the good news is out, but it's gotta be tempered by the bad news.

Immigration and Dems

This is one of the most important issues out there; what are the plans and intentions of the 3 top tier Democrats? There have been roughly 263 debates. So, where do they stand?

My Most Recent Favorite Vids:

The Swiftkids do a 2nd Hillary hit:

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=oW7s8TuvZ8U>

Ham Nation: on the Debate:

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=s99Pec0Sbu8>

Trunk Monkey compilation:

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=8avOiTUcD4Y>

One more Trunk Monkey:

http://youtube.com/watch?v=pFmgsydpA_U

Missed Opportunities

Hillary first spoke and then Obama spoke next, after a few interchanges. Two commentators have already asked the question, "Why didn't Obama go for the throat? Why didn't he say, 'You know that you and President Clinton could release those papers tomorrow if you wanted to; when you don't, it makes the entire Democratic party look bad; you make it appear like you have something to hide.' " But he didn't say that.



On the Iowa debate, the moderator asked Obama how he would offer the people of this country a new vision if he is depending upon several former

Clinton advisors when it comes to foreign affairs. Why didn't this moderator ask Clinton, "Why are your husband's former advisors on Obama's team?" She did not ask that question.