

# Conservative Review

Issue #7

A Digest of this Week's News and Views

January 13, 2008

## Trivialization of the Presidency

Why are we trivializing the office of the presidency? First of all, this is done through identify and populist politics, covered in the last issue. Secondly, this is done by both parties by their continued presence on entertainment shows. We are electing the most powerful person on planet earth; do we really want a jokester? Do we really need someone to whom we can relate and want to have a beer with?

## The New Voting Bloc

This could end the era of the Baby Boomers as presidential candidates. John McCain is too old to be a baby boomer and Barack Obama is too young. Everyone else is a baby boomer.

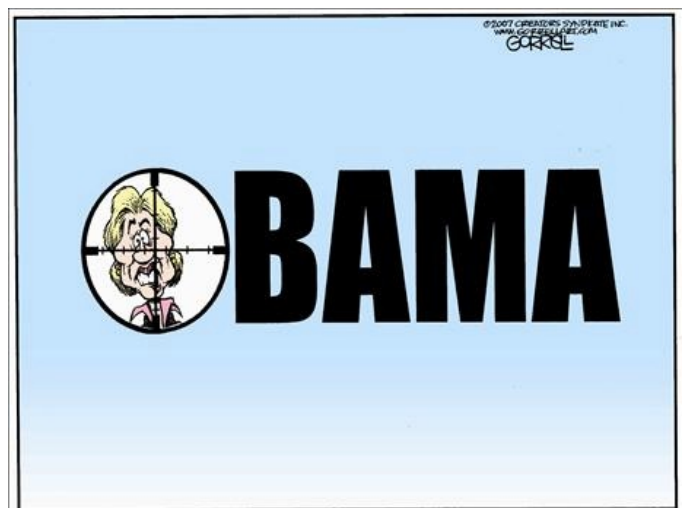
Obama, at least in Iowa, brought in a group of voters who had previously not participated en masse. However, on the negative side, after years of indoctrination by our school system, these are people who think that the government owes them something. These are people who think, if someone makes a lot of money, that is wrong, and the government needs to take that money from them and give it to more deserving people.

This is one reason that this new group of voters is so excited about Obama—he is young, articulate, and he will steal from the rich and give to the poor, because they have been taught, in order for someone to be rich, they had to make their fortunes on the backs of the little people.

## Stealing from the Rich

This is one of the saddest things about a third of the electorate today—they think that those people who make a lot of money owe them something. I live in a nice neighborhood, and there are a lot of families here which make more money than I do. It would never occur to me to walk up and down the street, knocking on doors, and asking those I perceive to be better off than me to give me money for my health insurance. But this is exactly what some people think government should do.

Our country was built on innovation and hard work and self-reliance. At this point, we are told by every economic expert there is that social security and medi-care and medi-cal are all in trouble. If we cannot pay for these things, how does it make sense to add additional *government benefits*?



# Evil Big Oil

One of the clearly defined enemies of liberalism is *Big Oil* because they charge too much money for gas, they make too much money, and they pollute the planet. Hilary Clinton has clearly stated that she wants some of those profits. Well, so do I, but at least I recognize that is robbery.

First of all, the price of oil is determined by the free market and by supply and demand. If gas is high here, it is high elsewhere as well. There are not a dozen executives sitting in an office in NYC saying, "I think we can squeeze these folk for \$4.25/gallon gas." And an underling responds, "Well, hell, then let's do it!" And suddenly we are paying more for gas.

There are a number of oil companies, some which are not US companies; there is greater demand for oil from countries like China and India. So, greater demand means higher prices.

Now, let's say that some liberal gets control and taxes Big Oil so much it hurts. What do you think is going to happen to your gas prices? If you do not have enough sense to answer that question, then you deserve the higher prices that you will be paying.

Big Oil is actually hundreds of companies. When their profit line is reduced, they raise prices. Who pays? You and I do. A tax on Big Oil is not a tax on some rich bunch of guys sitting in some marvelous office somewhere, causing them to downsize their lives and expectations. A tax on Big Oil is a tax on you and me.

## Conservatism vs. Liberalism

There are a lot of misconceptions about the differences in these two philosophies, and a lot has changed over the years as well. Conservatism is still incorrectly portrayed as a lily-white party of the rich are akin to fascists in some way, ruled by special interest groups and big corporations, who have some need to feed the great war machine. Liberalism is portrayed as being the party of the little guy, the helpless; a party which is pro-freedom and which supports freedom of expression and new ideas. These are missperceptions.

On most college campuses which are liberal, if a conservative comes to speak, it is not unusual for them to be shouted down, to have protests of various types which may involve the throwing of food as well as the limitation of his ability to speak to those who have come to listen to him. Even if it is clear that a question and answer period will be offered, in many cases, the speaker does not get that far. He rarely gets farther than the first or second statement.

Although Democrats are presented as the voice of the little guy, their contributions tend to far exceed that of Republican candidates, and they tend to represent the richest districts. Even though Hillary Clinton is portrayed as the candidate who will overthrow our corrupt medical system, guess who some of her largest contributors are?

Let's see if I can paint a more accurate picture of what the differences are.

Democrats love government, and they love big government even more. If there is a perceived problem out there, some governmental agency, study, or funding is represented as being the solution. We know this because every Democratic candidate for president is promoting some form of a government health care system.

Now, of course, they say that it will only cost so much, and a slight increase of taxes on the rich, careful governmental oversight and stopping the war in Iraq will easily take care of the cost—so is the party line. What is being proposed by the top 3 Democratic presidential contenders is a health care system which they will design and promote, despite the fact that none of them has run a business before, and they are proposing that they be allowed to run the largest business in the United States and in the world—a business which they have absolutely no experience in (although Hillary Clinton, to her credit, did shadow a nurse one day, so she has experience to that extent). What is sad is, a huge number of people will vote for these candidates, thinking that they will be getting something for free or at a very low price (I have an adult friend of mine—my age—who actually believes this).

Although Liberals were once known for the party of new ideas and innovative solutions, these are solutions which must fit within specific boundaries—government or some arm of the government must administer their solutions. An example of this is the recent proposal by President George Bush to revamp the social security system so that we would have more control over our accounts—the money would be ours, rather than the governments, and we would be able to invest a portion of our retirement in variety of investment vehicles. This was the greatest innovation ever proposed by either party with respect to social security, but it was shot down by the innovative liberals for several reasons: (1) George Bush proposed it, which automatically makes it bad; (2) there would be less governmental control over the ownership of the money—social security funds could not be as easily distributed to parties who had not contributed to social secure; and (3) there would be less governmental control over the investment of these funds—the money (actually, a portion of it) would have belonged to the person who paid into social security and they would have a say as to how a portion of their own money could be

invested. I know a tax person, who encourages everyone to invest in private retirement funds, who was against this proposal primarily for reason #1.

Another common liberal solution is to somehow get it into our education system. There are things and responsibilities of families which have been given over to the public school system, which is almost an monopoly (rich Democrats and rich Republicans can opt out of this monopoly, and many do). This is why we have sex education in schools, which does not seem to have cut back on promiscuity or on teen pregnancies (the liberal solution: *more sex education; obviously there is not enough*). There are schools who now teach that homosexuality is simply another option in life, no different than two people getting married (or not), and this is foisted on children too young to even know what homosexuality is.

Another example of a liberal program in the schools: free breakfast. There are, no doubt, some parents out there who do not see to their children's most basic needs—feeding them; so now government is supposed to take over and do the parent's job. There are a lot of reasons a kid shows up to school hungry, and sometimes, this is parental neglect; but to require government to take up the slack is a typical liberal solution, right or wrong. Now, what if you can get free food for your kid and you just have to fill out some papers periodically to do this—what will you do? Millions upon millions have chosen to let government take over feeding their kids for two meals a day.

Another example: universal pre-K. Our schools are failing; about half our kids are graduating and they cannot read, write, or do basic arithmetic. Same for the other half who do not graduate. What is the liberal solution? More school.

Do you see how this works? If the students in our public school system perform poorly, then the answer is more money and more school. Let's

ignore the successes of private schools and even home schooling.

It would be easy to accuse liberals of being socialists or of drifting toward socialism. When they call for greater taxes on successful businesses (like that evil big oil; like that evil store Wal-mart) and successful people (the evil rich), when they call for more government control over our schools and over medicine, that is socialism. When it is stated or implied that you should either get the same privileges as millionaires because they have somehow exploited you in order to make their millions, that is class warfare and class envy, the cornerstones to socialism.

Where most Democrats and Republicans agree: the poor and the helpless ought to receive some kind of governmental assistance. I have known a lot of people in my life who have governmental assistance or deserve governmental assistance. I have also known a larger number of people who received governmental assistance who should not have. I have seen firsthand where the government essentially *buys* houses for *poor people* (and, of course, the evil mortgage companies are then blamed when such a buyer walks away from a house which cost them less money to get into than a rent house). Let me see if I can state this clearly: these are votes bought and paid for with our taxes for the Democratic party. There is nothing humanitarian about it.

Let's contrast this with the more conservative Republican party (which is far less monolithic than this crop of Democratic presidential hopefuls).

Many of the conservative favor either school choice or some form of a voucher system (both of which are opposed by the top 3 Democratic candidates). School choice means that a parent has the *freedom* to choose the best school for their child. If a public (or private) school does not perform on any level, that school will go out of business. Do you see why a liberal opposes this?

It means freedom of choice, it means free enterprise will compete with government, and there may be schools set up where there is no free/reduced breakfast/lunch program and there may be schools where there is no federally mandated sex ed (or any other kind of federally mandated program).

Who will benefit? The children of those parents who cannot afford to send their kids to private schools. Who will benefit? Students who want a school which prepares them for college and students who do not need a school which prepares them for college (if 20% of the American workforce has a college degree, why in the hell do we try to push a college education onto 100% of our kids?). In short, conservatives want freedom of choice and liberals want government-run schools where choice is limited or nonexistent.

Let's take another example: taxes. If more taxes go to the government, who has the freedom? When someone has their wealth taken from them, they also have some of their freedom taken away as well. The more of our money that government has, the more power government has over our lives. The less money government has, the less control it has over our lives. Again, it is freedom (conservatives) versus government control (liberals).

Some conservatives propose a more transparent tax—a consumption tax. Since conservatives are not a monolithic group, not all of the top presidential candidates favor such an approach, but many of them do. Right now, productivity is taxed and savings are penalized. Some businesses have hidden governmental tax breaks and subsidies. Conservatives, for the most part, are against such preferential treatment and are against a tax system which is too unwieldy to understand or reform. How many liberals are proposing a more transparent tax system? None, of course.

There are more examples, but I am going to draw this to a close, but let me end with one statement: as a freedom loving conservative, there is nothing I want more than an intelligent Democratic party with clearly laid out positions whose candidates have experience and personal integrity. I want this because I believe in freedom. The current selection of Democratic candidates should be an embarrassment to liberals everywhere. They have no experience, they are not scrutinized by the press, and they often take positions which correspond to the latest polling information as opposed to some centrally, viscerally held position.

Why do I want better Democrats? Better Democrats means better Republicans. For most of President Bush's time in office, with a Republican Congress, they spent money like there was no tomorrow. Is there a problem? More money is the answer. This was an embarrassment to all conservative thinkers.

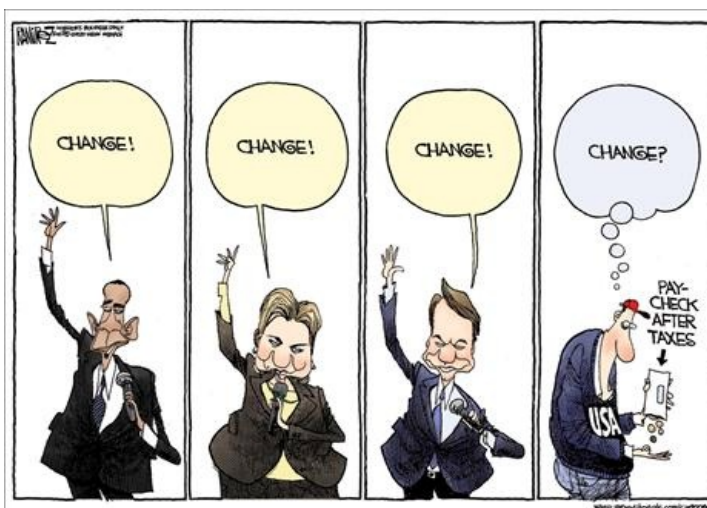
Furthermore, I would love to see another JFK or Truman (I have mixed feelings about FDR, however). Obama is not the 21<sup>st</sup> century JFK; he is just a man with no experience, typical big government solutions to everything, with little to recommend him beyond intelligence, charm and empty rhetoric.

## Rush: Tax Breaks for the Rich

The Democrat Party wants to portray all of this [so-called economic] misery as the result of George W. Bush's tax cuts for the rich, which, in fact, were tax increases for the rich. The rich tax increase went up, the amount of dollars they pay, top 1%, top 5%, top 10% up. Their rates may have gone down, but they're paying more of the income tax burden than ever before. So the Bush tax cuts were actually Bush tax increases. I'm spending time on this because the Democrats, I noticed after the debate last night, just couldn't stop talking about how rotten and horrible the economy is. They're trying to take it off of a Pew poll that showed that 84% of the American people are very happy with their lives, very comfortable with their lives, but 70% of those same people said that America is heading in the wrong direction. How in the hell can that be? How in the hell can that be? It's precisely because, while 84% think things are hunky-dory, they think they're not for everybody else. They're hearing about the subprime problem; they're hearing about mortgage foreclosures; they hear that stupid comment from John Edwards that every night in America 200,000 people are sleeping under bridges or on grates, and that most of them are US military veterans. Flat-out lie. They hear all this, "Oh, that's terrible, in America, veterans, we must be headed in the wrong direction," even though their own evidence, their own life's evidence is expressly counter.

## Rush: Economic Cycles

Washington Post also on the case here: "Economy Slumps to the Top of the Campaign Agenda." But then on page two, they ask, "What is the economy? Different voters have different anxieties about the economy. For some, it may be jobs." Really? Statistical full employment for how many months, years now? "For others it's



housing." Really? We have a housing crisis, a housing shortage. You try to find the good in everything. Do you realize that, as this housing bubble splits and the mortgage crisis goes on, do you realize what's happening in house prices? They're coming down, which is going to aid who? First-time home buyers. Yeah, it's not going to help existing home buyers, their equity may be awhile in returning. That's a cycle. It happens. Go back to the eighties.

Let's go back to the eighties again in oil. Oil got down to \$10 a barrel in the eighties. Oh, that was great for consumers, domestic oil business. Bottoms up. Plant 'em dead and plant a flag because they had to cap all the wells. They couldn't make money bringing oil out of the ground at ten bucks a barrel. Great for the consumer. You think things have never been worse. Those of you who were alive, do you remember the Carter years? They were so bad we had a misery index to measure it, interest rates at 21%, inflation was, what, 14%. Jimmy Carter created the modern Islamic Republic of Iran with the Ayatollah Khomeini by getting rid of the Shah of Iran. You think things are bad now? They've been much worse. The point is, we came out of it. You go back to any point in time, Great Depression, all these so-called recessions, look where we are now, better than ever. Every day in America is better than the day before.

## **Rush: Poor Bernadette Smith**

In Atlanta, Bernadette Smith, 31, has watched her credit-card debt climb to nearly \$40,000." Yeah, she was sitting there minding her own business, folks, poor woman, just sitting there doing her best to make it happen in this rotten economy known as the United States of America, one day, while she was minding her own business trying to be a great citizen, the credit card bill comes in and, lo and behold, her credit card debt is 40 grand. She just watched it climb to 40 grand. She had nothing to do with it, according here to the

LA Times. Just watched it climb. That's more than her annual take-home pay. What a sucky country.

This is not fair, ladies and gentlemen. The woman's credit card debt magically enlarges to the point it's larger than her take-home pay? "She works 13 hours a day at two jobs. Once obsessed with the latest style of designer jeans, Smith now shops for clothes only at Wal-Mart, or maybe Target." The embarrassment, why, the indignity. What a rotten country! "She has come to consider dinner at Ruby Tuesday a splurge." This is embarrassing. These people, apparently proud to have their names in the Los Angeles Times, with these details attached. Just watched her credit card debt climb to nearly 40 grand. Has that ever happened to you Mr. Snerdley? You been watching your credit card debt every month, it comes in and gets bigger, you just watch it happen and say, "How did this happen? This is not fair; this is not right, now I gotta go to Wal-Mart?" The credit card debt goes up, you usually have something to do with causing it, do you not? You weren't just sanding idly by.

The Story from the [LA times](#):

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-econ11jan11,1,4127932.story?track=crosspromo&coll=la-headlines-nation&ctrack=1&cset=true>

## **Rush: Another Sad Story**

"The faltering economy costs Leslie Garza, 18, nearly an hour of sleep each morning; her mom won't spend the gas money to drive her to downtown Los Angeles for her job scooping ice cream. So she sets the alarm early and takes the bus. Garza recently canceled her cellphone service to stretch her \$450-a-week paycheck." I tell you, what are we doing to our children, folks? What are we doing to our children? She's 18, and she has to get up an hour early to go scoop ice



cream? Losing an hour of sleep in the United States of America! "Enoch Brown, 49, a data-entry worker in Atlanta, said his annual household income is about \$100,000. Yet he's riding public transportation to work so he can save on gas and parking." So? He's making an economic decision. Doesn't mean the country's horrible, doesn't mean the economy's in the dregs. This is the Drive-By Media, and this is what they want you to think.

The Story from the [LA times](http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-econ11jan11,1,4127932.story?track=crosspromo&coll=la-headlines-nation&ctrack=1&cset=true):

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-econ11jan11,1,4127932.story?track=crosspromo&coll=la-headlines-nation&ctrack=1&cset=true>

