

Two Americas



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The conservative movement is in crisis. Modern conservatism was born in 1955 with the founding of *National Review*. Its editor, William F. Buckley Jr., said the publication's mission was to "stand athwart history, yelling stop!" But history has kept rolling along, smashing every traditional institution in its path. Family, faith, capitalism, our constitutional republic—they have all been shattered by modern liberalism. In the face of this ideological juggernaut, conservatives have offered sporadic and weak resistance. Their ideas have become stale. Too many prefer power to principles. The movement has become corrupt, lazy and ineffective. Having come to Washington to confront the political rot and moral decay, conservatives have become part of the establishment. In other words, they have become part of the problem.



The mission of *Reflections Magazine* is to launch a conservative moral and intellectual revival. We will bring together the finest minds and writers to defend the eternal principles of God, country and family. We seek to forge a reinvigorated conservative movement for the 21st century—one that champions a new nationalism, rooted in a culture of life, small government, a restoration of federalism and victory over Islamist terrorism. Capitol BuildingThe time has come for a one-nation conservatism that reaches out to minorities and women, the unborn and the poor, workers and students. The movement must go beyond its traditional base or else suffer a slow, agonizing death. Our goal is unabashedly counter-revolutionary: to roll back the forces of progressivism. Since the 1960s, a destructive liberal revolution has swept across our land. Characterized by radical secular humanism, sexual permissiveness and milk-toast socialism, it is transforming America into something our Founding Fathers would not only find unrecognizable but repugnant. We stand for the real America, the historic America, the eternal America—an America based on moral traditionalism, an America of limited government, self-reliance and entrepreneurship, an America that won its independence from imperial British rule, triumphed over Nazi Germany and Communist Russia, and has shed precious blood and treasure to liberate hundreds of millions of people around the world, and an America that champions human rights and freedom, in which every individual—regardless of race, color, gender or religion—possesses innate dignity and equal value in the eyes of our creator. We ask like-minded Americans to join us in this struggle for the heart and soul of America.

Edmund Burke, the great philosopher and godfather of Western conservatism, once said: "All that's necessary for the forces of evil to win in the world is for enough good men to do nothing." We refuse to do nothing. We will fight for what is right, true and good. This is the rock upon which we take our stand.

Mission:

The Edmund Burke Institute for American Renewal was founded in June, 2005 in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. We are a non-partisan, non-profit, education and outreach organization which aspires to engage and mobilize the millions of African Americans, Hispanics, women and other minorities in this country who share conservative values. We will inform conservative leaders about the needs and aspirations of minorities in order to make the latter feel welcome amongst us. Also, we want minorities to appreciate fully how conservatism is congruent with their values and goals. In short, we will build a steadfast alliance between conservative leaders and minority groups. We hope to preserve all those elements in the American republic that render us a strong and vibrant nation. Simultaneously, we are open to new ideas that will allow more citizens to enjoy the blessings of freedom, prosperity and moral renewal.



How We Differ From Other Conservative Organizations:

1. We seek to update conservative thought. We want to find original ideas on how to bolster timeless principles.
2. We are attentive to the needs of women and minorities. These are not peripheral but are a primary focus of our institute. We want the conservative movement to make adjustments in order to accommodate the unique aspirations of previously marginalized groups. We also want minorities to learn how the conservative movement can benefit them.
3. We are devoted to cultural issues, not just politics. The main battle of our time is to seize the initiative in the cultural arena.
4. We hope to foster a broad alliance with those who adhere to traditional moral principles. We seek to build bridges with individuals of all faiths in order to combat assaults on human dignity.
5. We write policy initiatives, opinion articles and monographs as well as organize symposiums and conferences that appeal to our audience. Hence we do not just think and write: we take action!
6. We do not focus exclusively on one group or on one issue. There are excellent minority conservative organizations across the United States that are currently working in isolation from one another. Instead, we bring these groups together on a variety of issues in order to find common ground and, thus, to be effective in achieving political and cultural change.

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Two Americas

By Jeffrey T. Kuhner

Gay marriage is coming to the District. The D.C. Council voted 11-2 on Tuesday to make the city the sixth jurisdiction in the United States to legalize same-sex unions.

Mayor Adrian M. Fenty has vowed to sign the legislation after a second Council vote Dec. 15. It will then go to Congress for a mandatory 30-day review process and be approved by the Democratic-controlled majority.

By early next year, the District will start authorizing marriage licenses to gay and lesbian couples - the seat of the federal government thereby joining Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont and (beginning in January) New Hampshire. The homosexual movement is on the march.

The bill represents the triumph of liberal elitism over the will of the people. The majority of District residents disapprove of same-sex marriage. In particular, the issue has exposed profound racial divisions. The city's small, latte-sipping, upscale and left-leaning white community generally favors it. Blacks - by large numbers and of all social and economic stripes - oppose it.

This is because most blacks are socially conservative. Religion plays a central role in their lives and communities. As devout Christians or Muslims, many blacks are pro-life cultural



traditionalists who do not share the Democratic Party's secular liberal agenda.

Yet gay marriage is being passed against their will. Marion Barry, the former mayor of the District, was one of the two council members to vote against the bill because it is highly unpopular with his overwhelmingly black constituents.

Mr. Barry understands that his job is to represent the values and interests of his voters rather than to kowtow to chic leftist causes that will further undermine the black community.

Many blacks resent the fact that homosexual activists have usurped the legacy of civil

rights. Gay-rights advocates argue that same-sex marriage is an extension of the struggle against oppression; only this time, it is not institutionalized racism but "homophobia" that must be dismantled. In their view, the legalization of gay marriage is a matter of equality under the law and extending full human rights to a discriminated-against segment of the population.

However, the quest to legalize gay marriage is not really about securing "justice" but is an attempt to legitimize homosexual behavior by encoding it into law.

Gays and lesbians are not forced to sit at the back of the bus as blacks once were. They are not denied voting rights or access to lunch counters. There are no permissive laws regarding the lynching of homosexuals. In short, gays and lesbians enjoy the same political and legal rights as do all other Americans.

They are free to engage in consensual sex in the privacy of their own bedrooms: They are not victims of state-sanctioned subjugation. To claim otherwise trivializes the unique brutal struggles faced by blacks throughout centuries of slavery and segregation.

Moreover, same-sex marriage represents a fundamental assault on the family unit. For thousands of years, the marital union between a man and a woman has been the central institution of Western civilization. It is the means by which society has perpetuated itself, producing and socializing children in order to transmit one generation to the next.

The primary aim of heterosexual marriage is to raise children. Hence, gay marriage is a contradiction in terms: the act of natural procreation is impossible. Almost every major religion - such as Christianity, Judaism and Islam - prohibits same-sex unions for this reason.

Only since the radical 1960s has marriage been redefined into an all-consuming quest for self-fulfillment and self-gratification. Selfishness has replaced selflessness. The results have been disastrous: abortion, skyrocketing divorce rates, rampant pornography, a dramatic increase

in out-of-wedlock births, the proliferation of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, the breakdown of the family, shattered homes, broken lives and the coarsening of our culture.

Homosexual marriage will deliver the death blow to the traditional family - and with it the very basis of traditional America. This is why leftists have embraced gay rights. Their goal is not to advance "civil rights" but to consolidate the sexual revolution.

The Democrats are the party of socialism and sex. And their primary victims have been blacks. The New Deal/Great Society welfare state has failed to improve the lives of blacks or eliminate the mass poverty endemic in the inner cities.

In fact, it has only ensured that many blacks remain dependent upon government handouts, stifling the habits of self-reliance, personal responsibility and entrepreneurship. The Democrats have kept blacks - along with other minorities and labor unions - as a reliable voting group by making them addicted to statism.

As a result, there are two Americas. One America is capitalist and mostly governed by a vibrant, wealth-generating private sector. The other is socialist, marked by economic stagnation and dirigisme.

For too long, the Democrats have taken the black vote for granted. They have ignored the economic interests and social values of most blacks. They have placed power and libertine leftist ideology above the needs of the black community. The District's drive toward same-sex marriage is simply another betrayal in a long line of abuse of blacks perpetrated by their Democratic leaders.

It is time for blacks to free themselves from the chains of liberalism.

-Jeffrey T. Kuhner is a columnist at The Washington Times and president of the Edmund Burke Institute. He is the daily radio host of the "Kuhner Show" on WTNT 570-AM (www.talk570.com) from noon to 3 p.m.

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An invisible man: A black conservative in the age of Obama

By Tracey L. Wells

According to the media, I do not exist. I am a black conservative male in the era of President Barack Obama and Democratic control of the House and Senate. According to the mainstream media, Hollywood and academia, I am on the wrong side of history. Am I trying to be white? Have I sold out?

My transformation from a liberal Democrat to a conservative was a long journey. I was raised in a two-parent, strict Christian household in San Diego, CA from the late 1960s until the mid-1980s. My father was a 27-year Navy veteran, a business owner and a church deacon. My mother was a strong, pious woman who was very active in the church.

I began to wonder why my parents always voted for Democratic candidates, even though their agenda did not improve our lives. I was told the same familiar line that Democrats care for the working class, the poor and minorities and that Republicans are the party of the wealthy. As a teen, I accepted this. After all, I was told by the media, the church and civil-rights organizations that I am born a victim and only the Democratic Party can help. My father would complain about taxes and illegal immigration; he hailed the importance of national security. Even at a young age, I understood that the Democratic Party ignored these issues. I also knew that Jimmy Carter's presidency was disastrous; I remember the long lines at gas stations and the embarrassment of the Iran hostage situation. My family backed the Democrats anyway.

When I attended college, I just wanted to fit in. I was self-conscious about being teased for not using much slang and for "speaking white."

To be more like my peers, I joined extremely far-left radical groups on and off campus that had goals to overthrow the government. Yet, I knew that these radical groups propagated ideas that contradicted my Christian beliefs. I was torn. I finally distanced myself and re-examined my support for the Democrats.

In southern California, the dominant influence on the values and politics of the youth was Hollywood. I noticed that Hollywood—with the assistance of liberals and Democrats—promoted the complete opposite of my Christian values. Hollywood says that conservative values are old-fashioned and we should "live and let live." The music industry, including rap music, also propagates this message. Thus, what I regarded as a detestable and vile lifestyle was constantly being championed by the prevailing culture and the Democratic Party.

I also questioned why so-called black leaders and all major civil rights organizations insisted that we (black people) give our votes to the candidate with a "D" after his or her name, without questioning their agendas. While I was about to vote in my first election in the mid-1980s, Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley made a last-minute campaign stop to my church in San Diego. He told our congregation to vote for him mainly due to his skin color. He did not really discuss the issues. I considered Mr. Bradley's statement to be arrogant. I voted for the Republican candidate who was the eventual winner, even though I still regarded myself as a Democrat.

For years, I religiously voted for the candidate with a "D" after his or her name. The Democrats

were consistently pandering to us, especially by coming to our church the week before an election. They would sing off-key and clap off-beat and pretend they cared. Yet, there was no change or improvement in the black community after every election. The schools were deplorable, the neighborhoods surrendered to gangs and there were more liquor stores than regular grocery stores and banks.

I noticed a common theme: The breakdown of the black family. The American family structure was deteriorating as a whole, but the black family structure was on life support. Liberal democratic social welfare programs became entitlements and these programs tore the family apart. Too many black men were going to prison and were not present to be fathers and to train their children. The two-parent, wholesome family was becoming an institution of the past—as Hollywood and the music industry glorified misogynistic movies and songs.

In addition, when welfare reform was discussed, most in the inner cities were ready to march and protest in opposition. It appeared to me that the goal of the Democratic Party was to keep us subjugated and keep control over us. The liberals' answer to every problem was that the government could help.

I was dissatisfied with the liberal and Democratic agenda. But I still refused to call myself a Republican or conservative. Maybe I was a so-called moderate or independent. Twice, I refused to vote for President George W. Bush even though I agreed with many of his policies more than with those of his Democratic challengers, Al Gore in 2000 and John Kerry in 2004.

I took on-line surveys during the 2004 election that showed I was a conservative—but I continued to resist: It could not be possible. The questions were basic. The surveys asked if I believed in the family structure and freedom of speech (even if I disagreed with the message); what my thoughts were on abortion, what my feelings were on national security and gun control and if I believed in lower taxes. I took several of these tests and I was appalled. Could

I really be a black conservative?

At last, I met and communicated with other black conservatives and realized I was a conservative, too. I told a good friend of mine, a conservative Jewish man, about my newly-discovered conservative leanings. He welcomed me to the club. He constantly challenged my faith in big government.

I did not share my discovery with too many blacks for fear of being labeled a sell-out. After all, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice were huge sell-outs, according to black liberals and the media. The silence and hypocrisy of the black church also appalled me. They were silent as the left took God out of the public sphere; they were silent on social issues such as abortion, homosexuality and the break-up of the family. I realized I had to speak out.

Even though I have been screamed at, cursed and called, “Uncle Tom,” I still stand by my conservative values.

I have since been challenged by black liberals who seem to want to make a black/white issue out of my conservative beliefs. Yet this decision is about lifestyle and beliefs—not race. Is it a black/white issue to have traditional values, love the country that you were born in, believe in a smaller, less-intrusive government and to pay lower taxes? Is it a black/white issue to disagree with harmful entitlement programs, prefer capitalism to a socialist-type economic system, and believe in maximum protection for the country from its enemies and for its borders? Is it a black/white issue to not buy into a utopian-type society where everyone is equal? Is it a black/white issue to believe in the Constitution for what it says, but not what it could say? Is it a black/white issue to believe that the government is the problem and not the solution?

I am frequently asked by black liberals and Democrats (usually in a combative way) how I can be conservative and what would our slave ancestors say? I usually ask them: “How would our slave ancestors feel about you being a Democrat?” I point out that Democrats fought

hard to keep slavery, introduced Jim Crow Laws, created the Ku Klux Klan, attempted to block a Republican-backed Civil Rights Bill in 1957 and filibustered the 1964 Civil Rights Bill.

The 2008 election was especially challenging. I knew that many of my family and friends blindly voted for Mr. Obama only because of his skin color and not the substance of his policies. They pressured me to do the same. There were heated debates and hurtful things said. I did not waiver. For the first time, I cast a vote for a Republican presidential candidate—even though Senator John McCain ran a weak and miserable campaign. I defied history.

I refuse to follow individuals who consider themselves “reverends” and the self-appointed leaders of Black America. I refuse to approve of their shake-down methods, while they profit and gain more perceived power. I will not be influenced by Hollywood actors or musicians who promote liberalism and harmful lifestyles. I will continue to refute the idea of the Democratic Party as “the party of the people”: It is the party of trial lawyers, unions, academia and radical

environmental groups. I refuse to have the mainstream media as my main source for news when their agenda is to promote liberalism. I also will not give my vote away just because a candidate has an “R” next to his or her name. I will view their credentials, policies and beliefs thoroughly before I give my vote.

Unless Mr. Obama suddenly moves to the right, he will not receive my vote when he runs for re-election in 2012. I will not blindly follow him because of his skin color. I will not be moved by his shallow speeches which promote an extreme leftist ideology. I will question his past associations and see their relevance to his current actions. Black liberals and Democrats can yell at me and try to intimidate me, but they cannot defeat my arguments.

I am a conservative, I am proud and I will spread the word. The mainstream media—and society at large—can pretend that I do not exist. Yet there are more of us than you think and we will be heard.

-Tracey L. Wells is a commercial insurance underwriter in Atlanta, Georgia.

Obama and Roosevelt: Marching toward a socialist America

By Kerry and Peggy McCarthy

Is President Barack Obama the new Franklin Delano Roosevelt ?

Since taking control of the Oval Office, Mr. Obama has been compared to numerous past presidents. Some say he is like John F. Kennedy because of his youth and charisma. Others link him to Abraham Lincoln, since he is considered a symbol of the culmination of Lincoln’s civil rights efforts. In fact, Mr. Obama’s supporters are adept at latching on to any and every positive past presidential characteristic—no matter how

superficial—in order to buttress their man. However, the most apt comparison of Mr. Obama to past presidents is to Roosevelt. The present administration anticipates success in pushing through bold new socialist programs to usher in an era of relief: a post-partisan, post-racial period led by a charismatic, beloved president.

Most Americans believe that programs initiated by Roosevelt during the Great Depression contributed to the recovery of the economy in

the 1940s. The New Deal consisted of a mixture of initiatives such as the National Recovery Administration—which was found to be unconstitutional and disbanded in 1935—and others that offered government involvement but were not overtly collectivist in nature. For example, programs such as Social Security seemed to offer help to the individual and were consistent with the philosophy of individualism.

Taken separately, New Deal initiatives appeared non-threatening to the individual. However, New Deal programs not only increased the size of government, but also changed the relationship of the individual to government. They convinced people to look to a charismatic leader for solutions to problems, acclimated Americans to the idea of a strong federal government and set the stage for the kind of centralization that will take place if America becomes a socialist country. Effectively, the New Deal set the United States on a collectivist course.

The next big step toward collectivization was known as The Great Society. Medicare and anti-poverty programs initiated by President Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s were not recognized as expansions of the New Deal. They also were not seen as detrimental to the individual. On the contrary, Johnson's plans were supported because they were seen as empowering disenfranchised, underprivileged individuals who deserved a helping hand. The acceptance and success of such measures emboldened liberals to consistently move the country to the left without any political fall-out.

With Mr. Obama as president and substantial Democrat majorities in both houses of Congress, liberals feel confident to make a final push for socialism. They hope the expansions of the New Deal that Americans have become accustomed to will serve as the



foundation on which socialism will succeed.

However, the problem for the Obama administration is that the sweeping “reforms” proposed such as health care and cap and trade cannot be disguised as individualistic. They are easily recognized as collectivist and socialistic. And the public has taken note, as is seen with Mr. Obama’s downward-spiraling approval ratings. Democrats’ overwhelming

desire to quickly establish socialism has incited public unrest.

Roosevelt's genius lay in the fact that people didn't see the inherently socialistic tendencies of the New Deal as threatening to individual freedoms. Although socialist in nature, Roosevelt's policies were welcomed as a salve to the nation's economic health and well-being. Now, however, the public clearly perceives Mr. Obama's initiatives as an attempt to solidify the Democratic Party's dominance and covertly advance socialism to the detriment of America.

Liberals do not recognize that their new programs go beyond what has been enacted in previous Democratic administrations. In

fact, they have crossed a line that Americans who value individuality cannot accept. Mr. Obama's use of the Roosevelt model to enact progressive legislation could damage both their reputations and finally expose liberals as promoters of a socialist utopia.

Republicans have been trying to point out for 75 years that the New Deal and other similar programs would lead to socialism. Many critics of liberalism believe that Roosevelt's programs put America on the road to socialism. To the public's chagrin, Mr. Obama has taken up FDR's socialist mantle and is now driving us there.

-Kerry W. and Peggy McCarthy are writers living in Indiana.

Let's roll

by Steve Malzberg



We are all familiar with the phrase, "Let's roll." Todd Beamer was a passenger on United Airlines flight 93, which was hijacked on September 11, 2001 and crashed in a field in Shanksville, PA.

When it became clear that the flight was being strategically routed toward the D.C. area, Beamer led a group of passengers into the cockpit and forced the plane to go down after breaking down the cockpit door. This bold, heroic act may have saved the White House from attack. Beamer's call to action was reportedly, "Are you ready? Let's roll."

On Saturday, December 5th, I had the honor of serving as Master of Ceremonies for the "9/11 Never Forget Coalition Rally" at Foley Square in downtown Manhattan, New York City. The location is in the shadow of the federal court

building where Khalid Shaikh Mohammed (KSM), Walid Muhammed Salih Mubarak Bin Attash, Ramzi Bin Al Shibh, Ali Abdul-Aziz Ali, and Mustafa Ahmed Al Hawsawi, all involved with the plotting and planning of the 9/11 attacks, are slated to be tried. The weather was bad. It was raining and it was cold, but the elements didn't deter thousands from showing up to express their outrage over the decision by Attorney General Eric Holder to bring these animals to the United States where they will be treated as U.S. citizens in civilian court.

The list of speakers was most impressive. First up was Debra Burlingame who lost her brother Charles "Chic" Burlingame III who was a pilot on American Airlines flight 77 which crashed into the Pentagon on September 11. She is the co-founder of 9/11 Families for a Safe & Strong America. Other speakers included Tim Brown who is a retired FDNY firefighter and a survivor of September 11. He was also a first responder to the 1993 terrorist attack on the

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World Trade Center. (I guess G.W. Bush didn't create terrorism after all!) Then there was Peter Regan who is an active FDNY firefighter and U.S. Marine who served two tours in Iraq. He lost his dad, firefighter, Donald Regan, FDNY Rescue Co. 3 in the attack. Peter introduced actor Brian Dennehy, who drove four hours to be there. He read a letter from Judea Pearl, the father of slain Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl, reportedly executed by KSM on videotape. Another superb speaker was Andy McCarthy, the great former federal prosecutor who helped put the blind Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman behind bars for his role in the 1993 WTC bombing, and who is a National Review Online contributing editor was his usual brilliant self. But the man who stole the show was David Beamer, Todd Beamer's dad.

Mr. Beamer, smartly attired in a light brown raincoat and brimmed rain hat, did not appear large in stature, but delivered a giant message. He read an open letter to President Barack Obama. He said that he considers the proposed trials to be a second attack on America, New York City and September 11 family members. Throughout his message to the president, Beamer punctuated his points with, "Mr. president, stop this attack."

Finally, he said, "Mr. President, I would have given my life to prevent September 11, 2001. I merely ask you to exercise leadership. Right this wrong, stop this attack. Commander-In-Chief, sir, once upon a time a young man issued a call

to action, to do the right thing, back when he said, 'Let's roll.' The free people on flight 93 did just that, successfully. Commander-In-Chief, sir, on this day, his old man is calling you to action. Stand up Commander, issue a command. Do the right thing, reverse this attack."

Bravo to Mr. Beamer. I know that his son was looking down on him and his tears of pride contributed to the rains that poured down upon us on that day. Unfortunately, the words and pleas of Mr. Beamer and all of the other speakers will fall on deaf, American-hating ears. Neither the president nor Mr. Holder will deny themselves and other America-bashers the joy of having KSM express the thoughts and words that they themselves could never reveal. When the mastermind of September 11 rises to speak in that courthouse and says America has been an evil nation, with an evil foreign policy and has treated Muslims poorly, Mr. Obama and Mr. Holder will be smiling somewhere out of sight from us all. And if KSM gets the chance to talk about how he was "tortured," and maybe even put CIA interrogators on the stand, Mr. Obama and Mr. Holder will pop the cork.

Click on link to view the C-Span coverage of the "9/11 Never Forget Rally": <http://www.c-spanarchives.org/program/290460-1>.

-Steve Malzberg is a nationally syndicated talk show host on the WOR Radio Network and a frequent guest on many television cable shows. He can be reached through www.worradionet.com.

Heroin fix drives Taliban

By Michael Fowler

The simplest and safest way to thwart an enemy's ability to conduct war is to destroy their supply lines. This is an old and useful tactic from the time of King Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562) of Babylon. His armies would surround their hapless victims who had taken refuge in forts, cut off all supplies, including water and food, until famine weakened their army, and then attack. This is a brutal but effective military ploy. We have been in Afghanistan for eight years—and neither the Bush administration nor the Obama administration has effectively utilized this strategy.



The solution to winning the war in Afghanistan is to destroy the Taliban's ability to make war, causing the decimation of the Taliban war machine. The Taliban's supply lines are the poppy fields. Eliminating those fields as a source of income would strike a fatal blow to the Taliban.

The Taliban are mafia drug-lords wrapped in Middle-Eastern freedom-fighter apparel. They generate \$100 to \$150 million annually by imposing "taxes" on opium farmers. Selling and exporting opium raises \$700 to \$800 million annually for the Taliban. This allows for the purchase of arms for insurgency, terrorism and black-market tyranny. Worldwide, Afghan heroin fuels 93 percent of a \$65 billion trade, far surpassing all of Mexico, Southeast Asia and South America combined. The United Nations estimates between 15 to 21 million people use this highly addictive drug. Afghan heroin alone

kills over 100,000 people each year, outweighing the U.S. combat losses of Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Grenada and Vietnam combined.

Our current policy of agricultural transformation allows the cultivation of opium poppies until economic incentives prompt farmers to take up other crops such as pomegranates and grapes. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2009 Annual Report, opium production has doubled under U.S. occupation and is so bountiful that the Taliban has reportedly stored 12,000 tons of opium, which can supply the entire world for three years. We need a new plan.

If the poppy fields in Afghanistan were eradicated, this would annihilate the Taliban's primary source of funding. This in turn would eliminate their ability to corrupt the Karzi government, buy arms, cause terror, protect al-

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Qaeda and buy foreign influence. It is the single, clearest solution and would end the havoc in southern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan while devastating world heroin trafficking in a matter of weeks. This is a win-win strategy.

Proponents against the eradication of Afghanistan's poppy fields argue that world demand will only increase production in other areas, making poppy destruction a useless endeavor. "If Afghanistan were suddenly wiped out as a producer of opium—by bad weather or a blight or eradication efforts—other parts of the world would simply emerge as new producers," said Founding Executive Director of the Drug Policy Alliance Ethan Nadelmann. This assumption, while based on the law of supply and demand, ignores the difficulties associated with expanding any type of production from clearing and preparing new land and setting up irrigation. Moreover, counter-drug operations performed in the United States and elsewhere use crop eradication as a means. Focused on the drug factor alone, Mr. Nadelmann misses the larger point: Destroying Afghan's poppy fields would bankrupt the Taliban, preventing them from resupplying arms and killing Americans.

Others believe increased Taliban recruitment is the primary objection to field destruction. U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates are both on record saying that destroying the poppy fields would strengthen the Taliban and that every disenfranchised farmer would become a Taliban recruit. That may be the case with the devastation of one or two fields, but it will not be the case with total destruction of any and all poppy fields.

A counterargument to this is that when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan almost three decades ago, opium production increased in response to increased arms expenditures. This shows that the economic needs of the insurgent army drive production. Moreover, eight-years of permissiveness have allowed the Taliban to strengthen their forces to an all-time high. In fact, 2009 was the highest loss of life for U.S. and NATO forces. Permitting opium production did not eliminate or curb the Taliban. Another

point is that when seasonal cultivation ends, the Taliban gains strengths as most of the opium farmers become fighters and take up arms after the harvest.

One of the fiercest arguments against the destruction of Afghanistan poppy fields is that if opium production is eliminated it will destroy the Afghanistan economy. First, no one makes that argument for Mexican drug-dealers or marijuana cultivators in California. Second, if the crops were removed the Taliban would collapse, Afghanistan would become safe and foreign investment money would flow into that country. More to the point, Afghan farmer's gross revenues from opium is about \$1 billion dollars according to 2007 U.N. estimates, while our 2007 U.S. Military operations cost taxpayers \$35 billion. Therefore, the plan should be: burn the fields, crush the Taliban, send the boys home, send one billion in aid and save \$34 billion a year.

The U.S. dominates the air in Afghanistan. Poppy fields grow in full sunlight, and forests do not obscure the poppy fields. Eradication efforts will not be hampered by a lack of discovery. Modern herbicides are quite safe and effective, as well as the use of tractors to plow the fields under. When the Afghan farmer is faced with the choice of taking U.S. assistance to grow legal crops or face total eradication of his crops and imprisonment, he will be far more motivated than he currently is to switch his crops.

In the past, the United States did not have the ability to eradicate those fields. Now, we are the occupier of Afghanistan and have the capacity and the duty to destroy this trade. Every poppy that grows empowers the Taliban with more artillery that will be used to kill American soldiers and Marines. No one has more power than Mr. Obama to dispatch the largest source of heroin export in the world. If he really wants get out of Afghanistan and cares about our troops, he must destroy those fields.

-Michael Fowler is the director of Veterans for Academic Freedom, a former Force Recon Marine, instructor of Christian apologetics, author and talk-radio host.

Beyond appeasement

By Herbert London

When Neville Chamberlain returned from Munich in 1936, he noted that based on his appeasement stance with Adolf Hitler, "peace was at hand." Alas, Chamberlain was duped and, as might have been expected, history has not treated him kindly. But, however false the concessions made by Hitler, Chamberlain believed he had obtained a concession—restraint on Nazi imperial ambitions.

In 2009, America's own Chamberlain, President Barack Obama has adopted a stance beyond appeasement; he engages in pre-emptive conciliation without any expectation of a *quid pro quo*. Mr. Obama doesn't wait to be double-crossed; he is concession man who gives before he is asked and remarkably puts American interests at risk in order to enhance his international standing.

Without securing any benefit from the withdrawal of missile sites and radars in Poland and the Czech Republic, Mr. Obama blithely gave up what had been negotiated and settled with our allies. This move was heralded by the Russians, as might be expected. But Russian leaders immediately noted that they will not use this gesture to put pressure on Iran's ambition to obtain nuclear weapons. After all, a Russian spokesman noted, "Why should we make a concession when you've decided to correct a mistake."

On September 23, President Obama addressed the United Nations and in the midst of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, he embraced the Palestinian position for a two-state solution based on the '67 borders, a divided Jerusalem, a cessation of new settlements in the West Bank and a "contiguous" Palestinian state. This was said without the slightest concession from the Palestinian side. There wasn't any demand that the state of Israel must be recognized. There wasn't the slightest recognition of defensible borders. There wasn't a hint that Palestinian violence would be arrested. And most significantly, there did not seem to be

the slightest recognition of geographic realities: A contiguous Palestinian state of Gaza and the West Bank means Israel would have to be divided in half.

Israel, America's only real ally in the Middle East, was being dismembered in front of the General Assembly amid thunderous applause from the ranks of tyrannical states. It was as if Mahmoud Ahmadinejad wrote Mr. Obama's speech.

Mr. Obama also suggested that he stands for the oppressed people of the world—a truly noble sentiment. Yet, in the next breath, he alluded to the electoral victory of Ahmadinejad in Iran. In that nation the oppressed were on the streets, beaten by the Revolutionary Guard, harassed in the homes, murdered by government thugs and raped in prison. Yet these oppressed people were ignored by our president. Here, again, an emotional concession was made without the slightest reciprocal gesture from the Iranian leadership.

And why should they or any of our enemies concede anything when Mr. Obama does their bidding? General Moammar Khadafy thinks Mr. Obama should be president for life. The only problem with this idea from Khadafy's perspective is that the president will soon run out of things to concede.

This plunge into the U.N. quagmire has made the president and, to an unprecedented degree, the nation, look weak and ineffectual. It appears as if the United States is in decline and cannot marshal the fortitude to defend its own interests. When Chavez, Castro, Ahmadinejad and Khadafy applaud the action of an American president, something must be wrong.

What is wrong, of course, is that this concession man in his pursuit of a transnational agenda no longer represents the will of the American people. He is, in his own eyes, president of the world, a world in which national sovereignty

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is subordinated to global concerns. From global warming to the zero option on nuclear weapons, Mr. Obama is employing these policy instruments to foster his global goals.

Where this will end is anyone's guess. But on one point I am sure: Should Mr. Obama's policies be pursued, the world of the future will see an America in decline and instability rampant on

the world stage. Welcome to the Second Dark Age.

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Why Sarah Palin is the Obama of the right

By Grace Vuoto

America has degenerated into a nation that no longer appreciates—or even creates—quality leaders. The meteoric ascendancy of former Governor of Alaska Sarah Palin is a case in point: What accounts for the streaming crowds who eagerly await Mrs. Palin as she tours the nation to promote her memoir, *Going Rogue*? Has Mrs. Palin earned her credentials as a leading Republican—possibly a presidential candidate in 2012?

At any other time in our history, even in the early 1990s, the answer to this question would have been a resounding “NO!” Mrs. Palin has been a mayor, a state governor for two years and a vice-presidential candidate for slightly more than two months. At any other time in our history, no sane man, woman or child would dare suggest that this is a resume for the highest office in the land.

Yet, today this is being discussed as possible. What advantages does Mrs. Palin have over other previous contenders for the Republican nomination such as Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney and Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee? She does not exceed these men in experience or knowledge. But she has one element they do not have: She is a star, a luminary. In other words, Mrs. Palin is a celebrity.

Mrs. Palin has legions of admirers because she embodies Super Woman. She is the everywoman fantasy: A really good-looking, fit, former beauty queen who has a husband, a family and a thriving career. For decades, women have been debating whether they can



“have it all.” In the early stages of the feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s, ambitious women were willing to sacrifice having a marriage and children in order to fulfill their professional ambitions. But this left too many bitter and alone. Career was not enough.

In the late 1980s, women gradually returned to idealize the family, but only if they could have this in tandem with their careers. Yet this left too many stretched thin—stressed, tired and angry, and with dwindling or paltry sex lives even within marriage. By the 1990s many women grudgingly concluded that one has to choose between motherhood and career. Silently, there was a return to motherhood, as many females decided that this was a step in their lives they did not want to forsake.

However, in contemporary America, many highly educated women who choose to rear

children find they are too bored, too isolated when they make this pledge. And those women who remain devoted to career long for motherhood. Women have found a dead end at every turn in trying to square this circle. Finally, the prevailing consensus is that women “can have it all—but not at the same time.” That is, women can enjoy their careers, take some time off to bear and rear children and then return to the workplace.

Mrs. Palin, however, stands for the woman who can marry, bear five children, keep fit and have a high-profile career *all at the same time*. In addition, she can take on a special-needs child. She is the feminine ideal: The ultimate juggler of multiple roles while not losing an ounce of her youthful vitality and sex appeal. For many, she embodies a sheer miracle.

In addition, Mrs. Palin is exceedingly charming. She can withstand media scrutiny and retain her dignity. She is feisty, combative and earthy. She has a populist touch: She is able to speak about complex issues in a simple, down-home manner that gives the audience a warm and comfy feeling.

Indeed, Mrs. Palin is exemplary in many ways. Yet does this mean she is qualified to be the future president of the United States?

The last time the nation experienced a similar phenomenon was in 2007-2008. Then, the luminary was a highly-educated, fit and good-looking black man who had a dazzling smile, an endearing family and outstanding skills as an orator. He had been a community organizer, a state senator and a U.S. Senator for several years—another thin resume. Yet Barack Obama represented the Ideal Black Man—the black man who appeared to be as comfortable in white circles as he was among blacks; the black man who could heal the nation’s racial wounds. He

too made his audience feel warm and fuzzy—especially when he promised we would be one, united nation, indivisible and harmonious. Many Americans fell in love—both with Mr. Obama and with his projections of a post-racial, post-partisan America. He peddled a delicious fantasy.

Mrs. Palin is now the right-wing freshman crush. She is the Obama of the right.

Both Mrs. Palin and Mr. Obama could only thrive in a television age, with a population that is poorly or not educated and has a short attention span. Both Mrs. Palin and Mr. Obama could only flourish in an era in which the enthusiasm of the moment is chosen over the judgment of the ages.

When Abraham Lincoln coined the phrase “government of the people, by the people and for the people,” surely he could not have imagined the likes of Mr. Obama and Mrs. Palin. It is not only they who disappoint with their thin skill sets—but also the people who exalt them to their elevated status. It may be rude to say it so boldly and frankly, but America is becoming a nation with a government of idiots, by idiots and for idiots.

The politics of the nation should not resemble another reality television program. When the bombs explode abroad—as in Afghanistan or Iraq—real people die. When bullets are sprayed at home—as at Fort Hood—real people die. When prosperity is squandered—as in our soaring debt and economic decline—real people suffer. The nation’s ills and needs are real. Yet, we are more interested in the bright colors of the circus.

-Grace Vuoto is the executive director of the Edmund Burke Institute for American Renewal.

Climategate: A threat to free speech and thought

By Loredana Vuoto

“I hate your opinions, but I would die to defend your right to express them.” This famous quote by the 18th-century philosopher Voltaire applies to Climategate, the current global warming scandal.

As leaders of 192 nations meet this week in Copenhagen, Denmark to outline a new global climate change agreement, debate rages concerning the veracity of scientific data supporting global warming. Global warming proponents are convinced that human activity is causing the earth’s temperature to rise to an alarming level; skeptics dispute that global warming is taking place—and even if it is, are nonetheless not convinced that this is a man-made occurrence.

The debate is further embroiled by revelations by Britain’s Climatic Research Unit (CRU) which has admitted to eliminating a substantial amount of the raw temperature data on which their assessments of global warming are based. CRU is a renowned research center specializing in climate change. Many of CRU’s findings were pivotal in shaping the policies adopted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Established in 1988 by the United Nations, the IPCC is known for aggressively promoting policies in favor of climate change. Its findings led to the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 which aimed at reducing greenhouse gases across the globe.



In late November, a computer hacker exposed hundreds of e-mails and other data from the CRU, proving that scientists had conspired to hide evidence that global warming is not as serious a threat as claimed by the IPCC. Among the e-mails leaked was one by CRU Director Phil Jones who mentions a “trick” to “hide the decline” in a chart showing global temperatures. Another e-mail cites how Mr. Jones and another scientist might boycott the academic journal, *Climate Research*, since they agreed to publish an article that was skeptical of man-made global warming. These latest revelations jeopardize the

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integrity and objectivity of scientific research.

Democrats and the Environmental Protection Agency have been staunchly promoting climate change policy based on the ICPP report that uses data produced by the CRU. Unfortunately, it appears that science is now being used by Democrats and leftist elites to promote radical left-wing policies such as the cap and trade bill that is currently stalled in the U.S. Congress.

Scientific institutions have a moral obligation to conduct impartial research, without injecting their own ideology into the data. Scientists are also obliged to disseminate information that is vital to the public so that an honest and open debate can occur. In democratic nations, the people have a right to make decisions based on legitimate scientific evidence—especially when the scientific evidence in question has broad implications, including passing legislation that will have profound economic consequences.

If the American government develops policies that are based on “false facts,” it risks misdiagnosing the real problem and dismissing adequate solutions. For example, Nathan Myhrvold, formerly Chief Technology Officer at Microsoft who is featured in the best-seller *Superfreakonomics* by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, argues that geo-engineering can be used to mitigate the effect of greenhouse

gases on the climate without reducing fossil fuel use. This is a viable option that would not negatively impact the economy like cap and trade which would raise the cost of energies that emit carbon dioxide, resulting in higher electricity costs.

Scientific research has been the bedrock of improving our civilization and making America the great nation that it is. As Richard Weaver noted in *Ideas Have Consequences*, the beginning of Western decline is the rejection of absolute truth. Climategate reveals the systematic efforts by some of the world’s leading global warming alarmist scientists to squelch truth and prevent a well-informed debate in schools, the media and government agencies.

In short, the belief that objective scientific evidence should be presented, no matter how controversial, is not a conservative or a liberal position; rather, it is a pro-science, pro-learning position. Let us not allow political correctness and radical ideologues to thwart scientific research. Excellence in the lab requires an iron commitment to follow the evidence, without prejudice, regardless of where the facts lead.

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