



FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE **NEWSLETTER #199 — AUG. 8, 2012**

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The 'Shapeshifter'

(posted by Steven W. Baker / SteveB, Aug. 8, 2012)

Geez...and we haven't even gotten to the Mormon cult thing yet...

"The Talented Mr. Romney" by Richard Eskow, Huffington Post

Aug. 7, 2012, (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rj-eskow/the-talented-mr-romney_b_1750073.html?utm_hp_ref=politics)



Put up or shut up! Mitt: "This is just one more front that I think is a very unfortunate and sad course."
(http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/07/mitt-romney-harry-reid-tax_n_1753082.html)

We tend to over-emphasize personalities in our politics especially in presidential campaigns. It matters who's president, of course, but our national elections are the product of much larger economic and social forces. They're increasingly dominated by a few financial powerhouses, and those who win them are then subjected to the intense gravitational pull of economic forces before even taking office.

The individuals running for president should be seen as the symptoms, as well as the causes, of larger events. Obama the Candidate was the product of social and economic yearnings which he shrewdly exploited. Bush the Candidate used larger forces in a shrewd way, too. He won and kept office by cleverly manipulating the corporate media, and by exploiting a network of relationships that extended from the boardrooms of Corporate America to the cloakroom of the United States Supreme Court.

To get lost in personalities during campaign season is to reduce all our elections to the presidential race and the presidential race to a reality show: America's Next Top President.

Having said all that: Man, can you believe that Mitt Romney?

What does it say about this moment in history that an individual with no discernible core is the GOP candidate? Not that the man is evil or hateful. Romney's lack of a self has led to the striking absence of even these qualities. Dick Cheney had a genuine, old school, castle-on-a-stormy-night-with-lightning-flashes kind of darkness. So did Dick Nixon. Mitt Romney just... *really, really wants the job.*

In that sense Romney resembles no historical or fictional figure in recent memory more than Tom Ripley, the protagonist of Patricia Highsmith's detective novel *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (played by Matt Damon in the movie). While the plots of the book and movie are somewhat different, both the literary and cinematic Ripleys had one quality in common: While he did very bad things -- cheating, lying, even killing -- Ripley never seemed like a particularly bad person. He just really wanted to *be* somebody.

Of course, Mitt Romney's never killed anyone (that we know of, anyway -- but that's true of everyone, isn't it?) He did brutalize that kid who dyed his hair in high school. You could argue that this incident happened so long that it doesn't cast much light on Romney's personality.

But Romney's reaction to the story happened in the present, and what was striking was his absolute lack of remorse when it came to light that the young man in question had been devastated by the experience. His reaction was eerily detached, even disinterested, as the suffering he had caused was revealed to him. He was cold and detached about it, like, like ...

... well, like a Patricia Highsmith character.

Romney's "European" trip was an oddly detached masquerade, too. His only stops on (or near) that continent were in Great Britain, a nation that's been struggling for many years to decide how "European" it wants to become, and Poland, which has only recently returned from decades spent outside the Europe of Western economics and Western imagination.

There's a reason for that, of course: Like Ripley stepping over a victim's corpse, Romney was stepping over the smoldering ruins of a continent devastated by the economic interests and philosophy which he represents. Whatever you do, *don't open that door!*

But that begs the question: Why make a big display of going to Europe only to skip over it like a flat shiny stone across a muddy lake? Because, like Tom Ripley, Romney is *all about appearances*. He wanted to *appear* like a statesman, *appear* like he was taking a European trip, *appear* like a President-to-be on an international mission.

Appearances were so much more importance than reality on this trip that it wasn't just irrelevant what Romney did or said. It was even irrelevant where he did or said it.

It could have been worse. Romney could have taken the advice that John Cochrane gave the *National Journal*. Cochrane, the *Journal* observes, is a "prominent supply-side economist at the University of Chicago." (Is there any other kind of economist at the University of Chicago?) Cochrane told the *Journal* that Europe needed a dose of "shock liberalization" and "more explicit free-market statements from Mr. Romney."

"Shock liberalization" and "explicit free-market" policies are exactly what Europe's been getting for the past several years, and they're destroying its economy. But Romney didn't even bother making that argument, because he's not an ideologue at heart. He's not *anything* at heart. He's just a poser.

That explains the Israel portion of Romney's trip, the one where he made the worst kind of gaffe a politician of his stripe can make: telling the truth. He praised the Israelis for managing their health economy so efficiently: "You spend eight percent of GDP on health care. You're a pretty healthy nation... Our gap with Israel is 10 points of GDP." It was promptly noted that Romney was embracing a highly socialized system.

What went wrong? As always, Romney was in "pander mode." He knew he was in Israel to pander to Sheldon Adelson, and to a few other billionaire funders and influential ideologues politically aligned with the Israeli Right. His flattering words about Israel's health care system were intended to please them, that's all. Romney didn't make this gaffe because he was "off script": He made it because he was on a *different* script.

That's how it goes in the Highsmith-like world of Mitt Romney. Sometimes one pose conflicts with another. Remember the shipboard scenes in *The Talented Mr. Ripley*? In fiction, these are moments of high tension. Oddly enough, in real-life politics nobody seems to care anymore.

Even Romney's Bain Capital experience had that Ripley flavor. Bain would swoop in on a company, pretend to be its friend and rescuer, then pick it clean and leave the remains for the crows. Then there was the matter of Romney's involvement with a company whose president, along with other employees, defrauded Medicare on a blood test scam. Romney wasn't accused of wrongdoing, but he did work alongside that president before promoting him into the top spot. And the business magazine *Forbes* confirms that he was a hands-on supervisor.

In one of life's little synchronicities, the company in question was called the Damon Corporation.

Tom Ripley's modus operandi was to work his way into your life as a trusted friend with no discernible identity or wishes of his own. Then, when you least expected it, he took everything you had. He took your life, in both senses of the word. What was once yours became his, including your identity, and you were no more.

Remember when Romney released his "59 page economic plan" to great fanfare last December? No? Neither do most people. But I do. I must admit I didn't understand Romney's personality back then like I do now. But what was striking at the time, and what seems even more striking now, is how carefully it was packaged to look like something it wasn't. What seemed conspicuous, in a foreshadowing of Ripleyesque moments to come, was the contrast between its utter economic vacuity and the great care given to the choice of typeface, its layout, and the design of its (meaningless) graphs.

Tom Ripley wore a Princeton jacket to play piano at a private party, even though he'd never gone to school there. That got him a job searching for a Princeton graduate in Europe, whose identity he eventually assumed. For Ripley the key to happiness was always *looking like somebody who mattered*. Appearances meant everything. Content meant nothing.

That also happens to be a good description of the Romney "jobs plan."

Economists are pressing Romney to explain how his plan works because the numbers don't add up. They don't know they're living in a unsettling mystery novel where *nothing* adds up. Other economists are staggered by the fact that Romney's tax plan would cut taxes for the richest among us while actually raising them for the 95 percent of Americans who aren't wealthy. The average American earning less than \$200,000 would get a tax hike of \$2,000, while the wealthiest 0.1 percent would get an average tax *cut* of nearly a quarter of a million dollars.

Who has the audacity to attempt a deception that big, that bold, that obvious? Who thinks they could get away with something like that? Tom Ripley, that's who. Romney's plan takes everybody else's money and gives it to ultra-rich people like himself. Remember: *What was once yours becomes his...*

Romney doesn't even have to persuade very many people that he's the real thing. Like a piano player in a Princeton jacket, he performs for a private and very exclusive audience. *Mother Jones* summarizes some fine work (with compelling graphs — <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/08/super-pac-dark-money-charts-sheldon-adelson-demos>) from Demos and USPIRG to show that 94 percent of all Super-PAC donations in this election cycle came from just over 1,000 people. They could gather comfortably for a croquet party at an estate in Greenwich or Newport.

And 57 percent of all individual Super-PAC donations came from just 47 people who each gave \$1 million or more, which includes the real money being given out by Adelson and the Koch Brothers. That group could fit comfortably in a parlor while Romney -- we mean *Ripley* -- played "Roll Out the Barrel" on the hostess' baby grand.

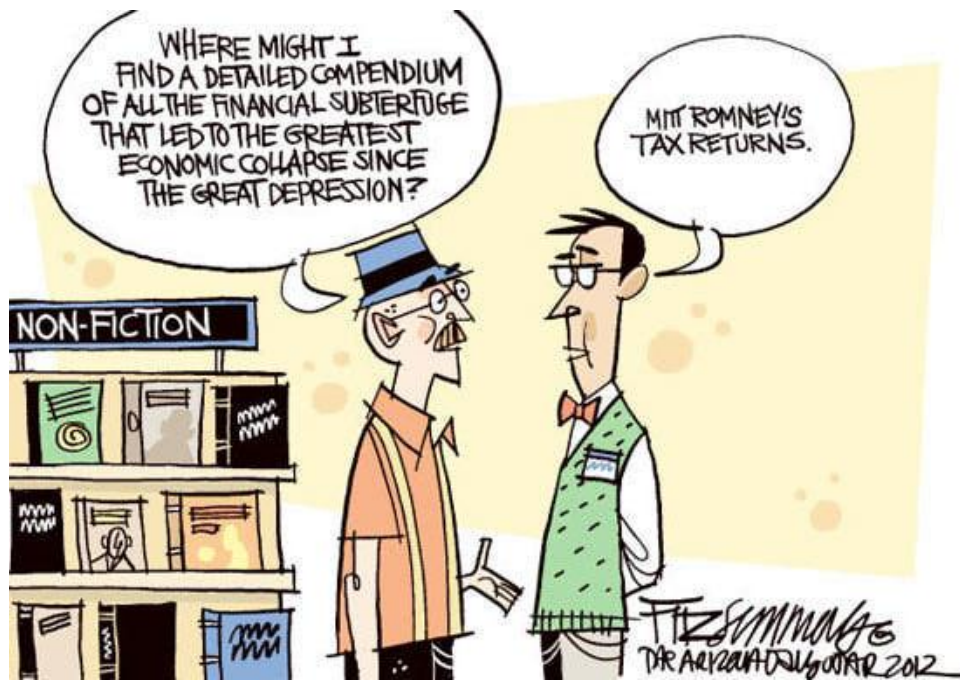
What does it say about our country that Mitt Romney is heading up the GOP ticket? Nobody in his own party seems to like him. Nobody outside his party, except some political insiders, seem to dislike him very much either. He's just there -- ingratiating himself, making himself useful, and always always always looking for the next opportunity.

Who is Mitt Romney? Let him into your life and you'll regret it. Before you know it your life will become *his* life.

Who is Mitt Romney? He's a public figure for whom, as Gertrude Stein said of Oakland, there's no "there" there. He's a shape-shifter, an identity hijacker, a human being who would rather *appear to be* than actually *be*. He's the living incarnation of the self-seeking, ethos-free, "always be closing" vacuousness of the hedge fund set. He's the Golem of Grosse Pointe, the Dybbuk of Darien, the animated spirit of vacuous wealth. He is soulless and amiably amoral ambition made flesh as a candidate for the highest office in the land.

Who is Mitt Romney? Don't bother turning the page because you already know the answer.

Who is Mitt Romney? He's Tom Ripley. And if he wants to be and you let him, someday he'll be *you*.



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"Obama's Success Schizophrenia" by Jon Kraushar, Fox 'News'

Aug. 6, 2012, (<http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2012/08/06/obamas-success-schizophrenia/>)

Ever notice how selective President Obama is when he bashes success?

He implies that many wealthy peoples' success makes them greedy—that they don't pay their "fair share" in taxes. Yet he milks them for campaign contributions.

He insults the success of small business owners, saying, "If you've got a business, you didn't build that. Somebody else made that happen." Yet he leans on small business owners to build jobs and the economy (which would help his re-election).

A recent cartoon by Steve Kelley of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* puts a twist on Obama's success schizophrenia. The cartoon's headline is "Why it's best that the president isn't going to the London Olympics." It shows three athletes on the Olympic victory stand as Obama says to them, "You didn't win that."

While the cartoon mocks the president, it actually underestimates the cynical way Obama manipulates the success of others. In fact, he would never talk to athletes that way.

Obama only lauds success when it benefits him. When Hollywood or Wall Street showers its wealth on him or when American athletes win Olympic medals or championships, the president gushes. At those times, he is intoxicated by success and loves how its perfume rubs off on him, politically.

When it comes to success, our president is a taker, not a maker.

However, when he can use personal success to incite the resentment and envy he believes he needs to win re-election, the president relishes bashing success. Thus, arguing for higher taxes on financially successful people, Obama has said, "If you've been successful, you didn't get there on your own. I'm always struck by people who think, well, it must be because I was just so smart. There are a lot of smart people out there. It must be because I worked harder than everybody else. Let me tell you something. There are a whole bunch of hard working people out there. If you were successful, somebody along the line gave you some help."

The president's suggestion that success derives from something other than personal effort is missing when he enthuses about sports and athletes. He doesn't demean the smarts and hard work of athletes by saying that other people are also smart and work hard. He doesn't make athletes feel less accomplished because coaches and parents (among others) helped them. He doesn't rip athletes for becoming super-rich because of their talents. He doesn't accuse jocks of lying, cheating and stealing as they rose to the top. He doesn't question the meritocracy of sports. He doesn't recommend bending the high performance standards of sports to include the less successful under a diversity quota. He doesn't diminish the personal achievements of athletes by calling them "lucky" or "fortunate." And he doesn't claim that all sports success is an outgrowth of big government (yet).

But the president will demonize successful business people—including his opponent, Mitt Romney—in all those ways. He doesn't attack athletes for their success because he loves to bask in their reflected glory. He attacks business people because fomenting resentment of their success—particularly their wealth—distracts from his own lack of success with the economy and job creation.

Among the most successful business people—or most successful athletes—only a minority deserve to be reproached for playing unfair because they've committed an actual crime or crossed an ethical line and cashed in on it. But Obama exposes the distortions of his demagoguery when he fails to make such distinctions.

It's sad that Obama resorts to tarring so many business people as villains while cozying up to athletes and trying to ride on their heroics. It's sad because the president himself has never been a real success in business or sports. But he feels free to denigrate or appropriate the success of others to divide or unite voters.

When it comes to success, Obama is a taker, not a maker.

For Obama, nothing succeeds like success—when he believes he can exploit others' success for his own success.

20120807-02	11:55	SteveB	Re: "Obama's Success Schizophrenia" (reply to SteveM, above)
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LOL! I believe the President "resorts to tarring so many business people as villains" **because they are villains!**

"Exploit[ing] others' success for his own success" **is a statement that makes no sense at all.**

Your article is full of falsehoods.

Romney has said pretty much the same thing Mr. Obama said, just in a slightly different context...

"Without question, we simply could not host Games in Salt Lake if it were not for the enormous spending and services of the federal government," Romney had said in a 2001 testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee during a hearing around cooperation between federal, state, local and private agencies for the Salt Lake City Olympics. (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/06/mitt-romney-olympics_n_1748235.html?utm_hp_ref=politics).

"2012: America's Last Free Election?" (Part 1) by Wes Vernon, RenewAmerica

July 16, 2012, (<http://www.renewamerica.com/columns/vernon/120716>)

A movie is about to be released that portrays what America will be like in 2016 if Barack Obama is re-elected. Will the presidential race of that year have all the credibility of a Hugo Chavez election in Venezuela? In the event Obama does get a second term, will his likely continued reach for ever-more power in the White House result in a gush of protests? And if so, how would those protests be handled by government? By a double-down on repression?

Where we stand now

America has faced threats to its continued existence many times in the past. We have always pulled through — sometimes imperfectly — but always in a manner by which we could survive.

At stake

One would be hard pressed to find a time when this nation did not face threats of either A — enemy attacks on the homeland; or B — armed insurrection on our own soil; or C — a second civil war; or D — Orwellian-style controls on our society; or E — an economic collapse dwarfing the Great Depression; or F — a combination of the above.

Now in 2012, we are at a juncture where all of these nightmare scenarios loom at once in what — coordinated or not — has the appearances of a vast pincer movement. Powerful forces intend to use any or all of them as leverage for the establishment of a one-world socialist society as the globe slips into darkness to which there is no recourse. It would be Orwell on steroids

In short, we face the prospect of, at best, the end of America "as we know it" — or at worst, and with the advent of modern weaponry, the literal end of America, period.

Surrounding us

We are all aware, of course, that the Islamic fundamentalist regime in Iran — despite protestations that its nuclear program is "peaceful" — will nonetheless have the ability to unleash atomic warfare on American interests overseas and our allies (read Israel).

Within our borders, Iran's terror network is preparing for our demise as well. Over a period of years, that regime of violence and hate has placed more than 40,000 of its agents in Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Venezuela.

You will notice these are all Latin American countries. The torturers, interrogators, and security agents amongst these Iranian agents (according to a former CIA spy working with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard who spoke to *WorldNet Daily*) can get to the U.S through Mexico. Given that President Obama has made our already-porous southern border even more of a joke, these agents should be in place to kill as many Americans as possible when the attack order comes.

At that point, the foreign invaders will find outpost sleeper cells, already operating throughout the United States, well-prepared to coordinate (likely) simultaneous attacks, the aim of which is to bring America to its knees. Shooting Western passenger airliners out of the sky in the event of an Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear facilities is only one option reportedly, according to intelligence sources. Presumably, that is one of many assignments for some of those 40,000-plus "sleeper" agents here.

Not incidentally

This column has repeatedly called attention to the alliance of Radical Islam and Communists (or what former "Red Diaper baby" David Horowitz calls "the Hate America Left").

In a few days (Thursday July 19), America's Survival, Inc., will hear from Konstantin Preobrazhensky — a former KGB officer who will give the inside story on that very connection. His presentation — scheduled for the National Press Club in Washington — will be part of an all-day conference of America's Survival, Inc.

At previous ASI sessions, we learned of serious discussions amongst otherwise seemingly rational people — including some with PHDs — as to how it will be necessary — come the revolution — to exterminate millions of unreconstructed American patriots at "re-education" camps.

[Emphasis mine. –SteveB]

Occupy Wall Street

Last year, we reported in this space that the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement had all the appearances of a budding violent revolution. The individual believed most responsible for launching OWS is one Kalle Lasn, a self-described "student of revolution," whose hatred of America is reflected in his view that American capitalism has spawned "disastrous consumerism" (as he sees it) and that the United States is "ripe for [mass] rage."

Speaking of rage

As an example of the kind of rage Lasn has in mind, the OWS-style violent protesters this year went on a May Day rampage in Seattle, smashed store windows and inflicted vandalism on banks. Even bystanders just sitting in their cars were not safe from assault.

Lasn's tactic is to lead up to the day of violence by using the "Trojan Horse tactic" — i.e., articulate a deceptively simple Trojan Horse demand so specific and so doable as to be impossible to ignore, according to Discover the Network.

That is right out of the play book of Saul Alinsky, the community organizer who was a model for Barack Obama. Alinsky's "how to" for revolutionaries taught that revolution is a slow, patient process of incremental, rather than sudden, transformation. As demands escalate and become less reasonable or doable, the revolution comes closer to the violent stage of push vs. shove.

Stephen Lerner, another activist of that stripe (and an OWS supporter) has advocated measures that could "literally cause a new financial crisis" and "bring down the stock market." These people are beyond off-the-charts. Does anyone imagine they honestly believe the non-"1 percent" of the elderly whose retirement portfolios are in the market constitute "the rich?" Beyond that, we will need to brace ourselves for their violent rampages if Obama loses in November.

Muslim Brotherhood

Terrorism expert Ken Timmerman, Republican candidate for Congress (Md.-8) recently noted that **top Obama administration officials "have held secret meetings with the Muslim Brotherhood since the president assumed office.** As Timmerman notes, **"It's time we learned whose side this administration really is on: the side of freedom or the side of Islamist tyranny."**

Make no mistake: The Muslim Brotherhood, founded in 1928 — just a few years after the fall of the Ottoman Empire in World War 1 — has laid out its designs on the West. The United States ultimately is to become the Islamist States of America (or some similar designation); all "infidels" who refuse to bow to Islam are to be killed; women have no rights; honor killings and beheadings are permissible; the West must incorporate "Shariah Law" in lieu of our Constitution and the Bill of rights; and the Muslim Brotherhood has said right out in public that it seeks takeover of the West by the use of deceit and serial lying.

No better example of that self-proclaimed dishonesty was exhibited than when Hosni Mubarak — an ally of the West — was ousted as head of state in Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood broke its promises not to participate in the Egyptian elections and not to attempt to control Parliament.

Now, it would be highly interesting to know what Obama and the Brotherhood discussed in these "secret meetings" he held with this worldwide organization whose aim is to destroy our civilization. The so-called "Arab Spring" that brought the Brotherhood to power in Egypt had the solid backing of Mr. Obama.

Brotherhood bares its fangs

So the Brotherhood — having won Egypt's presidential election by a thread, and having huddled with the alleged "leader of the free world" — now apparently feels less pressure to avoid "sticking it" to the U.S.

In Cairo, Egypt's President-elect Mohamed Morsi took a huge victory lap in proclaiming his victory. To hundreds of thousands of supporters in Tahir Square, he proclaimed that he will seek the release of Sheik Abdel-Rahman, who masterminded the first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993.

The "Blind Sheik" is serving time in a North Carolina prison for the bombing that killed 6, and also for unsuccessfully plotting to blow up other landmarks.

Chairman Peter King (R-N.Y.) of the House Homeland Security committee was outraged, saying it is "disgusting" that the president-elect would "declare that goal in an inaugural speech."

"The fact that he said this in his first speech," according to the Long Island congressman, "says to me that this is from the heart, and the Muslim Brotherhood has been trying to convince us that they have changed."

Of course, Obama would not be so politically stupid as to entertain that repulsive idea, at least not before the U.S. election.

That Morsi now feels free to reveal his true colors gives added weight to congressional candidate Ken Timmerman's question as to whose side our own president is on.

Yet another news item fails to offer reassurance on that score: The Obama administration not only excluded Israel from a counterterrorism conference in Spain, the president did not even mention Israel in his announcement of the event. How can you hold an international counterterrorism conference in the 21st century and not include the one ally that has had the most experience at it — unless the president wishes deliberately to send a signal as to "whose side" his administration really is on — or will be after the election?

Not the end

There is more...much more. And we will explore it in our next installment. Meanwhile, we can ponder this warning from respected historian Arthur Herman, who says we appear to be heading for another civil war — this one between "the makers and the Takers."

The former are those who created the wealth, and "the source of productivity, innovation, creativity and growth," and we would add those who work hard and just want to raise their families and live the American Dream. The latter are those guiding or influenced by leftist foundations, media, academia, public employee unions, and those who have prospered through government which in turn leads them into "cash cow" status for liberal politics.

Makers vs. takers? Perhaps there are those who believe makers vs. fakers would be just as appropriate.

Many Americans resent being forced by law into government dependency — as they pour gobs of money into government programs while alternative proposals offering more choice to the consumer (and a better return on the payment of his hard-earned tax dollars) have been rejected by politicians whose motive is pure power, as government piles on one nonsense regulation atop another.

It is not a pretty picture, but with neither side willing to buckle, it just may take a second civil war to settle the issue of what kind of America we really want.

More next time.

"2012: America's Last Free Election?" (Part 2) by Wes Vernon, RenewAmerica

July 19, 2012, (<http://www.renewamerica.com/columns/vernon/120719>)

Tons of cash are behind the giant and hostile metaphorical mowing machine that seeks to take down the United States. Big money. In our last column, we discussed the threats coming at us from all directions: militarily, diplomatically, culturally, economically, by way of intimidation, and subversion/infiltration of our major institutions.

People who hate this country mean business. They will not be satisfied until we are under their heel. They have their own ideas as to how the world should work, be it the communist who wants a Stalinist-like world order, or an Islamist who wants a worldwide Caliphate. Both want a "world order" (read world dictatorship).

As we have noted in this space, credible analyses have suggested we could be heading toward a second civil war: "the makers vs. the takers" as Arthur Herman puts it; or "the ruling class vs. country class," as outlined by Angelo Codevilla in his thin but intellectually solid book *The Ruling Class*.

But where do these destructive forces get their money? Obviously not from the proverbial thin air.

Here's your answer (not old stuff)

Regular readers of this column know a huge part of the answer to that question: George Soros, the multi-billionaire who has bestowed his money and attempted influence into almost every corner of American life. That's old stuff? Here's what's new:

Today, at about the time this column is posted, a gathering at the National Press Club was to present a study whose findings verify that the fundamental transformation of the United States is financed by offshore and secret money. That offshore finance is in fact generously provided by George Soros. As we are reminded by Cliff Kincaid (President of America's Survival Inc., the conference sponsor), Soros is a "moneybags for Barack Obama, the Democratic Party, and various Marxist groups."

ASI says Soros operates an offshore hedge fund, Quantum Funds, which makes the source of the funds "practically impossible to determine" (let your imagination run wild with that one).

If you see some irony here, given that agents for Mr. Soros's White House puppet make much of alleged (real or imagined) offshore accounts by the puppet's adversary in the presidential campaign, mark that down as (gasp!) another case of liberal hypocrisy. **Presumably one need not scratch his head to determine which is more suspicious: starting up Staples or funding a conspiracy to destroy this nation?**

The study released at the ASI conference exposes Soros "using his billions [including offshore] to wipe out American capitalism and the American way of life."

For example

George Soros, Angela Davis, and Critical Resistance by Tina Trent (Ph.D.) finds, for example, that Soros is bankrolling (just for starters) 1 — the work of the notorious Angela Davis, longtime communist, recipient of the Lenin Peace Prize from the old Soviet Union, still active in pushing for a Soviet-style America; and 2 — the Marxist Center for Constitutional Rights, now defending the criminal Wiki Leaks founder Julian Assange.

Army soldier Bradley Manning is on trial for passing classified information to Assange. Curiously (or perhaps not, depending on "whose side" the president is on), the Obama Justice Department has prohibited imposition of the death penalty in this case.

Interestingly (again, maybe not, if you look at the big picture), Wiki Leaks has posted an article defending the late Frank Marshall Davis, the Communist Party mentor of Barack Obama (and believed to be Obama's "real father"), and who has admitted sexual relations with children.

Open the prisons

The "Soros-Communist connection," as outlined by Dr. Trent's study, is also exemplified in the multibillionaire's funding of a Communist "prisoner's rights group" actually founded by "a former top official of the Moscow-financed Communist Party USA" (again Angela Davis).

1 — Several "prisoners' strikes" around the country have been supported by Critical Resistance, the Davis-guided and Soros-backed "criminals lobby."

2 — A lawsuit was filed by the Center for Constitutional Rights (another Soros-funded group) arguing that "solitary confinement" amounts to torture and "cruel and unusual" punishment. (Forget the rights of crime victims; they don't count here.)

3 — President Obama's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is moving toward banning criminal background checks on the grounds that they're "discriminatory."

Soros money is bankrolling the "criminals lobby" movement that hopes to make "prisoners' rights" a cause of the liberal left. The next step, as Kincaid points out, is "to empty the prisons themselves."

One can see this as laying the groundwork that could conceivably amount to a pivotal part of the chaos that will reign (coordinated with simultaneous or near-simultaneous attacks from other sources) during the bringing down of America.

Critical Resistance has championed the cause of fugitive Marilyn Buck, onetime member of the terrorist Weather Underground, who was serving time behind bars for a long list of crimes. That is, she was until she was freed from prison. Her release (as ASI exposed) was carried out by officials of the Obama/Holder Justice Department who falsely claimed that she had "repented her terrorist ways."

Old cause, new money

"Prison reform" has long been championed by the Communist Party and the National Lawyers Guild (a communist front, so designated as long ago as September 1950 by the House Committee on Un-American Activities).

In the 21st century, the cause has been revived by the money showered upon it by George Soros and his satellites.

Dr. Tina Trent, in her report released Thursday of this week, cites thousands of dollars Soros's Open Society Institute gave to support a book written by Wilbert Rideau, one of the most cold-blooded, merciless murderers ever to walk the planet, who evaded execution and was released from prison in 2005 for his 1961 crime, thanks to the efforts of Johnny Cochran (of O.J. Simpson trial fame). In a video, Rideau acknowledged he should have been executed for his crime. His lawyers had "gamed" the appeals system (possible model for "prison reform"?)

The Communist/Islamist nexus & Soros largesse

Frank Gaffney, President of the Center for Security Policy, is one of America's most astute analysts of the threats to America. An insightful quote attributed to him is that Sharia, or Islamic Law is "Communism with a God."

As Kincaid notes at the ASI conference, radical Muslims are working with communists for the abolition of capitalism and the American way of life. Eventually these two ideologies might come of blows, but in the meantime, they

constitute "an unholy alliance against America" (an alliance, we might add, that has the cooperation of the Soros interests).

(Repeated disclaimer — again: We're not talking about your Islamic neighbor or the nice lady in a burka who rings up a cash register at the supermarket. It is said that Islamic terrorists make up only 1 percent of the world's Islamic population. The worldwide Islamic population is at 1.62 billion. Meaning: 16 million violent radicals aiming to kill "infidels" — i.e., the rest of us...P.S. — There have been numerous reports of "Death to America" rhetoric preached within Mosques across America).

This column intends to return in the future to the ASI Conference. There are some excellent speakers lined up, and we need to talk about primary points that are made there.

The ubiquitous George Soros

One of the early efforts to expose the anti-American Soros empire was *The Shadow Party* by David Horowitz and Richard Poe.

The "Shadow Party," of course, is the Soros network. (And by the way, Soros's people have warned their critics, in effect, there's no point in trying to stop them because "that ship has sailed," as they privately warned Fox News amidst their (ultimately successful) effort to get Glenn Beck off cable TV. (Beck now does quite well on a nightly internet show).

Americans — Horowitz and Poe warn — should know that Soros and Co. have a plan to rewrite the U.S. Constitution. Obama has noted "flaws" in that same document (cherished to most of us) in that it bars him for doing the things he wants to do unilaterally (but which he does anyway, and we'll deal with that issue in the near future, as well).

It has been shown that the Soros machine 1 — has overthrown foreign governments, and might succeed doing the same thing here; 2 — has blanketed America through a vast network of private think tanks, foundations, unions, stealth PACs, and other front groups; 3 — has exchanged favors on both sides of the aisle; 4 — has taken effective control of the Democrat Party; and 5 — has sent its "radical infiltrators" to go about the business of quietly transforming America's societal, cultural, and political institutions "for more than a generation."

Beyond that...

The Soros machine has spent millions building or buying or inserting influence into 180 media outlets and front groups. Researching the extent of the far-flung, octopus-like Soros network is guaranteed to make your head swim. 180 media outlets. Does anyone wonder why no one on ABC, CBS, CNN, The New York Times, or The Washington Post has never — ever — done an investigative report on this individual so phenomenally powerful and influential in our society? Their silence is deafening.

Not only the journalist outlets themselves are tainted, but their "J schools" and supporting professional groups and newspaper "ombudsmen" — i.e., Pro-Publica's Journalism Advisory Board, the Center for Public Integrity, even the Columbia School of Journalism (long viewed as journalism's "crown jewel"!). Whatever happened to avoidance of "the appearance of conflict of interest?"

One source of information on Soros is Brent Bozell's Media Research Center, which has identified people whose names or works you would know. They would include David Gergen (CNN) , Christine Amanpour (ABC), Jill Abramson (Executive Editor — *New York Times*), Leonard Downie (former editor, now VP-Washington Post Co.).

You see, that's why Soros is not satisfied merely with Beck's removal. He wants to shut down all of Fox News and conservative talk radio. He's not satisfied with a measly 180 media outlets. He wants the entire media to be Obama's de facto propaganda ministry.

The anti-Fox campaign includes boycotting advertisers; false charges of racism; blaming conservative hosts for inciting violence (never mind many of Soros's favored allies and causes have preached and practiced violence); and forcing small businesses not to allow Fox in their shops or workplaces.

The Soros long-term goals include destroying the Tea Party (of course); neutralizing the conservative movement; putting the boot to market capitalism (through overbearing, unnecessary regulations and taxes); creating a government-controlled-and-funded national "news" organization; and eliminating Judeo-Christian values from our culture.

Again, there is more to come. Meanwhile, once again, the question: Will we be destroyed culturally from within?; by terrorism within?; by military attack?; by a second civil war?; by a one-man power trip? Or a combination of the above? Daunting "choices."

"2012: America's Last Free Election?" (Part 3) by Wes Vernon, RenewAmerica

Aug. 6, 2012, (<http://www.renewamerica.com/columns/vernon/120806>)

Months before Barack Obama assumed the presidency, many Americans seeking substance in lieu of "change" sloganeering had an uneasy feeling about the man. There were just enough unsettling reports on parts of his background to raise concerns. But at that time, those questions elicited few answers. That is because Mr. Obama had spent millions to hide his background.

Four years later in July of 2012, as President Obama was gearing up for his re-election bid, it was left to the outspoken John Sununu — former governor of New Hampshire — to encapsulate the widespread unease about the man voters sent to the White House in 2008. He should "learn to be an American," advised the not always diplomatic New Englander.

Granted, Sununu made the remark as he campaigned for the president's opponent Mitt Romney. Politically motivated or not, one will search in vain for a more succinct analysis of what there is about Barack Obama that causes so much doubt in the minds of a significant slice of the U.S. electorate.

But in the final analysis, is that mere superficiality? A conference here in Washington late last month connected the dots of information that have emerged during Mr. Obama's first (hopefully last) term. "Learn to be an American?" The information imparted at the one-day gathering of America's Survival, Inc., clearly shows that Mr. Sununu's phrase transcends mere "gut instinct." The conference, held at the National Press Club, was titled "Vetting Obama," the clear inference being that the president had escaped the normal "vetting" process when running for the highest office in the land.

Obama's mentor

Among the speakers was Paul Kengor, author of *The Communist — Frank Marshall Davis: The Untold Story of Barack Obama's Mentor*.

Frank Marshall Davis was a card-carrying member of the Communist Party USA. No, he was not merely an innocent misled "dupe." This man was hard core. A clue to his devotion to Moscow (and Joseph Stalin's slaughter of millions in Soviet gulags and across Eastern Europe) came in Davis's declaration, "I admire Russia for wiping out an economic system which permitted a handful of rich to exploit and beat gold from the millions of plain people....I honor the Red Nation."

Frank Marshall Davis's writings for communist-controlled newspapers in Chicago and Honolulu followed a rigid pro-Soviet line including 1 — referring to the good people resisting Soviet takeovers in Eastern Europe as "fascists"; 2 — accusing Democrat President Harry Truman of picking up on the conquest of Europe where Adolph Hitler left off; and 3 — blasting the Republican 80th Congress for enacting supposedly "phony tax cuts" that hurt the poor and padded the pockets of millionaires. The "rich" and "corporations," Davis wrote, should pay their "fair share." (Sound familiar in 2012?) That "phony" tax cut, by the way, was a prime factor in America's post-war prosperity.

Lineage from mid-20th to early 21st century

There are several interesting and relevant strands that went into the mindset of the man now in the White House.

A — David Canter, "nurtured in the USSR under Stalin's collectivization," pleaded the Fifth Amendment when questioned by a congressional committee as to his Communist Party membership. This same David Canter would later mentor young journalist David Axelrod, who in 2008 would help get Barack Obama elected president.

B — An interesting timeline traces the rise of Valerie Jarrett — one of the most influential advisors to President Obama: Her father-in-law Vernon Jarrett and her maternal grandfather Robert R. Taylor both worked with Frank Marshall Davis as "joint members of communist fronts or in suspected front activities," writes Kengor.

C — David Axelrod and Valerie Jarrett became President Obama's top advisors. Jarrett reportedly took the lead in forging the anti-First Amendment policy forcing religious-based institutions to provide insurance that goes against their fundamental beliefs. Axelrod is the de facto mastermind of the Obama 2012 re-election effort. His formula — in the current and past Obama campaigns — is to slime every person or entity that gets in Obama's way.

Sources

Paul Kengor's book is a must-read for anyone with a mind open enough to want to discover what makes our 44th president tick. The Communist reads like a study of a long-neglected narrative about a conspiracy that has sought to bring down this republic since shortly after the 1917 Russian revolution, throughout the Cold War, and thereafter and right on up to the present day. It is an informative read for that broader perspective as much as it is an outline of what led to Mr. Obama's world outlook. (Note: Davis's influence on Obama was thorough, from when the future president was a young boy and well into his teens).

The above is a mere sampling. The record shows Barack Obama — through much of his life and career — has been so thoroughly immersed in influences totally hostile to the United States that "learning to be an American" is naturally hard for him. He can't help it.

Paul Kengor, in researching for his book, consulted many credible sources, including, for example, Herbert Romerstein — arguably the world's greatest authority on communism and intelligence operations in general. As for how it was discovered that Frank Marshall Davis was in fact a very key influence in Obama's life, the best reference would be "Obama's Communist Mentor," Accuracy in Media, Feb. 18, 2008. That report was authored by Cliff Kincaid (now AIM's chief investigator, as well as President of July 19 conference sponsor, America's Survival, Inc.)

Obama & pro-Soviet "agent of Influence"

Barack Obama's lifelong support from dedicated hard-core communists (with both a large and small "c") did not end with Frank Marshall Davis. The woman who was instrumental to the future president's first job in politics was the subject of a talk at the recent conference. The speaker was Trevor Loudon, a New Zealand blogger and author of the 629-page encyclopedic *Barack Obama and the Enemies Within*.

(Note — The fact that a New Zealander feels compelled to issue the warning as to what is happening to America at this perilous time in its history speaks volumes as to the failure/refusal of America's mainstream media to inform us of the sheer volume of threats to our security. Loudon, a friend of this column, is concerned, looking from beyond our borders, that once the United States goes down, then so too does Western Civilization. The U.S. is the last bastion, Trevor believes. Once it is overtaken by its "enemies within," then what refuge is left?)

Alice Palmer

In his written research prepared for the conference (that goes into more detail than time for his actual July 19 speech would allow) Loudon briefly reviews such influences as Davis and Weather Undergrounders Bill Ayers and Bernadine Dorn, et al, but adds "the individual in Obama's life most closely tied to the Soviet Russian component of international communism was undoubtedly former Illinois State Senator Alice Palmer."

Indeed, though the relationship eventually went sour (for reasons having nothing to do with her communist affiliations), Alice Palmer "provided the first rung up the ladder to Obama's rise to the Oval Office."

Obama and Palmer were attracted to the Chicago affiliate of the New Party formed by such collaborators as "the Soviet and Cuban-affiliated Institute for Policy Studies" (a far, far left Washington think tank) and subject of past installments of this column.

Obama was Palmer's chief of staff as she prepared for her own (doomed) congressional race.

"Friends of Alice Palmer" included Barack Obama, along with future Democratic Socialists of America members Timuel Black and future congressman Danny Davis, both of whom remain good friends with Obama to this day. Rep. Danny Davis, as recently noted in this column, accepted an award from the Communist Party in Chicago.

Alice Palmer introduced Obama to the local political community at a 1995 gathering in the Chicago home of Weather Underground terrorists William Ayers and Bernadine Dorn.

So who exactly is this person?

Alice Palmer's propensity for far-left causes dates back to her high school days and early on in her career as an influential photo journalist.

Alice Palmer and her husband were invited by Grenada's government of Maurice Bishop to attend that country's first anniversary celebration of its Marxist Leninist "revolution."

The invite almost certainly was arranged by Don Rojas, a key player in the Bishop government who today is active in the U.S. via the Independent Progressive Politics network which includes several Marxist groups such as the Democratic Socialists of America and the Communist Party spinoff Committees of Correspondence.

In the 1980s, Alice Palmer was involved in Soviet-coordinated "peace" networks, including the (still existing) World Peace Council. The WPC directed most of its propaganda against Western military alliances, armaments, and the like. It was "the major Soviet-controlled Communist organization," under the tight grip of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the KGB.

Trevor Loudon notes that Alice Palmer was "an Executive Board member of the Communist Party USA-dominated U.S. Peace Council," the American affiliate of the World Peace council from 1983-1985.

Further

The prodigious New Zealand researcher cites a slew of Communists and their backers who in one way or the other have supported Barack Obama on his way to the White House, many of them in Alice Palmer's orbit.

The files seemingly are endless, both on Alice Palmer and other groups or individuals with whom Barack Obama has collaborated or who have helped in his quest for the nation's highest office. There is more. Much more. Until we prepare to move on to future installments of this series, we would leave with this thought.

Why?

Why on earth would the man who became America's first black president (in itself a reflection of the American dream) want to take over the world's best (but imperfect) health care system in favor of what is likely to end up as (at best impersonal) assembly-line medicine? Why would he presume the right to ignore the laws he doesn't like, and violate the Constitution (thereby violating his oath of office)? His constant overreach for power raises a legitimate question as to whether a second term will leave us with a 2016 election any more credible than those in Iran or Venezuela.

Why would he contemplate (as reportedly "in the wings") the roll-out in his second term of a "domestic" army supposedly to fight for the "global warming" hoax, but (even more frightening) bears the organizational potential for a federal police force?

Or why would he consider (as he reportedly is planning) a second-term assault on Americans' right to live in suburbia? Isn't this the United States of America, where people can choose to live where they want to live without Big Brother infringing on their precious freedoms by telling them via government fiat how they shall live? (BTW, I'm not necessarily a huge fan of suburbs, though I've lived in them most of my adult life after growing up in a city. But I do believe there are some things that come under the heading of "Live and let live." This man views that as a totally foreign concept — beyond his intellectual DNA.

Why the contempt of private sector (mostly small) business — the backbone of America's economy — with "You didn't build that"?

Time for "change"

Barack Obama sincerely believes in what he is doing. And that's the problem. It reflects everything he was taught starting at a tender age. Everything of any substance that he wishes for this country is wrong — totally incompatible with American values. Again, he can't help himself. That is who he is.

"Learn to be an American?" Good luck with the "learning" experience, Mr. President. Just not as on-the-job training at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. No way.

© Wes Vernon

20120807-04

12:41

SteveB

Re: "2012: America's Last Free Election?" (reply to SteveM, above) & "The Grand Old Party's Breaking Up"

Communists coming out of the woodwork, huh? Very bizarre, don't you think?

Here, you attempt to assassinate the characters of two good men. It won't work.

(Frank Marshall Davis in Hawaii, from Wikipedia): "He worked quietly, he wrote even when he no longer published his writings, and he talked with those who came to visit him--always seeking to present the truth of his vision, confident that social justice and human dignity would finally prevail. Indeed, despite his radical rhetoric, Davis was optimistic that good relations between ethnic groups could and would lead to a better world.

"It can be argued that Davis escaped defeat like a trickster, playing dead only to arise later and win the race, although the politics of defeat were all around him. If society seemed to defeat him by denying him financial rewards, publication, and status, he continued to write prolifically. He stood by his principle that the only way to achieve social equality was to acknowledge and discuss publicly the racial and ethnic dynamics in all their complexity situated in an unjust society. He provided a bold, defiant model for writers to hold onto their convictions and articulate them."

Here's something a little closer to the truth:

"The Grand Old Party's Breaking Up" by Froma Harrop, NationofChange

Aug. 7, 2012, (<http://www.nationofchange.org/grand-old-party-s-breaking-1344352652>)

When traditional Republicans tell their tea party wing that they have to negotiate with Democrats, the radicals' frequent response is: No, they don't. One side has to win. But before that fistfight at the edge of the falls can take place, one side has to win within the Republican Party. Civil wars are not pretty.

The tea party movement has become the dead bad-luck bird hanging around the GOP establishment's neck. Its anger-fueled energy has forced moderate Republicans off ballots in places where moderates tend to win. It has burdened otherwise centrist Republicans with radical positions that don't go well with a general electorate. **The Grand Old Party is being taken over by an ideological fringe with unclear motives, a loose grasp on reality and little interest in actually governing.**

The most recent victim is Ohio Republican Steven LaTourette, who says that he's had it after 18 years in the House. The uncompromising partisanship drove him out. "Anybody that doesn't understand that in a split government, you've got to find a common-ground way out of it, it's not going to be your way or the highway, is nuts," he said.

But suppose the right wing is nuts. Or suppose it isn't nuts but doesn't quite understand that pushing the United States to the brink of default, as it did last summer, is bad for the world, the United States and even itself. Or perhaps the radicals think that grown-ups somewhere will attend to the details while they play.

The right wing so badgered Maine Sen. Olympia Snowe that the Republican moderate — and shoo-in for re-election — has decided to leave the Senate. Now the party may lose her Senate seat to a Democrat. In Indiana, longtime Republican statesman Sen. Richard Lugar lost the primary to Richard Mourdock, a tea party favorite. That seat is now up in the air as Mourdock and Democratic Rep. Joe Donnelly battle it out. Donnelly has turned his opponent's tea party ties into a campaign issue.

Poor Mitt Romney is unable to pick sides — among fellow Republicans, that is. He says one thing in swing state Colorado, another in usually Republican Indiana. His socially moderate record as governor of Massachusetts would play well with most independents, who will ultimately decide the election. But he can't go there for fear of losing a right wing that does not like him.

Speaking of Massachusetts, Republican Sen. Scott Brown is now running neck and neck with Democrat Elizabeth Warren. He's done this in a generally liberal state by talking up his independent stands and how he wants to work with Democrats. But suppose he's re-elected and his fellow Republicans won't work with him, a likelihood, given the increasing demonization of moderates within the party.

And suppose — a real consideration for Massachusetts voters — Brown becomes a neutered outcast, while his re-election sends control of the closely divided Senate to the right-wingers. Do centrists in Massachusetts or anywhere else want tea party activist Jim DeMint, of South Carolina, controlling the powerful Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee?

And with the pragmatic Republican establishment under ideological attack, its moderates may no longer feel free to be themselves. Snowe voted to create the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which the right opposed. But with the Maine tea party later breathing down her neck, she only voted "present" during a filibuster of the appointee to run the bureau, the unobjectionable Richard Cordray, former attorney general of Ohio.

One's rooting for traditional Republicans to retake control of the asylum and restore a normal brand of politics. That would be very good for the country, a not-small consideration. The only side winning so far is the Democrats'.

20120807-05	12:43	Tom	Fw: "Service"
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We are getting "Serviced" from our government, & I don't appreciate it. The email below is from one of my Canadian friends.

[Source of original email unknown. –SteveB]

"Service"

I become confused when I hear the word "Service" used with these agencies:

Canada Revenue 'Service'
Canada Post 'Service'
Telephone 'Service'
Cable TV 'Service'
Civil 'Service'
Federal, province, city, & public 'Service'
Customer 'Service'

This is NOT what I thought 'Service' meant.

But today, I overheard two farmers talking, and one of them said he had hired a bull to 'Service' a few cows.

BAM!! It all came into focus. Now I understand what all those agencies are doing to us.

You are now as enlightened as I am.

;-(. . . I.R.S. for U.S.

20120807-06	14:30	SteveM	Fw: Lying Socialist Thieves
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The internal government emails contradict sworn testimony, in federal court and before Congress, given by several Obama administration figures. They also indicate that the administration misled lawmakers and the courts about the sequence of events surrounding the termination of those non-union pensions, and that administration figures violated federal law.

Rep. Turner blames Geithner for Delphi pensions decision, calls for pension...:

<http://dailycaller.com/2012/08/07/rep-turner-blames-geithner-for-delphi-pensions-decision-calls-for-pension-restoration/>.

Emails: Geithner, Treasury drove cutoff of non-union Delphi workers' pensions:

<http://dailycaller.com/2012/08/07/emails-geithner-treasury-drove-cutoff-of-non-union-delphi-workers-pensions/>.

Obama administration footprints all over denial of pension benefits to non-union...:

<http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2012/08/obama-administration-footprints-all-over-denial-of-pension-benefits-to-non-union-delphi-employees.php>.

Leaked Emails Put Tim Geithner Behind Delphi Non-Union Pension Elimination:

<http://www.inquisitr.com/294984/leaked-emails-put-tim-geithner-behind-delphi-non-union-pension-elimination/>.

Find Reviews by Make: <http://www.thetruthaboutcars.com/2012/08/455806/>.

Tim Geithner Pressures Delphi to Cut 20K Worker Pensions Shows Obama is In...:

<http://www.policymic.com/articles/12395/tim-geithner-pressure-delphi-to-cut-20k-worker-pensions-shows-obama-is-in-bed-with-unions>.

Emails show Obama administration involvement in killing non-union auto pensions:

<http://www.humanevents.com/2012/08/07/emails-show-obama-administration-involvement-in-killing-non-union-auto-pensions/>.

FLASHBACK: Obama in 2008: Failure to protect pensions 'not the America I...:

<http://dailycaller.com/2012/08/07/flashback-obama-in-2008-failure-to-protect-pensions-not-the-america-i-believe-in/>.

Auto-Bailout Casualties: <http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/313125/auto-bailout-casualties-john-berlau>.

20120807-07 15:34 SteveB Re: Lying Socialist Thieves (reply to SteveM, above)

Ya, one of Bush's guys. I thought O should have gotten rid of all of them from the beginning.

You see, O isn't nearly radical enough!

P.S. If, in all this time, the courts have done nothing, it doesn't seem like there's much of a case here...

20120807-09 16:18 SteveM Re: Lying Socialist Thieves (reply to SteveB, above)

Why Obama is a Marxist: **Being jealous of the rich and stealing their money. (The 20,000 non union retirees are in court now.)**

To understand why Barack Obama is a Marxist all that is required is to understand his position on the Bush Tax Cuts.. I will be voting for Mitt. I think he's a clean-cut guy who will do the right things for the most part. But he's also rich, and because of that, he knows how to make money. So news flash for those who are struggling to find a job, or want a crack at the American dream—you want people who understand wealth creation to hold political offices. You certainly don't want confused ex-college professors who spent too much time reading Karl Marx in college while smoking large quantities of dope with other Marxist teachers at the University of Chicago.

The Marxist believes that economic production such as land, raw materials, factories, tools, and people should become common property, so that every member of society could work according to their capacities and consume according to their needs. To the Marxist this is the only way to prevent the rich from living at the expense of the poor. And that statement defines the Presidency of Barack Obama. It is his belief in this Marxist idea that makes him consider that he has a right to raise taxes on the rich, while supplementing the poor, and maintaining the middle-class because the goal is complete destruction of the rich to expand the middle-class. It is for these reasons, and this specific definition when matched to the behavior of Barack Obama that indicates without any question that Obama is the first open Marxist to ever sit in The White House.

"Political correctness is a doctrine, fostered by a delusional, illogical minority, and rabidly promoted by an unscrupulous mainstream media, which holds forth the proposition that it is entirely possible to pick up a turd by the clean end." —unknown

20120807-11 17:50 SteveB Re: Lying Socialist Thieves (reply to SteveM, above)

I appreciate your more thoughtful response.

You raise three points:

1. President Obama is a "communist". Whatever that is... Are the Chinese still communists? The Russians? Even the North Vietnamese or Cubans? Not except by some weird definition. But perhaps you are one of those who would define the Europeans and Israelis as "communists"... maybe because they have decent government-involved health-care systems that, even R0mney admits, work much better than ours. Do you think Europeans don't have free enterprise or do you seriously doubt the President's commitment to free enterprise? Funny, to me, the first thing a "communist" would do is what our local Bolivian "communist", Evo Morales, did when he took power: write a new constitution, then take-over or control the big banks and big energy companies. The rest takes care of itself and is peanuts compared to the worlds of finance and energy. President Obama, even though he had an incredible opportunity to do much the same thing after Bush ran us off the cliff, instead chose to leave finance and energy in the hands of the crooks and fools who helped create the problems in the first place. He kowtows to the big money almost as badly as the Republicans, What a strange "communist"!

By the way...I don't know how to break this to you...the Bush tax cuts, for or against, have nothing to do with communism, only the fair distribution of taxation.

No one wants to pay taxes. They just, normally, recognize that they need certain services that, traditionally, only a government can provide. For years, they tried carrying guns, having guns in their homes, guns everywhere, because government was weak or non-existent. These people rejected this as a way of life and chose government instead, because that was the only way they could be safe. That's what history taught us and we have forgotten.

But government must be paid for, so taxes must be collected. Though they should, people don't want to pay taxes, in general. Maybe the tit-for-tat is too nebulous. A Republican is comfortable paying money directly to an expensive private school for his children, but doesn't feel he should have to pay property or income taxes to pay for the same thing as part of the traditional system of education that helped create a great country. Human nature, I guess.

To me, the only fair way to collect taxes is to devise a system whereby each taxpayer feels equal pain when they pay. Let's assume we tax only people who can afford to pay (they work and don't live in poverty, perhaps). And let's assume we have citizens who would feel a lot of pain if they had to pay \$1000 in taxes. How much would R0mney have to pay to feel the same pain? A lot more than what he actually pays, and he wants to pay even less! I don't think that's fair. R0mney's ideal is a flat tax. Haha. Equal pain is what progressive taxation is all about and it has been one of America's core principles for a long, long time. The Bush tax cuts go against this principle. To want them gone and the rich taxed more, as they used to be during America's more prosperous days, is certainly not "communist" unless you simply intend to call silly, meaningless names.

2. President Obama is a "confused ex-college professors who spent too much time reading Karl Marx in college while smoking large quantities of dope." Well, I just have to say that, even if all this is true, it sure doesn't seem to have affected the man in any negative way. This is really just more silly name-calling. You know something? For a long time now, many years, all the people I've met who never smoked marijuana have had important traits in common—they are invariably cowards, completely incapable of curiosity, or just plain stupid. None of these are good qualities in a President. The opposites of these qualities—courage, inquisitiveness and the willingness to study, and intelligence are good Presidential qualities and things I find in President Obama in abundance, even though I don't always agree with his actions.

3. R0mney would make a better President because of his business experience. This is really the heart of the matter, isn't it? And one to which I have no facile answer, yet I would like to explain my point of view on this one, right or wrong. I'm sure you remember that I never could see how wrecking those planes and sitting in that Hanoi prison could possibly have prepared McCain for the heavy-duty executive position that was soon to become available at the White House. I just don't see the connection. Business school, maybe. The way LBJ got there, yes. Prison, no. And isn't it really the same story with Mittens having been a (please excuse me while I execute 100 bows) businessman? And Bain Capital was really a pretty small business (whenever it was that he worked there), as Donald Trump has pointed out. They leveraged everything. Running anything Mitt has ever run is nothing compared to running the Executive branch of government for four years. I won't even get into all the problematic issues at Bain, like the outsourcing and raping and pillaging and destruction of jobs in the name of outrageous profits. Don't believe me? Google why Mittens didn't go to Italy during his alleged "European" tour-de-oops.

On the other hand, running the Executive branch of government for four years and having pulled it off at least moderately successfully is probably pretty good experience for being President. I just don't see how the two can be compared. If your argument for R0mney is experience, I simply find that argument lacking at this point in time. Bain Capital, Staples, the Olympics, even running a big Presidential campaign are all small fish compared to the whale of the POTUS job, the one that whitens the hair of all who hold the office.

I just don't see how experience can win this election for Mittens. He's gonna have to come up with some other reason to vote for him and his anti-middle class party. And the old Republican lies and scare tactics about the ALIEN, MUSLIM, COMMUNIST COMMUNITY ORGANIZER simply aren't going to cut it any better in this election than in the last. Just my humble opinion...

4. Oh, and political correctness is not a doctrine. :-)

I'm sure, just like President Obama in 2008, the largest thing Mittens has ever run in his life is this presidential campaign. For him, it's a \$1 billion business, at least.

But this time around, Mr. Obama has just a tad more experience under his belt than his opponent, don't you think?

20120807-19 21:51 Art Re: Lying Socialist Thieves (reply to all, above)

Has anyone else noticed the pattern here? I think it may be a childhood game where anything anyone says the other person tries to turn it around. I can't recall the name of the game.

Clearly some Republican strategist, if I can use the term that loosely, has made this a part of the campaign. Every time Romney's fingers are caught in the till, they try to turn it around. President Obama is the outsourcer in chief, the President ate dog, President Obama wants to deny people the opportunity to vote in Ohio, and on and on. It has happened on almost every issue so far. This "put up or shut up" is just the latest. As is so nicely presented below, the issue is Romney's taxes, not Reid's source. Note too, Reid has been very careful to say he has no idea how accurate this claim is. But as Reid says, Romney wouldn't qualify for any top position in the Federal Government today unless he agreed to release his back tax returns.

The Republicans obviously think the voting public is incredibly stupid and maybe they are right.

20120807-20 22:00 Tom Re: Lying Socialist Thieves (reply to Art, above)

Art, good points! I'll have Mittens Romney release more of his tax returns when President B. H. Obama releases his college transcripts, his passport records, and some of his "Law Review" opinion/papers!

20120807-08 15:58 SteveB 'Put up or shut up'??? GET SERIOUS!

From CNN (http://us.cnn.com/2012/08/07/politics/reid-romney-taxes/index.html?hpt=hp_t1):

Romney himself pushed back against Reid's accusations twice last week, insisting that he has paid a lot of money in taxes -- and telling the majority leader to either **"put up or shut up."**

Republicans are calling Reid a liar? Reid isn't running for President. Romney is (maybe).

Romney is telling Reid to "put up or shut up"???

That's exactly the point. That's what the world is saying to Romney!

All the coward has to do is produce his taxes and prove Reid is lying. What a golden opportunity!

If he doesn't, he loses all credibility in talking about the economy. He's already proven he has no credibility when talking about Obama's birthplace, Bain, the auto bailout, or foreign affairs (LOL).

That doesn't leave much territory for Romney. Maybe he could talk about Michael Vick and humane treatment of animals? Maybe he could talk about his multiple wives?

THIS ISSUE IS A VERY BIG DEAL, in my estimation. It is a complete roadblock for the GOP, unless they can make their candidate come clean.

They can call "liar" all they want. It's theirs to prove. No one else's.

T-R-A-N-S-P-A-R-E-N-C-Y!!!! The people demand it!

[20120807-10](#) 16:57 SteveM Re: 'Put up or shut up'??? GET SERIOUS! (reply to SteveB, above)

Reid used the well of the Senate where he could not be prosecuted for libel. Dummy Reid is the coward!

[20120807-13](#) 17:58 SteveB Re: 'Put up or shut up'??? GET SERIOUS! (reply to SteveM, above)

Sorry, no libel is possible. R0mney is a public figure. Anyone can say what they want. Otherwise, the President could have sued you all a long time ago.

Whomever you got your "fact" from about the floor of the Senate, you now know that person is a liar. Is it Rush? Glenn the lunatic?

Reid told his story in the Senate for emphasis, and has repeated it since, in at least one other venue, just in case you want to sue him for libel (which, by the way, R0mney might not want to do even if he could, because he would be forced to produce those tax returns). Darn!

The ball is clearly in R0mney's court...but no one's home...oh, maybe he's in one of his other homes...maybe the one with all the cool, expensive car elevators!

[20120807-12](#) 17:50 Art Re: 'Put up or shut up'??? GET SERIOUS! (reply to SteveB, above)

WAIT A MINUTE. I NEVER SMOKED MARIJUANA. Drank though. Does that count?

[20120807-14](#) 18:24 SteveB Re: 'Put up or shut up'??? GET SERIOUS! (reply to Art, above)

I'm not sure I've ever actually met you, Art. A situation I hope to change next year during our USA tour!

I guess there are just some of you who slipped through the cracks. And you were a Republican, right? ;-)

Remember, all my friends are communists! LOL!

[20120807-15](#) 18:53 Ben Re: 'Put up or shut up'??? GET SERIOUS! (reply to SteveB, above)

If the Tour includes Austin, Tom would like to meet you.

Tom is very interesting. He's a huge, powerful guy, nearly crippled from spine and knee damaged earned from many parachute drops under less than ideal conditions. Very bright; has an advanced degree in biology, and is an expert on some weird little salamander somewhere, or something like that; I believe he studied a species of monkey, too, in central America. He's been all over the world, and has eaten everything imaginable, and loves people.

He's been a real mentor to me and my fascination with sport shooting.

Show up with enough time on your hands, and I'll take you to the range!

[20120807-17](#) 21:15 SteveB Re: 'Put up or shut up'??? GET SERIOUS! (reply to Ben, above)

We're going around the whole outside of the continental US + Indiana. Up the East Coast from Florida to Maine, Niagara Falls, Michigan (beaver Island???), Chicago, Montana, Seattle, down the West Coast, then back across the southern US, returning to Florida. I plan on doing a book about the trip.

Definitely planning on stopping by Austin! Looking forward to good food, good music, and good companionship! Want to meet Tom, for sure! Maybe I'll even bring my own guns.

[20120807-16](#) 19:30 Art Re: 'Put up or shut up'??? GET SERIOUS! (reply to SteveB, above)

Remember, I'm a lot older than all you guys. I'm not even sure they had marijuana then. And yes, I was a Republican. On the other hand I've had a low tolerance for stupidity and selfishness. Hence the switch. Look forward to seeing you. Plenty of room but you have to like critters.

[20120807-18](#) 21:18 SteveB Re: 'Put up or shut up'??? GET SERIOUS! (reply to Art, above)

Appreciate the invite. Definitely looking forward to spending a little time with you.

I tell everyone we'll be staying at their house for two weeks just to freak them out, but we're really planning on motels and a day or so in each locale.

Can't wait to meet your "critters"!

[20120807-21](#) 23:58 SteveG Graphic: Middle Class & Small Business Tax Cuts from the Democrats

David Axelrod, a senior adviser to President Barack Obama

"We passed without, frankly, the help of the Republican caucus, we passed **25 tax cuts last year**, mostly aimed at the middle class and small businesses."

~David Axelrod on Sunday, January 31st, 2010 in NBC's "Meet the Press"



<http://www.realtyaustin.com/blog/austin-real-estate-statistics/>



—Friends of the Middle,
Steven W. Baker (SteveB), Editor/Moderator

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