

BATTLE HYMN

Amid the jubilation of the Eastern Establishment and the proclamations of redemption for past sins, a defeated minority of Americans, myself among them, is experiencing an altogether different flood of emotions in the aftermath of the people's verdict. Bewilderment, disbelief, even shame.

When the roar of the masses fades, we are left with a man born to run for the nation's highest office but ill-equipped to hold it. In a mere two months, the White House will be occupied by someone who speaks of hope and building up yet will undoubtedly attempt to tear down the last vestiges of our constitutional government. George Washington's simple faith, Coolidge's sincerity, and Reagan's drive to preserve a free people contrast starkly with this demagogue, who degrades reason through petty persuasion.

To him the unalienable rights of man are not life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness but whatever government deems them to be. Nor does his trust reside in the character and ideals of a free people under the faithful watch of a sovereign God. Rather, at his core is an abiding faith in his own ability to transform a nation.

From the coming tyranny few institutions and customs are safe. Freedom of religion and economic liberty are obstacles on the road to a perfect society to be built through judicial decree and executive mandate.

For the philosophical descendants of Kirk, Buckley, and Goldwater, three options remain in the face of this impending calamity: apathy, détente, or confrontation. Apathy is inconceivable, as the lives and livelihoods of our fellow citizens and our posterity are at stake. Peaceful coexistence is unjustifiable, as any compromise with evil is bound to result in evil. Compromise with reason-

able statesmen of conflicting philosophies is often noble, but concessions to a despot are the first steps toward slavery. Confrontation, then, is the course we must take. The battle is lost, but the war may yet be won.

JUSTIN ROWLAND
Steubenville, Ohio

MCCAIN'S MISTAKE

"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing," wrote Edmund Burke. Evil can also triumph when good people do the wrong thing.

The Republicans are a confused party. This allows Democrats, with their seductive "socially conscious" materialism, to move in. Until Republicans get consistent about limited government, personal responsibility, and what it truly means to be pro-life, they will continue to get their clocks cleaned.

John McCain ran an honorable campaign, yet he failed at the critical moment. The bank bailout presented him with an opportunity to put Republicans behind an ethic of responsibility. But instead of putting Country First, the senator chose Country Club First.

JAMES MOSHER
Ledyard, Conn.

SAVE US!

Regarding Lew Rockwell's piece in the Nov. 13 issue, not voting would be playing right into their hands—roll over and die. How could one as loyal to the nation and its ailing system retreat into smug obscurity? Take your marbles and go home because they are not playing by your rules? Not voting is what led us into this mess we are in now.

If Rockwell does not retract his position, he must resign as head of his own organization. His mistake could lead to the end of freedom as we cherish it and put the nation in a critical state of vulnerability to attack.

There is only one choice, Lew. On that you are right. The choice is Obama to save the nation.

TIM HOLM
Via e-mail

ABSTINENCE EDUCATION

Throughout my voting life I've faced a conundrum because I've generally disliked the Republicans and have absolutely despised the Democrats.

My first vote was happily cast for Reagan in 1980. I voted for him again in 1984. I couldn't bring myself to vote for Bush in 1988, so I voted for Ron Paul, the Libertarian Party candidate. I voted for Ross Perot in 1992. I even voted for Ralph Nader in 2004, despite his crackpot economics, because I was so appalled by George W. Bush's ill-premised war in Iraq. The ballots I've cast for other offices have largely been for Republicans.

However, given the reckless borrowing and spending that Bush and the Republican Congress have undertaken, I could no longer bring myself to hold my nose and vote for any GOP candidates this year. I've finally become what I've threatened to become for years—a nonvoter. I've concluded that a vote for anyone is nothing more than a vote for a system where power-hungry politicians and greedy lobbyists wreck our future for their own self-interest. I'm done supporting that.

On Nov. 5, I woke up with a clean conscience, knowing that I abstained from selecting the lesser among evils.

ERIC P. BLANKENBURG
Via e-mail

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Contents

November 17, 2008 / Vol. 7, No. 22

COLUMNS

26 Patrick J. Buchanan: When Elephants Forget

27 Daniel Larison: We Are All Socialists Now

35 Bill Kauffman: Gardening at Night

NEWS & VIEWS

4 Fourteen Days: The Triumph of Hope; Where's the Third Party?; What's the Matter with Pennsylvania?

25 Deep Background: Why Syria Gave U.S. Attacks a Pass

ARTICLES

16 Paul Gottfried: Republicans stand athwart history yelling, "Left turn ahead!"

18 W. James Antle III: Congress had lower approval ratings than Bush, but Americans voted for more of the same.

20 Michael Brendan Dougherty: California's Proposition 8 won't stop gay marriage.

22 Steve Sailer: How the American property ladder fell over

ARTS & LETTERS

28 Steve Sailer: Oliver Stone's "W."

29 Brendan O'Neill: *The Prosecution of George W. Bush for Murder* by Vincent Bugliosi

31 David Gordon: *The Tyranny of Liberalism: Understanding and Overcoming Administered Freedom, Inquisitorial Tolerance, and Equality by Command* by James Kalb

33 Jeremy Beer: *Real Education: Four Simple Truths for Bringing America's Schools Back to Reality* by Charles Murray

[COVER]

Bush's Broken Record

The 43rd president leaves office without a legacy to stand on.

He Fought the Wars and the Wars Won

BY GARY BRECHER Empty flight suit **Page 6**

Full Faith and Bad Credit

BY PATRICK J. DENEEN Fiddling while Wall Street burns **Page 8**

A Long Train of Abuses

BY ALEXANDER COCKBURN On civil liberties, Bush followed Clinton. **Page 10**

Discounting Family Values

BY ALLAN CARLSON Terror War trumps Culture War. **Page 12**

Conservatives Follow the Leader

BY LLEWELLYN H. ROCKWELL JR. Anything for the White House **Page 14**

COVER ILLUSTRATION: CHRIS HIERS

[PRESIDENT]

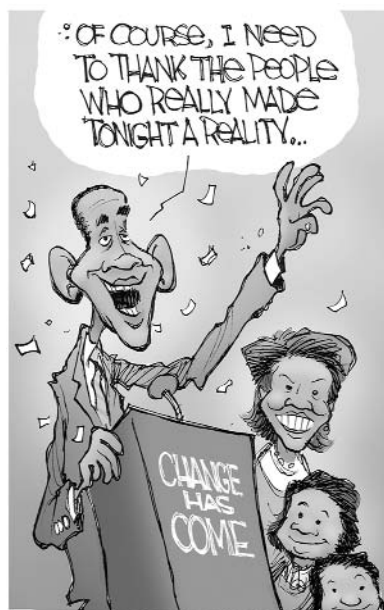
I HOPE, THEREFORE I AM

Perhaps the revelers pouring into American streets to celebrate Barack Obama's victory were honoring his historic achievement. More likely they—like the pundits who narrated the festivities—were congratulating themselves. We are so tolerant, so progressive, so open to change. What sort of change exactly? The bumper sticker didn't specify.

Politics is in large part pageantry—emblem wrapped in ceremony spun by rhetoric. But candidates come with agendas, and in this case the crowds have been so caught up in what Obama symbolizes that they have little idea what he plans to do. One woman caught on tape at a late rally exulted that once Obama was president, she wouldn't have to put gas in her car or pay her mortgage. A Fox talker speculated on election night that Obama's party affiliation might not have mattered: voters were enamored with the "idea" of him.

Onto that void, they projected their fondest hopes. But Barack Obama is no blank. He ran without boasting of accomplishments because his record is so very thin: four years ago, he was an obscure Illinois legislator. But that doesn't mean he lacks ambition, and his short time in the Senate, radical writings, and dubious associations suggest a strong ideological orientation. For all his post-racial, post-partisan, post-everything-we-find-shameful-about-our-history press, this is a man of the Left. And his margin was wider than any Democrat's since LBJ.

America awoke Wednesday a changed country, but probably not in the way most people think. In voting for who they wish to be, they neglected to examine who Barack Obama is. His mindset is no less extreme than the office's departing occupant—and his mandate is far greater.



[CANDIDATES]

WHO'S ON THIRD?

"All political lives end in failure," said the British politician Enoch Powell. This seems especially true for third-party presidential candidates. Once more, for all the dissatisfaction with red-blue politics, the also-rans gained little traction. No minor challenger—black/white, Left/Right, sane/not—broke 1 percent.

There were small improvements for the 2008 outsiders. Ralph Nader, that quadrennial bronze-medalist, came third again, with more than 650,000 votes, a sizeable increase from his 2004 score of 407,992. Closest to him, Bob Barr, the Libertarian Party nominee, notched over 487,000 votes, almost 100,000 more than the LP got last cycle. The Constitution Party candidate, Chuck Baldwin, also outperformed his predecessor, winning over 174,000 votes.

Further down the list is Alan Keyes, the veteran electoral loser whom Obama beat in 2004 for the Illinois Senate seat. Keyes, a fervent pro-lifer who earlier this year compared his career to an abortion, formed his own America's Independent Party after failing to secure the nominations of the Republican and Constitution Parties. He ran in just three states, California, Colorado, and Florida, yet still—with the support of the Christian Falangist Party—attracted almost 35,000 votes. You can't keep a bad politician down. Look for another Keyes challenge in 2012, if not sooner.



[CULTURE]

OBAMA'S KEYSTONE

Republicans have proven once again that they don't understand Pennsylvania—though Pennsylvanians certainly understand the GOP. Bush went all-out to win the state in 2004, but couldn't. Republican Sen. Rick Santorum fell in '06. Now Obama has won a decisive victory in the Keystone State, 55 to 44 percent.

Pundits predicted that Pennsylvania might be the one state where Obama would prevail but Democrats might lose congressional seats. Not so. Putatively endangered incumbents John Murtha and Chris Carney cruised to reelection with margins well over 50 percent. Even Rep. Paul Kanjorski, all but written off by the pollsters, narrowly triumphed against challenger Lou Barletta—a strong conservative voice for restricting immigration and one of the few Republicans who actually deserved to win. Meanwhile, Democrats knocked off GOP Rep. Phil English in the Third District.

How could Republicans get Pennsylvania so wrong? Ironically, the GOP seems to believe the things that Democrats like Obama and Murtha say about the state: that it's full of racist hicks who cling to their guns and Bibles. In fact, the people clinging to their guns and Bibles are not the imbeciles that both parties take them for. They understood perfectly well what the GOP had accomplished in eight years under Bush and cast their ballots accordingly.