

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.



## Morning in America

WASHINGTON

**W**HAT A WONDERFUL MORN! Campaign '08 is a corpse. Step gently around it. Offer a gentle wave of the hand to those poor wretches over in the corner looking forlorn and lost. Those are the political junkies. They have awakened every day for almost two years eager for the electioneering fray: first the primaries, where Hillary was "inevitable" and Rudy the likely Republican candidate. Then they heaved and sweated for Senator Barack Obama or Senator John McCain. Now the election is over, and they are in withdrawal.

Yet most of the rest of us have reason to be relieved and frankly a bit proud of our country. Yes, the campaign was a blare of competing rhetorical sophistications. It was rare that either candidate uttered an applause line that did not either begin with a deceit or end with one. Senator Obama's yawp about giving 95 percent of us a tax cut is a comely example—after all, some 40 percent of his targeted audience pays no income taxes. And Senator McCain's rant against Wall Street for the financial crisis is another. The crisis began with those subprime mortgages from Fannie and Freddie and was exacerbated by cheap money and recklessly low interest rates from the Department of the Treasury and from the Fed.

Most of the rest of us can be proud of how this election has concluded. The United States has elected an African American to the presidency two generations after Jim Crow. There was no violence and very little playing of the race card. Senator Obama ran a deft campaign and his Chicago advisors created a formidable machine—pardon the term. He is from Chicago, and so am I. We know what a Chicago machine has been, and frankly I have not been reassured when I have heard him sing that he is running against "30 years of broken politics in Washington." Does he mean he is bringing in "fixed politics"? We from Chicago know what "fixed politics" has meant

in Chicago, and there the fix has been in for more than 30 years.

Yet beyond my little play on words, I, a Reagan conservative through and through, join with so many of my fellow Americans in taking pride in this election. Old Europe has disdained this country for years as racially prejudiced, though for years some of our most beloved popular figures have been African Americans. At this point we have had black generals in our military, black members of our presidential cabinets, black Supreme Court justices, black political leaders throughout the states, and black CEOs all over the lot. No European nation has shown such tolerance to color, ethnic origins, or religious and political disagreement. Spare us your canards about racial prejudice in the Great Republic, and may I remind our European critics that 2009, the year in which Senator Obama will be inaugurated to the presidency, is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, the Great Emancipator.

Aside from the political junkies, there is another tiny coterie of gloomy souls this post-election, the Clintonistas. Doubtless the gloomiest among them is the downcast former Boy President. He is actually, according to my sources, quite angry. With the election of Senator Obama, Bill Clinton's days of White House revelry are *finito*. He has wanted to get back into the White House for years. Relatively unreported, but nonetheless true, he wanted his wife to run in 2004. We saw how passionately he campaigned for her in 2008. Yet a return of the Clintons was never to be. As I said as early as the spring of 2007 in *The Clinton Crack-Up* (and in an interview with Brian Lamb on C-Span), the "inevitable" Hillary was "going to have real problems getting the nomination." She faced a serious challenge from a younger generation of Democrats that found its candidate in the junior senator from Illinois.

As I also reported, her husband is a dreadful campaigner for anyone but himself. When she turned to him in the primaries she apparently knew nothing of his limitations. In 2004, of the 14 candidates he

campaigned for, 12 lost. In the closing days of this campaign, when the former president campaigned for Senator Obama, we saw why he is so dreadful in campaigning for others. To Senator Obama's visible chagrin, Bill talked about himself first, then his White House advisors. When he finally referred to the 2008 Democratic candidate sitting nearby, he only diminished him. Now Bill is a has-been and the historians are going to note his failed presidency.

Soon we are going to be hearing that the Reagan conservatives are has-beens too. Well, we shall see. Critics have been writing obituaries for the conservative movement since 1964. I recall their pessimistic reports with great clarity in 1987. That was when the Reagan Revolution was supposedly finished off by Iran-Contra and a stock market decline. In the years ahead, the principles of Reagan conservatism came to be adopted even by Democrats. The reason is clear. Those principles protect personal liberty, encourage prosperity, and protect American national security.

In the coming months, the conservative movement will regroup. It will refine its principles for the present needs of the nation: growth, personal liberty, and national security. It will find the next generation of conservative political leaders. If President Obama really makes good on his promise to return to the New Deal of the 1930s and the Great Society of the 1960s, a revitalized conservative movement will be back on top sooner than one might expect. Recall if you will that this happened two years after the Clintons brought "change" to Washington in 1992.

## The Clown of Campaign '08

WASHINGTON

HOW IS IT THAT AN ATTRACTIVE WOMAN who has been involved in state and local government since the early 1990s without much controversy is now passed off in the media as an airhead? Yet her opponent, long known as an airhead, a braggart, and even a plagiarist, is now passed off as a statesman? I have in mind Governor Sarah Palin of Alaska and Senator Joe Biden of Delaware or Scranton, Pennsylvania, or wherever he now claims to hail from. In September Governor Palin sat before ABC's Charlie Gibson and CBS's Katie Couric and was asked any question that popped into their minds or the minds of their researchers. The comely governor

responded adequately. She might not win first prize on *Jeopardy!*, but then no *Jeopardy!* winner has governed Alaska. Nonetheless she is portrayed in the mainstream moron media as an airhead, and Senator Biden is a statesman.

Well, take a glance at Senator Biden's performance over a single month. On September 22 he bragged to a Baltimore audience that "If you want to know where al Qaeda lives, you want to know where bin Laden is, come back to Afghanistan with me. Come back to the area where my helicopter was forced down with a three-star general and three senators at 10,500 feet in the middle of those mountains. I can tell you where they are." Two days later he continued his B.S.-ing that al Qaeda's headquarters had been moved to "the mountains between Afghanistan and Pakistan, where my helicopter was recently forced down." Both statements were rehashes of his September 9 garbagespiel that "the super-highway of terror between Pakistan and Afghanistan [is] where my helicopter was forced down." Left unsaid by the senator—who rarely leaves anything unsaid—was that the helicopter was "brought down" not by enemy fire but by inclement weather.

In September he also reminded us that he is a plagiarist. In his 1988 presidential bid he was caught lifting from British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock the Welshman's biographical treacle, adapting it for an American audience thus: "My ancestors, who worked in the coal mines of northeast Pennsylvania and would come up after 12 hours and play football for four hours." In Mr. Kinnock's version his Welsh ancestors "could work eight hours underground and then come up and play football." This was a dreadful humiliation for Sen. Biden, made all the worse when it was revealed that he had faked his academic record and been accused of plagiarism in law school.

After being forced out of the 1988 race, the senator, one would have thought, would never again mention his "coal mining" heritage. Yet on September 21, while addressing an audience filled with coal miners in Virginia, he fibbed: "...I am a hard-coal miner—anthracite coal, Scranton, Pennsylvania. That's where I was born and raised." He was never a coal miner, and most of his early life was spent in Delaware.

Amazing as it sounds, all the recent pratfalls were committed by the Democrats' vice presidential nominee in but one month. Nonetheless, as we entered October it was Gov. Palin whom the media deemed controversial. ❀



## Commonweal

*Government-dictated subprime mortgages overthrow long-standing lending regulations and nudge the world into recession, and what does Commonweal's resident archangel behold? Well, it is the sad expiry of "unregulated free-market capitalism" and visions of Karl Marx tuning in to CNN:*

Karl Marx, were he still about, would surely be interested in the report that unregulated free-market capitalism has died in a flash, by its own hand. After all, it took seventy years and a cold war to bring down the Marxist economy established in the Soviet Union following the Bolshevik Revolution.

(October 10, 2008)

## The Progressive

*Matthew Rothschild, editor of the pish posh left's Old Faithful, enlightens us to the dismal state of race relations among his fellow progressives:*

So if the conditions are so ripe for an Obama victory, why is the race so close?

Because millions of white Americans, especially those who are forty-five and older, may not be able to bring themselves to vote for the black guy. It's that simple.

I got an inkling of this in the spring when I went to give a talk in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, about an hour north of Milwaukee. At the dinner before-

hand, I was sitting with three elderly white women, who told me they had never voted against a Democrat in their lives. But this time they couldn't vote for Obama.

I asked why.

One woman instantly said, "Race has nothing to do with it," which I took to be a tell.

I asked her what was it, then. And she could not give me any coherent reason.

(October 2008)

## New York Review of Books

*In an era when the spread of Islam agitates even the most stout-hearted, the venerable NYRB reports an even more dire development in the geopolitical realm:*

Nevertheless, serious bird-watching (or birding, to use today's preferred term) has grown geometrically. In the Virginia town where I grew up, three of us looked for birds in the 1950s. Now thirty-five people there have formed an e-mail network where they regularly recount their birding adventures.

Tenfold growth in a half-century is probably a fair measure of the explosion of birding in the United States. The United States, however, is not unique. Birding is now expanding beyond its old base in northern Europe and the English-speaking world into Mediterranean and eastern Europe, and beyond.

(November 6, 2008)

## San Francisco Chronicle

*An urgent communiqué from "Ellen," high atop the Golden Gate Bridge:*

Editor—May the spirits of Martin Luther King Jr. and John Lennon be with us. High unemployment, hundreds of billions spent on military misadventures, tens of millions without access to healthcare, homes and habitats wiped out by global warming, trade agreements that benefit American executives and shareholders and rob American workers of their livelihood, foreclosures on families, the threat to national security from the implosion of greed-crazed financial institutions.

I have a dream. We invest in alternative energy and pass the National Health Insurance Act (HR676), creating new jobs as we clean up the environment and keep people healthy. Working families can buy houses where their children will grow to maturity. Schools have bigger budgets than prisons. We bring the troops home. We stop being the world's bully and start being a responsible world citizen. You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one.

—Ellen Karel  
Corte Madera

(September 30, 2008)

## The Progressive

*In the Progressive's innocent pages, literary critic Ezra Klein brings his considerable experience to bear in reviewing a recent bestseller:*

It is testament to Jerome Corsi's fine reputation that the experience of purchasing his new book, *The Obama Nation: Leftist Politics and the Cult of Personality*, is akin to nothing so much as buying pornography. There's the moment you find yourself holding it

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