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THEY SAID IT

“With so much invested emotionally, it will be a crushing psychological blow for liberals to see Bush reelected a week from this Tuesday. Furthermore, if Bush wins big it could be a defeat that threatens the very foundations of the liberal movement itself.

But even that is no excuse for some of the behavior we’re seeing. It’s no excuse for bending the rules, breaking the law, and generally treating this year’s election with an “anything goes” mentality where the ends justify any means. The country deserves - and the Constitution demands - much more than that.”

--Tom Bevan, *RealClearPolitics*, Sunday, October 24, 2004

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SOME THOUGHTS ON A KERRY PRESIDENCY

I continue to believe that President Bush will be reelected by a comfortable margin on November 2. But I thought it might be worthwhile this week to provide a preview of a few of the story themes that are likely to be featured in *Politics Et Cetera* during the next four years if I am wrong.

I will open with the only two positive observations about a Kerry presidency that I can conjure up at the present time, and then discuss two major concerns that I have on the domestic front. I will not address my fears concerning John Kerry’s foreign policy, although they are paramount in my mind, because I have written extensively about them in the past, most recently in the August 2 issue, in an article entitled “Kerry’s European Partners.” If Kerry is defeated next week then this article will, blessedly, have been for naught. If he wins, it will serve as a short introduction to a four-year-long discussion of these and related issues.

My first upbeat observation about a Kerry presidency is that what I used to call “blessed gridlock” will once again grip Capitol Hill, since the Republicans will most surely control both Houses of Congress for at least the next four years. And this should mean relative calm on the spending and new initiative front, despite Kerry’s almost fanatical propensity to spend taxpayer money on government programs. I am aware that Republican legislators are themselves big spenders, but I am counting on the fact that they would argue endlessly with the Kerry crowd over the details of spending bills and that this would slow the process somewhat.

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Bill Clinton did reasonably well dealing with a Republican Congress. But he had considerable personal charm, a great deal of experience working with legislatures while Governor of Arkansas, and excellent political instincts, which led him to support initiatives such as welfare reform that appealed to Republicans. Kerry has none of these qualities. He is one of the biggest, and possibly *the* biggest, of the big spenders in Washington and, unlike Bill, he does not appear to be at all politically flexible or imaginative. He is also, by all accounts, not very well liked among his colleagues on Capitol Hill, even in the Senate where he served for 20 years. And his legislative acumen borders on the pathetic, as evidenced by the fact that he produced absolutely nothing of significance legislatively during his long tenure in the Senate.

During the recent debates, he claimed credit for 56 legislative achievements. But the vast majority of these were of no importance whatsoever. For example, 24 were mere resolutions that had no chance of becoming law, such as a measure to change the name of the Committee on Small Business to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Ten others were bills to grant waivers to specific foreign-built vessels to transport cargo or people along the U.S. coastline, despite a 1920 law requiring that only U.S. built vessels be allowed to operate between U.S. ports. Because there were 10 different vessels involved, Kerry introduced 10 separate bills, all of which died in the House.

In 20 years, only five bills authored by Kerry actually passed both the Senate and the House and were signed by the President, and only two of these were even remotely significant. One was a 1999 measure that authorized \$53 million over four years to provide grants to women-owned small businesses. Another was a "save-the-dolphins" bill designed to reduce the incidental taking of marine mammals during commercial fishing operations.

Thus, my guess is that Kerry would be no better as president than he has been as a Senator when it comes

to legislative accomplishments, and this would not only be good news on the spending front but also with regard to any costly new initiatives he might dream up.

The second positive observation that I could make about a Kerry presidency is that it would probably doom Miss Hillary's chances of ever occupying the White House. This may seem of minor importance, but as far as I am concerned, if a Kerry presidency took the air out of Hillary's presidential balloon, it would provide proof of the old saying that it is an ill wind that blows no good.

Nothing is certain in this world, of course, but Hillary's shot at a run in 2008 would depend on Kerry's presidency crashing so badly that either he would decide not to run again or would be so weak that she could beat him out of the nomination via a primary challenge. Under either of these circumstances, her chances of winning in the general election would be very slim. She would have a shot at the White House in 2012, of course. But it is hard for me to image that she would be able to retain her position as the most popular and most electable Democrat in the nation through eight years of a Kerry presidency.

And this brings me to some concerns that I have about the implications for domestic policy of a Kerry presidency. For starters, I think it is critical to understand when considering this issue that while President Bush is fond of calling John Kerry a liberal, the fact is that the word reactionary is a much more fitting label for the Massachusetts Democrat.

In the first half of the 19th century, the term "reactionary" was used by the left to describe those individuals on the right who desperately opposed the extraordinary cultural, economic, and political changes sweeping across Europe in the wake of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. These "reactionaries" were defending the privileges and prerogatives of the leaders of the old order, most especially the Catholic Church, the monarchies, and the hereditary aristocracies.

Today's reactionaries are on the left. They are desperately opposing a virtual firestorm of cultural, economic, and political change that is sweeping across the world in the wake of a revolution in technology and the end of the Cold War. These reactionaries are defending the privileges and prerogatives of the leaders of a deeply entrenched and corrupt liberal elite dominated by a priesthood of bureaucrats, trial lawyers, corrupt union bosses, purveyors of educational rot, and the tired hucksters who head up a vast array of radical left wing "movements" that long ago outlived whatever useful purpose they may have once served.

Steve and I first pointed this out in an article entitled "The Liberal Republicans Versus The Reactionary Democrats," which we wrote in May 2001 while we were at Lehman Brothers. In that piece we noted that the Democrats were operating "on the assumption that the underlying fundamentals of the New Deal, the Great Society and *detante* remain as solid as ever; that there is no problem that can't be solved, no change that can't be accommodated, by throwing more and more money at a host of old federal programs that have barely changed in decades, despite the fact that most of the problems they were established to address have either grown more complex or reached the limits of what government can do to solve them."

Thus, I think one danger of a Kerry presidency would be that any and all plans to reform and modernize the tax code, the Social Security and Medicare programs, the nation's health care and educational systems, its trade statutes, its liability laws, and its military to make them more efficient and more in keeping with recent changes in demographics, in global trade patterns, in friend/enemy relationships around the world, and in the types of military threats America faces would be met with resounding opposition from the reactionary forces within the Kerry White House, which in turn would mean that serious problems in many crucial areas would not be addressed until they became overwhelming.

A second concern of mine about a possible Kerry presidency is that his philosophy of government and his views on the issues seem to lack a moral

dimension. Now I know this is a highly subjective observation. But I think there is ample anecdotal evidence to support it.

For example, Kerry's position on abortion, which is surely one of the most prominent moral issues of our time, is based exclusively on political considerations, being devoid of any and all moral content. Whether combatants in this controversy will recognize it or not, each side in this dispute has a morally consistent position. In contrast, Kerry's position is, as Steve described it in an article he wrote in the July 19 edition of this newsletter, a "moral abomination."

He says that he agrees with the pro-life position of the Catholic Church, which is based unambiguously on the contention that life begins at conception and that any action taken to end this life is murder. Yet, he would have us believe that as a politician, he has neither the right nor the obligation to fight for the life of the unborn child.

In fact, his determination to remain aloof from what he believes to be infanticide is so strong that he has even refused to support a law that would ban a procedure in which a sharp instrument is inserted into the head of a child just moments prior to its birth for the purpose of removing its brain and thus causing the collapse of its skull. Nor would he exercise his presidential prerogative to select a person to the Supreme Court who would defend the right of an unborn child to be born.

One wonders what the ladies from the pro-choice movement would think about his position if they actually ever thought about it. It is, in my opinion, reminiscent of the European colonial masters who overlooked the barbaric customs and mores of the locals, reasoning in a condescending way that they were little more than savages anyway.

Of course, not all presidential decisions so directly involve moral considerations. Nevertheless, I believe that when considering Kerry's seeming inattention to the moral dimension that it is important to keep in mind Aristotle's assertion that the process of determining with regularity and reliability what actions

are appropriate and reasonable in any given situation requires someone with a thorough understanding of moral and ethical tenets and a recognition of their importance to the decision making process.

This “moral dimension” is especially necessary for one who wishes to govern justly, since justice is at its very core a moral issue. It is therefore also of overwhelming importance when it comes to selecting individuals to fill positions that involve the administration of justice.

One can hope that Kerry knows this. But there are troubling signs that he is either uninterested in the moral dimension of the vetting process or intensely interested in finding individuals who are themselves uninterested in a moral dimension.

A troubling example of this is Kerry’s apparent interest in Eric Holder as a candidate for the leading law enforcement office in the land, i.e., Attorney General of the United States. Holder has the resume for the job, as a graduate of Columbia Law School and having been an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, and Deputy Attorney General of the United States.

But he also happens to have been a central figure in many of the Clinton crowd’s sleaziest affairs, so much so that a review of his various activities turns into a veritable historic tour of the moral and ethical shame of those years.

A comprehensive review of his disgraceful record is beyond the scope of this article. But the story begins when Bill Clinton made the unprecedented move of firing all of the U.S. Attorneys in the United States shortly after taking office and replacing them with folks that he felt would not be interested in persuing the past misdeeds of a corrupt governor of Arkansas and a soon-to-be corrupt President of the United States.

He selected Eric Holder to fill the all important slot of U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, where

Bill and Hillary where to about to set up a brand new little shop of horrors. And not only did they not want a snoopy prosecutor overseeing the soon-to-be crime scene, but they wanted one who would actively protect their back if anyone else started smelling around.

They chose well. Holder subsequently did all he could to protect the White House in one scandal after another. These included, but were not limited to, one that involved a perjury prosecution connected with Miss Hillary’s health care task force; the Commerce Department’s selling of seats on trade missions for campaign contributions; the coverup of the Chinagate affair; and the raid on the Gonzalez family in Florida. The grand finale occurred when Bill received considerable help from Holder when he decided in the final days of his presidency to pardon billionaire fugitive Marc Rich, whose wife just happened to be helping to bankroll Hillary’s Senate campaign.

It is worth noting here that many observers in the press seemed to think that the Rich affair drove the final nail in the coffin of Holder’s aspirations to become Attorney General some day. In fact, an editorial in the *Washington Times* in May 2003, concerning rumors that Holder was considering a run for Mayor of the District of Columbia, claimed that Holder himself has once said the Rich affair had assured that “his public life was over.”

I hope Holder was right on this account. But just the fact that Kerry has not put the rumors to rest that Holder is on his short list for this important job, raises some serious questions in my mind. The first is that Kerry must be anticipating some corruption in his administration or he wouldn’t need a guy like Holder at Justice. An alternative is that moral and ethical behavior is exceedingly low on Kerry’s list of critical factors when considering people for high level positions in his administration. Either way, I fear that the nation can look forward to a return to the days of scandal and corruption in the executive branch if Kerry moves into the White House next January.

UNDEMOCRATIC DEMOCRATS, ILLIBERAL LIBERALS

For a party that revels in calling its opponents “fascists,” “Nazis,” and other assorted totalitarian-inspired names, the Democratic Party appears to have some pretty serious problems with issues related to freedom of expression, democratic behavior, the free exchange of ideas, and the rule of law.

For decades, the left has caricatured Republicans as oppressive, self-righteous, and interested primarily in power. Earlier this year, in fact, the former Vice President of the United States and the Democrats’ last presidential nominee used the term “digital brownshirts” to describe people who use his invention, the Internet, to aid the Republican cause. But while the depictions of conservatives as iron-fisted despots have grown ever more cartoonish throughout the presidency of George W. Bush, it is the left that has grown more and more to resemble intolerant, sanctimonious, autocratic thugs.

This trend has been the subject of much conjecture and commentary on the political right for several years. Indeed, Mark and I have written along similar lines numerous times in the past, noting among other things the modern left’s penchant for fascist phraseology (e.g. “the Third Way”) and the quasi-religious temperament that underpins both liberalism and the totalitarian ideologies that haunted Europe throughout the last century.

And we are all, by now, quite familiar with the left’s speech codes; with the pervasiveness and dogmatism of political correctness; with the left’s disregard for the rule of law when the matter in question is “just sex”; and with semi-serious threats of violence against GOP politicians simply for doing their jobs. This latter was highlighted when actor/activist Alec Baldwin “joked” to the audience of the “Tonight Show” that people should surround then-Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde’s house and “stone him” to death for daring to hold impeachment hearings against Bill Clinton.

It seems to me, though, that the ferociousness of the left’s anti-democratic and illiberal behavior, both at home and abroad, has been cranked up more than just a touch during the last several months. The unfortunate thing is that while the election appears to be the impetus for this intensification, there is no guarantee whatsoever that the end of the campaign will herald a return to comparative normalcy. Indeed, if President Bush is reelected next Tuesday, as Mark and I expect, it seems highly likely that the aggressiveness of the left in pursuing its goals through any means necessary will actually increase.

What all this means in the long run is difficult to foresee. But one can reasonably infer that the left in this country sees President Bush and the war on terror as grave threats to the precarious balance of power that has existed between the parties for roughly a decade. Liberals have, in a very real way, been “losing” the political debate since at least Ronald Reagan, having given considerable ground in the battle for public support on issues like taxes and national security and having surrendered a good chunk of the control over the instruments of government as well.

But one suspects that they see in George W. Bush the prospect that the battle will finally be “lost” and that the Republican base will be expanded at the expense of their own, thus relegating them to permanent minority status. How else does one explain the lengths to which the left is willing to go to keep at least some grasp on power? Consider the following.

For decades, liberals have prattled on endlessly about the sanctity of the First Amendment, supporting the right of anyone, anywhere to say or do anything at anytime, as well as the right of the press to do much the same. But when faced with the exercise of the First Amendment in such a manner as to help President Bush or, at least, prevent harm from happening to his reputation in the run-up to the election, liberals suddenly became markedly less enthusiastic about safeguarding these constitutional guarantees.

This summer, for example, the prosecutor investigating the alleged White House leak of information about Valerie Plame, the CIA analyst whose husband had been critical of the Bush administration's handling of pre-Iraq war intelligence, tried to coerce a handful of reporters to reveal their sources.

Now, most observers had figured that the issue was moot anyway, since a Senate Intelligence Committee report demonstrated quite clearly that Plame's husband, former ambassador Joseph Wilson, was a liar and that any information given to reporters about his wife's identity was important background, not retribution, as Plame and Wilson claimed. But the investigation continued, and earlier this month *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller and *Time* magazine's Matthew Cooper were held in contempt of court by a federal judge for refusing to reveal their sources, who everyone knows were *Bush White House sources*. Both reporters face possible jail time for keeping these sources confidential.

In any other time, in any other place, with any other sources being protected, the contempt charge would be an offense of enormous magnitude that would send "chills" throughout the newspaper industry and threaten the very core of the press freedoms Americans so cherish. As it is, though, there has been very little reaction from Miller's and Cooper's press colleagues and nary a peep from the usual liberal suspects, such as the ACLU. The leaders of the Democratic party and their likeminded brethren in the mainstream media saw an opportunity to hurt Bush, or someone very close to Bush (e.g. Karl Rove) and thus were willing to concede their erstwhile "most prized freedoms."

Just to clarify, I don't particularly worry about Judith Miller, Matthew Cooper, or any "chill" sweeping through the journalism business. And I certainly think that liberals and journalists tend to overdo it with that "sacred inviolability" of sources hooey. But the point here is that liberals in this country usually scream until they're blue in the face about any perceived violation of the First Amendment, but Miller and Cooper have,

for all intents and purposes, been left to fight this battle alone, since the sources they are protecting are Bushies.

Of course, this First Amendment double standard is piddling when compared to that involving the freedom to express anti-candidate beliefs in documentary form. I am, of course, referring to the left's apoplexy over the proposed showing of the documentary "Stolen Honor: Wounds That Won't Heal." Sinclair Broadcasting had decided to show this movie, which paints John Kerry in a less than favorable light for his anti-war activism, on all its stations, but recently changed its mind, in large part because of Democratic Party intimidation tactics.

As you undoubtedly recall, liberals enjoyed tremendously the reaction to Michael Moore's anti-Bush documentary, "Fahrenheit 9/11," which is, I understand, similar to "Stolen Honor," in that it hammers one of the two presidential candidates, the primary difference between the two being that Moore's film is completely fallacious. You may also recall that Democratic Party leaders praised the film openly, and that no one on the right, even the terrible troll who lives under the bridge (a.k.a. John Ashcroft), ever even thought to do anything to keep "Fahrenheit" from the public. It is a free country after all.

Unfortunately liberals don't always see it that way. Their first line of attack against "Stolen Honor" was to claim that it would be fine if it were to be shown in theaters like Moore's film was. But since it was to be shown on television, over publicly owned airwaves, the government had a responsibility to censor it. Of course, that argument fell apart last week, when a theater in Jenkintown, PA, announced that it planned to show it on the big screen, ala "Fahrenheit", but was forced to cancel the screening due to the "threat of violence" and "civil disturbances" from Kerry supporters. It seems that it was not the venue that made Moore's film more acceptable, just the content.

As for the airing of the documentary on Sinclair's stations, while the Democrats failed in their attempts to manipulate the Federal Communications

Commission into doing their dirty work, they were successful in their second and third lines of attack. As the *Wall Street Journal* editorial board noted on Friday, Sinclair eventually crumbled under the pressure of “something new: A double team by trial lawyers and government officials threatening shareholder suits.”

According to the *Journal*, the liberal media “watchdog” group Media Matters announced recently that it intends to underwrite a shareholder suit against Sinclair. In addition, New York state comptroller, Democrat Alan Hevesi, “wrote a letter to Sinclair in his capacity as trustee of the state pension fund, which owns 265,000 shares in the company,” suggesting that Sinclair runs the risk of compromising “shareholder value” if it goes forward with its plans to air the documentary. The *Journal’s* editorial board concluded that the message of these actions was clear and simple: “Pull the show or else.” And the show was pulled

Sadly, though, trampling on the First Amendment appears to have been just a warm-up for the left in its effort to secure the “proper” outcome in this election. As completely far-fetched as it sounds, Democrats in this country appear to have, over the last several weeks, decided to try to affect the outcome of the election through an official party strategy of using the legal system to corrupt the process and an unofficial strategy of using violence to intimidate the opposition.

I know it sounds a bit nutty to suggest that a major political party in a bona fide twenty-first century democracy would attempt to undermine an election through legal maneuvering and intimidation, but the evidence on this count is substantial, and continues to grow everyday.

The unofficial component of the effort, which features the use of violence and intimidation against the opposition, began comparatively quietly several weeks ago, when it became clear that in many parts of the nation, a Bush-Cheney bumper sticker or yard sign was an invitation to vandalism at the hands of tolerant, peace-loving Kerry supporters.

Though both sides in every election report some vandalism against their signs and stickers, it became clear early on that in this campaign, the animosity directed at those with the gall to display their support for the President was more than just a bit out of the ordinary. Stories of Bush signs being defaced or stolen are countless, as are stories of defacement of property where Bush signs are displayed. *National Review’s* Stanley Kurtz wrote recently that he asked readers for thoughts on the subject and was inundated by responses. To whit:

Again and again...readers say they’ve been scared off of posting bumper stickers by visions of having their cars keyed or their windows smashed. A typical comment: “Putting a Bush-Cheney sticker on my car would be like adding a bulls-eye that says, ‘Please vandalize my truck.’” A reader from Arlington, Va., who lives just a few blocks from national Bush-Cheney headquarters, says he was not afraid to use bumper stickers in 1996 or 2000, but wouldn’t do so this year. Bush lawn signs are feared, not only as an invitation to vandalism, but because they might permanently alienate neighbors. A man whose wife was handicapped and dependent on neighbors in case of emergency was wary of starting a neighborhood “war” with a sign . . .

Plenty of folks told me that their cars had been keyed, dented, or had windows smashed in for carrying a Bush-Cheney bumper sticker. Nasty notes left on the windshield are common. And some drivers get cut off in traffic and flipped off by cars sporting Kerry bumper stickers. One fellow said a couple of young guys pulled up next to his 64-year-old mother’s car and signaled her to roll the window down. When she did, they screamed, “Bush is a F**king MORON!”

Apparently, Bush-Cheney cars are routinely keyed in places like liberal Seattle. And

liberal Bethesda, Md., has reportedly seen a rash of spray-paintings of Bush yard signs (with Kerry signs left in tact). One pro-Bush family in liberal West L.A. had its yard sign stolen six times. Theft, spray paint, or just tearing to shreds are the weapons of choice against yard signs, but one Bush-Cheney sign was actually set on fire. Even in conservative Idaho, Bush-Cheney cars get keyed. And in conservative Houston, parking while visiting a friend in the liberal midtown section can mean a keyed car. Apparently, these attacks are so common that you can now buy a T-Shirt with a picture of a slashed-out Bush-Cheney logo and the legend, "A person of tolerance and diversity keyed my car."

Of course, the petty vandals and verbal assailants are mere pikers compared to the real activists in the party. Over the last few weeks, shots were fired into Bush-Cheney campaign offices in Tennessee and West Virginia. A cinder block was thrown through the window of the Bush headquarters in Flagstaff, Arizona. Several Bush campaign offices, in states like Washington, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Florida were broken into or overrun and "occupied" by Kerry supporters, some of whom were part of official "protests" sponsored and organized by pro-Kerry labor unions. And lastly and most importantly, in the most obvious and gross display of totalitarian tendencies, voters have been harassed and threatened going to the polls for early voting. With respect to this last tactic, the *Orlando Sun-Sentinel* reported the following about early voting in Florida over the weekend:

With early voting taking place in busy public places like City Halls and libraries, voters are voicing complaints of being blocked by political mobs, or being singled out for their political views. Others say they have been grabbed, screamed at and cursed by political partisans of all stripes.

Republican Rep. Tom Feeney of Oviedo said the antagonizers are "Kerry thugs"

out to harass Bush voters. "If you ask me whether I believe there is an organized effort to intimidate Republican voters, the answer is absolutely yes," said Feeney....

Permits in Palm Beach County show that the SEIU union and other Democratic groups have been holding rallies at early voting locations, where they have a captive audience of voters standing in line. Elections Supervisor Theresa LePore said the lines are long because voters are brought in by the busload. "Special interest groups are trying to whip everybody into a frenzy and get everybody upset," she said. "Campaigns and their observers are confronting the workers and the voters. Things have gotten nasty and ugly."

LePore said the county has an ordinance that forbids interference in county business in the building and they are citing that law to the campaigners. Her attorney has told her that an area at each polling place can be set aside for solicitation so she planned to do so. LePore said campaign workers followed voters into polling places and handed out literature next to the voting machines. Other voters standing in line were told the machines don't work and that they should vote absentee.

As for the official, party-sanctioned attempts to undermine the election, most people know by now that the Democrats fully intend to litigate any close contest this fall. Many others have likely heard of the Democrats' elections manual, which instructs party lawyers to launch "pre-emptive attacks" and to allege voter intimidation "even where no signs of intimidation have emerged yet "

But the party's effort goes far beyond this. The thrust of the effort is twofold: the first tactic involves registering as many new voters as possible, whether they are eligible or not, or, in some cases, regardless of whether they even exist; the second tactic revolves

around eliminating a number of the basic safeguards that exist to prevent organized groups or individuals from manipulating the voting process on election day. I don't have either the time or space to recount in these pages the countless incidents of fraudulent Democrat-sponsored voter registrations or similarly countless incidents of Democrats trying to game election rules on such issues as provisional voting. But a couple examples should provide a bit of the flavor of what's been going on in an important swing state these past few weeks.

In Ohio last week, a 22-year-old man was arrested and charged with a fifth-degree felony for filling out 124 fraudulent voter registration cards. Of course the best part of the story is that the man, Chad Staton, was paid for his efforts in *crack cocaine*. Staton's employer/dealer was a woman named Georgianne Pitts, who was herself employed by the NAACP's National Voter Fund, which was established in 2000.

Also in Ohio, Democrats are using the courts to raise a considerable stink over the state's rules on provisional ballots, ballots which can be cast by people who believe they are registered to vote, but whose names don't show up on registration rolls. These ballots are set aside, and, if they prove legitimate, are then counted. In Ohio, the state law requires provisional ballots to be cast in the voter's proper precinct.

Democrats recently filed suit to have this last stipulation overturned, contending that making a voter vote in the actual precinct where he is registered is racist and intended to suppress black voter turnout. Jesse Jackson was dispatched to Ohio by party leaders to drive home the Democrats' assertion that the man responsible for enforcing the provisional ballots law, Secretary of State Ken Blackwell, was simply trying to disenfranchise black voters.

These Democrats appear not to care that eliminating the requirement that provisional ballots be cast in the proper precinct would make it virtually impossible to prevent voters from casting multiple votes in multiple districts. They also appear not to care that they look more than a touch ridiculous sending Jackson to Ohio

to invoke the name of Bull Connor in denouncing the Secretary of State for targeting black voters, since Secretary Blackwell is, well, black.

Finally, Democrats are relying heavily on scare tactics and lies to motivate voters to pull the lever for their candidate this year. I know that Democrats insist that it is Republicans who use fear and deception to motivate voters, talking as they do about terrorism and security. And I know as well that politicians always tell some lies during the course of the campaign and that some in the media (notably ABC political news director Mark Halperin) have accused Bush of telling more fundamental lies this time around. But here's the difference. Bush's alleged scare tactics involve something of which people should legitimately be scared, terrorism, and his alleged lies are unrelated to these tactics. Kerry's scare tactics, in contrast, are firmly rooted in lies, based as they are on complete fabrications ginned up specifically to confuse and frighten voters.

I mentioned the principle Kerry lies on the draft, Social Security, and the flu vaccine last week, and the theme has been echoed in numerous news stories and opinion columns over the last several days. Over the weekend, *San Diego Tribune* columnist Joseph Perkins wrote that "The Kerry campaign [and] the 527 and activist organizations that support the Democrat presidential nominee, are persuaded that the masses will easily fall victim to their big lies." I should note that Perkins' word selection was not random, that the title of his column, "Campaigning on the 'Big Lie,'" was intended to evoke Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels, who made the phrase and the technique infamous.

Personally, I would not go so far as to accuse the Democrats of being Nazis. As I wrote at the onset of this piece and in several previous pieces, I tire quickly of those on the left who use that term interchangeably with "conservative," never comprehending the deep slander and trivialization of some 12 million murders inherent in such a reckless charge. That said, liberals do appear to have fallen into patterns of behavior that are evocative of totalitarianism.

The left will almost certainly make similar accusations against the right; they always do. But in this case, as in most, the problem is that they have no evidence whatsoever to back up their allegations of Republican thuggery. As the folks over at RealClearPolitics noted over the weekend, “using the exact same search criteria that turned up pages of stories involving the vandalism of Bush offices, etc. around the country yielded surprisingly few results when applied to John Kerry.”

Mark and I have often written of the Democratic Party’s “descent into madness,” and I continue to believe that this advance will get a pretty strong nudge if Bush wins. Clearly, the idea of a second Bush term is too much for many liberals to bear. They are so convinced of their own righteousness and that the “real” order of the universe involves them benevolently running the country (and the world, for that matter) that they appear to have come to believe that any means necessary to secure the “proper” outcome is legitimate. If that outcome is, despite their best efforts, not secured, I have no idea what liberals will do, but I suspect many will sink to levels that we can only imagine.

Along these lines, I’d like to close with a quote that has received a lot of play over the past couple of days, but which I think is important enough that repeating it one more time can’t hurt. It comes from a column written by Charlie Booker and published by London’s *Guardian* newspaper. And while I’ll concede that it may be a bit unfair to tar American Democrats with the brush of an Englishman, there is no question that the sentiments generally expressed by his paper, *The Guardian*, and by other left-wing European rags, are ones with which the more energized and radical liberals in this country sympathize. Additionally these European leftists are the type of people with whom John Kerry purports to be tremendously concerned and whose support he repeatedly says he will seek if elected. Booker wrote:

On November 2, the entire civilised world will be praying, praying Bush loses. And God’s law dictates he’ll probably win, thereby disproving the existence of God once and for all. The world will endure four more years of idiocy, arrogance and unwarranted bloodshed, with no benevolent deity to watch over and save us. John Wilkes Booth, Lee Harvey Oswald, John Hinckley Jr - where are you now that we need you?

Enough said.

ANNOUNCEMENT

In all likelihood, this will be the final edition of “Politics, Et Cetera” before the election. Unless there is a pressing reason to do so, either a sense that we need to change our predictions or, heaven forbid, a “national emergency,” we see no reason to try to publish anything else about the election just one day before it occurs.

But we will be back later next week – most likely on Thursday – with a special, post-election issue.

Thanks much.

Mark and Steve

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