

**Mark L. Melcher** Publisher  
melcher@thepoliticalforum.com

**Stephen R. Soukup** Editor  
soukup@thepoliticalforum.com

## THEY SAID IT

The great upheavals which precede changes of civilization, such as the fall of the Roman Empire and the foundation of the Arabian Empire, seem at first sight determined more especially by political transformations, foreign invasion, or the overthrow of dynasties. But a more attentive study of these events show that behind their apparent causes the real cause is generally seen to be profound modification in the ideas of the peoples. The true historical upheavals are not those which astonish us by their grandeur and violence. The only important changes whence the renewal of civilizations result, affect ideas, conceptions, and beliefs. The memorable events of history are the visible effects of the invisible changes of human thought. The present epoch is one of these critical moments in which the thought of mankind is undergoing a process of transformation.

Two fundamental factors are at the base of this transformation. The first is the destruction of those religious, political, and social beliefs in which all the elements of our civilization are rooted. The second is the creation of entirely new conditions of existence and thought as the result of modern scientific and industrial discoveries. The ideas of the past, although half destroyed, being still very powerful, and the ideas which are to replace them being still in process of formation, the modern age represents a period of transition and anarchy.

Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd*, 1895.

## IT'S MISS HILLARY ALL THE WAY.

It is far too early to be comfortable handicapping the presidential race. In fact, in a sane world it would be far too early to even think about the presidential race, at least in anything more than very general terms. But this is not a sane world. This is a world of mass media, the 24-hour news cycle, celebrity politics, and an intense 24-7-365 regimen for those politicians whose thirst for power and fame cannot be sated by anything less than the presidency.

This is a big money, big power contest. Every commercial enterprise in America has a huge stake in the outcome. There's no room for complacency. The slogan of this age, in which contemplative moments are considered a waste of time by the "successful," says it best: "You snooze, you lose."

For the nation at large, the new two-year long presidential race is almost certainly a bad thing. It makes the job of the president more difficult and further promotes the insidious notion that the presidential selection process is a huge entertainment spectacle rather than the most important and serious task in the lifecycle

### In this Issue

It's Miss Hillary All the Way.

Subscriptions are available by contacting:

The Political Forum LLC 8563 Senedo Road, Mt. Jackson, Virginia 22842  
Phone 540.477.9762 Fax 540.477.3359 melcher@thepoliticalforum.com www.thepoliticalforum.com

of a nation. On the plus side, from our very narrow and selfish perspective here at The Political Forum, it provides welcome grist for the mill and a gruesome form of amusement, like watching a car wreck or fire.

Some wag once said that American politics is to good government what mud wrestling is to the performing arts. So pour in the mud and let the fight begin. The following are some early picks, the morning line, so to speak. Given the lengthy time frame involved, we not only reserve the right to change any or all of these predictions at any time, but we expect to do so, for the one certain thing is that this match will feature many surprises, including some spectacular takedowns.

We'll look at the Democratic field first, and be much more specific in our forecasting than we will be with the Republicans. This is because the Democratic race has begun very early and it looks to us as though it is already over. Then we'll look briefly at the Republicans with a great deal more circumlocution, that race having hardly begun and having no candidate who appears to be invincible.

So here's our take on the Democratic race.

**Miss Hillary:** She will get the Democratic nomination and win the White House. To defend this prediction, we will go beyond conventional wisdom, popular clichés, and the talking points of the talking heads. Yes, she has an awesome fund raising machine. Yes, she has a superior organization. Yes, she has a big advantage with the “women's” vote. Yes, a lot of people hate her. Yes, she is a liar, lacks warmth, and is a polarizing figure. But there is another factor that transcends the sum of all of her good and bad points, something that not even her critics mention, but that is unique to her as a presidential candidate, that gives her a special kind of advantage over everyone else in the race.

And what is it? Well, the honorable lady is dishonorable. She is unhindered by scruples, principles, conscience, morals, or ethics. Critics compare her to Lady Macbeth. They should think

more in terms of Robespierre, Mirabeau, Saint-Just, and Danton, who were so taken with the nobility and justness of their cause that they trampled on all that was honorable and just. Like her husband, she believes that means are irrelevant in pursuit of “proper” ends, though she is unquestionably more likely to be ruthless in her means than was he. To say that she will fight dirty is an understatement. She will do anything to win. She will show no regard for laws or conventions. Her opponents will not know what they are up against until they are no longer up against it.

Exaggeration? Well maybe. But the fact is that Hillary Clinton is assembling a veritable Stygian council for a campaign organization. Her chief operative will be Harold Ickes. He was a close friend of Hillary's before she met Bill. He was her principal male operative in the hierarchy of her husband's White House, once serving as Deputy Chief of Staff. In real life, he was a mobbed up lawyer for New York Teamsters Local 560. They don't come dirtier than Harold Ickes, or better connected to dark underbelly of the Democratic Party. What he doesn't know about crooked politics isn't worth knowing.

Among other things, he has the distinction of being the guy who introduced Bill and Hillary to Ron Carey, former boss of the Teamster's, and to Arthur Coia, head of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), a partnership which led to some of the worst scandals in American campaign fundraising history.

Also high in the Hillary campaign organization will be former Democratic Party Chairman Terry McAuliffe. If Ickes is Hillary's Moloch, “sceptered King . . . the strongest and fiercest,” then McAuliffe is Belial, “in act more graceful and humane” but “false and hollow, though his tongue dropped manna.”

He is every bit as sleazy as Ickes. He began his political career as an aide to former House Majority Whip, Rep. Tony Coelho, who, as one-time Chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign

Committee was the unrivaled master of political fund-raising sleaze; the man who invented the modern day version of this art. In 1989 he abruptly resigned from the House at the height of his power and left town just ahead of the law.

After learning the trade of dodgy political fundraising at the feet of the master, Terry went into the real estate business in Washington, D.C., which has long been a fever swamp of Democratic Party corruption. The sleazy deals Terry was involved in are too numerous to detail here, but they include a transaction with Global Crossing in which he converted a \$100,000 investment into an \$18 million windfall in two years, shortly before the company went bankrupt, costing shareholders \$50 billion.

Then there was a shady deal with – guess who? – Prudential Insurance Company, about which the December 22, 1997 issue of *Business Week* said the following: “The U. S. Attorney’s Office in Washington is trying to learn more about how McAuliffe earned a lucrative fee in helping Prudential Insurance Co. of America lease a downtown Washington building to the government. Prudential just settled a civil case involving that lease for over \$300,000 without admitting any liability.”

And finally, there were the big and dirty deals done in conjunction with Ickes and his union friends. They are too numerous to detail here. But the following from a 1999 *New York Times* article provides an insight into what transpired.

A former Democratic official has testified that Terence McAuliffe, President Clinton’s friend and chief fund-raiser, played a major role in promoting an illegal scheme in which Democratic donors were to contribute to the Teamster president’s re-election campaign, and in exchange the Teamsters were to donate large sums to the Democrats. The official, Richard Sullivan, the Democratic National Committee’s former finance director, testified in Manhattan at the trial of William Hamilton, the Teamsters former political director, that

McAuliffe urged him and other fund-raisers to find a rich Democrat to donate at least \$50,000 to the 1996 re-election campaign of Ron Carey, the former Teamsters president. During the three-week-long trial, Sullivan testified that McAuliffe had said that if a Democratic donor made a large contribution to the Carey campaign, then the Teamsters would contribute at least \$500,000 to various Democratic Party committees . . . McAuliffe’s lawyer, Richard Ben-Veniste, said his client had done nothing wrong.

And then there’s this from a 2002 column entitled “McAuliffe’s Shady Business Past” by Byron York in *National Review Online*.

In the late 1990s, some of McAuliffe’s business ventures came under investigation by the U.S. Department of Labor, which filed suit against two labor-union officials, both of them with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers pension fund, for entering into questionable business arrangements with McAuliffe. Both officials later agreed to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in penalties for their actions, and the union itself had to reimburse its pension fund by nearly \$5 million.

In one deal, McAuliffe and the fund officials created a partnership to buy a large block of commercial real estate in Florida. McAuliffe put up \$100 for the purchase, while the pension fund put up \$39 million. Yet McAuliffe got a 50-percent interest in the deal; he eventually walked away with \$2.45 million from his original \$100 investment. In another instance, the pension fund loaned McAuliffe more than \$6 million for a real-estate development, only to find that McAuliffe was unable to make payments for nearly five years. In the end, the pension fund lost some of its money, McAuliffe moved on to his next deal, and fund officials found themselves facing the Labor Department’s questions.

On March 19, 2001, the liberal *New Republic* summed up McAuliffe's past as follows:

More than almost anyone else, McAuliffe personifies Clinton era sleaze. It was McAuliffe who, as Democratic finance chair, dreamed up the idea of parlaying White House hospitality into campaign cash. It was McAuliffe who broke down the barrier between hard money contributions, which are regulated and go directly to candidates, and soft money contributions, which are not limited but are supposed to be restricted to party-building activities. And it was McAuliffe who presided over Democratic fund-raising while the party surreptitiously sought illegal money from foreign donors – the scandal, you'll remember, that probably kept the Democrats from retaking the House in 1996.

We do not yet know what private detective firm Hillary will hire (if she hasn't done so already) to do "opposition research" on her opponents. But we know that she will do so, and that the effort will be intense. We further know that she will have a team that isn't on her direct payroll to make use of the information she gains to discredit and frighten her opponents. Terry Lenzner and Jack Paladino were among those who helped with these chores in Bill's White House. Paladino was in charge of handling what were known in those days as "bimbo eruptions." We have written a lot about Lenzner over the years, including the following.

Indeed, it seems like only yesterday that America had a president who had a full-time private investigator named Terry Lenzner working for him, his party, and his wife, whose firm, Investigative Group International, specialized in digging up dirt on people. *Vanity Fair* described this firm in an article entitled "The President's Private Eye," as "Washington's most feared and vilified private-investigation firm." Clinton's erstwhile buddy, Dick Morris, called it "the White House secret police."

Indeed, it seems like only yesterday that this nation had a president who, shortly after taking office, accumulated over 900 confidential FBI files on Republicans, and also had former FBI General Counsel Howard Shapiro running back and forth between the Bureau and the White House like some sort of bicycle courier. When last heard from Shapiro was at a big D.C. firm where his clients included, of all people, Terry Lenzner. As they say in Disney Land, "It's a Small World After All."

The world will never know all the dirty deals that this crowd perpetrated, but several of Bill's *objects d'amour* have attested to the fact that it was not pretty, as did the corpse of Kathleen Willey's cat.

As regards Iraq, don't worry about Miss Hillary's current unpopularity with the anti-war bunch. As Gustave LeBon noted in his famous little book *The Crowd*, "excessive suggestibility" is characteristic of mobs – "they are like the leaves which a tempest whirls up and scatters in every direction and then allows them to follow." When the time is right, Hillary will wave the bloody shirt and the antiwar crowd will hail her as its leader, much as the Romans did the morally corrupt and dissolute Mark Anthony.

**Barack Obama:** This guy doesn't have a chance. He has no natural constituency beyond some star-struck, uber-liberals who have been gobsmacked by the sight of a clean and charismatic black politician, having mistakenly come to believe by the process of exposure that the likes of such sleaze bags as Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, John Conyers, and Alcee Hastings were the best that they could expect from the African-American community.

Moreover, Obama is way out of his league. This was apparent by his decision to enter the race so soon. While Obama is almost certainly more substantial a politician than some of the more vapid "charismatic" Democrats (see, for example, John Edwards below), he is no match for Hillary. He is, in political terms, young and inexperienced. He is an attractive and soothing

novelty act, but a novelty act nonetheless. Timing is everything for this kind of candidate, and too early is the worst choice of all. His handlers should have known that.

He will probably peter out on his own, but if he doesn't, the aforementioned, "race-hustling poverty pimps," as J.C. Watts once called them, will sabotage him, for he is a dire threat to their "leadership" of the black community, which is based solely on the myth that rampant racism makes the appearance of such a man as Obama impossible. In the meantime, Obama serves Miss Hillary's purpose by keeping other challengers from gaining ground on her.

**Bill Richardson:** This guy has less chance than Obama. His most noble achievement while working in the Clinton administration was trying to get Monica Lewinsky to accept a job at the United Nations, where he was U.S. Ambassador, in order to get her out of town and keep her from running her mouth any further, so to speak. At the time Zaire was coming apart and Saddam was in the process of expelling the U.S. arms inspection team. But the two Bills were too busy dealing with Miss Lewinsky's complaint that she didn't want to work at the United Nations to pay much attention, and both situations worsened.

Another shining moment in Richardson's career as a public servant was his handling of the Wen Ho Lee nuclear espionage scandal when he was Bill's Energy Secretary. His performance was so bad and his explanation before the Senate for his mishaps so lame that Senator Robert Byrd, a fellow Democrat, told him "You will never again receive the support of the Senate of the United States for any office to which you might be appointed."

Finally, for reasons that make no sense, the Bush administration sent the poor damn fool to North Korea in 2005 to discuss that nation's nuclear ambitions, and he came back announcing that he was "very pleased" with the rogue nation's willingness to make progress in six-nation talks and is committed to dismantling its nuclear weapons program.

He's a Clinton loyalist, so the only purpose we can see that he serves in this race is to help Hillary by crowding the field and defending her during debates. He could pick up a VP slot if he performs this task well. She will need someone in that role who will feel comfortable in a corrupt administration.

**Tom Vilsack:** This guy could surprise. He's articulate. He's nice looking. He's clean. He has a good life story to tell. He's a traditional liberal. He's well spoken. He seems reasonably smart and to have a good command of the issues.

He won't beat Hillary out for the nomination. But his presence is good for her, for if he wins the Iowa primary, he would provide cover for a loss by her in that big contest. After all, he's the favorite son. He would make a good second banana, but he's too clean for the Hillary camp.

**John Edwards, Christopher Dodd, Joe Biden,**

**Dennis Kucinich:** Losers all. Tired, vapid, clichéd, pointless. They make Hillary look good by comparison.

Now we come to the Republicans.

**John McCain:** He's the GOP front runner at this point and it would be easy to just predict that he will win the nomination, given his fine organization, excellent fund raising abilities, early name recognition, experience in the presidential ring, and the fact that Republicans generally like to decide their winner early, and they tend to favor the favorite.

But he is capable of making some really stupid mistakes. Indeed, he is likely to do so. He is stubborn, a notorious hot head, and he has very weak political moorings, which makes him prone to take positions that may seem reasonable to him personally but that are anathema to thoughtful conservatives.

We were thinking specifically of him when we wrote earlier that this presidential contest will feature some surprises, including some spectacular takedowns. This

is going to be a long and strenuous race that will test McCain's mental stability, nerves, and intellectual underpinnings. He certainly could win the GOP nomination, but we could easily blow it too. Indeed, we're betting that he will.

**Mitt Romney:** If we are somewhat less optimistic about McCain's chances than the pundits, it is fair to say that we are somewhat more optimistic than they are about Romney's chances. He compares favorably on virtually all counts with any one of the other GOP candidates. He is nice looking, intelligent, articulate, a good family man, and has excellent ethical and moral credentials. He was a successful governor of a big state as well as a successful businessman. His conservative credentials are just fine, but not too much so for the middle of the roaders. He could turn out to be surprisingly appealing in a long contest, especially when compared to the other candidates.

There is, of course, the question of his Mormon faith. This could be an issue with some segments of the population in the general election, including the African-American community, which has some reason to question the views of Mormons toward them, and those voters who are generally antagonistic to all religions and suspicious of persons of faith. But this should not hurt Romney in the Republican primaries, where blacks and atheists are not traditionally well represented.

**Rudy Giuliani:** This man is one of the most popular politicians in the GOP, arguably *the* most popular. He is liked and respected by large majorities of all segments of the Party. And why not? He is exceedingly charming. He is honest, smart, articulate, a successful businessman, has excellent political skills, and performed magnificently during the terrible 9/11 tragedy. He is indeed "the nation's mayor."

He would win a popularity contest hands down. But there is some question in our minds whether a majority of primary voters will prefer him as the Party's presidential candidate over all of the other candidates. He is, after all a liberal, and a pro-life

Catholic who is on his third marriage. He will do well among the Party moderates, but they won't win it for him.

**Sam Brownback:** If Guilani is the choice of the moderates, Brownback will be the choice of Republicans on the hard right. He is a very conservative Catholic. He is honest, a good family man, principled, and focused. But he is not naturally charming and he can appear at times to be not very bright. He is also perhaps too conservative on too many issues to be acceptable to a broad cross section of the Party, especially when other choices are available. He is fundamentally a good guy. He will be an asset in the debates and the discussions. But he won't win.

**Chuck Hagel, Mike Huckabee.** Both are losers. Hagel, of course, has a primary constituency of one: himself. Except for the Senator himself and a few anti-war lefties (who have no idea where he stands on any issue but Iraq), no one seems to think there is any need for this guy to run for president. Even he seems to grasp his unpopularity among his fellow Republicans, acknowledging last week that his run at the White House may be as an independent.

As for Huckabee, even if he could raise enough money to be competitive (which he can't), and even if he could gain the name recognition to hang with the likes of Giuliani and McCain (which he can't), and even if he could convince conservatives that he is not just a little too enamored with the power of government to affect personal behavior (which he can't), is the nation really ready for another president from Hope, Arkansas? Isn't one a century enough?

And finally...

**New Gingrich:** Newt isn't even in the race, and probably won't be. But his strategy relative to becoming a candidate is worth considering, namely that he will not decide whether to run until much later this year.

Our interpretation of this is that Newt believes, as we do, that there will be some surprises between now and the end of the year. If there are none, he probably figures that he would lose when pitted against all of the above-mentioned candidates. But if John McCain crashes during the year, the contest could be ripe for a late entry. If that happens, Newt would make it interesting. But he would still lose.

In any case, as we said in the title of this piece, Hillary will sit in the oval office in 2009, with Harold and Terry by her side, and a new, low dishonest decade will begin, to borrow a phrase from Auden.

Copyright 2007. The Political Forum. 8563 Senedo Road, Mt. Jackson, Virginia 22842, tel. 540-477-9762, fax 540-477-3359. All rights reserved.

Information contained herein is based on data obtained from recognized services, issuer reports or communications, or other sources believed to be reliable. However, such information has not been verified by us, and we do not make any representations as to its accuracy or completeness, and we are not responsible for typographical errors. Any statements nonfactual in nature constitute only current opinions which are subject to change without notice.