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**On the cover:**

*A Kuwaiti man watches an oil well burn during the Persian Gulf War.*

*Photo © Reuters/CORBIS*

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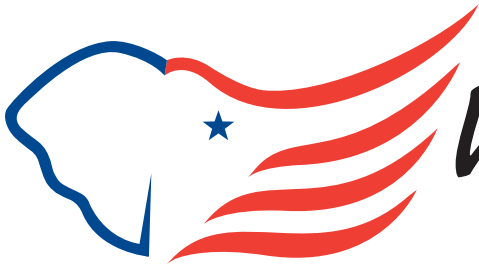
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## Note From The Executive Director

Welcome to another edition of *The Ripon Forum*. You will note that due to both popular demand and an overwhelming amount of available content, we have increased the production of *The Forum* from a quarterly to a bi-monthly. Now you'll receive six issues per year at the same low \$25.00 price. Renew or subscribe today!

Recently, it was my honor to address a class of 400 youth attending a Junior Statesmen Foundation Congressional Session in Washington, DC. These high schoolers demonstrated solid poise and genuine interest in our Federal system of government—enough to engage their peers and in everything DC has to offer. It was a pleasure to promote our moderate Republican ideals to this band of impressionable teens, and it is my true feeling that these motivated Junior Statesmen will be amongst our political leaders of tomorrow. If you or your child are interested in learning more, visit [www.jsa.org](http://www.jsa.org).

Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* is old news, but I recently rented a documentary called *Celsius 41.11*, produced by Chetwynd and Steinberg, which offers truthful counterclaims to Mr. Moore's overtly liberal smears. Check it out at your local video store or library. One of the items touched on in the film is the so-called voter fraud in Ohio during the 2004 presidential election. Read *The Washington Times* journalist Robert Stacy McCain's article in this *Forum* issue to learn more about "voting irregularities" on the Democrats' side.

Commemorating the establishment of the first of 51 bird sanctuaries and the settlement of the Alaskan Boundary dispute (March 1903) by our icon, President Teddy Roosevelt, this *Forum* contains three environmentally oriented articles. Read Georgia Representative John Linder's informative piece on his proposed bill to protect our nation's water supply from drought or misuse. American Enterprise Institute's scholar, Samuel Thernstrom, gives his sound advice how the Clean Air Act of 1990 is a successful Republican initiative in need of louder and more frequent publicity by the GOP-held Congress. Our cover story by Amory Lovins, founder and CEO of the independent Rocky Mountain Institute, pleads for wholesale change in the American attitude on fossil fuel dependence—arguing for a strategy of migrating to alternate fuel and better energy efficiency.

In keeping with our publication's title, this issue also offers a forum for debate between Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA) and Representative Nancy Johnson (R-CT). The former argues his stance against abortion. The latter states her case to protect a woman's right to choose. Read both and decide for yourself—Ripon doesn't have a dog in this fight, only the willingness to offer the forum for the debate.

Within this issue you will find our hallmark poignant policy articles, a point/counter-point debate, and several informative insights on legislation currently being discussed in the halls of Congress. I encourage you to read *The Forum*, and then pass it on to your family and friends so that they, too, may participate in policy discussions at your local level. We hope you enjoy *The Ripon Forum*. Read on!

Sincerely,

Elvis Oxley  
Executive Director  
[eooley@riponsoc.org](mailto:eooley@riponsoc.org)



# Forecasting Social Security Reform

## From New Deal to Ownership Society

By Donald Lambro

**F**orecasting the outcome of President George W. Bush's high-risk venture to turn Social Security from a creaky New Deal antique to a modern 21st century wealth-creating system is a tricky business.

The President's plan to overhaul Social Security, especially his call to create personal retirement accounts, will encounter stiff resistance in Congress. However, the battle lines are still being formed. Democrats are mostly against it, though some, such as Sens. Ben Nelson of Nebraska, Tom Carper of Delaware and Max Baucus of Montana, are keeping an open mind.

Many Republicans are for it, but some are not and others are still testing the waters. Overall, it isn't clear just where they are right now on what is clearly a work in progress. Certainly, GOP leaders are going to stand by President Bush and produce a bill. But what that bill will look like, and whether Republican lawmakers will jump ship when the roll is called are much harder to predict.

A bill is going to be written in the House Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Rep. Bill Thomas of California. Mr. Thomas floated some eclectic ideas in February that would tie tax reform to the Social Security overhaul, replacing the corporate tax with a value added tax on goods that consumers would pay—an idea that is going nowhere.

In the end, House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert and House Majority Leader Tom DeLay will have a huge say over the bill's shape, and they are not going to bring up a bill that cannot pass.

Over in the Senate Finance Committee, Chairman Charles Grassley of Iowa is not hostile to Social Security reform, but says he won't move a bill to the floor that does not have majority support. Even with 55 GOP senators, minus two or three defections, and a handful of

Democratic allies, Republicans are far from the 60 votes needed to end a filibuster.

One of the toughest obstacles, beyond Democratic opposition to any kind of investment accounts financed by the payroll tax, is how Congress will solve Social Security's coming insolvency and pay for the transition costs to shift to personal retirement accounts.

President Bush opened the door slightly to the possibility of raising the \$90,000 income ceiling on which Social Security taxes are levied, saying everything was on the table except raising the payroll tax rates. That doesn't sit well with most Republicans, but could draw a few more Democrats into President Bush's column. And, if push came to shove, would conservatives give a little on raising the ceiling in exchange for enacting personal accounts? I think many would in order to bring down the last pillar of the New Deal welfare state.

Realistically, however, what are the chances of President Bush's personal Social Security accounts becoming law? The liberal national news media have been pounding President Bush's proposal since January, giving us countless reasons why Congress won't pass it. But the President has a lot of options in this fight. Moreover, the Democrats' unbending obstructionism could come back to haunt them.

President Bush does not have to pass a bill that would invest 4 percentage points of each worker's payroll tax—as he has previously proposed—to come out of this a winner. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan may have given the President the best advice in February when he told Congress, "If you are going to move to private accounts, which I approve of, you have to do it in a cautious, gradual way."

My guess is that President Bush has the makings of a majority compromise if

he begins with 2 to 3 percentage points that automatically doubles after a period of testing, unless Congress votes otherwise.

Economist John Cogan of the Hoover Institution, who advises the White House on Social Security reform, told me that "you don't have to start out big on this at first. You can start small and over time, as workers see their investment accounts grow, the political pressure will build to expand them."

A passable bill does have to deal with the system's financial solvency and the transition costs over the next few decades. But it does not have to solve all of these issues into the last quarter of this century when we cannot possibly know the size of our economy to finance future liabilities, or how much will be saved in the longer-term by weaning workers away from the present pay-as-you-go system and into private, self-financing accounts.

Meantime, don't believe the polls showing overall support falling below 50 percent. When you deduct those over 65, most of whom are opposed to it, and workers 55 and older who won't be able to participate anyway, the poll numbers show strong support among younger workers between 30 and 50 who want to earn a higher yield on their tax dollars over their working lives.

There are enough Democrats in the Senate and the House, who know their party's long-term future rests with these younger voters. Such sensible Democrats are not going to vote against the political interests of this pivotal constituency.

In short, President Bush has a lot going for him in this epic legislative battle. I like his chances. ☺

— Donald Lambro is the chief political correspondent of The Washington Times and a nationally syndicated columnist.



# Debunking Social Security

## Democratic opposition based on myths

By Stephen F. Manfredi

**S**ocial Security is secure and private savings accounts are reckless. This is how Democrats are succeeding in defeating Republican efforts to reform Social Security.

Politics has a way of inverting truth—this explains why Democrats are shamelessly denouncing promising Republican ideas, such as personal retirement accounts, while defending Ponzi schemes like the current Social Security system.

The best argument doesn't always win. Republicans had better recognize this reality if they are to avoid a potentially disastrous political defeat, and institute the capstone of their "ownership society."

When Democrats are not too busy mincing words over whether Social Security constitutes a "crisis," they are waging a frontal assault on President George W. Bush's proposal to create private pension accounts. President Bush's proposal would allow younger workers the freedom to voluntarily place a small share of their Social Security payroll taxes (up to 4 percent) into personal retirement accounts in order to receive a higher financial return than they would under the current government-run system. Democrats immediately branded this piecemeal free-market reform "gambling."

So begins our great national dialogue about Social Security.

Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid claims that President Bush is playing "Social Security roulette" and trying to "destroy Social Security by giving this money to the fat cats on Wall Street." The Democrats' basic argument is that private savings accounts will bankrupt the Social Security system and leave senior citizens without a vital safety net.

But what is so secure about Social Security? And why is a 1930s pension program sacrosanct when institutions like marriage and the English language are subject to harsh criticism?

In truth, Social Security deserves no reverence and guarantees no economic security to our most vulnerable citizens. It has been tried and is now failing its first great test. With baby boomers on the verge

of retirement, Social Security's structural weaknesses and unsustainability are becoming apparent.

When the program began, 16 workers paid into the system to support one Social Security beneficiary. Today, there are only 3 workers paying into the system for each recipient. These numbers are not good. By 2018, Social Security will pay out more in benefits than it collects in taxes. Shortfalls in the trillions of dollars will occur until the system goes bankrupt around 2042. Social Security is the fiscal equivalent of a runaway stagecoach heading for a cliff. And Democrats are telling the passengers to stay in their seats for the bumpy and ill-fated ride.

The willingness of Democrats to turn a blind eye to this monumental challenge is unfortunate, but not surprising. Democrats have a vested interest in the status quo. They are reluctant to admit that the New Deal welfare state has failed and that free markets may provide a better solution.

Democrats promise to protect the Social Security "trust fund" by putting payroll taxes in a "lockbox." Yet this is a myth. As a matter of practice, politicians constantly use Social Security funds to make up budget shortfalls and pay for government spending. In reality, there are no real assets or funds set aside exclusively for Social Security. There is no "trust fund" beyond government issued IOUs—in which legislators promise to pay future Social Security beneficiaries by taxing future workers at higher rates.

Critics of private accounts argue that the purpose of Social Security is not to create wealth, but to guarantee a basic income to our most vulnerable citizens. But the mere good will of government is no assurance of economic security. The federal government cannot guarantee future economic prosperity any more than it can prevent hurricanes or tornados.

Our government will always have the capacity to write checks to Social Security recipients. That's easy. Ensuring the value of these checks is more difficult. If Social Security is not reformed, the federal govern-

ment will simply raise taxes or print more money to finance its obligations. The resulting inflation will devalue wealth and imperil everyone's retirement security; the massive tax hikes needed to bolster the system would badly hurt the middle class and curtail economic growth.

Personal retirement accounts offer a better alternative. By taking advantage of modern financial instruments, our nation of investors can use the free market to provide for more comfortable and secure retirements. Federal employees have enjoyed this privilege through the Thrift Savings Plan for two decades. They're not on breadlines. By giving younger Americans the freedom to voluntarily place a small portion of their payroll taxes in conservative stocks, bonds, or mutual funds, Americans will be able to save for their own retirement while earning compound interest on their safeguarded investments.

Personal accounts would not only be significantly more profitable, but they would be far less risky than the current Social Security system. Individual ownership of retirement accounts will eliminate the type of raiding that has plagued our government Social Security plan. Retirement money that is set aside by individuals will consist of redeemable assets. For once, retirees will have a trust fund, not an IOU. In a competitive global economy, America would be wise to get ahead of the curve and embrace personal accounts.

During the height of the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt cautioned that Americans had "nothing to fear but fear itself." Would he really be pleased that his party wants America to remain in the financial Stone Age? ☞

— Stephen F. Manfredi is  
policy director at The Ripon Society.



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Photo by Alex Wong/Getty Images

# Tillie Fowler, R.I.P

## Republican was a close friend of Ripon

By Richard S. Kessler

Committee chairwoman Tillie Fowler listens at a special meeting to examine sexual misconduct allegations at the Air Force Academy on Capitol Hill.

The Ripon Society recently lost a dear friend and staunch supporter. Former U.S. Rep. Tillie Fowler, a Florida Republican and former Ripon board member, died of a brain hemorrhage on March 2 at a Jacksonville hospital. She was 62.

Tillie served in the House of Representatives from 1993 until 2001, emerging as one of the most influential women in the GOP. During her years on Capitol Hill, she gained a well-earned reputation as a no-nonsense, pro-defense hawk. She championed a strong military and high-defense budgets.

Gov. Jeb Bush described Tillie as “a great Floridian and committed public servant. Congresswoman Fowler was a great leader and was dedicated to making the lives of Floridians better. She will be missed.”

Tillie was known as the “Steel Magnolia” because she struck many of us here in Washington as the perfect combination of a Southern belle and a military drill sergeant. She took this description for what it was: a deeply respectful compliment. She possessed Southern grace and manners along with a tenacious, shrewd political mind—an impressive mixture that made her a powerhouse on Capitol Hill.

During her congressional career, Tillie became vice chairwoman of the House Republican Conference, the fifth-ranking member in the GOP hierarchy. She also

served for six years as a deputy majority whip.

Tillie was elected to Congress in 1992. She won a seat that had been held by a Democrat for 42 years. Listed in publications such as *USA Today* and *Working Woman* magazine as a “political hotshot” and “someone to watch,” she wasted no time in earning a reputation as an effective legislator.

She secured an appointment to the House Armed Services Committee, the only Republican woman on that committee at the time. She also served on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and in the 106th Congress she was named Chairman of the newly created Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations and Emergency Management. Her number one priority was investigating the country’s preparedness for a domestic terrorist assault. She found overlap and inadequacies among the several federal agencies with jurisdiction over domestic preparedness against a terrorist attack.

“Tillie will be remembered as an effective legislator because she always kept her word to her colleagues and constituents,” said House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert, Illinois Republican.

Tillie tended to be more conservative than most of us at Ripon. But she shared our Big Tent philosophy and actively participated in the Society’s activities. She was a loyal and indispensable board member, playing a pivotal role in our growth as a policy and outreach organization during the 1990s.

After leaving Congress in January 2001, she was mentioned as a possible secretary of the Navy in the Bush administration, but instead joined the national law firm of Holland & Knight. Moreover, Tillie served on the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee, which advises the secretary of defense on strategy and policy issues. Tillie succeeded Richard Perle as the committee’s chairman, after he stepped down in the summer of 2003.

She also served on other high-profile boards, such as a committee investigating prisoner mistreatment in Iraq and a panel

looking into accusations of sexual abuse at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Tillie never backed away from controversy. The academy panel, which she chaired, criticized the Air Force’s senior leadership for being aware of but doing very little to prevent cases of sexual abuse. The Iraq panel also criticized the military and civilian leadership for the prisoner abuse scandal. Despite a chorus of attacks on Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld from many in the media, however, Tillie argued it would be a mistake for him to resign.

A native of Milledgeville, Ga., she was the daughter of former Georgia state Sen. Culver Kidd.

Tillie once revealed to a reporter that her father strongly encouraged her to pursue a profession, because he had witnessed first-hand the difficult economic plight of widowed women during the Great Depression. He never wanted his daughter to become destitute. She did not disappoint him.

After graduating from Emory University law school, Tillie worked for Georgia Rep. Robert Stephens and in the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs with Elizabeth Dole, who is now a Republican U.S. senator. Tillie viewed Senator Dole as a professional role model, a strong, independent and successful woman who exhibited both power and feminine civility. The North Carolina senator felt the same way about Tillie.

“She was nothing less than the embodiment of a woman who could achieve anything,” Mrs. Dole said. “Her compassion, grace, warmth and cheerful personality will always live in my heart.”

Survivors include Tillie’s husband of 37 years, L. Buck Fowler, and her two daughters, Tillie A. Fowler and Elizabeth Fowler, as well as her brother and two sisters.

The entire Ripon family mourns the passing of a great patriot, congresswoman, mother, wife and—above all—dear friend. May she rest in peace. ☹

— Richard S. Kessler is the President of The Ripon Society



# Disconnected Democrats

## Party embraces instant-money mentality

By Patrick M. Garry

It was as if the Democratic Party's financial status instantly changed. During the Clinton years, the party was constantly bemoaning its strained coffers. During the 2000 campaign, the party pushed hard for campaign finance reform. But then, almost instantly, things changed in 2004. The Democratic Party was flush with cash. It was the party of instant money.

In the wake of last fall's presidential election, Democrats have been anguishing about their failure to connect with mainstream America. But since moral values are apparently too mystifying a concept, perhaps there is a simpler, more secular explanation for the disconnect: money. On this most basic ingredient of modern life, the Democratic mentality is far removed from average Americans. The contrast is stark: instant money versus livelihood money; receivers versus earners.

Democrats have always taken a superficial view of money. To them, the mere amount is all that matters. It is the same kind of superficiality with which Democrats view people, looking at them only for their outward characteristics, like the color of their skin and the accent of their language. But just as with people, not all money is the same.

### Party of Instant Money

For the vast majority of Americans, money represents a lifelong process of earning a livelihood—day after day, week after week, year after year. This process shapes one's values and imposes a code of discipline, fostering perseverance and personal responsibility. Increasingly, however, the Democratic Party has drifted away from this mindset. It has become the party of instant money.

Sen. John Kerry marries one of the wealthiest women in the world. Instant money. Sen. Hillary Clinton signs an \$8 million contract for her memoirs. Instant money. Former Sen. John Edwards has an

injured client walk into his office, and the resulting insurance settlement yields a multi-million dollar fee for Mr. Edwards. Instant money. A Hollywood actress and Democratic activist appear in a 15-second commercial and receive a \$3 million check. Instant money.

With all this instant money flowing

MoveOn.org. And most of that money came from "instant money" industries like Hollywood and the trial lawyers, and from a small number of very wealthy donors like George Soros, who gave nearly \$24 million. Not surprisingly, despite their previous opposition to the big money influence in politics, Democrats blocked all attempts to restrict 527 soft money.

Photo by Alex Wong/Getty Images



U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) speaks on NBC's 'Meet the Press.' Kennedy talked about various issues including withdrawing U.S. troops from Iraq.

But this instant money identity has alienated Democrats from mainstream America. With their material wealth being the result of large, one-shot infusions of cash, instant money people tend to be focused primarily on the present, immersed in a cult of the "now." They are susceptible to the hedonistic self-indulgence that such an immersion can bring. Consequently, they are less concerned with preserving what is valuable from the past, nor with finding ways in which to carry the past forward into the future. Perhaps this is why liberals are so quick to dismiss tradition and to denigrate the values of Western culture that underlie America's history. Perhaps this is why they have yet to articulate a vision of America's future in a world threatened by Islamic terrorism.

### Earners vs. Receivers

An instant money lifestyle can dispense with many of the behavioral rules to which most people must adhere. In the pursuit of their livelihood, "earners" must abide by the discipline of going to work everyday, complying with rules set by their employers, providing service to their customers, and acting with the honesty that will command loyalty from their colleagues. Indeed, "earners" must act everyday in a manner that protects the future of their financial survival.

Receivers of instant money, on the other hand, need not impose any such discipline on their lives. They need not concern themselves with the task of functioning harmoniously in a larger group or set-

ting. Unlike the self-restrained earner, the instant-money receiver can indulge in a self-absorbed exercise of rights, as Hollywood celebrities do when they flip-pantly slur President George W. Bush with obscenities. Instant-money receivers become absorbed in a culture of the self, eschewing any higher purpose to life other than self-gratification. They preach rights without duties, individual entitlements without responsibilities to the larger community. They see only their self-centered ends, ignoring any duty to the means—just as Democrats did when they lectured about electoral integrity while participating in widespread voter registration fraud.

Earners have to take responsibility for the institutions that make possible the earning of money. They know that no gain is possible without sacrifice, and that no productive activity is without its risks. They know that life is a pursuit toward improvement, and not an immediate attainment of perfection. They do not adopt the trial lawyer view that every disappointment or injury amounts to a violation of rights; nor do they indulge in naive Hollywood fantasies of a false nirvana. Contrary to the mentality of earners, liberals elevate as their moral hero not the producer or the provider, but the victim. They place the entire blame on the food companies for obesity in America, without allocating any responsibility to personal behavior.

On the surface, receivers of instant money might seem completely independent, free of all the institutions and rules that govern the earners of livelihood money. But in reality, it is the receivers who are the dependent ones. Their dependency arises because their instant money comes from outside sources beyond their control; hence, they are continually beset with an insecure reliance on the vagaries of external events. The Hollywood actor must hope that her particular look is the one currently in vogue with producers and audiences; the young singer must hope that his listeners continue to see him as defiant and rebellious.

Unlike earners, receivers become dependent on the whims of outsiders to magically confer sudden wealth. This same kind of dependence can be seen in the way Democrats wish to place America's fate in the hands of an aloof and uncontrolled United Nations, and in the way they look to France to provide validation of America's role in the world. A dependency mindset

shapes the Democratic view of education as a self-esteem exercise, rather than as the instilling of abilities needed to live as independent earners. It also shapes the way Democrats scoff at Social Security reforms aimed at creating an ownership society that is not dependent on government largesse.

### **Democratic Hypocrisy**

Liberals have been rejecting the notion of moral values for so long that they are completely blind to any relationship between morality and money. They refuse to recognize the character traits that the earning of money requires—traits like self-restraint, honesty and a sublimation of self-ego to the needs of a larger community. Democrats believe in spending and redistributing money, but they don't believe in the freedom of money. They don't believe in giving workers control of their own retirement accounts, or households control over their health care needs through medical savings accounts, or parents control over their children's education through school vouchers.

This inability to understand the links between money and morality has had a corrupting influence on Democrats. Ralph Nader summed it up when, after depleting his campaign resources fighting off Democratic assaults on his candidacy, he said: "I underestimated the mendacity of the Democratic Party."

Unmitigated hypocrisy has come to define the party, especially its claim of being the party of the common person. Take Mr. Kerry: the America he belongs to is not the America he claimed to represent. He and his wife own five different homes, valued near \$30 million. He flies in a \$35 million private jet, windsurfs behind an \$800,000 speedboat, and rides an \$8,000 bicycle. Yet he kept telling us how dreadful it was that 3 percent of America's population controls 20 percent of its wealth. He condemned those who maneuver special favors from the government, yet he got the city of Boston to remove a fire hydrant that kept him and his wife from parking their SUV outside their house. He preached environmentalism, yet he and his wife sought to divert huge amounts of river water to supply the sprawling lawn of their Idaho ski lodge. He advocated compassion to the needy, yet in 1993 when he was in between wealthy wives and earned only \$130,345 he gave just \$175 to charity. He preached tolerance, yet condemned his opponents with

the word "un-American" more often than any politician since Joseph McCarthy.

The hypocrisy and intolerance of modern liberals can be seen in their attitude toward those who hold contrary views. On college campuses, professors opposing political correctness are punished by speech codes and academic marginalization. Gay rights activists demand sensitivity and accommodation from others, yet have no hesitancy in ridiculing religious believers. Liberals continually repeated their "move on" mantra during the Clinton scandals, and yet now refuse to move on from a presidential election that went against them. During President Bush's inauguration, mobs of liberal activists engaged in adolescent violence, vandalism and public vulgarity, all in defiance of taxpayers who had to pay for mob control and of fellow citizens who had to battle these mobs while going to work or taking their children to school. Indeed, the whining, self-absorbed refusal of the American left to accept the results of the 2004 election stood in sharp contrast to the courage of Iraqis who risked their lives to vote.

Democrats claim to be the party of the future because demographic trends favor them, with America becoming less and less white. But this shallow view of voters, focusing only on what people look like rather than on the character of their souls and the aspirations of their dreams, will only further divide the Democratic Party from mainstream America. This division was apparent in the 2004 election, where President Bush drove deep into traditional Democratic territory. He took 40 percent of the union vote and a near majority of that portion of the middle-class that earns between \$30,000 and \$50,000 a year. And while President Bush relied on large numbers of small donors, Mr. Kerry was financed by an elite group of wealthy donors, like the Hamptons beach house owners who raised \$3 million in one day.

With its instant-money mentality, the Democratic Party is destined to follow the Clinton model—achieving national power only during times of peace and prosperity. This is because the party knows only how to receive peace and prosperity, not how to earn it. ☞

— Patrick M. Garry is a professor at the University of South Dakota School of Law.

# Passing President Bush's Agenda

## An interview with House Majority Leader Tom DeLay

By Stephen F. Manfredi

Since being elected to Congress in 1984, Texas Republican Tom DeLay has risen to become House Majority Leader, the second ranking leader in the House of Representatives. In this role, it has been Mr. DeLay's responsibility to work with the Republican leadership to develop the issues and policies that form the Republican agenda while setting the legislative schedule to ensure that national priorities are appropriately addressed.

Mr. DeLay has revolutionized his office and played a crucial role in getting the necessary votes to pass legislation since the landmark Republican election victories of 1994. Mr. DeLay's leadership contributed to the passage of key elements of the Contract with America, Trade Promotion Authority, welfare reform, the Balanced Budget Act and the historic tax cuts signed by President George W. Bush. Mr. DeLay has been an outspoken defender of the free market, traditional values and a strong national defense throughout his two decades of service in Congress.

Mr. DeLay was born in Laredo, Texas in 1947. He graduated with a degree in biology from the University of Houston in 1970 before becoming a successful small business owner. He served in the Texas State House for six years before winning his seat in the United States House of Representatives.

The House Majority Leader kindly agreed to an interview. We wish to thank his staff for their cooperation and generosity in making the interview possible.

**RF:** What are your three most important legislative priorities and in which order will you pursue their passage?

**DeLay:** Our three top priorities are philosophical, not legislative: to protect the security, prosperity and families of the United States. That means maintaining our success in the war on terror at home and

abroad. That means helping to create jobs and opportunities in our economy. And that means meeting the needs of Americans of every age and background to pursue happiness and raise their families in safe and vibrant communities.

**RF:** President Bush has made reforming Social Security a centerpiece of his domestic agenda. Still, some Republicans and many Democrats have stated that there is no "crisis" in Social Security. Is there enough support in Congress to pass Social Security reform and what should our 21st century pension system look like?

**DeLay:** Well, first of all, support for strengthening and improving Social Security must come—and is coming—from the American people. That support right now is growing, as more and more people—young and old—come to understand the situation facing Social Security. The Baby Boom generation will start to retire in just three years. Seniors are living longer, healthier and more active lives. There are fewer workers and more retirees all the time, and every year we wait to act, the problem grows \$600 billion worse.

Retirement security in the 21st century needs to look more like the 21st century than the current system. It can't just be about getting a check. It has to include flexibility for seniors to retire when they want. It will have to account for long-term



House Majority Leader Tom DeLay

Courtesy of Rep. DeLay's office

health care, which is now bankrupting millions of seniors. It will have to provide more personal control, so that government can't swoop in and change the rules in the middle of the game. The specific plan is yet to be worked out, but Social Security is facing a fiscal crisis, and we have a moral obligation to act.

**RF:** Tax reform is one of President Bush's top priorities. You have been a vocal advocate of replacing the federal income tax with a national sales tax. Is this going to happen during the 109th Congress?

**DeLay:** In the House of Representatives, we're going to begin work on fundamental tax reform this year. We're taking a dual-track approach on tax reform. On the

one hand, the Ways and Means Committee is ready to start building the legislative case for the need to streamline the federal revenue system in hearings. On the other, we'll also move specific, targeted legislation to further simplify portions of the current tax code, to "prepare the battlefield" for fundamental reform when the nation is ready for such an initiative.

**RF:** You have said that if you don't set "conservative goals, you don't get conservative governance." What conservative goals have you set for the House?

**DeLay:** My goals are the same Republicans have set for decades: to preserve and enhance the security, prosperity and families of the United States. On security, our goal is to fight and win the war on terror with no excuses or apologies until the last terrorist on earth is in a cell or a cemetery. We're going to continue to secure our homeland, and also employ every diplomatic resource at our disposal to expand our coalition and isolate terrorist organizations and their state sponsors. On prosperity, our goal is to double the size of our economy over the next 10-15 years. We'll do that by reducing the burden on American businesses. They have enough to worry about with their competitors without worrying about the onerous taxation, regulation and litigation they face every day. And on families, Congress must remember that all the security and prosperity in the world won't last without the values that enabled our countrymen to achieve them in the first place. We must promote a culture of life and protect our society from the excesses of judicial activism.

**RF:** On that note, in recent years, many social conservatives have said that they feel betrayed by Congressional Republicans for failing to advance a more culturally conservative agenda. How do you respond to these complaints?

**DeLay:** The 109th is the most culturally conservative Congress in memory, and President Bush is the undisputed leader of the conservative movement. After years of thankless work, conservatives in recent years have celebrated victories in the fights to ban partial-birth abortion and protect the unborn from violence against their mothers. We have begun to take more aggressive action monitoring and expressing our disapproval of judicial activists. We passed the Marriage Protection Amendment, and continue our work today publicly and privately to protect marriage, the unborn and the role of faith in the public square. Insofar as all activists on every side of every issue never think Congress moves fast enough for them, I salute their vigor and urge them to maintain their advocacy. But we respect and support social conservatives and their ideas, and our record reflects that.

**RF:** Some have called the House "Bush's rubber stamp." Should President Bush expect more resistance to his agenda in the House than he received during his first term in office?

**DeLay:** The President should expect the same support we have always given him. That support is not contingent on personality, but ideas. The President and House Republicans agree on 99.9 percent of issues, so I wouldn't expect there to be some new friction just because others disagree with our agenda.

**RF:** Republicans and Democrats alike have argued that America's "open" southern border has become our nation's soft underbelly. What kind of immigration policy should Congress enact?

**DeLay:** Our immigration policy should reflect America's tradition as a nation of immigrants. We should welcome legal immigrants into our country and encour-

age them to become American citizens, just like all our ancestors did at some point. But illegal immigration, on the other hand, is a crime, and it is the responsibility of all branches of government to protect our borders. And this isn't simply an ideological debate—border security goes to the heart of our homeland security. Without the former, we cannot have the latter.

**RF:** There are real divisions among Republicans regarding the issue of immigration. Do you think the immigration issue will split the Republican Party?

**DeLay:** There are real disagreements among Republicans on immigration, yes, and on abortion, taxes, government spending, foreign policy, entitlement spending and every other issue under the sun. Those differences—and our party's tolerance of them—are what make us the majority party in the United States today. The Democrats have no such disagreements—they have a strict party orthodoxy, and deviation from it is an unforgivable sin. Our party won't split, because our differences—and working through them—make us stronger.

**RF:** After the No Child Left Behind Act and the proposed Constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage, some have questioned whether the Republican Party can still be considered the party of federalism and local control. Is this a fair criticism?

**DeLay:** The Republican Party has always been committed to solving problems at the level closest to the problem. Because I did not support the No Child Left Behind Act, I can't really speak to that, but in the case of the Marriage Protection Amendment, that is the only way I can see to keep marriage a state issue. Whatever one's opinion on homosexual marriage, the judicial decisions foisting it upon unwilling communities are groundless. Much like the *Roe v. Wade* decision, which even pro-abortion advocates admit was shoddily reasoned, the Massachusetts Supreme Court simply imposed its political whim on communities they disagreed with. The U.S. Supreme Court shows progressively less concern every day for the will of the American people, and the amendment is the only way to ensure marriage rights are defined by elected legislators and not judges. ☞

— Stephen F. Manfredi is  
policy director at The Ripon Society.

**“On security, our goal is to fight and win the war on terror with no excuses or apologies until the last terrorist on earth is in a cell or a cemetery.”**



Photo by Ian Woldie/Getty Images



# Ending Our Oil Dependence

## Replacing all the oil the U.S. needs will cost less than buying it

By Amory B. Lovins

**T**he United States of America has the world's mightiest economy and most mobile society. Yet the oil that fueled its strength has become its greatest weakness.

Fortunately, this 10,000-gallon-a-second oil habit is also uneconomic, and American business is the greatest force on earth for turning market imperfections into profits.

The United States can *eliminate* its oil dependence and revitalize its economy—not by passing federal laws, taxing fuels, biasing markets, subsidizing favorites, mandating technologies, limiting choices, or crimping lifestyles, but by adopting smart business strategies. If government steers, not rows, then competitive enterprise,

supported by judicious policy and vibrant civil society, can turn the oil challenge into an unprecedented opportunity for wealth creation and common security.

How can this be done? President Ronald Reagan's National Security Advisor, Robert C. McFarlane, wrote in an op-ed in *The Wall Street Journal* published on Dec. 20, 2004 that “perhaps the most rigorous and surely the most dramatic analysis...was tasked by the Pentagon and carried out by...Rocky Mountain Institute, a respected center of hard-headed, market-based research.” Three months earlier, my team released that independent, peer-reviewed, 329-page study—*Winning the Oil Endgame: Innovation for Profits, Jobs, and Security*—and posted it with all technical

backup at [www.oilendgame.com](http://www.oilendgame.com). More than 170,000 free copies have already been downloaded. Here's a summary. But first, a little history is necessary.

In 1850, oil from the giant whaling industry lit most homes. Yet in the nine years before Drake struck oil in 1859, five-sixths of the whale-oil market vanished: competition elicited cheaper alternatives that the whalers had not expected. They ran out of customers before they ran out of whales, the rest of which were saved by capitalists and technological innovators.

Today, the globe-girdling oil industry seems poised to follow suit. Might oil become uncompetitive even at low prices before it becomes unavailable even at high prices? To find out, my economists, engineers, scientists and consultants added up the modern competitors for the first time. We examined decades' backlog of powerful new technologies for saving and displacing oil. We arranged them in order of increasing cost on a uniform accounting basis. Surprise! The robustly competitive options could save half the oil America uses and substitute cheaper alternatives for the rest, all led by business for profit. The transition beyond oil has three parallel elements:

- **Redouble the efficiency of using oil.** The United States now gets twice as much GDP per barrel as in 1975, but can wring out twice as much again by applying proven 2004 technologies. Saving each barrel will cost only \$12 (in year-2000 dollars)—less than half what the government forecasts oil will cost in 2025, or a fourth the recent price, so even more efficiency would be worth buying. Conservatively, we valued oil's unmonetized economic, military and environmental costs at zero, and assumed the same activities, vehicle attributes and lifestyles as the government forecast—then found ways to deliver these outcomes with less oil, less money and more brains.

Personal vehicles use 42% of U.S. oil and cause 58% of its forecast growth. Only 1% of their fuel energy moves the driver. Yet George P. Shultz's Foreword to our study says: “Hybrid technology is already on the road and currently increases gas mileage by 50% or more....New, ultralight-but-safe materials can nearly redouble fuel economy at little or no

extra cost....” Ultralight, ultrastrong carbon-fiber composite autobodies (make-able by a technique displayed by a Tier One supplier at the 2005 Detroit Auto Show), backstopped by new lightweight steels, can yield uncompromised, affordable 66-mpg hybrid SUVs and 92-mpg hybrid cars that pay back in three years. The materials’ extra cost is offset by simpler auto-making and smaller propulsion systems. Per pound, the composites can absorb 6–12 times as much crash energy as steel, so by making cars big, which is protective, but not heavy, which is hostile and fuel-wasting, they can save oil *and* lives.

Even without lighter materials, if 2025’s cars and light trucks were only as efficient as 2005’s popular hybrids, they’d save a sixth of forecast oil use, or two Persian Gulfs’ worth. Together, cost-effectively efficient vehicles, factories and buildings can cut U.S. oil use by 29% in 2025, rising to 52% as vehicle stocks turn over.

- **Save half of natural gas at an eighth of today’s market price, and then substitute it for nearly a third of the oil.** Established, highly profitable efficiency techniques can save 12 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of gas a year. In all, 15 TCF a year can be freed up to displace oil, directly or (more efficiently and profitably) via hydrogen. Saving just 1% of U.S. electricity, including peak hours, saves 2% of total gas use and cuts gas prices by 3–4%. By this leverage, just the early savings would make gas affordable and abundant again, cut gas and power bills by \$55 billion a year, and avoid the cost, siting problems and vulnerability of new liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals and power lines.
- **Replace the last fifth of U.S. oil with modern biofuels.** Two percent of U.S. gasoline today is substituted by costly, heavily subsidized ethanol made from corn-based sugars. Making ethanol instead from the woody parts of plants like switchgrass and poplar doubles the yield while saving capital and energy. Without competing for food crops’ land or water, such “cellulosic ethanol,” plus biodiesel, can cost-effectively displace nearly four million barrels of oil per day, create 750,000 rural jobs, and boost farm income by tens of billions of dollars a year. (Sugarcane ethanol has displaced 25% of Brazil’s gasoline, repaying initial

subsidies 50 times over, and now beats gasoline without subsidy.)

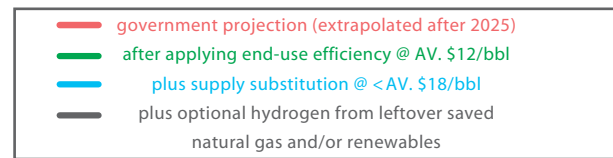
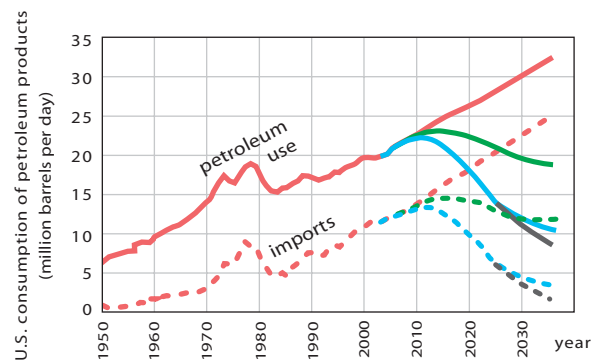
Within two generations, combining these three steps could make a more prosperous and secure America completely oil-free (see graph). This will require \$90 billion of investment to retool the car, truck and plane industries, so that rather than importing efficient vehicles to replace foreign oil, we *make* efficient vehicles and import neither. Building an advanced biofuels industry will take another \$90 billion. This \$180 billion of private investment will by 2025 return *every year* more than \$150 billion gross (\$133 billion of it from saved oil) or \$70 billion net, add a million new jobs, and preserve another million jobs, chiefly automotive, now at risk.

### Making America More Competitive

The business case is compelling: cheaper trucking with doubled margins, affordable petrochemical feedstocks and airline fuel, lower and more stable fuel prices for all, and restored American primacy in making cars, trucks and planes. And the alternative is grim. China’s ambitious car-export plans fit Beijing’s new energy policy focused on efficient use and breakthrough technologies. Will China export your uncle’s Buick? More likely you’ll drive home your super-efficient Chinese car from Wal-Mart. The Big Three automakers will be toast unless they adopt advanced efficiency technologies first.

Such “disruptive” business shifts are hard. However, hesitating risks a slow, chaotic transition rife with wars and disruptions. Protecting national competitiveness and security requires instead an orderly transition harnessing America’s strengths in technology and private enterprise, accelerated by light-handed policies that support, not distort, business logic.

Our study therefore suggested modest policy innovations that are market-oriented without taxes, innovation-driven with-



**How oil efficiency and substitutions, deployed at historically reasonable rates, can profitably eliminate oil dependence over the next few decades.**

Further details at [www.oilendgame.com](http://www.oilendgame.com).

out mandates, doable administratively or at a state level (where many are bubbling up), and previously overlooked in Washington. For example:

- “Feebates” for new cars and light trucks combine fees on inefficient models with rebates on efficient ones—all calculated separately within each size class, so one isn’t penalized for choosing an SUV, but rewarded for choosing an *efficient* SUV. Whatever vehicle size you want would offer more choices as the greater price spread between more and less efficient models pulls innovations faster from the lab to the showroom. Feebates encourage you to invest in fuel savings over the vehicle’s life, not just the first few years. Rebates no bigger than current \$4,000–5,000 manufacturer sales incentives would actually make money for producers as well as consumers, and be tried up each year to stay revenue-neutral. The fuel savings would be like buying gasoline at 57¢ a gallon—worthwhile even if the big savings made oil prices plummet.
- Low-income families lack affordable personal mobility—the last frontier of welfare reform. Junking clunkers and creatively financing super-efficient and reliable new cars could cleanse urban air, expand low-income employment opportunities, and create a profitable new million-car-a-year market for advanced-technology vehicles.
- Governments buy hundreds of thou-

sands of light vehicles a year. Smart procurement can speed innovation and reduce automaker's investment risk.

- Innovation-friendly policies like temporary federal loan guarantees (structured to cost the Treasury nothing) can help automakers retool and retrain, and airlines buy efficient airplanes while scrapping inefficient ones.
- Tweaking USDA rules can let profitable biofuels and biomaterials replace loss-making crops and durable revenues replace subsidies, ultimately tripling net farm and ranch income.
- The 48 states that reward gas and electric distribution utilities for selling more energy and penalize them for cutting customers' bills can easily purge this perverse incentive—as state utility commissioners unanimously urged in 1989.
- The military imperative of light, agile, fuel-efficient forces can protect troops and fuel supply lines, save tens of billions of dollars in annual fuel-logistics costs, realign force structures from tail to tooth, avoid poisonous geopolitical rivalries over oil, and ultimately help prevent the fighting of wars over oil.

Being able to treat countries with oil the same as countries without oil, and no longer giving anyone cause to think U.S. actions are about oil, would help defuse global suspicions and conflicts. By modestly shifting its technology budgets and procuring fuel-efficient platforms, the Defense Department could spawn broadly transformative advanced-materials civilian industries—just as it did with the Internet, GPS, and microchips that propel today's economy.

## A Better Energy Policy

The required one-time \$180 billion investment, spread reasonably over a decade, averages \$18 billion a year. That's what America now pays for foreign oil every 5–6 weeks. At the forecast 2025 price of \$26 a barrel, the oil saving of \$133 billion a year would act like a large and permanent tax cut, but one that corrects, not exacerbates, today's fiscal imbalances. And the savings would become big even in the first decade.

Rather than sending \$120 billion a year abroad for oil (partly to fund our enemies), we would reinvest it in our own companies and communities, and pocket the surplus. Drilling for oil under Detroit, we would discover a trove of vehicular effi-

ciency bigger than Saudi Arabia's oil output, but all-American, squeaky-clean and inexhaustible.

Our analysis assumed vehicle improvements two-fifths slower than after the 1979 oil shock, and enormously slower than in the 1920s (when autobody shifted from wood to steel in six years) or in World War II (when Detroit mobilized in six months). Indeed, our proposed oil savings are much slower than America achieved when she last paid attention. During 1977–85, 27% GDP growth was accompanied by 17% lower oil use, 50% lower oil imports, and a stunning 87% drop in Persian Gulf imports. OPEC's sales fell 48%, breaking the cartel's market power for a decade. The United States showed it had more market power than OPEC—but on the demand side: America is the Saudi Arabia of negabarrels, able to save oil faster than OPEC can conveniently sell less oil. Today's potent technologies and policy options could make that old play even more successful.

Automakers are already scrambling to make advanced-technology vehicles, and the oil industry, where I've consulted for 32 years, is generally receptive. Shell's former Chairman, Sir Mark Moody-Stuart, wrote in his Foreword that our study reflects “technical rigour, good humour, and common sense,” as well as “refreshingly creative policies... [that] merit serious attention....” Many oil-industry leaders agree that with foresight and supportive policies, they can profitably redeploy assets and skills in the post-petroleum era, as some already do with branded biofuels. The hydrogen in their oil may even be worth more without the carbon than with the carbon (even if nobody pays to keep carbon out of the air), because hydrogen can be used far more efficiently than hydrocarbons.

The result: By 2015, early savings will displace as much annual oil as the United States now gets from the Persian Gulf; then every seven years (at 3% annual GDP growth) can save another Gulf's worth. By 2040, oil imports could be gone. By 2050, the United States economy could be oil-free and thriving, dominant again in transportation equipment. A more effective and efficient but less overstretched military could refocus on protecting American citizens, not foreign pipelines. Rather than prolonging for decades our reliance on the frighteningly vulnerable Trans-Alaska Pipeline to haul oil that's too costly for oil

major to drill, this grave threat to national energy security could phase out on schedule. Carbon emissions would shrink by one-fourth as a free byproduct of profitable oil savings. Federal budget deficits would shrink slightly, trade deficits vastly. The United States could regain moral stature and esteem as it led a more peaceful world beyond oil.

Oil dependence is a problem America needn't have, and it's cheaper not to. Getting profitably, attractively and completely off oil—led by business, implemented through markets, sped by barrier-busting, boosted technologically by the Pentagon for military effectiveness and conflict prevention—would express America's highest ideals, honor its market and political principles, and enhance its security. Informed citizens will drive this transition as they guide markets, enforce accountability and create grassroots innovation.

A better energy policy process would offer even wider benefits for a stronger country and a safer world. Letting all ways to save or produce energy compete fairly at honest prices—no matter what kind they are, what technology they use, how big they are, or who owns them—is far from today's hogs-at-the-trough approach, but it's what conservative economics demands and what the nation's broad hidden consensus ([www.nepinitiative.org](http://www.nepinitiative.org)) would support.

Mr. Shultz concludes: “We can, as Amory Lovins and his colleagues show vividly, win the oil endgame.” Mr. McFarlane concurs: “It is becoming clear...that the means to achieving near-term energy security and ultimate independence from foreign oil are at hand. Courage and leadership are all that it takes to get us there.” And the preamble to President George W. Bush's 2001 energy policy statement says it best: “Our country has met many great tests. Some have imposed extreme hardship and sacrifice. Others have demanded only resolve, ingenuity, and clarity of purpose. Such is the case with energy today.” ☞

— Amory Lovins is founder and CEO of Rocky Mountain Institute ([www.rmi.org](http://www.rmi.org)), an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit applied research center in Snowmass, Colorado. He has advised the Departments of Energy and Defense, and consults for industry worldwide.



# Stealing Elections

Democrats  
were not  
'robbed' in  
2004



By Robert Stacy McCain

**E**lection Day 2004 was more than two months old, Inauguration Day was less than two weeks away, but Sen. Barbara Boxer still had questions.

"Why did voters in Ohio wait hours in the rain to vote?" the California Democrat demanded to know in her Jan. 6 floor speech. "Why did poor and predominantly African-American communities have disproportionately long waits?"

The long wait on Jan. 6 was for Mrs. Boxer and other Democrats to finish their protest, so that Congress could do what it had convened to do: certify the Electoral College votes of President George W. Bush's historic re-election.

Not only had the Republican received more popular votes (62 million) than any other president in history, but for the first time since President Bush's father left office, Americans would have a president

elected by a majority. President Bill Clinton had twice been elected by pluralities (43 percent of the popular vote in 1992, 49 percent in 1996). Of course President Bush's 2000 election had been decided by the narrowest margin in the Electoral College, with both he and his opponent each getting about 48 percent of the popular vote—and Democrats had never stopped emphasizing that Al Gore had actually won the popular vote, by a margin of some 540,000 votes.

There was no such consolation for Democrats in 2004. Besides his record-setting vote total, President Bush had won the popular vote by a margin of 3 million votes. In no key state was President Bush's winning margin anything like the razor-thin edge by which he'd won Florida in 2000. He won Ohio by a margin of more than 138,000 votes—hardly a nail-biter.

The fact that Democrats chose to focus their post-election complaints on Ohio pretty much gives their game away, since President Bush's margin of victory was actually much narrower in other states. President Bush won Iowa by about 10,000 votes and won New Mexico by just 6,000. (Sen. John Kerry, meanwhile, won Wisconsin by a slender 11,000-vote margin.)

## 'Irregularities' in Ohio?

Iowa and New Mexico, however, did not have enough electoral votes combined to tip the Electoral College to Mr. Kerry. With 270 electoral votes needed to claim victory, President Bush won 286 to Mr. Kerry's 252. If they could discredit President Bush's win in Ohio (with 20 electoral votes), Democrats could claim that the Republican didn't really win re-election.

(This focus on electoral votes was, of course, mind-boggling to Republicans who remembered how, after the 2000 election, many Gore supporters called for the elimination of the “undemocratic” Electoral College.)

So it was that Democrats found occasion to declaim against what Mrs. Boxer called “irregularities” in Ohio. “What’s wrong with our democracy?” Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. of Illinois demanded to know. “What’s wrong with our voting system? State after state, year after year, why do we keep having these problems?”

The protests were futile and Democrats knew it. Yet such complaints continued even after President Bush’s re-election was certified. Mr. Kerry himself chose the occasion of Martin Luther King Day to replay the same litany of charges to a Boston audience: “Thousands of people were suppressed in their efforts to vote. Voting machines were distributed in uneven ways. In Democratic districts, it took people four, five, 11 hours to vote, while Republicans [went] through in 10 minutes.”

Neither Mr. Kerry nor any other Democrat offered any actual evidence to support their claims that Ohio Democrats were somehow cheated by wicked Republicans.

For one thing, the supposed “irregularities” occurred in Ohio counties where the election officials were Democrats, mystified at charges that they had “suppressed” fellow Democrats. “Why would I disenfranchise voters in my own community?” said William Anthony, chairman of the Franklin County Democratic Party, denouncing purveyors of vote-fraud accusations as “conspiracy theorists.”

Some might consider it foolish for Democrats ever to complain about voting “irregularities,” given their party’s long-standing reputation for electoral escapades. Lyndon Johnson earned the nickname “Landslide Lyndon” after winning a Senate seat in a 1948 Texas election that even sympathetic historians admit was stolen. LBJ won by 87 votes with the help of 203 last-minute voters in a small town called Alice—202 of whom were found to have voted in alphabetical order. Many Republicans believe Richard Nixon was cheated out of the 1960 presidential election by similar shenanigans in Texas and also in Illinois, where Mayor Richard Daley’s Chicago machine produced just

enough votes to carry the state for John F. Kennedy.

Evidence suggested Democrats were up to the same familiar stunts in 2004. A few examples:

In Wisconsin, four Democrat campaign workers—including relatives of key state party officials—were accused of slashing the tires of vans which the state GOP had rented for its get-out-the-vote effort. Meanwhile, in Milwaukee, an investigation found that there were not city registration records for some 7,000 people who voted in the Nov. 2 election. In 17 wards of that heavily Democratic city, there were at least 100 more votes recorded than there were voters listed on the records. Two wards showed 500 more votes than voters, according to the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel.

In East St. Louis, Ill., prosecutors say a Democratic official plotted murder in an attempt to thwart an investigation of vote fraud. Kelvin Ellis, who heads the city’s department of regulatory affairs, was arrested Jan. 21 along with three others, including his secretary and the city’s chief of police. Republicans had charged vote fraud after votes from East St. Louis helped elect a Democrat to chairman of the St. Clair County Board. A federal indictment against Mr. Ellis accused him of instructing another person to “dispose of” a witness in the vote-fraud case. Mr. Ellis was charged with four counts of obstruction of justice.

Washington state Republicans have accused Democrats of stealing the gubernatorial election by fabricating bogus votes in Democrat-dominated King County. Ten days after Election Day, while absentee votes in the close contest were still being counted, a judge ordered election officials to provide to the Democratic Party the names and addresses of some 900 people whose provisional ballots had been disallowed because of lack of proper signatures. King County Democrats secured some 600 extra votes this way, so that Republican Dino Rossi’s margin was trimmed to less than 300 votes. In a mandatory machine recount, King County officials produced still more additional votes for Democrat Christine Gregoire by “enhancing” ballots previously rejected by scanning machines, trimming Mr. Rossi’s lead to 42 votes. In a subsequent hand recount, King County “discovered” previously uncounted bal-

lots, just enough to give Mrs. Gregoire a 129-vote victory in the final tally.

Yet despite all of this, Democrats like Mrs. Boxer and Mr. Kerry want Americans to believe that it is Republicans who steal elections through “irregularities.”

## Democrats in Trouble

Democratic “disenfranchisement” demagoguery about the 2004 presidential election is symptomatic of a deeper denial within the party, a refusal to confront the reality of the phenomenal decline of the Democrats’ political power. As recently as 1994, Democrats not only held the White House, but also had majorities in both houses of Congress and a majority of state governorships. All of this has now changed.

Since taking control of the House of Representatives in the watershed 1994 election, the GOP has successfully defended its majority status in five consecutive elections. Nor is this likely to change. The booming growth of Republican “red” states will favor the GOP when House districts are redrawn after the 2010 census. Senate Republicans, meanwhile, boosted their majority to 55 seats in 2004, defeating former Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota. And the 2006 midterm election offers still more prospects for GOP pickups. Despite the shenanigans by which Democrats captured the governorship of Washington state, Republicans have a solid majority of governors, with 28 to the Democrats’ 22.

Democrats’ dwindling political position means the party has less and less to offer its special-interest constituencies. Even such fanatical Republican-haters as left-wing financier George Soros are unlikely to keep pumping in contributions to support a Democratic Party with little hope of regaining meaningful clout.

The bizarre “we wuz robbed” complaints about Ohio from Mrs. Boxer and other Democrats can thus be seen as an effort to maintain their party’s image of electoral viability. Democrats are in a desperate fix, and tactics like their complaints of Ohio election “irregularities” are merely further evidence of just how desperate they’ve become. ☞

— Robert Stacy McCain is a journalist based in Washington, DC.



## Why Iraq Matters Only spread of democracy can stabilize Middle East

By Jeffrey T. Kuhner

“It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.”

These powerful words, uttered by President George W. Bush in his second inaugural speech, encapsulate the transformation in U.S. foreign policy since 9/11. America is no longer willing to coddle brutal dictators for the sake of preserving “stability.” In particular, the President has realized that the pre-9/11 foreign policy of supporting pro-American autocratic regimes in the Middle East has failed to

protect the United States from Islamic terrorism. Rather, this so-called “realist” policy, which for decades was supported by both Republicans and Democrats, has only undermined our security—both at home and abroad.

What the 9/11 attacks clearly demonstrated is that the old “realism” is completely unrealistic in this age of terror. Washington’s long-standing support for the Saudi royal family, the authoritarian petro-states in the Gulf, Pakistan’s military dictatorship and Egypt’s corrupt regime have not paid long-term strategic dividends for the United States. The policy has not only been a failure, but it has played a key role in unleashing the very forces of hatred and violence that threatens America’s existence.

Instead of being grateful for U.S. assistance, the House of Saud has secretly bankrolled Wahhabi mosques and madrassas around the world. These have become the prime recruiting grounds for Islamic jihadists. It is no coincidence that nearly all of the 9/11 hijackers were Saudi citizens.

Qatar’s lavish oil revenues have been used indirectly to fund al-Jazeera. The Arab media outlet has emerged as a potent propaganda mouthpiece for al Qaeda and other



An Iraqi mother carries her daughter as she casts her vote in a polling station in the northern Kurdish city of Suleimaniya, January 30, 2005. Millions of Iraqis flocked to vote in the historic election.

© Khalid al-Mously/Reuters/Corbis

Democratic Party. However, it is certainly understood by the Bush administration, as well as by most Republicans on Capitol Hill.

### Bush’s New Realism

This is why President Bush’s democratic “idealism” has become the new realism. The President understands that the only way to eliminate the root causes of Islamic extremism is to transform the Middle East. Only by ending the conditions that encourage the rise of terrorists—such as economic backwardness, the lack of political freedom and accountability, and the absence of a free media open to different points of view—

can the United States and the West achieve lasting security.

“In the long run, we cannot live in peace and safety if the Middle East continues to produce ideologies of murder and terrorists who seek the deadliest weapons,” President Bush said during his recent trip to Europe. “Regimes that terrorize their own people will not hesitate to support terror abroad.

“A status quo of tyranny and hopelessness in the Middle East—the false stability of dictatorship and stagnation—can only lead to deeper resentment in a troubled region and further tragedy in free nations,” he added. “The futures of our nations, and the future of the Middle East, are linked—and our peace depends on their hope and development and freedom.”

Many of the President’s critics charge that his plan to spread liberty to Arab lands is naïve and ultimately doomed to failure. They cite numerous reasons: the region has a long history of despotic rule; Islam and democracy are incompatible; and the “Arab street” will reject the U.S.-led effort as a form of neo-colonialism.

Moreover, anti-war liberals argue that the Bush administration’s most ambitious

insurrectionists in Iraq.

For much of the 1990s, Pakistan’s government looked the other way as its top nuclear scientist, A.Q. Khan, sold vital WMD secrets to Libya, Iran and North Korea. Khan’s global network has been finally dismantled, but not before doing incalculable damage to our security interests.

Then there is Egypt. Since 1979, the United States has provided nearly \$50 billion in weapons and money to the regime in Cairo. Yet under Hosni Mubarak’s reign, the country has become increasingly repressive. Its state-run media has also become the central focal point for spreading anti-American and anti-Semitic hatred throughout the Arab world.

Hence, U.S. backing for these governments has not made us safer. It has only worked to embolden and strengthen America’s enemies. In this new era of terror, the danger to the United States does not come from traditional armies or nation-states, but from lone, fanatical jihadists who are more than willing to detonate a dirty bomb in Washington, New York or Los Angeles. This may not be fully grasped by the liberal media establishment and many luminaries in the

strategic initiative, Iraq, is degenerating into another Vietnam—a military quagmire that threatens to drain precious American blood and treasure in a futile cause. They further argue that, even if the administration can achieve some kind of military victory, Iraq is too ethnically divided to evolve into a viable, pluralist democracy.

But the critics are wrong. The recent successful elections in Afghanistan proved that a stable democratic order can be erected within an Islamic civilization. The election of Hamid Karzai dealt a serious blow to the critics of Bush, not only because it showed that democracy and Islam can co-exist. The election also demonstrated that, when given the opportunity, millions of Afghans—including countless women, who suffered perhaps the most under the former Taliban regime—prefer the ballot box to blowing up innocent civilians.

## Democracy in Iraq

Furthermore, the Iraq vote in late January shattered the myths put forward by President Bush's opponents. Despite the escalating bombings and terrorist attacks, Iraqis demonstrated to the world that they are willing to risk their lives to build a new democracy.

Turnout for the vote was high, especially among the country's majority Shiites. The Kurds also came out in large numbers. The result, however, is not the ethnic strife that many liberal pundits predicted. Instead, the largest coalition of Shiite parties, known as the United Iraqi Alliance, which took just under 50% of the 8.5 million votes cast, has had to reach out to Kurdish and even some Sunni allies to forge a working coalition in parliament.

The biggest losers were Iraq's Sunni Arabs. They were the most privileged group under Saddam Hussein's fascist regime. Hence, many of them have been reluctant to support the post-invasion reconstruction effort. But even many of them have come to realize that their election boycott has backfired. It did nothing to strengthen the insurgency in the Sunni triangle. It also guaranteed that they will be underrepresented in the legislature. Many Sunnis are now vowing not to make this mistake again. Sunni participation will likely increase dramatically in next year's ballot.

What has been most striking about the Iraq elections is the restraint and moderation shown by the Shiites and Kurds. After having been brutalized for decades under Saddam's iron rule, they easily could have

sought revenge against former Baathist officials. Instead, the overwhelming majority of elected candidates are moderates.

It is often said that democracy in the Muslim world will lead to the victory of radicals. But this fails to comprehend the true nature of democratic governance. Democracy itself tends to be a moderating force, often compelling deal-making, compromise and persuasion. It acts as a solvent against extremist politics of any sort. This is why, for example, the Shiite cleric firebrand, Moqtada al-Sadr, who last year led a deadly uprising against U.S. troops, captured only 3 seats in the new parliament—a far cry from the 20 seats predicted by many pundits.

The next major challenge for Iraq is whether all the major parties in parliament can agree upon a permanent constitution later this year. If this happens and next year's vote goes smoothly, the country then will be well on its way to becoming a full-fledged pluralist democracy. As the Iraqi government continues to gain moral and legal legitimacy, the insurgents will continue to be marginalized. More importantly, they will be exposed as murderous thugs who wish to keep Iraq enslaved under an Islamic fascist state.

## A New Middle East?

A democratic and stable Iraq will serve as the centerpiece for the broader effort to reform the greater Middle East. Already, the elections in Afghanistan and Iraq have begun to spur small reformist changes in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and other Arab countries.

The trend is definitely in President Bush's direction. Therefore, he needs to stay on the offensive. He should continue to press the governments of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Pakistan—our supposed "allies" in the region—to move toward greater freedom and human rights for their citizens.

Moreover, the administration should continue to stand up to Iran's mullahs and Syria's Baathists. Iran is clearly seeking to acquire nuclear weapons. If Tehran succeeds, it will destabilize the entire region and prompt an immediate arms race throughout the Arab world. Iran is also the world's greatest sponsor of terrorist groups. It provides direct support for al Qaeda.

Yet the United States has a powerful ally in its attempt to curtail Iran's nuclear ambitions: the Iranian people. Having lived for over 25 years under a brutal theocracy,

the overwhelming majority of Iranians are desperate to embrace political and economic reform. The country has witnessed a surging democratic movement. Washington needs to continue to apply diplomatic pressure and stringent proliferation measures against Tehran's rulers. But now is the time to push for regime change—not militarily (yet), but strategically. By providing political, financial and moral support to Iran's dissidents, the Bush administration could play a pivotal role in toppling the mullahs from power. No matter what the administration decides to do, the one thing it cannot allow is for Iran's dangerous leadership to acquire a nuclear arsenal.

Syria must also be contained. President Bashar Assad is one of the region's most ruthless strongmen. Damascus continues to support terrorist insurgents in Iraq. The regime cracks down on all dissent and internal opposition. Also, Syria continues its military occupation of Lebanon—despite repeated promises to withdraw its troops.

However, Assad may have finally overplayed his hand. The recent assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri has sparked mass protests across Lebanon. What precise role—if any—Damascus played in Hariri's death may never be fully known. But his murder has shed an international spotlight on Syria's long-standing subjugation of Lebanon. Lebanese citizens are now demanding the restoration of their country's democracy and national independence. Washington would be wise to back Lebanon's brave democrats; they are our natural allies in the struggle to weaken Assad's power and influence in the region.

Ultimately, the U.S.-led war in Iraq has done more than simply topple a fascist regime that sponsored terrorism, actively sought WMDs and menaced its neighbors. It has unleashed the winds of change that will alter the Arab political landscape.

Should Iraq's democratic experiment succeed, it will transform the entire Middle East and catapult the region to its rightful place among the great civilizations of modernity. If the attempt fails, however, the Arab world, the United States and much of the West face decades of more murder, misery and mayhem. ☞

—Jeffrey T. Kubner is communications director at The Ripon Society.



# Reforming Social Security

## Personal accounts bolster savings and investment

By U.S. Representative Michael G. Oxley

**P**resident George W. Bush has launched an important national dialogue on the solvency of Social Security.

Social Security touches, or will eventually touch, all Americans. One in six people currently receive cash benefits from the program; 154 million people pay the taxes that finance it. Although not originally designed to be a retiree's primary source of support, Social Security benefits now make up 90 percent of the income for one-third of Americans over the age of 65.

That's why it is so important to honestly address the challenges facing the program.

Social Security is running into a demographic wall. With the retirement of the baby boom generation, a smaller percentage of workers will have to support a larger number of retirees. When the program began, the ratio of contributing workers to beneficiaries was 16:1. It's now about 3:1, headed to 2:1—sobering numbers for a pay-as-you-go program.

Beginning in 2018, the Social Security trust fund will pay out more than it collects in taxes. The surplus will run dry around 2042 and if nothing is done, retirees face a severe 30 percent cut in benefits. We must act now to save the system. In front of the House Financial Services Committee, Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan testified, "The demographics are inexorable and call for action before the leading edge of baby boomer retirement becomes evident in 2008."

Personal retirement accounts are a key part of the solution. The President has suggested allowing younger workers to invest up to 4 percent of their share of the payroll tax in individual accounts. As chairman of the Financial Services Committee, I recognize the role that responsible investing can play in retirement security. I'm disturbed by the politics being played by those who claim there is no difference between disciplined investing and gambling in Las Vegas.

The fact is that the United States has changed from a nation of savers to a nation of investors. Tens of millions of Americans have 401k plans, IRAs, or mutual funds. People trust their investments in stocks,

mutual funds and bonds as a proven way to save for a house, their child's education or their own retirement.

Even the most conservative stock and bond investments outperform Social Security's paltry returns of less than 2 percent.

Despite the occasional downturns, the stock market has gone up over every 20 year period in U.S. history. That speaks to the benefit of long-term investing.

You can enjoy steady returns by understanding investing fundamentals like the power of compound interest, dollar cost averaging and diversification.

Compound interest allows your money, once invested, to make more money for you. Dollar cost averaging is a way to make the market work for you during its highs and lows. Index funds offer millions of people a low-cost way to diversify their investments.

The United States has strong regulatory safeguards to reassure investors. The Securities and Exchange Commission is dedicated to the fairness of the marketplace. When some companies misplaced their priorities, Congress responded with the protections of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

There is a model for individual accounts—the federal employees retirement plan that covers 3.2 million active and retired workers.

The Thrift Retirement Plan allows workers to invest a portion of their wages in stocks, bonds, or government securities.

The plan limits investment options to broad index funds, does not permit risky investments and keeps administrative costs low. Participants move to more conservative investments or annuities as they approach their retirement years.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist's staff did a study showing that \$10,000 invested in blended Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) funds in 1988 would be worth \$42,000 today. The same \$10,000 in the Social Security trust fund would be worth only \$11,700. What Social Security recipient couldn't use that extra \$30,000?

Voluntary personal accounts would



U.S. Representative Michael G. Oxley

give every American the chance to build a nest egg for their golden years. The government could not touch the account. It would be yours and could be passed on to your children, something you can't do with a Social Security check.

It's important to clearly state who this change would affect.

The President has said that people 55 and over will continue to receive their benefits under the current program. There will be no change for them.

Younger workers could choose whether they want personal accounts or not. I think many of them would want to invest in a brighter future for themselves and their families. Personal retirement accounts will also contribute to our future economic growth by expanding the pool of capital that businesses draw on to expand and create jobs.

President Bush has shown great political courage in starting this discussion. He's proposing that Social Security do what it has always done: meet the needs of the times.

When it was enacted in 1935, Social Security promised freedom to older Americans living in poverty. Personal accounts are about freedom for young people who need a retirement system that empowers them to take control of their future. 🕊

— Rep. Michael G. Oxley is an Ohio Republican and chairman of the House Financial Services Committee

Courtesy of Rep. Oxley's office



## Expanding Minority Homeownership Making the ‘Ownership Society’ a reality for all

By U.S. Representative Bob Ney

Over the last century, expanding homeownership has been a longstanding policy of our country’s government. A home is more than just the symbol of the American Dream; it is the backbone of the American way of life. Every citizen of this country—regardless of race, creed, color, or place of birth—should have the opportunity to own a home of their own. New homeowners can create wealth for their families for generations to come, while also helping transform neighborhoods and communities.

However, while far more American households now share in the benefits of homeownership, minority households continue to share at substantially lower rates. The homeownership rate among white households is about 74.2 percent while the percent for minority households is substantially less.

Lagging minority homeownership rates are a serious concern. Minority households are expected to account for two-thirds of household growth over the coming decade.

Improving the ability of such households to make the transition to homeownership will be an important test of the nation’s capacity to create economic opportunity for minorities and immigrants and to build strong, stable communities.

Last year, the Housing Subcommittee



Courtesy of Rep. Ney’s office

U.S. Representative Bob Ney

assisted in the successful enactment of 11 housing related bills. Through bipartisan cooperation, Congress and the Bush administration were able to enact legislation that today is making existing housing programs work more efficiently.

Of those enacted last year, the American Dream Downpayment Act and the proposal to raise the FHA multifamily loan limits are helping thousands of individuals and families realize the dream of homeownership. I am especially proud of

the American Dream Downpayment Act, which will provide \$200 million in grants to help homebuyers with their down payment and closing costs.

Housing is the primary source of personal wealth for American families. Home equity represents the single largest asset held by most Americans. The benefits of homeownership extend beyond the individual homeowner as well. Recent studies show that children of families who own homes experience fewer behavior problems and achieve higher math and reading scores. In addition, equity built through homeownership can provide an important link to entrepreneurship. Home equity serves as one method of enabling potential new business owners to gain access to the credit markets. This equity tends to be one of the largest sources of collateral for bank loans to begin a new business.

Multiple studies also demonstrate that homeowners tend to be more involved in their communities and local governments than renters. Homeowners participate in a greater number of non-professional organizations, have higher church attendance, and also have higher voter participation rates.

In the Housing Subcommittee, I plan to continue working hard to explore new ways to put people on the path to homeownership, so they can realize its many benefits.

The federal government, consumers and the housing industry are linked by our mutual goal of creating housing opportunities for more Americans.

We have much to achieve together for the American people, and our best hope of being successful is to work in close concert with each other—guided by the same high standards and principles, and motivated by the same goals.

In that way, we will continue to open up our communities to new opportunities for growth and prosperity. ☺

— Rep. Bob Ney is an Ohio Republican and chairman of the Housing and Community Opportunity Subcommittee

**“Multiple studies demonstrate that homeowners tend to be more involved in their communities and local governments than renters. Homeowners participate in a greater number of non-professional organizations, have higher church attendance, and also have higher voter participation rates.”**



# Are We Running Out of Water?

## Ensuring an adequate water supply for the 21st century

By U.S. Representative John Linder

Nothing could be truer than a 1746 quote by Benjamin Franklin, “When the well is dry, we know the worth of water.” As we continue our journey further into the 21st century, this quote from over 200 years ago remains true today.

Water-related issues have been of interest to me for many years. In fact, I wrote an article in 1978 that predicted that one of the two major challenges for our country in the next century would be providing enough fresh water, literally the source of life on earth, for our booming population.

According to the October 27, 2003, edition of *U.S. News and World Report*, “our population has more than doubled since World War II, and at this rate, we could be on our way to one billion people living in the United States by the end of the century.” This population growth will clearly put a strain on our already burdened water supply. Although our population is increasing, there is no more fresh water on earth now than there was 2,000 years ago when the world’s population was less than three percent of its current size.

In addition to the challenge of population growth, many states across the nation are currently facing a water crisis, or have in the last few years. To name just a few, aquifers are being challenged by salt water intrusion, and our aging water pipes leak billions of gallons of fresh water in cities all over the country. For example, New York City loses 36 million gallons per day, and

Philadelphia loses 85 million gallons per day due to leaking systems. Additionally, severe droughts a few years ago caused water shortages up and down the East coast. States once accustomed to unlimited access to water realized that they were not immune to the problems the West has experienced for decades.

Even with the hundreds of thousands of federal, state, local and private-sector employees working to solve these water problems, America does not have an integrated or comprehensive water policy. The difficulty is that there is little communication and coordination among these water experts. If we wait another 10 or 20 years to get serious about meeting demand for clean water, it will be too late. We must act now to meet these challenges.

Recognizing this need, I have reintroduced my bill, the “21st Century Water Commission Act,” H.R. 135, in the 109th Congress. H.R. 135 would establish a commission to evaluate the water supply needs of the United States and recommend measures to ensure that all Americans have access to adequate drinking water over the next 50 years. It was approved by the U.S. House of Representatives by voice vote on November 21, 2003, but unfortunately, the U.S. Senate adjourned before being able to consider the legislation.

I want to be clear: my bill does not give the federal government more authority or control over water. Rather, this commission will propose how to better coordinate water management efforts on all levels so that localities, states and the federal government can work together to enact a comprehensive water policy to avoid future water shortages—without encroaching on state and local governments’ traditional authority over water policy. In addition, it will reduce the bureaucratic red tape many local communities face when trying to build water reservoirs and other infrastructure needs.

### Some Highlights of H.R. 135:

- The commission will look for ways to ensure fresh water for U.S. citizens for the next 50 years.
- The commission will be composed of nine members appointed by the President, and key leaders in the House and Senate.
- The commission will look for ways to eliminate duplication and conflict among federal governmental agencies.
- The commission will consider all available technologies and other methods to optimize water supply reliability, availability and quality, while safeguarding the environment.
- The commission will hold hearings in distinct geographical regions of the United States, and in Washington, D.C., to seek a diversity of views, comments and input.
- No later than six months after the date of the first meeting of the commission, and every six months thereafter, the commission will transmit an interim report to Congress and the President.

A final report will be due within three years of the commission’s inception. The report will include a detailed statement of the findings and conclusions of the commission, as well as recommendations for legislation and other policies.

I have a lot of questions on how the United States should address its water problems. But, as I am not a “water expert,” I don’t have all the answers. That is why we need a commission of experts to work on water issues so that we can ensure an adequate supply of fresh water for U.S. citizens in the future. Now is the time to get ahead of this issue, and I believe that the 21st Century Water Commission can serve as a channel for sharing the successful strategies and ideas that will allow us to do so. ♡

— Rep. John Linder is a Georgia Republican and the sponsor of H.R. 135, the “21st Century Water Commission Act.”



Courtesy of Rep. Linder's office

U.S. Representative John Linder



## Funding for a Safer New Jersey Providing key help to our first responders

By U.S. Representative Mike Ferguson

**T**om Schweitzer, the fire chief for Rocky Hill Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1 in Somerset County, NJ, knows firsthand the benefits of the Homeland Security Department’s grant program for the nation’s first responders. After the program began following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, his fire department has received \$83,700 from Washington.

Rocky Hill has purchased breathing apparatuses and an air compressor to fill that equipment. “These federal grants have put our fire department in a much better position to do the job we need to do,” Mr. Schweitzer said.

Several Somerset County first responders also have received security grants, including \$225,000 for the Bernardsville Fire Co. No. 1; \$81,309 for the Green Brook Fire-EMS; \$94,185 for the Martinsville Fire Dept.; and \$25,178 for the Montgomery Fire Co. No. 2.

Throughout the 7<sup>th</sup> District that I represent—which includes portions of Hunterdon, Middlesex, Somerset and Union counties—more than \$2 million in security grants have been distributed to first responders.

We think about firefighters when we see a house fire or a traffic accident. But since the 9/11 attacks, important homeland security responsibilities have been added to their work. For example, Mr. Schweitzer and other local fire chiefs say they have received training in responding to emergencies involving biological and other weapons of mass destruction.

To meet these new challenges, fire departments need additional funding both for training and new equipment. Often local governments, already pressed with tight budgets, cannot meet this need.

That’s why the Homeland Security Department’s Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program is important. Congress has approved more than \$600 million in first-responder funding for this year.

The application period for seeking these grants is from March 7 to April 8. Since 2001, I have annually contacted fire chiefs and mayors to urge them to apply for



U.S. Representative Mike Ferguson

Courtesy of Rep. Ferguson’s office

the grants and offer the services of my office in completing the application. Also, Homeland Security Department officials this month are hosting grant workshops for fire chiefs in Somerset and Hunterdon counties.

Overall, New Jersey has benefited from security funding; our state ranks as the nation’s eighth largest recipient of federal security funds. That’s appropriate given New Jersey’s proximity to New York City and our extensive network of transportation and critical infrastructure, such as interstate tunnels, bridges and ports, and nuclear and chemical plants.

Although New Jersey has received more than \$240 million in security funding since 2001, more needs to be done to ensure we fortify our vulnerabilities and

protect our communities from the legitimate threats we face.

One of the challenges New Jersey faces in securing more funding is the formula that distributes grants. For example, under current law each state is given at least some money, regardless of whether certain states face a legitimate threat of an attack.

That means security funding isn’t solely based, as the 9/11 Commission unanimously recommended, on population density, critical infrastructure and realistic threat. And that means states like New Jersey receive fewer security dollars than they need or deserve.

I have worked to try to change that funding formula, including pressing congressional leaders and Homeland Security Department officials. Obviously, lawmakers from low-risk states that currently receive security funding oppose any formula change.

This year, I am co-sponsoring legislation introduced by my New Jersey colleague, Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, which would change the formula to ensure security funds are distributed according to a state’s risks, vulnerabilities and threats, as well as its capability to respond to terrorism.

Homeland security funding is critically important to New Jersey, as dozens of fire chiefs like Mr. Schweitzer can attest. We need more funding so our first responders can meet their new responsibilities. ☞

— Rep. Mike Ferguson  
is a New Jersey Republican

**“Throughout the 7th District that I represent—which includes portions of Hunterdon, Middlesex, Somerset and Union counties—more than \$2 million in security grants have been distributed to first responders.”**

# Defending Choice

## A GOP strategy to safeguard reproductive rights

By U.S. Representative Nancy L. Johnson

This spring we will mark the 40th anniversary of *Griswold v. Connecticut*, the landmark Supreme Court case that first established privacy rights in America. Four decades after the Court's decision, *Griswold* still resonates and is guiding a pro-choice Republican strategy to both prevent unplanned pregnancies and safeguard reproductive rights.

In 1961, a New Haven, Connecticut woman named Estelle Griswold was arrested for opening a birth control clinic to dispense contraceptives. State law made it illegal to provide contraceptives or even birth control information to Connecticut residents. Griswold protested the law in court. In its ruling four years later, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the Connecticut ban on contraceptives.

But the high court's decision in *Griswold* went far beyond this law.

In writing for a 7-2 majority, Justice William O. Douglas argued that inherent in the Constitution is a "right to privacy" that puts a wall between the government and personal reproductive health decisions. That same right to privacy later became the basis for the Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade*.

With *Griswold's* 40th anniversary approaching, we continue to face challenges in access to reproductive services and an increase in barriers to abortion services. Under the leadership of the Bipartisan Pro-choice Congressional Caucus, Republican moderates have been instrumental in evolving the pro-choice strategy from one focused on protecting rights guaranteed under *Roe v. Wade* to a two-pronged strategy of both preventing unwanted pregnancies and protecting reproductive rights.

This public policy strategy returns us to the inherent rights guaranteed under *Griswold v. Connecticut*. Moderates recognize both the seriousness of the decision to choose an abortion and the importance of providing information and access to contraception. One thing all Republicans can agree upon is a shared goal of reducing the need for abortions. This requires arming Americans with information and birth control access so young women can prevent unwanted preg-



U.S. Representative Nancy L. Johnson

nancies, and are not forced to make this difficult choice in the first place.

Republican moderates have led the way in legislative initiatives to educate the public about emerging reproductive technologies like emergency contraception (EC). EC prevents pregnancy after unprotected sex or a contraceptive failure through a concentrated dose of birth control pills that may be taken up to five days after unprotected sex. This resource would greatly reduce the number of unintended pregnancies each year if it was made widely available to women.

Because the dosage is more effective the sooner it is taken, it is essential that young women have enough information to obtain EC in the hours after unprotected sex. Right now the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is considering a decision to grant emergency contraception over-the-counter status. A "yes" by the FDA would be a victory in our fight to prevent abortion and unplanned pregnancies by increasing EC awareness and making this important resource easier to obtain.

A team at John Hopkins University found that, despite the safety and effectiveness of emergency contraception, only 20 percent of women who sought medical treatment at a hospital after a sexual assault were provided EC. It is essential that hospitals adopt uniform guidelines for reducing the risk of pregnancy among sexual assault survivors. Republican moderates have pushed initiatives to require hospital emergency

rooms to provide sexual assault victims with access to EC, and that effort continues today.

It is unacceptable for any health care provider to deny a woman access to these critical reproductive health services—especially since the effectiveness of emergency contraception is greatest within the 12 hours immediately following an assault. Because early intervention with contraception prevents fertilization or implantation, any Republican who supports abortion in cases of rape or incest should strongly support EC and any pregnancy prevention strategy for sexual assault victims.

In addition to emergency contraception, moderates have also pushed for insurance coverage for prescription contraceptives. We have made great strides over the last decade in the battle for contraception coverage equity in insurance plans. In 1998, Congress passed a provision requiring health plans participating in the federal employee health program to cover FDA-approved prescription contraception in the same manner in which they cover other drugs. In 2000, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ruled that an employer plan that provides other preventative drugs but not contraceptives constitutes sex discrimination under the Civil Rights Act.

Twenty-one states, including Connecticut, now require health plans that provide prescription drug coverage to also cover prescription contraception. Several recent legal victories have also greatly expanded employer coverage of contraceptives. But ultimately state-by-state coverage leaves many women without protection, and it is essential we address the inequity at the federal level. A cohesive federal policy, and there are many legislative initiatives before Congress to address this, would prevent unplanned pregnancy and reduce the need for abortion.

Republican moderates have a unique opportunity to advance these initiatives. If one woman from Connecticut can change the course of reproductive history, imagine what Republican moderates can do together to focus public policy on prevention and away from restrictions on reproductive services. ☺

— Rep. Nancy L. Johnson is a Connecticut Republican and chairman of the House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee.



# Green Opportunities for the GOP

## Republicans need new strategy on the environment

By Samuel Thernstrom

**T**he death of the environmental movement is being mourned—and fiercely debated—from cyberspace to the *New York Times*. Certainly, the movement has seen healthier days. Its focus in 2004 was not passage of a new Clean Air Act, or improvements to any of the major environmental laws; its main goal was defeating President George W. Bush. Fifteen million dollars were spent on that effort in vain. Not only was the President reelected, environmental issues were largely invisible in the campaign.

Republicans might be forgiven for thinking that this issue is best ignored. We should think twice. With the national electorate closely divided, no party can afford to ignore a chance to seize the high ground on a major issue—and the opportunities for environmental leadership today are enormous. The broad outlines of a new approach to environmental regulation are obvious, but the loudest voices on these issues are firmly committed to the old “command-and-control” (and litigate, litigate, litigate) approach.

The greatest challenge in enacting new environmental legislation is not a lack of issues; it’s lack of leadership. Democrats are loathe to give the President a victory on an issue they consider their own, and Republicans so far have been willing to settle for defeat. The President and congressional leaders are understandably focused on higher profile questions, leaving environmental policymaking to drift. It’s a shame, because the sensible reform agenda is clear, and the political payoff for leading the way could be significant.

Sixty to seventy percent of Americans sympathize with the environmental movement, while only five or six percent are hostile to it. But at the same time, voters don’t take their cues from activists: In 2004, only 9 percent said they would be more likely to vote for the presidential candidate who carried the Sierra Club’s endorsement. And basic party preferences on the environment are more balanced than you might think. Only half of the electorate prefers Democrats, while a quarter to a third prefer Republicans; the

rest are evenly divided or undecided.

To make progress on this issue, Republicans will have to overcome a national press corps that considers conservative conservationists oxymoronic. That can be done with a strong agenda and real commitment. Too often, the loudest Republican voices on the environment are hardliners who mock “tree huggers” and dismiss the EPA as an American Gestapo. This ignores the real opportunities here: With environmentalists and Democrats moving steadily to the left, the common sense center is up for grabs.

For more than ten years, America has stood at the threshold of a new era in environmental policymaking, but hasn’t stepped forward. The successes—and failures—of many of our landmark environmental laws (the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Superfund program) have been clear since the 1990s. All have accomplished much, although at needless cost, and all are straining against their limitations, undermined by unforeseen complications and unintended

ed consequences. They haven't met their goals completely, and they face uncertain prospects for getting the job done.

Enacted a generation ago, these laws have been revised only occasionally and incompletely, if at all. They were the first federal efforts to respond to important—and complicated—problems. It's not surprising that they weren't perfect; it's surprising they worked at all. By now, their strengths and weaknesses are well understood, and yet reforms have been halting at best.

Take, for example, the Clean Air Act. A vast army of state and federal bureaucrats is employed issuing thousands of permits, inspecting facilities, and litigating everything from medical science to speculative engineering questions. Rigid regulations require overly prescriptive and sometimes counterproductive approaches to complex problems. Perverse regulatory incentives hinder innovation, as companies focus on the letter of the law rather than the larger goal of environmental performance. Every sector of the economy—and every household—bears some of the cost of this inefficiency; in some sectors, the cost is considerable. Meanwhile, in some areas, air pollution remains a serious public health problem, despite 35 years of federal regulation.

To do better—to make further improvements in air quality, where it's needed, at less cost—we need a better regulatory approach. We need an approach that promotes less bureaucracy, less litigation, more flexibility and innovation—and perhaps most importantly, more reliable results. In broad terms, we know what is needed, but cannot agree on how to do it.

The success of the 1990 Clean Air Act's market-based "cap-and-trade" program to control sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) emissions is uncontested. Even skeptics admit that the program has produced far greater reductions in pollution, far faster, at much less cost than anyone had imagined possible. This approach has two strengths: It

gives companies an economic incentive to excel, and it is 100 percent effective. No lawsuits, no army of permit-processing civil servants, and no excuses. It offers perfect compliance at a minimal cost.

Extending this approach to other pollutants, and perhaps other industrial sectors, is the obvious next step. For three years now, President Bush has proposed doing just that, with no success. This year, once again, he called on Congress to establish a national trading program for SO<sub>2</sub>, nitrogen oxides, and mercury.

The President's proposal would cut power plant emissions of these pollutants by more than 70 percent—to levels 90 percent lower than they were when the Clean Air Act was first enacted in 1970. Environmentalists concerned about acid rain in the Adirondacks could hardly believe their ears when the President announced this initiative in 2002—it was all they had dreamed of—but they were even more surprised when the national environmental groups geared up to block the bill in Congress.

Since then, there's been heated debate over whether the caps are too high, whether the timetables are too slow, whether it's safe to "trade" mercury emissions, and whether it's wise to ignore greenhouse gases. These are reasonable issues to debate, and there are reasonable ways to resolve them. All that is needed is determination to get the job done, and for the first time, there are signs of seriousness from the administration.

Recently, the Environmental Protection Agency announced that it will move forward this year with implementing as much of the President's initiative as possible through regulation if Congress doesn't act first. If Congress is smart, it won't wait for the EPA. Policymaking at this level is properly the responsibility of legislatures, not the courts or bureaucrats, and the legislative process is far more likely to produce a carefully crafted compromise that accommodates valid concerns on both sides.

For example, the ability to adjust the caps is one of the strengths of a cap and trade system. This flexibility needs to be limited—frequent adjustments would be costly and inefficient—but it can be useful. Congress could use this feature to craft a simple compromise: Adjust the targets or timetables as needed to satisfy a voting majority (probably making them somewhat more ambitious), while requiring an independent review of new information about pollution levels, health effects, and the efficacy of the trading system. Every five years, the caps could be adjusted, with an appropriate phase-in period for the new targets to take effect. The trading system could even be expanded, over time, to include new industrial sectors, and the caps reset accordingly.

The way forward on air pollution is clear. The reform agenda for other areas is, in many cases, equally obvious. It is well understood, for instance, that the Endangered Species Act creates perverse incentives for landowners: If your land offers suitable potential habitat for an endangered species, call the bulldozers—quick! If the owls show up first, the cabin you dreamed of building will remain just a dream. It's no surprise that once a species is listed as endangered, there's almost no chance that it will ever recover enough to be delisted. A new law that offers landowners positive incentives to protect species, and some reasonable flexibility in accommodating competing needs, would serve us well. On issue after issue, conservative environmentalism can be built on a foundation of simply learning from our successes—and our failures. ☺

— Samuel Thornstrom is managing editor of the *American Enterprise Institute Press* and director of the *W.H. Brady Program on Freedom and Culture*. He served as communications director for the *White House Council on Environmental Quality* in 2001–02.

**“Democrats are loathe to give the President a victory on an issue they consider their own, and Republicans so far have been willing to settle for defeat.”**



## Protecting the Unborn GOP needs to promote a culture of life

By U.S. Senator Rick Santorum

**T**hirty-two years after the legalization of abortion by the Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*, the majority of Americans consider themselves to be pro-life.

One would expect that a ruling of such proportions as *Roe v. Wade* would have achieved a general acceptance among the public for abortion, especially when it has been so strongly promoted by the media, popular culture and the judiciary. The fact that so many self-identified pro-choice individuals are still troubled with an unlimited right of abortion is a powerful statement as to where this country stands on abortion and where the Republican Party should focus its attention.

The Republican Party has made great strides in passing pro-life legislation. The recent enactment of both the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act and the Unborn Victims of Violence Act are testimony to the support behind a compassionate society that protects the most innocent and most helpless among us—the unborn child. The passage of the Born Alive Infants Protection Act officially and legally recognized the basic rights of all human life and all children born alive, regardless of their stage of development. Once a baby is completely born, independent of the mother, he or she now receives the full protection and dignity afforded to you or me.

The common-sense legislation that was passed upholds a basic principle which I believe we should all agree—no matter if you are Republican or Democrat, liberal or conservative, male or female, black or white, rich or poor, young or old—that every life is sacred and every life is endowed with dignity. Yet there are still steps for us to take—steps with broad support.

We should also all agree that no person or entity should be forced, against their will or conscience, to provide, refer for, or pay for an abortion. No one should be forced to choose to be involved in an abortion or be put at risk of losing their funding. Health care entities (physicians, other health professionals, hospitals, provider-sponsored organizations, health maintenance organizations, and health insurance plans) should not

be coerced into providing abortion services that they believe to be morally wrong, and they certainly should not be discriminated against because of their objections to providing or paying for abortions.

Second, the Republican Party must stop allowing Democrats to impose an ideological litmus test on judicial nominees. In the 108th Congress, the Democrats, in unprecedented obstructionism, used the cloture vote to deny up-or-down floor votes to ten highly qualified nominees, all of whom had bipartisan majority support and would have been confirmed if given a vote. It is wrong to require that a nominee promise to uphold *Roe v. Wade* in order to be confirmed because it compromises their ability to rule fairly as a judge. Therefore, we should ensure a fair confirmation process and nominate judges who uphold the constitutionality of the law, not those who seek to usurp the power of the people.

Additionally, women need to know that alternatives to abortion exist, and that resources are available for them at these times. We must continue to support, educate and care for women who are considering abortions, have had abortions, or are facing a daunting future of raising a child on their own. Republicans must work to ensure that these women are provided with adequate support and information.

For example, while an uncomfortable truth, women have the right to be informed of the overwhelming scientific data that suggest that unborn children beyond 20 weeks are capable of feeling pain. Knowing the facts surrounding an abortion procedure allows women to understand the weight of this potentially life-changing decision.

Lastly, we must commit our efforts to advancing initiatives that offer compassionate, life-affirming choices and support to women facing unplanned pregnancies. Not every woman facing an unplanned pregnancy knows that supportive services exist. Many believe that the future they had planned is no longer achievable. They feel alone and abandoned. Often they mistakenly think that abortion is their only real choice.



U.S. Senator Rick Santorum

Courtesy of Sen. Santorum's office

Women need to know that they have a choice and that people are there to help. To that end, we should provide women with alternatives to abortion through programs that support crisis pregnancy centers and maternity homes already working to meet women's needs at these times. In one initiative, a grant program would link women to a network of supportive organizations who are ready and willing to offer assistance in the form of pregnancy testing, adoption information, prenatal and postpartum health care, maternity and baby clothing, food, diapers, and information on childbirth and parenting.

In the end, the debate over abortion will not be won by the Republican Party but by individuals, families, organizations and community groups who reach out and support those in need—especially young women facing crisis pregnancies. The Republican Party, however, can continue to provide a safety net for hospitals and health professionals who choose not to perform abortion services; confirm judges who will follow the law, not make the law; and support community-based services for women. In doing so, the party will be welcoming the majority of the public who believe that abortion is a tragedy and preys on the most vulnerable in our society. 🙏

— Sen. Rick Santorum is a Pennsylvania Republican and chairman of the Senate Republican Conference.



# Remembering the Children

## The way to improve preschool education

By Sara Mead

**W**hen it comes to preschool, both Democrats and Republicans tend to miss the boat. Liberal activists talk about expanding access to early childhood education, but too often ignore the importance of the educational curriculum. Conservatives, for their part, focus overwhelmingly on curriculum while neglecting access and other important aspects of early childhood development, such as health and socio-emotional development. Some conservatives also suspect that preschool programs are not family-friendly, and are an attack on homemakers.

This creates a stalemate and thwarts efforts to expand preschool access or improve academic quality. That's unfortunate, because helping families afford high-quality, academic preschool is one of the best ways government can simultaneously improve the opportunities of disadvantaged children, strengthen our national economic future, and help elementary and secondary schools meet the challenges of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Longitudinal studies of quality preschool programs in Michigan and North Carolina find that they save taxpayers money in the long run by reducing grade retention, special education placements, teen pregnancy, welfare participation, and crime rates. In fact, Federal Reserve economists Art Rolnick and Rob Grunewald estimate that those savings net taxpayers a 16 percent real return over time on their investment in preschool. That's a much better return than many economic development investments offer.

But the need for preschool should really be measured from the children's perspective. As schools work to meet the goals of No Child Left Behind, it's abundantly clear that too many children—particularly poor and minority children—enter school already far behind. UCLA sociologist Meredith Phillips estimates that half of the enormous academic achievement gap between black and white students exists before first grade. So while poorly-performing public schools today too often exacerbate this gap, helping disadvantaged students before they start school would help to close it.

Yet while the liberal-conservative stalemate stymies action on improving early childhood education, it also shows the way forward. To realize the benefits of quality preschool, policymakers must use ideas from both left and right.

We must invest more public money to make preschool available to more children. The current patchwork of Head Start, state programs, childcare and private preschool isn't enough. Fewer than half of poor children attend preschool, in contrast to two-thirds of all children and higher percentages of children from affluent homes. Instead, children spend their days in daycare programs that are little more than babysitting—a tremendous waste of time and resources that could be spent preparing children for school.

But this investment must be linked to improvements in preschools' educational quality. Too many preschool programs today, including some state preschools and Head Start centers, offer too little academic content to prepare children for school, and they ignore the latest scientific research about how children learn.

Preschool is not the same as daycare. But what does quality preschool look like?

First, quality preschool focuses on school readiness, not just childcare. Successful preschool programs, such as Chicago's Child Parent Centers and Georgia's Universal Pre-K, have a planned curriculum of activities to develop children's language skills and introduce early math, reading, and other academic concepts.



Illustration courtesy of Sydney P., Age 5

Second, successful preschools have qualified teachers who have strong verbal skills and understand early childhood development. Research shows the most effective preschool teachers have at least a bachelor's degree.

Third, smaller class sizes are more conducive to rich interactions that help preschoolers learn. The National Association for the Education of Young Children recommends no more than 20 children per class.

Fourth, successful preschools include regular, developmentally appropriate assessments that guide classroom instruction.

Finally, successful preschool initiatives reach the children who need them. Both universal preschool and narrower systems that target disadvantaged students can succeed. Yes, quality preschool is expensive, but policymakers must resist the temptation to skimp on quality to lower the bill or serve more students. By focusing on those most at-risk, redeploying existing early childhood resources more effectively, and including an element of parent and community responsibility to cover the costs, policymakers serve the children who most need preschool in a fiscally responsible manner.

Is preschool anti-family? No. For starters, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research, 44 percent of children whose mothers are homemakers attend preschool. Moreover, preschool programs can be family-friendly, by helping parents give their children educational opportunities regardless of whether both parents work or not.

Preschool should not be a partisan issue. Both Democrats and Republicans have important things to bring to the table. Republican and Democratic leaders, including Gov. Jeb Bush (R-FL), Gov. Mike Easley (D-NC) and Gov. Bill Richardson (D-NM) have supported school readiness efforts. Expanding quality preschool for all children who need it is a tall order, but by bringing together the best of conservative and liberal ideas, we can secure a brighter future for our country and our children. ☺

— Sara Mead is an education policy analyst at the Progressive Policy Institute.



## Are They Listening to America's Voice?

### U.S. message must get out to Arab world

By U.S. Representative Henry J. Hyde

**A**s Americans, we are justly proud of our country. If any nation has been a greater force for good in the long and tormented history of this world, I am unaware of it. We have guarded whole continents from conquest, showered aid on distant lands, sent thousands of youthful idealists to remote and often inhospitable areas to help the world's forgotten. Our generosity is a matter of record, from rebuilding our defeated enemies to feeding millions whose names will never be known to us.

Why, then, when we read or listen to descriptions of America in the foreign press, do we so often seem to be entering a fantasyland of hatred? Much of the popular press overseas, often including the government-owned media, daily depict the United States as a force for evil, accusing this country of an endless number of malevolent plots against the world. Today, as we strike terrorists around the world who have masterminded the murder of thousands of Americans, our actions are widely depicted in the Muslim world as a war against Islam. Our efforts at self-defense, which should be supported by every decent person on this planet, instead spark riots that threaten governments that dare to cooperate with us.

How has this state of affairs come about? How is it that the country that invented Hollywood and Madison Avenue has such trouble promoting a positive image of itself overseas? Over the years, the images of mindless hatred directed at us have become familiar fixtures on our television screens. All this time, we have heard calls that "something must be done." But, clearly, whatever has been done has not been enough.

What can we do to correct this problem? I believe that the problem is too great and too entrenched to be solved by tweaking an agency here or reshuffling a program there. We must rethink our entire approach to diplomacy and seek out new

perspectives and approaches. It is clear that much of the problem lies in our ineffective and often antiquated methods. For example, Voice of America broadcasts on short-wave radio simply cannot compete with AM and FM channels in terms of accessibility, to say nothing of television, the most powerful medium of all. Shifting our efforts into these and other popular media, including the Internet and others, will take time and money, but this reorientation is a prerequisite to having any hope for an audience.

But there is a deeper problem. According to many observers, we have simply ignored the contest for public opinion and thereby left our enemies' slanders unanswered. The results are sobering. In testimony before the House International Relations Committee, a former chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, which oversees our international broadcasting efforts, stated that "we have virtually no youthful audience under the age of 25 in the Arab world." We are beginning to address that problem but have decades of inexplicable and inexcusable laxity to make up for.

Our first priority, then, must be to focus our efforts on reaching an audience and presenting our case to them in clear and persuasive terms. We must remember that, although our enemies are vocal, we have many friends, and the ranks of the persuadable are even larger. But it is up to us to make a compelling case, not once but over and over again.

To do this, we must seek to engage the populations of the world on a permanent basis, not as an adjunct to our foreign policy but as a central component of that policy. To the extent that we can enlist the world's populations on our side, or even simply reduce their enmity, our foreign policy goals can be significantly advanced.

To that end, I would recommend that President George W. Bush inaugurate this



Courtesy of Rep. Hyde's office

U.S. Representative Henry J. Hyde

new approach by making a televised address from the Oval Office to the peoples of the Muslim world. His words should be spoken directly to the people, not to their governments. He should explain our goals and the rationale for our actions in Afghanistan and ask for their understanding and for their support. I doubt that this address would persuade everyone in his audience, but the fact that the President of the most powerful country on earth was addressing his words to, and asking for the support of, individual Muslims, and not their ruling regimes, would be a powerful symbol of our determination to fight for and win the understanding and support of all of the peoples of the world. ♡

— Rep. Henry J. Hyde is an Illinois Republican and chairman of the House International Relations Committee.

## Confronting America's Enemies Strong defense needed to win war on terror

By U.S. Representative Candice Miller

I came to the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress with a firm belief that the first and foremost responsibility of the federal government is to provide for our national defense. It's in the preamble of our Constitution, and throughout the 108<sup>th</sup> and now into the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress I continue to make this my principal advocacy.

All of our lives were changed on September 11, 2001, when cowardly terrorists murdered over 3,000 innocent civilians, because they hate our freedom. These new enemies are unlike any we have ever faced: They hide in the shadows and prey on the innocent. It has been said that freedom is not free and that the price of freedom is being ever vigilant.

I'm proud to serve on the House Armed Services Committee, where because of that vigilance there is a genuine commitment to a strong military. Part of this commitment is to continue transforming our military into a more modern and mobile fighting force. This will allow us to respond quickly and with great flexibility to future threats.

America's armed forces are, and must continue to be, the best trained, best equipped and strongest fighting force in the world. Potential enemies must know our strength is backed up by a firm resolve to defend our nation. They must know that we will practice what President Ronald Reagan called "peace through strength." We have utilized technology to upgrade our weapons systems that allow for pinpoint targeting of the enemy, enabling us to avoid civilian casualties. We have authorized funding levels necessary to ensure that our troops have the body armor, vehicles and weapons they need in combat that allows them to take the fight to the enemy.

America's all volunteer military is a great success. Our troops are highly qualified and motivated. The services are meeting their goals for recruitment and retention. And, we recognize that our Guard and Reserve forces are playing a larger and extended role in the theater. Today, you will find that Guard and Reserve forces make up over 30 percent of our troops in Afghanistan, Iraq and other



Courtesy of Rep. Miller's office

U.S. Representative Candice Miller

trouble spots around the globe.

That is why in the most recent Defense Reauthorization bill we declared 2004 the "Year of the Troops." Congress approved a 3.5 percent across the board pay raise with special pay, bonuses and improved housing. We ensured that members of the National Guard and Reserve receive pay at equal levels to our active duty troops when they are called to service. We eliminated the previously unfair reduction in Survivor benefit plan annuities, enhanced TRICARE benefits and expanded health care coverage for military families to ensure those on the home front are protected and cared for. Now we look toward legislation which will greatly enhance benefits for the families of soldiers who make the ultimate sacrifice, by increasing the death benefit from its current \$12,000 to \$100,000.

The President's proposed budget goes a long way toward recognizing that national defense and homeland security are our national priorities with a 5 percent and 8 percent increase respectively. However, at the same time, we continue to challenge the Pentagon to achieve greater efficiency, less bureaucracy and greater emphasis on effective war fighting.

There has been much debate about the "Bush Doctrine" and the use of pre-emptive action to defend ourselves. Many have said that it would be better to do nothing, hoping that the terrorists will perhaps leave us alone. This is analogous to a nest of rattlesnakes living in your basement. You know they're down there. But the question is should you be very quiet and hope they don't come up the stairs and bite you, or should you eliminate their nest?

Last year, I had the privilege to travel with a small group of members on a trip, which included visits to Iraq and Libya. In Iraq, we went to the now-infamous spider hole where Saddam Hussein, who brutalized his people and defied the world community, was pulled from the ground. This was a fitting end for such a despot.

In Libya, we were the first congressional delegation in decades to meet with Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi. We met with Qadhafi, across a field from his former home which was bombed by President Reagan in 1986 due to Libya's complicity in a terrorist bombing of a Berlin Disco. In front of the home there are posters that say: "This is a result of Reagan and Thatcher's madness." There is also a large statue of an upraised gold fist clutching and crushing an American fighter plane. And yet, because of the Bush Doctrine, Libya is now seeking recognition in the community of peaceful nations, while giving up its weapons of mass destruction programs. Libya now understands our strength and resolve.

I think of these experiences often when we are crafting the Defense Authorization bill. I know it is my job to ensure that our brave men and women in uniform have every available resource to continue to protect our homeland and to spread freedom, hope and democracy throughout the world. I know that, if we are successful in this effort, it will allow future generations to live in peace. ♡

— Rep. Candice Miller is a Michigan Republican and a member of the House Armed Services Committee and House Government Reform Committee.

## Heart of Darkness

### Sudan faces food crisis

By Jeffrey T. Kuhner

**S**udan is on the verge of a terrible famine. Millions of lives are threatened unless the United States takes decisive action. What is different about this famine is that it is not due to drought. Rather, it is a deliberate, engineered policy by Khartoum in its ongoing genocide against black Africans living in Darfur.

Sudan's radical Islamic government has been supporting Arab militias, known as the janjaweed, in a brutal ethnic cleansing campaign aimed at wiping out the country's majority black population. So far, over 70,000 in the western region of Darfur have been murdered, over 2 million have been displaced into squalid refugee camps, and countless women and children have been raped and sold into slavery.

Yet the doomed people of Darfur now face an even deadlier threat: hunger. For two years, Arab marauders have systematically attacked the farms of black Africans. The janjaweed—composed mainly of nomads and cattle herders—are seizing large chunks of arable land for their animals to graze on. They are also waging a scorched earth strategy, seeking not only to permanently drive out black farmers but to create the conditions for widespread starvation. Hundreds

of farming villages have been razed. Seed stock and agricultural equipment have been destroyed. Vital crops are no longer being grown.

The result is a severe food shortage. The crisis is so bad international aid agencies are warning that, unless something drastic is done in the next few months, millions will slowly starve to death.

"All the indicators are there for a famine," Marc Bellemans, the Sudan emergency coordinator for the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), said in a recent interview with *The Wall Street Journal*. In a report late last year, the FAO warned "a humanitarian crisis of unseen proportions is unfolding in the Darfur region..." Due to the vast scale of the crisis, international aid workers are unable to stem the rising tide of hunger and misery.

Yet, as the people of Darfur are slowly being exterminated, the world community wrings its hands. In a just-released report, the United Nations found that, although "systematic" atrocities are being committed by the janjaweed, it does not rise to the level of "genocide." Even for the United Nations, this is a new low. While it engages in legal hair-splitting over what constitutes genocide, the Islamic fascists in Khartoum and

their Arab militia allies continue to murder, rape and pillage with impunity.

The Bush administration has sought to convince the United Nations and our European allies to exert pressure on the government in Sudan. But Washington's attempts to impose sanctions have been consistently blocked by Russia, China and France—all of whom have strong economic ties with Khartoum.

The very same nations, who self-righteously opposed the American-led war in Iraq, are now opposed to U.S. efforts in Sudan. Instead, they cynically hide behind the veneer of international legalisms. The European establishment insists that future war crimes cases be tried before the International Criminal Court. This is being resisted by the Bush administration, which rightly does not recognize the ICC's legitimacy. Ultimately, however, the debate is a red herring: prosecuting some local Arab chieftain in the distant future does nothing to stop the janjaweed's rampage. It also does nothing to stop the emerging famine.

The crisis in Darfur reveals the moral bankruptcy not only of the United Nations, but of Old Europe as well. They are not willing to lift a finger to prevent the spilling of African blood—just as they refused to prevent the genocides in Bosnia, Rwanda and Chechnya.

This is why America must act before it is too late. It is time Washington spearhead an international coalition to rein in Khartoum's killers.

Critics of military action caution that the United States is stretched too thin in Iraq and Afghanistan to provide any kind of large-scale troop deployment. This is true. But what is needed is American air power and overall leadership. An intensive bombing campaign of government military targets across Sudan would cripple the ability of the regime and the janjaweed to prey upon defenseless Darfurians. The nations of the African Union can provide the ground forces to establish a defensive perimeter in Darfur. This would allow massive aid to be shipped in to save the doomed and the dying.

A few bombs and genuine international resolve can end the suffering. Why are we waiting? ☞

— Jeffrey T. Kuhner is communications director at *The Ripon Society*.



Close to death from starvation, a 10-year-old Sudanese girl lies with her mother and brother inside a compound run by Doctors Without Borders. Despite massive relief aid, starving Sudanese are still dying by the thousands.



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