

## WHO IS THAT MASKED MAN?

Stephen L. Bakke – April 14, 2009

I set out here to provide a “digest” of “snippets” about our current administration, some satirical, which I have “kicked up” in recent weeks. I’m trying to clean off my desk. The author of each is indicated. There’s nothing original here. I have indicated my personal “Top 10” favorites by presenting them in **bold type**.

---

***Obama, like other liberals, wants to dispense with experimentation and debate (which he dismisses as the same old gridlock and partisan posturing) and sluice an enormous liberal/socialist wish list ..... It will be difficult to resist this charismatic figure, but let’s be clear about this: Though he denies what he is about, he is pulling the country dangerously toward a statist dead end. – Mona Charen***

*Obama’s critics who accused him of “socialism” during the presidential campaign were roundly ridiculed ..... But Obama’s opponents read him well. He has the heart, if not the affect, of an ideologue. – Rich Lowry*

*He might be a fairly sensitive and compassionate man..... Still on the basis of its first 60 days, this is a very odd presidency. In between appearances on Jay Leno and his “March Madness” picks, Barack “Oprompta” (get it?) also found time to compare AIG executives to suicide bombers. – Mark Steyn*

***The statist never learns from his policy failures. He is never deterred by the destruction he causes. Negative data are simply rejected, as with his steadfast allegiance to failed Keynesian economics. -----The fact is that the New Deal was, overall, a dismal failure. Yet today it serves as the Statist’s prototype for governance ..... (The statist) is unmoved by reason, evidence and history. – first David Limbaugh followed by Mark Levin***

*President Barack Obama’s fiscal policy could be summarized by St. Augustin’s famous prayer, “Give me chastity and continence, but not yet”. It’s much easier to host a “summit” on fiscal responsibility ..... playing to his strength of earnest, high-minded gab. He wants to make tough, politically difficult choices, just not yet. – Rich Lowry*

***(Obama’s) goal is to rewrite the American social compact, to recast the relationship between government and citizen. .... Obama is a leveler. He has come to narrow the divide between rich and poor. For him the ultimate social value is fairness. Imposing it ..... is his mission. If Obama has his way, the change that is coming is a new America: “fair”, leveled and social democratic. Obama didn’t get elected to warranty your muffler. He’s here to warranty your life. – Charles Krauthammer***

*President Obama is a man in a hurry. He knows that time is not on his side. He will never be as powerful as he is now, and his opposition – the leaderless GOP – will never be as weak. So he pushes hard to win acceptance of his agenda as possible. – E. Thomas McClanahan*

*When it comes to our complex economy, President Barack Obama would do well to heed the physician's ancient commandment to first "do no harm". – Victor David Hanson*

*So where is the promised transparency? Don't look for it in their language ..... They never spend money; they "invest". There are no longer terrorist attacks, but rather "man-caused disasters". The global war on terrorism is now merely the "overseas contingency operation" .....just remember what Abe Lincoln said: "You can say a dog has five legs, but calling a tail a leg doesn't make it so". - Jan Ganter in a letter to the editor, Ft. Myers News Press*

*The White House today announced today that it would no longer use the phrase "war on terror" and would instead replace it with a cryptic symbol once used by the funk rocker known as Prince ..... spokesman Robert Gibbs .....said that the White House had decided to replace the phrase with the symbol after determining that its first-choice euphemism, "overseas contingency operations", was too much of a mouthful. – Satirist Andy Borowitz*

*Notwithstanding the Treasury secretary's protestations that the Yes/No prompt buttons of Turbo Tax were too complex for a simple soul such as himself, it's no reflection on the hapless Geithner that he's unable to fix the planet ..... Obama and Geithner are trying to do it with a sophisticated global economy in which North American consumers, European bankers, Asian suppliers, Saudi investors and Chinese debt-holders are more tangled than an octopuses' orgy ....Barack Obama ..... barely disguises his indifference to economic matters ..... (his plan to reduce charitable tax deductions) is not intended to raise revenue, but to advance government as the distributor of largesse and diminish alternative sources of societal organization ..... his big plans for socialized health care, a green economy, universal college education (are all about) extending the reach of the state. – Mark Steyn*

*His performance has been weaker than those who endorsed his candidacy, including this newspaper, had hoped. Many of his strongest supporters – liberal columnists, prominent donors, Democratic stalwarts – have started to question him. – The Economist*

*So why has Obama babbled away about health care and energy reform instead of fixing the banking industry ..... (the most likely reason) is that the administration is paralyzed because it is confronted with what Donald Rumsfeld would call a "known unknown". – Jonathan V. Last*

*This public exposure (Leno, 60 Minutes, etc.), coupled with lingering problems about his Cabinet and unprecedented proposals to expand government, have made it difficult for Americans to get a fix on Obama because he's "trying to do it all" ..... In this case, it seems to me that ..... we have got a hyperactive president. We don't have a presidency yet. – Charles O. Jones, University of Wisconsin Professor Emeritus*

*Steve Croft, the President's interviewer on "60 Minutes", suggest the President might be "punch drunk" when he chuckled aloud in discussing the crash of the economy. "Gallows humor", the President later called it. But that doesn't work for a president ..... there should be a bright line between behaving as the commander in chief and entertaining as a celebrity in chief. – Suzanne Fields*

*Does he seriously believe that the Wall Street investors will not worry that their winnings, should they join the Treasury as partners in risky investments, would be subject to public abuse, publicity and confiscatory taxation? So who does Obama persist in his aggressive rhetoric? ..... (He) sabotages his own program (public/private partnerships) by way of his own rhetoric ..... he truly wants to be forced to nationalize the banks in pursuit of his ultimate goal of a socialist economy. – Dick Morris*

*The old adage “Everyone’s a capitalist on the way up and a socialist on the way down” is kicking in. The thing is, if you’re a socialist on the way down, you were never really a capitalist on the way up. Capitalism requires putting your own capital at risk. – Jonah Goldberg*

***I’m not suggesting President Obama is a communist, but he is a utopian – and that’s the danger. He wants to create a perfect society in which the state takes care of everyone in need. It sounds wonderful – but the road to economic ruin and loss of liberty is paved by well-meaning men with good intentions ..... Maybe if President Obama had spent time in the real economy, not simply as the recipient of government or nonprofit paychecks his whole life, he’d be a little less confident in his utopian plans. – Linda Chavez***

*Robert Kennedy famously said: “There are those who look at things the way they are and ask, “Why?” I dream of things that never were and ask, “Why not?” The new liberal version is: There are those who look at things the way they are and ask, “Why?” I dream of things that never were funded by the government and ask “Why not?” – Ann Coulter*

*Beyond the hypocrisy and the undemocratic nature of using panic to cram through policies you couldn’t get through debate and persuasion, what I find fascinating is the psychological projection. Liberals have been using fear to demonize their opponents for generations. – Jonah Goldberg*

*(During the State of the Union address) having mounted his charger, our knight proceeded to ride off in all directions. He blamed his predecessor for the vast deficit he had inherited – just after pushing a three-quarter-of-a-trillion spending package through Congress that will make it vaster. Promising economies to balance the budget, in the next breath he was handing out goodies all around ..... He was going to encourage private capital to invest – by raising taxes on it. He would restore our sense of responsibility by blaming other ..... This president was going to balance the budget – just as soon as he spent more ..... he had lost the thread and with it the decorum. – Paul Greenberg*

***The answer Obama has given (as a reason for the avalanche of spending programs), ..... is that we can only solve our economic problems by advancing these other programs. But the real answer came from White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel in November: “Never let a serious crisis go to waste”. – Michael Barone***

*Here is a president who would rather redistribute income than create wealth ..... (But at least) we have a president ..... who will stand on his principles. Unfortunately, they’re bad ones. – Dick Morris*

*America has a choice: It can reacquaint itself with socioeconomic reality. Or it can buckle its mandatory seat belt for the same decline most of the rest of the West embraced a couple of generations back ..... In 1945, America emerged from the Second World War as a preeminent power on Earth. Seventy years later ..... Let's not go there. – Mark Steyn*

*The last thing the administration can risk is delay that could allow the market to begin recovering on its own. That would undermine, if not destroy, a golden opportunity to restructure the American economy in ways that would allow politicians to micro-manage other sectors of the economy the way they have micro-managed the housing market into disaster. – Thomas Sowell*

*Whatever the reason, this level of presidential detachment from high policy decision making is dangerous in a White House that has so many czars and other senior players. – Tony Blankley*

***Given the depressing nature of the world abroad, the more we now keep promising to be gentle, the bigger the stick later on we will have to carry. – Victor David Hanson***

*It was not the wrongness of the choice that scuttled Daschle's appointment in Obama's view, but the perception of wrongness. If so, the experience has taught Obama some valuable lessons about how Washington works. Lesson One: Politics is at least 90 percent perceptions. Lesson Two: The world looks a lot different from inside Washington's Beltway than it looks in the real world. Lesson Three: Don't demonize lobbyists too much. You may need them later. – Clarence Page*

***What's missing from Obama's performance isn't the intelligence that voters acknowledged in electing him. It's the experience they tried to pretend didn't really matter ..... Absent is maturity – that grown-up quality of leadership that is palpable when the real deal enters a room. – Kathleen Parker***

*Remember, it was kindness that got us into this mess in the first place. It was the willingness of Fannie Mae to buy up mortgages that could never be repaid and the availability of low-interest student, car and home-equity loans that encouraged people to live beyond their means and thus spread this miasma of bad debt over our nation's economy. – Dick Morris*

***Obama seeks to replace entrepreneurs with bureaucrats. He emboldens our enemies, who interpret his words of outreach and humility as signs of weakness. His actions – while well-intended – represent a menace to the continued security and prosperity of this nation. He smiles, he reproaches America. And much of the “world community” applauds. – Larry Elder***

***Our security emanates from the justness of the cause, the force of our example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint. – President Barack Obama in his inaugural address ..... it generated the following commentary: Only the very, very naïve could say something so wrong. It is hard to identify a time in history when any people's security emanated from the justness of their cause ..... the Jews' cause ..... in Hitler's Europe? Or the Ukrainians or Armenians or Cambodians or anyone else? Powerful armies give decent peoples their***

*security, not the justness of their cause. If President Obama believes that in this world good people are secure thanks to the goodness of their cause, America is in trouble. – Dennis Prager*

---

And coming soon, inspired by the recent Lenten season: ***“AND THEY TOUCHED HIS ROBE”***.

---

More comments will follow on important topics and personal thoughts as our President battles through tough territory. As I said in my December 2008 “essay” on liberals and conservatives, “I want to be on record joining with other conservatives in uniting behind our new President. We must show that we will act more respectfully than liberals did during George W. Bush’s presidency. Such treatment was beyond mere disagreement and criticism. It was undeserved and unprecedented. We who oppose many of Barack Obama’s policies will, I believe, act in accordance with conservative values of decency, while respectfully continuing to oppose him when we disagree”. As Dennis Prager said on election night: “I did not vote for him. I did not want him to be President. But as of January 20, 2009, he will be my President.” I agree, and I’m also solidly part of the “loyal opposition”, and will act accordingly.

---

*I extend thanks, as always, to the many writers, commentators, researchers, and others, from both political extremes, whose hard work helps me greatly. They gather details and individually present so much information. About all I do is gather, organize, summarize, and then attempt to fill in with additional comments – commonly referred to as my frequent “RANTS”. Someone recently commented to me that it’s no wonder I have these ideas – I obviously don’t pay attention to both sides of the arguments. I assure you that I approach issues from multiple angles. While I have become a conservative, I still read and evaluate more liberal columns, books, commentary, and web sites than Al Franken, Al Gore, Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, Chuck Schumer, Nancy Pelosi, and Harry Reid COMBINED! Maybe I could even throw in a couple more names for good measure.*