



The 2008 Presidential Election:

The Politics of Misdirection & Our Greed for Salvation

[Part 1 of 2]

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The advocacy of socialism in this country is an act of treason. At least it should be. Capitalism's deserved victory over communism should not be celebrated with the ushering in of what Karl Marx suggested was the transitional stage between what our founding fathers intended for us to practice and what the Russians have for over nine failed decades.

The history books will correctly mark the 2008 presidential election as an historic event, but the historic nature of the election goes well beyond the racial significance on which those history books will dwell. Of course it is worth celebrating the fact that the country has come a long positive way towards equality of race in its acceptance of Barack Obama for president. That point alone should elicit a sense of pride for all races. Less than fifty years ago blacks were segregated within both politics and greater society in the United States because of a bigoted social sense of their inherent inferiority. On January 20th, 2009, a black man will hold the highest office of the land. Perhaps now we can finally shed the once noble programs, but which became a potent form of discrimination in their own right, of affirmative action from our society. While we long ago reached a level of cooperation where merit should have been the sole determinant in promotion among diverse races, how can a black man continue to claim inferiority of such measure so as to be worthy of government-assisted advantage when he is represented in the White House? Of course the last thing anyone should wish to do is diminish the pride and rejoice of all those who are proud to see someone who looks like themselves finally sitting behind the desk of the oval office—a place where so much legislation was accepted keeping them relegated to second-class status. But the founding fathers were more forward thinking than they are given credit for, and the idea that all men are created equal—black and white—is indeed part of our founding documents; the unfortunate reality is that it took over two centuries for it to take hold amongst those who didn't wish to apply it. The historicity of this event should be celebrated for what it represents for this country: the general populace accepting of racial equality of opportunity; and as part of that celebration, we should disarm ourselves of the tools used to compensate for an absence of meritocracy.

However, while there remains a significant population in this country who harbor considerable emotion on the racial element of the election, we could not care any less about the new



president's black skin—that is not why we didn't vote for him. The racial element of the election notwithstanding, Obama represents a dangerous choice for America.

As un-American as the prohibition of civil rights was for over two centuries in this country, it is that same rejection of constitutional application going on today in how our government bodies are interpreting so much of what the liberal majority believes to be American. The most glaring example is their reinterpretation of our revolutionary battle cry: *no taxation without representation*. What that means in less alliterative terms is that unless a man's interests are represented by his government, his government has not the right to tax him. However, despite fighting a revolutionary war over such a principle, the financial programs being touted by both liberal congressional leaders and the newly elected president could best be summarized with a manipulated cry of *representation without taxation*. The promise to take from the rich and give to the poor—a Robin Hood mentality—seems to have secured both the nomination and election victory for this until-the-election-cycle-unknown without any significant legislative, management or policy history. And why not? Americans are significantly less wealthy this month than they were two months ago, and a frightened electorate wants someone to blame, while at the same time praying in desperation for someone to save them. The rich, representing a minority of votes, are an easy scapegoat for the non-rich, who incidentally represent a majority of votes. It's not good policy; it's just good math. And praying on people's fears is unfortunately highly effective at subjugating their dissent.

Obama's exceptional rhetorical skills—exceptional in their own right, as well as glaringly different from and significantly superior to those of the outgoing president—inspired a population. Words can do that; that is what they are designed to do: *inspire*. And what the general populace did was accept this unknown's rhetorical acumen, his promise to redistribute the wealth of this nation, his promise to allow us all to latch on to his own bootstraps and rise up with him as one nation. It is a message we can all relate to, for most people are just trying to live out a life of happiness, undoubtedly have experienced hardship—most especially now—and love a good underdog-achieving-the-world story. It is an oddly typical American story: a land of opportunity where even the smallest among us can rise up to levels seemingly reserved for the privileged; where a man who was once poor can now experience wealth; where a man whose voice was not heard can now have his voice heeded and in fact manipulated into law. The masses latched on to his personal story and made it their own; they all accepted the scapegoating of the wealthy, the indictment of the success of the oil companies as something evil and immoral, the conviction of free trade as a symptom of the greed of American corporations, and put their faith in the hands of someone who brings less experience to the office than any other president since perhaps Grant. In fact, the limited experience he brings to the Presidency of the United States includes voting “present” over 120 times (upwards of 3% of



his votes) for the legislation that came before him in the Illinois State Senate. In other words, he didn't take a stand on the issues. He didn't vote "yes" and he didn't vote "no." All he voted on was an acknowledgment that he was in the room. As reported by Factcheck.org, Kent D. Redfield, professor of political studies at the University of Illinois at Springfield, admits that "if you are worried about your next election, the present vote gives you political cover." In the same report, the AP is quoted as saying that "voting this way can be a way to duck a difficult issue." This is the leadership that was acceptable to a majority of the voting population. They put their faith in someone who sounded right, but whose words implied nothing but a penchant for the left.

But his Senate voting record is not why we didn't vote for him, despite it being reason enough not to.

Socialism—an advocating of state ownership and management of society's means of production and the resulting distribution of goods in the effort of creating an egalitarian society—is the professed doctrine of the president-elect and his majority congress; although he and his party have been wise to refrain from saying aloud the word that defines the doctrine they will undoubtedly railroad through the new congress. What's more disappointing is the number of Americans who seem to be doubting the benefits of capitalism and warming up to an economic theory that has failed nations for generations, discouraged business creation, crippled economies through the absence of rational price mechanisms, and encouraged totalitarian regimes in their restrictions of civil liberties. We don't give the new president or congress a pass on that position—we believe it to be treasonous. However, we do realize that a large number of Americans are terribly frightened, confused on the financial state of our current economy, ever burdened with exponentially rising health care costs and energy costs, and have not been offered any coherent understanding of how we arrived at this moment and where blame must be placed for our current situation—the assignment of blame critical so as not to entrust the blamed with our recovery. So with respect to the general populace, we are of the mind to cut them some slack on their vote on November 4th. While the pollsters have argued *ad nauseum* that a not insignificant percentage of votes for the new president were votes against the current outgoing president and all that they disliked about his administration, what should frighten all Americans including those who voted for Obama is the movement away from free market capitalism and general liberty toward a growing influence of government over our lives—socialism. If we do not open our eyes to the policies being put forth by our government, the America we know and love, the America we want our children to know has existed and will hopefully not perish from the earth, will fade from the landscape to be replaced with the idea that we have the right to remake it in an image not intended by our founding fathers and one in which an oppressive government is permitted voice and presence



when just such a government is what our founding fathers defeated and based the unique idea that is (or was) our country on the premise that government is of the people, by the people and for the people—not the paternal benefactor of the people, which is the objective role of socialism.

But the people have spoken. They asked for a paternal benefactor in the role of their government. A government to protect them from the dangers of the free market, to shield them from the greed of others, to lift them up and out from the muck that has been thickening all around. A benefactor they will indeed receive, for the government they elected will be all too happy to assume responsibility for doling out wealth and health. How paternal it will be in its beneficence will be both predicable and brutal in its application.

The subject of Ayn Rand's magnum opus, *Atlas Shrugged*, should be a fixture of all our thoughts on the events of the last twenty some-odd months, for the social conditions of her fictional account could be seen taking the stage all around. And we should all be alarmed that the voices against a movement towards socialism are being drowned out by a media clearly ultra liberal in their views if not consistently anti-republican in their coverage of the last eight years. The following is what Rand has to say about capitalism and the morality inherent in capitalism:

Capitalism is a social system based on the recognition of individual rights, including property rights, in which all property is privately owned.

The recognition of individual rights entails the banishment of physical force from human relationships: basically, rights can be violated only by means of force. In a capitalist society, no man or group may initiate the use of physical force against others. The only function of the government, in such a society, is the task of protecting man's rights, i.e., the task of protecting him from physical force; the government acts as the agent of man's right of self-defense, and may use force only in retaliation and only against those who initiate its use; thus the government is the means of placing the retaliatory use of force under *objective control*.

. . .

The moral justification of capitalism does not lie in the altruistic claim that it represents the best way to achieve "the common good." It is true that capitalism does—if that catch-phrase has any meaning—but this is merely a secondary consequence. The moral justification of capitalism lies in the fact that



it is the only system consonant with man's rational nature, that it protects man's survival *qua* man, and that its ruling principle is: *justice*.

By that definition, our government has failed all of us. And if our country is to be a representation of the views of over 300 million people—of which, it should be noted, just over a third of them voted on the 4th which represents over 60% of eligible voters—then our country has failed us. If we are not careful, the nation we have believed in, have loved with all of our being, may soon exist only in the space we allow it within our imaginations. The reality we thought existed may soon turn out to be nothing more than an imagined illusion, for Rand's *justice* is not what is being delivered onto our nation this day. It is socialism too many want. It is socialism the government is offering. It is socialism Obama is advocating. And it is being delivered under the guise of anything but what could and should only be called socialism. But what is most disheartening, what is most disappointing—and most frightening—is that the average citizen voter who cast his ballot for Obama, who was at his rallies and cheered when he spoke, who shed tears when he secured the necessary electoral votes, who proudly displays his campaign buttons and t-shirts along New York's streets, who reads the newspapers of foreign nations celebrating America's vote for change, whatever that is supposed to mean—of African nations dancing in the streets, of Italians proclaiming a changed world—none of them fully understands the consequences of a socialist doctrine in this country, none of them has a grasp of the history that has created this country, that has created the global financial village as a result of this country and the consequential expansion of freedoms across nations outside of our borders. The optimist should hope that they do not know what they are asking for, what they have voted for, that they could not possibly want to trade capitalism and the free markets for socialism; the patriot should be pounding his drums for an organized effort to combat them if they did. While the Republican Party is divided, splintered into factions, appearing to view this as merely a defeat in an election and not appreciating the defeat in ideology it represents, the true patriots of this country wishing for it back are left leaderless. President Bush has been derided by the media for eight years, in many respects for good reason. He has permitted the flawed leadership that has enabled our current financial crisis; he has allowed corruption to go unheeded within his own party; he has been inept at communicating with the American people, stumbling and stuttering over words that should have assured and inspired instead of embarrassing and disappointing. He was not the leader many of us wanted, but at the time of his respective presidential elections in comparison to the "other guy" he was the leader we needed. He was the only candidate representing the only Party not advocating socialist programs for a country designed to be capitalist. But too many of our citizenry seem to be ignorant to history, watches too much television dominated by liberal views, and believes that



the outgoing administration is responsible for all of their woes and to which the answer lies in the ascendancy of a virtual unknown; that capitalism is responsible for today's financial straits and to which the answer must reside in the adoption of socialism.

Socialism has been adopted before by populations weary of their economic woes, and to terrific horror. Socialism has been sold before to populations by brilliant orators capable of rallying the masses with promises of renewed glory, and with historic consequences. A similar period of history comes immediately to mind of a population which succumbed to oratory promising the elevation of the people to once grandiose heights of national glory, only to be disappointed beyond all measures of comprehension—their acceptance of a man whose words had the unique power to embrace their imagination for national pride and greatness at the expense of scapegoating others: the Germans and their acceptance of Hitler in 1933. Hitler targeted the Jews as the reason the German populace was burdened with prohibitive debt; Obama targets the financially successful as the reason “average” Americans are suffering. Hitler didn't so much propose socialism to the people as he imposed the most extreme variety of socialism—fascism—on the populace and claimed the title of savior of the German people and its culture; Obama didn't so much propose socialism to the people as he imposed a fear and rejection of free market capitalism, and didn't deny the messianic considerations his supporters offered. Hitler exterminated over 6 million Jews in his drive to racially purify the German nation; Obama seems intent on exterminating capitalism in his drive to nationalize America's free market economy. They both enthralled a population through their oratory; it was their oratory that enabled their meteoric rise above a malleable population; and they both used the logical fallacy *cum hoc ergo propter hoc* (with this, therefore because of this) suggesting that correlation implies, if not proves, causation.

Here Obama made his case:

You are financially struggling today AND we now have a free market capitalistic society, THEREFORE it is the free market capitalistic society that has caused your financial struggle.

Your healthcare costs are exorbitantly high keeping millions of Americans uninsured AND we do not have universal government run health care, THEREFORE universal government run healthcare will lower costs and allow the uninsured to be insured.

Iran is building nuclear weapons despite the international community's consensus it poses a grave international threat AND the United States is not participating in diplomacy without preconditions with Iran, THEREFORE the United States participating in diplomacy without preconditions with Iran will stop Iran from building nuclear weapons.



But the world seems intent on celebrating his elevation to our presidency, seeing as socialism has worked so well for them all. It is worth noting that a sure sign America is in trouble with its leadership is when the non-voting French sport t-shirts on their vacations to New York proclaiming their love for our presidential candidate; when Italian newspapers declare the world has changed because of his election; and when the leader of one of the most dangerous regimes on the planet, who has proclaimed America the great Satan and the Israeli people worthy of nothing but extermination from the face of the earth, and who thirty years ago took part in the taking of American hostages for over a year, calls to congratulate our president on his elevation to the highest office in the land and newly elected leader of the free world. But we are blind to the signs until they become retrospective memories, and act on them only after their results are integrated into our present-day fabric.

And while partisans would quickly implore their short-sighted vision in declaring this argument just another attack of one party on another, this is not about party politics. The dangers facing us transcend party—both of them. We should not beholden ourselves to the views of a particular party without consideration of the views of the individuals the party chooses to have represent them. Loyalty should be first to family, to country, and to ourselves (and we leave it to the reader to determine in what order we intended those to be arranged). Party loyalty is a creation of political operatives in order to divide the nation into discernable parts, enabling them to identify where their money is going to come from and where their limited resources are to be applied so as to ensure the continued existence of their party. We should not let it blind us to the morality of the issues that will face our generation and the generation of our children. There were individuals this election, just as there are in every election, who voted along party lines because that is how they always voted and that is how they will always vote. There are individuals who voted for the other guy because they will never vote for anyone who isn't white. We voted for who we did this election not because we thought he would make an exceptional president—we don't think he would have; and we didn't vote for Obama not because of his skin color or because of his party affiliation—the surface stuff shouldn't matter to anyone. If the Democratic Party put forth someone who shared our values, who we considered a student of the ideals of our founding fathers, we would have cast our ballot for the Democratic candidate.

But while the Republican Party seems to be sitting out on this fight for free market capitalism, the Democratic Party marches on toward a dismantling of what our founding fathers envisioned in their inception of this remarkable country. And so it is worth asking: Where are the founding sons? Where are the men and women who will reclaim the authority to promote our founding fathers' mandate of forming a more perfect union? Where is the party of Americans who have not dismissed as mere rhetoric the call to duty so uttered by our creators?



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