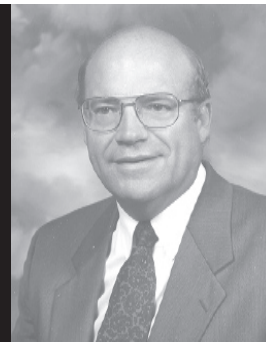




Dr. Fred Schwarz

The Schwarz Report



Dr. David Noebel

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The Schwarz Report Bookshelf

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Tackling Our National Debt

by David A. Noebel

Americans finally realize that debt has its limits. Inevitably the day comes when the creditor demands payment—and that day seems to be today! We are inconveniently being reminded of the pluses of budgets, savings, and investments juxtaposed with the minuses of lying (ethics), cheating (cooking the books), and greed.

A few thousand years ago, we were given plenty of guidance on how to avoid the financial Armageddon we see happening before our very eyes. Listen carefully to the Old Philosopher's straightforward recommendations and warnings that even I can grasp, having no idea what hedge funds consist of or how they spread terror around the world.

"Wealth obtained by fraud will dwindle, but whoever earns it through labor will multiply it" (Proverbs 13:11).

"Truth stands the test of time, lies are soon exposed" (Proverbs 12:19).

"Ill-gotten gains do not profit anyone, but right-doing rescues from death" (Proverbs 10:2).

"A greedy man is in a hurry for wealth, he doesn't know that poverty will come to him" (Proverbs 28:22).

"When people do not accept divine guidance they run wild. But whoever practices the law is happy" (Proverbs 29:18).

"The person who runs to get rich quick will only get into trouble" (Proverbs 28:20).

"Better a poor man who lives with integrity than a rich man who distorts right and wrong" (Proverbs 28:6).

"Dishonest scales [dishonest printing press money?] are detestable to the LORD" (Proverbs 11:1).

"Honest balances and scales are the Lord's; all weights in the bag are His concern" (Proverbs 16:11).

"Silver is tested in a crucible, gold in a smelter" (Proverbs 7:21).

Enough wisdom? Enough Economics 101? Too much Bible—an old book that has been rendered obsolete by modern scholars and scientific experimentation? Really?

This wisdom of the ages cries out to our contemporary predicament, but who can admit it without being considered Neanderthal or worse? A Harvard MBA is considered sacrosanct, but even the *Wall Street Journal* (Sept. 17, 2003) wrote, "In the post-Enron era, MBA programs—Harvard in particular—have come in for some caustic criticism for producing graduates obsessed with making money

And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead expose them. Ephesians 5:11

"Dwell on the past and you'll lose an eye; forget the past and you'll lose both eyes." Old Russian Proverb

regardless of the ethical consequences. To some people, MBA graduates are at the root of all the corporate greed and dishonesty. In a public-opinion survey about how companies can mend their reputations, one respondent declared, ‘Get rid of the Harvard MBA’s.’”

Unbalanced budgets simply mean we’re living beyond our means. Unbalanced budgets equal national debt, and national debt ultimately equals slavery! In the words of that Old Philosopher, “Debtors are slaves to the lenders” (Proverbs 22:7).

My hope and prayer is that this national crisis—fast turning into a world crisis—will turn each of us back to first principles, including the concept of truth itself. According to the Old Philosopher, “Truth stands the test of time” (Proverbs 12:19)—and that includes financial and economic truth.

Can we all now admit together that truth is not relative? That morals—doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong—really do matter? That living on our children’s and grandchildren’s wealth is sin (wrong/evil/criminal)? The Old Philosopher said that a good man “leaves an inheritance to his grandchildren” (Proverbs 13:22). Instead, we’re leaving our grandchildren bad debt and bad money. We seem to have a gold standard for everything except our money!

The Old Philosopher knew that honesty and integrity matter. The present financial crisis cries out that honesty and integrity still matter. Cooking the books is wrong and morally evil. Dishonest politicians in bed with dishonest business practices (Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae) spell trouble. And we are in big trouble.

Some have rightly sought to warn us of our present financial meltdown (Martin Weiss, Richard Maybury, Don McAlvany, and others). However, I am reminded of Steven G. Austin’s *Life After Enron: Not Business as Usual—Rise of the New Ethics Class*. Austin’s concern in 2004 was with Enron, WorldCom, and HealthSouth, but his book also tells the truth about our present condition with Bear Stern, Washington Mutual, and Lehman Brothers, etc. What Austin and co-author Mary Steelman do is contrast the Book of Proverbs with the practices of the financial community, drawing the obvious conclusion that we as a nation are headed for destruction if we don’t change our ways.

Austin proposes a game plan on how to emerge from this crisis although it includes some hard truth—honesty, integrity, Christian ethics, proper auditing procedures, etc. I never thought I’d be reading a book about the importance of “Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.” But I did read it carefully and agree that such successful principles

come straight from the Bible. (For an example of biblical accounting principles, see Exodus 38:21-23.)

But I want to address the largest financial crisis of all—our national debt. It is becoming more and more obvious that some of our present-day politicians are on the take (for example, look into who received Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae largess!). Those who are guilty must be convinced to do the right thing, or we will all go down into the dustbin of history together.

America, although a debtor nation today, has great resources and wealth to speak to our national debt. Here in a nutshell is a simple plan to address this problem.

Congress needs to swallow its pride and engage its enemy—ExxonMobil—to drill ANWAR and split the profits 50/50 with the American people to be used only to drive down the national debt—not to be spent in any other areas.

This plan would also require Congress to balance its budgets each year and not add to the debt.

Instead of the taxpayer being burdened with another \$850 billion of debt, this obligation needs to be carried by America’s oil wealth. And drilling our own oil would save \$700 billion a year that we presently pay to Middle East despots.

If ANWAR doesn’t have enough oil to cover our national debt, then we should drill off the coast of Santa Barbara, CA, where the oil is literally oozing out of the ocean floor. (See Google’s “Santa Barbara Natural Oil Seepage.”)

If Alaska and California don’t have enough oil and gas to pay off our national debt, we must develop nuclear energy and sell it to Canada, Mexico, and the rest of the world for a profit. Energy is obviously one of the major components that can provide answers to the questions of poverty, so this plan would help the poor as well. (See Proverbs 14:21.)

Let me remind readers that economics—the so-called boring subject—is an important component in a biblical Christian worldview. It is a subject that warrants more attention in the classroom and from the pulpit in light of the importance of truth, morality, and concern for God’s standards and ways as well as concern for our neighbors and their ways.

Economics, like music, can and must glorify God. Gold and silver are His monetary standard (see Haggai 2:8). Printing press paper money backed by the whims of politicians always loses its value and robs the common citizen. This is not God’s will or way! Over the past 95 years, the American dollar has lost nearly 95 percent of its value. Yet, government’s primary financial responsibility

is to standardize and stabilize the value of the dollar and, according to the U.S. Constitution, that standard is gold and silver. (Article 1, Sec. 10: “No State shall . . . make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts.”)

Let us consider the real probability that three practices

are responsible for our current economic meltdown: 1) going off the gold standard; 2) engaging in unacceptable accounting practices; and 3) acquiescing to moral laxity. Now let us consider how we can alter these practices in light of the solid wisdom of the ages!

Obama’s Leftism

by Joshua Muravchik

Introducing himself to the nation at the 2004 Democratic national convention, Barack Obama spoke not only of his black father, “born and raised in a small village in Kenya,” but of his white mother, “born in a town . . . in Kansas” to a father who “worked on oil rigs and farms through most of the Depression” before enlisting in military service “the day after Pearl Harbor.” What brought them together was “a magical place, America,” he said, adding, “I stand here today, grateful for the diversity of my heritage . . . knowing that . . . in no other country on earth, is my story even possible.”

Not only was Obama the real, living embodiment of America’s racial diversity, he was a dazzling presence, outshining the party’s nominee with his look, stage presence, oratorical mastery, and the brilliance of his rhetoric. Nor was that all. This avatar of reconciliation talked of transcending divisions not just racial but political and ideological. He spoke lovingly of country and movingly of God and family in a way that had eluded the Democrats since their sharp turn to the Left when the party nominated George McGovern in 1972.

In the speech’s highlight, Obama said, “[T]here is not a liberal America and a conservative America—there is the United States of America. . . . We worship an “awesome God” in the blue states, and we don’t like federal agents poking around in our libraries in the red states. We coach Little League in the blue states and yes, we’ve got some gay friends in the red states. There are patriots who opposed the war in Iraq and there are patriots who supported the war in Iraq. We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes, all of us defending the United States of America.”

Four years later, Obama is the Democratic nominee, and even his occasional shrill attacks on his opponent seem to have chipped away little of the cornerstone of his own candidacy: the promise to bring us, all of us, together. Can he do that? Is he well-suited to raise the curtain on a new post-partisan, post-ideological era?

From his record in office, it would hardly seem so.

Non-partisanship does not just mean Democrats coaching Little League, lovely as that is, but cooperating with members of the other party in developing compromise solutions to national problems. The Senate has a particularly rich tradition of such bipartisanship, but Obama appears never to have participated in it. On the contrary: according to *Congressional Quarterly*, which measures how often each member votes in accordance with or at variance from the majority of his own party, Obama has compiled one of the most partisan of all voting records.

Last year, for example, the average Senator voted with his own party 84 percent of the time; Obama voted with his party 96 percent of the time. In the prior two years, his number was 95 percent, making him the fourth most partisan member of the Senate. And not just partisan, but also highly ideological. In 2007, according to the *National Journal*, Obama’s voting record made him “the most liberal Senator.” Throughout his Senate career, according to Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), the dean of liberal advocacy groups, Obama voted “right” 90 percent of the time. Actually this is misleading, since ADA counts an absence as if it were a vote on the “wrong” side. If we discount his absences, Obama voted to ADA’s approval more than 98 percent of the time.

This touches directly on the question of what, beyond the platitudes of unity, hope, and change, Obama himself believes in. His voting record is one indication. Another is his intellectual evolution.

Abandoned by his father when he was still too young to remember him and then sent at age ten by his mother to live in Hawaii with her parents, who enrolled him in a prestigious prep school, Obama spent much of his teen years searching for his black identity. Late in his high-school career he found a mentor of sorts in Frank Marshall Davis, an older black poet. According to Herbert Romerstein, former minority chief investigator of the House Committee on Internal Security, FBI files reveal Davis to have been a member of the Communist party not only in its public phase but also when it officially dissolved and went underground in the 1950’s.

According to Obama, Davis told him that a white person “can’t know” a black person, and that the “real price of admission” to college was “leaving your race

at the door.” Perhaps influenced by this, he reports that at college, “[t]o avoid being mistaken for a sellout, I chose my friends carefully. The more politically active black students. The foreign students. The Chicanos. The Marxist professors and structural feminists and punk-rock performance poets.”

Despite Obama’s tone of self-mockery, the passage discloses the milieu in which he immersed himself. In this light, it is not surprising that, upon graduation, he decided on a career as a “community organizer,” even if it was none too clear to him what exactly that meant. As he confesses in his early memoir *Dreams from My Father* (1995), “When classmates . . . asked me just what it was that a community organizer did, I couldn’t answer them directly. Instead I’d pronounce on the need for change. Change in the White House . . . Change in the Congress . . . Change in the mood of the country . . . Change won’t come from the top, I would say. Change will come from a mobilized grass roots. . . . I’ll organize black folks.”

Thanks to a grant from a left-wing foundation, he was hired by a small group of white protégés of Saul Alinsky, the original apostle of “community organizing.” Alinsky’s institutional base was the Industrial Areas Foundation, which he called a “school for professional radicals” and whose goal he announced to be “revolution, not revelation.” As Obama himself would put it, there were “two roles that an organizer was supposed to play . . . getting the Stop sign [and] the educative function. At some point you have to link up winning that Stop sign . . . with the larger trends, larger movements.” In other words, “community organizer,” to Obama and his colleagues and mentors, was a euphemism for professional radical.

It was in the course of trying to mobilize churches for political protest that Obama met Jeremiah Wright. When the controversy surrounding the pastor arose this year, Obama denied being present when Rev. Wright delivered his most incendiary sermons, commenting that he was like “an old uncle who sometimes will say things that I don’t agree with.” But this was evasive. By Obama’s own testimony, the reason other ministers directed him to Wright was that Wright’s Trinity United Church of Christ was steeped in politics.

Thus, Obama writes that Wright had “dabbl[ed] with liquor, Islam, and black nationalism” before returning to Christianity and studying, among other things, “the black liberation theologians.” Whoever and however many these theologians may have been, Wright invoked only one on the church’s website. “The vision statement of Trinity United Church of Christ,” in Wright’s words, was “based upon the systematized liberation theology that started in

1969 with the publication of Dr. James Cone’s book, *Black Power and Black Theology*.”

What was that theology? Here are two tiny snippets of Cone’s thought: “Christianity and whiteness are opposites,” and “there will be no peace in America until whites begin to hate their whiteness.” In addition to a cross superimposed on a map of Africa, the website declares: “We are an African people, and remain ‘true to our native land,’ the mother continent, the cradle of civilization.” It defines Trinity as, among other things, “a congregation committed to the historical education of African people in diaspora, a congregation committed to liberation.” When Obama joined the church in the 1980s, it did not yet have a website, but he tells of a brochure that, while condoning the pursuit of income, warned congregants against the “psychological entrapment of black ‘middleclassness’.” The liberationist music was playing back then, too.

At Trinity, Obama attempted to enlist Rev. Wright in his protest campaign, and the pastor sought to recruit Obama to the church. Evidently both succeeded, though at the time Obama says he was so far from religion that he “could no longer distinguish between faith and mere folly.” But when he began to participate in Trinity’s services he discovered he was not unique in his ambivalence. Of the other congregants, he would observe, “Not all of what these people sought was strictly religious. . . . It occurred to me that Trinity, with its African themes, its emphasis on black history, [was] a redistributor of values and circulator of ideas. Only now the redistribution didn’t run in just a single direction from the schoolteacher or the physician . . . to . . . the sharecropper or the young man fresh from the South. . . . The flow of culture now ran in reverse as well, the former gang-banger, the teenage mother, had their own forms of validation—claims of greater deprivation, and hence authenticity.”

The first time Obama attended services at Trinity, Wright delivered a sermon (it was titled “the audacity of hope”) whose theme was: “white folks’ greed runs a world in need.” Twenty years later, when it was revealed that Wright’s church had honored Louis Farrakhan, that Wright had traveled with Farrakhan to visit the Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi, and that in his sermons Wright had beseeched God to “damn America,” charged the U.S. government with inventing the AIDS virus in order to kill black people, and claimed that Israel and South Africa had colluded to invent an “ethnic bomb” to kill blacks and Arabs while leaving whites unharmed—when all this was revealed, Obama, under pressure from the Hillary Clinton campaign, declared himself “shocked” at Wright’s vitriol. But in truth not only was he aware of Wright’s

views, they were what had drawn him to Trinity church in the first place.

Obama left Chicago after three years to attend Harvard Law School. As he would explain, “I had things to learn..., things that would help me bring about real change.” After graduating with honors in 1991, he returned to the Windy City to join the small law firm of Judson Miner, an activist who had been attorney to Mayor Harold Washington.

Within three years of his return, he also became deeply involved with Bill Ayers, a former leader of the so-called Weather Underground. This leftist terrorist group, akin to the German Baader-Meinhof gang or the Italian Red Brigades, specialized in bombing government buildings. Ayers later wrote boastfully that he had personally carried out an attack on the Pentagon. Ayers’s wife and closest collaborator was Bernardine Dohrn, whose views were so extreme that they seemed to cross a line from ultra-leftism to Satanism. At a meeting of the Weather Underground, she hailed the murders then recently committed by Charles Manson’s demented followers. “Dig it, first they killed those pigs, then they ate dinner in the same room with them, they even shoved a fork into a victim’s stomach!” she exulted, giving a three-fingered salute to signify a fork.

After the pair emerged from hiding in 1980, a court dismissed the main charges against Ayers on the grounds that the government had used an illegal wiretap. He pled guilty to possessing explosives, but served no time. The net outcome inspired him to gloat that he was “guilty as hell and free as a bird.” Dohrn served seven months. Then they both went respectable, but without changing their views. Ayers posed for a picture stomping on an American flag, and in 2001 he told the *New York Times*: “I don’t regret setting bombs. I feel we didn’t do enough.”

The details of Obama’s association with Ayers remain somewhat shrouded because both Ayers and Dohrn have refused to discuss it, while Obama and his spokesmen have prevaricated about it. When, during one of the televised primary debates, George Stephanopoulos asked about his connection to Ayers, Obama replied, “This is a guy who lives in my neighborhood, who’s a professor of English in Chicago who I know and who I have not received some official endorsement from. He’s not somebody who I exchange ideas [with] on a regular basis. And the notion that somehow as a consequence of me knowing somebody who engaged in detestable acts 40 years ago, when I was eight years old, somehow reflects on me and my values doesn’t make much sense.”

Later, Obama’s campaign manager, David Axelrod, added: “Bill Ayers lives in his neighborhood. Their kids at-

tend the same school.” If this is true, Ayers’s children must be slow learners, since they are thirty-one and twenty-eight while Obama’s are nine and six. But Obama’s own reply, though less bald-faced than Axelrod’s, was thoroughly disingenuous. Thanks to the meticulous investigations of the Left-leaning blogger Steven Diamond (globallabor.blogspot.com), the story of Obama and Ayers’s collaboration has been seeping into the public record despite extraordinary efforts to seal it.

After escaping punishment for his crimes, Ayers received degrees in education and became an advocate of school reform in Chicago. In particular, he propounded a “radical” project in the late 1980s that was inspired by New York City’s disastrous experiment decades earlier in “community control.” Ayers’s project was championed by a coalition called the Alliance for Better Chicago Schools (ABCs); according to Diamond, one member of the “alliance” was the Developing Communities Project (DCP), the group for which Obama worked as an organizer. If so, then it is likely that the two met back then, since the DCP was a tiny organization and Obama was most likely its representative.

In any event, in 1994, when the philanthropist Walter Annenberg put up \$500 million to help the nation’s public schools, Ayers submitted a grant proposal that secured \$50 million for an entity called the Chicago Annenberg Challenge. The word “challenge” signified that the recipients were required to find double the amount in matching funds; this they did, disposing altogether of some \$160 million.

The ostensible purpose of the project was to reinvigorate Chicago’s flagging decentralization project. Ayers devised a structure made up of three connected elements, of which the main two were the Collaborative, or operational center, and the Board, with overall financial control. Ayers named himself to head the Collaborative; Barack Obama, apparently by Ayers’s choice, became chairman of the Board.

So it is conceivable that the two met as late as 1994, but this hardly seems likely. Would anyone yield control of the purse to someone he did not already know well and trust thoroughly? And what exactly were Obama’s credentials in the field of school reform, unless he had been active in the ABCs with Ayers in the 1980s? At the very latest, the two must have met sometime after Obama returned from Harvard in late 1991 or early 1992, well before he was chosen to chair the board in 1995.

For the next four to five years, the two worked together to raise the matching funds and disburse small grants to local organizations pushing the reform program. It could

only have been an intimate partnership. When Obama decided to run for the state senate, his first fund-raising event was held in the home of Ayers and Dohrn. In 1997, Ayers published a book about juvenile justice, *A Kind and Just Parent*, which Obama blurbed as “a searing and timely account.” The two also served together on the board of the leftist Woods Fund from 1998 until 2001.

This is what is now public about the relations between Obama and the unrepentant terrorist Bill Ayers. There may be much more, so far successfully hidden by all concerned; but even these facts suggest that Ayers was among Obama’s closest collaborators.

Obama’s turn to electoral politics signified no change in his basic ideological orientation. As his wife Michelle put it: “Barack is not a politician first and foremost. He’s a community activist exploring the viability of politics to make change.” (“I take that observation as a compliment,” Obama said as late as 2005.)

Obama’s target was a legislative seat held by Alice Palmer, who had decided to make a run for the U.S. Congress. She introduced Obama in Democratic-party circles as her anointed successor. (After a later falling-out, the two would dispute whether her support had amounted to a formal endorsement or merely, as she claimed, “an informal nod.”) Like others among his mentors or patrons, Palmer, too, was a radical, a member of the executive body of the U.S. Peace Council, the least disguised of Soviet front organizations. She had made multiple pilgrimages to the Soviet Union, and in 1986 attended the 27th Congress of the Soviet Communist party, telling the party paper on her return that the Soviets “plan to provide people with higher wages and better education, health and transportation, while we in our country are hearing that cutbacks are necessary in all of these areas.” According to a later story in the same paper, Palmer visited Moscow again the following year to attend the World Congress of Women sponsored by another Soviet front organization.

In his campaign for the Illinois senate, Obama was endorsed by the New Party (NP), a coalition of socialists, Communists, and other leftists. According to the newsletter of the local chapter of Democratic Socialists of America, whose members were said to constitute 15 percent of the Chicago New Party, “Once approved, candidates must sign a contract with the NP [which] mandates that they must have a visible and active relationship with the NP.” Apparently, Obama signed such a pledge. After winning the primary (unopposed because his lawyers had succeeded in knocking all three opponents off the ballot), he appeared at a New Party membership meeting to voice his thanks.

Entering the national political scene eight years later,

Obama did not, to be sure, appear as a radical, but he still bore the earmarks of the world in which he had been immersed for twenty years. He called himself “progressive,” a term of art favored by veterans of the hard New Left, like Tom Hayden, as well as by old-time Communists. Early this year his wife Michelle, lacking his tact, would kindle controversy by saying that his success in the presidential primaries made her feel proud of her country for the first time. The comment, a faux pas that she was soon at pains to explain away, flowed logically from her view, expressed in her standard stump speech, that our country is a “downright mean” place, “guided by fear,” where the “life . . . that most people are living has gotten progressively worse.”

This year, Obama appeared before Rev. Al Sharpton’s National Action Network (whose official slogan is “no justice, no peace”) to seek its support. The candidate praised Sharpton as “a voice for the voiceless and . . . dispossessed. What National Action Network has done is so important to change America, and it must be changed from the bottom up.” Given Sharpton’s long career of reckless racial demagoguery, it might seem shocking that a mainstream candidate should be seeking his blessing, but in this, at least, Obama was not unique: all of the 2008 Democratic aspirants did so. He did, though, strive to separate himself from the pack, “If there is somebody who has been more on the forefront on behalf of the issues that you care about and has more concrete accomplishment on behalf of the things you’re concerned about, then I am happy to see you endorse them. I am happy to see you support them. . . . But I am absolutely confident that you will not find that, because there is nobody who has stood fast on these issues more consistently each and every day, than I have. That is something that I know.”

As it happened, Sharpton, a consummate wheeler-dealer, kept his options open for a while. But other radicals, soft and hard, rushed to embrace Obama, often waxing rapturous in their support. Robert Borosage and Katrina vanden Heuvel enthused in the *Nation* that Obama’s was “a historic candidacy,” from which “new possibilities will be born.” Michael Lerner wrote in *Tikkun* that the “energy, hopefulness, and excitement that manifests [sic] in Obama’s campaign” was reminiscent of “the civil-rights movement, the anti-war movement, the women’s movement, the environmental movement, and the movement for gay liberation.” Most remarkably, Tom Hayden himself joined the chorus by breaking a New Left taboo against “red-baiting” and laying bare some of Hillary Clinton’s own far-Left history—this, in retaliation for the Clinton campaign’s revelations about Obama’s

radical background.

Even after declaring his candidacy, and despite a certain inevitable sidling rightward, Obama still reflected the presuppositions of a radical worldview. In one notable remark, he said of voters in economic distress that in their desperation they “cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren’t like them.” Chastised for his condescension, he responded: “I said something that everybody knows is true.” This was elitism of a very specific kind—the mentality of the community organizer, according to which people in the grip of “false consciousness” need to be enlightened as to the true nature of their class interests, and to the nature of their true class enemies.

The same suppositions are again evident in Obama’s stances on international issues. Iraq, as he sees it, is only a symptom. “I don’t want to just end the war . . . I want to end the mindset that got us into war in the first place.” And what would that mindset be? In a 2002 speech that he frequently cites, he said the war resulted from “the cynical attempt by Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz and other armchair, weekend warriors . . . to shove their own ideological agendas down our throats, irrespective of the costs in lives lost and in hardships borne . . . the attempt by political hacks like Karl Rove to distract us from a rise in the uninsured, a rise in the poverty rate, a drop in the median income . . . the arms merchants in our own country . . . feeding the countless wars that rage across the globe.”

In this litany of global perfidy, the issues of Saddam Hussein’s murderous dictatorship, of American security, of the future of freedom, shrink to inconsequentiality next to the struggle of the oppressed against their American capitalist overlords.

When it comes to Iran, Obama has acknowledged that the regime presents a problem. But his actions—he opposed the Kyl-Lieberman amendment designating the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps a terrorist organization—as well as his rhetoric imply that the greater danger emanates from George W. Bush (who is allegedly seeking “any justification to extend the Iraq war or to attack Iran”). Likewise on defeating terrorism, where he rejects the America-centric focus that Bush has given to the issue; instead, in the words of his aides, Obama’s main goal is to “restore . . . our moral standing”—that is, to put an end to our aggressive ways.

Even the events of 9/11 could not shake Obama from the mindset that the enemy is always ourselves. The bombings, he wrote, reflected “the underlying struggle—between worlds of plenty and worlds of want; between the modern and the ancient; between those who embrace our teeming, colliding, irksome diversity, while still insisting on a set of values that binds us together; and those who would seek, under whatever flag or slogan or sacred text, a certainty and simplification that justifies cruelty toward those not like us.”

In this reading, the lessons to be learned from the actions of Osama bin Laden and Mohammed Atta are that we must accept multiculturalism at home and share our wealth abroad.

In sum, Obama comes to us from a background farther to the Left than any presidential nominee since George McGovern, or perhaps ever. This makes him an extremely unlikely leader to bridge the divides of party, ideology, or, for that matter, race. If he loses, it will be for that reason (though many will no doubt adduce different explanations, including of course white racism, to which every GOP victory since Nixon’s election in 1968 has been attributed).

And if he wins? Without a doubt, it will be a thrilling moment. But the enduring importance of that landmark event will depend on the subsequent effectiveness of his presidency. If his tenure—like that of, say, Richard Nixon or Jimmy Carter—should end by inviting scorn, then it may open as many wounds as it heals. On the other hand, it is not unimaginable that he may rise to the challenge of the office and govern from the center, as he will have to do to succeed. This, however, would truly involve reinventing himself, a task for which his intellectual and ideological background furnishes few materials.

With his sharply partisan speech to the Democratic national convention in late August, Obama appeared to zag to the Left after months of zigging toward the center in hopes of winning over independent voters, which had stirred cries of alarm among some of his leftist supporters. Others among them, however, were and are nothing fazed. As the *Nation*’s Robert Dreyfuss explained, they “put their faith in the Senator’s character and innate instincts.” Heaven help us, they are probably right.

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The Nonsense of Global Warming

by Paul Johnson

This summer's atrocious weather tempted me to tease a Green whom I know. "Well, what about your weather theory now?" (One of the characteristics of Greens is that they know no history.) He replied: "Yes, this weather is unprecedented. England has never had such an August before. It's global warming, of course." That's the Greens' stock response to anything weather-related. Too much sun? "Global warming." Too little sun? "Global warming." Drought? "Global warming." Floods? "Global warming." Freezing cold? "Global warming."

I wish the great philosopher Sir Karl Popper were alive to denounce the unscientific nature of global warming. He was a student when Albert Einstein's General Theory of Relativity was first published and then successfully tested. Einstein said that for his theory to be valid it would have to pass three tests. "If," Einstein wrote to British scientist Sir Arthur Eddington, "it were proved that this effect does not exist in nature, then the whole theory would have to be abandoned."

To Popper, this was a true scientific approach. "What impressed me most," he wrote, "was Einstein's own clear statement that he would regard his theory as untenable if it should fail in certain tests." In contrast, Popper pointed out, there were pseudo-scientists, such as Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud. Marx claimed to be constructing a theory of scientific materialism based on scientific history and economic science. "Science" and "scientific" were words Marx used constantly. Far from formulating his theory with a high degree of scientific content and encouraging empirical testing and refutation, Marx made it vague and general. When evidence turned up that appeared to refute his theory, the theory was modified to accommodate the new evidence. It's no wonder that when communist regimes applied Marxism it proved a costly failure.

Freud's theories were also nonspecific, and he, too, was willing to adjust them to take in new science. We now know that many of Freud's central ideas have no basis in biology. They were formulated before Mendel's Laws were widely known and accepted and before the chromosomal theory of inheritance, the recognition of inborn metabolic errors, the existence of hormones and the mechanism of nervous impulse were known. As the scientist Sir Peter Medawar put it, Freud's psychoanalysis is akin to mesmerism and phrenology; it contains isolated nuggets of truth, but the general theory as a whole is false.

The idea that human beings have changed and are

changing the basic climate system of the Earth through their industrial activities and burning of fossil fuels—the essence of the Greens' theory of global warming—has about as much basis in science as Marxism and Freudianism. Global warming, like Marxism, is a political theory of actions, demanding compliance with its rules.

Those who buy in to global warming wish to drastically curb human economic and industrial activities, regardless of the consequences for people, especially the poor. If the theory's conclusions are accepted and agreed upon, the destructive results will be felt most severely in those states that adhere to the rule of law and will observe restrictions most faithfully. The global warming activists' target is the U.S. If America is driven to accept crippling restraints on its economy it will rapidly become unable to shoulder its burdens as the world's sole superpower and ultimate defender of human freedoms. We shall all suffer, however, as progress falters and then ceases and living standards decline.

When I'm driving to my country home in Somerset, I pass two examples of the damage Greens can cause when their views are accepted and applied. Thanks to heavy government subsidies, many farmers switched from growing food to biofuel crops—perhaps the most expensive form of energy ever devised. The result has been a world shortage of food, with near starvation in some places, and a rise in the cost of food for everyone. We're now getting wise to this ridiculous experiment; shares in biofuels have fallen, and farmers are switching back to their proper work. But the cost has been enormous.

The other thing I pass is a new windmill, spinning slowly around. Windmills were the great invention of the early Middle Ages—man harnessing nature and using it to replace muscle power. When I was a boy more than 70 years ago there were still a few windmills, but nobody doubted they were on their way out. The thought of going back to wind power would have seemed preposterous. Nevertheless, under pressure from Greens this has happened. Wind power is a grotesquely expensive and inefficient form of energy, and the new windmills are hideous things, ruining the landscape and making an infernal noise.

Marxism, Freudianism, global warming. These are proof—of which history offers so many examples—that people can be suckers on a grand scale. To their fanatical followers they are a substitute for religion. Global warming, in particular, is a creed, a faith, a dogma that has little to do with science. If people are in need of religion, why don't they just turn to the genuine article?

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