

10 DEVELOPING TRENDS POINTING TO A CONSERVATIVE RESURGENCE IN 2008

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PINE BLUFFS—Those who follow current events closely have seen certain emerging trends which point to a possible resurgence underway for conservatives. That, if true, will help Republicans in November 2008. I'll explain, but first some bad news for Republicans.

Senator Trent Lott's (R-MS) announcement that he will resign "to pursue other opportunities," brings to six the number of Republican senators who will not return in January 2009. The others are Wayne Allard (R-CO), Pete Domenici (R-NM), Chuck Hegal (R-NE), John Warner (R-VA), and Larry Craig (R-ID). All are in competitive states and their departure gives Democrats a decided advantage in next year's elections, when Republicans will be compelled to defend 23 seats, while Democrats only need to defend 12. Bad news? Yes and no.

Fundraising is also a huge concern for the Republican Party. At a time when many major corporations report large gains - Apple's recent quarterly profits jumped 67%; Merck, which just offered to settle all Vioxx claims for \$4.85 billion, developed a vaccine for cervical cancer and a new medicine for diabetes, tallied a 62% gain; McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Boeing, Caterpillar, Honeywell, and 3M all reported strong earnings - contributions to the Republican Party are way down. With just under a year to go in the presidential campaign, Republicans are losing the fundraising wars big time.

Senator John Ensign (R-NV), head of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, wrote in his November 12, 2007 fundraising letter: "Republican Senate candidates are fighting for their lives against the most well-funded, aggressive Democrat

attack campaign in history." He expects the AFL-CIO to spend \$200 million during the 2008 elections, almost exclusively to benefit Democrats.

Yes, the difference between money the Democrat presidential candidates have raised and funds the Republican candidates have collected, is striking. Rudy Giuliani leads all Republicans with \$17 million, while Democrat Barack Obama has raised twice that much. If this state of affairs continues, the Republican presidential primary winner will face significant campaign problems, as will Republican candidates nationwide. But will it? I think not, because at least 10 recent events point to a conservative resurgence across America.

First, retirement of "moderate" (read liberal) Republicans Hegal and Warner is surely a blessing in disguise. They've seldom, if ever, helped further conservative policies in the Senate, and replacements will benefit the conservative cause.

Second, Lott, 66, presently the House Minority Whip, relished the wrangling over votes that went with his job, but his voting record reveals a vacillation between liberal and conservative positions. Fortunately, Mississippi's conservative Republican governor Haley Barbour gets to appoint Lott's temporary successor, who will then have a leg up in the 2008 election to fill out Lott's unexpired term, which runs through 2012.

Third, in Virginia, Republicans are urging former U.S. Solicitor General Ted Olson to run for the seat John Warner will vacate. Olson's wife Barbara - promising author of the *New York Times* bestseller, *Hell to Pay*, an exposé of Hillary Rodham Clinton - was killed on 9/11/. She was a passenger on United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed into a field near Shanksville, a rural Somerset County, Pennsylvania town. Olson would oppose former Democrat governor Mark Warner. "His [Olson's] political background and high profile in conservative circles would actually make him a national candidate from a

fundraising perspective," a New York based fundraiser said. "He could actually go toe to toe with Warner on the donor front, if he were interested . . ."

Fourth, over on the House side, when Representative Tom Tancredo (R-CO), announced on October 29, 2007 that he won't seek re-election at the end of his current term, he joined several other House Republicans who do not intend to return in January 2009. But just watch this.

Tancredo made his mark by pushing for immigration reform long before the 9/11/ terrorist attack. Dan Stein, president of the Federation for American Immigration Reform said of Mr. Tancredo: "He's been a bellwether of the national mood - kind of a national canary who's been way ahead of, or foreshadowing the surge in public opinion, and actually helped lead it at critical times. He's really irreplaceable . . ."

However, Tancredo believes he can now step aside because the immigration issue has gained other champions. He points to massive numbers of voter's telephone calls and e-mails helping to sink the Senate's misguided Immigration Reform bill and the so-called Dream Act, other Republican presidential candidates embracing immigration reform as a top priority, and his recent offering of an amendment on the House floor removing federal funding from sanctuary cities that protect illegal aliens. Democrats accepted the amendment without objection, and Tancredo said: "I just figure how many more signs do I need that I've done what I set out to do. . . . I remember the first time I did it, I got [only] 82 votes. That's what has changed in the Congress." See the trend here?

What's in his future? He doesn't know yet. One option might be to troll for a vice-presidential nomination by one of the Republican front-runners next year. Another would be to challenge liberal Senator Ken Salazar (D-CO) who comes up for re-election

in 2010. Tancredo's only 61. I hope he opts for the latter.

Fifth, regarding changes in Congress, Tancredo is correct. Another emerging trend is this: on October 24, after almost drowning in telegrams, e-mails, and phone calls from constituents, a divided Senate voted 54-44 to kill the misguided Dream Act - which would have legalized illegal alien students by giving them conditional green cards and an eventual path to citizenship. That's 8 votes less than the 60 needed for cloture, to bring the bill to the floor for a vote. More and more Senate Republicans, who finally seem to "get it" regarding illegal immigration, argue that no immigration bill should pass until the federal government first seals our porous borders and begins stricter enforcement of laws against employers who hire illegals.

In fact, sealing the southern border should be among the highest of priorities, since the Mexican government has little problem with its citizens crossing that border by the millions. John McCaslin, in his *Inside the Beltway* column of November 5, 2007, wrote: ". . . Increasing the number of Mexicans working illegally in America is among Mexico's highest foreign policy objectives."

Sixth, although enthusiasm for Democrats in the contributions area *does* seem to be running high, this contradicts nationwide polls, which show that enthusiasm among the general populace for the Democrat-led Congress, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), has waned considerably. Reid's plight reminds of Tom Daschle (D-SD) two years ago, just before he was turned out of office by his conservative constituents, whom he'd been trying to fool for years.

Seventh, Reid's troubles in his home state of Nevada, where his popularity has sunk to an all time low - he's viewed favorably by only 32%, and unfavorably by 51% - mirror what appears to be nationwide dissatisfaction with policies pursued by vindictive

Congressional Democrats who seem more interested in attacking George W. Bush than in addressing America's problems. According to a mid-November Gallup poll, just 14% of Americans have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in Congress. I've actually seen a recent poll placing Congressional approval as low as 13%.

Eighth, while the rest of us focused on presidential primary politics, on October 20, Louisiana elected a Republican governor. Conservative Bobby Jindal, the first American Indian to ever hold that office, won handily with 54% of the vote. In the process Louisiana voters booted from office the incompetent former Democrat chief executive, Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, who sought to cover her own mistakes by laying all the blame for Hurricane Katrina response and recovery failures on the Bush Administration.

Ninth, as liberal leftists and other crazies in the Democrat Party attack their own leaders and try to convince them that the vast majority of Americans want us out of Iraq now, Bill O'Reilly reports that Americans appear to be staying away in droves from the recent spate of anti-American, anti-Bush, anti-war films such as *Rendition*, *Lions for Lambs*, *In the Valley of Elah*, and *No End in Sight*, all "dishonest propaganda films," according to O'Reilly. Here's a trend I hope continues.

Finally, just five weeks after New York's Democrat governor Elliott Spitzer, displaying the arrogance for which liberals are noted, set off a major political immigration battle by ordering state officials to issue driver's licenses to illegals, he was forced to back down. The issue put him at odds with not only New Yorkers, but also New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Republican presidential candidates Mitt Romney, Rudy Giuliani, and Fred Thompson, former Navy Secretary John Lehman who served on the 9/11/ Commission, Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, and

New York State's Republican Legislature. After meeting with New York's Democrat congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. which undoubtedly urged him to shelve the plan because of the heat they were taking both at home and nationally, he scrapped his idea. "You don't need a stethoscope to hear the heartbeat of the public on this," he said. Or Hillary's either, he might have added.

These polls and current events seem to indicate a mood swing already in progress among the nation's voters. But for Republicans to win in 2008, they must return to their conservative roots; at the core are less government, a strong national defense, and lower taxes. A strategy for long-term economic growth, tax cuts for middle income families, effective limits on government domestic spending, a renewed commitment to deregulation and a strong military, and continued improvement in intelligence budgets, are all part of it.

Admittedly, it will be an uphill battle, but with a bit under a year left to go, it can and must be done. The socialist, hate America alternatives offered by liberal Democrats are unthinkable.

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