

Letters from our readers

30 January 2010

On "Obama's State of the Union Address: Cynicism, clichés and a call for austerity"

I tuned my radio into Obama's State of the Union speech in progress, and I thought I'd gotten the audio from a television rerun of Monty Hall's "Let's Make a Deal" or Bob Barker's "The Price is Right":

Hall: "And behind door number three: a brand new washer and dryer!"

Obama: "While we're at it, let's also eliminate all capital gains taxes on small business investment!"

Barker: "Come On Down! You're the next contestant on The Price Is Right!"

The cheers and laughter from the audience sounded like they were a troupe who had been hired in to enliven the proceedings; was there a self-serve wet bar, by any chance, on the premises last night? The addition of a few storm troopers bellowing in the background and it all sounded like a G.W. Bush rally, circa 2002.

The television game show that "the talented Mr. Obama" emceed last night has disgusted more than socialists, and fooled no one.

Randy R
Arizona, USA
28 January 2010

This article on last night's State of the Union is so right on!! For some time, I have been wondering when someone would capture the essence of the now totally lame State of the Union addresses. A constant and veritable...stick in my thumb and pull out a plum, oh what a good boy am I. Although, Obama's was a shade less on the totally want to puke while watching it. In Jan. of 1936, FDR got right to the point in his State of the Union...during perhaps a very "likeness" time:

"We have earned the hatred of entrenched greed...They seek the restoration of their selfish power. They steal the livery of great national constitutional ideals to serve discredited special interests...The principle that they would instill into government if they succeed in seizing power is well shown by the

principles which many of them have instilled into their own affairs; autocracy toward labor, toward stockholders, toward consumers, toward public sentiment...Give them their way and they will take the course of every autocracy of the past, power for themselves, enslavement for the public."

Very good article!!

Curt P

Utah, USA
28 January 2010

On "New York Times columnist worries over Obama's 'credibility gap'"

Following my emergence from the vomit bag and reading Yahoo news State of the Union comparisons with a former speech of Ronald Reagan, it is amazing how this President parallels the Calvin Lockhart character of the Reverend Deke O'Malley in *Cotton Goes to Harlem* (1970), in terms of the condemnation made of him by Godfrey Cambridge's Digger Jones, namely that he could have been somebody progressive but is really nothing better than a con man. I'm so sick of hearing about his championship of the middle class as I am of reading a poster on a colleague's wall, "Rebuild America's middle class with unions". What has happened to the "working class"? The answer is ideological erasure in the same manner as the UK postwar Old Labour victory clarion call of "We are all working class now" was replaced by New Labour's Lord Mandelson's "We are all Thatcherites now".

The author is right. Obama is a con man, the Herbert Hoover of his generation rather than the supposed FDR of his political campaign. He switches his masks as much as a fan dancer like the late Sally Rand quickly switches her fans to conceal his ignominious shame of switching from someone espousing change to becoming little better than a 21st century version of Herbert Hoover and Ronald Reagan. Massachusetts should be hopefully the tip of the iceberg that will eventually destroy this facile Democratic Party version

of the Titanic.
Tony W
28 January 2010

The fiction of Obama's radicalism has been exposed in his first year. He is not likely to provide any long run service to any of America's oligarchs. Much as they will approve of his cutting funding to America's poorest to refinance the Imperial occupations. They are unlikely to bet a kopeck on his chances or reelection. And other members of the financial aristocracy will begin to seriously fund other political prospects, e.g. the next big Republican thing.

Chris
Ireland
28 January 2010

On "Obama to impose freeze on social spending"

Obama is a shameful excuse for a President. He has and shows no spine, and does not think for himself. The first place austerity is required, as well as justified, is in the utterly fetid pork barrel of military expenditure. The first move Obama should not only be making but actively lobbying to make is to cut the military budget by 20 percent. That same 20 percent will offset any so-called "necessary" cuts in domestic social spending.

R H
27 January 2010

On "The country boogie-woogie of Sleepy LaBeef"

David, I just found this review in the archives and found it to be a brilliant and touching piece. You've inspired me to check out LaBeef, who I've never heard. The humanity that you bring to your assessment of his work is exemplary critical writing. How joyous to find someone worthy of praise in the sterile cultural landscape we now inhabit.

Ernie M
22 January 2010



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