



## THE FOUNDATION

"I want an American character, that the powers of Europe may be convinced we act for ourselves and not for others; this, in my judgment, is the only way to be respected abroad and happy at home." --George Washington

## PATRIOT PERSPECTIVE

(Editor's Note: Mark Alexander is away participating in a national security forum. This week's Patriot Perspective is a guest essay by Alexander's colleague Victor Davis Hanson. For the top conservative commentary on the Web, look no further than *The Patriot's* Opinion page.

### Europe Got Obama -- Now What?

By Victor Davis Hanson

"Yes, we can!" Germans shouted in unison with candidate Barack Obama at their Victory Column in Berlin this past summer.

To judge by the crowds and European media, most Europeans were as ecstatic about the coming of the Obama presidency as they were over the departure of George W. Bush. At last, an American president praised multilateralism and the United Nations, and seemed sympathetic to Europe's socialist culture.

Obama's multiracial, nontraditional heritage seemed sophisticated and cosmopolitan in a European way that Bush's Texas accent and Christian fundamentalism most definitely were not.

Despite Bush's efforts in his second term to work closely with the Europeans, and the emergence of conservative governments in France, Germany and Italy, Old Europe for the most part was all too happy to see him go.

But will Europe always be happy with the Obama it wished for?

Mirek Topolánek, prime minister of the Czech Republic (which currently holds the European Union presidency), just blasted the Obama administration's stimulus plans as "a way to hell."

German Chancellor Angela Merkel sniffed: "We must look at the causes of this crisis. It happened

because we were living beyond our means.... We cannot repeat this mistake."

And just when President Obama announced the dispatch of thousands more troops to Afghanistan, many European leaders confirmed they will withdraw their own contingents over the next two years.

America, meanwhile, may backtrack on missile defense of Eastern Europe in the face of Russian threats. And there is talk of more trade protectionism in the Democratic-controlled Congress. Europeans wouldn't be happy if either of these things come to pass.

What then is going on?

In some sense, the Obama administration will bring a new honesty to European-American relations. For the last eight years, Europeans have had it both ways. Bush took out Saddam Hussein, removed the Taliban from power, hunted terrorists, offered firm security guarantees to the Europeans in their squabbles with the Russians, tried to box in Iran, and ran trade deficits with his free and open trade policies. For his efforts, he was caricatured as a cowboy buffoon by European sophisticates.

But now after welcoming Obama, the Europeans are beginning to discover that they must contend with a new administration to the left of themselves. And as we saw with Obama's recent cavalier treatment of visiting British Prime Gordon Brown -- he was given a packet of DVDs, unviewable in Europe, as a going-away gift -- Obama doesn't seem convinced of any special relationship with Europe. His interests and priorities lie more in Asia, Latin America and Africa -- places that have also been the great sources of immigration to America the last half-century.

So, it will be harder for Europeans to pull off the old two-step of quietly wanting the U.S. to deter threats

while loudly deploring our Neanderthal reliance on brute force.

As Afghanistan turns from a joint NATO project into an American war, the Obama administration may well conclude that if we don't have European allies against the Taliban, we won't elsewhere. Perhaps NATO will be seen as a Cold War relic, with no place in Obama's brave new multipolar world.

Given Obama's plans to emulate Europe's expensive socialist entitlement system, there may be less money for defense. Ironically, that would mean less American protection abroad of a disarmed socialist Europe -- a continent sandwiched between North Africa, the Middle East and Russia, with millions of unassimilated Muslim immigrants at home.

In matters of foreign policy, Obama likewise has outflanked the Europeans. His calls for talks without restriction with the Iranians; his offer to pour hundreds of millions into Gaza; his outreach to the Syrians; and his popular resonance in South America, the Middle East and Africa suggest that a leftist America now has more in common with some of these former European colonies than do the centrist Europeans.

It was once easy to slur Bush's war on terror as typical American overkill. But now Europeans better worry that someone in the Obama administration will notice that the renditions, preventative detentions, wiretapping and summary deportations practiced in parts of Europe were often as authoritarian as anything Bush embraced.

On a number of other issues -- expensive legislation to combat global warming, multilateral foreign policy, massive government borrowing, relations with unsavory foreign dictators -- Obama is moving to the left of Europe.

The trans-Atlantic alliance we've taken for granted for so many years, of course, won't come to an end overnight. But how ironic will it be if its eventual downfall is someday traced not to a loud George Bush bang but to a Barack Obama whimper.

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## **GOVERNMENT & POLITICS**

### **Hope 'n' Change: The New GM -- Government Motors**

President Obama took the unprecedented and unconstitutional step this week of getting intimately

involved in the private sector when he forced General Motors CEO Rick Wagoner to resign and gave Chrysler 30 days to merge with Italian automaker Fiat. These moves came after the federal government decided that the restructuring plans proposed by both embattled automobile companies did not go far enough to guarantee their continued viability. GM is now in the hands of COO Frederick Henderson and a leadership team that ultimately will be crafted by the White House. GM will receive financial support from the government for 60 days, during which time, Obama explained, "My team will be working closely with GM to produce a better business plan." That plan could still include some form of bankruptcy.

How is it possible that a federal government currently piling up an \$11 trillion deficit is in any way capable of making the right decisions for GM? Not to mention it has no right to do so. The auto giant reached its nadir in large part because it could not meet enhanced government fuel-efficiency standards or the excessive demands of a labor union that walks hand-in-hand with the current administration and the liberal Congress. Indeed, the question we keep asking is, why hasn't Obama thrown UAW president Ron Gettelfinger under the hybrid, too? Of course, we already know the answer.

Now that the government has its hooks in GM, it can force the company to produce cars that meet the excessive environmental and energy standards of the EPA. In other words, cars that no one will buy when gas isn't \$4 a gallon -- cars such as this "Government Motors" gem.

Obama claimed, "The United States government has no interest or intention of running GM," but that is *exactly* what he has in mind. What else would the new car czar (read: kommissar) -- the Director of Recovery for Auto Communities and Workers -- be empowered to do? In fact, Obama wants the federal government to "stand behind" warranties for GM and Chrysler, which even Democrats in Congress say he needs their approval to do.

As for Chrysler, why, of all companies, was Fiat chosen to partner with the smallest of the so-called Big Three automakers? Fiat is famous for making lightweight, fuel-efficient vehicles that are all the rage in Europe but which don't sell that well in America. If the design sense that made Fiat famous abroad and feckless here at home is applied to Chrysler, then the company might better be allowed

to slip into bankruptcy -- something that could happen anyway if it doesn't craft a deal with the cardboard car company from Italy in 30 days.

Finally, as an April Fool's Day joke, Car and Driver magazine ran an article claiming that Obama had ordered Chevrolet and Dodge out of NASCAR if they were to continue to receive bailout funds. Naturally, it caused quite a stir because it was so believable. We can only imagine the White House staff crying, "Who leaked our plans?"

### **This Week's 'Braying Jackass' Award**

"The administration clearly believes it does have the authority to use some of the remaining TARP funds for the automobile industry. ... I don't know technically where that authority would be. But my own view is that if it is perceived they don't have that authority and it is perceived by the Congress they need to have that authority, the Congress would probably be willing to give that authority." --House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) exhibiting quite a backbone

### **News From the Swamp: Bloated Budget Passes**

The fiscal sausage grinding for Barack Obama's first budget concluded on Capitol Hill Thursday night, with the passage in both houses of the \$3.55 trillion Leftist goodie bag. The House vote was 233-196 (20 Democrats opposed), while the Senate voted 55-43 (two Democrats opposed). While Republicans and even some Democrats recoiled at the prospect of multi-trillion-dollar deficits as far as the eye can see, the House and Senate leadership determined to ram through their massive spending.

The major initiatives in the budget include a cap-and-trade system to control greenhouse gases that will do nothing but slap a huge tax on any American who uses energy. We're thinking that at least some of the 95 percent of Americans who Obama promised won't see a tax increase do, in fact, use energy, and so will be hit by the hidden tax increase. Also included is another tax increase in the form of health care "reform," which will add at least \$1 trillion to the budget over the next 10 years. And as we have learned with Social Security and Medicare, predictions are often low.

On income taxes, The Washington Post reports, "Both chambers have adopted Obama's plans to extend tax cuts for the middle class beyond their

2010 expiration date and to allow cuts for families making more than \$250,000 a year to expire. But both chambers scaled back Obama's plan to protect millions of families from the alternative minimum tax and dropped his proposal to make permanent his signature \$800 tax credit for working families." Also buried in an Obama budgetary footnote is the assumption that the estate (read: death) tax remains at 2009 levels for next year instead of disappearing as the Bush tax cuts of 2001 intended.

In stimulus news, the Associated Press reports, "South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford has won a key victory in his fight to control \$700 million in federal stimulus money intended to help the state's schools, with the White House acknowledging in a letter released Wednesday that state legislatures can't overrule governors who don't want the money." In other words, the AP thinks Mark Sanford hates children and doesn't want to educate them, but the White House caved in to his idea of paying off debt rather than increasing entitlements.

### **Chicago Politics**

"Don't think we're not keeping score, brother." --Barack Obama

*"That's what President Barack Obama said to Rep. Peter DeFazio in a closed-door meeting of the House Democratic Caucus last week, according to the Associated Press. A few weeks ago, Mr. DeFazio voted against the administration's stimulus bill. The comment from Mr. Obama was a presidential rebuke and part of a new, hard-nosed push by the White House to pressure Congress to adopt the president's budget. He has mobilized outside groups and enlisted forces still in place from the Obama campaign."* --Karl Rove

### **New & Notable Legislation**

Candidate Obama pledged to allow non-emergency legislation to be posted for at least five days on the White House Web site for public comment before signing bills into law. But President Obama has signed six bills into law after less than five days, and of the other three, only one was posted for more than five days before receiving his signature. The latest campaign pledge breaker signed by Obama this week was a \$10 billion land-conservation bill that did anything but "conserve." In fact, it puts some oil-rich land out of bounds.

In a piece of good news, the punitive 90 percent tax on TARP-funded company executives died a quiet

death this week. However, the House passed the Pay for Performance Act, which would grant Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner the power to decide what is "unreasonable or excessive" compensation for *all* executives of companies receiving federal bailout money. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) called it "a matter of simple fairness." For his part, Geithner has acknowledged that other executives could be forced out in the manner of GM's Rick Wagoner.

Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) introduced a bill that would raise taxes on the top two income brackets, from 33 and 35 percent respectively, to 36 and 39.6 percent. According to Heritage Foundation Senior Policy Analyst Curtis Dubay, that means taxpayers earning only \$104,425 could see their taxes rise. So much for pledges.

The bill granting House representation for the District of Columbia has found a likely supporter in Attorney General Eric Holder. The Washington Post reports, "Justice Department lawyers concluded in an unpublished opinion earlier this year that the historic D.C. voting rights bill pending in Congress is unconstitutional, according to sources briefed on the issue. But Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr., who supports the measure, ordered up a second opinion from other lawyers in his department and determined that the legislation would pass muster." When in doubt, get a second opinion. The Post also offers this "keen sense of the obvious" observation: "A finding that the voting rights bill runs afoul of the Constitution could complicate an upcoming House vote."

H.R. 875, the Food Safety Modernization Act, hasn't received much press, but it deserves a closer look. The bill would establish a Food Safety Administration that would be the product of a merger of the USDA and parts of the FDA. It would regulate "food production facilities," an undefined term that could mean any food producer from Archer Daniels Midland on down to the local vegetable stand. The bill could wrap farmers up in so much bureaucratic red tape that they will no longer be able to operate effectively, if at all.

### **From the Left: More Lousy Obama Nominees**

According to Harold Koh, Obama's nominee for the State Department's legal adviser and considered a possible future Obama Supreme Court pick, Shariah

law (i.e., Islamic law) may properly be used to determine certain court cases. That's just one of Koh's off-the-wall positions. A former dean of Yale Law School, Koh is a proponent of what's called a "transnational legal process," which equates our constitutional process with laws instituted in other nations. That's akin to accepting the currency of Zimbabwe (where a loaf of bread can cost billions) at a 1-to-1 ratio for our dollar -- discounting the administration's best efforts to match Zimbabwean hyperinflation. Koh believes that it's "appropriate for the Supreme Court to construe our Constitution in the light of foreign and international law" in its decisions, regardless of the will of American voters. Think same-sex marriage, affirmative action and detainment of terrorists.

Koh has also claimed that together North Korea, Saddam-era Iraq and the United States compose an "axis of disobedience" because each "flagrantly" has disobeyed international law. But as far as disregarding the law himself, in 1994 he said, "I'd rather have [former Supreme Court Justice Harry] Blackmun, who uses the wrong reasoning in *Roe v. Wade* to get the right results, and let other people figure out the right reasoning." In light of his obvious hostility to America and its Constitution, how can Koh take the oath to support and defend them?

In other nomination news, yet another Obama pick fessed up and paid back taxes this week -- and it's not an April Fool's joke. Health and Human Services nominee Kathleen Sebelius, who replaced tax cheat Tom Daschle, amended three years' worth of returns and paid nearly \$8,000 to the IRS for "unintentional errors." Asked for his thoughts, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus said, "I think she should be confirmed."

### **Blagojevich Indicted, Stevens Cleared**

Former Illinois Democrat Gov. Rod Blagojevich was indicted by a federal grand jury Thursday on 16 felony corruption charges, including the scheme to auction off Barack Obama's former U.S. Senate seat. He is also accused of racketeering conspiracy, wire fraud, extortion conspiracy and lying to federal agents. Five associates, including his brother, were indicted as well. One extortion victim could turn out to be former Chicago congressman Rahm Emanuel, now Barack Obama's chief of staff. Reached for comment while on vacation, Blagojevich declared, "I am innocent. I now will fight in the courts to clear my name."

Another man who claimed innocence was vindicated this week -- former U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska -- though it was too little, too late. In October 2008, Stevens was convicted on corruption charges involving gifts from an oil services company in Alaska. Eight days later, he lost re-election to the seat he had held for 40 years to Democrat Mark Begich, former mayor of Anchorage.

On Tuesday, however, the Justice Department dropped all charges, citing prosecutorial misconduct. Judge Emmet Sullivan held the federal prosecutors in contempt of court in February for failing to comply with a court order that internal documents be delivered to Stevens' attorneys -- documents that would have significantly helped the defense in cross examining a key witness against Stevens. Beyond that, Justice rules prohibit issuing indictments so close to an election, except under extraordinary circumstances. It seems those extraordinary circumstances were the effort to reach 60 Democrat seats in the Senate.

Indeed, we second The Wall Street Journal: "We've criticized Mr. Stevens for excessive spending and earmarks, and his habits contributed to the decline and fall of the GOP Congress. His explanation at trial about the gifts he received was hard to believe, and a D.C. jury inclined to dislike Republicans didn't believe it. But Mr. Stevens deserved a fair trial and the full protection of the law. He got neither here, and that's a larger scandal than anything he was charged with."

### **Elections: Minnesota and New York Down to the Wire**

In the Minnesota Senate election dispute (yes, it's still dragging on), former "Saturday Night Live" actor Al Franken won a significant victory Tuesday when, the Star Tribune reports, "a panel of three judges ordered no more than 400 new absentee ballots opened and counted, far fewer than the Republican [Norm Coleman] had sought to overcome the lead held by ... Franken." The Democrat holds a 225-vote lead that is now almost impossible for the incumbent Coleman to overcome.

In New York's 20th district, a special election was held Tuesday to fill the seat of now-Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, who was appointed to Hillary Clinton's seat. Democrat Scott Murphy leads Republican Jim Tedisco by less than 50 votes, with about 6,000 absentee and military votes yet to be counted. The

election became a referendum of sorts on the Obama economic plan as Tedisco railed against the stimulus and budget late in the running, and the national Democrat Party threw everything but the kitchen sink into the race. Obama himself lent his name to the effort, endorsing Murphy.

### **New York Times Gets the 'Spike' Award**

In October 2008, The New York Times happened upon a story involving the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), Project Vote and the Obama campaign. Heather Heidebaugh, who represents the Pennsylvania Republican State Committee in its lawsuit, testified to the House Judiciary subcommittee, however, that the Times spiked the story just when it got interesting. A former ACORN worker served as a "confidential informant" for the Times for several months -- at least until she revealed that the Obama campaign had sent its donor list to ACORN. The worker claims that the campaign asked ACORN to "reach out to the maxed-out donors and solicit donations from them for Get Out the Vote efforts to be run by ACORN." The Times reporter informed her that her editors wished to kill the story because it was "a game changer." Funny, that didn't stop the Times from publishing a flimsy and fact-challenged piece alleging that John McCain had a long-ago relationship with a female lobbyist. As Dr. Paul Kengor, professor of Political Science at Grove City College, observed, "The New York Times is a liberal newspaper. It is dedicated to furthering the Democratic Party. People think The New York Times is an objective news source and it is not." And other than a few conservative blogs, this story has been similarly spiked by the Leftmedia.

### **U.S. Seeks to Join UN Human Rights Council**

In a reversal of the Bush administration's policy, the U.S. will now seek to join the UN Human Rights Council, created in March 2006 to replace the 60-year-old Human Rights Commission, which featured such human-rights abusers as Sudan and Zimbabwe. The previous administration's policy was justified if for no other reason than the current incarnation includes China and Saudi Arabia, not exactly paragons of human rights, either. And as Wall Street Journal columnist Leslie Hook points out, "In its three-year history, the body has done little other than issue critiques of Israel and justify rights-abusing regimes. The council also has a hand in overseeing for the Durban Review Conference, a

gathering that ostensibly fights racism, but in practice has become an anti-Semitic hate fest." Elections are set for May for one of three seats on the 47-member council. Belgium, Norway and New Zealand are also in the running, though New Zealand has indicated it will step aside for the U.S.

## NATIONAL SECURITY

### Warfront With Jihadistan:

#### Droning in Mixed Messages

Distinguishing his administration from what he characterized as years of unfocused, failed policies during the Bush administration, The One announced a "new" plan for operations in Afghanistan that, well, extends those policies. Specifically, borrowing a page from the much-touted "surge" playbook -- credited along with an energized engagement policy as the turning point that led to success in Iraq -- Obama committed an additional 4,000 troops by this fall. This, *in addition* to the 17,000 troops committed last month, brings the total to 60,000 U.S. troops -- roughly twice as many as the non-U.S. NATO contingent in Afghanistan. Fortunately, this effort will also be accompanied by an energized engagement policy, making this "new and improved" policy *completely* different from the previous one. Oh, and we're still waiting on the additional forces that an adoring Europe was supposed to contribute as soon as we elected Barack Obama president.

Additionally, another preexisting policy that will be stepped up is the use of Predator unmanned aerial vehicles armed with Hellfire air-to-surface missiles in the role of, let's just say, "parts distributors" of would-be terrorist threats in neighboring Pakistan. Having discovered that Pakistani intelligence officials had been tipping off Taliban operatives in Afghanistan about impending Predator strikes, the Bush administration abandoned the policy of obtaining permission from Islamabad before conducting the strikes. Result: dead terrorists. More than half of the current list of 20 high-value targets have been killed or captured during the past six months, a point evidently not lost on the current administration, in light of the continuation of the Bush policy of, "Shoot first, talk later."

Meanwhile, we would note one substantive defense policy change the Obama administration has made: namely, throwing the term "Global War on Terrorism" (or "GWOT") under the bus. Underscoring the new non-use of this term with an equally apt non-statement, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton an-

nounced, "The administration has stopped using the phrase, and I think that speaks for itself." Unquestionably so ... volumes, in fact. Accordingly, we'd like to recommend a new phrase for Obama's defense theme: "Make Believe -- Not War."

### A Tale of Three Headlines

"Clinton offers olive branch to Taliban" --Reuters

"Taliban Chief Vows 'Amazing' Attack on D.C. 'Soon'" --KFMB talk radio, San Diego, CA

"U.S. peace offer in Afghanistan is a 'lunatic idea' says Taliban" --UK Daily Mail

*Hat tip to Rush Limbaugh*

### Department of Military Readiness: NoKo Missile Launch

North Korea continued preparing for its intended Taepodong-2 ICBM launch this week, as commercial satellite imagery revealed that the NoKos have stacked all three stages and likely have fueled the missile. The war of words also continued, as the rogue regime issued blunt threats against U.S. aircraft flying tracks in the Sea of Japan in order to monitor the launch. Defense Secretary Robert Gates attempted to calm things with his own comments downplaying U.S. Navy plans to shoot down the missile. The Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force moved two of its own Aegis warships, the destroyers Chokai and Kongo, into the Sea of Japan this week, doubling the number of SM-3 shooters that could intercept the missile in flight (the Japanese are partners in the U.S. Navy's Aegis missile defense program).

While Japanese leaders asserted that they would only fire at missile debris or a failed launch that threatened to land on Japanese soil, the JMSDF deployment is yet another indicator of how the rules of missile blackmail change when the threatened party has missile defenses. Especially against nations such as North Korea or Iran that have a relatively small number of launchers, missile defenses can negate one of the key threats that the Axis of Evil (remember them?) use to cause trouble. We hope that this lesson is not lost on the commander in chief as he meets with his Russian counterpart in London in part to discuss reduction of both countries' nuclear arsenals, and that the president resists Russian efforts to kill the planned Polish-Czech missile defense system.

## BUSINESS & ECONOMY

### Income Redistribution:

#### What's a Few Trillion Between Friends?

Under-promising and over-delivering can be a good thing -- but not when it comes to the number of taxpayer dollars the federal government is doling out in the name of rescuing our economy from imminent disaster. For example, The Wall Street Journal reports that the amount the U.S. has committed to "stabilizing financial companies and rescuing domestic auto makers" reaches almost \$2.98 trillion -- a figure Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus notes is "just short of what the entire federal government spent in fiscal year 2008."

Even worse, according to Bloomberg.com, the federal government and Federal Reserve have lent, promised, or paid out a grand total of \$12.8 trillion, which is frighteningly close to the *entire 2008 GDP* of \$14.2 trillion. Not surprisingly, the so-called stimulus has ballooned far beyond early projections, growing by 73 percent from the \$7.4 trillion estimated by Bloomberg last November. The cost for every man, woman and child in the country now stands at \$42,105 -- 14 times greater than the U.S. currency now in circulation.

And when it comes to the initial \$700 billion set aside last year for the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), according to Neil Barofsky, the Special Inspector General for TARP, all but \$109.5 billion has been spent. Still, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner refuses to rule out the possibility that the Obama administration will ask Congress for even more funds to funnel to Wall Street.

With this news compounded by the announcement of 663,000 more lost jobs in March and 8.5 percent unemployment, it's no wonder the federal government has established a Web site to help Americans cope. Of course, with Big Brother burning through trillions with little forethought and less accountability, soliciting coping counsel from the feds makes about as much sense as seeking financial advice from, well, the government.

#### This Week's 'Alpha Jackass' Award

"[A]t a time when the world is fearful ... there is a strong tendency to look for somebody to blame." --fear monger and blame-thrower-in-chief Barack Obama

## Mangled Sin Tax

In a well-timed April Fool's Day moment, Barack Obama broke another campaign promise -- "I can make a firm pledge ... no family making less than \$250,000 a year will see any form of tax increase" -- by signing an increase in the tobacco tax. The astounding 159 percent increase from 39 cents per pack to \$1.01 took effect Wednesday. The average state tobacco tax is currently \$1.19 a pack, while the average non-reservation retail price of a pack of cigarettes is between \$4 and \$5. And as economist Brad Schiller notes, "[O]ver half of all smokers are low income, and one of four [is] officially classified as poor." Not only that, but the central government's plan to raise \$38 billion over five years is based on the assumption that sales will not drop. What economics class did *that* come from?

Cigarette makers, anticipating a drop in sales (at least on the legitimate market), already raised prices from 71 to 81 cents per pack to make up for the expected revenue shortfall. Nobel economist Gary Becker says that a 10 percent increase in the price of a pack will cause an eight percent decline in sales. As a result, the tobacco industry could lose 117,000 of its 1.2 million jobs and states will lose billions in tax revenue. The only question remaining is how the public will react to the inexorably necessary tobacco industry bailout that will be sold as the only way to rescue another industry destroyed by Barack Obama and the Democrat-controlled Congress.

## CULTURE & POLICY

### Climate Change This Week: Earth Hour

Climate change hysteries had 60 whole minutes to revel in their own brilliance and self-righteousness during Saturday night's "Earth Hour." Supposedly, hundreds of millions of people in 4,000 cities and 88 countries turned off the lights to show their solidarity for the cause. Oddly enough, Al Gore was not among them, as his brightly shining Nashville mansion was visible from outer space.

The feel-good stunt, which is being hailed by the World Wildlife Fund as "the world's first-ever global vote about the future of our planet," was held ahead of this week's talks in Bonn to come to agreement on limitations for heat-trapping gases. A final deal is supposed to be reached in Copenhagen in December.

"Earth Hour was probably the largest public demonstration on climate change ever," claimed Yvo de Boer, the UN top dog regarding climate control. "Its aim is to tell every government representative to seal a deal in Copenhagen. The world's concerned citizens have given negotiations an additional and very clear mandate."

But what did it really accomplish? Well, reports vary, at least at the UN. Before the event, the United Nations reported to Fox News that it anticipated an \$81,000 savings on its electric bill. After the event, however, and after the story had been posted to the Fox Web site, the UN called back to say that the savings had been \$24,000 -- still impressive for a 60-minute lights out. The third phone call, however, was like the punch line of a bad joke. The real savings for UN headquarters' participation in Earth Hour? A whopping \$102. Priceless.

### **Village Academic Curriculum: Jury Finds for Churchill**

Ward Churchill, the former University of Colorado professor who was fired in 2007 for plagiarism, fabricating research and other misconduct, found favor in the eyes of a Colorado jury this week. The jury found that the University wrongly fired Churchill and awarded him \$1 (that's one dollar) plus legal fees and the chance to get his job back. A judge will decide the latter. Churchill claimed that the stated reasons for his firing were nothing more than a cover-up for the real reason: his comparison of victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks to a Nazi murderer in a 2001 essay. Churchill testified that he didn't intend for his comments to be hurtful to the victims, but added, "if you make it a practice of killing other people's babies for personal gain ... eventually they're going to give you a taste of the same thing." That's so much better. Apparently, however, he convinced his peers on the jury. Still, as a university spokesman pointed out, "[The verdict] doesn't change the fact that more than 20 of his faculty peers found that he engaged in plagiarism and other academic misconduct." Welcome to academia.

### **Around the Nation: Targeting Conservatives**

The Missouri Highway Patrol has retracted a report released to the state's law enforcement agencies that profiles domestic militia members as individuals who often hold conservative political views and support third-party political candidates. Entitled

"The Modern Militia Movement," the report was published by the Missouri Information Analysis Center, one of the Department of Homeland Security's 58 national "fusion" centers that serve as the "centerpiece of state, local, federal intelligence-sharing," said DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano.

Of the many troubling aspects of the militia report, attention is brought to people who supported Republican nominees, specifically, 2008 presidential candidate Ron Paul. Further, Chuck Baldwin of the Constitution Party and Bob Barr of the Libertarian Party are also named as third-party candidates that "militia" members might support. "It is not uncommon for militia members to display Constitutional [sic] Party, Campaign for Liberty or Libertarian material," the report reads. Display of a Gadsden flag or holding political views that are opposed to abortion or federal taxes could also help identify "militia" members.

The report calls into question how the fusion centers are using the intelligence they receive, and even the American Civil Liberties Union is expressing concern. "It seems to implicate people who are engaging in First Amendment protected activities and suggest that something as innocuous as supporting a political candidate for office would mean that you're harboring some ill intent. It's completely inappropriate," said ACLU national security policy counsel Michael German.

Missouri Highway Patrol superintendent Col. James F. Keathley said his officials should have reviewed the report before it was sent to state law enforcement by the MIAC, and that such protocol would be followed in the future. Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder has called for the Department of Public Safety director to be put on administrative leave while an investigation is conducted.

### **And Last...**

This week brings three stories that we think typify, in various ways, the Obama administration's approach to the economy. First, Agence France-Presse reports, "Vandals blew a gaping hole in the rear end of a statue of Communist leader Vladimir Lenin on Wednesday, but Russian officials were not amused by the 'monstrous' act of vandalism." We might say that the economy is so bad, even Lenin lost his, uh, rear. To the man who coined the phrase "useful idiots," happy April Fool's.

Meanwhile, a Web customer ordering Domino's pizza online discovered that the promotional word "bailout" was good for a free medium pizza. The company had considered the ad campaign and Internet coupon in December, but never launched it. In spite of this, the pizza chain tossed up the dough for 11,000 free pizzas in less than 24 hours. Now if only TARP will cover the toppings...

Finally, in Florida, the AP reports, "Authorities said a man threw a Molotov cocktail [a makeshift gasoline bomb] at his neighbor's trailer, but the wind shifted and set fire to two cars, a pickup and a travel trailer in the man's own yard." For some reason, this reminded us of the White House's handling of the auto industry. The best line of the story, however,

was this: "Authorities believe alcohol was involved." Perhaps the same could be said of those in Washington.

Veritas vos Liberabit -- Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus, et Fidelis! Mark Alexander, Publisher, for *The Patriot's* editors and staff.

(Please pray for our Patriot Armed Forces standing in harm's way around the world, and for their families -- especially families of those fallen Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, who granted their lives in defense of American liberty.)