



THE FOUNDATION

“Resolve to perform what you ought. Perform without fail what you resolve.” --Benjamin Franklin

CULTURE

“The fact is that post-Umar Farouk, post-Richard Reid, and eight years post-9/11, this country is still flying blind when it comes to airline security. Another young male Islamic extremist tries to kill hundreds of innocent people, and the response is the same: Heightened airport security for travelers of all ages, nationalities, and religious backgrounds -- instead of increased focus on those who look, act, worship, and travel like terrorists. Even worse, this is the second major vulnerability revealed inside of a few weeks. Remember the embarrassment of the leaked 93-page TSA Standard Operating Procedures manual? Most reports focused on the fact that the document revealed how certain government or law enforcement credentials looked. Or that only 20 percent of checked bags are given a ‘full open-bag search.’ Or that disabled individuals’ wheelchairs, casts, and orthopedic shoes are potentially exempt from explosives screening. But most frightening to me was that while the leaked document deemed that holders of passports from Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Libya, Syria, Sudan, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Somalia, Iraq, Yemen, and Algeria should be subjected to additional screening, no such special attention was given to holders of passports from Saudi Arabia -- the home of 15 of the 9/11 hijackers. And now it’s worth noting that the list doesn’t include Pakistan or Nigeria -- Umar Farouk’s home -- either. At the time of the memo’s leak, Michael Scheuer, the former head of the CIA unit tasked with tracking Osama bin Laden, told me that the federal government ‘knows without question that al-Qaeda and its allies pore over the U.S. media for operationally applicable information.’ There was ‘no chance’ that the misstep had gone unnoticed by our enemies, he said. Nor, I suspect, will the fact that in the wake of this latest attempted act of Islamic terrorism, the United States will keep refusing to apply the most invasive screening techniques to travelers with the most in common with the 9/11 attackers.” --columnist Michael Smerconish

RE: THE LEFT

“President Obama, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid

and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi -- all of whom have in recent years promised unprecedented levels of transparency in government -- are flouting their own words by meeting in secret to write the final version of Obamacare. They are doing this to avoid the public meetings of a bipartisan conference committee representing the Senate and House and the multiple, on-the-record roll call votes required in both chambers on a conference committee report. The most radical expansion of central government power in American history is happening right under journalists’ noses, and yet they raise not a peep of protest when the doors close, effectively barring them from doing their jobs at a critical juncture. ... It’s time for a sit-down protest by journalists whose first job is to uphold the public’s right to know what its government is doing. Invite readers to come join them in demanding open meetings. The last thing Reid and Pelosi want is the spectacle of the Capitol Hill Police dragging protesting journalists away from the closed doors. It’s time to show some cojones, people.”

--The Washington Examiner

GOVERNMENT

“President Obama is a great admirer of the Mayo Clinic. Time and again he has extolled it as an outstanding model of health-care excellence and efficiency. ... They ‘offer the highest quality care at costs well below the national norm,’ he wrote. ‘We need to learn from their successes and replicate those best practices across our country.’ On the White House web site, you can find more than a dozen other instances of Obama’s esteem. So perhaps the president will give some thought to the Mayo Clinic’s recent decision to stop accepting Medicare payments at its primary care facility in Glendale, Ariz. More than 3,000 patients will have to start paying cash if they wish to continue being seen by doctors at the clinic; those unable or unwilling to do so must look for new physicians. For now, Mayo is limiting the change in policy to its Glendale facility. But it may be just a matter of time before it drops Medicare at its other facilities in Arizona, Florida, and Minnesota as well. Why would an institution renowned for providing health care of ‘the best quality and the lowest cost’ choose to sever its ties with the government’s flagship single-payer insurance program? Because the relationship is one it can’t afford. Last year, the Mayo Clinic lost \$840 million on its Medicare patients. At the Glendale clinic specifically, a spokesman told Bloomberg,

Medicare reimbursements covered only 50 percent of the cost of treating elderly primary-care patients. Not even the leanest, most efficient medical organization can keep doing business with a program that compels it to eat half its costs. In breaking away from Medicare, the Mayo Clinic is hardly blazing a trail. Back in 2008, the independent Medicare Payment Advisory Commission reported that 29 percent of Medicare beneficiaries -- more than 1 in 4 -- have trouble finding a primary-care doctor to treat them. A survey by the Texas Medical Association that year found that only 38 percent of that state's primary-care physicians were accepting new Medicare patients. But if you think things are bad now, just wait until Congress enacts the president's health care overhaul." --columnist Jeff Jacoby

FOR THE RECORD

"For those of you who may have been off the grid over the weekend the big news was an item in a new book by Mullpal Mark Halperin and John Heilemann titled 'Game Change' in which Majority Leader Harry Reid was quoted as using inappropriate language when describing then-Senator Barack Obama. According to the reporting: 'Reid said Obama could fare well nationally as an African-American candidate because he was "light-skinned" and didn't speak with a "Negro dialect unless he wanted to have one.'" Ok. The whole double standard thing was duly marinated over the weekend -- if this had been an Republican would Al Sharpton have given him/her a pass as he did to Reid? And so on. ... President Obama issued a statement forgiving Harry Reid before the ink had even dried on the pages of the book. Yet it took him three days to figure out what to say about the guy who tried to blow up that plane on Christmas Day. Second, according to the reporting, Reid made those statements to 'a group of reporters.' Whoa! Check, please! To a group of reporters? None of whom thought this was newsworthy? For whom did those reporters write, 'My Weekly Reader'? If not evidence of a double standard, then it is certainly evidence of journalistic incompetence." --political analyst Rich Galen

FAITH & FAMILY

"The secular left -- and some self-described Christians -- criticize Brit Hume, the Fox News commentator, for suggesting that the solution to Tiger Woods' problems is a relationship with Jesus Christ. Hume made his remarks on 'Fox News Sunday.' Disclosure: I also appear on Fox News. Hume said, 'My message to Tiger would be: Tiger, turn to the Christian faith and you can make a total

recovery and be a great example to the world.' That is a message shared for 2,000 years by those who follow Jesus of Nazareth. It apparently continues to escape the secular left that Christians feel compelled to share their faith out of gratitude for what Jesus has done for them (dying in their place on a cross and offering a new life to those who repent and receive Him as savior). In a day when some extremists employ violence to advance their religion, it is curious that many would save their criticism for a truly peace-bringing message such as the one broadcast by Brit Hume. Criticism of Hume has taken two forms. One is that it is hubris to presume the Christian faith is superior to other faiths. The other criticism is that Hume used Fox as a pulpit and if he wants to preach he should resign from the network and go door to door like a Jehovah's Witness. ... Christians like Hume are not trying to impose anything on anyone. They know the difference Jesus has made in their lives and they care enough about others to want to share His message in the hope that other lives will be similarly transformed." --columnist Cal Thomas

OPINION IN BRIEF

"If there is any lesson in the history of ideas, it is that good intentions tell you nothing about the actual consequences. But intellectuals who generate ideas do not have to pay the consequences. Academic intellectuals are shielded by the principles of academic freedom and journalists in democratic societies are shielded by the principle of freedom of the press. Seldom do those who produce or peddle dangerous, or even fatal, ideas have to pay a price, even in a loss of credibility. ... Even political leaders have been judged by how noble their ideas sounded, rather than by how disastrous their consequences were. ... It may seem strange that so many people of great intellect have said and done so many things whose consequences ranged from counterproductive to catastrophic. Yet it is not so surprising when we consider whether anybody has ever had the range of knowledge required to make the sweeping kinds of decisions that so many intellectuals are prone to make, especially when they pay no price for being wrong. Intellectuals and their followers have often been overly impressed by the fact that intellectuals tend, on average, to have more knowledge than other individuals in their society. What they have overlooked is that intellectuals have far less knowledge than the total knowledge possessed by the millions of other people whom they disdain and whose decisions they seek to override. We have had to learn the consequences of elite preemption the hard way -- and many of us have yet to learn that lesson." --economist Thomas Sowell

THE GIPPER

“Since when do we in America believe that our society is made up of two diametrically opposed classes -- one rich, one poor -- both in a permanent state of conflict and neither able to get ahead except at the expense of the other? Since when do we in America accept this alien and discredited theory of social and class warfare? Since when do we in America endorse the politics of envy and division?” --Ronald Reagan

POLITICAL FUTURES

“A Wall Street Journal/NBC poll taken in mid-December showed that 55 percent of Americans believed the country was headed in the wrong direction. Just 47 percent approved of the job Obama was doing as president. Twenty-two percent approved of the job Congress was doing. And a whopping 35 percent have positive feelings toward the Democratic Party. And yet the public seems to like Republicans even less. Just 28 percent have positive feelings toward the GOP -- a rating lower than poll results just before the party’s defeats in 2006 and 2008. You can’t make as many mistakes as Republicans did and expect to be forgiven quickly. That could lead to a dilemma for voters next November. Many will be fully ready to vote Democrats out of office but will not be fully ready to vote in Republicans. Faced with an either/or choice, they will weigh whether they want to get rid of Democrats more than they want to stay away from Republicans. That dilemma could have been avoided. A slightly less disastrous end to the Republican reign might well have resulted in one or two additional GOP senators this year. And that, in turn, might have prevented some of the runaway Democratic excesses we’ve seen. Republicans think about that a lot these days, as Democrats overreach in ways that could burden the country for generations. All GOP lawmakers can do now is to oppose. But in their heart of hearts, they know they share some of the blame.” --columnist Byron York

INSIGHT

“Well, there’s something known as American conservatism, though it does not even call itself that. It’s been calling itself ‘voting Republican’ or ‘not liking the New Deal.’ But it is a very American approach to life, and it has to do with knowing that the government is not your master, that America is good, that freedom is good and must be defended, and communism is very, very bad.” --National Review founder William F. Buckley Jr. (1925-2008)

READER COMMENTS

“Mark Alexander’s essay, ‘Great News for 2010,’ is the

best comparison I’ve ever read of the differences between liberals and conservatives. Thank you for defending our Constitution! I thank God for you and your staff and that we have defenders right here in my home town of Chattanooga. God Bless You and Yours!!” --Sherry

“Even though I may be homeless on the streets of San Diego by Summer, I just sent *The Patriot* \$100. That is an investment I wouldn’t make with any other publication but you are the best. As an ex-WWII Submariner, I recommend *The Patriot* to everyone I know. Cast off and take in all lines! Clear the Bridge, Take ‘er down. Fire one, Fire two, Fire three and reload! I’m fired up! Semper Fi.” --San Diego

“I have [supported *The Patriot Post* | <https://patriotpost.us/donate/>] financially for several years now and have been an outspoken supporter as well. You have filled a huge void that the media has left when they joined Obama and those who would destroy freedom. As a retired soldier and combat veteran, I thank you for your unsurpassed support for our troops. God Bless you and your staff and keep fighting.” --SSG (R) K. Potts

Editor’s Note: Not everyone loves us, however...

“why don’t you waste your time on something the people care about?leave the man alone. STOP!!!!!!!!BEING A HATER!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” --a.b.

THE LAST WORD

“2010 is going to be a tough year. We are going to have huge struggles over terrorism, war, shockingly large new deficits and public debt policies, crushing tax proposals on energy, income, health care and many other human activities. We have every right to dissent, and to do so vigorously even on such matters as terrorism policy. Contrary to White House and Democratic Party complaints in the last few days, there is nothing partisan or improper about sharply criticizing such administration policy. As a loyal conservative Republican, I nonetheless wrote an entire book in 2005 criticizing Bush’s anti-terrorism policy and operations. As did many other conservative Republicans dissent. At a much, much grander level, Winston Churchill in the 1930s powerfully dissented from a policy of appeasement that Britain’s leaders at the time were convinced were vital to secure the peace. Dissenting with honesty, ferocity and courage is one of Churchill’s lessons to us today. And, whether fighting as an underdog in a political struggle or trying to keep things together as a breadwinner in this second hard economic winter,

Churchill's last words in his last speech in Parliament as prime minister in 1955 are sturdy guides to conduct: 'Meanwhile, never flinch, never weary, never despair.'"
--columnist Tony Blankley

Veritas vos Liberabit -- Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus, et Fidelis! Mark Alexander, Publisher, for *The Patriot Post*'s editors and staff. Read online at <http://patriotpost.us>

(Please pray for our 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.)