



Romney's Remarkable Remarks

Despite the image of youth perpetuated by both his boyish optimism and his matinee-idol looks, Romney has been around the track a few times. Even when mounting the soapbox for another candidate, Romney inevitably talks about his own experience in both business and politics to show he knows the real world and how it relates to politics and how politics should relate to it. Yet both Romney and the Republican Party should be grateful that the limited coverage the three major broadcast networks now give the party conventions prevented his remarks in Saint Paul from going out live over the national airwaves.



For convention coverage, prime time began at 10 p.m. and ended at 11, just enough time for two moderately long speeches. Romney's was on in the 9 o'clock hour and was heard only by the political junkies who watch C-Span and other cable networks and those who were listening on National Public Radio. I doubt that the not-so-mighty "Mittster" is yet aware of cognitive dissonance between his spirited championing of the Grand Old Party and what the fictional Mr. Dooley used to call "the facts 'iv the matter."

Romney picked up on the Obama mantra of "change" and then asked his audience to consider what is the status quo and what kind of change the nation really needs. Mitt's message: It is the Democrats, led by pied piper Barack Obama and career Washington politician Joe Biden, not the Grand Old Party of John McCain and Sarah Palin, that is offering more of the same. They are offering the kind of liberal big government solutions from which the nation has long labored and suffered the wages of Washington's hubris. Liberalism is the libation of the working class and McCain and Palin have arrived to close the saloons and save the families.

Is it liberal or conservative, Romney asked, when government doubles its spending, as Washington has since 1980? Is it liberal or conservative when the Supreme Court grants new rights to suspected terrorists being held prisoner in Guantanamo Bay? There were several more rhetorical questions, all designed to elicit the response that the status quo — "the mess we is in" — is undeniably and insufferably liberal and the Republicans are the change agents.

Yet it is amazing, is it not, that it is the Republicans, who oppose big government, budget deficits and activist judges, that have been the party in control of the White House for the last eight years and of both houses of Congress for six of the last eight and 12 of the last 14 years? Did Romney say federal spending has doubled since 1980? Interesting. It so happens that 1980 was the last year of the Carter administration. The following year was the first of Reagan's eight in the White House and the beginning of what was supposed to have been the "Reagan Revolution." In the French Revolution, heads rolled. In the Reagan revolution, government spending rolled on. And on and on... It was the Reagan administration that told us to expect deficits in excess of \$200 billion in the "out" years for "as far as



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on September 10, 2008

the eye could see.”

The old myths die hard. As Reagan’s first term was nearing its end, former Vice President Walter “Fritz” Mondale was the frontrunner for the 1984 Democratic nomination for president. The “other Fritz,” South Carolina Senator Ernest Hollings was among his Democratic rivals. Hollings expressed the conventional wisdom that the Republicans were pikers compared to free-spending liberals like Mondale.

“If the deficits are \$200 billion under Reagan,” said Hollings, “what will they be under Mondale, \$400 billion?” Well...surprise! We have \$400 billion a year deficits even without “President” Mondale. Today, the world’s remaining super power, the “indispensable nation” is borrowing money from China to finance a needless and unprovoked war with Iraq. This under a “conservative” administration. The party that used to boast of keeping the country out of war is now all too eager to plunge us into more conflicts. Where have you gone, Bob Alphonso Taft?

The Supreme Court is liberal? Well, seven of the nine justices now sitting were nominated by Republican presidents. Jimmy Carter had no Supreme Court vacancies to fill, so between Lyndon Johnson’s choice of Thurgood Marshall in 1967 and Bill Clinton’s nomination of Ruth Bader Ginsburg in 1993, ten consecutive Supreme Court confirmations were the choices of Republican president. *Roe v. Wade* was a 7-2 ruling of a Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Warren Burger, a Nixon appointee. It was written by Harry Blackmun, a Nixon appointee. It was upheld in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992) by a court made up of 8 Republicans and 1 Democrat and the lone Democrat, Justice Byron “Whizzer” White, opposed the ruling of the majority, as he opposed the original *Wade* ruling.

Between Lyndon Johnson’s departure and Bill Clinton’s arrival at the White House, a Republican was president for 20 out of 24 years. Even counting the eight years of Clinton, Republicans have held the office for 28 of the last 40 years. Republicans held a majority of U.S. Senate seats for six of Reagan’s eight years and were the majority party in both houses for 12 consecutive years, from January 1995 until January, 2007. And yet they tell us we are still one Republican win away from restoring limited government, putting strict constructionist judges on the Supreme Court, reducing excess spending, etcetera, etcetera. What have they done with all the opportunities we have already given them? Why should we give them more opportunity to wallow at the trough of big government at home and endless warmaking abroad? Are we that stupid?

No, but we may be that desperate. We would be foolish to assume McCain’s nominees to the high court would be conservative jurists. They are as likely to resemble David Souter as Clarence Thomas. But we know the kind of judges and the kind of jurisprudence we will get from President Barack Obama. And with Democrats likely to hold onto and even increase their majorities in the House and Senate, it may be only prudent to put a Republican in the White House. McCain would likely wield his veto pen more often and more vigorously than Bush did. The problem is that some of the legislation that Bush should have vetoed was written by McCain.

But at least Sarah Palin will bring immediate improvement to the office of Vice President should the GOP ticket prevail. If John McCain turns out to be another Bob Dole, he will lose and this will all be academic. If he wins, he may turn out to be another Nixon.

Should we impeach him now and get it over with?



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