



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 25, 2010

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## Sarah Palin, Enigma

When Former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin announced her support for three prominent Republicans, her Facebook statement entitled “Ride the Tide with Commonsense Candidates” resounded with laudibles such as supporting those who offer “commonsense government,” and those “who promise to fight FOR the people and AGAINST politics as usual.” She referred to the Massachusetts election as “truly amazing,” and a “demonstration of the momentum we all share in the fight for the values and policies that will get our country back to work. The commonsense conservative principles of liberty and fiscal responsibility are on the rise...”



The candidates were happy to accept Palin’s endorsements and efforts to help in their campaigns. Representative Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.) was positively effulgent: “There is absolutely no one more in tune with the hearts and minds of everyday Americans than Governor Palin, and I’m excited to welcome her back to our beautiful state this spring.” Her [website](#) continued, “Both Governor Palin and Congresswoman Bachmann are well-known and respected conservative leaders whose bold and unwavering stances in defending the U.S. Constitution and commonsense approaches to issues like health care, taxes and government bailouts have attracted millions to their message.” Bachmann has a Freedom Index rating of 90 and is running for re-election in November.

Likewise, Texas Governor Rick Perry announced on his [website](#), “I look forward to standing with Sarah to promote our shared conservative values of limited government, low taxes and individual freedom. Gov. Palin is a true conservative leader whose priorities and message resonate with Texans, and I am honored to have her in Texas supporting my campaign.”

Perry’s rivals for the Republican primary are Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison and Debra Medina, a Ron Paul activist. Hutchison carries some considerable liberal baggage, including her support for the massive \$700 million Wall Street bailout, a middle-of-the-road Freedom Index rating, and a history of [waffling](#) on her commitment to the race.

Perry is hoping his campaign will benefit from Texas’ reputation as an economically successful, fiscally and socially conservative state. However, his record as a big-government “conservative” who believes that government programs can stimulate the economy is clearly shown by his failed “Texas Enterprise Fund.” In December, 2004, Perry [announced](#):

Today we are not only building upon the Enterprise Fund’s tremendous record of creating jobs, we are unveiling its crowning jewel. I am proud to announce that the state of Texas is investing \$20 million from the Texas Enterprise Fund to help Countrywide Financial bring 7,500 additional jobs to Texas over the next 6 years.



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Countrywide failed in 2008 and was purchased by the Bank of America as part of the federal bailout plan. Another \$15 million went to Washington Mutual which went bankrupt that same year. Neither brought the promised jobs to the state.

The platform of Perry's other opponent, Debra Medina, is based on the Constitution. "The U.S. Constitution not only protects citizen's freedoms in the Bill of Rights, it also divides power between the federal and state governments and ultimately reserves final authority for the people themselves. Texas must stop the over-reaching federal government and nullify mandates in agriculture, energy, education, healthcare, industry, and any other areas D.C. is not granted authority by the Constitution."

Perry has recognized the threat Medina represents and has made serious efforts to ingratiate himself with Tea Party activists. He has attended and spoken at a number of Texas Tea Party rallies, as well as indirectly supporting the possibility of seceding from the union:

We've got a great union. There's absolutely no reason to dissolve it. But if Washington continues to thumb their nose at the American people, you know, who knows what might come out of that. But Texas is a very unique place, and we're a pretty independent lot to boot.

A reasonable question thus arises: If Palin is a true blue Tea Partier and a true believer in the "fight for values and policies," why is she supporting Perry and not Medina?

Palin's announced support for Senator John McCain's re-election bid was even more problematic. McCain welcomed the support: "I'm looking forward to getting back on the campaign trail with my former running mate, and I know my fellow Arizonians will welcome her as well. Sarah energized our nation and remains a leading voice in the Republican Party." Palin concurred: "John McCain is on fire to kill Obama's government takeover of healthcare and that's what I want to see," others were far less enthusiastic about her endorsement. Steven Warshawsky's [comments](#) on McCain's real position on healthcare are instructive:

McCain's campaign website demonstrates that his thinking on this issue is much closer to Hillary Clinton than Adam Smith. For example, McCain states that "controlling costs" is his top priority and that "nothing short of a complete reform of the culture of our health system and the way we pay for it will suffice." This is a recipe for massive government interference in the health care industry. McCain also supports universal coverage, claiming that "we can and must provide access to health care for all our citizens."

Palin's supporters are having serious doubts now about her endorsement of McCain. Zbigniew Mazurak posted on The Reality Check website: "I was a fan of Palin myself. But I'm now convinced that she's not a conservative, nor is she a politician qualified for the Presidency of the United States. She's simply just another RINO endorsing another RINO. No real conservative would ever endorse McCain for the Senate."

On Palin's own website, other supporters expressed disappointment:

Mary Ann said: "I only voted for John McCain because he was the only choice. He did bring Sarah into National attention. You do not owe John McCain anything else. You will ruin your influence if you keep supporting McCain. McCain and all [the] others who have been in office so long need to retire."

Kristi said: "I agree. This is why you should not be going to support John McCain in his bid for another term in the Senate. I love John McCain for his service in the Viet Nam war BUT his too liberal views and



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voting record in the Senate should serve notice to conservative Americans who want to stop the socialist trend overtaking our country.”

Mark said: “Sarah, we love you dearly. But if J.D. Hayworth [a local conservative radio talk show host in Phoenix] jumps in and runs against John McCain in the Arizona primary, it’s a no brainer. We will NOT support John McCain against J.D.Hayworth.”

And Dan added: “It seems our search for a true conservative, small government leader continues. I really thought you could be the one until I read this today. McCain? Perry? Are you being blackmailed? I got on board the Tea Party express because I believed “WE” were about taking back an out of control federal government. That “WE” were much more than voting for the candidate with an “R” in front of their name because they were the lesser of two evils. I for one am very disappointed in your decision and looking back at the comments you’ve received here, it looks like I’m not alone. I still have hope that you are the leader we seek, but this decision will need an explanation first.”

Recent polls support McCain’s difficulty with conservatives in Arizona. Rasmussen Reports [said](#) back in September that “he’s always had a challenging relationship with the GOP’s base voters.” 61 percent of them say he is “out of touch” while only 33 percent believe he has done a good job representing GOP values. This is only slightly better than a [national poll](#) Rasmussen did in January which indicates 75 percent of GOP voters that their legislators are out of touch, and just 21 percent think their legislators have done a good job representing GOP values.

However, in [another poll](#) by Rasmussen, 59 percent of Republican voters say that Palin “shares the values of most GOP voters throughout the nation.”

Her book sales have helped her image. *Going Rogue* jumped onto the best-seller lists almost immediately, and has since sold millions of copies. Those who hoped that they would learn more about her future plans and her “values,” “policies,” and “commonsense conservative principles” were disappointed. As noted in a review [here](#), “If you are looking for a hint of confirmation of her future plans, you won’t find it. And if one would like some confirmation about her support of the Constitution, that also is missing.”

[In her book] she describes her days as a student athlete, making mention of “the liberating effect [of] Title IX on women’s sports.” It might have been refreshing if, at that juncture or later in the book, Governor Palin would have pointed out something that used to be a talking point for conservative Republicans: the role of the federal government in elementary- and secondary-school education. Simply put, there isn’t one, constitutionally speaking.

[T]he book is like a woman’s bikini. What it reveals is interesting; what it conceals is essential. The politically interested reader has to ask himself: Do I know any more about Sarah Palin’s political ambitions or core beliefs at the end of the book than I did at the beginning? Aside from a few vague hints of something deeper, the answer is “no.”

A little more about those ambitions and core beliefs was revealed in the diary of Palin’s ghost writer, [Lynn Vincent](#). When Palin and Vincent first met, it was in a conference room at the Hotel Del Coronado, already crowded with supporters. As Palin was leaving, someone yelled, “When are we going to get our country back?” “How ‘bout 2012?” she responded.

As the two were getting acquainted, Palin said she selected Vincent to help with her book because “I want someone who gets it. Who gets that abortion kills more people in this country than cancer, who gets that the Bible is history, that we didn’t just tumble out of the trees and starting walking upright. I



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wanted someone who gets that God isn't the spare tire. He's the steering wheel." Palin wanted someone to help her respond to "Those who speak so cruelly about me, about my motives — they don't have the first idea of who I really am."

At the end of the month-long interview for the book, Vincent relates this final comment from Palin:

You know what I dream sometimes? I dream that all of my children will someday be able to walk the streets of this land without fear in their hearts. In my America, *the one I hope to build*, [emphasis added] I honestly believe that could happen."

In August of 2009, a writer for [Vanity Fair](#) attended the Vanderburgh County Right to Life dinner in Evansville, Indiana where Palin was the guest speaker. The writer said that Palin "is at once the sexiest and the riskiest brand in the Republican Party. Her appeal is profound. When she chooses to reveal herself, what she reveals is not always the same as the truth."

For Palin, sometimes the truth is what is convenient or popular. Numerous times during her campaign she said: "I told Congress 'Thanks, but no thanks, on that Bridge to Nowhere.' If our state wanted to build a bridge, we were going to build it ourselves." In fact, according to one [investigator](#), "she was lobbying for federal funding for the bridge before she was against it and was against it only after it had become a political embarrassment."

The *Vanity Fair* article may have [summed it all up](#) in a single sentence. Who is Sarah Palin? "[She] is a cipher by choice."

*Photo: AP Images*



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