

**The  
BLACK  
C o m m e n t a t o r**  
Commentary, analysis and investigations  
on issues affecting African Americans  
[www.blackcommentator.com](http://www.blackcommentator.com)

**April 23, 2009 - Issue 321**

[Contents of Issue Menu](#)

[Click Here](#)

[Home](#)

**If You Liked Bush-Cheney,  
You'll Love the New GOP - and Newt, Too  
Solidarity America  
By John Funicello  
BlackCommentator.com Columnist**

Click on the back button of your browser to return to non printer friendly page of this article

[Click here](#) to get helpful hints for viewing and printing this printer friendly plain text page

They hardly know where to begin, the Republicans. There are so many things they are against, they could be on the talking heads TV shows on three shifts instead of just two.

But, if there's one thing that the GOP does best, it's fear-mongering. They started in on the new administration with the former vice president's televised warning that President Obama's actions on the world stage were paving the way for enemies of the U.S. to start another effort to harm us.

He acted like he had some inside information, although we'd have to put him back in power before he would share that information with other Americans. Of course, we know that it's not likely that he has any such information, but, as he and his man Dubya ran the country for eight years, he's still running through the streets of America, yelling "fire."

Since the Bush Administration has been out of office, Dick Cheney is just the first in a long line of Republicans who are out on the radio and television talk circuit carrying their buckets of fear and trying to upend the Obama Administration, no matter what it or he tries to do.

They don't like anything he does, so they are against everything he does. After a while, the president might want to consider taking it personally. They don't like his method of dealing with the financial meltdown, they don't like the rise in the stock market because it could show that the bail-outs and stimulus programs are working (although the

short-term rise in the market might not mean anything at all).

Republicans don't like the idea that an American president would conduct talks with the government of Iran, conduct any kind of diplomacy with the duly-elected president of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, or open up or end the embargo imposed on Cuba, a lid kept on that country by a parade of American presidents over the past half-century. More fear mongering.

If they're not careful, Republicans will soon resemble the Hole in the Wall Gang and it will be tough to get in or out of their clubhouse and few will make the effort. Perhaps, it's because the people don't like the fear mongering.

When a right-wing radio shock-jock said he wanted Obama to fail, there was a scramble by some Republicans to disassociate themselves from that kind of inflammatory rhetoric, but they seem to have recovered and now they're piling on.

The latest Obama "outrage" for the GOP was the big summit of leaders of Western Hemisphere nations, just ended. During one of the sessions, President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela arose, walked over to President Obama, put his hand out to shake the U.S. president's hand, and handed him a book.

Then - gotcha! The photo that sent America's right wing on a trip to the stratosphere was captured. Obama actually shook Chavez' hand. Now, to get the entire picture, one has to remember that Chavez was the one who, a day after George Bush addressed the United Nations, stepped up to the same podium and declared that he could still smell the sulfur of the U.S. president's presence there.

To say the least, Chavez' remark - along with lots of others he's made over the past decade about Bush, Cheney, and the rest, especially after the U.S.-supported coup attempt against Chavez - set off a renewed round of vituperation.

He was impolitic, but Chavez was, and is, far from a threat to the U.S. The other "left-leaning" heads of state in the hemisphere are far from threats to the U.S. Rather, Chavez' biggest offense is that he is a leader in a movement to free Central and South American peoples from the overpowering influence - viewed as control by some - by a series of U.S. governments over those countries, that goes back to the early days of the U.S. republic.

It appears that the most visible and vocal Republicans are concerned that there might be a lack of fear of America among other peoples of the world. They like the idea of being feared, and being able to justify that fear with the might of armies and weapons systems that no other country possesses.

Newt Gingrich said that the handshake shows America to be weak. He actually said that and he may believe it. Clearly, he would rather we had bombed Venezuela - or at least invaded them - in the Bush Administration, just to teach them a lesson.

A parade of Republicans have expressed their chagrin at other nations' loss of the fear of the "world's only superpower." They want that power expressed, as it was in the war of aggression in Iraq, and now Afghanistan and Pakistan. They want the power to be expressed in Iran (possibly through the U.S.'s main ally in the Middle East, Israel).

They want the power, preferably military, expressed anywhere in the world where a leader has had the cheek to talk back to an American president.

All the tough-guy talk from the latest batch of Republican spokespersons and their supporters and "leaders" among the broadcast bloviators is just a bit hard to take. As far as their taste for war-making, few of them have ever put on the uniform of their country, yet they like the idea of bringing the benefits of war to innocents abroad. Where and how did they get to be war-lovers? Surely, it's not because they have smelled war and surely not because they have lost half their families in a war of someone else's making.

Tough talk is for soft-bellied politicians and those with tanning-bed tans. They never have put themselves in harm's way and the overwhelming majority of them see to it that their children never are in harm's way.

Whether one agrees with Obama's policies or not, he campaigned on bringing some change in the way we do foreign policy: talk and negotiate first, rather than "shock and awe" destruction first, last, and always.

The American people seemed to approve that approach, since they voted overwhelmingly for a new way of dealing with other nations and other peoples. They voted for what Obama proposed and the Republicans lost.

The Republicans lost so badly and have been so disoriented since, that they appear to have a radio shock-jock as a leader. But they haven't lost their taste for macho that was personified in the presidency of George W. Bush and his sidekick, Dick Cheney, who preferred to shoot first. What they planned to do after the shooting was never made clear, and we're left with their mess.

Members of the GOP stumbled a bit, about whether to support Obama or not, then they reverted to type, seeing danger in every old lady's handbag or socks and under every bed in America, then warning everyone who will listen.

What's needed is a discussion of the issues, and there are plenty of them. But the GOP, through its concentration on generating fear instead, is making its hole-in-the-wall smaller and smaller, so that even their base, which seems less inclined to support the "leaders" wholeheartedly, might not even be able to find the entrance to their clubhouse.

[Click here to comment on any article  
in this issue or see what others are saying in the](#)

**The BlackCommentator Readers' Corner Blog**

**BlackCommentator.com** Columnist, John Funiciello, is a labor organizer and former union organizer. His union work started when he became a local president of The Newspaper Guild in the early 1970s. He was a reporter for 14 years for newspapers in New York State. In addition to labor work, he is organizing family farmers as they struggle to stay on the land under enormous pressure from factory food producers and land developers. Click [here](#) to contact Mr. Funiciello.

[Contents of Issue Menu](#)

[Click Here](#)

[Home](#)

[Click Here To](#)

[CONTRIBUTE TO !\[\]\(23d9fc146e83b5c3013cfa32c784f8d5\_img.jpg\) NOW](#)

[Click Here To](#)

[CONTACT !\[\]\(ec9132f1d27c8919987d92907322654d\_img.jpg\)](#)

Your comments are always welcome.

### **e-Mail re-print notice**

If you send us an e-Mail message we may publish all or part of it, unless you tell us it is not for publication. You may also request that we withhold your name.

Thank you very much for your readership.

Website Design and Hosting provided by



Copyright © 2002-2009  
www.BlackCommentator.com  
All Rights Reserved