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**Fake Mavericks Denigrate a Long Tradition of Community Organizing
Color of Law
By David A. Love, JD
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board**

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The Republican Party made it clear at their 2008 convention that they have no love for community organizers.

The overwhelmingly white crowd in Minnesota cheered at the speech made by Alaska Governor Sarah Palin - GOP vice presidential candidate and Trojan Moose - mocking Senator Barack Obama's community organizing experience. "I guess a small-town mayor is sort of like a 'community organizer,' except that you have actual responsibilities," Palin told the party faithful in Minneapolis-St. Paul. Although her remarks were directed toward Obama, it is clear that her ultimate target was community organizing itself. And the GOP is no friend of community organizing, particularly when community organizing helps the poor, the powerless, the disenfranchised, and, especially, people of color.

And while the GOP standard bearers - including Palin, the Manchurian candidate Senator McCain, 9-11 pimp Rudy Giuliani, former sleeping presidential candidate Fred Thompson, and empty suit Mitt Romney - have given little indication that they have worked an honest day in their life or improved the human condition, they would sit in judgment of those who have dedicated everything, and sometimes sacrificed their lives, in the name of social justice.

Now, I should say in the interests of full disclosure that my wife and I have a background as community organizers - she has worked in children's health, political and labor campaigns, while I have experience in racial justice, police brutality, voting rights and media justice. It is hard work, and perhaps the most fulfilling you will find.

You are helping real people solve real problems in their lives, and you see and feel the direct results of your actions.

Community organizing helped bring us an end to slavery, Jim Crow and apartheid, voting rights for women and African Americans, and humane working conditions. Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad were a perfect example of effective community organizing, as was Dr. King's Montgomery Bus Boycott, or Gandhi's ability to bring the British Empire to its knees through nonviolent civil disobedience. When you think about it, Moses and Jesus were community organizers as well.

Conservatives throughout the ages have done what they could to stop this brand of community organizing, for the sake of staying in power, getting paid, keeping others down, keeping the whole pie for themselves, whatever. And today's conservative crowd in early twenty-first century America, a frighteningly bankrupt coalition of entrenched interests, scam artists, profiteers and the Christian Taliban, is no exception. They thumb their noses at the New Deal reforms and the regulatory state, even though their own regime of deregulation and upward wealth transfer (also known as unbridled greed) has destroyed the American economy for the second time in eighty years. They spit at the civil rights legacy and programs of diversity, at a time when the ranks of the Brown, non-Christian, foreign language speaking and foreign born in the U.S. is increasing in dramatic fashion.

And most of all, they yearn for judges who are strict constructionists in interpreting the Constitution (translation: Black folks picking cotton, women in the home, LGBT people ostracized and invisible, etc.). They are more than aware of the transformative nature of community organizing, and they would erase all the positive effects that community organizing has had on public policy, legislation and court decisions.

These counterfeit mavericks, reformers and compassionate conservatives who claim to put country first, whatever that means, want to take us back to the days before the people woke up, and they are counting on you to go back to sleep.

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
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board member, David A. Love, JD, is a lawyer and journalist based in Philadelphia, and a contributor to the [Progressive Media Project](#), [McClatchy-Tribune News Service](#), [In These Times](#) and [Philadelphia Independent Media Center](#). He contributed to the book, [States of Confinement: Policing, Detention, and Prisons](#) (St. Martin's Press, 2000). Love is a former Amnesty International UK spokesperson, organized the first national police brutality conference as a staff member with the Center for Constitutional Rights, and served as a law clerk to two Black federal judges. His blog is [davidalove.com](#). Click [here](#) to contact Mr. Love.

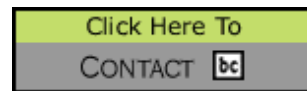
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