

Obama Efforts to Placate Right Wing Backfire

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What President Obama has gotten for his troubles “to placate the right wing” is “bailed out banks that wouldn’t lend, huge bonuses paid to Wall Streeters, tens, scores or more thousands of people losing their homes, an ever bigger, ever more disastrous war, and solid, rocklike Republican opposition on health care,” essayist Lawrence Velvel, dean of the Massachusetts School of Law at Andover, writes.

“It is possible that the brilliant fellow who is President cannot grasp that there are people in this world with whom one cannot ‘make nice’ because they will screw you ever time, so you are better off hammering them and pleasing those who are on your side and *will* assist you instead of fruitlessly trying to placate and/or obtain the help of those who will *never* help you?” Velvel asks.

“With regard to multi billion dollar bailouts of guilty banks, failure to assist innocent people who were bamboozled into subprime mortgages by Wall Street, increasing the size of the war in Afghanistan instead of withdrawing from that Godforsaken war, prosecution for torture, health care, and who knows how many other disasters, Obama has tried to make nice to the right wing in hopes that the right wingers will help him. No soap, Barack,” Velvel writes.

“Obama says in regard to torture that he wants to look forward, not look back,” Velvel continues. “He is a brilliant guy who, despite his brilliance, seems never to have learned the truth in Faulkner’s line that the past is not prologue; it is not even past.”

“When those who do evil get away with it because nobody wants to think about what was done, and people instead want to focus on ‘moving forward,’ the door is open, both ideologically and practically, for recurrence of the same evil in the future,” Velvel warns.

As examples from America’s past he points to the Civil War and the Philippines Insurrection: “Not for nothing was the desire to begin overlooking the Civil War followed, starting in 1876, by 90 years of Jim Crow—the very Jim Crow which made it a miracle that Obama could be elected as ‘early’ as 2008. Not for nothing was the Philippines Insurrection succeeded by the Viet Nam War, which was succeeded by Iraq II, which has now given way to Afghanistan. Not for nothing was the waterboarding of the Philippines Insurrection followed by the waterboarding of the so-called War on Terror. It has all happened before and history shows it will all happen again if we put it all aside in the name of moving forward.”

Velvel concludes, “One wonders whether Obama’s brilliance and articulateness have now played him false. That is, one wonders whether his immense intelligence and skill enabled him to succeed and succeed without ever having to realize and act upon the fact that there are some people who simply will never be placated, who will always be bitter enders in

opposition. One wonders whether it is possible that he has never before had to face this fact because, for his entire life, he was always able to persuade so many people by virtue of intelligence, grace and fluency, until he ran up against the hard case Republicans who seem to control that party in Congress and who seem intent on running this nation into the ground."

The Massachusetts School of Law at Andover is a 21-year-old law school whose pioneering mission is to inexpensively provide rigorous legal education, a pathway into the legal profession, and social mobility to members of the working class, minorities, people in midlife, and immigrants.

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Further information or to arrange for interviews with Dean Velvel, please contact Sherwood Ross, media consultant to Massachusetts School of Law at Andover, at sherwoodross10@gmail.com)

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