

# The tide of public opinion may be turning against President Obama

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The tide of public opinion may be turning against the President. Pollsters report growing skepticism about health care reform, and more active hostility on racial matters, thanks to that “uncalibrated” expression of opinion on the arrest of Professor Gates in his own home. That remark turned him, in the eyes of some, from a small b black President into a militant Black Panther, or at least someone who can be bashed as such.

These are the new controversial issues with no one right answer, and a noisy debate everywhere, but something else is also going on.

With Democrats fussing among themselves, with Obamacrats forced to rely on corporate media, the right-wing TV and radio stations close ranks behind the most self-righteously-correct ranters having a field day poking, prodding, pummeling, and peeing into cups of their own resentment, hate and venom.

There is no smear that is beneath them, no inference or insult out of bounds. Lou Dobbs blesses the birthers while that Elmer Gantry of demagoguery, Glenn Beck, meditates on his mountain and pronounces Obama a racist. An Israeli settler refers to our President as “that Arab,” and worse.

These are the nattering nabobs of negativity of our times, to resurrect an old canard once aimed at the left. The Yes We Can advocates seem to be taking refuge in the No We Won’t center. The next thing you know, the removal of a democratically elected President that worked in Honduras might be attempted here at home.

Some of us are still singing “We Shall Overcome” when our adversaries are chanting “We Shall Overthrow.”

If Barack’s legitimacy as a citizen won’t bring him down, his actions—moderate if not reactionary as they are— unites the crazies against him and drives them even more beserk. The contentious Congressman who vowed to “break him,” should be taken seriously

This relentless riposte is having an effect on a demoralized and economically challenged population that is not well informed in the first place—except perhaps about Michael Jackson’s dubious doctor who may have done the dirty deed. Sensing possible victory—whatever that means— the Angeroid microfactions that lost the election are now seeking to polarize the public to topple the Administration with an electronic coup d’media. It is all that serious.

Only Jon Stewart seems to be calling them on their game, while at the same time despairing

about the obvious missteps and mistakes that the White House is making. They may be a garden outside the Oval Office but there is a minefield inside it.

At the same time, another enemy is mounting a counterattack, perhaps in a more stealth manner, not by what it says, but by what it does. The banks are deploying regiments of lobbyists and PR firms to defeat proposed new financial rules and an agency to protect consumers. They are escalating the gouging of the public.

Emboldened by billions in bailout monies, and funds from the Treasury and Federal Reserve, the Banksters are in full loot mode. New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo reports that extravagant bonuses at some banks now outstrip revenues. The financial elite takes our money—and tells us to shove it.

As a new wave of foreclosures threatens, the banks are not willing to modify most mortgages—even those sold fraudulently, because they make more money forcing families out and reselling their homes.

The pace of regulatory reform, meanwhile is a slow-go, with few calls for more radical measures like a moratorium on foreclosures of the kind declared by FDR during the last Depression.

Are you aware that outside of the government, a not for profit called NACA (The Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America) is touring the country mobilizing homeowners to demand financial relief. I was at their original “Save The Dream” event in Washington last summer where members of Congress and officials like FDIC chairman Sheila Bair pledged support, but little happened.

Government help has only reached 200,000 of the more than 12 million families in need. If you are not familiar with this issue or the role of devious mortgage servicers like Litton, owned by Goldman Sachs, see these YouTube videos on the PACFILM Channel:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVyahxDc5OU>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mov0AVLsvQg>

According to FEED News, NACA is doing better—even though they are not getting the national publicity they deserve, perhaps because media outlets don’t want to send the few staffers they have to the heartland,

“About 50,000 people attended the second Save the Dream event in Chicago. This is a dramatic increase over the 25,000 people who attended NACA’s first two Save the Dream events last year in Columbia, SC, and Washington, DC.

“One of the reasons why turnout has increased this year is NACA’s use of optimized press releases, blog outreach, and YouTube videos to let people know that the national non-profit community advocacy and homeownership organization offers unprecedented solutions for homeowners caught up in the current mortgage and economic crisis. During the Save the Dream events, borrowers can get mortgages restructured the same day.”

If the Obama Administration is to survive an ongoing assault still building steam, it needs a grass roots action-oriented army like the one NACA is building. They can’t just rely on the

Netroots activists who prefer emails to organizing. They can't rely on that co-opted in-house DNC arm, Organizing for America either. That is there only to rally support for the White House.

A new movement has to develop outside the Democratic party in the same way that the right acts outside the GOP, and has built a capacity for independent action with echo chambers, message points and personalities. Their ideas may be backward but their dedication can't be denied.

We can defend Obama's ideals, and also press for more action. As Jeff Cohen reminds us, we have a "president whose instinct is toward conciliation and splitting the difference with big business and the right wing. Sure, Obama was a community organizer once. That was decades ago when Russia was still our mortal enemy, Nelson Mandela was still an official State Department terrorist threat and the White House was still funding Islamist fanatics in Afghanistan. For the last dozen years Obama has been a politician — and a consummate compromiser at that. Have we failed to notice?"

Can progressives fight a three front war—against the vicious right, against the slippery center, and for a more comprehensive and empowering agenda? Can they finally realize that all politics does not occur in DC, and that being tethered to the denizens on the Hill can be a liability at a time when most political chameleons enjoy so little respect.

Will they ever realize that they have to get into the economic trenches and fight the power of the banks with groups like A New Way Forward? Why is economic justice a priority for so few activists when these issues impact millions?

Knock, Knock, anyone there?

*News Dissector Danny Schechter blogs for Mediachannel.org. His new film and book on the financial crisis, THE CRIME OF OUR TIME, will be out soon. (NewsDissector.com/plunder) Comments to Dissector@mediachannel.org*

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