

Far Right Leaders Vow to ‘Take Back America’ from ‘Evil’ Obama and Democrats Starting with Congress in 2010

Presidential candidate Huckabee and several Members of Congress embrace activists who characterize Obama as tyrannical fascist

The How To Take Back America conference held in St. Louis September 25 and 26 drew some 600 activists and, according to organizers, 100,000 online viewers. The gathering was an expanded version of the annual conference held by Phyllis Schlafly’s Eagle Forum, co-hosted this year by radio personality and far-right activist [Janet Folger Porter](#) and promoted by other right-wing bloggers and radio shows.

Conference leaders and participants were both fearful and optimistic: fearful that if the Obama administration gets its way, freedom in America will give way to servitude to a tyrannical socialist government; and optimistic that Americans are angry enough to resist that tyranny and will sweep Democrats out of power in House elections in 2010.

Joining conference participants and echoing the themes were presidential candidate Mike Huckabee and several Republican Members of Congress, including Michele Bachmann (MN), Trent Franks (AZ), Steve King (IA), and Tom McClintock (CA).

Among the themes of the conference:

- a continued merging of messaging and organizing among the Religious Right and “teabagger” right
- the fervent belief that America is at a tipping point between freedom and fascist power: President Obama and his congressional allies are on the verge of delivering America into Socialism, Communism, and/or Nazi-style tyranny, and that government is therefore to be feared and resisted
- optimism that the tea bag movement and anti-health-reform town halls are a sign that Americans are prepared to resist that tyranny
- extreme opposition to Democratic health care reform efforts, with some support for the congressional Republican alternative and some

demands for a no-compromise approach that would involve ending all government involvement in health care, including Medicare

- recent attacks on ACORN are just part of a larger effort to target progressive community organizing groups and their religious supporters and “defund the left”
- hostility not only to same-sex marriage but also to any legal protections for LGBT Americans and same-sex couples
- a new push to use “abortion as black genocide” as a wedge between African Americans and pro-choice progressives built around a new “documentary” portraying abortion as 21st century genocide
- American exceptionalism the belief that America’s founding was divinely inspired and the nation has been uniquely blessed by God is alive and well, though America is now living under a curse for having elected Barack Obama
- activists don’t need a majority to take back America; if their minority or “remnant” is committed enough God will use them
- the apparent passing (or grabbing) of the torch from Phyllis Schlafly to Janet Folger Porter

The most widely read book among these activists may not be Mark Levin’s *Liberty and Tyranny* or Glenn Beck’s *Common Sense* but Saul Alinsky’s *Rules for Radicals*, which was invoked repeatedly by speakers and participants.

A Coalescing Of Right-Wing Themes

The wide range of issues covered by workshops indicated the ongoing merging of Religious Right and far-right anti-government rhetoric that has been a hallmark of anti-Obama organizing. In this, you could say that [Phyllis Schlafly](#) has been ahead of her time: for decades she has

combined Religious Right opposition to abortion, feminism, reproductive choice, and gay rights with concerns about a far-ranging list of threats to the American way of life, including federal judges, international treaties, the United Nations, and supposed secret plans to merge the U.S. with Mexico and Canada in a North American Union.

Former and probably future presidential candidate Mike Huckabee won a cheering standing ovation from this crowd when he adopted its anti-UN stance, demanding that the organization leave the U.S. and not get one more dime in American funding. Huckabee complained about giving a platform to “murderous thugs” and said, “Enough! It’s time to get a jackhammer and to simply chip that part of New York City and let it float into the East River never to be seen again.” Huckabee managed to combine a couple of the far right’s favorite targets by declaring that the UN “has become the international equivalent of ACORN and it’s time to say enough.” (This from the man who said minutes earlier that the conservative movement was at its best when it was built on a strong intellectual grounding.)

Ferocious hostility toward the Obama administration is a unifying force in bringing together social and religious conservatives, a trend also evident at the Values Voter Summit in Washington, D.C. the week before. At How To Take Back America, for example, a session on health care reform focused less on the threat of publicly funded abortion and more on the “fascist” government “takeover” of the economy as a “power grab” by the president. The proposed “cap and trade” energy legislation was described as an effort to tax and control every American’s energy usage.

President Obama: ‘He’s Just Evil.’

The depth of hostility toward President Obama -- described by a representative of the American Family Association as “a scary, scary individual” -- cannot be overstated. Rep. Trent Franks called Obama “an enemy of humanity” who “has no place in any station of government.” Another speaker, anti-gay activist Matt Barber, strung together as many insults as he could in describing the president as “a secular humanist, a radical socialist moral relativist.”

Obama’s push for health care reform is not about health care, said Rep. Tom Price, it’s about power. A representative from Oregon Right to Life said “it’s not about health care, it’s about subjugation and control...He is a statist. He believes in control by government and its dear leaders, fascism by any other name.” During a session on how feminism is destroying society, a questioner asked if President Obama’s push for women to go back to college

was a precursor to women being forced into hard labor like they were in Russia.

In fact many speakers and participants suggested parallels between the Obama administration’s actions and the rise to power of the Nazis. (One favored technique is to list a set of policy actions that sound like Democratic proposals and then spring the surprise that they were all actions taken by Hitler.)

Similar hostility was directed toward Democratic congressional leaders. Speaker after speaker accused the president and his allies of pursuing a Marxist agenda, and one dubbed Obama, Nancy Pelosi, and Harry Reid the “new axis of evil.”

Several people suggested that armed resistance to tyrannical government may be needed. A speaker who drew parallels between America today and her experiences growing up under Nazis and Communists urged activists to buy more guns and ammunition; someone suggested that “the Second Amendment” would be the answer to threats by state governments to impose forced vaccination and quarantines during a flu pandemic.

Stopping Health Care Reform

Blocking Democratic health care reform proposals (Rep. Price called House Democrats’ HR 3200 a “monstrosity”) was among the hottest topics at the conference. As noted above, rhetoric focused on the issue less as a policy disagreement and more as a last-ditch battle against a power-hungry president to preserve freedom in America. One speaker said dramatically that if this “diabolical change” were not defeated, government of the people, by the people, and for the people would perish from the face of the earth.

Among the most extreme anti-Obama and anti-government speakers were three doctors who led a workshop session on “[How to Stop Socialism in Health Care](#),” which moderator Andy Schlafly called “the most important issue we’re facing.”

Lawrence Huntoon, representing the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (which bills itself as a conservative alternative to the AMA), argued that any governmental “interference” in the practice of health care is unconstitutional, and that the Obama administration is really only interested in power. “Just like the fraud and deception of socialism itself,” he said, proposals for reform have more to do with government gaining control over the lives of individuals than of health care.

The second speaker, Dr. Frank Rosenbloom of Oregon Right to Life, lashed out at President Obama's policies and at suggestions that opposition to his administration reflected racism. Obama, he said, is a supporter of Planned Parenthood and therefore responsible for genocide against black children. "Liberals are the true racists in this society," he proclaimed. But he was just warming up. Rosenbloom compared Obama to Adolf Hitler, saying "fascism is happening here and now." Recalling President Obama's statement that if his daughter mistakenly became pregnant, he would not want her to be punished with a baby, Rosenbloom said that is the sort of "moral sewage that is running our country."

Rosenbloom, who said Obama is "not stupid," but "just evil," rejected Rep. Price's plug for HR 3400, a Republican alternative bill, demanding that government get out of health care completely. He called for an end to Medicare and Medicaid, saying that people could be provided for through tax subsidies for buying insurance.

A third speaker, Dr. Allen Unruh, said "we either live in freedom or in servitude, there is no middle ground." Unruh said Obama health care plans would result in dismantling the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 9th, 10th, and 13th amendments and said it would turn all doctors into "slaves of the state" and result in "slavery reenacted by our first black president."

Abortion: No Compromise, New Wedges

While anti-Obama and anti-government fervor felt like the energizing force of the conference, the intensity of opposition to legalized abortion was also undiminished.

Arizona Rep. Trent Franks, citing Obama's pro-choice policies, called him an "[enemy of humanity](#)."

"Obama's first act as president of any consequence, in the middle of a financial meltdown, was to send taxpayers' money overseas to pay for the killing of unborn children in other countries...there's almost nothing that you should be surprised at after that...we shouldn't be shocked that he does all these other insane things....A president that has lost his way that badly, that has no ability to see the image of God in these little fellow human beings, if he can't do that right, then he has no place in any station of government and we need to realize that he is an enemy of humanity."

Huckabee also called for "no compromise" on the issue:

That's why the position that I believe that we must uncompromisingly hold toward the sanctity of human life is an absolute and cannot be negotiated and cannot

be given away. And I will never support anyone for public office who does not believe that we should protect every single human life. It's better to lose elections than to lose our culture and to lose civilization.

Huckabee added that he didn't believe an uncompromising anti-choice stance would lead to lost elections, saying he was encouraged that younger women are more anti-choice than their mothers and grandmothers.

Anti-choice activists are mounting a renewed effort to use abortion as a wedge issue, portraying legalized abortion as "black genocide" and promoting *Maafa 21*, a new "documentary" meant to help stir anti-abortion sentiment in African American churches. Janet Porter told of attending a showing of the movie in Arizona, after which a speaker urged people to confess if they had voted for pro-choice candidates like President Obama. An African American woman, Porter says, rose and prayed, "Forgive me Lord, for putting race over you."

Along the same lines, Rep. Franks touted his "Susan B. Anthony Frederick Douglass Pre-Natal Non-Discrimination Act," which would ban abortions carried out on the basis of race or sex. He bragged that the bill would put members of the Congressional Black Caucus and other liberals in a box, because they don't want to support discrimination, but that if they do vote for the bill, they will be acknowledging that "there's a person involved."

Freedom With An Asterisk

An overriding theme of conference speakers was that the nation is poised on losing its freedom. Rep. Tom Price said that in Washington "we see a crowd in charge that is not too fond of freedom."

Of course, freedom to these conference-goers does not extend to LGBT Americans who want to live their lives free from discrimination or serve the nation in the armed forces. Several [workshops](#) focused on the dire threat to children and communities posed by the prospect (and reality) of gay couples getting married. And for this crowd, stopping marriage equality is not enough: they are out to prevent civil unions and domestic partnerships as well. They believe the Employment Anti-Discrimination Act is a grave threat to religious liberty. They believe that allowing gays to serve openly in the military would threaten national security. And please don't get them started on transgender people.

Gay rights advocates, like Obama, were described by Liberty Counsel's Matt Barber as bullies who get their way with propaganda and "goose-stepping" intimidation

of those who oppose equality.

Attacking Progressives

Conference participants were downright gleeful about the troubles facing ACORN, which they claim has been routinely engaged in voter fraud. They were warned, however, that congressional action to deny funding to ACORN is only a first step in attacking funding for organizations affiliated with ACORN and more broadly, groups doing community organizing in poor communities like the Industrial Areas Foundation.

A group of participants from Wisconsin, for example, distributed materials attacking the state's Catholic bishops for supporting social justice-oriented religious coalitions like Common Ground, which they argue has a "Radical Left Agenda" -- which in their mind includes things like government support for day care.

In her address, Rep. Michele Bachman said liberalism is repulsive to the American people and called for a renewed effort to "defund the left," something she criticized Republicans for failing to do when they were in power. "Defunding the left is going to be so easy and it's going to solve so many of our problems," she said.

Franks touted his "pre-natal discrimination" bill as a way to "completely defund Planned Parenthood," which is high on the Right's agenda.

Taking Back Congress In 2010

Many speakers shared Phyllis Schlafly's optimism that the anti-Obama, anti-government anger evident in the health care town halls, the tea bag parties, and the conference itself is spreading like wildfire and will make it possible for the Republicans to reclaim the House of Representatives in 2010 and bring a screeching halt to the Obama administration's plans to drive America into socialist subservience.

Porter announced plans for a rally at the Lincoln Memorial on May 1, 2010, and she's already got several members of Congress, including Reps. Franks and King signed up. Porter claimed that the event was not about impressing the media or Washington elite, but about touching the heart of God with a show of national repentance for having elected such wicked leaders. She said attendees would be able to give God a sign of their readiness to turn from their wicked ways by putting money into barrels that would be given to the opponents of targeted Democratic congressional leaders.

Passing The Torch

The entire conference had the feel of a generational passing of the leadership torch from Phyllis Schlafly to Janet Folger Porter. Photographic tributes to Schlafly's life were capped with a long "surprise" recounting of her career by Porter during the final evening program. Porter presented Schlafly with the "American Hero of the Century" Award. For her part, Schlafly praised Porter repeatedly throughout the weekend, saying, "there aren't extravagances enough to praise Janet for the role she's played in taking back America and rebuilding the conservative movement."

Although they don't agree about everything (Porter argued that Mike Huckabee was God's chosen candidate in 2008, while Schlafly disparaged his conservative credentials), Porter is in many ways a perfect successor to Schlafly. She shares many of her characteristics, including a no-compromise approach to politics, a strategy of promoting the most extreme and fantastical claims about opponents' aims and goals, seemingly limitless energy for the fight, and a talent for self-promotion.

Porter has a [documented record](#) of promoting even the wildest right-wing conspiracy theories, including "birtherism" and claims that the Obama administration is planning to round up conservatives into internment camps and exterminate millions of Americans through a flu vaccine plot. None of that apparently can diminish her shine in the eyes of the public officials hoping to gain or keep her favor. Both Rep. Franks and Mike Huckabee credited Porter for getting them to the conference. Huckabee went a little further, saying there are two Janets he answers to, his wife and Porter. Porter co-chaired the Faith and Values committee of Huckabee's presidential campaign. So if Porter does indeed become the new leader of Schlafly's loyal followers, that's good news for Huckabee's future political ambitions.