
From: Huma Abedin

RELEASE IN PART B6

Sent: 12/5/2009 12:53:29 PM +00:00

To: H <HDR22@clintonemail.com>

Subject: Re: Hi Hillary - my Thursday column for The Hill-- Purple Nation: Criticized From the Left and Right, Obama Must Be Doing Something Right By Lanny J. Davis

Ok

----- Original Message -----

From: H

To: Huma Abedin

Sent: Sat Dec 05 07:27:53 2009

Subject: Fw: Hi Hillary - my Thursday column for The Hill-- Purple Nation: Criticized From the Left and Right, Obama Must Be Doing Something Right By Lanny J. Davis

Pls print.

----- Original Message -----

From: Davis, Lanny J.

B6

To: H

Sent: Fri Dec 04 09:32:23 2009

Subject: Hi Hillary - my Thursday column for The Hill-- Purple Nation: Criticized From the Left and Right, Obama Must Be Doing Something Right By Lanny J. Davis

Hi H--

Know you are in Europe doing Great Work, as usual.

I stopped my column for Wash Times after my friend Exec Editor John Solomon resigned on principle. But still writing each Thurs for The Hill - and am using my favorite theme, "Purple Nation."

See below.

Saw Pres Clinton in NH Wed night - my soulmate Chris Spirou, who predicted your win in NH primary, invited me up as guest. Pres Clinton was truly great - still the second best public speaker and politically gifted person I have ever known. (You remain my #1!)

Congratulations on Chelsea. Pres Clinton actually said he looked forward to be a grand-father!!!!

Be well, sleep when you can, and you continue to amaze me and everyone else with the job you are doing (and with highest job approval rating of anyone in office on Washington and maybe in the world! Funny how life is a full circle and there is justice somewhere sometimes....)

My best wishes to you, the President, Chelsea and your future son-in-law for happy and health holidays (those two worlds being the ONLY one that truly matter).

Lanny

(My column is below in case you want to read it)

Lanny

----- Original Message -----

From: Davis, Lanny J.

To: Davis, Lanny J.

Sent: Fri Dec 04 08:19:37 2009

Subject: Purple Nation: Criticized From the Left and Right, Obama Must Be Doing Something Right By Lanny J. Davis

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Purple Nation

Criticized From the Left and Right, Obama Must Be Doing Something Right

By Lanny J. Davis

<http://mobile.thehill.com/opinion/columnists/lanny-davis/>

The Obama White House must consider last week to have been a pretty good one. When the president is attacked personally in the same week both from the right by former Reagan speechwriter and Wall Street Journal columnist, Peggy Noonan, and from the left, by New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd, he must figure he's in the right place politically and substantively.

Late last week, Ms. Noonan made a rather personal attack on Mr. Obama for what she described as his "iconic" bow to the Emperor of Japan. This, she concluded, emblemized Mr. Obama's weakness as president. Then came the witty and acerbic Ms. Dowd a day or so later, noting that "President Obama can often be more interested in wooing opponents than tending to those who put themselves on the line for him."

Meanwhile, here are the facts and results in the reality-land called the White House:

*Mr. Obama returned from his trip to Asia after obtaining some concessions from the Chinese on global warming for the first time ever; and then China also indicated it would join Russia, for the first time ever, to support increased pressures on Iran to cease its development of a nuclear bomb. Funny how that respectful bow to an emperor seemed more important to some conservative Republican critics of Mr. Obama than these concrete, albeit preliminary, results of his trip to the Far East.

*Then on Tuesday night, after many weeks of deliberations, President Obama made the tough decision on Afghanistan to send 30,000 additional U.S. GIs (plus, he hopes, additional troops from NATO countries). But he made that decision not, as Ms. Dowd might suggest, in order to "woo opponents," but rather, based on a careful assessment of facts, a variety of opinions -- elected officials from both sides of the aisle, experts, civilian and military -- and then he exercised his best judgment. The mission, which he clearly spelled out in his sober speech Tuesday night, is to prevent Afghanistan from reverting to a rogue, Taliban-controlled state -- one that provides safe harbor to Al Qaeda, and thus, increases the risks of a terrorist attack on the U.S. Most of Mr. Obama's, traditional anti-war Democratic Party base are probably unhappy with his speech and his decision.

*Yet this is the same Barack Obama who banned torture and closed Gitmo, pleasing the left; but refused to prosecute Bush Administration officials for war crimes or even to support a Truth Commission, offending the left. This is the same Obama who has led this nation closer than has ever been in its history to a national health insurance system, pleasing the left; while indicating he is willing to give up a government -- run "public option" if that's what it takes to pass the bill, and thus, offending the left.

So which is it? The weak Obama who bows to an emperor? Or the Obama who is willing to use increased military strength to protect the U.S. from another 9/11?

Is it Obama the liberal, who believes in the FDR-embedded principal of government as a friend, not an enemy, and national health insurance as a follow-on to Social Security and Medicare? Or Obama the centrist, who fundamentally believes in the bedrock role of the private sector in a free market economy -- i.e., who is ready to pass a national health insurance plan that almost entirely relies on the private insurance industry (even if a public option were included)?

To me, the answer is as obvious as it is displeasing to the both the hard left and hard right: Barack Obama was during his campaign, and remains to this day, a pragmatic man of the center-left.

I wasn't an Obama supporter during the primaries – and I don't always agree with him on every issue. For example, my gut favors getting out of Afghanistan entirely, based on past history and too many memories of Vietnam. But I am impressed with this president's careful and thoughtful decision-making; so I am going to trust him and support his decision on Afghanistan and hope and pray he has made the right decision.

Now comes the next battle. Purist liberals will again be angry when the president supports a health care bill without the public option, as he must, since it will be the only way national health insurance can get enacted into law this year. But as I've written before: I'll bet not one of those brave liberals who insist it is better to do without any bill than one without a public option have been forced to take a sick child to a public hospital emergency room because they couldn't afford health insurance; or have risked bankruptcy – or even death – for the same reason.

Such purist liberals who see the good as the enemy of the perfect may not be salvageable. But I only hope that thoughtful and fair-minded conservative Republicans in the congress will give President Obama a chance to work with them and pragmatic progressive Democrats to create the bi-partisan consensus that he and most Americans – left, right and center – truly want in the months and years ahead.

#

Mr. Davis, a Washington D.C. attorney, served as Special Counsel to President Clinton from 1996-98 and as a member of President Bush's Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board from 2005-06. He is the author of the 2006 book, "Scandal: How 'Gotcha' Politics Is Destroying America."

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