

Monday, October 5, 2009

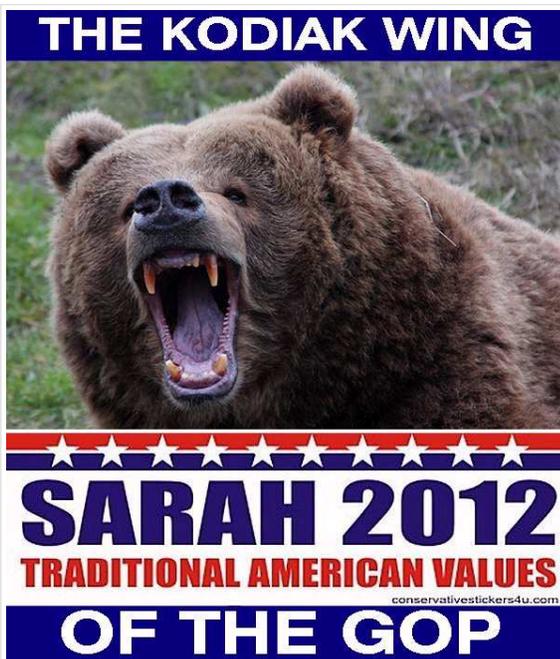
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Sarah Palin as a GOP Nominee?

Posted by [ZbigniewMazurak](#) On October - 4 - 2009



Palin's Hong Kong speech prompted yet another round of speculations that the erstwhile Governor will run for the Presidency in 2012. Many people, including James Lewis and the eldest son of Ronald Reagan, compared her to the 40th President, with Lewis (and most AT commenters) proclaiming her the best candidate for the 2012 Republican nomination.

To be sure, there are many reasons to like and admire Sarah Palin. She was the best governor Alaska has had, was unafraid to fight for ethical standards even against her party colleagues, and, last year, she saved McCain from an utter humiliation. Palin is strong on defense and unafraid to criticize Robert Gates, a man wrongly admired by the Heritage Foundation and many Republicans. She professes conservative beliefs on many issues, and we didn't hear her diss Reagan in 1994, then claim Reagan's mantle in the Reagan Presidential Library in 2008, as one presidential candidate did. She has always been a conservative – not only when conservatism was fashionable.

Palin's conservative credentials are

proven and impressive.

But is she a presidential figure already? As of now, I am not convinced that she is.

The swarms of people who endorsed her as the next Reaganite did so because they're disillusioned with, and disappointed by, the GOP's past presidential candidates and its current leaders (the RNC and Senate leaders). So am I, but these people seem to desire a „perfect“ conservative candidate“ (and claim that Palin is one), and thus reject Romney, Huckabee, Gingrich, Giuliani and Pawlenty.

Although presidential candidates must be held to rigorous conservative standards, Republicans ought to recognize that they'll never get a *perfect* conservative candidate. Even Eisenhower, Reagan, Teddy Roosevelt and Rick Perry do not have 100% conservative records. That's because, as CATO Institute said, „foreign policy, like domestic policy, is the art of the possible“. Policymaking is about pragmatism and practically achievable goals. Every Republican implemented at least a few liberal policies. For example, Teddy Roosevelt endorsed the progressive income tax and Reagan endorsed nuclear disarmament. Also, Reagan failed to abolish the Education Department (though he tried to), decentralize the country, abolish many wasteful civilian programs or make progress on school prayer, affirmative action abolition and similar issues. Yet Reagan was unquestionably a good president.

A good President drafts his list of goals, chooses the priorities, defends them uncompromisingly, and makes compromises (when possible) on the less-important issues.

If Palin is elected, she, too, will be forced to pick priorities and make compromises on the lesser issues. Yet, she hasn't told anyone what, according to her, are the most important affairs of the country, what policies would she implement to manage them, and what compromises would she make on the non-priority issues. And her opinions on many issues (e.g nuclear weapons, the Fair Tax and the Department of Transportation) are still unknown.

Equally worrying is her lack of what Bush the Elder called “the vision thing” – a new direction for America. If she becomes the captain of the American ship – now heading towards the iceberg – she'll have to set a new direction. She'll actually be morally obliged to choose it before the primary season. Yet, she hasn't done that. She hasn't yet declared what exact kind of America does she want.

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continue on its present course; they don't want it to continue towards its present direction. Yet Palin hasn't chosen a new one (and neither have Gingrich, Jindal, Pawlenty, Barbour nor Giuliani). Even her HK speech was rather a credential-builder rather than a "Shining City on the Hill" speech setting a new direction for America. If Reagan hadn't told the American people what America he wanted as early as 1964, he would've never on the Presidency.

One can criticize Huckabee and Romney all day (and there are some reasons to do so), but at least they've said what country do they want. Huckabee wants an America based on 3 nonnegotiable values: Faith, Family, Freedom. Romney wants to rebuild America as a superpower, one based on three pillars: a strong military, a strong economy, and a nation of strong families.

To be sure, Palin professes conservative beliefs on many issues, but a set of such beliefs on a number of selected issues is not the same as a new direction for America. Palin must propose a new direction – or should not run for the Presidency.

Of course, this doesn't mean that Palin should be already ruled out as a political candidate or that she cannot win a presidential election. Nor should it be misconstrued that I'm an opponent of Palin – I'm not. But – at least to my rigorous standards – Palin still has much homework to do before she can run for the White House. And so do many other Republicans.

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Guest Columnist

3 Responses



ClaireVoyant1 Said,

Palin has 55% negatives. She is a more polarizing figure than Hillary Clinton. She CANNOT win the general election. Unfortunately, her fans are oblivious to this or simply are in denial. Therefore, she could possibly win the nomination even though she has NO WAY of winning the general election. A Palin nomination gives us 4 more years of Obama. Is that what they want? Let's hope Palin has better judgment than her fans!

Sarah has a valuable role to play in the party, but running for president in 2012 is not one of them.

Our job is to pick the most conservative candidate who has the best shot at winning the general election. In my opinion, that candidate is Mitt Romney. He is the antidote to Obama's naivete and inexperience. Mitt is all about experience and competence. He is what the country will be searching for after Obamanation.

Posted on October 4th, 2009 at 1:18 pm



greg Said,

Palin will win the nomination, and the general election. After 4 years of Obama, the country will be more than ready to elect a "common sense" conservative. Going into the primary season, Palin may very well be unstoppable. She'll have one, possibly 2, best sellers, the biggest internet footprint of any of the others, i.e., hundreds of pro-Palin bloggers, a Facebook following that will most likely be in the millions by then, as well as Team Sarah. On top of that, she may also have the Tea Party organizational structure, will get the lions share of the NRA, pro-life, and Evangelical voters. Let's face it, it is the base when it turns out in large numbers that decides who the nominee is, and there is no one who energizes the base more than Palin.

All the Palin-haters, Murphy, Schmidt, etc., can say what they want. Right now they are out front trying to stave off the tsunami of book sales that will more than likely sweep them aside like so much trash.

Posted on October 4th, 2009 at 6:01 pm



Zbigniew Mazurak Said,

Claire – I agree with what you wrote about Palin, but I'm not sure if Romney is the right candidate for the GOP nomination. I'm not sure who should be the 2012 GOP nominee.

Posted on October 5th, 2009 at 2:15 am

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