

Monday, September 1. 2008

Labor Day Political Musings....

Ok, I've about had it.

Within hours of John McCain announcing that his VP choice was Sarah Palin, Governor of Alaska, the rumor mill got going trying to destroy her.

First was the claim that her last child, Trig, who has Downs, was actually her daughter's - that she had fraudulently concealed her daughter giving birth.

That was quite-quickly disproven with a photo that showed an obviously-pregnant Sarah Palin.Â Oops.

Next up they went after Mrs. Palin's daughter with the (true) claim that she is *in fact pregnant now*, and every possible means of attack was launched.

On my forum the attacks included innuendos that this was caused by an "abstinence only" belief by her parents all the way to the possibility *that she was raped!*

Folks, this sort of crap is blatantly out-of-bounds and **both candidates have now said so, including Obama himself in the national media.**

I am **outraged** at this blatant exploitation of candidate's children in this regard, and let me remind the "liberal left" that Obama was born when his mother was 18 - and there is question as to whether **she** was married at the time of conception!

This has exactly nothing to do with legitimate political debate. It does, however, have everything to do with **forcing** the indoctrination of our children against the expressed wishes of the parents of said kids.

And there I draw the line.

My daughter has a good friend who's parents are strictly religious.Â He is forbidden to see certain movies that I personally think are great fantasy, such as *Harry Potter*, on religious grounds, among other restrictions.

I have no right to demand that this child be given access to material that his parents find offensive in their particular religious milieu; indeed, our First Amendment says quite the opposite, in bold, black print.

Now either you believe in our Constitution or you do not.Â If you do then a parent's decision on what to teach their children about religion **and all matters related to it, including human sexuality**, is none of your damn business.

It is my considered position that "sex education" in our schools is **absolutely out of bounds in all forms** just as is demand that someone attend a Bible Class.Â **BOTH** are exactly equal.Â You do not need to teach abstinence (or birth control methods) to teach the **biology** of sexual reproduction, nor the **biology** of disease progression.Â Both can be taught without **any** sort of religious or socio-political overtone, and should be.

But the indoctrination of our children in matters religious is explicitly barred in government schools by the United States Constitution in the First Amendment's establishment clause.Â

Period.

The fact of the matter is that The Hard Left is absolutely apeshit over Sarah Palin. There is no way to know how this pans out over time, but the idea that McCain would nominate a religious conservative **woman** who willingly bore a Down's child with full knowledge of the consequences utterly trashes entire realms of attack on the Republican campaign and leaves the Democrats exposed to extreme negative public reaction should they attempt it anyway.

The result was an outpouring of scurrilous nonsense and Obama was wise to say "stop it!" - although that it took him three days was curious. I suspect he was spending those three days taking polls and sticking his finger in the air, and only when it dawned on him and his advisers that *trying to attack a 17 year old who got pregnant* might end up blowing up in his face as *his own birth is dangerously close to that very scenario* did he step up.

But whatever prompted him to put a stop to it, I'm glad he did.

Now let's have a debate on the underlying issues - whether our **government schools** have any business teaching this sort of thing - in any way, shape or form.

If you answer "Yes", then I hope you're prepared to launch an immediate amendment to the Constitution to allow it, because as The Constitution stands today ***such instruction, no matter which form it takes, is explicitly barred by law.***

Period.

Posted by Karl Denninger at 17:05

I personally think there should be NO government schools, but since there are government schools I will point out that they are not run by Congress nor the federal government... yet. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; Anonymous on Sep 1 2008, 18:44

But Congress is the one setting the standards and appropriating the money. If a **state** wants to have whatever standards for these programs it deems fit, that's within its constitutional rights (most states have a constitutional mandate for free public education) But for **the federal government** to set these sorts of standards - either way - is flatly unconstitutional as it is a clear and clean violation of The Establishment Clause, just as it would be if the curriculum requirement was for a "Bible Class". You can't prohibit one without prohibiting the other. Anonymous on Sep 1 2008, 19:33

Alright, I'll take the bait: I do not understand how religious education equates to sexual education. Please expand upon your reasoning. Anonymous on Sep 1 2008, 20:56

And I was outraged by the Rovian Swiftboating and by the (knowingly false) insinuation that Obama was a Muslim, etc., etc., etc. Outrage at candidate rumor accomplishes absolutely nothing, in our postmodern, post-Rovian/Carville, media frenzy politics. What Swift-Boating has demonstrated, if we didn't already know, is that negative campaigning works, unless the campaign responds quickly, decisively and convincingly. Don't rely on the American voter to search out the facts; instead, know that advertising sells. I feel sorry for all candidates' children and Palin is the issue, not her child or her Down's child. In fact, given my family history, I find the latter quite sympathetic. I know virtually nothing about Palin. If reports are true--I will find it extremely difficult to support a candidate that supports Intelligent Design as biological instruction. As should you if your outrage on religious instruction is genuine rather than feigned. Perhaps this is another inaccurate "attack" line--I'll wait to see when more reliable information is out on her. But she is so unknown that I'm only going on initial reports. McCain apparently is striking for the evangelicals by selecting her, or that seems one of the few plausible interpretations. Not impressive, in my book, but to each his (or her) own. And I suspect the Obama campaign was taken aback by the choice, which smacks a bit of a Dan Quayle-esque (unknown, small state, won't block the sun from the candidate) selection criteria, though I trust Palin is more competent than Quayle. I hope. Or maybe this was Rove anticipating the sympathy

backlash?--no, the last 8 years have made me too cynical. Anonymous on Sep 1 2008, 21:31

Hi Karl, While I agree that the children of the candidates are not in and of themselves directly relevant to the campaign, I think you are missing something when you say "and let me remind the "liberal left" that Obama was born when his mother was 18 - and there is question as to whether she was married at the time of conception!" What is the point of reminding the liberal left of that? They have no problem with unwed pregnancies. When they point out that a Republican has an unwed pregnancy or that a child of a Republican has an unwed pregnancy, or that the child of a Republican is gay (Cheney), they aren't concerned about the unwed pregnancy or the child being gay. The liberals who dwell on these things are saying that the Republicans involved are hypocrits, as in "Republicans are anti-gay, but Cheney has a gay daughter, so Cheney is a hypocrite", or "Republicans are anti unwed pregnancies, but Palin has a daughter who is pregnant, so Palin is a hypocrite." Of course, never mind that Cheney or Palin have no control over what their children are doing and that the accusations are non sequiturs. I believe that such stuff is rather silly, but I think you are missing the point the liberals are making, given your statement. Also, you bring up a Constitutional argument. Where in the First Amendment does it say a parent can indoctrinate a child in any fashion desired? It says you as an individual can have your own religious beliefs, but where does it say you can then impose your personal beliefs onto a child? (Another good one is where does it say you have a right to have or raise a child?). Does the first amendment granting the power of a parent to impose religion on a child also extend to the power to impose free speech onto a child? As in, say as an example a parent likes the teachings of Hitler, does that parent have the right to force the child (at least until age 18) to write papers (perhaps to submit as homework, or as letters to an editor or as a statement of belief for a college admissions, ect) espousing the pro Hitler beliefs that the parent holds? Even if such papers would possibly ruin various career and social choices of the child? What about religious beliefs that prohibit getting a vaccination? What if your child were to get measles because another child got it as the result of his parent deciding he was against vaccinations for religious purposes? Does the possibility of your child getting sick make it your business under the first amendment what the other parent does with his child? What about a parent having religious beliefs against evolution, or for a universe where the earth is the center of all, or where the earth is flat? Can the parent force the school system to teach these beliefs to the child - even if it means the child will be intellectually handicapped later for having such beliefs? What if the parent has religious beliefs against Calculus or arithmetic? To what degree is a child allowed to be ignorant until age 18 in a world where you have to know quite a lot to get along as an adult just because the parent wishes it so? Is there such a thing as mental abuse with respect to education? Of course there are the other issues of a parent believing "spare the rod, spoil the child" means use a rod a lot for beatings, and whether that is protected under first amendment and whether it is anyone's business. I once had a discussion with a lawyer about social services just coming into people's homes and taking children without proving anything wrong, without habeus corpus, without due process, without a trial. I was against taking the children. The lawyer saw nothing wrong with it. He said the government had an obligation to protect the rights of the child and that the parent had no inherent right to raise the child. With no inherent right being violated, there was no need for a trial according to him. Anonymous on Sep 1 2008, 21:41

Obviously someone has never read The Constitution, which reserves all rights not explicitly granted to the Federal Government to the states, or to the people. But heh, what's a little document between friends. Anonymous on Sep 1 2008, 22:02

Happy to. Where do morals come from? Ding! Anonymous on Sep 1 2008, 22:03

It is my position that The Federal Government has no business of any sort under The Constitution to institute curriculum requirements of any kind. Such power is reserved to The States, which (most of them anyway) have a Constitutional requirement to provide a free public education. The Federal Government has no business funding or mandating anything in relationship thereto. Period. Therefore, what Sarah Palin supported and promulgated **as governor** has nothing to do with the Federal Government as she is and was within the proper exercise of power as *a Governor*, but that power does not extend to The Federal Government and thus her opinions thereupon are immaterial to her qualifications as the second executive at The Federal level. Anonymous on Sep 1 2008, 22:05

What do morals have to do with sexual education? Does this mean that nutrition courses should also be verboten when they run afoul of various religions' dietary laws? Just because a religion lays claim to the morality of a given behavior (be it eating, sexual activities, or textile production) should not mean that discussion of that behavior becomes forbidden. (A policy which could be interpreted as ceding a religion power over curriculum.) Anonymous on Sep 2 2008, 03:48

An obvious non-sequitor. I have no issue with the teaching of the **biology** of reproduction; that is an expected and normal part of, in fact, biology class. We live in a nation where it is explicitly unconstitutional to promote an "establishment" of religion - irrespective of which one that might be, or irrespective of which one you might NOT be. There is no reason to teach a "moral code" as pertains to

sexuality. It is an impermissible intrusion into the right of the people to form, hold and transmit their own moral (and religious) norms, which are not, under our system of government, vested in government. If **the state and local governments** wish to put together curricula that meet local and state community standards, under their state Constitutions, that's perfectly fine. But **The Federal Government** has no authority or right to intrude here - on either side. Anonymous on Sep 2 2008, 08:30

If congress is setting standards and appropriating money, "which they are", then what they are doing is unconstitutional. They are either respecting an establishment or prohibiting the free exercise of religion. We have strayed so far away from the constitution we may as well use it to start our next fire. Anonymous on Sep 2 2008, 09:10

Found your commentary Time to give something back Thought you might like to have a read of this:

<http://londonbanker.blogspot.com/2008/10/financial-eugenics-paulson-plan-for.html> Anonymous on Oct 3 2008, 15:04