

## DEMOCRATIC DISDAIN COULD BE BUSH'S SECRET WEAPON

By Don Feder

One of the more charming conceits of the left is that conservatives (Republicans, the middle class) – actually, anyone who doesn't embrace its worldview – are, well, stupid.

This attitude is most conspicuous during election years. (“Vote for him, you've got to be kidding! He's too dumb to be president.”) With the subtlety of a Michael Moore documentary, said snobbery was illustrated by Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton on “Larry King Live” last week.

In discussing how Bush got us into Iraq, over the sage advice of the wise men of the State Department, the former first lady attributed the blunder to a lack of imagination.

“I think it's important to have a president who asks a lot of questions, who is *intellectually curious*, who seeks out contrary points of view, who doesn't just surround himself with people who see the world the same way he does....You don't get that sense from this White House,” said Hillary – who, as first lady, was infamous for lashing out at subordinates who dared to offer a perspective different from her own.

President Clinton got his advice from the likes of Janet Reno, Madeleine Albright, Robert Reich, Donna Shalala, Joycelyn Elders and Hillary herself -- a group as intellectually diverse as the political science faculty of U Cal Berkeley – or the North Korean politburo.

Anyway, what Hillary's saying (in her inimitably sweet way) is that Bush – BA, Yale, MBA Harvard Business School -- is a dunce. We need a president who's “intellectually curious.” Bush just doesn't measure up. Bush doesn't have the smarts to ask discerning questions. He's so insecure that he has to surround himself with yes men. (Like Colin Powell?) He can't think outside the box. He isn't into innovative solutions – ergo: the presidential equivalent of a special-needs child.

The left – epitomized by New York’s junior senator – has questioned the mental acumen of every Republican president in memory.

Adlai Stevenson Democrats were sure Dwight Eisenhower was a man better suited to the golf course than the Oval Office. They never could quite figure out how Ike organized the greatest amphibious landing in history and ran the war in Europe.

Remember the jokes about Gerald Ford not being able to walk and chew gum. In the opinion of then-House Speaker Tip O’Neill, Ronald Reagan was an amiable dolt who needed 3x5 cards to answer the simplest questions.

There are exceptions to the left’s Republican-equals-low IQ equation. (Richard Nixon wasn’t retarded. He was rotten, liberals told us interminably.) But, for Hillary and friends, a Republican president has to be one or the other. Thus Nixon was evil. Ford was stupid, as was Reagan. Bush Sr. -- portrayed as slow-witted Pappy -- was a dolt. W? Like father, like son.

It’s amazing how the goofy old Gipper managed to bring down the Evil Empire and give us America’s greatest postwar expansion – following four years of Carter-esque malaise – with such limited cranial capacity.

On the other hand, Democratic presidents widely admired for their intelligence have been absolute disasters, illustrating the expression: Too clever by half.

Thomas Jefferson (the quintessential renaissance president) decimated our Navy, leaving us vulnerable to the British in 1812. A raving Francophile even while the guillotine was in full swing, his much-vaunted IQ didn’t keep him from living way beyond his means. (He died deeply in debt.) Nor did it allow him to perceive the hypocrisy of lamenting the institution of slavery while living off the toil of slaves.

Or, take Jimmy Carter – Annapolis graduate, engineer, and the most pathetic president in a generation. Four more years of Carter and we would all have been singing the Internationale and buying coffee-table editions of “Das Kapital.”

Then there's Hillary's hubby – the ultimate oxymoron, a Rhodes scholar who managed to precipitate the greatest constitutional crisis in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, through a piece of abysmal stupidity with a woman half his age and his perjury and flagrant abuse of power in a vain attempt to cover it up.

If the above is the product of deep thoughts and high IQs, aren't you glad Republican president are such simpletons?

But what Hillary and other elitists actually are saying is that anyone who disagrees with them – who adheres to limited government, the free market, traditional morality and a strong foreign policy – just doesn't get it.

The counterpart is that people with conservative values are wicked. So, either we're too dumb to understand how depraved our positions are, or we're motivated by malice.

The left, on the other hand, is genius personified. Clearly, considerable brain-power went into formulating the tenets of modern liberalism:

- Tax increases will fuel an economic boom.
- Reverse discrimination furthers racial harmony.
- Cutting defense and a foreign policy that convinces the bin-Ladens of the world that we're a bunch of wimps is the way to keep America safe.
- Handouts inculcate a work ethic.
- Gun control – which disarms potential victims – is the best way to fight crime.
- Attacking parental authority and facilitating family dissolution helps children.
- Condom distribution promotes responsibility among adolescents.
- Not drilling in the Artic Wildlife Refuge and the virtual abandonment of nuclear power contributes to energy self-sufficiency.

Brilliant! It reminds me of the comment of a friend's grandfather. This cultured gentleman, a European immigrant, was watching a television interview with a college professor who was spouting the usual nonsense, when he turned to me in disgust and remarked: "Really, one has to be an intellectual to believe something so stupid."

Liberal arrogance and elitism aren't confined to their attitude toward Republicans. The left sincerely believes that ordinary Americans are imbeciles – unfortunates who are sorely in need of a keeper (big government) to bring us in out of the rain and keep us from drooling all over ourselves.

- Because we're too dumb to know how to spend our income, they want to do it for us, through higher taxes.
- Because we're too feckless to raise our children without their intervention, they believe the responsibility should be transferred to government schools and social-service agencies, whenever possible.
- Because we can't be trusted to make basic decisions about how we are to be governed (through the democratic process), they're shifting more and more of those decisions from elected bodies to the courts.

Modern liberals are autocrats at heart. Like Plato, they seek the rule of benevolent philosopher kings (themselves). Their arrogance will be their undoing.

Republicans should pray that Democrats keep talking about Bush's intellectual inferiority. More than any other factor, it was Al Gore's disdain for Bush that lost him the 2000 election.

During the first presidential debate, there was Gore – the smug little overachiever – actually sneering at Bush as the Republican candidate set forth his positions. Gore rolled his eyes, smirked, grimaced, sighed audibly – and stopped just short of holding up a sign that read: "I'm not with stupid."

The American people compared the two, and decided that they'd rather be led by a decent man who had faith in them (albeit one who wasn't terribly articulate) than a pompous, egotistic, know-it-all, who -- in his heart of hearts -- would like to limit the franchise to members of the Council on Foreign Policy and the Sierra Club.

Thus Hillary, Ted Kennedy, Jesse Jackson and others of the Democratic brain trust could just turn out to be the GOP's secret weapon.