

LATEST LIBERAL MELTDOWN – BETTER BRAIN-DEAD THAN RED (STATE)

By Don Feder

Liberals took their historic defeat in the 2004 elections quite well. They could have reacted with bitterness, rancor and hysteria. Instead they were gracious, and engaged in thoughtful introspection.

I'm kidding.

Actually, liberals behaved predictably. They've spent the past week sneering at red-state residents – remarking on the alleged poverty, stupidity and plain gullibility of Bush country (combined with neo-Marxist cant about how capitalists use faith appeals to control the masses).

The more intrepid among them are talking about emigrating to Canada. The more delusional are toying with the idea of secession.

Reuters tells us that the day after the election, hits on the Canadian government's immigration website increased six-fold – almost double the previous record high.

Leftists should feel right at home in our socialistic, gun-banning, gay-marrying, speech-suppressing, multicultural-worshiping neighbor to the north. If we could exchange our liberals for their conservatives, it would be perfect.

On the McLaughlin Group (November 7) MSNBC political analyst Lawrence O'Donnell said there will be “a serious discussion of secession over the next 20 years.” Since most of our military comes from red states, who do the blues imagine will defend them? The French? The Aspen Institute? An elite force of yoga instructors?

Liberals have concocted a fantasy version of America, where all of the nation's brain-power and productivity reside in the blue states, while red America is a land of trailer parks, country-music bars, tractor-pulls and Klan rallies. (Quick, someone tell the Texans with their oil reserves, cattle and industrial output that they're a virtual wasteland.)

There may be more money in New York and California than in Oklahoma and Indiana. But most of the people in the blue states who've created that wealth voted for Bush. According to exit polls, Bush got 63% of the vote of those with incomes of \$200,000 and up.

And the cops, firefighters and physicians who keep the cultural elitists safe and well? They voted for Bush too. Likewise the farmers who keep them fed and the contractors and construction workers who build their homes, offices and roads.

Who will patrol the streets of an independent Blue America? Mental health professionals who specialize in conflict resolution? Defense attorneys? Who'll perform open-heart surgery – holistic healers?

Despite the wealth of Wall Street, and mansions in Beverly Hills, Blue America is rife with urban decay, illegal immigrants, poverty, crime, taxes and gargantuan government. California is bankrupt. New Jersey is chronically corrupt. Try finding an English-speaking cabbie in New York.

Taxes are so high in Kerry's home state that there's an ongoing middle-class flight. (Massachusetts lost more than 79,000 residents in the past 12 years.) Factories move from Michigan and Pennsylvania to Tennessee and South Carolina, not in the opposition direction.

Overtaxed, government-heavy, welfare-friendly, de-industrializing – no wonder the left thinks Blue America is nirvana.

A constant refrain runs through the liberal post-election rant – “They so stupid.” Red state residents are portrayed as slack-jawed knuckle-draggers, ignorant, superstitious yokels inflamed by wily politicians and pernicious preachers.

ABC News correspondent Carole Simpson said this year's election results reflected the triumph of the “stupid.”

Bush campaigned by “pandering to people's fears, petty interests and prejudices,” shrieked Newsweek columnist Sheryl McCarthy. “How can 59,054,087 people be so dumb?” asked a headline in the London tabloid, *The Daily Mirror*.

In case you've missed the message, novelist Jane Smiley drove it home – with a sledge hammer -- in a slate.com column of November 4th.

“The good news is that 55 million Americans have evaded the *ignorance-inducing machine*. But 58 million have not,” Smiley declared, adding, “The election results reflect the decision of the right wing to cultivate and exploit *ignorance* in the citizenry.”

Warming to her theme, Smiley inveighs on the MSN website, “Jimmy Carter ... asked Americans to take responsibility for their profligate ways, and promptly lost to Ronald Reagan, who told them once again that they could do anything they wanted.”

And you thought it had something to do with stagflation, a little jerk in a cardigan, the Tehran hostage crisis and the global advance of Soviet communism – fool that you are!

“The history of the last four years shows that red state types, above all, do not want to be told what to do – they prefer to be *ignorant*. As a result, they are virtually unteachable,” Smiley sneers.

Stupid and selfish to boot! They don’t want to be told what to do. They resist directives from Nanny State- GHQ. Who do they think they are – Americans?

By the way, red-state residents are so selfish that they have more children, are more likely to volunteer for military service and give more to charity than their blue counterparts.

Compassionate, caring, blue-through-and-through Massachusetts has the second lowest per capita charitable giving in the nation. According to the Catalogue of Philanthropy, in 2004, the 10 states with the highest per person giving went for Bush, and the 10 stingiest states (per capita) voted for Kerry.

Smiley also informs us that, “*Ignorance* and bloodlust have a long tradition in the United States, especially in the red states. There used to be a kind of hand-to-hand fight on the frontier called ‘knock-down-drag-out,’ where any kind of gouging, biting, or maiming was considered fair. The ancestors of today’s red-state voters used to stand around cheering and betting on these fights.”

Not just ignorant, selfish savages -- but sadistic too.

But of course, the Central Park Jogger rape took place in Topeka. No, come to think of it, the gang-assault and bludgeoning of a defenseless woman happened in Blue York City.

And the braining of Reginald Denny in the course of a race riot that left 55 dead, was that in Montgomery, Alabama? Again, no, that was in the other costal anchor of Blue Nation – Los Angeles. The brutal murders of Nicole Brown-Simpson and Laci Peterson also happened in La-La land.

By the way, if red-staters are so appallingly ignorant, then why did Bush win the votes of 52 % of college grads (to 46% for Kerry). While it’s true that Kerry won the support of 55% of those with post-graduate degrees (to 44% for Bush), he also won a narrow majority of high-school dropouts – all Mensa members, no doubt.

Liberals also resurrected one of their favorite conspiracy theories: Republican plutocrats used appeals to ignorant, bigoted fundamentalism to get poor, benighted Christians to vote against their class interests – just the way they used race to the same effect, in years past.

Another slate.com contributor knowingly observed, “‘Morality’ is the new ‘race’ – as in racism ... But even as the agenda has now shifted to the sanctity of marriage, the ends and means remain remarkably consistent: Seduce the have-nots into a strange

bedfellow-ship with the haves through emotional tribal markers that strike at some pre-rational sense of identity. Then they will be persuaded to vote against their own self-interest.”

Says Smiley, “The reason the Democrats have lost five of the last seven presidential elections is simple: A generation ago, the big capitalists, who have no morals, as we know, decided to make use of the religious right in their class war against the middle class and against the regulations that were protecting those whom they considered to be their rightful prey – workers and consumers.”

According to this bizarre theory, through an appeal to traditional religion, the tragic but hateful masses have been seduced into voting against the taxes and regulations that would have given them a better life. Why? Because they’re a bunch of really dumb bunnies – drooling idiots, when you get right down to it. (Or, as a 1994 Washington Post story put it, religious conservatives are “poor, uneducated and easy to command.”)

There are any number of problems with this hypothesis. Big business doesn’t give to the Christian Coalition, which is funded by small contributors. Corporations open their coffers to the enemies of the Christian right. In Ohio’s recent marriage amendment referendum, business lavishly funded opponents of the ban on gay marriage.

Say what you will about George Bush, to maintain that his deep devotion and regular professions of faith all are faked to manipulate the little people, requires a breathtaking cynicism.

In the last election, the Christian vote wasn’t the product of evangelicals being hoodwinked by Republicans, but the result of this growing segment of the electorate being insulted and tormented by Democrats. To compound their folly, now liberals are jeering at these and other red-staters: “Hey, stupid!” (Gary Bauer says liberals have taken to referring to Bush country as “Jesusland.” I don’t think it’s a term of affection.)

If you’re a political activist, your fondest hope is that the other side never gets it – that it remains eternally bereft of clues. Thus, the liberal response to their electoral donnybrook is a source of ongoing delight for me.

In a classic scene in the movie “Conan The Barbarian,” the protagonist is asked by the War Leader, “Conan, what is good?” The future governor of California replies: “To crush your enemies and drive them before you! To hear the lamentations of their women!”

I give you the lamentations of their women – and girlie men.

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