

from our viewpoint...

## Election rhetoric winding down

Today citizens all across this nation will express their opinion on the running of the country as they go to the polls to vote.

In the closing days the conservatives were trying to paint Sen. Barack Obama as a Marxist. They released a few cuts from a radio interview with National Public Radio in Chicago in September 2001 where he made comments about the civil rights movement, the Supreme Court and the U.S. Constitution.

The sections or cuts of the interview were re-released last week to prove that Obama was a Marxist because in one cut of the interview he said he believed the constitution was a list of negative liberties and that the civil rights movement became court-focused rather than depending on the community organizing to help make more substantive changes.

Reading the U.S. Constitution — as approved in 1789 — if you were a woman or a slave the law of the land was a list of negative liberties as neither group had any rights or liberties under the original document.

In fact the Constitution does not list any individual liberties. The rights and liberties we enjoy were not in the main document, but are those listed in the first 10 amendments to the Constitution that were passed and ratified after the constitution was drafted.

In the letter from the constitutional convention the founding fathers said they had to find a way to reach common ground.

"It is obviously impracticable in the Federal Government of these States to secure all rights of independent sovereignty to each, and yet provide for the interest and safety of all. Individuals entering into society must give up a share of liberty to preserve the rest. The magnitude of the sacrifice must depend as well on situation and circumstance, as on the object to be obtained. It is at all times difficult to draw with precision the line between those rights which must be surrendered, and those which may be preserved; and, on the present occasion, this difficulty was increased by a difference among the several States as to their situation, extent, habits, and particular interests.

"This important consideration, seriously and deeply impressed on our minds, led each State in the Convention to be less rigid on points of inferior magnitude than might have been otherwise expected; and thus, the Constitution which we now present is the result of a spirit of amity, and of that mutual deference and concession, which the peculiarity of our political situation rendered indispensable."

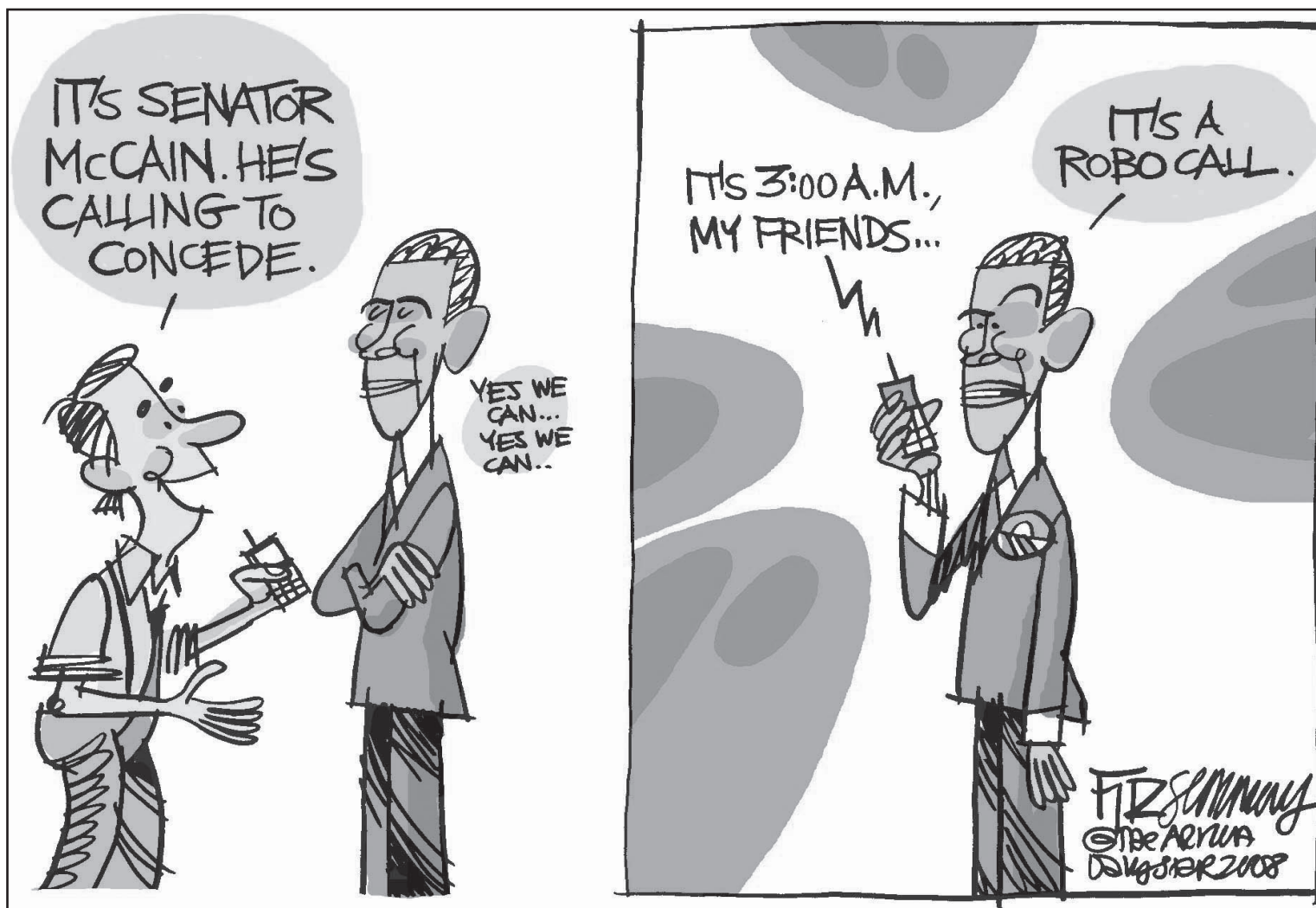
Women suffrage did not get much traction until Wyoming wanted to become a state, and under their constitution allowed women the right to vote to be able to count them in the effort to win statehood. It was not until 1920 when amendment 19 was ratified giving women the vote nationwide.

For a black man the Civil War and President Abraham Lincoln's emancipation proclamation were the first steps that became part of the 14th Amendment ratified in 1868. However, it wasn't until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed into law things really changed.

The constitution language was part of the great compromise the founding fathers agreed on to establish the federal system. It is through the amendments that much of the language has slowly been changed as the world and times have changed.

What Obama said seven years ago as a law professor from his perspective of the civil rights movement should be understood in that context. Again the smear campaign tries to cherry-pick a few second of an interview that lasted nearly an hour and covered lots of topics.

We hope everyone voted in this election. — Tom Betz



## If the Reagan era is dead, who killed it?

If you believe Newsweek magazine — something that usually requires a serious suspension of disbelief — the Reagan Era is dead. Politico also chimed in, proclaiming the death of the Reagan revolution.

Newsweek doesn't go on to tell you who killed the Reagan Era, so I will. It was the Republican Party that demolished the shining city on the hill my father built. It was the Republican Party that was 100 percent responsible for the end of the Reagan Revolution.

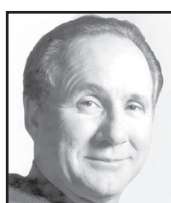
They forgot who he was; and having forgotten who he was, they stopped following in his footsteps that should have led to smaller, less-intrusive government, and restrained government spending. They are the ones who began to undermine the sturdy foundation my father built.

By the way, the same thing happened to Maggie Thatcher in Britain. Her own party was responsible for undermining all the great advances she made towards dismantling the socialist welfare state that had made England an economic basket-case. It happened because once she was out of power her party weakened.

Maggie was strong and Ronald Reagan was strong, but when they no longer were in power and at their prime, their followers turned into weak-kneed office seekers.

Being weak they were easily led astray and went in other directions, and fell prey to the lure of big government, big spending and big deficit politics.

The end of the Reagan Era was brought to us by the Republican Party, which had thrived



**michael reagan**

• making sense

under his leadership and is now in danger of becoming a minor player in the nation's politics and a spectator at the birth of a socialist America doomed to follow the path to ruin of every failed state has embraced the Marxist creed.

Can the Reagan Era be resurrected? It can, but only by the party that was responsible for its death. Republicans killed it and it's up to Republicans to revive it. And if America is to survive the coming debacle looming ahead under an ultra-left-wing Obama government drenched in the welfare-state philosophies of Karl Marx, only a reborn Republican Party will be capable of bringing America back from the brink of destruction.

Unless John McCain understands what is at stake here, Nov. 5 is going to resemble the smoking rubble of Dresden in the wake of the Allied firebombing of that city. The Republican Party is going to be in shambles.

It's going to be in shambles because the Republican Party abandoned the trail leading to that shining city on the hill to become itself a quasi-left-wing organization which looks at the Democrats' welfare programs and says "me too."

They destroyed the party from within. They are the ones to blame. Not the left-wing media

, not left-wing academia, not the Democratic Party but the GOP — the Grand Old Party — no longer grand, just old and scared silly.

Ronald Reagan had the same media that we have today. He had the same left-wing academia that we have today and the same Democratic Party that we have today. But when the media and the Democrats attacked him he found it invigorating, and found strength and fortitude in being under fire, and he fought back like a tiger.

Today, when Republicans are attacked, they tremble and run for cover. And they give in and begin to mumble "me too."

I've heard people say that Ronald Reagan would have supported the bailout. My answer to that is: "Balderdash!" Ronald Reagan would never have supported a bailout, because under his leadership there never would have been a need for a bailout. He never would have allowed the double-dealing and sheer criminality that brought about our current crisis.

In a Ronald Reagan administration the Chris Dadds and Barney Franks — who bled Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac dry — wouldn't be running Congressional committees, they'd be fending off Federal prosecutors.

Let's not have any more talk about the end of the Reagan Era and the Reagan Revolution. It's time to re-fire the jets and move forward.

Let's win another one for the Gipper. *Mike Reagan, the elder son of the late President Ronald Reagan, is heard on talk radio stations nationally. E-mail comments to Reagan@caglecartoons.com.*

## What is it like to live in a battleground state

*If you are reading this and have not voted today, I urge you to put this down and go vote, as it will be the most important thing you do this year.*

Over the weekend, I drove to Lamar, Colo., to visit my wife, Ava, and pack some more boxes and tubs, as she will be retiring at the end of the year and moving to Goodland.

Colorado is one of the big battleground states in the presidential game this year, and it was enlightening to see how that is going.

Her living and being involved in politics in Colorado this year has been interesting, entertaining at times.

My wife and I are both Democrats, but she was a Barack Obama fan long before I was. She campaigned for Obama in southeast Colorado and was a delegate at the county assembly.

Saturday, we went to a craft fair at Lamar Community College. A lot of people know us, and we got to talking about the election, and especially what might happen on the local scene in Prowers County.

In Colorado, the county commissioners live in districts, but are voted on by everyone in the county. Over the years, the Republicans have usually had two commissioners while the Democrats have had one. When I lived there in the '90s, the Democrats had two commissioners to one Republican, but since the three men got along well, it was hard to tell which was which at times.

The expectation is that one of the Republicans might get beat this year, and an open seat might go to a Democrat.

The last time Prowers County voted for a Democratic president was for Lyndon Johnson in 1964. In 1976, the 3rd Congressional District, the southern half of the state, voted for Jimmy Carter, but the electoral votes went to Gerald Ford.

While we were sitting in Ava's apartment Saturday night, the phone rang several times. When she answered, she listened and kept answering "Yes" and sometimes "No."

About five minutes later, she hung up and said she had been talking with Michelle Obama. Actually it was a recorded call asking



**tom betz**

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if she was supporting Obama and attached was the taped message from the candidate's wife.

"I have had calls from Sarah Palin and John McCain," she said. "I hung up on one from Rudi Giuliani."

She finds the attention being given the state sort of fun, but is certainly glad it is winding down and will be over tonight. Besides the national attention, Colorado has 14 amendments on the ballot that are adding to the swamp of political campaign ads.

She cancelled her cable television last month, and the only political ads she has seen in the past month have been those on the DVDs I bring down with programs recorded from the Denver channels we see in Goodland. She got to see some of the difference in the programs we like that are on Kansas channels, where the number of political ads has been much lower.

Both of us were chatting with one of our daughters on-line Sunday morning when the phone rang. I answered it, and found myself answering questions in a "political survey."

The recorded message asked if I was going to support McCain or Obama. Having voted for Obama already, that is how I answered.

As the recorded message went along, it became obvious the purpose of the call was to get people to change and vote for McCain. The questions were designed to elicit answers that would favor the conservative agenda and brand Obama's ideas as being liberal and therefore bad.

At the end of the call, the sponsoring organization was identified as Let Freedom Ring, and a phone number was given in a whisper.

The organization has a web site at [www.letfreedomringusa.com](http://www.letfreedomringusa.com).

"Let Freedom Ring was formed to counter the attacks of anti-conservative groups on patriotic candidates as well as attacks on the

important issues of our day — those that affect the core of our society: the family, marriage, the economy, energy, abortion, health care and foreign policy, to name just a few. We also work to keep our constituents and the media informed about what our founding fathers' intentions were and how history shapes laws and our culture today," the web site says.

I later read that the phone call I answered was one of thousands of "push-poll" calls the group had used in several states, including Colorado, over the last 72 hours of the campaign to try to pull out a win for McCain.

One media expert said the Let Freedom Ring effort was costing about \$5 million.

Most of Kansas has not seen or heard many of the ads that are running almost constantly on Colorado radio and television stations as both parties try to win not just at the national level, but in contested state and local races.

I think some of the last-minute money will have been ill spent, because the reports from Denver are that more than half of the voters — like my wife and I — have already voted by advance ballot.

## Letter Policy

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