

January 12, 2012

Time to examine the Daley departure. [Craig Pirrong](#) at Streetwise Professor kicks it off.

*Bill Daley was demoted back in November, a move that had Valerie Jarrett's fingerprints all over it. Now Daley is gone altogether, resigning from the White House to return to Chicago to "spend more time with his family" (cue the Dirge of the Political Dead).*

*Daley and Jarrett (and Michelle Obama, not to mention the president) are Chicago Democrats, but just as in Russia there are vicious rivalries among clans that are ostensibly part of the same governing elite, there are deep-seated hatreds and rivalries within the one party of the One Party State that is Chicago. Anyone who lived, as I did, through the Byrne-Daley-Washington election, the subsequent election of Harold Washington, Council Wars, and the open warfare that followed Washington's death understands that. The rule of Daley II had some similarities with Putinism, with Richie Daley–Bill Daley's brother–running a natural (city) state, and dividing the spoils among the factions to maintain a semblance of peace. But the hostilities never went away, and hands always rest on dagger handles.*

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*Bringing both factions so close within the White House was a recipe for conflict, and it is pretty clear that such conflicts indeed continued unabated, with Rahm Emanuel (another Chicagoan) and then Daley arrayed against Jarrett and Michelle Obama. Obama's political travails starting in 2009, culminating with the election of Scott Brown in early 2010, led to a fundamental divide over what path to pursue: a more accommodating traditional political course (the Emanuel then Daley position) or a more ideological, progressive one (Jarrett and Michelle Obama).*

*We now know who prevailed. ...*

[Tom Elia](#) at New Editor sums it up.

*Daley will step down at the end of the month and [will be replaced by current budget director Jack Lew](#).*

**Update:** *Does anyone else find it as interesting as I do that President Obama's first two chiefs of staff, both very important Chicago Democrats, chose to resign their positions -- one right before a big midterm election, and the other before a big presidential election campaign?*

*Perhaps it's best explained by an old Chicago Democratic Party political maxim, first uttered by West Side ward boss Bernie Neistein: "Don't make no waves, don't back no losers."*

[Charlie Gasparino](#) says the moderates have been shellacked.

*... Daley thought he had the president's blessing to move the Obama economic agenda to the center, but that support quickly evaporated as the ideologues and the spin masters like Valerie Jarrett and David Plouffe assumed bigger roles in the administration's daily affairs.*

*As I reported on the Fox Business Network back in September, Daley grew increasingly agitated about his role. He openly complained that he was being isolated by Jarrett, Obama's friend and personal adviser, who's been at the forefront of Obama's most recent leftward tilt, and let it be known that he wanted to do something else — maybe serve as treasury secretary, given his banking background at JP Morgan.*

*At the time, I received an interesting phone call from Daley himself, grousing about my report without offering any specific complaints. When I asked him if he wanted the treasury, he told me he didn't "lust" for the job. He issued a similar nondenial when I asked him about his issues with Jarrett.*

*Those issues were obviously too much for Daley to overcome; he had no choice but to resign and "spend more time with his family."*

*One thing is certain: Bill Daley may want to spend more time back in his native Chicago, but the president's ultraliberal handlers clearly wanted him to spend less time with the man in the White House.*

**Seth Mandel** has more.

*The resignation of White House chief of staff Bill Daley must be frustrating to President Obama because it—with some help from the well-timed release of Jodi Kantor's [new book](#) on the Obama White House—reveals the extent to which Obama has succeeded not in creating a no-drama administration (an impossible goal in the Washington of 2012 anyway), but rather in creating the impression of one.*

*The New York Times [tries admirably](#) to parrot the administration line, calling Daley's departure a "distracting shake-up in a White House that has prided itself on a lack of internal drama, with a tightly knit circle of loyal senior advisers playing a steadying role." But the paper is forced to give away the game later on in the story, revealing the Obama White House for what it is: the Hotel California of presidential administrations:*

*"While the president said he asked Mr. Daley to reconsider his decision, he did not apply the kind of pressure he brought to bear on Treasury Secretary Timothy F. Geithner, who has for several months been eager to return to New York."*

*The Times is right; Geithner has been begging to leave. And far from being chock full of "loyal senior advisers," the White House is made up of people trying desperately to get out before their term is up (Daley, Geithner) and comically disastrous hires to which Obama has shown a generous amount of loyalty (Eric Holder, former press secretary Bob Gibbs). ...*

**Jennifer Rubin**.

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*subsumed to the goal of re-election, how exactly does the undisguised lurch to the left help Obama?*

*Obama's blank slate, on which moderate voters projected their aspirations, is now filled in. The resulting portrait is of a president unwilling to talk turkey to his own base, unwilling to address our debt and convinced that vilification and name calling is the key to success. Comity, the constitution or governance? Forget it. In both Obama and Newt Gingrich you now see the crystallization of lowest-common denominator politics. The politics of personal destruction? They are a matched pair, perfect practitioners of that game. Alas, the country is not better off. But boy do they feel good showing who is a force to be reckoned with.*

[The Hill Blog](#) has a post on the subject.

... Daley was only ineffective because his boss would not let him be effective.

Bill Daley is a political pragmatist. He cuts deals. Like his father and his brother, he is not a left-wing ideologue; nor is he a Republican in Democratic clothing.

He is a pro-business Democrat, an increasingly rare breed these days in Washington.

Obama is not a pro-business Democrat. His wife is not a pro-business Democrat. They don't like the business community. They don't trust the free market. They want to spread wealth around (other people's wealth, I might add).

[Jennifer Rubin](#) reports reports David Brooks went to confession on the Laura Ingraham show.

*Politico* reports that moderate New York Times columnist David Brooks confessed to radio talk show host Laura Ingraham, regarding President Obama:

*' I still like him and admire him personally, but he's certainly more liberal than I thought he was. He's more liberal than he thinks he is. He thinks he's just slightly center-left, but when you get down to his instincts, they're pretty left. And his problem is that he can't really act on them, because it would be political disaster. And so that means, I think right now he's doing very little, proposing very little. '*

*I'll put aside for now whether he should turn in his pundit badge after misjudging a liberal president so badly, for so long and with so much certitude.*

*But for now, let's consider carefully what Brooks is saying. He contends in essence that the entire 2008 campaign was a canard and, worse, that Obama is so politically tone-deaf and insulated that he doesn't recognize that he is badly out of step with a center-right country. No wonder Obama imagines the Republicans who decry his liberal statism are acting out of malice. If he's the personification of reasoned centrism, then they must be extreme and irrational. ...*

**Jennifer** also looks into the background of the foolish Gingrich attacks on Romney. *The decision by Newt Gingrich to go anti-Bain — and those ostensibly trying to help him — are in some ways inexplicably stupid. Why would Gingrich, who already has a reputation as a thorn in the side of the right and a malicious self-promoter, [attack Mitt Romney](#) on free-market capitalism, which is at the center of the modern Republican Party?*

*Gingrich has never been known as one to distinguish good ideas from bad, but consider the other Republicans who have involved themselves in an endeavor which will likely go down as a text-book example of political stupidity.*

*There is Barry Bennett, the longtime establishment Republican operative from Ohio, who supposedly paid [for the anti-Bain film](#). Did he think this was smart Republican political strategy? A longtime Ohio Republican activist and national Republican fundraiser who knows Bennett said, “I’m shocked.” He acknowledged, “Barry is a gun for hire,” but said that mainstream Republicans would find the attack piece repulsive. ...*

The **[Occupiers in DC](#)** are getting some of their natural allies.

*The rat population around the two Occupy D.C. camps at McPherson Square and Freedom Plaza has “exploded” since protesters began their vigil in October, according to Mohammad N. Akhter, the director of the District’s Department of Health.*

*Akhter said in an interview Monday that city health inspectors have seen rats running openly through both camps and spotted numerous new burrows and nests underneath hay-stuffed pallets occupiers are using for beds. Both campsites had working kitchens for weeks until last week, but [protesters at McPherson Square voluntarily closed down theirs](#) after health inspectors pointed out unsanitary conditions during an informal monitoring visit. ...*



### **Streetwise Professor**

#### **[Valerie \(and Michelle\) Back the Bus Over Bill Daley, Just to Make Sure—and to Send a Message](#)**

by Craig Pirrong

[Bill Daley was demoted back in November](#), a move that had Valerie Jarrett’s fingerprints all over it. Now Daley is gone altogether, resigning from the White House to return to Chicago to “spend more time with his family” (cue the Dirge of the Political Dead).

Daley and Jarrett (and Michelle Obama, not to mention the president) are Chicago Democrats, but just as in Russia there are vicious rivalries among clans that are ostensibly part of the same governing elite, there are deep-seated hatreds and rivalries within the one party of the One

Party State that is Chicago. Anyone who lived, as I did, through the Byrne-Daley-Washington election, the subsequent election of Harold Washington, Council Wars, and the open warfare that followed Washington's death understands that. The rule of Daley II had some similarities with Putinism, with Richie Daley—Bill Daley's brother—running a natural (city) state, and dividing the spoils among the factions to maintain a semblance of peace. But the hostilities never went away, and hands always rest on dagger handles.

Jarrett and Bill Daley belonged to different factions in Chicago. Moreover, whereas Daley was and is a practitioner of crony capitalism who intermediated between government and heavily regulated businesses, Jarrett is and was more ideological, and her ideology is hard core progressive class warrior.

Bringing both factions so close within the White House was a recipe for conflict, and it is pretty clear that such conflicts indeed continued unabated, with Rahm Emanuel (another Chicagoan) and then Daley arrayed against Jarrett and Michelle Obama. Obama's political travails starting in 2009, culminating with the election of Scott Brown in early 2010, led to a fundamental divide over what path to pursue: a more accommodating traditional political course (the Emanuel then Daley position) or a more ideological, progressive one (Jarrett and Michelle Obama).

We now know who prevailed. Daley had already been emasculated, but his departure sends a very powerful message—as it was no doubt intended to do. Wall Street and the Fortune 500 set considered Daley a voice of reason who would rein in the more radically progressive tendencies in the administration. How's that working out now, guys?

With Jarrett and Plouffe (another hard core progressive) firmly in charge, and Daley publicly humiliated, the stage is set for a very divisive and ideological campaign this summer and fall. A campaign with a class warfare core and strong OWS influences. 2012 promises to be as ugly as some of the campaigns of the 19th century, such as the Jefferson-John Adams contest of 1800 (as suggested by Jeff Carter) or Jackson-J.Q. Adams battle of 1828.

Oh joy.

Don't I remember some guy running in 2008 as a uniter? Those images and words will soon disappear down the memory hole.

There is one intriguing aspect of the timing of the Daley defenestration. Over the weekend excerpts of Jodi Kantor's new biography of Michelle Obama were published in the New York Times. They depict a first lady at war with Rahm Emanuel and Robert Gibbs, with Valerie Jarrett firmly allied with Michelle.

The book details that Michelle's and Jarrett's enmity to the Daleys went back almost 20 years:

"Mrs. Obama worked in the Daley administration between Sept. 16, 1991, and April 30, 1993, according to City of Chicago personnel records. She was hired by Jarrett, then Daley's deputy chief of staff.

Kantor writes Mrs. Obama "disapproved of how closely Daley held power, surrounding himself with three or four people who seemed to let few outsiders in — a concern she would echo years later with her own husband.

“...She particularly resented the way power in Illinois was locked up generation after generation by a small group of families, all white Irish Catholic — the Daleys in Chicago, the Hynes and Madigans statewide.”

When Jarrett was forced out of City Hall in 1995 — even though she was close to Daley — “the Obamas were horrified, their worst suspicions about the world confirmed.”

Jarrett, Gibbs, Obama’s top strategist David Axelrod, Mrs. Obama’s former chief of staff Susan Sher and Chicago pals Eric Whitaker and Marty Nesbitt “gave me many hours of interview time each,” Kantor wrote in her acknowledgements. In all, Kantor got the cooperation of 33 current and former members of the Obama administration and close friends.”

Note particularly that Jarrett was forced out by the Daleys in 1995. Revenge is a dish best served cold, and payback is a bitch. Note also the racial and ethnic component to the intramural Democratic struggles in Chicago—hardly a secret to anyone who lived in Chicago in the 1980s and 1990s.

The fact that Daley’s departure comes hard on the heels of the release of the book excerpts could be coincidence. But perhaps not.

The book also provides considerable support for something I’ve long believed—that Jarrett is Obama’s Svengalina. When push comes to shove, Obama will go with Jarrett, either out of ideological sympathy, Chicago tribal loyalty, or something more psychodramatic than that.

In the end, though, what is particularly important is what the exile of Bill Daley portends for the national political situation. And what it portends is not good.



*He needs to be retired.*



## The New Editor

### William Daley resigns as Obama's chief of staff

by Tom Elia

Daley will step down at the end of the month and [will be replaced by current budget director Jack Lew](#).

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## NY Post

### Exit the moderates

by Charles Gasparino

The announcement that Bill Daley will step down as President Obama's chief of staff is further proof that as the 2012 election approaches, Obama is embracing his inner leftist on anything touching the economy. The administration has moved so far left that even one of the country's most prominent Democrats can't fit in.

Embracing Wall Street protesters, massive government programs and tax hikes might seem like a losing formula for re-election, but Team Obama is betting it's the best way — maybe the only way — to win.

A scorched-earth assault on the GOP nominee as a plutocrat, and on Republicans in Congress as the roadblock to progress, seems to be their chosen strategy for distracting the public from the disaster of the president's economic policies.

That left Daley — as one of the last moderates left in the administration — as odd man out at the White House. Of course, it's also rotten news for the struggling economy: At least one more year of full-throttle Obamanomics, with the promise of four more if the strategy works.

As moderates like Daley depart, anti-business crusaders increasingly fill key slots at the new consumer bureau, the National Labor Relations Board and elsewhere in the administration — giving businesses ample reason to scale back hiring for the foreseeable future.

The administration can celebrate anemic economic growth and an unemployment rate of "only" 8.5 percent — but millions more Americans have been out of work so long they've stopped looking, and no longer show up anymore in the "unemployed" tallies.

Daley's departure, it should be noted, had been in the cards for months. He was brought in last January to convince the business community that, despite constant verbal jabs and plans

imposing both new taxes and onerous regulations, the president really wasn't all that anti-business.

Daley would work to change both the perception and the reality. A former banker and Clinton-era commerce secretary (and son and brother of two Chicago mayors), he saw the "shellacking" the Democrats received in the 2010 elections as proof positive that Team Obama needed to move to the center in order to have a chance at a second term.

He even had the guts to preach economic moderation in public, agreeing with a businessman at one gathering that regulations are too onerous to support decent economic growth.

Daley thought he had the president's blessing to move the Obama economic agenda to the center, but that support quickly evaporated as the ideologues and the spin masters like Valerie Jarrett and David Plouffe assumed bigger roles in the administration's daily affairs.

As I reported on the Fox Business Network back in September, Daley grew increasingly agitated about his role. He openly complained that he was being isolated by Jarrett, Obama's friend and personal adviser, who's been at the forefront of Obama's most recent leftward tilt, and let it be known that he wanted to do something else — maybe serve as treasury secretary, given his banking background at JP Morgan.

At the time, I received an interesting phone call from Daley himself, grouching about my report without offering any specific complaints. When I asked him if he wanted the treasury, he told me he didn't "lust" for the job. He issued a similar nondenial when I asked him about his issues with Jarrett.

Those issues were obviously too much for Daley to overcome; he had no choice but to resign and "spend more time with his family."

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## Contentions

### [Daley Departure Busts "No-Drama" Myth](#)

by Seth Mandel

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away the game later on in the story, revealing the Obama White House for what it is: the Hotel California of presidential administrations:

While the president said he asked Mr. Daley to reconsider his decision, he did not apply the kind of pressure he brought to bear on Treasury Secretary Timothy F. Geithner, who has for several months been eager to return to New York.

The *Times* is right; Geithner has been begging to leave. And far from being chock full of “loyal senior advisers,” the White House is made up of people trying desperately to get out before their term is up (Daley, Geithner) and comically disastrous hires to which Obama has shown a generous amount of loyalty (Eric Holder, former press secretary Bob Gibbs).

Of course, for some reason, we haven’t seen the rash of newspaper stories on how Obama prizes loyalty over talent and competence, the way we did with George W. Bush. Perhaps the *Times* will be getting around to that any day now.

The other notable part of the Daley story is that he was brought in because he has ties to the business community and a good reputation in Congress. What the Daley departure signals is he is fully aware his boss’s reelection efforts will be consumed by Obama’s relentless attacks on both. He will be running against the “do-nothing Congress” and “Wall Street greed,” demagoguing the country’s political leadership and its private sector leadership. His slogan, then, will essentially be “It’s *literally* everyone’s fault but mine!” There was no reason for Daley to stick around as the president spent nearly \$1 billion attempting to destroy the reputations of Daley’s friends and associates.

So Daley will go back to Chicago with a no-show title of “campaign co-chair” the administration says they will “probably” bestow upon him. But really, there’s no drama here. President Temperament is fully in control.

## Right Turn

### [Daley and any pretense of moderation are out at the White House](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

White House Chief of Staff William Daley [will resign today](#), ending what was in effect the White House’s failed experiment in faux moderation. His replacement will be Jack Lew, the current head of Office and Management and Budget, whose influence we saw in the presentation of a 2011 budget controlled by Obama’s political advisors. Lew, an experienced budget hand, was sent up to deliver a political budget designed to satisfy the base and promote confrontation rather than progress on deficit control. He will presumably have no more latitude now that he is being shuffled to a bigger office.

Daley was hired, supposedly to soothed to get along with the business community in the wake of the president’s party’s 2010 “shellacking.” But as I and many expected, the policies that the president has insisted upon and the increasingly vitriolic tone of class warfare clashed with the facade of a more reasonable, business-friendly White House. Daley’s social relationships with business leaders were no substitute for more business-friendly policies. Instead, Obama has

reverted both rhetorically and substantively to that with which he feels most comfortable: liberal partisanship.

In the wake of the president's extra-constitutional power grab on recess appointments and his demonization of the Republican Party, it would seem the president's leftist instincts and advisors are fully in command. There is no pretense of trying to reach deals with the Republicans on entitlement or tax reform. The Defense Department's budget, if the president has his way, will be cut. The base extols in the showing of no-holds-barred leftism. But now that everything is subsumed to the goal of re-election, how exactly does the undisguised lurch to the left help Obama?

Obama's blank slate, on which moderate voters projected their aspirations, is now filled in. The resulting portrait is of a president unwilling to talk turkey to his own base, unwilling to address our debt and convinced that vilification and name calling is the key to success. Comity, the constitution or governance? Forget it. In both Obama and Newt Gingrich you now see the crystallization of lowest-common denominator politics. The politics of personal destruction? They are a matched pair, perfect practitioners of that game. Alas, the country is not better off. But boy do they feel good showing who is a force to be reckoned with.

## The Hill

### [Obama's real reelection problem](#)

by John Feehery

The *Chicago Sun-Times's* Lynn Sweet picked out an interesting morsel in Jodi Kantor's book about the Obama family:

"When Michelle Obama worked in Mayor Daley's City Hall in the early 1990s, she was 'distressed' by how a small group of 'white Irish Catholic' families — the Daleys, the Hynes and the Madigans — 'locked up' power in Illinois.

"She particularly resented the way power in Illinois was locked up generation after generation by a small group of families, all white Irish Catholic — the Daleys in Chicago, the Hynes and Madigans statewide."

Obama White House Chief of Staff Bill Daley, one of those hated white Irish Catholics, resigned the same weekend the book's juiciest tidbits leaked out.

It is probably all just a coincidence, but sometimes coincidences reveal bigger truths.

And the bigger truth is that Bill Daley left the White House because he lost to Valerie Jarrett and to the president's wife in the battle for the philosophical direction of the Obama White House.

I don't know if Michelle Obama's antipathy toward white Irish Catholics finally became too much of a barrier to Daley or not. But I do know that Daley was only ineffective because his boss would not let him be effective.

Bill Daley is a political pragmatist. He cuts deals. Like his father and his brother, he is not a left-wing ideologue; nor is he a Republican in Democratic clothing.

He is a pro-business Democrat, an increasingly rare breed these days in Washington.

Obama is not a pro-business Democrat. His wife is not a pro-business Democrat. They don't like the business community. They don't trust the free market. They want to spread wealth around (other people's wealth, I might add).

## Right Turn

### [David Brooks confesses he was conned by Obama](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

[Politico](#) reports that moderate New York Times columnist David Brooks confessed to radio talk show host Laura Ingraham, regarding President Obama:

' I still like him and admire him personally, but he's certainly more liberal than I thought he was. He's more liberal than he thinks he is. He thinks he's just slightly center-left, but when you get down to his instincts, they're pretty left. And his problem is that he can't really act on them, because it would be political disaster. And so that means, I think right now he's doing very little, proposing very little.' '

I'll put aside for now whether he should turn in his pundit badge after misjudging a liberal president so badly, for so long and with so much certitude.

But for now, let's consider carefully what Brooks is saying. He contends in essence that the entire 2008 campaign was a canard and, worse, that Obama is so politically tone-deaf and insulated that he doesn't recognize that he is badly out of step with a center-right country. No wonder Obama imagines the Republicans who decry his liberal statism are acting out of malice. If he's the personification of reasoned centrism, then they must be extreme and irrational.

Brooks's second point, that Obama's instincts are left-leaning, has surely been confirmed over the past three years. Given a choice between completing military missions and grabbing the "savings" for domestic spending, there is no competition. Faced with cold, hard math on the relatively small amount of revenue to be raised from millionaires and oil companies, he nevertheless insists on taxing the rich. For him, that is a moral good unto itself. He builds government bureaucracies like kids build with blocks — endlessly. A consumer protection bureau (to "protect us"), Dodd-Frank (to constrain the evil banks) and Obamacare (to require health insurance that is more than simply a catastrophic policy) all reflect his disdain for the free market and his conviction that the government knows best.

He also embodies the worst qualities of the intolerant authoritarian left. Critics (e.g., Fox News, government contractors, Wall Street) are vilified. The law is a malleable tool in the hands of the president to be used for liberal ends (e.g., recess appointments, unaccountable czars). The Libyan war does not amount to "[hostilities](#)," and the Senate recess is not a recess because he has decided so. With apologies to Louis XIV, he seems convinced, "La Constitution, c'est moi."

And in foreign policy he defaults to the leftist view of America, that its prominence is the cause of much of what is wrong with the world and that virtue can be found in subsuming our interests to multilateral action.

Brooks is certainly more prominent and more politically aware than many politically moderate voters, but the realization and the disappointment he confesses to must have registered with many of them as well. They, like Brooks, have figured out that Obama is more liberal than they. In a [Gallup poll](#) last month, we learned that Americans perceive Obama as a great deal more liberal than they. In a country in which conservatives (42 percent, according to Gallup) and moderates (37 percent) predominate, this is a problem.

It is even more problematic when the president has latched on to a message that jazzes the liberal base (and his own political preferences), namely confrontation, harsh rhetoric, class warfare and constitutional overreach. He's making the David Brooks voters (who bought his 2008 moderate spiel hook, line and sinker) increasingly uncomfortable.

In poll after poll, we see confirmation of the political composition of the American electorate: This is a center-right country. Obama billed himself as a centrist, but has reverted to type, an academic leftist who is antagonistic toward Wall Street, uncomfortable with American power, and infatuated with wealth redistribution. So long as the Republicans do not make the mirror-image mistake, that is choose someone who's a turn-off to the center part of the center-right majority, they stand a good chance of regaining the presidency.

Obama has blown his cover as a moderate technocrat, leaving the middle of the political spectrum wanting an alternative. (After all, you can fool David Brooks for only so long.) Obama can't win without them, and, with the decidedly un-right-wing Mitt Romney or the blue-collar friendly Rick Santorum the most likely GOP presidential nominees, those voters will have that alternative they've been looking for.

## Right Turn

### [The stupidity of attacking Romney, capitalism](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

The decision by Newt Gingrich to go anti-Bain — and those ostensibly trying to help him — are in some ways inexplicably stupid. Why would Gingrich, who already has a reputation as a thorn in the side of the right and a malicious self-promoter, [attack Mitt Romney](#) on free-market capitalism, which is at the center of the modern Republican Party?

Gingrich has never been known as one to distinguish good ideas from bad, but consider the other Republicans who have involved themselves in an endeavor which will likely go down as a text-book example of political stupidity.

There is Barry Bennett, the longtime establishment Republican operative from Ohio, who supposedly paid [for the anti-Bain film](#). Did he think this was smart Republican political strategy? A longtime Ohio Republican activist and national Republican fundraiser who knows Bennett said, "I'm shocked." He acknowledged, "Barry is a gun for hire," but said that mainstream Republicans would find the attack piece repulsive.

Then there is the film's director, [Jason Killian Meath](#), a former aide to GOP veterans Ed Gillespie and Miss. Gov. Haley Barbour among others. I spoke to Dave Fuscus, the president of Xenophon, a corporate PR firm with clients that certainly don't harbor animosity toward the free market, and Meath's current employer. Fuscus said his firm had nothing to do with the anti-Bain film and that Meath had done the project on his own time through a separate company, [Cicero-Media](#). Does Meath think imitating Sen. Ted Kennedy's 1994 anti-Bain ads is going to boost his career in GOP circles?

The list of those ingesting stupid pills continues. Rick Tyler, former Gingrich aide and now the head of the [super PAC](#) that bought the anti-Bain film, said that he's a pro-market capitalist. Really? I'm not sure other pro-market capitalist politicians would agree. The film is an attack on capitalism. As [Jim Pethokoukis of the American Enterprise Institute](#) wrote today, "Of course, Romney and Bain weren't in the game to create jobs. They were in it to make money for their investors and themselves. Then again, the same would go for Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Michael Dell, Warren Buffett and just about every other successful entrepreneur and investor you could name. But that is the miracle of free-market capitalism. The pursuit of profits by creating value benefits the rest of society through higher incomes, more jobs, and better products and services. This isn't 'destructive creation' — like, say, crippling U.S. fossil fuel production before 'clean energy' sources are viable — but 'creative destruction' where innovation and efficiency sweep away the old and replace it with a more productive and wealthier society." Apparently none of the people involved with this project grasped this or understood that this is what Republicans believe.

Next up is Texas Gov. Rick Perry. If there's a dumb gimmick (repealing the 16th and 17th Amendment, sending Social Security to the states) in view, he's for it. So sure enough, he jumped on the bandwagon decrying the pink slips that Bain has issued. Today he [said](#): "Now I have no doubt that Mitt Romney was worried about pink slips — whether he was going to have enough of them to hand out because his company Bain Capital with all the jobs that they killed, I'm sure he was worried that he'd run out of pink slips ..□.□. There is something inherently wrong when getting rich off failure and sticking it to someone else is how you do your business and I happen to think that's indefensible." Thunk. Not what the "real" conservatives in the right-wing blogosphere had in mind when they toiled for him all these months.

And finally, there is Sheldon Adelson, longtime friend of Gingrich an major donor to Republican causes. [Did he intend his \\$5 million](#) for the super PAC to be used to attack capitalism? Somehow I get the sense this was not what he had in mind.

The entire effort has the potential to put the final nail in Gingrich's presidential campaign coffin and cement his reputation as the most reckless man in politics As [Tim Pawlenty](#), a Romney supporter, said today on the topic of Bain, "It's an old issue, and first of all, it's the Democrats' issue, it's the issue that Barack Obama comes out after Mitt on. The Democrats have brought this out for years. For Newt or other Republicans to be attacking private enterprise in this way, I think, is really just embracing the Democrats' message. It's, unfortunately, not what Republicans should be doing." But Gingrich is above his party. Remember, he's Churchillian! (You may recall when there was push back on his first anti-Bain attack, Gingrich retreated, saying he should not have phrased his criticisms in that way.)

This is the Gingrich effect writ large: Creating havoc, blemishing careers and giving the Democrats plenty of laughs. Gingrich is likely to do poorly tomorrow as will Perry (making two rotten outings in a row for both of them). There is no appetite in the GOP for these candidates or

their brand of anti-capitalistic pandering. The historian from Freddie Mac and the crony capitalist from Austin do not, we clearly see, embrace the Tea Party ethos. The referendum on this entire gambit should be swift. Whether it ultimately helps Romney or not, Gingrich is a reminder of the very worst in American politics.

## Washington Post

### [City: Rat population has 'exploded' around Occupy D.C. camps](#)

by Annie Gowen

The rat population around the two Occupy D.C. camps at McPherson Square and Freedom Plaza has “exploded” since protesters began their vigil in October, according to Mohammad N. Akhter, the director of the District’s Department of Health.

Akhter said in an interview Monday that city health inspectors have seen rats running openly through both camps and spotted numerous new burrows and nests underneath hay-stuffed pallets occupiers are using for beds. Both campsites had working kitchens for weeks until last week, but [protesters at McPherson Square voluntarily closed down theirs](#) after health inspectors pointed out unsanitary conditions during an informal monitoring visit.

Akhter said his concerns about the health and safety at the camps prompted him to order a city-wide review of conditions there, including input from health inspectors, mental health professionals, experts on the homeless and others. He is reviewing their findings this week.

“I’m very supportive of their rights and ability to demonstrate but I have concerns about their personal safety,” Akhter said.

The National Park Service has official jurisdiction over the two camps and will make the final decision whether to evict protesters. But Akhter said he will advise the federal government to close the camps if sanitation conditions warrant doing so. He also said he would unilaterally move to evacuate the camps if there were a blizzard or severe winter storm.

Akhter, who is originally from Pakistan and has worked for the District government for over 20 years, said that the situation in the two parks is reminiscent of refugee camps he has toured overseas in the Middle East and Africa during his public health career. He said he fears disaster could strike during a severe winter storm.

“Going down to these camps, it’s no different than refugee camps,” Akhter said. “People are living in very primitive conditions and they’re doing it by choice. They are very brave and thoughtful people, but my concern is that they should also take care of themselves. When the weather goes bad suddenly we’re watching a tragedy unfold in the middle of Washington, D.C. ”





