

BIPARTISAN CONCERN ABOUT THE DANGERS OF MCPALIN'S HATE- MONGERING

Former McCain Campaign Chair John Weaver:

John Weaver, McCain's former top strategist, said top Republicans have a responsibility to temper this behavior.

"People need to understand, for moral reasons and the protection of our civil society, the differences with Sen. Obama are ideological, based on clear differences on policy and a lack of experience compared to Sen. McCain," Weaver said. "And from a purely practical political vantage point, please find me a swing voter, an undecided independent, or a torn female voter that finds an angry mob mentality attractive."

"Sen. Obama is a classic liberal with an outdated economic agenda. We should take that agenda on in a robust manner. As a party we should not and must not stand by as the small amount of haters in our society question whether he is as American as the rest of us. Shame on them and shame on us if we allow this to take hold."

Republican advisor David Gergen:

COOPER: There's also the question of ruling after this, and bringing the country together. It's going to be all the more harder to do that whoever wins with all this anger out there.

GERGEN: This—I think one of the most striking things we've seen now in the

last few day. We've seen it in a Palin rally. We saw it at the McCain rally today. And we saw it to a considerable degree during the rescue package legislation. There is this free floating sort of whipping around anger that could really lead to some violence. I think we're not far from that.

COOPER: Really?

GERGEN: I think it's so--well, I really worry when we get people--when you get the kind of rhetoric that you're getting at these rallies now. I think it's really imperative that the candidates try to calm people down. And that's why I've argued not only because of the question of the ugliness of it.

Republican Frank Schaeffer:

John McCain: If your campaign does not stop equating Sen. Barack Obama with terrorism, questioning his patriotism and portraying Mr. Obama as "not one of us," I accuse you of deliberately feeding the most unhinged elements of our society the red meat of hate, and therefore of potentially instigating violence.

[snip]

Stop! Think! Your rallies are beginning to look, sound, feel and smell like lynch mobs.

John McCain, you're walking a perilous line. If you do not stand up for all that is good in America and declare that Senator Obama is a patriot, fit for office, and denounce your hate-filled supporters when they scream out "Terrorist" or "Kill him," history will hold you responsible for all that follows.

John McCain and Sarah Palin, you are

playing with fire, and you know it. You are unleashing the monster of American hatred and prejudice, to the peril of all of us. You are doing this in wartime. You are doing this as our economy collapses. You are doing this in a country with a history of assassinations.

Change the atmosphere of your campaign. Talk about the issues at hand. Make your case. But stop stirring up the lunatic fringe of haters, or risk suffering the judgment of history and the loathing of the American people – forever.

We will hold you responsible.

Retiring GOP Congressman Ray LaHood:

LaHood supports the McCain ticket, but doesn't like what he sees at some of the McCain-Palin rallies: When Barack Obama's name has been mentioned by Sarah Palin, there are shouts of "terrorist," and LaHood says Palin should put a stop to it.

"Look it. This doesn't befit the office that she's running for. And frankly, people don't like it."

Congressman LaHood says it could backfire on the Republican ticket.

He says the names that Obama is being called, "Certainly don't reflect the character of the man."

Ta-Nehishi Coates:

When the McCain campaign cast the spell of diabolical jingoism, they have no idea of the forces they are toying with. We remember Martin Luther King's murder as a sad and tragic event. Less remembered is the fact that ground-work for King's murder was seeded, not simply

by rank white supremacy, but by people who slandered King as a communist.

This was not some notion bandied about by conspiracy theorist, but an accusation proffered by men who were the pillars of the modern Republican Party:

As late as 1964, Falwell was attacking the 1964 Civil Rights Act as "civil wrongs" legislation. He questioned "the sincerity and intentions of some civil rights leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., James Farmer, and others, who are known to have left-wing associations." Falwell charged, "It is very obvious that the Communists, as they do in all parts of the world, are taking advantage of a tense situation in our land, and are exploiting every incident to bring about violence and bloodshed."

Falwell was **not alone**. These men didn't kill Martin Luther King, but they contributed to an atmosphere of nationalism, white supremacy and cheap unreflective patriotism that ultimately got a lot of people killed. Confronted with Apartheid South Africa, men like Helms and Falwell used the same "communist" defense. While Mandella wasted away in prison, they dismissed the whole thing as a communist plot.

Let me be clear—This is the ghost that McCain Campaign is summoning. This is the Ring Of Power that they want to wield. The Muslim charge, the "Hussein" thing is nothing more than today's red-baiting, and it is what it was then—a cover for racists.

David Frum:

Those who press this Ayers line of attack are whipping Republicans and conservatives into a fury that is going to be very hard to calm after November. Is it really wise to send conservatives into opposition in a mood of disdain and fury for a man who may well be the next president of the United States, incidentally the first African-American president? Anger is a very bad political adviser. It can isolate us and push us to the extremes at exactly the moment when we ought to be rebuilding, rethinking, regrouping and recruiting.

Joe Klein:

But seriously, folks, I'm beginning to worry about the level of craziness on the Republican side, the over-the-top, stampede-the-crowd statements by everyone from McCain on down, the vehemence of the crowds that McCain and Palin are drawing with people shouting "Kill him" and "He's a terrorist" and "Off with his head."

Watch the tape of the guy screaming, "He's a terrorist!" McCain seems to shudder at that, he rolls his eyes... and I thought for a moment he'd admonish the man. But he didn't. And now he's selling the Ayres non-story full-time. Yes, yes, it's all he has. True enough: he no longer has his honor. But we are on the edge of some real serious craziness here and it would be nice if McCain did the right thing and told his more bloodthirsty supporters to go home and take a cold shower.

Digby:

We are entering a turbulent period in our country. Validating a bogus

accusation that your political rival is a terrorist in our current environment is the most irresponsible thing I've seen a campaign do in many a year. They know they are very likely going to lose this election. And McCain certainly knows that the main reason he is losing is because of the dramatic failures of fellow failed Republican George W. Bush. But even knowing that his candidacy was always very likely doomed is not stopping him from releasing this poison into the bloodstream of the body politic, a poison which will be with us for a long time to come. I guess that's what McCain means when he says that Americans should fight for a cause greater than themselves. That cause, evidently, is him.

Andrew Sullivan:

McCain and Palin have decided to stoke this rage, to foment it, to encourage paranoid notions that somehow Obama is a "secret" terrorist or Islamist or foreigner. These are base emotions in both sense of the word.

But they are also very very dangerous. This is a moment of maximal physical danger for the young Democratic nominee. And McCain is playing with fire. If he really wants to put country first, he will attack Obama on his policies – not on these inflammatory, personal, creepy grounds. This is getting close to the atmosphere stoked by the Israeli far right before the assassination of Rabin.

For God's sake, McCain, stop it. For once in this campaign, put your country first.

John Sweeney:

Sen. John McCain, Gov. Sarah Palin and

the leadership of the Republican party have a fundamental moral responsibility to denounce the violent rhetoric that has pervaded recent McCain and Palin political rallies. When rally attendees shout out such attacks as "terrorist" or "kill him" about Sen. Barack Obama, when they are cheered on by crowds incited by McCain-Palin rhetoric – it is chilling that McCain and Palin do nothing to object.

Paul Krugman:

The crisis isn't the only scary thing going on. Something very ugly is taking shape on the political scene: as McCain's chances fade, the crowds at his rallies are, by all accounts, increasingly gripped by insane rage. It's not just a mob phenomenon – it's visible in the right-wing media, and to some extent in the speeches of McCain and Palin.

[snip]

What happens when Obama is elected? It will be even worse than it was in the Clinton years. For sure there will be crazy accusations, and I wouldn't be surprised to see some violence.

Greg Sargent:

To my knowledge neither McCain nor Palin has uttered a single syllable of protest as their crowds indulged their fear and loathing of Obama. It's hard to overstate how reckless and lacking in leadership this is – and how dangerous this is, too.

[snip]

But neither McCain nor Palin has taken a single step to do anything like that. Surely that's the big story here.