

Editorials

Letters

Liberty and justice for some

Last May, this newspaper published a letter I had written informing your readers about an incident I suffered on April 22, 2007. I'm the fellow who the Lampasas County Sheriff's Department S.W.A.T. team called on the phone, informing me that my laundromat was on fire and then assaulted me on my driveway as I ran out of my house en route to a fire that had not occurred. They did this because my wife's immediate supervisor made a false report stating I had taken her hostage. Her supervisor made this report in retaliation to my having reported violations a month prior to that to Child Protective Services that were occurring within the facility of my wife's employment.

The Sheriff's Department did not properly investigate the report and went into attack mode because as one of the deputies recently told me, "the report came from a reliable informant." This reliable informant is in fact a friend of the sheriff and was abusing her position within the community. This motivated the sheriff not to respond to my written request under the Freedom of Information Act not to release the incident reports I had requested afterward.

Every deputy in the Sheriff's Department knew instantly that the informant had lied and that the reason for the lie was retaliation for the 32 CPS violations the facility had been cited for a month prior to the assault on my driveway. However, even after my repeated requests that their informant be charged for giving false information, the Sheriff's Department refused to consider or act on knowledge of the criminal act.

I believe if I had made that false report the Sheriff's Department would have charged me immediately for violating state law. However, in Lampasas County, if you are friends with the sheriff you'll receive the privileges of select law enforcement.

Lometa's police chief also has ignored my requests for prosecution and requests for the April 22 driveway incident reports. The Lometa police are attempting to cover up the incident because the chief and I have personal differences, and they were as guilty as the informant of imposing personal vendettas with your tax dollars. I also have had personal disagreements with the sheriff over the years when they have failed to properly do their job, not because I was involved in any criminal activity.

The informant also immediately fired the woman who is my ex-wife, stating to the State Labor Board that my ex-wife had made a threat to kill one of the facility's owners and three employees. When the labor board requested written statements, the facility was unable to back up the lie. My ex-wife was granted her unemployment wages.

If you are working in Lometa, beware of angering your employer because they just might sic a S.W.A.T. team on you and then continue to attack your family with lies and deceptions. All with the full help of the local law enforcement. The pledge of allegiance ends with the words "with liberty and justice for all."

Since the driveway assault has occurred, I've had to start disposing of my properties, incurring major financial loss. I refuse to live in an area where law enforcement follows the doctrines of Adolf Hitler. I also refuse to pay taxes on a business that goes unprotected by local law enforcement.

The people in this country are in full knowledge that their elected officials are corrupt, yet they repeatedly continue to vote for the same people right down to local levels of our government. Are we lazy, ignorant or cowards? Probably all the above. We dishonor the sacrifices made by our military over the last 200 years.

I do wish all in your community liberty and justice for all. As for me, I'm leaving and moving back to the United States of America.

Terry Lacey Hamilton

Letters Policy

The Lampasas Dispatch Record encourages letters from its readers. Letters should be to the point, typed if at all possible, and signed. Address and telephone numbers also should be included for verification purposes. Only one letter per writer will be considered in a 60-day period.

Letters will be printed on a space-available basis. Letters should stick with issues, and not simply be personal attacks. Letters endorsing a particular position on issues of local interest will be accepted, however letters endorsing a candidate for political office will not be accepted.

We reserve the right to edit for length, content and potentially libelous statements. Correspondence should be mailed to: Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 631, Lampasas, TX 76550. Or send an opinion to letters@lampasasdispatchrecord.com.



No week for weak candidates

There is perhaps one advantage worth noting in having a long, looning presidential campaign: You get to see the candidates react to a variety of circumstances. Though, from Barack Obama's angle, that's not precisely an advantage.

In one week's time, Obama: 1. finds himself deeply embarrassed by his pastor's racial rants and by his own inability to explain how he never heard any of these rants during 20 years of church attendance.

2. signals his economic ideas aren't quite up to the challenge of differentiating himself from the rest of the presidential field while proposing constructive solutions to the mess in which we're stunned to find ourselves.

As for No. 1, Obama demonstrates his probable ignorance of some folk adages: that a man is known by the company he keeps, and that when you lie down with dogs, you may cheerfully expect to arise with a flea infestation. Meaning he never realized, as the Rev. Jeremiah "God D— America" Wright expounded before him, that this stuff could stir up a storm for a bright young presidential candidate?

Not many people suppose Obama believes the trash Wright heaps before his hearers. You get associated with that trash, nonetheless, by mutely staring as it piles up. What about the trouble George W. Bush got in for speaking at Bob Jones University, which banned interracial dating? Down came the fury of the Democrats and the media upon him. He had to apologize. Obama didn't notice? Thought perhaps a black man enjoyed exemption from the conversational standards imposed on white men? Not intuitive. Not what you'd call good judgment.

As for No. 2, while blood accumulates in the gutters of Wall Street, Obama flashes his economic credentials by spurning President Bush's plans for extension of the tax cuts due soon to expire. His party on Capitol Hill made the same noises last week in laying out their design for the next budget. At least, that was before the weekend drama that saw the Federal Reserve engineer the takeover of Bear Stearns by J.P. Morgan — to avert the unknowable consequences of seeing so large an economic player simply fall apart.

The call to let "tax cuts for the wealthy" — as liberals call them — simply go away and rates rebound shows naivete of a highly beguiling sort. What Obama is saying, in a bid to be taken seriously as an economic

William Murchison



thinker, is that the present victims haven't been kicked hard enough — let's take more money from them as the penalty for having lost so much. Boy, if having their taxes hiked and their social usefulness questioned doesn't inspire them to work harder, what would?

Not that voters are precisely wagging their tails in empathy with the Big Rich who squandered so many big bucks on high living during the boom. Not that foreclosures and high gasoline prices, along with rising prices for groceries, don't assail the (relatively) poorer classes because I assure they do.

No, the point is that if a presidential candidate, at a moment of severe national stress, can't do better than propose the absurd for the sake of discomfiting the man whose job he wants — well, what can he do?

Obamamania has always been about hope and change — of which we certainly could use some, assuming they came in a form calculated to improve the way we live. From a Harvard man, one expects a little bit better than Obama lately has been delivering. True, he may yet find his footing and move forward again. It's a looning campaign. For now, the colt makes his equine competition look better without their having had really to exert themselves.

Obamamania is about salesmanship: the call to sink into the driver's seat (switching metaphors from one transportation mode to another) and careen off the dealership lot without asking too many questions. Such as: How much gas you got in the tank? And did someone inspect this thing?

The looning campaign is about inspecting this thing — the Obama movement — from top to bottom, looking for rents in the upholstery and listening for pings in the engine.

Well, guess what ... ?

William Murchison is a columnist with Creators Syndicate.

Words for a very troubled world

I think the following poem is so appropriate at this time in our lives with our world in so much trouble and our men overseas -- and especially being that it is Easter.

Winnie L. McLean

I Am the Light of the World

Oh, Father, up in heaven,
We have wandered far away
From Jesus Christ, Our Saviour,
Who arose on Easter Day...
And the promise of salvation
That God gave us when Christ died
We have often vaguely questioned,
Even doubted and denied...
We've forgotten why You sent us
Jesus Christ Your Only Son,
And in arrogance and ignorance
It's our will, not Thine, be done...
Oh, shed Thy Light upon us
As Easter dawns this year,
And may we feel The Presence
Of the Risen Saviour near...
And, God, in Thy great wisdom,
Lead us in the way that's right,
And may "The Darkness" of this world
Be conquered by "Thy Light."

--Helen Steiner Rice

School project

Hi! My name is Joey Ballard. My class is doing a 20-page report on a state, and I need your help. I chose the state of Texas and would be so happy if you could publish this and ask your readers to send me things

Linda Chavez



Obama ignores biggest issue: breakdown of the family

I expected more from Barack Obama. Like many Americans, I had hoped his candidacy might transcend the racial divide that has separated this country for too many generations. I disagree with Sen. Obama on virtually every important public policy issue, and yet I have watched every televised speech he's made and every debate with a sense of admiration. I want him to succeed in his party's nomination battle, even when I fear, as a staunch Republican, that he might be the more difficult candidate to defeat in November. But he has profoundly disappointed me in his major address on race.

The speech, which attempted to quell the furor surrounding his spiritual advisor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, presented an opportunity for Obama to tackle the real issue facing blacks today, which has little to do with race. But instead, Obama fell back on the tired formulas of the past.

He began with a stunningly inappropriate example of moral equivalence:

"I can no more disown [Wright] than I can my white grandmother ... a woman who once confessed her fear of black men who passed by her on the street, and who on more than one occasion has uttered racial or ethnic stereotypes that made me cringe." Never mind that Obama didn't choose his grandmother but did choose his church and spiritual mentor. Wright's racist paranoia and repeated, vicious, public denunciations of America — for example, that our government created AIDS in a laboratory in a genocidal plot to infect blacks — are hardly the same as the occasional prejudiced remark voiced privately.

But more fundamentally, Obama avoided dealing in any meaningful way with the single most important issue facing the black community — the breakdown of the black family. This issue, and its consequences, explains far more about the failure of blacks to thrive today than racism or lack of social spending.

Nearly seven in 10 black babies are born to single mothers. These children will fail in school at higher rates than those born to two parents. They are more likely to become involved in criminal activity. Their poverty rates will be higher. And they are far more likely to repeat this pattern by giving birth to or fathering a child out of wedlock themselves.

Barack Obama could talk about this problem in a personal way. While his parents were married, his African father abandoned his mother in his infancy, and he was raised primarily by his white grandparents, including the grandmother whom he admits is "a woman who sacrificed again and again for me, a woman who loves me as much as she loves anything in this world."

But instead of confronting the problem at the core of the black/white economic divide, he chose to repeat the litany of liberal explanations. Even while acknowledging the role of welfare policies in the erosion of black families, his main emphasis was on "[a] lack of economic opportunity among black men, and the shame and frustration that came from not being able to provide for one's family. ...The lack of basic services in so many urban black neighborhoods — parks for kids to play in, police walking the beat, regular garbage pickup and building code enforcement — all helped create a cycle of violence, blight and neglect that continue to haunt us."

Politicians in general — black, white, and brown — have avoided talking about illegitimacy, even though it threatens not just the black community but increasingly Hispanics and poor whites as well. Nearly half of Hispanic babies are being born to single mothers — a big increase in just the last few years — and one in four white babies are born out of wedlock. And when you factor in high divorce rates, substantial numbers of American children will spend a major portion of their childhoods in female-headed households.

This crisis, far more than race, is the most important social issue of our time. Obama could use his bully pulpit to talk about it, but instead he chose to try to explain away black racism and rehash racial grievances, both black and white.

Ironically, given Sen. Obama's problems with his own church, hundreds of black churches and faith-based organizations around the country are involved in efforts to encourage marriage, including some in Chicago. Obama could have proven himself a genuinely courageous leader had he been involved in this effort.

Linda Chavez is the author of "An Unlikely Conservative: The Transformation of an Ex-Liberal" and a columnist with Creators Syndicate.

From the Bible

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."

Revelation 5:13

Maureen McGovern
Beverly Hills, California