

## Right Thinking:

I suppose I should be careful. It's wise to tread lightly when things appear to be going well for one's own side of a fight. It's probably not a good idea to get too cocky when it's so early in the skirmish. But I just got a look at some of the news and quotes from the Conservative Political Action Conference and I had to smile. That's the annual meeting of the conservative movers and shakers in the Republican Party. I'd have to say they are a bit scrambled right now. For sure, Obama, has given them a clear target, there's no doubt that "Socialism" will be their focus for the next four or eight years. Obama's sweeping program for big spending and big oversight is in their crosshairs. But that's the end of the hopeful news for them.

For one thing Mitt Romney has emerged, albeit so very early, as the most popular choice among the attendees to be their standard bearer. This is the same Mitt we all remember. The guy who changed everything he said about anything he said whenever it seemed appropriate. When he was the Governor of a liberal state, Massachusetts, he was quite the progressive. When Mike Huckabee frightened him in the presidential primaries he got that conservative religion, big time, he began talking about values and responsibility. When Obama started to roll up primary victories Romney commenced to use the word "change" in every sentence of every stump speech for a month. You can always count on Mitt to wet his finger, hold it high in the air and carefully consider which way the wind is blowing before he decides who he's going to be...today.

Bobby Jindal is supposed to be a rising star in the Party. He brings a refreshing dash of color, he's smart as a whip and he has no tawdry Washington D.C. past that can bring a man down fast. Unfortunately his first time out in the major leagues he came across as a high school sophomore trying to make the varsity debating team. His nationally televised response to the President's speech on the economy was rated a C-. And that C- minus was the consensus of the people attending that pivotal conservative gathering I mentioned before. These are precisely the people who want Bobby to do well. He'll get better, I'm sure but first he has to take some vocal training, drop his voice an octave or so and stop sounding exactly like Jimmy Carter.

Rush Limbaugh was the knockout keynote speaker and he brought the house down. The man is brilliant, I'm serious. He is a brilliant radio performer, the best in a generation or two. That guy sells more advertising minutes at higher rates than the next five radio stars put together. He is the Arthur Godfrey of his time. Unfortunately he could not possibly run for office. First of all he would be taking an enormous cut in wealth, which is how he judges everything, and secondly he'd have to actually do something instead of just yelling about it. Rush is not equipped for either of these. Public service is not an option.

Eric Cantor is really sharp. Keep your eye on him. He has the Obama nerd factor going for him. He talks like he's actually thought about what he's saying. He's just getting his career going and I think it will be distinguished. Stay tuned.

And then there's Sarah Palin. I have already said too much about Sarah. I'm afraid that I over-indulged during the '08 presidential race. So many targets and so little time. Governor Palin will end up as a blip on a footnote from a torn out page of an obscure history book.

But you know what? None of this really matters. There is only one gigantic factor that will decide everything political in the next several years. That is, simply put, will the American economy recover and/or thrive under the leadership of Barack Obama? If it doesn't, if we're still wallowing around in the stew we are currently in, Obama will not be reelected. He might not even run. The other side could nominate anyone breathing, even Governor Spice, and win easily. No question.

And if he does pull it off, if the Obama administration actually makes the new New Deal work, if Americans regain the vision that life is better than before, if we can point to real material gain and psychological renewal, there is no power on earth that will beat him.

That's why the opposition wants him to fail and why the country needs him to succeed.