

viewpoints

## Far right may get what it deserves

By Kathleen Parker

Article Last Updated: 02/09/2008 09:53:19 PM MST

Kamikaze Republicans — those who say they'll never vote for John McCain because he isn't conservative enough — may get what they deserve.

The Clintons.

Many on the right, including Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck, Ann Coulter, James Dobson and others, have declared they'd rather vote for Hillary Clinton — or not vote at all — than cast a ballot for McCain. These self-appointed spokesmen for conservatism insist that voting for Clinton is a matter of principle: Better to go down on the strength of one's convictions than to be a morally compromised placeholder, they say.

To be sure, political cannibalism makes for interesting dinner conversation, but the winner eventually starves to death.

It isn't necessary to love everything McCain has done to vote for him should he be the nominee. But it isn't possible to argue that there's no difference between McCain and

Clinton (or Barack Obama), as some Republicans insist.

A form of irrational conservatism has taken hold when being true to oneself or to the party is viewed as more important than, say, turning over the country to people who want to raise taxes and impose socialized health care. Principles shouldn't be so inflexible that strict adherence elevates a worse alternative.

Exactly which core principle facilitates the garnisheeing of wages to pay for mandatory insurance coverage, as Clinton has proposed? In a recent interview with ABC's George Stephanopoulos, Clinton said that her government-ordered insurance program would require an enforcement mechanism that might include "you know, going after people's wages." Where are those core principles when a Democratic president is appointing judges to the Supreme Court? Given that five of the nine justices will be 70 or older come November, it's a near certainty that one or more will be replaced in the next four to eight years. Justice John Paul Stevens will be 88 in April.

The principles that Republicans rail about are not inconsequential. Small government and free-market economics were once ideas that most Americans embraced. They went hand-in-hand with strong families and moral values that didn't need redefining every four years.

McCain's enemies see him as having abandoned those principles with the McCain-Feingold campaign-finance reform bill, which

Advertisement

TARGET WEB COUPON

EXPIRES 3/8/08

# FREE Twenty 4x6" basic prints



Offer available at Target One-hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One-hour service limited to machine capacity. Limit one item or offer per coupon. Offer not available for prints made on the Kodak Picture Kiosk. Void if copied, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. No cash value. Maximum retail value \$4.40 for combined free offer.

9856-0113-2647-5849-0376-5806-89

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

limited political speech, and the McCain-Kennedy immigration bill that would allow for gradual citizenship for illegal immigrants who meet certain criteria.

McCain also has suggested that Americans be allowed to buy Canadian drugs that are cheaper because Canada's socialized health system imposes price controls. And he's on board with environmentalist initiatives to reduce global warming.

These are positions with which conservatives would naturally argue. And perhaps they are right that McCain is more moderate than conservative, but so is the nation.

Serious people don't really believe that the U.S. government is going to round up 11 million or 12 million people and ship them back to wherever they came from. It isn't going to happen.

McCain's fire-breathing opponents, meanwhile, disregard his support of other positions Republicans hold dear. He has a strong pro-life voting record (except for supporting federal funding of embryonic stem cell research), has opposed wasteful spending, and has been steadfast in supporting the war. But, stepping outside the GOP box, he opposes torture, including waterboarding.

How dare a man who was tortured for five years in a Vietnamese prison depart from the party line? Anti-McCain rage for many comes down to personality. He doesn't play nice and his

independence annoys those who prefer the team player mentality.

But Republicans' obstinance in claiming to prefer Clinton to McCain is arrogance of a Clintonian order.

Advertisement

TARGET WEB COUPON

EXPIRES 3/8/08

## FREE Twenty 4x6" basic prints



9856-0113-2647-5849-0376-5806-89

Offer available at Target One-hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One-hour service limited to machine capacity. Limit one item or offer per coupon. Offer not available for prints made on the Kodak Picture Kiosk. Void if copied, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. No cash value. Maximum retail value \$4.40 for combined free offer.

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™