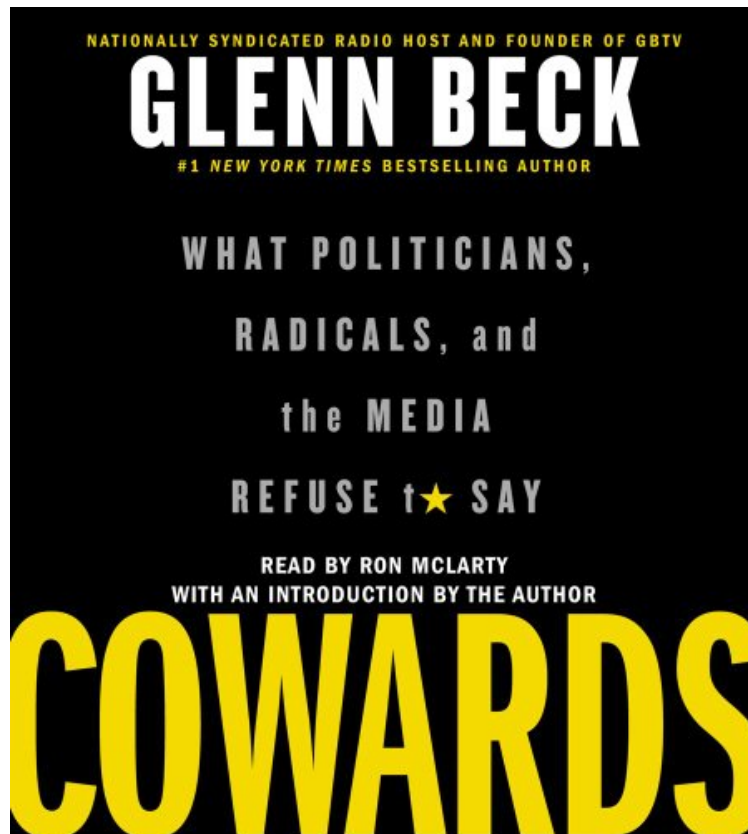


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Cowards: What Politicians, Radicals, and the Media Refuse to Say

Glenn Beck

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the following review helpful. A great story. By Tammy Dean. Once again, another really good read. This story holds your interest and is hard to put down. It is a great story about the service our faithful friends take their job seriously and how faithful they are. It is a great story and a must read

COURAGE > COWARDS As we approach the most important presidential election in America's history, something has been lost among all of the debates, attack ads, and super-PACs something that Americans used to hold in very high regard: **THE TRUTH**. Glenn Beck likes to say that the truth has no agenda but there's another side to that: people who have agendas rarely care about the truth. And, these days, it seems like "everyone" has an agenda. The media leads with stories that rate over those that matter. Politicians put lobbyists and electability over honesty. Radicals alter history in order to change the future. In "Cowards," Glenn Beck exposes the truth about thirteen important issues that have been hijacked by deceit. Whether out of spite, greed, or fear, these are the things that no one seems to be willing to have an honest conversation about. For example: * How our two-party **POLITICAL SYSTEM** often leaves voters with **NO GOOD OPTIONS**. * How extremists are slowly integrating **ISLAMIC LAW** into our **SOCIETY**. * How **PROGRESSIVE** religious leaders like **JIM WALLIS** are politicizing the Bible. * How the **CARTEL VIOLENCE** on our border is **FAR WORSE** than people realize. * How **LIBERTARIAN** has been **INTENTIONALLY** turned into a **DIRTY WORD**. * How **GEORGE SOROS** has amassed enough **MONEY** and **POWER** to **INFLUENCE** entire **ECONOMIES**. In some cases, the truth is out there, but people simply don't want to hear it. It's much easier, and certainly a lot more convenient, to keep our blinders on. After all, as a quote attributed to President James Garfield made clear, The truth will set you free, but first it will make you miserable. Miserable or not, the truth can no longer be something we hope for; it must be something we live. When courage prevails, cowards do not and this book was written to ensure that's exactly what happens."

About the Author Glenn Beck, the nationally syndicated radio host and founder of TheBlaze television network, is a thirteen-time #1 bestselling author and is one of the few authors in history to have had #1 national bestsellers in the fiction, nonfiction, self-help, and children's picture book genres. His recent fiction works include the thrillers *Agenda 21*, *The Overton Window*, and its sequel, *The Eye of Moloch*; his many nonfiction titles include *Conform*, *Miracles and Massacres*, *Control*, and *Being George Washington*. For more information about Glenn Beck, his books, and TheBlaze TV network, visit GlennBeck.com and TheBlaze.com. Ron McLarty has appeared on Broadway in *That Championship Season*, *Our Country's Good*, and *Moonchildren*. His film credits include *Two Bits*, *The Postman*, and *The Flamingo Kid*. He has starred on television in *Spenser for Hire* and *Cop Rock*. Mr. McLarty is also a novelist and an award-winning playwright. Glenn Beck, the nationally syndicated radio host and founder of TheBlaze television network, is a thirteen-time #1 bestselling author and is one of the few authors in history to have had #1 national bestsellers in the fiction, nonfiction, self-help, and children's picture book genres. His recent fiction works include the thrillers *Agenda 21*, *The Overton Window*, and its sequel, *The Eye of Moloch*; his many nonfiction titles include *Conform*, *Miracles and Massacres*, *Control*, and *Being George Washington*. For more information about Glenn Beck, his books, and TheBlaze TV network, visit GlennBeck.com and TheBlaze.com. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. "I am impatient with those Republicans who after the last election rushed into print saying, 'We must broaden the base of our party'—when what they meant was to fuzz up and blur even more the differences between ourselves and our opponents." —Ronald Reagan, 1975 **I'M SURE** you've noticed how little choice there seems to be in politics. I hear it over and over again from people who call in to my radio show and tell me that they don't see any point in voting since both candidates are equally terrible. They're often right. In 2008, our choice for president was between a Republican who wanted to spend billions to "combat" global warming and a Democrat who wanted to spend hundreds of billions to do the same thing. In 2004, it was between the incumbent George W. Bush, whose embarrassing conservative record we'll cover later, and John Kerry—a man who, by some accounts, had been the most liberal member of the Senate for multiple years. If it seems like no "real" conservative or libertarian candidate for president ever makes it very far it's because they don't. They are derided and marginalized by the establishment and mainstream media until their names become toxic. By the time the power base is done with a candidate who might pose a threat, he's become the punch line to a joke, the plot of a Saturday Night Live skit, or the first thing that pops up on Google when you search for "homophobia" or "racist" or "idiot." None of this is happening by chance. It's a shell game, and the progressives who run our political parties, our universities, and our media treat the rest of us like tourists in Times Square. It may occasionally look as if libertarians and small-government candidates have a chance to win the prize—but that's just the way they set up the con. The illusion of victory is omnipresent, but it's just that—an illusion. A con can't ever really be beaten. **THE SHELL GAME TURNS 100** The Big Con started right around 1912. America was given a "choice": Woodrow Wilson or Theodore Roosevelt. The New Freedom or the New Nationalism. Progressive or Progressive. That was the year that Republican became Democrat and Democrat became progressive. Later, after progressives finally had their hands on our wallets, they stopped calling themselves progressives and took the name "liberal" instead. When people caught on to that, the left changed the names to protect the guilty once again. The Con, Revealed Hillary Clinton actually described these bait-and-switch word games pretty

well during a 2007 debate after she was asked if she would define herself as “liberal.” You know, it is a word that originally meant that you were for freedom, that you were for the freedom to achieve, that you were willing to stand against big power and on behalf of the individual. Unfortunately, in the last 30, 40 years, it has been turned up on its head and it’s been made to seem as though it is a word that describes big government, totally contrary to what its meaning was in the 19th and early 20th century. I prefer the word “progressive,” which has a real American meaning, going back to the progressive era at the beginning of the 20th century. Progressives realized long ago that if you rig the game of politics against the small-government option, then you end up with a series of candidates who increasingly blur the line between the parties. Eventually the parties themselves become meaningless—empty vessels that simply serve to funnel money and power through the system. With very few exceptions, our elections are really no longer about whether to grow or cut government’s size and power, but rather by how much they should grow. We debate double-digit increases in social program spending versus single-digit increases. We debate how many new billion-dollar entitlements we should add instead of whether these programs should even exist in the first place. We debate whether teachers unions and the U.S. Department of Education should have more or less power, rather than whether the federal government should have any role in local education at all. All of this is part of the con, and it’s worked to absolute perfection. With very few exceptions even the “boldest” of conservative politicians submit budgets and bills that, a hundred years ago, would’ve been too far left for even a Democrat to propose. Whenever candidates or groups raise their hand and question these debates, invoke the Constitution, or propose “radical” ideas like a balanced budget amendment, shutting down overreaching and ineffective federal agencies, or adhering to the Tenth Amendment, they are ostracized. Why do you think the Tea Party was immediately branded as a bunch of racists and birthers? It’s because they posed a real threat of waking voters up to the fact that Americans are being presented with a never-ending series of false choices. The progressive establishment can’t allow real diversity to stand. The only hope we have of changing this is by first educating people as to how this happened and who’s behind it—and then by presenting a better way forward. That’s what the first two chapters of this book are all about: the virus—progressivism; and the antibiotic—commonsense libertarianism. Yes, we have plenty of other issues to solve, and many of them are covered in this book, but if we don’t start by treating the underlying disease then none of that will matter. So, let’s take a giant step back, get out of the weeds of the twenty-four-hour news cycle and cable channels and Twitter attacks, and ask ourselves this simple but important question: How did we ever get to the point where the conservative/libertarian point of view does not even get a seat at the table?

THE RINO—AN ANCIENT SPECIES It’s pretty easy to spot the people who don’t really fit into the Republican Party. A lot of times these are the same people who frequent the Sunday morning talk shows or are media darlings. I’m talking about people like Arlen Specter, John McCain, and Lindsey Graham. But these types of Republicans are nothing new. Theodore Roosevelt was one of the first RINOs (Republican in Name Only) in American history. Yes, I know, Roosevelt was brave and strong. He explored the world. He strung up rustlers in the Wild West. He wrote more history books than most people ever read. He edited a magazine. (Even if Newt Gingrich were around back then, Teddy Roosevelt would still have been the smartest guy in the room.) All of this made Roosevelt incredibly dangerous when he decided to get on board the Progressive train. And the longer he rode those rails, the more radical he got. His “Square Deal” was one thing. It started the ball rolling. It got the nose of big government under the Constitution’s tent by regulating business and the banks. But then Roosevelt’s progressivism got increasingly more toxic. After he left the White House, he unveiled something he called the “New Nationalism.”

They Really Said It You know, my hero is a guy named Teddy Roosevelt.

—**JOHN MCCAIN AT A PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE IN OCTOBER 2008** And for government to not leave guarantees that you don’t have the ability to change, no private corporation has the purchasing power or the ability to reshape the health system, and in this sense I guess I’m a Theodore Roosevelt Republican. In fact, if I [was] going to characterize my—on health where I come from, I’m a Theodore Roosevelt Republican and I believe government can lean in the regulatory leaning is okay.

—**NEWT GINGRICH** There’s a reason Barack Obama took time out in December 2011 from pretending he was FDR or JFK or Harry Truman or Lincoln (and from golf, too, come to think of it) to channel Roosevelt at Osawatimie, Kansas. Osawatimie is where, in 1910, Roosevelt gave a speech that would sound right at home in today’s Democratic Party. “We should permit [wealth] to be gained only so long as the gaining represents benefit to the community,” Roosevelt told a crowd of thirty thousand listeners. “This, I know, implies a policy of a far more active governmental interference with social and economic conditions in this country than we have yet had, but I think we have got to face the fact that such an increase in governmental control is now necessary. . . .” Two years later, Roosevelt doubled down, turning from rogue elephant to Bull Moose and running for president on his own Progressive Party ticket. The New York Times explained that Roosevelt’s 1912 Progressive Party convention was at best a gathering of “a convention of fanatics.” How bad was Roosevelt’s 1912 campaign? It made people think that Woodrow Wilson was conservative. That’s bad, but what’s far worse is that Roosevelt is the president who some prominent modern-day Republicans, like John McCain and Newt Gingrich, still look up to. Roosevelt certainly wasn’t alone in being a progressive Republican; the GOP was infested with these guys. In 1912, Roosevelt’s Progressive running mate was California governor Hiram Johnson, a big-time Progressive who hated Japanese immigrants. You know who worshipped Johnson? Earl Warren—the same guy who, as the Republican governor of California during

World War II, helped FDR ship the Japanese in his state to internment camps. Sometimes the Truth Slips Out I am keenly aware that there are not a few men who claim to be leaders in the progressive movement who bear unpleasant resemblances to the lamented Robespierre and his fellow progressives of 1791 and '92. —THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Then there was Nebraska's progressive senator George W. Norris, who served nine congressional terms (five in the House and four in the Senate) as a "Republican." Norris was the very model of a RINO. Not only did he endorse FDR in 1932; in 1928 he had also endorsed Democrat Al Smith. Norris also sponsored FDR's Tennessee Valley Authority and Rural Electrification Act (both alongside segregationist Mississippi anti-Semitic congressman John Rankin) and was very pro-Soviet ("Russia is more in accord with the United States . . . than most any other foreign nation").

Bipartisan Progressives I guess it's not really surprising that when Henry A. Wallace (another former progressive Republican) and his communist-controlled Progressive Party staged their national convention in 1948, they hung a huge portrait of the late former supposed Republican George Norris from the rafters. Another big-time Republican progressive was Wisconsin's Senator Robert La Follette Sr. "Fighting Bob" La Follette actually wanted to be the national Progressive standard-bearer in 1912, but two things stood in his way: Teddy Roosevelt, and a nervous breakdown he suffered while delivering a speech in Philadelphia that year. (It must have been really stressful keeping up the small government charade.) In 1924, La Follette finally embraced who he really was, leaving the GOP and running for president as a Progressive against Calvin Coolidge. His platform included nationalizing the country's big industries, an idea that was so good it resulted in an endorsement from the Socialist Party of America.

AN UGLY HISTORY In his 1796 Farewell Address, George Washington put on his spectacles and looked right into the future when he warned us about the dangers of political parties, or factions: The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty. It's hard to find a better example of the "absolute power of the individual" or the "ruins of public liberty" than the way early progressives looked at the weakest members of our society. These people, many of whom are emulated and respected by modern-day politicians, weren't just busy trying to control big business or monetary policy; they also wanted to control society—from cradle to grave. In some ways that's just the natural evolution of their ideology; once somebody thinks they know best about a bunch of things like regulating the snot out of the economy, they think they know best about everything. "Everything," in this case, included determining who was good enough to live, die, and breed. That was what the Progressive Era eugenics movement was all about. Crippled? No children for you. The wrong race? Ditto. Have special needs? You're an embarrassment to society and you'll get none of our attention or care. That's right—the people who advertise themselves as the ones who care most about the "least of us" are actually the people who preferred that the least of us didn't exist. One of the big players in the eugenics movement was a guy named Madison Grant. Since Grant was named after two presidents, he thought he was really great—and, more than that, he thought that you weren't really great at all. In 1916 Grant wrote a huge bestseller titled *The Passing of the Great Race*. It contained gems like this: Mistaken regard for what are believed to be divine laws and a sentimental belief in the sanctity of human life tend to prevent both the elimination of defective infants and the sterilization of such adults as are themselves of no value to the community. The laws of nature require the obliteration of the unfit and human life is valuable only when it is of use to the community or race. As the percentage of incompetents increases, the burden of their support will become ever more onerous until, at no distant date, society will in self-defense put a stop to the supply of feeble-minded and criminal children of weaklings. *The Passing of the Great Race* was translated into German in 1925, and guess who was a big fan? Yep, that's right. "The book is my Bible," Adolf Hitler wrote to Madison Grant. So, what's this got to do with this chapter? Just this: Madison Grant and Theodore Roosevelt were great friends. And when *The Passing of the Great Race* came out, this is what Roosevelt wrote to Grant: "The book is a capital book: in purpose, in vision, in grasp of the facts that our people must need to realize. . . . It is the work of an American scholar and gentleman, and all Americans should be grateful to you for writing it." Senator McCain, is your hero really "a guy named Teddy Roosevelt"? "The laws of nature require the obliteration of the unfit, and human life is valuable only when it is of use to the community or race." —Madison Grant, writing in a book endorsed as "fearless" by Theodore Roosevelt

DAMN HOOVER Back to the national picture. There were three Republican presidents of the 1920s: Warren G. Harding, Calvin Coolidge, and Herbert Hoover. Harding and Silent Cal were true conservatives: they cut spending and taxes; they reduced the national debt; they vetoed bad legislation; their policies fostered growth and prosperity. They got it right. Herbert Hoover was something else entirely. In 1912, Hoover bolted the Republican Party to support Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party ticket. He served in Woodrow Wilson's wartime administration and oversaw the nation's food supply. In 1918, he joined in Wilson's call to elect a Democratic Congress. In 1920, Franklin Roosevelt (another Wilson appointee) even supported Hoover as the Democratic candidate for president—and angled to be his running mate. Because Hoover was a progressive, he reacted exactly how you'd expect when the stock market crashed in October 1929. Like most elected officials today, Hoover simply

didn't trust the free market to correct the situation. Instead, he waded into the Great Depression with his own version of TARP and stimulus plans. Cal vs. Herb It's not all that surprising that Hoover looked to the government after the '29 crash. After all, this is the guy about whom Calvin Coolidge said "for six years that man has given me unsolicited advice—all of it bad." It was Hoover's Republican big government response that set the stage for FDR's even-bigger-government New Deal. Hoover's programs cost so much that, in 1932, presidential hopeful FDR blasted Hoover for "presiding over the greatest spending administration in peacetime in all of history." He charged the Hoover administration with "fostering regimentation without stint or limit." Speaker of the House John Nance Garner, FDR's running mate that year, charged that Hoover was "leading the country down the path of socialism." "We might have done nothing," Hoover said, defending his big-government, big-spending, little-results efforts. "That would have been utter ruin. Instead we met the situation with proposals to private business and to Congress of the most gigantic program of economic defense and counterattack ever evolved in the history of the Republic. . . . No government in Washington has hitherto considered that it held so broad a responsibility for leadership in such times." Regulation! Taxes! Stimulus! Infrastructure! Vote Hoover! [B]efore a year [of the Depression] would pass, Hoover had done damage . . . on three fronts: by intervening in business, by signing a destruction tariff, and by assailing the stock markets. . . . Hoover proceeded undaunted. He ordered governors to increase their public spending when possible. He also pushed for, and got, Congress to endorse large public spending projects: hospitals, bridges. . . . By April 1930 the secretary of commerce would be able to announce that public works spending was at its highest level in five years.

—AMITY SHLAES IN THE FORGOTTEN MAN: A NEW HISTORY OF THE GREAT DEPRESSIONS

Sound familiar? Many years later, after another economic panic, George W. Bush, another Republican president, would claim that he "abandoned free-market principles to save the free-market system . . . to make sure the economy doesn't collapse." The GOP went into the fetal position after the Great Depression left Republican officeholders in the breadlines. Alf "the Kansas Sunflower" Landon, the GOP's hapless 1936 nominee, set the standard for all the "me too" Republican nominees who have followed him. Just elect us, these guys have said for years. We won't repeal anything the Democrats have done. Elect us, and we'll run progressive programs better than the Democrats ever could. In 1940, Wall Street utilities attorney Wendell Willkie followed Landon. Willkie may have been the RINO-est Republican presidential candidate of all time considering that he'd been a registered Democrat until just before emerging as the 1940 long-shot GOP nominee. After his 1940 loss to FDR, Willkie pursued an obnoxious career of lecturing Republicans to be even less conservative than they already were. Even Taft? Just how dismal were the 1940s and '50s for conservatives in the GOP? To a lot of people, the conservative alternative to duds like Wendell Willkie, Tom Dewey, Harold Stassen, and Earl Warren was Ohio senator Robert A. Taft, a guy they called "Mr. Republican." But even Taft was, on occasion, a little squishy. Listen to these words from his colleague Richard Nixon: "As a matter of fact, Taft was a progressive. . . . [H]e had very progressive, advanced views on aid to education, on health care, and on housing." In 1944 rumors began to fly that Willkie might turn his coat again and endorse FDR for a fourth term. Unfortunately, Willkie died before that might have happened, but we do know this: Willkie had a secret meeting that July with a Roosevelt emissary about realigning all the progressive/liberal elements into a single party in 1948. IKE, BARRY, AND TRICKY DICK Some might say that everything changed for the better after Tom Dewey's embarrassing 1948 defeat; that the GOP turned away from progressivism. But that's simply not true. Dwight Eisenhower captured the GOP nomination in 1952 by defeating the more conservative (caveats apply) Senator Robert Taft of Ohio. Compared to what would follow Ike, his administration looks pretty darn good, but compared to what it might have accomplished, it left a lot to be desired. The truth is that Ike's eight years looked very much like what Tom Dewey's "unity" administration might have looked like had he won. Think about it: Dewey's campaign manager became Ike's attorney general; Dewey's foreign policy adviser became Ike's secretary of state; Dewey's running mate Earl Warren became chief justice of the Supreme Court. It's no wonder that Arizona's Barry Goldwater blasted Ike for running a "dime store New Deal." Barry Goldwater. "Mr. Conservative" captured the GOP nomination in 1964, but, let's face it, he was the only bright light around at that point for conservative Republicans. There was, however, an avalanche of liberal, progressive RINOs: New York governor Nelson A. Rockefeller, Pennsylvania governor William W. Scranton, Michigan governor George W. Romney, and senators like Jacob Javits, Tom Kuchel, Kenneth Keating, John Sherman Cooper, Margaret Chase Smith, Leverett Saltonstall, Clifford Case, and George Aiken. And that's not counting Prescott Bush, Chuck Percy, Mark Hatfield, Edward Brooke, or even John Lindsay, who soon became mayor of New York City and drove "Fun City" into the ground. In other words, it was a liberal Republican field day. Goldwater was the exception, not the rule. And with the rest of the RINO bunch manning the ship, we didn't stand a chance of stopping LBJ's "Great Society." After Goldwater was betrayed by party progressives in 1964, Republicans lost their nerve. The conservative recapture of the GOP fell apart. The Washington establishment decided to play it safe. Read our lips: No new Goldwaters! And certainly, they weren't interested in that actor-governor out in California—Ronald Reagan. Nope, the GOP wasn't going to buy into any of that c-r-a-z-y free enterprise, small government stuff anymore. It was going to play it safe—that was how you won elections. Or so we were told. In 1968, the GOP decided to nominate Richard Nixon again. Now, Dick Nixon wasn't only a retread (think Bob Dole, John McCain, or Mitt Romney); he was one seriously bad president—and one really bad example of a progressive

republican.No Explanation Necessary I will be prepared to put on an aggressive and vigorous campaign on a platform of progressive liberalism designed to return our district to the Republican Party. —RICHARD M. NIXON, RUNNING FOR CONGRESS IN 1946

Liberals hated Richard Nixon. They didn't go for his style. They resented the way he helped expose Stalinist agent Alger Hiss in the late 1940s. But, if they were smart, they should've embraced him: down deep he was their compatriot on some very important issues. Conservatives, on the other hand, cut Nixon a lot of slack for a very long time. They shouldn't have. They fell for the argument that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." But Richard Nixon was never a friend of conservatism; he just used the rhetoric and the movement to his own advantage. He played conservatives—and Republicans—for suckers. And Barry Goldwater was one of the biggest suckers of all. Yes, Richard Milhaus Nixon really was Tricky Dick. Nixon not only didn't repeal Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, he went out of his way to put the entire program on steroids. Nixon never balanced a budget (even LBJ did it in 1968–69), but he did create the Environmental Protection Agency and proclaimed Earth Day. He signed OSHA and an Emergency Unemployment Act into law. He recognized Communist China (a policy that I would venture to say has now had a few unintended consequences) and he spent more on social programs than on defense. In fact, Nixon wanted to spend more with his "Family Assistance Program," which would have provided a "guaranteed income" to tens of millions of Americans. Under Nixon, Medicaid's spending skyrocketing 120 percent. He also wrecked what was left of the gold standard and devalued the dollar. And, when inflation ran riot, he instituted wage-and-price controls. Spiro Agnew, Nixon's vice president, was actually an eastern establishment Rockefeller-type Republican who only mouthed conservative words to keep Nixon's Republican base at ease. Liberal Senate minority leader Hugh Scott got it right when he boasted: "The conservatives get the rhetoric; we [the liberals] get the action." New York Times columnist James Reston said of Nixon in 1970: "He is at a critical point in his career. He has been trying to liberate himself from his conservative and anti-Communist past, and work toward a progressive policy at home and a policy of reconciliation with the Communists abroad. . . ." Reston got it only half right. Nixon never really was a conservative; he was always—you guessed it—a progressive. And his favorite president was—you guessed right again—Woodrow Wilson. In fact, while Ronald Reagan placed a portrait of Calvin Coolidge in the Cabinet Room, Nixon hung portraits of Wilson—and Theodore Roosevelt—in his own private office. INTO THE BUSHES I've met George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush. They are both decent, kind, courteous people. But neither of them did a very good job with bringing a true conservative philosophy to the Oval Office. The GOP had come a long way under Ronald Reagan. This new and improved party might not have accomplished everything that conservatives wanted (it never could, for example, figure out how to balance a budget or abolish Jimmy Carter's Department of Education), but it seemed to be finally taking us away from the progressive track that Teddy Roosevelt had laid for the country all those years ago. Reagan's conservatism, however, never seemed to be good enough for the first president Bush. He was too busy ridiculing "voodoo economics" or introducing his own brand of watered-down, progressive "kinder, gentler conservatism." Before you could say "Read my lips, no new taxes," Bush Sr. had blown an 89 percent approval rating and received a pathetic 37.5 percent in the 1992 election. It was pretty much the same with George H. W. Bush's son when he took over eight years later. George W. had marketed his own brand of politics as "compassionate conservatism." He campaigned for the White House without promising to abolish any federal agencies—something that was odd for a true small government politician. Conservatives should have seen through this act (we've seen it enough times to know how it ends), but we didn't. There was so much concern about beating Al Gore (for good reason, I should add) that no one really stopped to think about Bush himself. Vladimir Milhaus Lenin? There are many strange things about Richard Nixon, but this is among the strangest: When Nixon rolled out his abandonment of the gold standard, a rise in the tariff, and wage-and-price controls, he could have named his program anything. He could have called it "the New Progressivism." He could have called it "the Great, New, Fair, Square Deal-Frontier-Society." Instead he called it "the New Economic Policy"—the name Soviet dictator Vladimir Ilyich Lenin gave to the economic policy he instituted in 1922. George W. not only abandoned the traditional GOP promise to eliminate the federal Department of Education, he imposed a whole new level of Washington bureaucratic control on local schools with his "No Child Left Behind" act. He also doubled federal education spending (amazing fact: Bush spent more on education than on Iraq) and grew federal spending 68 percent overall. Voodoo Election Returns How bad did George H. W. Bush's "kinder, gentler conservatism" stink up the lot in his 1992 reelection campaign? This bad: Bush ended up with 37.5 percent of the vote. In 1932, colorless old Herbert Hoover, running at the depth of the Great Depression, got 39.7 percent! Bush got exactly 1.0 percent more than hapless Alf Landon did in 1936 when Landon won a whopping 8(!) electoral votes. For years on end, a Republican Congress spent like Charlie Sheen in a Vegas nightclub, and Bush generally stood by and accepted it. He issued just twelve vetoes over his two terms, the lowest total since Warren Harding—which isn't even a fair comparison considering that Harding died in office during his only term. George W. nearly doubled our national debt, taking it from \$5.768 trillion to \$10.626 trillion. He oversaw creation of the \$700 billion blank-check TARP program, the first stimulus, and a \$180 billion Medicare drug benefit program. In 2009, the Mercatus Institute ran the numbers on George W. They aren't pretty: Bush increased spending more than any of his seven predecessors (LBJ, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, GHWB, Clinton). In Bush's last term discretionary spending skyrocketed 48.6 percent. Adjusted for inflation, Bill Clinton's budget rose by just 11

percent. Bush's budgets soared by 104 percent. The number of federal subsidy programs expanded by 30 percent. When Bush left office the number of programs had grown to 1,816. My point with all of this is not to add to the George W. Bush bashing—he obviously did plenty of very good things—but simply to underscore that he was not even close to being a conservative president. A Republican? Sure. A guy who kept us safe during one of the most dangerous times in American history? Absolutely. But a real, small government, constitutional conservative? No way. FOOL ME ONCE. . . At this point some people may be thinking that I believe there's absolutely no difference between Republicans and Democrats. No, not at all. There is absolutely a difference between the way Michele Bachmann, Jim DeMint, and Mike Lee view the world as opposed to the way Nancy Pelosi, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, and Barbara Boxer view it. What I am saying, however, is that those on the right who stand for real conservatism are relentlessly attacked and marginalized and, therefore, never really even make it into the running for the West Wing. You only have to look back to how Sarah Palin was treated once she had a chance at making it to Washington to see how this works in practice. I am also saying that even those who claim to carry the conservative torch can backfire once they are exposed to the glitter and glamour found along the Potomac. No candidate is a sure thing to be conservative or moral or honest or constitutionally focused just because they wear the label "Republican." Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew weren't any of those things. Teddy Roosevelt was no small government conservative. George III interfered less in our educational system than George W did. Courting Disaster The rationale of those who tell us to ignore our gut and vote Republican usually boils down to something like this: No matter how bad Republicans really are, conservatives have to vote Republican so that we can place conservative justices on the U.S. Supreme Court. But guess what? Democrats are told the same thing! I'm not sure that either side is really all that happy with the results. There have been plenty of Republican SCOTUS nominees who were so atrocious they didn't even get confirmed: Clement Haynsworth, G. Harold Carswell, Douglas H. Ginsburg, and Harriet Miers. And then there's the nightmare of GOP nominees who actually do get confirmed: Ike's disastrous choices of Earl Warren (a payback for help at the 1952 convention) and William J. Brennan (chosen solely to woo northeastern votes in Ike's 1956 reelection bid), Nixon's catastrophe of the cranky and unprofessional Harry Blackmun (he gave us Roe v. Wade), Gerald Ford's pick of John Paul Stevens, and George H. W. Bush's stupefying selection of the liberal nonentity David Souter. With selections like that, who needs Democrats? We're told that we have to forgive the GOP for the Nixons and McCains that it hands us from time to time; that we have to turn a blind eye to what's wrong with the Republican Party. The "smart people" in charge tell us that we just have to keep our mouths shut, turn off our brains, and rally around the elephant. Sorry if I'm not thrilled by the idea of standing in line to pull the lever for a party that couldn't seemingly care less about governing by the values it pretends to stand for. There are also those who make a more fundamental argument about why none of this matters: old-fashioned conservatism's time has passed. I hear it all the time; people say that the modern GOP has to move on and adapt. They say it has to expand beyond its traditional base, be a big tent, be progressive—maybe not as progressive as Barack Obama, but smart and tough when it comes to using government as a tool to help people. If you want to win, they say, then you have to move toward the middle—offer a little something to everyone. Be more like McCain and Romney and less like Palin and Santorum. RINO Fun Fact John McCain voted to confirm ACLU general counsel Ruth Bader Ginsburg ("I would not look to the U.S. Constitution, if I were drafting a Constitution in the year 2012") to the Supreme Court in 1993. And he wasn't alone: the vote was 96–3. Nope, sorry, not buying it. Decades of evidence are in to show us exactly what we get when we compromise our values to win elections: more government, more spending, more taxes, more regulations, more bureaucracy, more interference by Washington in our daily lives. If that's what winning means then you'll excuse me if I'm not excited about continuing that trend. If turning my back on my principles is a prerequisite to winning elections, then, I hate to say it, but I'd rather lose. I'd rather not be in power than have to justify using that power to do things that I'm fundamentally opposed to. But perhaps the biggest problem for those of us who care about the future of liberty is that most people don't understand that we are being offered false choices; that John McCain as the standard-bearer of the Republican Party in a presidential election is indicative of how the conservative/libertarian chair has been taken from the table. The truth is that we are the mark—the sucker—in a national shell game. The ball—which represents real small government, constitutional candidates—seems like it's always there, ready to be discovered, when, in reality, the operator is palming it. It doesn't matter which shell you choose or how many times you play or how closely you pay attention—the ball will never be where you think it is. You will lose every time. That is why understanding history is so vital to understanding the current political playing field. What the establishment is doing today is what progressives originally did when they took the chair away from constitutionalists and said: Here's your choice: Theodore Roosevelt or Woodrow Wilson; John McCain or Barack Obama. Which is it going to be? Beck Quotes a Socialist! I'd rather vote for what I want and not get it, than vote for what I don't want and get it. —EUGENE V. DEBS, SOCIALIST CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT IN 1900, 1904, 1908, 1912, AND 1920. Sorry, that's not a fair choice—and so it's time that we call the shell game what it really is: a scam. I don't know about you, but I don't participate in scams, I expose them. And that's what we need to do now: expose the system as not just flawed, but rigged; expose the "two-party" system as a one-party monopoly; and, most important, show America that there is another choice. We just have to pull our chair back

up to the table.