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Wanted: Straight-Talking Men

When leaders lead in Israel, When the people willingly offer themselves, Bless the LORD! --Judges 5:2

Combative, factually inconsistent and slow moving? Yes. But at 71 minutes, President Obama's Wednesday night State of the Union address was not a record breaker. Former President Bill Clinton clocked a mind-numbing 89 minutes in 2000. As to number of words in a State of the Union speech, the Gold goes to Jimmy Carter with 33,667! In 1790, Pres. George Washington delivered 1,089 written words to Congress—about the length of this letter.

While Mr. Obama's speech ranks only third in duration compared to his immediate Democrat predecessors, he did invoke the personal pronoun "I" some 76 times—double that of George W. Bush in his final State of the Union. Could be a record. But paraphrasing one commentator's observation, "...It isn't about the state of the union. It's about the state of this President's mind."

Judging from the tone of the speech, the President doesn't sound like a happy camper. Opponents (Republicans?) were advised to support his agenda because Americans are tired of petty partisan bickering. Others (moderate Democrats?) were chided for worrying more about fall elections than fighting to bring about needed change. Even the Supreme Court was rebuked for an opinion last week, effectively gutting most of *McCain-Feingold*, the infamous campaign finance law. And, to the more than 62 percent of Americans who do not want the government messing with their current health care plans, the underlying message was "Trust me. I know what's best for you."

Certain special interest groups, however, liked what they heard. Obama promised to make the military gay-friendly. Are there really hordes of homosexuals clamoring to "be all they can be?" And, the message to Islamic terrorists: If you war against America, we'll give you the best legal defense teams tax dollars can buy.

Delivering the obligatory 12-minute GOP response was newly-elected Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell. The packed Virginia State House was a good setting—it was a pleasant presentation, if not slightly tepid. For instance, the President promised to earmark more tax dollars to put Americans to work rebuilding the nation's infrastructure—constructing "clean-energy facilities." Likewise, referring to the need for new jobs, Gov. McDonnell said, "Good government policy should spur economic growth, and strengthen the private sector's ability to create new jobs. We must enact policies that promote entrepreneurship and innovation, so America can better compete with the world."

We have reason to believe a response from Rep. Michelle Bachmann (R-MN), Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) or Sarah Palin would sound more like this:

"Friends, the truth is, government produces NOTHING. What it spends, it first takes from us! For generations, Americans have been free to create, invent, save, invest, buy and sell, resulting in a prosperity unmatched by any other nation or people. The President's recent, unprecedented takeover of major institutions and companies, placing them in the hands of unelected, inexperienced "czars," shocks our sensibilities. We say to you, Mr. Obama, take your hands out of our pockets. You've done too much already."

For those like Chris Matthews, Keith Olbermann and David Letterman who are troubled by attractive, articulate, well-educated, “straight-talking,” conservative women, the fall elections could be a bummer.

There are 36 U.S. Senate seats up for election this year. As it happens, 18 are Democrat and 18 Republican. Prior to last year’s Tea Party rallies and congressional district town hall meetings, pundits thought Republicans had a reasonably good chance to hold on to all 18—maybe even pick up a New York seat with Rudy Giuliani or George Pataki in the race. But the ground game has changed. It appears as many as seven Democrat seats are now in play—several of them (and scores more in House races) could be captured by *attractive, articulate, well-educated, “straight-talking,” conservative women*. Here’s a taste:

Challenging Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid is **Sue Lowden**, a one-time elementary school teacher and former anchorwoman for KLAS, the CBS affiliate in Las Vegas. Lowden won election to the Nevada State Senate in 1992, unseating the Democrat Senate Majority Leader in a heavily Democratic-controlled district. She later became the Majority Whip and chaired the Taxation Committee. Lowden currently heads the Nevada State Republican Party, and polls show the (onetime) second runner-up for Miss America with a wide lead over the most powerful Democrat in the U.S. Senate. Commenting on Obama’s speech, she said, “Government growth and personal freedom do not go hand-in-hand. It’s time for Washington to know that Nevadans choose more freedom over more government.”

In New Hampshire, the announced retirement of moderate Republican Judd Gregg, who earlier had been picked for a Cabinet position by Barack Obama but later changed his mind, should have paved the way for Congressman Paul Hodes to steal the seat for the “Ds.” Except that **Kelly Ayotte**, the attractive, hugely popular state Attorney General thinks she should retain it for the “Rs.” She is pro-life, pro-gun, pro-real marriage and successfully defended New Hampshire’s parental notification law before the U.S. Supreme Court. According to the latest Rasmussen Report, Ayotte leads Hodes by nine points.

Another fearless conservative is Hawaii Governor **Linda Lingle**. Elected in 2002 as Hawaii’s first Republican governor since 1962, Lingle has spoken forcefully against Barack Obama’s handling of so-called “man-caused disasters” (formerly the war against terror), especially the failed attack on a Northwest Airlines flight to Detroit from Amsterdam on Christmas Day. Speaking to a gathering of national GOP leaders this week, she said Obama has a “tin ear” when it comes to protecting the nation from terrorism. “Your No. 1 responsibility as a president... is to protect the people in this country and we need policies that match that obligation,” said Lingle. Due to term limits, she will leave office at the end-of-the-year, raising talk that she might be persuaded to take on Daniel Inouye (D-HI) who has been wedded to the seat for 48-years.

The Bible provides numerous examples of courageous women like Sue, Kelly and Linda during times when men were hesitant or fearful. A certain prophetess named Deborah was such a person. Because the people of Israel had turned to idols the land was given over to war and bloodshed and they were being oppressed by a certain Canaanite king. Deborah summoned a good man named (get this) *Barak*, to go north and attack the enemy stronghold. She knew God had spoken to him. When he refused to go unless she accompanied him, she stepped up like many courageous women are doing today. But the god-fearing man was told that the victory over the enemy would be given to a woman rather than to him. (Judges 4-5)

We’re not unaware of the refreshingly straight-talking Scott Brown, the new GOP senator-elect from Massachusetts. Mention of his upset victory in a state where only 12 percent of voters are Republican makes our point. People are looking for strong, unhesitant moral leaders—men preferred.

But pastor, teacher, you who have an ear to hear, please consider. From what pool of moral men will we draw our “ministers of justice,” if not from the Church? Pray tell, where else do good men gather?

Rick Forcier

1. UnionLeader.com, 1/13/2010

2. Republican Party Considers Alternative to Candidate Litmus Test, John McCormick, *Bloomberg Business Week*, 1/29/2010