Republicans Can't Afford to Default to Obama

by Phyllis Schlafly March 20, 2009

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Republicans are still awestruck at how Barack Obama was able to get every Democrat in the House and Senate to vote for his Stimulus package despite opinion polls showing impressive public opposition. The answer is Obama's use of his years of training in Saul Alinsky-style community organizing combined with 21st-century technology.

This converted his successful campaign tools and technology into a political tsunami to pass tremendous spending bills that will saddle us, our children and grandchildren with incredibly enormous debts. The Stimulus shocker was followed immediately by the just-as-expensive Omnibus bill (for the current fiscal year), and it was followed by the just-as-expensive Budget bill (for the next fiscal year starting October first) that incorporates many new liberal social policies.

To pass the Stimulus bill, Barack Obama called on his supporters to host or attend "House Meetings" on the weekend before the vote. To gather attendees, he sent out 13 million emails.

Obama created a new lobbying organization called "Organizing for America" headquartered in the offices of the Democratic National Committee. Thus, there's no question that its political purpose is to "redirect the campaign machinery" to get

Congress to pass all the big-spending, spread-the-wealth bills that Obama promised before the election (which really means spread the poverty).

Those who attended the February 6 "Economic Recovery House Meetings" watched a 4-minute YouTube clip in which Obama urged his supporters to "come together, organize, and stay involved in the task of remaking this nation." They watched a 10-minute sales talk promoting the Stimulus package, downloaded talking points and statistics from the internet, and then participated in discussions guided by a list of questions printed off the internet.

The pro-Obama New York Times gleefully announced that Obama's technology is transforming "the YouTubing-Facebooking-texting-Twittering grass-roots organization that put Mr. Obama in the White House into an instrument of government." This plan is called "Retooling a Grass-Roots Network To Serve a YouTube Presidency."

After the House Meetings, Organizing for America sent out an email thanking those who attended and boasting that Economic Recovery House Meetings were held in all 50 states — 3,587 House Meetings in 1,579 cities, and 429 congressional districts. This included 382 meetings in California, 255 in Florida, 115 in Ohio, 199 in New York, 105 in Washington, and 149 in Texas.

At the end of the meetings, the host instructed the participants that "it is now our mission" to get the word out about the Stimulus package by talking, emailing and texting to friends and neighbors.

What are Republicans going to do about this new challenge from the Left to begin "remaking America" (Obama's Inaugural words) into a land of total government control over our health care, our laws, our courts, our schools, our money, our banks, and our jobs, plans that may double the government's share of our economy? Are Republicans ready (in Obama's words) to "come together, organize, and stay involved"?

Obama has learned how to organize the grassroots, get them together in small groups (in the old-fashioned way), and then urge them to "spread the word and build support" (with 21st-century internet tools). However, there is one chink in the armor of Obama's model.

Part of Obama's rise to the presidency is based on his reputation as a great orator, but now we discover that he can't give a speech unless he is reading a pre-written script! He doesn't even answer questions at his news conferences without the teleprompter crutch.

The teleprompter is a device that rolls the script on two screens, one on the speaker's right and the other his left. The teleprompter enables the speaker to look to the right side and the left side of the audience, back and forth, and pretend he is speaking extemporaneously.

The pro-Obama media have been trying to conceal from TV audiences the fact that Obama is reading all his speeches, even short ones given before small groups, but there are two difficulties. A teleprompter requires Obama to turn from side to side and never make eye contact with his audience, and it's almost impossible to get a good photograph of Obama without revealing at least a part of the teleprompter screen.

President Obama doesn't go anywhere without his teleprompter. He depends on it for every speech, even his six-minute tribute to Abe Lincoln, simple introductions of his own Cabinet officials, and informal small gatherings. He is the first President to be so completely dependent on the teleprompter.

Nevertheless, Obama's tactics plus his 21st-century technology have been tremendously successful. If Republicans want to recapture Congress in the 2010 elections, they will have to organize both locally and with modern technology.