Un-American and Unlawful White House Projects

by Phyllis Schlafly September 4, 2009

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The Obama Administration brags that Cash for Clunkers was a success because it revived the suffering auto industry. But who really benefited from this $3 billion program?

The majority of cars bought with taxpayer-paid incentives of $3,500 to $4,500 each were foreign cars. Toyota and Honda were the big winners.

For years, Americans have been pursuing the goal of self-sufficiency in oil, a natural resource essential to our standard of living. But the effort to get our government to revoke its ban on drilling for oil in American waters off of our shores has been consistently checkmated by the liberals and radical environmentalists.

Now we hear that the Obama Administration is letting the U.S. Export-Import Bank lend $2 billion to Brazil's state-owned oil company, Petrobras, to drill for oil in the ocean near Rio de Janeiro. Why Brazil, and why not "drill, baby, drill" in U.S. waters?

We know there is an abundance of oil and natural gas right off of U.S. shores, and that drilling would produce good-paying jobs without any need for Stimulus handouts. Does the Obama Administration oppose this because it's an issue Sarah Palin can run with?

The Obama Administration doesn't like criticism, so maybe that's why it is pushing Congress to hurry up and pass the so-called Hate Crimes Act (H.R. 1913). Being squeamish about criticism is also why the Obama Administration launched an un-American project on August 4 as part of what the White House called its "rapid response" Health Insurance Reform Reality Check.

The plan was "to collect and maintain information" on people who criticized the Democrats' health care bill. Obama's friends were instructed to report to the White House email address, flag@whitehouse.gov, any information that they considered "fishy," which everybody understood is a code word to build an Obama political enemies list.

That anti-First Amendment totalitarian project was partly withdrawn as a lawsuit was filed against it by the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS) and the Coalition for Urban Renewal and Education (CURE). They charged that the White House project was to "unlawfully" collect information on protected political speech.

The long list of Obama's czars, accountable to no one except Obama himself, is one of his most worrisome and expensive notions. The czars may be substitutes for the nearly half of Obama Administration's executive-branch positions that remain unfilled.

The czars' salaries are paid by the U.S. taxpayers but they are not confirmed by the Senate, yet they appear to have the authority to override those who are confirmed. Lack of Senate confirmation means we must rely on Glenn Beck to discover that the Green Jobs Czar, Van Jones, is or was a communist and a self-described "rowdy black nationalist."

So far, Obama has appointed 34 czars. Just listing them is enough to scare anyone who believes in constitutional and representative government: Afghanistan Czar, AIDS Czar, Border Czar, Car Czar, Climate Czar, Copyright Czar, Cyberspace

Czar, Drug Czar, Economic Czar, Education Czar, Energy Czar, Executive Pay Czar, Faith-Based Czar, Great Lakes Czar, Green Jobs Czar, Guantanamo Closure Czar, Health Reform Czar, Infotech Czar, Intelligence Czar, Iran Czar, Middle East Peace Czar, Non-Proliferation Czar, Persian Gulf/SE Asia Czar, Regulatory Czar, Science Czar, Stimulus Accountability Czar, Sudan Czar, TARP Czar, Terrorism Czar, Urban Czar, War Czar, and WMD and Terrorism Czar.

At least one Obama pal is functioning in a similar capacity without the awesome Russian title of czar. Former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, who publicly withdrew from the position of Secretary of Health and Human Services because of non-payment of income taxes, is providing "outside advice" to the President inside the Oval Office and to top White House officials, while continuing as a highly paid policy adviser to hospital and pharmaceutical clients of a law and lobbying firm.

Daschle is not registered as a lobbyist; he identifies himself as a "resource" to government and industry. It looks like Daschle has the best of all worlds, both for influence and remuneration.

The senior Senate Democrat, Robert Byrd of West Virginia (who is third in line for the U.S. presidency after Joe Biden and Nancy Pelosi), wrote Obama in February saying that these czar appointments are a power grab by the executive branch and violate both the constitutional system of checks and balances and the constitutional separation of powers. He said they are a clear attempt to evade congressional oversight.

The President is entitled to have his own advisers, but these czars are directly dictating policy, and nobody really knows the extent of their powers. Whatever happened to Obama's campaign promise of transparency?

Rep. Jack Kingston (R-GA) has introduced the Czar Accountability and Reform Act (H.R. 3226) to cut off the salaries of these czars (estimated at $172,000 plus

their staffs of 10+ people). It's unlikely that the Democratic Congress will let this bill see the light of day.