

The "bad subjects" . . . on occasion provoke the intervention of one of the detachments of the (repressive) State apparatus. But the vast majority of the (good) subjects work all right "all by themselves," i.e., by ideology.  
- Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses"

# Bad Subjects

**Political Education for Everyday Life**

January 2001 / Issue #53X / FREE

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO ISSUE #53

## Bad Election

**Bad Election:  
We Recount**

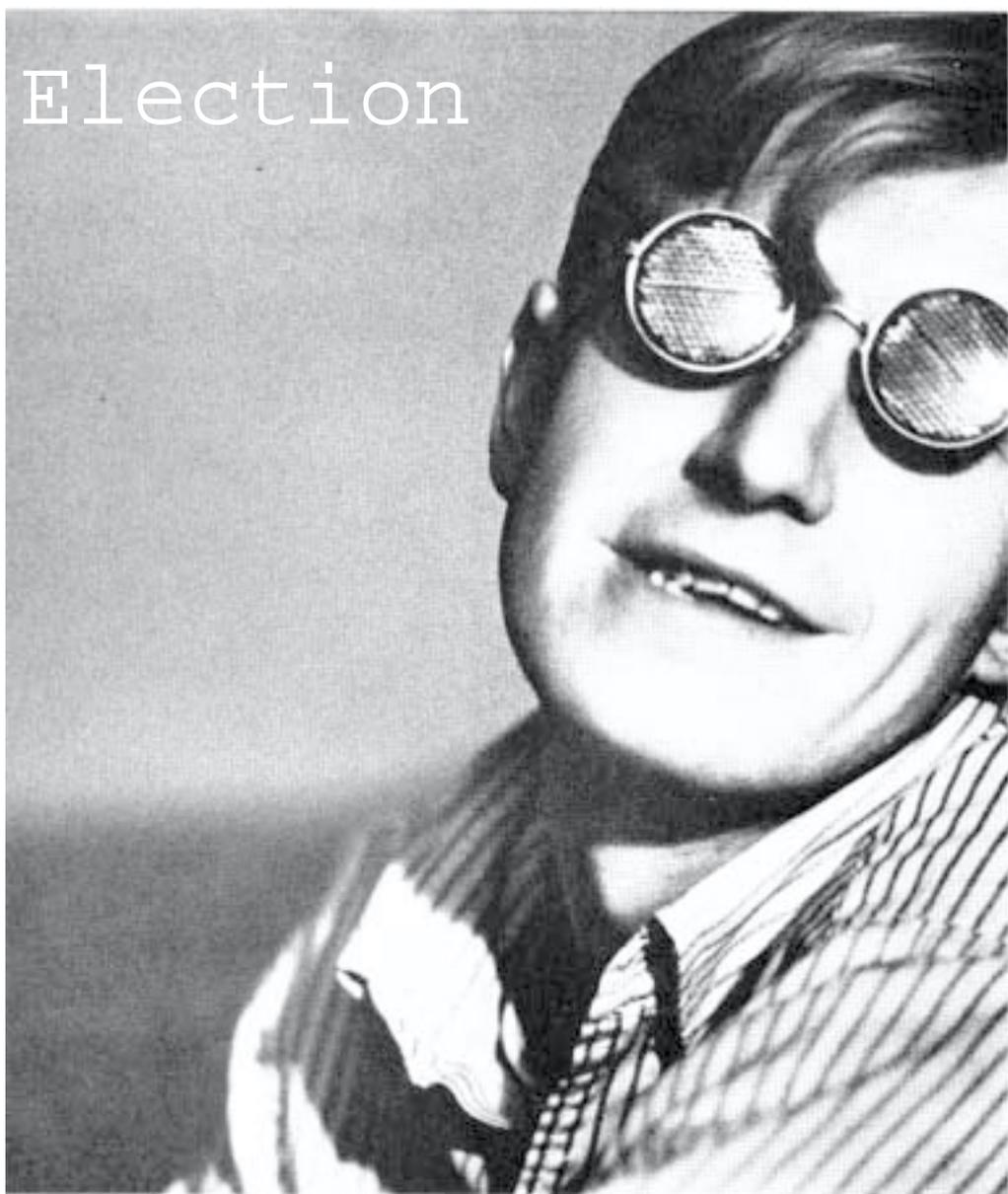
Charlie Bertsch

**Alienated Votes  
and Left Separatism**

Joe Lockard

**Vox Florida:  
BS Interviews  
Republican  
Demonstrators**

Aaron Shuman



*In his youth, our fearless leader was fond of trying on his father's rose-colored glasses. . .*

# BAD SUBJECTS GENERAL INFORMATION

## PRODUCTION DIRECTORS:

John Brady, Megan Shaw

## PRODUCTION TEAM:

**SF Bay Area:** John Brady, Julia Bryan-Wilson, Ed Korthof (On-line Services), Joe Lockard, Annalee Newitz, Steven Rubio (On-line Services), Jeremy Russell, Joel Schalit (Reviews), Megan Shaw, Aaron Shuman

**Seattle, WA:** Geoff Sauer (Webmaster)

**Boulder, CO:** Frederick Aldama

**Pittsburgh, PA:** Jonathan Sterne

**Saginaw/Bay City, MI:** Mike Mosher

**Tempe, AZ:** Arturo Aldama

**Tucson, AZ:** Kim Nicolini, Charlie Bertsch

*Bad Subjects* seeks to promote radical thinking and public education about the political implications of everyday life. We invite you to join us and participate in the *Bad Subjects* project.

*Bad Subjects* is made possible through a combination of cash contributions, generous grants from the Townsend Center for the Humanities and the Graduate Assembly at the University of California at Berkeley and donated labor, including the work of the collective that runs the English Server <<http://eserver.org>>.

**SUBMISSIONS:** We are always looking for material to publish in *Bad Subjects: Political Education for Everyday Life*. Consult the "Calls for Papers" on our home page and send a query to the editors of an upcoming issue or <[bad@uclink4.berkeley.edu](mailto:bad@uclink4.berkeley.edu)>. The ideal *Bad Subjects* article is no more than 3000 words and keeps specialized terminology to a minimum. *Bad Subjects* also welcomes letters in response to the magazine or website. If you are interested in writing reviews for our website, you should contact our Reviews Editor Joel Schalit <[badreviews@eserver.org](mailto:badreviews@eserver.org)>. All regular mail should

be addressed to our Berkeley address:

*Bad Subjects*, 322 Wheeler Hall, UC-Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, 94720

**DISTRIBUTION:** You can get *Bad Subjects* FREE at the following distribution sites:

### SF Bay Area

- University Press Books on Bancroft Ave. in Berkeley.
  - Cody's Books on Telegraph Ave. in Berkeley.
  - The Long Haul Community Space on Shattuck in Berkeley.
- And on the UC-Berkeley campus:
- WHEELER HALL: on the table outside 322 Wheeler
  - DWINELLE HALL: inside the department lounges of Rhetoric, Comparative Literature, History.
  - BARROWS HALL: in the department lounges of Ethnic Studies, Sociology and Political Science.
  - STEPHENS HALL: graduate lounge

### Chicago

- Quimby's Queer Store, 1854 W North Ave.

### Milwaukee

- Fuel Cafe

### New York

- Blackout Books, 50 Avenue B

### Portland

- Reading Frenzy, 921 SW Oak

### Israel

- Porter Institute for Cultural Studies

**Our resources are limited! Please help us out by photocopying *Bad Subjects* for anyone who is interested.**

© 2001 BY THE AUTHORS

**Art and Design:** All design and layout by Charlie Bertsch. The front cover image comes from a clandestine source whom we are afraid to name, lest he meet the fate of other folks who have crossed paths with the CIA and its shadowy minions. The back cover image was created by Dave Koehler <[www.quirked.com/distortions](http://www.quirked.com/distortions)>. He also came up with the Bush-Dick "dialogue," but not the expanded version you see here. For that you can blame another clandestine source. And remember, the revolution may not be televised if there is a rolling power blackout in your area. . .

## BAD SUBJECTS ONLINE

Every issue of *Bad Subjects* is available for free on our website:

**<<http://eserver.org/bs>>**

You can download the current issue as an Acrobat file and print it out to look like this hardcopy. Our website also features internet-only content, such as our reviews section, a bi-weekly column, and links to other sites of interest to our readers. For more information, contact us at <[bad@uclink4.berkeley.edu](mailto:bad@uclink4.berkeley.edu)>.

# Bad Election: We Recount It

3

Charlie Bertsch

In the aftermath of the U.S. Presidential Elections, members of the *Bad Subjects* Production Team engaged in heated debate about their meaning. We have never had a “party line” at *Bad Subjects*. And we pride ourselves on opening our publication to diverse points of view. But the conversations we have among ourselves are rarely as rancorous as the ones inspired by the controversy in Florida. Like our fellow travellers on the heterodox Left, we were suddenly forced to confront the possibility that our votes mattered more than we had been inclined to believe.

For years, many American leftists have argued that the electoral successes of the Democratic Party might be more of a bane than a boon. Take the case of Welfare Reform. Would a Republican President have been able to speed legislation through as efficiently as Bill Clinton? European leftists have been asking themselves similar questions about the dismantling of their own welfare states, as historically left-of-center parties in Great Britain, Germany, France and other countries pursue the course of fiscal conservatism with startling zeal. In the face of such a bald-faced betrayal of progressive values, leftists have wondered out loud whether it might not be preferable to battle a cut-and-dried enemy instead of a perpetually unreliable “friend.” We’re about to find out. But at *Bad Subjects*, we hope that the debates precipitated in the wake of the election’s aftermath are not forgotten as we ponder a sequel to the Reagan Era.

We’ve preserved a paper trail of our own internal debates in the bi-monthly columns on our home page <<http://eserver.org/bs>>. These columns reflect the opinions of their individual authors, rather than any collective position. Until our focus turned to the 2000 Elections, it never seemed necessary to emphasize this point. But when Joe Lockard’s first column on the topic went up, everything changed. Suddenly, other members of the Production Team were worried that the column would be interpreted as a collective statement, one that they vehemently opposed. As a consequence, they fired off their own responses to Joe’s column in rapid succession. And Joe replied in turn.

Responding to Joe’s initial conclusion that “in the end there was little difference between Bush and Nader,” Aaron Shuman wrote that “Ralph Nader is

not responsible for Gore’s pain, and no amount of Nader-bashing will cleanse Gore’s sins (or those of the Left).” Lindsey Eck filed a report from his hometown of Austin, Texas that shifted the focus back to Bush:

Texas did have one big effect on the contest. Here Bush learned the lesson that propelled him to his apparent victory: Nothing is less welcome in an American male than signs of intelligence, especially book learnin’. The candidate who had learned to abdicate his elite education and Washington pedigree through contempt for intellect and a deplorable inability to speak coherent English was well positioned to take charge of an America increasingly evolving in the direction of Texanisms: macho swaggering, hatred of intelligence, and contempt for the weak and pusillanimous.

After an acrimonious back-and-forth on our Production Team’s listserv, Jonathan Sterne defended the decision that he, Aaron, Steven Rubio, and other members had made to vote Green.

Acknowledging that Al Gore is definitely preferable to George Bush, Jonathan nevertheless stated that the lesser of two evils is still an evil. He took particular umbrage at the blame directed towards the Green Party:

The Democrats’ treatment of Nader and the finger pointing on the left is an embarrassment to representative democracy. This would be a classic case of scapegoating, except that Nader and much of the radical left had already been excluded from the Washington establishment. You can’t banish a goat if it’s already outside the city walls.

Finally, in an effort to articulate some middle ground between the anti-Green and pro-Green factions, John Brady reflected on the difficulty of establishing a meaningful leftist party in the United States. Providing a counterpoint to the idealism of many Green supporters, John underscored the need for a leftist political program “marked by programmatic flexibility, the willingness to settle at times for smaller goals, and the ability to now and again place compromise with one’s political opponents over moral correctness.”

We are publishing two pieces in this issue that tackle the subject of the 2000 Election. The first, by Joe Lockard, expands on the columns he wrote for our website, offering a biting critique of the Green Party’s role as a “spoiler.” The second, by Aaron

Shuman, is simultaneously light-hearted and sobering. Aaron was in Florida in the days following the election and spent a great deal of time talking to people on all sides of the controversy. His piece here is the product of interviews he conducted with Republican activists protesting against the Gore team's push for a recount. The

worldview these interviews lay bare is disturbingly close to the one that our next President espouses, revealing a fondness for simplicity and even simple-mindedness where complex thinking is needed.

*Charlie Bertsch <cbertsch@u.arizona.edu> recently moved to Tucson, Arizona, where he encounters far too many pick-up tricks with "Jesus fish" and Bush-Cheney bumper stickers.*

## Alienated Votes and Left Separatism

Joe Lockard

In 1913 W.E.B. DuBois wrote that socialism could be divided into two distinct camps. "On the one hand those far-sighted thinkers who are seeking to determine from the facts of modern industrial organization just what the outcome is going to be; on the other hand, those who suffer from the present industrial situation and who are anxious that, whatever the broad outcome may be, at any rate the present suffering which they know so well shall be stopped." So DuBois drew a line between theoretical purists and down-to-earth practicalism.

In the aftermath of the almighty election botch, with attention focused on Florida recounts and the Bush-Gore legal battles, the US left paid little attention to the state in which it emerged from the elections. It is difficult to remember an historical moment when American progressivism has been so eclipsed, more useful to its opponents than to its friends. These elections have left the constituencies of a coherent American progressive movement deeply alienated from each other, with charges and counter-charges hurled across a dividing line. That dividing line is the one that DuBois specified nine decades ago, between a politics based on the luxury of futurism and a politics based on social immediatism.

### Green Suicide

The first relevant observation in assessing the post-election American left is that the Green Party is walking dead meat. It was too infatuated with its 'success' in siphoning off votes and depriving Gore of victory to notice all the angry faces and turned backs standing around. Even with the running start of an established party base, Nader's three percent of the national popular vote represents almost the poorest showing by a significant

third-party presidential campaign in the last century (only Strom Thurmond's States Rights Party in 1948 fared worse, finishing in fourth place with two percent). Among leading progressive third-party candidates over the past century, both Debs and LaFollette achieved better electoral success than Nader.

Despite this miserable showing, the Green Party boasted of establishing itself as "the major competition" within US national politics. This is pitiful self-delusion. The Green Party may last another election cycle or even two, but probably has hit its electoral peak and will decline, returning to its previously fractionated and uncooperative selves. The various Green parties remain in the midst of unification talks. As a political force, the Greens may remain a party capable of capturing a majority in northern California's Arcata city council, but little more.

Friends are everything in politics. Organized labor poured heart and soul into supporting the Democrats, and union officials now angrily refer to Greens, their mothers and sex acts inside three syllables. Since the Greens were always thin around union halls anyway, they haven't figured out what those three syllables mean for their future and any possible cooperation with labor (such as supported Nader's earlier work on the WTO and globalization issues). Nader campaigned most heavily in swing states where organized labor was making its most intensive efforts, a strategy that was read as anti-labor inasmuch as it certainly did nothing to propel the Greens towards their sacred five percent and federal funding. The Nader/Green forces turned strong friends into powerful enemies.

Neither have the Greens understood the meaning of another vital sign. CNN polling data confirm the obvious: people of color avoided Ralph Dubya even more than they disdained the Republican model. George Bush took nine percent of the African American vote; Nader took a magnificent one percent, his support from Cornel West and Danny Glover notwithstanding.

ing. Among Hispanics, Nader doubled his vote share to two percent. In precisely the communities where the Nader/Green program might be thought to have greatest appeal, it suffered the worst rejection. It probably was not the Nader/Green stand on issues that provoked this disdain. Rather, high political principles here boiled down to the message 'let's all lose together gloriously towards a better future'. People of color have been on the losing side of social power in the US for far, far too long not to recognize an exploitative political call for self-sacrifice.

White America hears year after year after endless year that people of color want social power and equality *now* and not in the future, but there are many in the American left who have still not absorbed this repeated message. No one can escape noticing that it is the African American community that lead a passionate defense of democracy and electoral fair play in Florida and in behalf of Al Gore. It seems they can figure out the differences between Gore and Bush that were supposed not to exist. They perceived that a Gore administration would benefit them, even within neo-liberal constraints, and how a Nader-launched Bush administration which — in that utterly co-opted phrase — 'celebrates diversity' while promoting institutional racism will do nothing but try to send minority communities to the back of the bus.

All those impoverished and hard-working folks living at the minimum wage and less did not smile with toothy joy and shout "Yassuh!" when Nader used Orwell-ese to proclaim that short-term worse-off would be long-run better-off. Parents failed to understand how fewer environmental controls and more toxins under a Bush administration in the near future would give their children long-term benefits. Gays, who gave seventy percent of their votes to Gore, clearly did not understand that it was in their best long-term interest to prevent hate-crime legislation against gay-bashing. "Make it worse to make it better," the unofficial Green slogan late in the campaign, was no more than a pseudo-rationalization for cutting off many noses to spite a few Democratic party faces.

With the damage done, the Nader/Green camp couldn't decide whether to preen themselves or act like the kid who, having thrown a rock through a window, claims that a meteor did it. With Gore short some 150-odd votes in the unfinished recount, Nader pretended that his approximately 96,000 Florida votes did not represent a proximate cause for Gore's defeat. Petulant Nader supporters asserted that no one owned

their vote and they could exercise the franchise as they pleased, as if anyone questioned either proposition. There were laughable explanatory tautologies ("Gore defeated Gore"), and there were even more laughable statistical demonstrations that Nader changed nothing (viz Tim Wise in *Z Magazine*).

Nader told Larry King of his delight at taking Democratic votes since he needed them to build a new party. Which one? Nader does not belong to any party. Other Nader/Green campaigners issued calls to work with "Democratic allies" against the incoming Republican administration, calls that are light years removed from any realistic understanding of an irreparable breach. Allies? There are none left. Having created history, some people refuse to understand that history cannot be undone.

Within a week after the election, as attention re-focused on the Florida disenfranchisement, Nader had already begun disappearing like a whisp. He left behind a column of American progressives that he led like a postmodern Moses (note Matthew Rothschild's post-election biblicization of Nader, "he railed like a prophet..."). But there will be no Promised Land today or anytime soon.

Instead, there is political solitude created by this left-liberal breach. After ideologically demonizing Bush and Gore as equivalent values, all options closed. The Greens dug themselves into a political hole and declared it the future kingdom, as if such pitiful results represented great beginnings. By presuming that no intelligent political life exists outside their hermetic space, the Greens ensured that theirs will be a small and suffocating house. Progressive politics thrive best in open spaces and free-flowing practice. Progressivism recognizes that its strength comes from the quality of ideas and expression, not from simplistic righteousness that alienates neighbors — and certainly not from fear of co-mingling with a broad span of allied opinion.

### Left Elitism and Separatism

The results of this election demonstrated eloquently that progressive politics in the United States has permitted itself to indulge a form of cultural elitism that believes elections are token proceedings where defeat and victory are irrelevant because the outcome is fixed. In this

worldview Democrats and Republicans have merged into a two-headed beast and, with collaboration from compliant corporate media, created a rigged electoral system. They have become “the two-party plutocracy”.

About 98 million votes were cast for either Bush or Gore. About 2.7 million votes went to Nader. Whether progressives like it or not, political decision-making in the United States lies among those 98 million votes cast by people in equal possession of their faculties and no more inherently subject to media manipulation than a Green voter. Whether or not they meet progressive druthers, neither ‘liberals’ nor ‘conservatives’ are contemptible human beings deserving of a lip turned down with scorn. Rather, they are working people who respond to identical political stimulæ and whose support will be needed if there is the remotest hope of grappling with the exploitation and powerlessness that prevails under capitalism in the United States.

There were millions of voters in this election who were intensely sympathetic — or potentially sympathetic — to programs advocated in the Green platform, but who were not interested in following this suicide charge off the political cliff. A major group of progressive figures, including Toni Morrison, James Weinstein, Todd Gitlin, and Michael Bérubé, warned against precisely this electoral outcome and form of progressive self-injury. After the election, left journals like *The Progressive*, *In These Times* and *The Nation* all published essays either defending or criticizing ‘the Nader drain’. Some, like one friend who says “I’m just blaming the Bush voters,” tried to avoid the contentious aftermath.

What troubles me more than simple contentiousness is the sense of cultural separation that hangs over Naderism. Even when invoking populist rhetoric, it is clear that Naderism voices an alienation from a mass public. Winning politics are politics that accept a common humanity and fallibility, and not those that stigmatize others as ill-educated dupes of machine politics. The pro-Nader forces are at their core no more than middle-class Reform Democrats gone Green, with a large and idealistic student following that will probably drift elsewhere. Working people have met earlier incarnations of the same phenomenon many times. It is objectionable for its bourgeois intolerance of those allegedly befuddled classes in need of uplift, and for its desire to re-create the world in its

own genteel mold rather than smile at human difference.

Despite its frequently massive flaws, Dixiecrat racism, and corruption, the Democratic party was where this middle-class and Philadelphia-born child learned about the American working class, even if party politics were not pretty, intellectual or genteel. We always knew that our allegiance was to people who had less than we did, not to people who had more. Even the responsibility of Democratic party leaders for genocide in Vietnam during the 1960s never altered recognition of a basic populist commitment within the party. Corrective political ebb and flow washed through the party then, and the same eventually will have its way with today’s DLC leadership.

For rank-and-file Democrats, reformers and Republicans were kissing cousins. People who had too much money and wanted to keep it were Republicans; people who had too much money and felt a little generous today were Reform Democrats. Republicans thought black people caused too many problems and they opposed civil rights; Reform Democrats patronized black people and supported civil rights so long as blacks behaved properly. Reform Democrats were better off being honest and re-registering as Republicans: by the 1980s, many had. In another twenty years there will be plenty of ex-Green Republicans too.

Class privilege in American society recognizes equivalent forms of class privilege. It is not the immediate party identification that counts so much as ability to transit through a continuum of political phases. Thus David Stockman inspired by the Port Huron Statement to become a SDS organizer is the same David Stockman who became Reagan’s OMB chief. Hordes more joined such Wordsworthian left-to-right journeys of class self-discovery, arriving to join an earlier neocon generation that also began as young reformers. Reformism is a temporary relinquishment of class privilege that, in its very enactment, re-confirms the centrality of privilege.

So reformism is a tentative indulgence of idealism that can be retracted; real redistribution of power is too frightening. Along this line many Green votes arrived through a calculation that ‘Nader’s program is good but he’ll never win — still, I’ll have done the right thing voting for him.’ But the foreseeability of its political futility ensured that the vote was for meaningless reformism, for a change that would not happen. This is the rotten heart of reformism: with calls for so-

cial purification, it crusades for change that stands no immediate chance of happening and so refuses change that can happen.

Reformism has indulged in an obsessive antagonism towards a choice between 'lesser evils' and so avoids the political task of identifying a better choice. Indeed, given the absence of human perfectability we embrace all lesser evils. No reasonable theory of justice could function without relying on choices between greater and lesser evils, and social justice cannot be obtained without similar exercises in choice. Given that human opinion is rarely congruent across broad populations, effective democratic politics concern choices in the direction of least disagreement. The designation 'lesser evil' has become a term of contempt through which to castigate the democratic necessity of viable candidates and electoral compromise.

When poor and disempowered communities must suffer the consequences of middle-class debates over 'lesser-evilism' — that awkward term advanced by Michael Lerner in *Tikkun*, who deems this a contradiction to his fatuous and half-forgotten 'politics of meaning' — then this debate advances social privilege under guise of moralism. Elitism establishes itself on such a putative ability to rise above mundane choices.

The concept of a moral elect has an old and ugly presence in Euro-American history, tracing its descent from origins in both Puritan and Catholic moral hierarchies. The secular left-wing has not escaped this history any more than the religious right-wing; rather, the concept of a moral elect simply mutates. Nader, with a record of over three decades of social activism, rose to symbolize a claim of moral entitlement. Behind Green/Nader social arguments lay an unmistakable malodor of claims to a moral elect.

It is precisely this trap of a moral claim that secular progressivism has rejected for so long, and here the American left fell for the same language of decent virtue which the various American right-wings have adopted for so long. Progressives who demand that candidates for public office have an unblemished record on social issues — and Gore's flaws were obvious — share an insistent voice with right-wing zealots who insist that candidates manifest religious and sexual proprieties. Each position argues that a particular test of complete moral fitness should govern political selection; each demands imposition of a monopolistic morality. Flexibility and contingency disappear.

The result is that the luxuries of middle-class conscience specify Moral Princes through a recombinatory and mutually-reinforcing alliance between a left and right that otherwise loathe each other. Bush and Nader spoke from opposed politics but from within near-identical self-positioning as pristine moral agents. Where Dubya offered himself for the restoration of "decency and honor" in the Oval Office, Ralph arrived as a Quixotesque reform knight on his Green nag. They were co-dependent twins living in mutual contempt; they were an impossible Scylla and Charybidis for political navigation. Each sought to rescue National Virtue enchained, one for the right arm and one for the left. They are as mean a pair as Shelley described those two avatars of British reaction, Sidmouth and Castlereagh:

...two vultures sick for battle,  
Two scorpions under one wet stone,  
Two bloodless wolves whose wet throats rattle,  
Two crows perched on the murrained cattle,  
Two vipers tangled into one.

As a result of this perverse and antagonistic collaboration, left separatism has created a new post-Clinton political terrain. It is a terrain where 'Listen to me and only me!' politics prevails over strategic cooperation. Naderism emphasized its capacity to tilt and alter an electoral landscape over an ability to have substantive effect. Yet sitting in its petty three percent isolation a separatist left was not only thoroughly repudiated on Election Day, it proved itself the most valuable of allies to the Republican right-wing. If the American right can rely on left separatism to rationalize its isolation from broader public opinion, then the Republican party has received the most precious of electoral gifts: a left that chases its own tail instead of savaging Trent Lott's britches. Ralph Nader spent a career chasing irresponsible corporations and ended as Ralph Dubya, an alternative energy source for the US Chamber of Commerce and the National Manufacturers Association.

A new post-election species of rationalization has appeared, arguing that the Democrat-Republican near-even split will result in stalemate in any case. To achieve even minimal legislative accomplishment, the two parties will be forced to resemble each other even further. Ignoring the effects of a national sea change into Texas-style neanderthalism and indulging in unwarranted wishfulness, this argument proceeds to ignore the

vast role of executive branch agencies in shaping conditions of everyday life. To take only one example, the quality of daily life has been improved in the United States (and through standards adoption, globally) by agencies like EPA, OSHA, and FDA, all of which stands at imminent risk of corporate-oriented political redirection. It is as if, having decided the contest, the Nader/Green forces have proclaimed 'No matter, the boat isn't sailing anyplace anyway.' Directionless stasis, however, does not exist. Thus illusion proceeds into self-delusion and permits George Bush to set sail for the hellholes of his choice, all sacrificial victims aboard.

Refusal to differentiate between parties and candidates ultimately leads to a refusal to differentiate between outcomes. A left separatism predicated on belief that the political system is corrupt in its near-entirety — the quintessence of Naderism — can only invent ever-new explanations to justify its choice of marginalization.

Left separatism eclipsed American progressivism in these elections. That separatism cannot prevail.

*Joe Lockard <lockard@socrates.berkeley.edu> is a member of the Bad Subjects Production Team.*

# Vox Florida:

## BS Interviews Republican Demonstrators

*Aaron Shuman*

I thought I was flying home to spend Thanksgiving weekend with an ailing parent. Then my hometown of West Palm Beach, Florida, became an international news story over the manual recount of ballots to determine the race for President.

The following interviews with Republican demonstrators were conducted outside the Palm Beach County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on Sunday, November 25, the final day for completing manual ballot recounts to certify Florida's vote. The interviews were conducted from 5-8pm, by which point it was known that Palm Beach County had failed to meet its deadline and George W. Bush was declared Florida's presidential winner.

By now, it is well documented that Republican Party operatives and congressional aides were flown into Florida, all expenses paid by the Bush campaign, to co-ordinate street demonstrations. A front page article in the December 1 *Palm Beach Post* cited as GOP inspiration the November 13 march where Jesse Jackson was shouted off a stage in downtown West Palm Beach and where a crowd of thousands were turned back by about 100 angry Bush supporters. Party protests successfully pressured Miami-Dade County to stop its manual recount on Wednesday, November 22. Emboldened demonstrators, rarely numbering

more than a couple hundred, moved north to Broward, then Palm Beach County. The day before these interviews Bush supporters shut down Military Trail, the major thoroughfare in front of the EOC, for at least an hour. Democratic Party clubs finally organized a counter-demonstration on November 25, with their first "Count Every Vote" candlelight vigil. With police tape and sheriffs to separate protesters, the scene at the Center that Sunday had the tension of an abortion clinic defense, with safety marshals in orange reflective vests watching over the Gore side, where most demonstrators mutely held signs or candles. There was no analogous display of event security on the Bush side. By the end of the evening, with arguments between camps taking place before television cameras, men identifying themselves as representatives of Governor Jeb Bush dispersed the Republican crowd.

One reporter described the events as a "block party" for Republicans, many of whom claimed they were coming out to protest for the first time. It was more like a temporary autonomous zone where protesters drummed like hippies, talked like Nazis, and cited events of the past week and a half as the birth of a re-energized, aggressive protest movement. Discredited old ideas received new births: Florida House Speaker Tom Feeney proposed literacy tests as the solution to voter error caused by the butterfly ballot. Old rhetoric was there too. Right-wing demonstrators protested Gore's "carpetbagging lawyers" flown in to "steal the election" and asserted "states rights" against the prospect of federal intervention. Listening to the civil dis-

course was like witnessing to the resuscitation of segregationist logic.

There was a complete inversion of civil rights rhetoric. Military voters whose absentee ballots were disqualified replaced Haitian-Americans and African-Americans as images of disenfranchisement. This happened despite the more legitimate claims of disenfranchisement by the latter groups, the state's history of absentee ballot fraud, and a Republican concession that election fraud occurred in Seminole County. Republicans cited the 14th Amendment to argue the "disenfranchisement" of people who had voted, while ignoring the rights of those who had been denied the vote, according to testimony collected by the NAACP. And finally, while white liberals and the state Democratic Party fractured along the color line where they are most vulnerable, born-again Christians of color called for "kill[ing] the race card" and led chants of "Latin, black, and white must unite" — for "one nation under God", of course.

The effect was chilling and cumulative. One Republican interviewee was a black activist claiming responsibility for chasing "house Negro" Jesse Jackson out of town; another, a white retiree, likened Al Gore to Hitler while making racist statements — such as Joe Lieberman "must be extremely near and dear to [the interviewer's] heart," because of a supposed Jewish crook in my nose. Others Republican interviewees included a French racist railing against immigrants and a Roseanne-like woman citing the printing of ballots in Spanish and Creole as proof of racial fairness in the electoral process (notwithstanding contrary evidence and evidence that requests for additional ID and threats of deportation were made).

Alienation frames these interviews. The rapid proliferation of right-wing demonstrations in Florida without resistance from a counter-presence says a great deal about the alienation of state Democrats from a grassroots base, save those black Democrats who organized through churches and synagogues to generate opposition. Alienation from reality arrived in the form of the mass media's distance from street-level reporting, given that the media failed to quote consistently what Republican demonstrators were actually saying. In the spirit of bridging over these alienations, *Bad Subjects* presents a selection of their words.

**The French Perspective: Marie, 50s, white, West Palm Beach** This woman was the first person I met. Seeing my press badge, she approached and insisted on speaking to me, declaring she was from France and

could give me the French perspective. In the spirit of internationalism, I complied.

**Marie:** I am from France. I am American; I am an immigrant. And I think if we let Mr. Gore go on, he'll destroy this country. This is a country of freedom. We have counted about four times, the vote, and we should not count anymore, because we have won. Mr. Bush has won. And Mr. Gore cannot behave this way, or we are going to be just like living in Russia. Where you're gonna have the ATF pick up people, and they're gonna have an army of immigrants, and they're gonna pick everybody up in this country. Thank you. [*She turns to leave.*]

**BS:** What do you mean by army of immigrants?  
**Marie:** Well, I believe that they're putting more and more immigrants in the army and the navy and everything, so they have the control over everybody. And it's very dangerous because we'll have a government like in Cuba.

**BS:** The immigrants having control over everybody?

**Marie:** Well, I say that they are making people go in the army and navy who are not living here a long time. So they can manipulate those votes a little more than they were before.

**BS:** Do you think it's because other people aren't joining the navy?

**Marie:** Well, I think because [*unintelligible*] the real military people are the ones who defend this country, because they [don't] want to be under the United Nations. And the United Nations should not tell America what to do. We have a free country. My father was in the French military, and I think we should just respect each country with its own military. We don't need to be a participant in the United Nations. We should have just one country, one military, and one government.

**BS:** And were you born here?

**Marie:** I was born in French Morocco.

**BS:** When did you come to the U.S.?

**Marie:** I came about thirty years ago. I had nothing when I came in this country. Everybody in this country has a choice: they can work hard like I do. Right now I'm working twelve hours a day help-

ing my husband. We pay a lot of taxes, so everybody can be happy. But I tell you in this country, everybody has an opportunity to become someone. If they are poor, they shouldn't go to McDonalds. They should stay home and eat and make food for their kids. This country is the land of opportunity. And we are not going to have this beautiful country destroyed.....Like Jean-Jacques Rousseau said, inequalities are gonna be forever. Inequalities are here to stay. And we cannot have the idealistic world where you have the rich; everybody is rich or everybody is poor. It's impossible. Because the rich are working for everybody else to get their paycheck for welfare. So we don't have a country with inequality. It's just human. You're not going to make everybody equal. But they promise everybody. It's impossible. And they will destroy this country just like in Russia, where our economy will be bad, we'll depend on Chinese to give us our food, and it's not nice. This country is beautiful. God save and God bless America. Thank you. [*She turns to leave.*]

**BS:** Can I ask you one more question? Compared to France, how is America the land of opportunity?

**Marie:** [*responds with difficult pronunciation — interviewer rephrases question*]

**BS:** How are opportunities greater over here than in France?

**Marie:** No, there is not greater opportunity in Europe. I was a teacher in Europe; there is no opportunity in Europe. Because this country, you can work two or three jobs. You can go to school at night. I have my real estate license but I decided to be a mother, and now I'm helping my husband. But this country, you can do anything you want, you can, and don't destroy it, please don't destroy it.

Sore Losers: Margaret, 49, white, Boynton Beach

Margaret was one of the voters summoned to protest by an automated dialer the Republican Party used, calling its lists to tell people where, when, and why to go. Like Marie, she has lived in South Florida for about two years.

**BS:** So what are you doing out here today?

**Margaret:** Supporting President Bush. Get that:

President Bush. He's already been elected, not once but twice but three times. So Al needs to concede. Stop being such a loser. Such a sore loser.

**BS:** And did you do anything for Bush before the election?

**Margaret:** Just support him. Yeah, I can read the butterfly ballot, no trouble. I live in Palm Beach County, no problem. But if you're from here, you know how all those senior citizens drive, no wonder they couldn't figure out how to vote.

**BS:** Well, what do you think about that?

**Margaret:** I don't think there was a problem until they all got together to have coffee later in the day, and then somebody said "Did you see how confusing that was?" and then the others got on the bandwagon. I don't believe all those 10,000 affidavits that are signed. I think those are just sore Gore losers that are saying they don't know how they voted. Seriously, I do... [*These affidavits were collected by the Democratic Party from Palm Beach County voters, who stated that they feared having misvoted because of the butterfly ballot.*] And the other thing I heard on the news like a day or two after the election was that all these people that were complaining about the ballot, they said that voters should have a right to vote, but you also have a responsibility, and it's your responsibility. The reason that ballot was mailed to you was so that you would study it, be familiar with it, and know how to vote. So therefore, I don't think they should have done any of this hand recounting and stuff. It's just like anything, your job or whatever. When you screw up, hey, you get fired. You're not following the rules like you're supposed to. So I think they need to focus more on that.

**BS:** I was reading that the State House Speaker Tom Feeney was suggesting literacy tests.

**Margaret:** I didn't hear about it. But you know, they had the ballots available in like three different languages: Spanish and Creole in addition to English. If people took their responsibilities more seriously, they would have known, they could have asked for a Spanish ballot.

**BS:** Because that's been one of the things that the Gore side has been saying. Is that...

**Margaret:** Nope, it was available.

**BS:** ...the issues about languages at polls...

**Margaret:** And you could even ask somebody to read the ballot to you if you don't understand. The other thing is, too, if you make a mistake, then you should say "I made a mistake, I need a new ballot". The other thing, and I do this, because I've lived in a lot of different states, and even though I'm literate enough to probably figure it out on my own, I always ask for a demonstration...They showed me how to do it. So there's no reason for these people to be crying foul. There was enough opportunity. [*There have been numerous newspaper stories about voters of every race who realized they misvoted but claim poll workers denied them another ballot to correct their errors.*]

**Flori-Duh: Yvonne, 56, white, West Palm Beach** A woman wheeling a cart turned and introduced herself to me as the creator of the Flori-Duh T-shirt. The word is contained within the body of the state, in two different colors. The Smithsonian collected her shirt on a recent trip for election memorabilia. She had two posters taped to her cart, one announcing T-SHIRTS \$10 and the other with a copy of the article that appeared about her in the *Palm Beach Post*.

**BS:** So when did you start making the Flori-duh T-shirts?

**Yvonne:** I been out here about a week, I guess. I sold a lot of em; I don't know how many. And then I had the green one. I have two styles: this one here, and then the green ones, the one that was chosen for the Smithsonian by Mr. Byrd. And then I did another one that said — EXTRA EXTRA EXTRA BAD CHAD ACCUSED BUTTERFLY PREGNANT INSPECT FOR DIMPLES That was the other one. Those sold out real quick.

**BS:** Really?

**Yvonne:** Yeah, so I'm out of these Flori-duh shirts, except for maybe five of them.

**BS:** How many do you think you've sold in the past week?

**Yvonne:** Probably a total of close to 300. I could have sold a ton more. I was only out here like four nights. I couldn't get here cuz I have a real job. [*laughs*]

**BS:** That always makes it difficult.

**Yvonne:** People were leaving their phone number. I got a list of phone numbers to call up. So I'm trying to

get this on the Internet, because I know my fifteen minutes of fame are almost over. [*laughs*] I gotta get it while that fire's hot.

**BS:** Why have you been coming out?

**Yvonne:** I'm definitely for Bush. Although I'm a Democrat, I voted for Bush. I prayed about it, and the Lord told me to vote Bush. I wasn't real enthused about either one, to tell you the truth, but I felt like God wanted people to know that He is in control, and that is what this is all about. I don't know if the media is aware of this, but in 1999, there were two Christians who prophecied this to happen. They said that the eyes of the world would be upon...one said Palm Beach County, and the other one said West Palm Beach.

**BS:** Really? Who were those guys?

**Yvonne:** You know what, I don't know the names. [*laughs*] I do have them, but I don't have them with me. Then there was another propheciser who said recently that this will not be over until the first of the year. And then it was the very next morning, I had the TV on, and I heard one of the news people say the same thing.

**BS:** About the legal stuff?

**Yvonne:** Yeah, he said the same thing, about the whole legal mess...So I believe it. I don't think this is going to be over 'til then.

**BS:** So why, as a Democrat, did you decide to vote for Bush?

**Yvonne:** Because, as I said, I did pray about it. I wasn't real enthused about either one. I didn't feel like Bush was going to be strong enough to lead this country. And after prayer, God showed me through Moses, that Moses wasn't really ready to lead his people out. And with God all things are possible. He did show me that. And the very next day, I was listening to a Christian program, and the lady on the program said almost the same thing that had been told to me. She gave Moses as an example.

**BS:** Really?

**Yvonne:** Yeah, same thing. So that to me is a confirmation of that's why I chose Bush. I'm out here for two reasons. The shirts at first started out as a

fun thing, and a lot of people thought it was funny, and I was gonna do it just for myself and family and friends. And they said, Why don't you just sell them? So I decided to sell them. And it just took off like fire.

**BS:** Yeah, I've been seeing Flori-Duh all over the place.

**Yvonne:** *[laughs]* Some of them around here aren't mine. The styles that you see here tonight, those are the two styles that I created. I designed them and had them made...But from what I hear there are other Flori-Duhs in different versions. It doesn't matter if you copyright anything. Mine is copywrit as far as because it's already been in the paper, established with my name. But I'm not going to fight over it. *[laughs]* You know, it really is sad that this whole thing is happening. But it doesn't really surprise me. I mean, two weeks before the election, no one was even sure who they wanted. I mean, they weren't even enthused about the election, because neither party was one that anyone was that enthused about. And now they're fighting over their man, so to say. But I've always felt from the beginning that Bush would be the one. I just pray that whoever gets in, that God changes their heart if it's not in the right place, for the people. Definitely.

**BS:** Was your church politically active? Did your church back Bush?

**Yvonne:** Our church, they don't come right out and tell ya. They never come out and tell ya who to vote for. But as a Christian, most other Christians believe in Bush more so than Gore.

**BS:** Why do you think that is?

**Yvonne:** Because of the abortion issue. With Gore, he was for getting the abortion, what do you call it, the partial abortion where the baby is so far along that it actually could be born. And I've seen that before; they showed it on some TV show. It's the most gory, to use the expression, that I have ever seen. I mean, just totally gory.

**BS:** Yeah, that's messy.

**Yvonne:** And so if they ever took that in front of the Senate and showed them what I saw, they would never let that into law. Never let it into law, it's sickening how they suck out the brains of a

live baby, you know? Before I became a Christian, I would have been for abortion. And I do believe in it, in some cases, where if a woman was raped or it was her life, you know, that person definitely has the right. But if a baby is old enough to be born, that is a baby. *[A man walks up. His T-shirt displays the American flag, flanked by the words "God," "Family," "Business," and "Country," with God on top in large type and Business on the bottom.]*

**Man:** Amen.

**Yvonne:** The Bible says I knew you before you were even in your womb.

**Man:** Amen.

**Yvonne:** And I do truly believe in that. So that is why the Christians are for Bush.

**BS:** That makes sense.

**Man:** You voted with conviction; good for you. It's the only reason I voted for him. Good for you. You didn't vote your pocketbook; you voted your conscience.

**Yvonne:** Yes.

**Man:** On that one issue alone.

**Yvonne:** Yes.

**Man:** That's exactly what I did.

**Yvonne:** Yes, it more or less was why I did — that issue.

**Man:** Good for you. *[Walks off.]*

**Yvonne:** He must go to my church, because we had a concert, some Christian singers, and that's where I got that shirt [he was wearing], for the Fourth of July.

**BS:** When did you become a Christian? How long ago was that?

**Yvonne:** Well, actually, I've known the Lord all my life, but like most people, I never lived my life as a Christian. But I have, thank God I have been from the pits as they say, for the past — oh gosh I don't know — at least twenty years. But I became very close to the Lord when I lost a son.

**BS:** Okay.

**Yvonne:** I turned a bad thing into a good thing.

**BS:** When was that?

**Yvonne:** I lost my son seven years ago. I actually became a Christian more than twenty years ago. But even more so, I've been having a relationship. There's a difference between being a Christian and having a relationship, and I actually have a strong relationship with Jesus Christ for the past seven years, since the death of my son. His death gave me back my life in realism... [*The man returns with money for a T-shirt.*]

**Man:** I'm sorry for cutting in. I'm feeling wonderful. I feel a lot better after I heard her testimony.

**Yvonne:** Extra large is the only size I have.

**Man:** That's all you got? You don't have a large?

**Yvonne:** I have a large in this one. But this is the Smithsonian one. You really would rather have this one.

**Man:** Actually, the Chad one is [the Smithsonian one.]

**Yvonne:** I don't have Chad anymore.

**Man:** But that's the one they're putting in.

**Yvonne:** Bad Chad? No, un-uh. They're putting this one in.

**Man:** Well, it doesn't matter. I'm gonna take it anyway, but that's not what I thought.

**Yvonne:** [*laughs*] Well, read the newspaper. I got the article. [*Points to the front of her cart where it is taped. Laughs.*]

**Man:** I'm not saying you're lying, mind you.

**Yvonne:** No, it said that in the paper.

**BS:** What was the first night you came out here? And why did you come out?

**Yvonne:** I think it was last Saturday. Then I came out Sunday after church. Just those two days, and then I came out again Monday, because I was off Monday. Then I came out this weekend, so that's five times.

**Man:** God bless you.

**Yvonne:** Thank you. You too, sir. [*Man buys Flori-Duh T-shirt and walks off. Interview below refers to him as Flori-Duh Man.*]

**BS:** Did you get phone calls? Like some folks have been telling me about the calls they got from the phone bank?

**Yvonne:** From the phone bank?

**BS:** The Republican Party had like a recorded message...

**Yvonne:** No, actually one of the guys from my church came up and told me that tonight out here... Don Weeks, he's with the Republican Party. And then whatshisname from our Christian radio station. He was out here tonight. I gave him one of my shirts today in my Bible class. He was out here doing interviews with people. He said, "—I need a Democrat, Yvonne. Have you seen one around?" [*laughs*] I said, they're way down there.

**BS:** What's the Christian radio station?

**Yvonne:** WRMB. I listen to that one, and WAY-FM. They're more for the younger generation, I would say, but I like both of those stations. Ken is the one that I like so well on WRMB. He's the one that I know well from my class.

**BS:** So when you came out the first Saturday, why did you come out?

**Yvonne:** Well, a lot of people said if you're gonna go sell your shirts, you should go over where they sell them. And to tell you the truth, I was on [another] corner all by myself, and I thought, well, this is kinda crazy; I should go down [to the EOC] and check it out. I didn't know what it would be like. So I came down here. There wasn't a whole lot of people here, so I parked across the street. You know what's funny? As busy as it's been in the parking area over there, I have had an open spot right in front every time.

**BS:** How'd that happen?

**Yvonne:** I know, my son said that tonight. He said "Mom, you got front row again". My son came out for the first time tonight to take pictures. And

I said because every night I pray to God let me have a front row seat and every day it's there. I left last night when it started just barely drizzling, and I was tired; I had sold out all of my t-shirts, so I thought, Oh, I'll go ahead and leave. I wasn't in my car, I'm telling ya, not even a minute, and it poured down rain. [laughs] And today, I was selling over there when it started pouring down rain, and I thought Oh man, I really need an umbrella. I looked over. This umbrella had been sitting there the whole time I'd been selling shirts. No one had ever come to get it, so I picked it up. Some lady comes over and says, "—Can I stand underneath here with you?" We got to talking, and she told me Yvonne, if you want to put your shirts on my Net, you can. I've been trying to get my shirts on the Net, and she came over to me and offered. Offered me to put them on her show, on her Net. So it's just... [laughs] it's called a God thing. [laughs] [sighs] But I have been interviewed; it's really funny. I've been interviewed by every media throughout the world. I've been on Japan, China, France, Germany, Norway, their 60 Minutes. Their interpreters wanted to know what Duh means. They mispronounced it as Doo. Flori-*DOO*? I said, well, it's Flori-*Duh!* So now I'm trying to explain *Duh!* to these people.

**BS:** To the Norwegians?

**Yvonne:** Yeah, and to all of the other ones who had been doing the interviews that did not understand. The Chinaman, oh he was so cute, when I was trying to explain to him what it meant. Then I've been interviewed by I can't tell you how many different newspapers. All over this one crazy idea. [laughs] It's funny how things happen. It's been a blessing. It's been a blessing; I've had fun with it. Some Floridians took it too hard and were not real happy with me. I said if you can't laugh with the people, you know, come on! That's the way I look at life, you gotta laugh about things. They're laughing at Florida because of this, but you know, there is a reason for this happening in our little city here so. We may not know right now why, but some day I'm sure it will be revealed to us.

#### Black Power Republicans

At 7pm, the rally MC — a woman named Janet who described herself as a staffer at the Center for Reclaiming America — and said she was here today "as an individual voter, concerned about freedom", suggested that the crowd go home and watch results on CNN. Meanwhile, word spread

among protesters that police would allow them to go up to the Emergency Operations Center, where Gore supporters were being interviewed, as long as they left their signs behind.

This resulted in several heated arguments in front of the EOC, culminating in one between Flori-Duh Man and an elderly Jewish man. Flori-Duh Man said, "This is Florida; this isn't New York! Go back to New York! Where you from? Where you originally from? You're from New York, aren't you? Long Island. Guess what, you live in Florida!" and so on. When the Jewish man turned to leave, Flori-Duh Man grabbed him by the shoulder, at which point the man turned around and said, "Touch me again, and I'll have you arrested."

Sheriffs moved in to begin clearing the crowd. Soon after, a man in a suit introduced himself to Bush supporters as a representative of Governor Bush and suggested they clear the area. Meanwhile, one black Bush supporter began shouting at departing TV camera crews, "The truth is here! Turn the lights back on! You can't stand the truth! Turn the camera back on!" Six black men, flanking him like a chorus, shouted "We want freedom! We don't want to be controlled or nothing! We are freedom! We represent freedom!"

The leader led a chant of "Latin, black and white....MUST UNITE!" for the cameras as sheriffs and Republican operatives herded people away. These black men claim responsibility for forcing Jesse Jackson off stage in West Palm Beach and are likely the ones referred to by Marlene Bastien, president of Haitian Women of Miami, for "giving out information saying that voting Democratic is like voting for the devil and the Ku Klux Klan."

The following is a transcript of conversation as we moved, and kept moving, away from the EOC. Willie Logan, referred to in the interview, was a black Democrat and the first African-American to be appointed speaker-designate in the Florida State House, before white Democrats unseated him in 1998. He has since campaigned as an Independent for the Senate nomination and has encouraged black Democrats to become "free agents," with a certain reconciliation to state Republicans.

Maurice, early 30s, black, Miami-Dade

**White Woman:** You are a passionate man.

**White Man:** You know what? You heard them guys telling the truth...Don't that make you sick? Definitely

makes me sick. We don't want to hear no more of that stuff [about racism]. Tired of hearing that.

**White Woman:** Black and proud! Black and proud! Black and proud!

**White Man:** You got up there and you told the truth!

**Maurice:** Converted a lot of people.

**White Man:** I tell you the truth. I broke down and I couldn't take it. When I seen you guys run him [Jesse Jackson] outta here, I come up to you and I wanted to, I wanted to...

**Maurice:** God bless you, brother.

**Chorus Member:** Cuz we represent freedom!

**White Man:** Hey, we all love this country, don't we?

**Maurice:** That's right.

**Chorus Member:** For everybody.

**Maurice:** For everybody.

**White Woman:** Black and proud!

**White Man:** I can't stand nobody calling me a racist!

**Maurice:** The press won't play us on TV.

**White Man:** That's right, that's right, you got it, you got it! They wanna play their games...

**Maurice:** They are the racists. They wanna keep America divided.

**White Woman:** Jesse Jackson compared you to Jews, the Jewish people. You don't need to be compared with anybody cuz you are you, baby! And that is it — you don't compare to anybody!

**Young Latina:** Like what they did to the Cuban Americans...

**White Woman:** Right! And with the Mafia...

**Maurice:** They teach divisionism. Now we're here to bring back the union.

**White Woman:** Black and proud! Black and proud!

**Maurice:** The Republicans, that's the whole secret. Listen, if you can't figure that out, I don't know what to tell you. They don't want to show that on TV.

**White Woman:** They don't want to let you dream! They want to destroy their slaves!

**Maurice:** Am I being taped here?

**BS:** I was gonna ask. Can I?

**Maurice:** Yeah, it's okay. I just wanted to be sure I was.

**BS:** Why'd you all come out here today?

**Maurice:** We came out here to support, no, I'm sorry.

**Man in Bush T-shirt:** The Governor asked us to leave, Governor Bush asked us to move out.

**White Man:** [To me] So ease on out here with us. They'll talk to you — ease on out. We don't want them to show us in no bad light.

**Maurice:** Well, the Governor [unintelligible] he's not wanting us here.

**Chorus Member:** We represent freedom! We want to control our own taxes.

**Maurice:** He wants the troops to move out. [We walk away from the Center.]

**BS:** So you came out here to support?

**Maurice:** What we really wanted to show is that Black people are thinking good of the Republicans...Of course, Frederick Douglass, as you well know, is a black man who was a Republican. Harriet Tubman was a Republican. Booker T. Washington was a Republican, and you can go on and on from there. Once it was against the law to be a Democrat, after the Civil War. Now they need our vote; now they coming to us smiling and laughing in our face, like a wolf in sheep's clothing. That's what I call a murderer, because that's what a wolf does, they murder the sheep. The sheep are the people. No matter black and white, don't make a difference what color you are, because the Bible says Gen. 9:22-26 that Noah was

the father of all men, which means we're all blood brothers. There's no difference between me and you.

**Man in Bush T-shirt:** They don't want us in there. Governor Bush doesn't want us in there...No, that was Governor Bush. The Governor Bush people are trying to get everybody out; they don't want to look bad; they don't want to get any arguments going in front of the camera, and what happens is one liberal will walk up and start causing trouble, and distract the whole press.... [*unintelligible*].

**Maurice:** So people got to realize that we are one. So in knowing that, remember the North was the Union. The word union means unity. The Confederates were those who seek to separate. They're the separationists. That's why they won't allow us, the press will not allow anybody black to speak up good for the Republicans.

**BS:** And were the Confederates Democrats?

**Maurice:** Of course.

**BS:** I don't know...

**Maurice:** You don't know the history? Yes, let me give you the history. Eighteen thirty-six: the Whig Party was formed. They were called the Democrats; they were all for slavery. Eighteen fifty-four: the Republicans was formed by abolitionists; those are people who wanted to free blacks. After the War, the Civil War, the Dixiecrats were formed. The Dixiecrats are the Democrats. They are the ones that desired that we remain in slavery. Black people have forgotten about that, because of the preachers and certain women who want to live for free off our tax dollars. And they teach us that the Republicans are for the rich and the Democrats are for the poor. When the facts are the Republicans was for the poor, because they're the ones that freed the poorest of the poor, which were the slaves. I am, we're here. I'm not supporting anything that had to do with affirmative action or all that. [*Governor Jeb Bush attempted to eliminate affirmative action by executive order, which was overturned by the Florida Supreme Court.*] All I want is equal rights: my right as a black man to do business with my brothers, whether he's Latin, black, or white. Makes no difference to me. I just want equal rights. I'm tired of being overtaxed. And that's what slavery is. Slavery is when you're paying anything over 10 percent in taxes, because God only requires 10 percent. So how in the world did

they get the power, under the guise of helping the poor — and most of these people who are considered poor — nude nightclub dancers. They're making a killing. They're living in houses for free, at our expense, black and white. So they got black, white, and Latin men all in slavery, while they live for free. [*A flyer Maurice hands me condemns "FREE GOVERNMENT HUD HOUSING."*] And of course, Gore, with his higher taxes, he's only paying homage to those who helped train us to vote for the man that believes in us being in slavery. Because Gore himself donated money to the Confederate Rebel Association. And when the NAACP asked him why, he said it's only forty dollars! We don't want to hear that, you understand? If the Bible says in Matthew 6:21, wheresoever your treasure is, there is your heart also. So his money is with them; he's with them. His Dad was a segregationist Senator, Al Gore Sr., and he voted against the Civil Rights Bill. His granddaddy and his great-grand-daddy were all cotton farmer slavemasters from Tennessee, where of course, the KKK started in 1866, in Pulaski, Tennessee. So here are these Southern Dixiecrats, now coming to us for our vote, need our help. We're the brothers that run Jesse Jackson away from here. Cuz we don't want no more house Negroes coming here, teaching our people to go for the slavemaster. I, I can guarantee you: Jewish people are good. There are bad Jewish people, [but] there's good in everybody's races. But I can tell you, no good Jewish person would vote for any German that aspires to being a Nazi. Why? Cuz the Nazis murdered six millions of their people. Five hundred years from now, they won't do that. So how can Lieberman, being a Jew, ask me to vote for the Democrats who are the ones that were our slavemasters? He's hypocritical, and that's evil. He ought to be ashamed of himself. He requires us to do things he wouldn't do. And he wants our vote. So what I'm saying to our black people is that it's time out for all of that. We got to unite with our black, Latin, and white, Chinese, Haitian, Bahamian, Jamaican — all brothers got to unite under the Union. I'm not saying that's perfect. The Dixiecrats are the bottom of the barrel to me. Republicans are at least a step up on Jacob's Ladder, towards heaven. I'm really for theocracy, rulership by God.

**BS:** Hmm. Okay.

**Maurice:** But I want to take a step up. I'm not gonna take a step back down to H-E-L-L. You understand? So that's where we're at. So you got a bunch of us guys who know the truth now and we're here to defend it. Just like back in the days of slavery, the black Negro that was in the house with the master didn't want us to fight for freedom. But we went and fought anyway. They hated us back then; they hate us now. Cuz this

represents, right now we're going through a Civil War to straighten out party lines. Right across the Mason-Dixon Line. On this side is the Confederates; on this side is the Union, the North. And of course, the Union, I mean, the South thought they were powerful cuz they were the gunslingers. The Union was supposed to be little homeboys. But when the Union all of a sudden had to face their ex-slaves, that's when the tides turned. Well, here we are. Here we are! That's why the tide is turning now. Because they know that two years from now, we're gonna make sure anybody that aspires to being a Democrat will not make it into office because we're gonna teach our people the history. They're gonna have to come up with another name for a party.

**BS:** You know anything about this black Democrat Willie Logan, who was gonna be Speaker of the House...

**Maurice:** No, he's not a Democrat. He was an Independent. I know him. But he was a Democrat at one point, and then the Democrats....He might have been, but I know right now he's an Independent, which means he might have had a change of mind. Everybody has the right to repent. I'm not gonna say anything bad about him, but I can tell you, I'm definitely against what Jesse Jackson tried to do, come down here, and get us to help and promote and get together with the Dixiecrats. I'm not gonna support that. I'm not gonna support the Reverend Al Sharpton coming down here. [Sharpton appeared at the EOC on Sunday, where protesters shouted, "You and your people aren't welcome here." Sharpton's National Action Network was the first organization to file suit claiming the disenfranchisement of black voters under the 1965 Voting Rights Act.] They don't know the Bible. If I get into a Bible conversation with them, they'd be lost, cuz I know the Bible. They don't even know the Bible, calling themselves reverend. How could you be a Reverend and teach your people to go back to the slavemaster? That's totally insane. Nobody on the planet Earth would do that. I guarantee you no other nation of people would go and support the person that oppressed them. You

know what? My white brothers are my blood brothers, because Acts 17:26 says all nations are one blood. I will support and work with anybody white,

**White Man:** You ain't the only brothers.

**Maurice:** Yes sir.

**White Man:** You ain't the only brothers.

**Maurice:** Yes sir.

**White Man:** We're all brothers.

**Maurice:** We're all brothers, cuz that's what the Bible says, that God said

**White Man:** And that's the way it used to be, when I said brother, it didn't mean a black guy.

**Maurice and Chorus:** Right.

**Maurice:** Cuz all of us are brothers.

**Everyone:** That's right.

**Maurice:** My thing is, since we're all brothers, I'm not gonna support anybody white, I don't care if he's Black, but if he aspires to being a Dixiecrat, he's outta here. I'm not gonna help him, Black or white. Period. It ain't about skin color. They trying to play the race card. What we're doing, we're here to kill the race card. It's all about us unifying under God; that's the whole secret. So you tell Al Gore, you know, you played hard, it was a good [smacks his fist], but you playing basketball. You see, it's not 4 out of 7. This is the Super Bowl: the game is over; you lost. The game is over. Love ya. [Turns and walks away]

Aaron Shuman is a Bad Subjects editor and freelance writer still hoping for a senior appointment in a Gore administration.

Explore our archive of web columns

<<http://eserver.org/bs/editors/>>



*Image by Dave Koehler <[www.quirked.com/distortions](http://www.quirked.com/distortions)>, but he's not to blame for the literary embellishment. . .*

-- "He-he-heh. You said 'Dick' He-he-heh."

-- "He-he-heh. You said 'Bush.'"

-- He-he-heh. I need NSA for my bunghole. I am the Great Spookholio."

-- "He-he-heh. You said 'Bush.'"