

## The 12-Step Guide for the Recovering Obama Voter

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We have met the enemy, and he is us.

That's what Walt Kelly's Pogo said in the 1960s. His educated readership got it. He was paraphrasing Commodore Perry's famous 1813 quote from the Battle of Lake Erie, war of 1812. Today nobody knows about Perry. Or the War of 1812. Or the Revolutionary War, for that matter. And in fact, nothing much about American history, and certainly nothing heroic. And that, dear friends, is the problem.

Karpel writes that "Obama's brand of liberalism isn't a political philosophy; it's a debilitating condition - like Parkinsonism, rheumatism, or alcoholism." People who believe in Obama are not very good at arguing to defend him. They are vociferous, yes. They tar any Obama opponent as a racist, sexist, homophobic, Bible thumping, gun toting primitive. They thus make an ad hominem attack on the individual as being the opposite of what they are, and avoid encountering the arguments themselves.

Karpel knows the Obama community pretty well. He was a community organizer fighting for "social justice" in the early 1970s and an adviser to the far-left firebrand Abbie Hoffman. He worked with John Lennon during the former Beatle's involvement in American leftist politics. He then got into writing, for publications that find themselves on both the left and the right of the American political spectrum: The New Republic, New York Magazine, The New York Times, Playboy, and The Wall Street Journal.

It is doubtful that he was ever in Obama voter. In 1995, almost a generation ago, he wrote a book which anticipates the coming collapse which Obama is accelerating. That book is entitled "The Retirement Myth: What You Must Know Now to Prosper in the Coming Meltdown of Job Security, Pension Plans, Social Security, the Stock Market, Housing Prices and More." You could say that he saw Obama coming.

In any case, here are his 12 steps. Reading these, you kind of know where the book is headed:

Step one: we need to acknowledge that we became hooked on a political cult that, blurring the distinction between government and religion, presented a politician as a messianic figure.

Step two: we need to acknowledge that instead of valuing only character, we became addicted to charisma.

Step three: we need to acknowledge that instead of being grounded in fact and truth, we became addicted to "narratives."

Step four: we need to acknowledge that no sooner did we express our resolve to put racism behind us by voting for an African-American to be president than we became addicted to an unprecedented form of bigotry: post-racism.

Step five: we need to acknowledge that instead of valuing only a competent, we became addicted to elitism.

Step six: we need to acknowledge that instead of striving for self-reliance, we became dependent on dependence.

Step seven: we need to acknowledge that instead of accepting intractability and impossibility, we became addicted to the fantasy that every problem has a solution.

Step eight: we need to acknowledge that instead of accepting our share of responsibility, we became addicted to blaming others.

Step nine: we need to acknowledge that instead of facing painful truths, we became addicted to denial.

Step 10: we need to embrace a sober alternative to the politics of addiction.

Step 11: we need to make amends for having allowed ourselves to become Obama addict's by helping others to overcome their addiction to this president's belief system.

Step 12: we need to support others, as well as benefit from their support, as we overcome our Obama addiction by taking steps to attain voting sobriety.

Whoever wins the election in 2012, the problem will cure itself. Europe and the US have been living on borrowed money for decades. Borrowed time as well. We have known all along that it cannot continue indefinitely, and the apocalypse is approaching now in a matter of months rather than years. We have been kicking the can down the road.

1. Government long ago passed the point of being able to pay its obligations by raising money through taxation. It had to borrow.
2. About 2008 it lost the ability to pay them by borrowing on public markets, and instead borrowed from the Federal Reserve.
3. Now, the government does not have the ability to redeem short-term borrowings from the Fed, so it has swapped short for long term debt, operation TWIST.

Each action they take presumes some magical source of income in the distant future. That would take favorable demographics - more workers. Actually the birthrate is stagnant. It would require higher productivity. Actually, our population gets dumber and less productive by the year. It would require innovation. Actually, the government stifles innovation. It would require investment. Actually, increasing amounts of capital are lying idle or leaving the country. Capital is especially abandoning places like California, where things are worst.

Moreover, everything they are doing increases expenditures in the future. Adding more people to Social Security disability. Signing up for unbounded obligations through Medicare. Introducing Obamacare. Extending jobless benefits, even as people are not going back to work. Starting and continuing wars. Spending vast amounts on schools to "eliminate the black-white test score gap." Adding employees to the bureaucracy.

When world governments embarked on their regimes of fiat money, now some 80 years ago for the US, they accepted the obligation to put the "full faith and credit" of the government behind their currency. In other words, the promises of politicians. We should have known. Many did know and spoke out at the time, but the voices of the prudent are always drowned, eventually, in a democracy. Our people have demanded more government payments and services than we can pay for. "They sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind." That's today's voter.

Obama voters especially, but even most Republicans, cannot come to grips with the fact that we cannot continue indefinitely to live beyond our means. Ryan knows the truth, and knows enough to keep from saying it. Romney probably does as well. Obama's genius is in his naivety. He doesn't even know the truth, so he doesn't run the risk of saying anything politically incorrect.

We have met the enemy, and he is us. In the person of Barack Obama.

Selected bibliography:

This time is different - Eight centuries of Financial Folly

The Black Swan

The Folly of Fools

Thinking Fast and Slow

The Big Short

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