

Publisher

Pason Gaddis
pgaddis@floridaweekly.com

Executive Editor

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pkennedy@floridaweekly.com

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Shelley Lund
slund@floridaweekly.com
Lyndsey Walsh
lwalsh@floridaweekly.com
Doug Rosburg
drosburg@floridaweekly.com
Allison Spencer
aspencer@floridaweekly.com

Business Office Manager

Kelli Carico

Street Address:
Florida Weekly
4300 Ford Street, Suite 106
Fort Myers, Florida 33916
Phone 239.333.2135
Fax: 239.333.2140



OPINION

What's happens now?

tanyaAMADOR-DAIGLE

politics@floridaweekly.com



— *Editor's note: Tanya Amador-Daigle is reporting for Florida Weekly on the national primaries until the presidential candidates are chosen this summer. She has a unique perspective on the primaries and the process for choosing a candidate, having traveled the country reporting on primaries and caucuses for the Purple States project. To learn more about Purple States go to www.purplestates.tv.*

In what must have been a difficult withdrawal speech on Saturday, Hillary Clinton said, "Although we weren't able to shatter that highest, hardest ceiling this time, thanks to you (her supporters), it's got about 18 million cracks in it." In front of an impassioned and emotional crowd, Clinton finally endorsed Barack Obama. Watching her demeanor during her speech I couldn't help but think that she was still trying to convince herself that she had found herself here. After all, in the early days of her campaign, she, along with everyone else, thought she had the nomination wrapped up. This was a sad day for her indeed.

Clinton has vowed to work hard for Obama and support him however he needs. Obviously she is after something, perhaps several things. If she doesn't get the Veep slot then maybe a place as a senior member on his staff or some help with her \$30 million campaign debt. Clearly Hil will have to be pacified. It is obvious that the reason she held out for so long was so that she won't go away completely empty-handed.

With the last Democratic opponent out of his way, can Barack Obama win over the 18 million voters who voted for Hillary Clinton? As the dust begins to settle from Clinton's long anticipated withdrawal, this is the question on the minds of many. If Obama names Clinton as his running mate, I'm pretty sure the answer would be yes, in which case John McCain will have an even more difficult challenge on his hands.

Thus far Obama has remained secretive about whom he is considering for the VP position. It looks to me like he's in a pickle. How can he choose the old horse as his running mate and still run on a platform of "change"? An Obama-Clinton ticket wouldn't exactly show that he is intent on breaking from the past. Maybe he could modify his slogan to "Some Change", or, "Change We Can Somewhat Believe In." There, problem solved.

On the other hand, if Clinton were chosen as his partner in crime, it seems more than likely that she would be bringing him most of

those 18 million who voted for her. In other words, she may publicly claim that the decision is up to him, but the bottom line is, Hillary's got something Obama wants and it isn't her pantsuit collection.

The biggest debate is how many disappointed Clinton supporters are going to jump ship. The media has been telling us that many of them have sworn to vote for McCain. I've yet to see any polls that support this and it is probably too early to tell, as the wounds are still raw. Most of those interviewed that have said they will switch their allegiance are women. These women feel that sexism has triumphed. I'm not sure I agree with them.

I think Hillary Clinton's experience both worked for her and against her at the same time. Although there are many who would like to see a return to the Clinton days, in the current political climate many Americans are desperate for a revolution in government. More Clintonism is the opposite of that. Even if we're not sure what type of "change" Obama will bring, he represents that word I'm getting tired of repeating, "change".

One thing is clear: Hillary Clinton has made history. As her new best friend, Barack put it, "She shattered barriers on behalf of my daughters and women everywhere, who now know that there are no limits to their dreams." I think her feminist supporters should be proud. ■

EDITORIAL

Scott McClellan, official spokesman

BY RICH LOWRY

Scott McClellan has learned the profound wisdom of the old Groucho Marx line about not wanting to belong to any club that would have him.

The former press secretary has written a scathing memoir about his time in the Bush administration, but nothing he says in his book, dully titled (appropriately enough) "What Happened," is as damning as the fact that he spent nearly three years as White House press secretary.

Likable, but maladroit and plodding, he was the perfect spokesman for the administration of Harriet Miers, Michael Brown and Al Gonzales. For anyone who doubted that President Bush too often valued loyalty over talent, there was McClellan stumbling through daily briefings to embody the point more eloquently than he ever could have stated it.

McClellan's book has all the inherent interest of one of his briefings. He tells of an incident that was one of his "favorite moments" from working with then-Gov. George Bush in Texas. He stumbled upon Bush making sandwiches. McClellan picks

up the tale from there: "For the next 20 minutes or so we munched on the sandwiches and talked about a variety of topics, few of which had to do with politics."

No one was going to pay any attention to a book replete with such banalities, so McClellan had to "sex it up." He took the conventional anti-Iraq War case and cut-and-pasted it into his book. He says that the administration engaged in a "political propaganda campaign" in the run-up to the war, doing "a disservice to the American people and to our democracy." If McClellan's provocative language is stripped away, what he is saying is unremarkable.

McClellan is more compelling when he complains about his treatment during the Valerie Plame case. He maintains that Karl Rove and "Scooter" Libby made categorical denials to him of involvement in the leak. Whether that was the case or he missed subtleties in what they told him, McClellan said things from the podium about the controversy that were untrue, and no one bothered to correct him.

That would have been grounds for resigning, but McClellan stayed. It wasn't until a new White House chief of staff arrived and

wanted a better press secretary that McClellan was forced out. The deep-think (and entirely commonplace) theme of his book is that Washington has a poisonous culture of the "permanent campaign." But people fighting for what they believe is more admirable than rank, unprincipled careerism.

When McClellan first met with Bush in Texas for a job interview, Bush asked why he wanted to work for him. "Because I believe in you," McClellan said. What about Bush's agenda? McClellan hastily added he believed in that, too. But he didn't in any meaningful way. He writes of the death penalty, which he defended in Texas: "I do feel significant doubts about it, much as I would later feel about the necessity of war in Iraq." But he swallowed them: "I was called on, as official spokesman, to defend a position despite inner qualms about it."

Lo and behold, here is Scott McClellan, ever the mouthpiece, spouting views that happen to suit the interests of his New York publisher and betray his foolishly loyal former boss. If he has any inner qualms, we'll never know. ■

Rich Lowry is editor of the *National Review*.

MOMENTS IN TIME

- On **June 15, 1877**, Henry Ossian Flipper, born a slave in Thomasville, Ga., in 1856, is the first black cadet to graduate from the United States Military Academy. Flipper was never spoken to by a white cadet during his four years at West Point.

- On **June 12, 1924**, the first Bush president, George Herbert Walker Bush, is born in Milton, Mass. Bush served in the Navy during World War II and was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery in combat.

- On **June 10, 1935**, in New York City, two recovering alcoholics found Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.), a 12-step rehabilitation program. Today there are more than 80,000 local groups in the United States, with an

estimated membership of almost 2 million people.

- On **June 11, 1944**, five days after the D-Day landing, the five Allied landing groups link up in Normandy to form a single solid front across northwestern France in Operation Overlord. The Allied invasion force included 3 million men, 13,000 aircraft, 1,200 warships, 2,700 merchant ships and 2,500 landing craft.

- On **June 14, 1954**, more than 12 million Americans in 54 cities "die" in a mock nuclear attack, as the United States goes through its first nationwide civil-defense drill. At 10 a.m., alarms were sounded in selected cities, at which time all citizens were supposed to get off the streets, seek

shelter and prepare for the onslaught.

- On **June 9, 1973**, Secretariat becomes the first horse since Citation in 1948 to win America's coveted Triple Crown -- the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness and the Belmont Stakes. In 1999, ESPN ranked Secretariat No. 35 in its list of the Top 50 North American athletes of the 20th century, the only non-human on the list.

- On **June 13, 1983**, after more than a decade in space, Pioneer 10, the world's first outer-planetary probe, leaves the solar system. Headed in the direction of the Taurus constellation, Pioneer 10 will pass within 3 light years of another star -- Ross 246 -- in the year 34,600 A.D. ■

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