

**The Rooted and the Rootless**by **Patrick J. Buchanan** ([more by this author](#))

Posted 04/24/2009 ET

Updated 04/24/2009 ET

Does Barack Obama understand the people he leads? Do his aides?

These may seem cheeky questions to ask of a team that just won the presidency. But there is something in their cool, insouciant, blase demeanor, in the face of insults to their country, that suggests there yet exists a chasm -- between them and us.

Now, the change since the 1960s in the character of the nation has been great. The moral and social sappers spawned by that decade have done their work well. But Middle America yet remains a blood-and-soil, family-and-faith, God-and-country kind of nation.

We are not Europe -- yet.

Most Americans remain visceral patriots. It's in the DNA.

What almost cost Bill Clinton the presidency in 1992 was not that he had opposed the Vietnam War, but that, it was said, he marched against his country while in a foreign country.

When Barack confided to friends in San Francisco that he was having trouble in Pennsylvania because these folks "get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them ... as a way to explain their frustrations," he revealed that he does not really understand a part of the nation he now leads.

It is this part of America that does not comprehend how the president could sit in Trinidad and listen to the scrub stock of the hemisphere trash our country -- and say nothing.

To Obama's supporters, he may have behaved as a rational leader ought: Be pleasant and friendly, smile, ignore taunts and insults, rise above all that, communicate, seek common ground.

That is who Obama is, friends say. On a personal level, there is surely nothing wrong with so conducting oneself. But Obama is now president of the United States. He represents our country, not just himself.

The other America is hardwired another way. It believes, as Merle Haggard sang, "If you're running' down my country, man, you're walkin' on the fightin' side of me."

At Columbia, Harvard Law and the University of Chicago -- where Barack, the son of a single mom, shuttled from Hawaii to Indonesia and back -- a black kid in a strange Muslim world, then in a white world, by his own admission unrooted, learned how to get along. And he is surrounded by aides with advanced degrees from elite colleges who react just like him.

But if they don't wish to lose the country, they had better begin to understand the rest of America -- as the 1960s' liberals never did.

When columnist Tom Wicker famously wrote, after the riots at the 1968 Democratic Convention, "These were our children in the streets, and the Chicago police beat them up," a Gallup poll recorded that 56 percent of Americans interviewed approved of the Chicago cops.

To most Americans, it was the cops who were "our children," and the country was delighted the obnoxious and over-privileged brats had gotten what they deserved.

When students marched down Wall Street in 1969 to protest the "dirty immoral war" in Vietnam, the construction workers of Pete Brennan's building trades waded in. Liberals could not understand how the working class -- the proletariat, for Pete's sake! -- so detested them.

Ever since the Social Democrats voted to a man for the Kaiser's war credits in 1914, the left has felt itself repeatedly betrayed by the

economic class in which they have always invested so much hope.

This divide here is not Republicans versus Democrat, so much as it is NASCAR versus The New York Times.

When the Dubai Ports deal became public and America exploded, Times neocon columnist David Brooks was as stunned as his neoliberal colleague Tom Friedman. The "pitchfork-wielding xenophobes" were out of their cages, and a new Dark Age was upon us.

When during the Panama Canal debate Ronald Reagan declared: "We bought it. We paid for it. It's ours. And we're gonna keep it," and crowds came roaring to their feet, the elites could not comprehend it, because they do not understand what Pascal meant when he said, "The heart has reasons that the mind knows not."

Rooted people love the things of the heart: God, country, family and faith. The weapons of the mind have been given to us, they believe, to defend the things of the heart.

Knowledge follows love; it does not precede it.

Most Americans have grown to love America long before they read the Constitution, or the Federalist Papers. There are heroes in Arlington who never learned to read. A true nation is an extended family. If fathers or sons do not defend it, it is their conduct that is indefensible.

Obama may be popular today, but he will lose the country and his presidency if he lets the perception take hold that he, the personification of American sovereignty, does not react as a normal patriot.

The Obamaites may not like Sarah Palin's phraseology. But they need someone in their councils who is rooted in the Real America.

Mr. Buchanan is a nationally syndicated columnist and author of [Churchill, Hitler, and "The Unnecessary War": How Britain Lost Its Empire and the West Lost the World](#), ["The Death of the West."](#), ["The Great Betrayal,"](#) ["A Republic, Not an Empire"](#) and ["Where the Right Went Wrong."](#)

[Advertise](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)
Copyright © 2009 HUMAN EVENTS. All Rights Reserved.