

Dick Morris

Obama sows seeds of demise

By Dick Morris

Posted: 04/28/09 05:45 PM [ET]

The Hill Website: <http://thehill.com/dick-morris/obama-sows-seeds-of-demise-2009-04-28.html>

When the Obama administration crashes and burns, with approval ratings that fall through the floor, political scientists can trace its demise to its first hundred days. While Americans are careful not to consign a presidency they desperately need to succeed to the dustbin of history, the fact is that this president has moved Ñ on issue after issue Ñ in precisely the opposite direction of what the people want him to do.

Right now, Obama's ratings must be pleasing to his eye. Voters like him and his wife immensely and approve of his activism in the face of the economic crisis. While polls show big doubts about what he is doing, the overwhelming sense is to let him have his way and pray that it works.

But beneath this superficial support, Obama's specific policies run afoul of the very deeply felt convictions of American voters. For example, the most recent Rasmussen Poll asked voters if they wanted an economic system of complete free enterprise or preferred more government involvement in managing the economy. By 77-19, they voted against a government role, up seven points from last month.

And in the Fox News poll — the very same survey that gave Obama a 62 percent approval rating and reported that 68 percent of voters are "satisfied" with his first hundred days — voters, by 50-38, supported a smaller government that offered fewer services over a larger government that provided more.

By 42-8, the Fox News poll (conducted on April 22-23) found that voters felt Obama had expanded government rather than contracted it (42 percent said it was the same size) and, by 46-30, reported believing that big government was more of a danger to the nation than big business. (By 50-23, they said Obama felt big business was more dangerous.)

By 62-20, they said government spending, under Obama, was "out of control."

So if voters differ so fundamentally with the president on the very essence of his program, why do they accord him high ratings? They are like the recently married bride who took her vows 100 days ago. It would be a disaster for her life if she decides that she really doesn't like her husband. But she keeps noticing things about him that she can't stand. It will be a while before she walks out the door or even comes to terms with her own doubts, but it is probably inevitable that she will.

For Americans to conclude that they disapprove of their president in the midst of an earth-shaking crisis is very difficult. But as Obama's daily line moves from "I inherited this mess" to "There are faint signs of light," the clock starts ticking. If there is no recovery for the next six months — and I don't think there will be — Obama will inevitably become part of the problem, not part of the solution.

And then will come his heavy lifting. He has yet to raise taxes, regiment healthcare or provide amnesty for

illegal immigrants. He hasn't closed down the car companies he now runs and he has not yet forced a 50 percent hike in utility bills with his cap-and-trade legislation. These are all the goodies he has in store for us all.

Obama's very activism these days arrogates to himself the blame for the success or failure of his policies. Their outcome will determine his outcome, and there is no way it will be positive.

Why?

You can't borrow as much as he will need to without raising interest rates that hurt the economy;

The massive amount of spending will trigger runaway inflation once the economy starts to recover;

His overhaul of the tax code (still in the planning phases) and his intervention in corporate management will create such business uncertainty that nobody will invest in anything until they see the lay of the land;

His bank program is designed to help banks, but not to catalyze consumer lending. And his proposal for securitization of consumer loans won't work and is just what got us into this situation.

So Mr. Obama should enjoy his poll numbers while he may.

Morris, a former adviser to Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) and President Bill Clinton, is the author of *Outrage*. To get all of Dick Morris's and Eileen McGann's columns for free by e-mail or to order a signed copy of their new best-selling book, *Fleeced*, go to dickmorris.com.

The Hill — 1625 K Street, NW Suite 900 — Washington, DC 20006 — 202-628-8500 Telephone | 202-628-8503 Fax
The contents of this site are © 2009 Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., a subsidiary of News Communications, Inc.