

What is the Cloward-Piven Strategy?

This article is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's Web site, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of July 3-4, 2010.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—As I have watched various decisions for the past 18 months by representatives of the United States government, I have been thoroughly appalled.

Many people ask why these ridiculous policies are being pursued. Various analysts conclude that many decisions are being made because of incompetence by certain leaders.

However, there is another theory for the reason of these policies. Some people suggest that these leaders know exactly what they are doing.

Recently, I stumbled upon what is called the Cloward-Piven Strategy. I would like to share some articles about this approach.



An article by Trevor Loudon titled "1966 Cloward-Piven Strategy Unveiled at Socialist Scholars Conference" was posted at newzeal.blogspot.com on June 27, 2010.

It said: "Many commentators on the U.S. left have tried to minimize the significance and importance of the Cloward-Piven Strategy, made famous by writer James Simpson and TV personality Glenn Beck.

"According to Simpson and Beck, Columbia University sociologists, [a] husband and wife team, Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven, devised a strategy in the early 1960s to crash the U.S. economy and bring on socialist revolution by deliberately overloading state welfare rolls to the point of bankruptcy.

"Many on the left regard this hypothes[is] as gross exaggeration at best, deliberate misrepresentation at worst."



An article by Michael Eden titled "Politico Article Reveals Obama's Cloward-Piven Strategy Backfiring" was posted at startthinkingright.wordpress.com on Aug. 24, 2009.

It said: "I genuinely believe that Barack Obama—a follower of Saul Alinsky as well as the most liberal member of the U.S. Senate when he belonged to it to go along with a long and deep relationship with leftist radicals—is pursuing a 'heads we win, tails you lose' strategy. If the economy somehow miraculously picks up under all of this massive spending and even more massive debt, then Democrats win big and Republicans lose. If—far more likely—the economy crashes under its own massive weight due to hyperinflation as interest payments on the debt soar and the Obama Treasury devalues the currency by printing money, then a starving, terrified people will scream for help from their government. And Democrats will—in solving the 'crisis' they themselves created—secure the pure-socialist totalitarian state they have always envisioned. Either way, Obama liberals believe they will win big.

"Government by crisis is a tried and true fascist approach. It is up to you to decide whether it is a coincidence or not that Barack Obama is using the same approach, as described by his Chief of Staff, Rahm Emanuel:

"EMANUEL: 'You never want a serious crisis to go to waste. What I mean by that is it's an opportunity to do things that you think you could not do before. This is an opportunity. What used to be long-term problems—be they in the health care area, energy area, education area, fiscal area, tax area, regulatory reform area—things that we had postponed for too long that were long-term are now immediate and must be dealt with. And this crisis provides the opportunity for us, as I would say, the opportunity to do things that you could not do before.'

"Obama began his presidency by fearmongering a crisis to get his way. He fearmongered the stimulus through the Congress, predicting terrifying scenarios if it failed and hyping claims that have turned out to be completely false if he got his way. Republicans were completely shut out of the stimulus, and the legislation was rushed through Congress so quickly that not one single Representative or Senator had any chance to read the bill that Obama then took leisurely four days to sign."



An article titled "Glenn Beck Examines 1960s Radicals Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven" was posted at foxnews.com on Aug. 25, 2009.

It said: "The Cloward-Piven strategy in a nutshell. Left-wing radicals Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven advance their strategy to end poverty in a May 2, 1966 article in *The Nation*.

"Cloward-Piven starts with the idea that there is a wide gap between the entitlements that poor people are eligible for and the entitlements that they are actually collecting. They say getting everybody on the welfare rolls will wipe out poverty and the only way to accomplish that is through a massive multi-city education campaign making heavy use of the media.

"So, once the poor know that they're eligible and start to sign up, what happens next? In their own words, 'a crisis.' A crisis that starts in the cities that

would rapidly spread to a nationwide level and force the government to move quickly to create a new program for direct income distribution: Marxism.

“Wait a minute—community organizations overwhelming the system that would lead to a massive redistribution of wealth? Gee, where have I heard that before?”

“That’s Cloward-Piven strategy in a nutshell.”

It later said: “If you think all of these unread thousand-page bills are just part of a runaway out-of-control government, I don’t think it is. It’s meant to overwhelm the system. I mean, how can you fight a stimulus package when there is a giant health care bill alongside cap-and-trade all going full throttle at you at the same time? What happens when one or all of these massive bills pass?”

“I showed you the debt clock a minute ago. We can’t spend anymore. Even Barack Obama admitted that much, yet here we are with trillion-plus dollar health care bills and more on the table.

“Why? Why—given the risk—do you keep pushing?”

“According to the Cloward and Piven strategy, you do it to collapse the system, and once that system has collapsed, a new one is put in its place. Well, what system could possibly be ready to go? . . . Is there a better time to implement the 1960s radical ideology from scratch than when a president who has clearly said over and over again he’s not a Marxist, couples himself with far left-leaning Congress and advisers who are self-proclaimed Marxists, socialists and communists?”



An article titled “Don’t Be Fooled by Obama’s ‘Incompetence’ ” was posted at mensnewsdaily.com on June 7, 2010.

It said: “It is a tremendous mistake to think that the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico will help convince Americans of Barack Obama’s incompetence. Obama’s true agenda is so insidious that even his inability to handle a crisis serves his greater strategy.

“And that strategy has a name: It is the Cloward-Piven Strategy. Named for the two Leftist sociology professors who formulated it, its purpose is to bring about the demise of capitalism by overloading the system, largely by making more people desperate and dependent on the government.”



An editorial by Michael Gaynor titled “Glenn Beck’s ‘Real’ History Trumps Radical Historians’ Revisionist History” was posted at renewamerica.com on June 8, 2010.

It said: “ ‘Progressive’ professors like [Joseph] Palermo [associate professor of history at California State University in Sacramento] are ‘on the warpath’

against Beck, and the main reason is 'specific content': Beck poses a significant threat to progressivism, political correctness, moral relativism and multiculturalism, the pillars of those 'progressive' professors life."



An article by Liz Blaine titled "The Obama Agenda: The Fall of America Through Orchestrated Crisis" was posted at newsrealblog.com on June 13, 2010.

It said: "By using the Cloward-Piven Strategy to promote economic and social change through the exploitation of misfortune, national crisis and disorganization, the Left is advancing government as the tool for reorganization."

It later said: "First promoted in 1966 by Marxist Columbia University professors Richard Andrew Cloward and Frances Fox Piven, the Cloward-Piven Strategy seeks to hasten the destruction of capitalism in America by expanding the welfare system to the point of collapsing the economy and implementing socialism by nationalizing large sectors of private industry."



An editorial by Michael Gaynor titled "Obama Fooled People (Including Some Conservatives) on His Way to the White House" was posted at renewamerica.com on June 15, 2010.

It said: "Obama has been fortunate to escape scrutiny, to have race work for him and to be able to fool or to intimidate people, even some conservatives. America is fortunate that most people are no longer awed by the style and audacity of Barack Obama and they are still hoping for change for the better and looking elsewhere for it. What worked for Obama at the *Harvard Law Review*—style—will not fool the American people now."



An article by Michael Gaynor titled "Newt Gingrich Better Study The Cloward-Piven Strategy" was posted at renewamerica.com on June 25, 2010. Following are excerpts from his article.

Gingrich sees the secular-socialist tidal wave, but apparently he thinks that Obama—the stealth socialist instrument or "tip of the Cloward-Piven spear"—is merely mistaken.

On June 24, 2010, former Speaker Newt Gingrich stopped by Huntington [Long Island, New York] Book Revue . . . to promote his latest book, *To Save America: Stopping Obama's Secular-Socialist Machine*.

Gingrich is right about America needing saving from Obama's secular-socialist machine and the succinct message on the book's inside flap is blunt:

"America on the Brink

"The Obama administration is conspiring to transform America. They want to remake our America—of free enterprise, faith, and personal freedom—into their America—of endless bureaucracy, secularism, and state control—despite overwhelming opposition from the American people. How is this possible? How has the Obama team succeeded in adopting widely despised policies like the massive stimulus bill and the healthcare takeover? How could such a radical president and his congressional leaders get elected and then take a center-right country in a socialist direction bitterly opposed by most Americans? Former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich has the answer: the Left have built a secular-socialist machine out of corruption, lust for power, and sheer ruthlessness, and are using it to steamroll over the will of the people. In this book, Gingrich reveals:

- How the secular-socialist machine gained power through deception and outright lies

- How the machine shuts the American people out of the legislative process

- Why some of our most powerful leaders seek to banish religion from public life

- How the machine uses taxpayer money to pay off its supporters and punish its opponents

- How we can replace, not reform, Obama's socialist programs

"Exposing the mortal threat now facing America, *To Save America* offers concrete strategies for dismantling the machine and replacing it with policies and institutions that work. But we must act fast, Gingrich warns, or our children will inherit a secular, socialist America transformed beyond recognition."

Right!

Yet, amazingly, Gingrich said that the operators of that secular-socialist machine are merely mistaken, not malevolent.

Also amazingly, historian Gingrich seemed unfamiliar with the Cloward-Piven strategy when I asked him about it.

The Cloward-Piven strategy was presented in the May 2, 1966, issue of *The Nation* by radical socialist Columbia University professors Richard Andrew Cloward and Frances Fox Piven.

Former socialist David Horowitz defined it as "[t]he strategy of forcing political change through orchestrated crisis" that "seeks to hasten the fall of capitalism by overloading the government bureaucracy with a flood of impossible demands, thus pushing society into crisis and economic collapse."

[James] Simpson [in "Barack Obama and the Strategy of Manufactured Crisis," Sept. 28, 2008] was insightful and blunt, not ignorant or gullible.

"Barack Obama, the Cloward-Piven candidate, no matter how he describes himself, has been a radical activist for most of his political career. That acti-

vism has been in support of organizations and initiatives that at their heart seek to tear the pillars of this nation asunder in order to replace them with their demented socialist vision. Their influence has spread so far and so wide that despite their blatant culpability in the current financial crisis, they are able to manipulate Capital Hill politicians to cut them into \$140 billion of the bailout pie!”

Gingrich sees the secular-socialist tidal wave, but apparently he thinks that Obama—the stealth socialist instrument or “tip of the Cloward-Piven spear”—is merely mistaken.



An editorial by Phyllis Schlafly titled “Constitution Is Endangered If Kagan OK’d” was posted at investors.com on June 29, 2010.

It said: “Barack Obama revealed his goal for the Supreme Court when he complained on Chicago radio station WBEZ-FM in 2001 that the Earl Warren court wasn’t ‘radical’ enough because ‘it didn’t break free from the essential constraints placed by the Founding Fathers in the Constitution’ in order to allow ‘redistribution of wealth.’

“Now that Obama is president, he has the power to nominate Supreme Court justices who will ‘break free’ from the Constitution and join him in ‘fundamentally transforming’ America.”



In conclusion: Be careful about considering people incompetent, when they may actually be making great strides in a deeply held philosophy.