

With the Republicans taking over the House of Representatives, John Boehner is expected to become the new Speaker of the House and Eric Cantor the new Majority Leader. Even though a new Congress has been elected and new leadership is going into place, this marks two years until President Obama and Vice President Biden stand for reelection. In 2012, there is a significant possibility that the Republicans will win the White House. There has been great speculation that Sarah Palin, former governor of Alaska, Mitt Romney, former governor of Massachusetts, Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Mike Huckabee, former governor of Arkansas, will be the top four contenders for the GOP nomination for 2012. Even though all four are regarded as capable career politicians, they are not competitive to run against Obama and Biden for 2012. The American public has grown tired of career politicians. The Republicans need to come up with something new—a breathe of fresh air. I would propose that the GOP nominees be General David Petraeus for President and Dr. Condoleezza Rice for Vice President. Together, they offer far greater experience and knowledge in international diplomacy and statesmanship than any other combination the Republicans could field.

Many Americans believe that the President of the United States should be a man of quality and represent the people and our country. Tens of thousands want the president to have military experience, a strong foreign policy, and great moral ethics. General Petraeus is one of the best choices, if not the best, for the GOP if they want to take back the White House. He has an unparalleled background in military and foreign relations, and he is well respected both internationally and domestically.

General Petraeus holds a Masters in Public Administration and a PhD in International Relations. Before rising to the top ranks of the U.S. Army, he was an Assistant Professor of International Relations at West Point. He is unlike anyone in the current political arena. Most average politicians who strive to win the highest elected office in the land are governors, senators, and representatives. Petraeus is a four-star general in the United States Army, and would be the first real military figure since President Eisenhower to make a serious run at the White House. Bob Dole, the former Senate Majority Leader and 1996 presidential Republican nominee, said: “I don’t know anything about his politics, whether he has an interest. It’s kind of a time for another Eisenhower” (Klein). General Petraeus is one of the most qualified public servants to run for the commander in chief of the United States. He was head of the U.S. Armed Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. Both the Republicans and Democrats respect him for his brilliant and analytical mind. President Obama recently recognized him by entrusting him as the head of the Armed Forces in Afghanistan. If General Petraeus has earned high bipartisan praise, he also has secured positive opinions from the news media.

The media have a positive outlook towards General Petraeus, which is highly unusual today. As General Petraeus takes charge of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, the majority of Americans like and approve of him (Newport 1). He is also admired by other countries, and highly regarded by other governments. Britain often refers to him as “America’s Montgomery” (Partin). Petraeus enjoys a strong reputation as successful general by British citizens (General Petraeus...). Petraeus’ image is now more positive on a relative basis among those who have an opinion of him (Newport 1). Scott Wilson, a staff writer for the Washington Post says that General Petraeus is a talented general,

who is the key to keeping the president's war strategy in tact (Wilson 1). Congressman Tom Rooney (R- FL) said, "When President Bush announced the troop surge, planned and orchestrated by Gen. David Petraeus... I was proud that Americans stood up to support Gen. Petraeus and our troops" (Rooney). Not only does Petraeus have the domestic media on his side, but he also enjoys a positive view internationally.

The vice president is the "wing man" for the president, and Dr. Condoleezza Rice is the preeminent person to complement General Petraeus. Dr. Rice is regarded as one of the best respected administrators from the Bush Era. Her ability to still maintain strong public support makes her a very appealing vice presidential candidate. Dr. Rice or Condi (as she prefers) is not only marketable because of her popularity, but she has an outstanding academic career. She has very strong government work experience, including two internationally recognized positions: National Security Advisor and Secretary of State.

Condoleezza Rice received her PhD from the University of Denver at the young age of twenty-six, and obtained a post-doctoral fellowship to continue research at Stanford's Center for International Security and Arms Control (part of Stanford's Institute for International Studies) (Condoleezza Rice). In 1981, she began teaching political science as an assistant professor, while serving as the assistant director of the Center for International Security and Arms Control (Condoleezza Rice - Biography). Not only was she one of the most intelligent professors at Stanford, but she was also one of the most well respected. Dr. John Ferejohn, a political science professor at Stanford, recognized Dr. Rice's qualities of leadership and persuasiveness – traits that she has carried throughout her career (Felix 116). Dr. Ferejohn observed: "She got along with

everyone, and even when she was just an assistant professor she exhibited a lot of what you see now – a very effective leader, decisive, and clear-headed. Even when you disagree with her about something, she has good reasons. She’s effective when she’s opposing you – she often wins” (Felix 116-117). In 1984, Stanford awarded her the Walter J. Gores Award for Excellence in Teaching (their highest honor for teaching) (Felix 121). In 1993, at age thirty-eight, she received the School of Humanities and Sciences Dean’s Award for Teaching (Felix 122).

According to former President George H.W. Bush, “Condi was brilliant.... She has a manner and presence that disarms the biggest of the big shots. Why? Because they know she knows what she is talking about” (Felix 128). Dr. Rice had one of the hardest jobs at the hardest time: she was the National Security Advisor after the September 11th terrorist attacks and was the Secretary of State during President George W. Bush’s second term. Accepting the position of National Security Advisor, she became the most prominent woman in foreign policy (Felix 201). Her job was to manage the foreign policy agenda of the world’s only remaining superpower during a period of rapid global change. She was the closest foreign policy expert to President Bush in the White House, even closer than then-Secretary of State, General Colin Powell. Brent Scowcroft, the National Security Advisor for President George H. W. Bush said, “I think she will do a great job. She has the personality for it. She has the background for it. She starts off with a very powerful set of credentials” (Condoleezza Rice 1). After Colin Powell retired, President Bush replaced him with Dr. Rice, because he knew he needed the best person for the job. She was exceptionally well liked, admired, and respected around the world. The Senate confirmed her 85-13 in 2005 to be the 66th Secretary of State (High

Praise...). During her tenure as Secretary of State, she continuously strived to promote global cooperation against terrorism. She created a global network alliance with Western and Eastern Europe to fight terrorism. The main reason for this is that the terrorists knew that Bush and Condi both would not tolerate these acts of terrorism. Condi fought long and hard with the terrorists, and was feared by them at the same time (Partin).

The Petraeus-Rice ticket offers tremendous appeal to the American public. General Petraeus is a Republican from New York, who is very well respected and admired in his home state (Hughes). He also has extensive military experience to be an effective commander in chief. A large portion of voters look for military experience in presidential candidates during the election process. He is also very well respected by both political parties. "Petraeus was unanimously approved by the Senate to lead the surge of troops into Iraq in 2007" (Weinman 2).

Looking at the vice presidential position, on the other hand, Rice offers even more appeal to the ticket. Dr. Rice is a conservative, African-American woman, who is exceedingly popular in California and Alabama. "Rice's presence on the ticket deprives the Democrats of the we-are-more-diverse-than-you argument. With Rice on the ticket, the GOP would have somebody to get enthusiastic about. The former Secretary of State is immensely popular with Republicans. For a party that up to now has been clueless about how to run against either a woman or a person with color, Condoleezza Rice is pure political gold" (Boyd 1).

Another exceptional aspect of the Petraeus/Rice ticket is that neither is a politician; they are distinguished public servants. General Petraeus is a Four Star General, one of the highest ranking in the United States Army: Dr. Rice is a professor of

business and international affairs and a former Secretary of State. Neither has held an elected political office, which places them well beyond the realm of clichéd politicians who run for the presidency. A recent Fox News poll showed that 49.3% strongly disapprove of President Obama, and 73.8% strongly disapprove of Congress, which at the time was controlled by Democrats. A recent Rasmussen poll shows that President Obama's disapproval rating has been dramatically increasing since last year: 26% of voters approve of his performance, 43% of voters strongly disapprove of his performance, while the remaining 31% are undecided. By being of different backgrounds and having different cultural work experience, they can offer more change to our country than President Obama and Vice President Biden ever could.

Not only is their public appeal alluring, but the shift in the Electoral College would bless the Republican prayers of winning 2012. "It is quite possible that if Condi ran as a vice presidential candidate that she could seize California's electoral votes" (Partin). California currently has 55 electoral votes which is just over twenty percent of the 270 electoral votes needed to win. "If Nixon, Ford, and Reagan can win California, then Condi had a good chance of doing the same" (Partin). Petraeus is also well admired by his home state of New York. New York currently has 31 electoral votes, which is just over eleven percent of the electoral college requirement. "Petraeus is a native New Yorker, educated at West Point, and is an internationally recognized war hero, why wouldn't New York support him?" (Partin). If Petraeus and Rice win votes from their respected states, then the Republicans would have 86 extra electoral votes that usually go to liberal candidates. These 86 extra votes --represent nearly one third of the needed electoral college votes--would strengthen the GOP's hope of winning 2012.

While Petraeus and Rice are creating foreign and domestic policy, someone has to be in Washington defending these policies against opposition. The role of the Attorney General is to defend the federal government in federal court cases, and is crucial to a Petraeus and Rice administration. Petraeus and Rice will need an Attorney General who is not only a master of Constitutional Law but charismatic as well. Petraeus should nominate the former Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, Sandra Day O'Connor, who best represents the values Petraeus needs as an Attorney General. Mrs. O'Connor would bring a wide array of appeal, intelligence, experience, and charisma to Petraeus administration.

O'Connor possesses an abundance of quality political and legal experience which makes her the most superior candidate for this position. She is well balanced between the political and constitutional aspects of the country, and that makes her the best person for the job. She knows how politicians and justices think, because she was both at one time. This is a rich fusion of experience that very few possess who are appointed to Attorney General (Choper 276). By knowing both sides of the spectrum, she can effectively defend the policies engineered by Petraeus and Rice.

Decades ago, it was difficult for women to find work, especially as lawyers, because of the gender barriers in society. She began her political career by campaigning and fundraising for Barry Goldwater in 1958 to become the new U.S. Senator for Arizona. She also was a strong force behind the presidential campaign for Senator Goldwater in his campaign for the presidency in 1964. Even though he lost the election, she made a very important ally (Goldwater) that would help her later on in her career. In 1969, she became a state senator in Arizona, and became the first female to serve as a

majority leader for a state senate (Sandra Day O'Connor...). As a senator she served on many vital committees: State, County and Municipal Affairs, Appropriations, and Judiciary Committees (Partin 1).

While keeping her feet wet in the political arena, she found a job as part time worker for the Arizona Attorney General's office. After retiring from the Arizona Senate, she became a trial judge of Maricopa County in Arizona. Then she was appointed by the Democratic Governor Bruce Babbitt and confirmed to be a judge on the Arizona Court of Appeals, which is what attracted President Ronald Reagan to consider her as a nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court (Partin 1). In 1981, President Reagan nominated her to become the first woman on the U.S. Supreme Court, and Mrs. O'Connor was easily confirmed. She served on the court for about twenty-five years, gaining a reputation as one of the brightest justices (Choper 275). By serving on the court for two and half decades, she knows how certain justices interpret the Constitution. Currently there are six justices that remain on the court from when Mrs. O'Connor wore the black robe: Justices Scalia, Thomas, Kennedy, Ginsberg, Breyer, and Chief Justice Roberts. The six above represents a combination of liberal and conservative views on the Constitution, which O'Connor has been exposed to and knows how to work with. This may be the most essential experience to have in order to become a successful Attorney General.

Not only is her intelligence unmatched, but also her aura is so strong that both Democrats and Republicans widely respect her. "She was a careful and thoughtful and highly respected member of the court, a wise judge who served the nation and the Constitution well," said the late Senator Ted Kennedy (Sandra Day O'Connor...). She

was known for being the key swing vote on the court from 1981 through 2006. She is well admired because she doesn't play party politics. Her decisions came from the common man's view on the Constitution. She did not let Republican or Democratic views cloud her judgment (Sandra Day O'Connor...). This is one reason, why she remains as one of the most beloved justices. During her confirmation process, the Judiciary Committee voted in favor of her 17-1 to go to the Senate to be confirmed. She has one of the highest confirmations in American history, 99-0 (Sandra Day O'Connor...). Not one Democrat opposed her conservative presence to become the first female on the U.S. Supreme Court (Partin 2). Senator Joe Biden told Mrs. O'Connor that he planned on voting for her and knew of no Democrats that would oppose her including Ted Kennedy (the epitome of liberalism) and Robert Byrd (the late Senate Minority Leader) (Biskupic 90). Even though she was a conservative Republican on the court, she did not let this influence her decisions, making her more popular with the American public (Partin 2). She has constantly been conscious about putting the public good ahead of partisanship, thus making her consistent with the Petraeus-Rice spirit.

Petraeus and Rice could offer a variety of changes in numerous areas such as the economy, military, and foreign policy. Both are highly experienced experts in international relations. General Petraeus offers a militarily based foreign diplomacy, whereas Rice represents an economic and political approach to foreign affairs. General Petraeus offers a highly experienced background of military experience; Condoleezza Rice has a strong background of international economics and business. Petraeus and Rice offer the opportunity for real, substantive hope and change in the economy, military, and foreign relations, while O'Conner can defend their policies against the opposition.



From: General Petraeus



From: Condoleezza Rice



From: Sandra Day O'Connor

Secretary of State

Richard Lugar (Current Senator for Indiana)

Secretary of Treasury

Ben Bernanke (Chairmen of Federal Reserve)

Secretary of Defense

General Stanley McCrystal (4 Star General in the U.S. Army)

Attorney General:

Sandra Day O'Conner (Former U.S. Supreme Court Justice)

Secretary of Interior:

Sarah Palin (Former Gov. of Alaska)

Secretary of Agriculture:

Saxby Chambliss (Current Senator of Georgia/Ranking member on the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee)

Secretary of Labor:

Meg Whitman (Former CEO of EBay)

Secretary of Commerce:

Eric Cantor (House Majority Leader)

Secretary of Education:

Glen Thomas (Secretary of Education for CA)

Secretary of Health and Human Development:

Judy Thomas (Former Head Director of Pharmacy for Kaizer in CA)

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development:

Christopher Dodd (Current Senator from Connecticut/Chairmen on the banking housing and urban affairs committee)

Secretary of Transportation:

John Thune (Current Senator for South Dakota/Ranking Member on the Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine)

Secretary of Energy:

Stephen Chu (Current Sec. of Energy)

Secretary of Veteran's Affairs:

Chuck Hagel (Former Senator of Nebraska)

Secretary of Homeland Security:

Colin Powell (Former Sec. of State)

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