



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on July 15, 2010

Coulter Rips Republicans Over 'Permanent War'

Quick, what Republican made the following statement? "I thought the irreducible requirements of Republicanism were being for life, small government and a strong national defense, but I guess permanent war is on the platter now, too."



If you guessed Ron Paul, your error would be understandable, though it is not often that Ann Coulter is mistaken for Ron Paul. For one thing, Paul does not have a long blond mane. And he does not, thank God, go about in a micro-mini dress that Miss Coulter might have outgrown in grade school. No, it was Ann Coulter herself in a recent column, turning against the Afghanistan War, John McCain, William Kristol, Liz Cheney, and the Republican Party with a vengeance, all the while defending Michael "Stainless" Steele. It might be difficult for some columnists to defend the Republican national chairman and rip the party at the same time, but Ann Coulter is no ordinary pundit.

Steele, you may recall, ruffled a lot of feathers in both parties when he called the undeclared whatever-it-is in Afghanistan "Obama's War" and blamed the incumbent for the continued loss of life and drain on the nation's treasury the enterprise is costing us. Democrats, of course, were indignant at seeing their beloved beanpole blamed for a war started by his bumbling predecessor and brought on by the Kabul government's close ties to al-Qaeda, the gang that brought the twin towers down and crashed the party at the Pentagon. And Republicans, dedicated to defending the Wars of the Bushes, would not suffer in silence the trashing of such a noble enterprise as was undertaken among the warlords and poppy growers of Afghanistan. McCain, the party's standard bearer in the *Titanic* cruise of '08, *Weekly Standard* publisher Kristol, and Ms. Cheney, daughter of the former vice predator and right-wing pundit at large, were among those denouncing Steele for his statement and suggesting the Grand Old Party might fare better with a different leader at the helm of its national committee.

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Enter ungentle Annie, her verbal six-guns blazing. Michael Steele was right, she insists. Afghanistan is Obama's war, as surely as Vietnam was Lyndon Johnson's, even though JFK had about 16,000 military "advisors" there the day Johnson became President. Johnson had a force level of about 400,000 combat troops in 'Nam by the time he returned to the ranch, leaving behind a conflict of a far greater magnitude. (Texans like to do things big.) Under either President, it was one of those "Democrat wars," as Bob Dole used to say.

"Republicans used to think seriously about deploying the military," Coulter wrote. "President Eisenhower sent aid to South Vietnam, but said he could not 'conceive of a greater tragedy' for America than getting heavily involved there." The Afghanistan war was a roaring, seven-year success under Bush, Coulter declared. "Within the first few months we had toppled the Taliban, killed or captured hundreds of al-Qaida fighters and arranged for democratic elections, resulting in an American-friendly government." Sure, that's what wars are for, building friendships. That's the chapter that was missing from Dale Carnegie's book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. You've got to shoot them first to get their attention.

"In the entire seven-year course of the Afghanistan war under Bush, from October 2001 to January 2009, 625 American soldiers were killed," Coulter wrote. "In 18 short months, Obama has nearly



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doubled that number to 1,124 Americans killed." No doubt Obama planned that doubling of the American war dead just to reduce the number of U.S. soldiers who might be tempted to vote Republican in the next election. But the blonde bomber is wise to him. You'd have to get up pretty early in the morning to slip a conspiracy past Ann Coulter.

"Having some vague concept of America's national interest — unlike liberals — the Bush administration could see that a country of illiterate peasants living in caves ruled by 'warlords' was not a primo target for 'nation-building,'" Coulter crowed. Pity no one thought to tell that to Sarah Palin, who was gushing during the vice presidential debate two years ago about the way we were "spreading democracy" and "building schools" in Afghanistan.

Whatever. Clearly Coulter believes we have labored too long at the Afghanistan conflict, which is turning into a "permanent war." She obviously prefers a splendid little war like Operation Watch Our Cakewalk in Iraq, now seven and a half years young. She gives the usual reasons for defending Bush War II: Iraq was a state sponsor of terrorism, was attempting to build nuclear weapons, had used "weapons of mass destructions" against Iranians and Kurds, etc. But she makes clear her belief that the war in Iraq would have been worth fighting even if that nation had not been ruled by the villain from Central Casting.

"If Saddam Hussein had been a peach," wrote Coulter, "it would still be a major victory in the war on terrorism to have a Muslim Israel in that part of the globe, and it sure wasn't going to be Afghanistan (literacy rate, 19 percent; life expectancy, 44 years; working toilets, 7)." Well, you can't have it stated more clearly than that: the unalienable but uniquely American right to conquer any far-off land that is not Israel.

"Iraq had a young, educated, pro-Western populace that was ideal for regime change." Surely, that's a good enough reason to invade a nation and change their government for them.

Iraq "had vast oil reserves; and is situated at the heart of a critical region." Well, there you go. The Iraqis have what we want and are situated where we want to be. So no offense, Babylonians, but you are standing where we see a need to bomb, strafe, shoot, and roll our tanks across your land. We regret, of course, the inconvenience, the collateral damage, and all that sort of thing.

Coulter is not likely to join a peace march any time soon, but at least she has taken a dislike to one American war, if only because it offers such a meager return on our investment in bullets, bombs, and bloodshed. ("Everyone knows it's not worth the trouble and resources to take a nation of rocks and brigands.") Perhaps that's an encouraging sign, but it is also a major cause of embarrassment for the Republican Party and its neoconservative warlords. It was bad enough several years ago when America was being lectured to by the Germans on the dangers of militarism. But the Grand Old Party has come to a pretty pass when it finds Ann Coulter up in arms over its attachment to "permanent war."



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