



Written by [Christian Gomez](#) on February 14, 2011

CPAC Reagan Banquet; Gov. Mitch Daniels calls for New Government

Open exclusively to Participating Organizations, Platinum and Diamond members, with tickets going for around \$250 and up, the Ronald Reagan Banquet was among this year's prized events at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC).

Upon opening doors to the banquet at the Marriott Ballroom on 7:30 pm, attendees walking to their seats were greeted by a life-like wax manikin of President Ronald Reagan that was provided courtesy of Madame Tussauds Wax Museum.



As in the Presidential Banquet the night before, attendees were provided with an exquisite dinner, commencing with a Wardman Park salad. The main course dish consisted of a filet mignon and Chilean sea bass with tomato risotto and Chardonnay beurre blanc (choice of either red or white wine).

The banquet kicked off with a presentation of the trailers for two new Reagan documentaries: [Still Point in a Turning World: Ronald Reagan and His Ranch](#) and [Ronald Reagan: Rendezvous with Destiny](#), produced by Citizens United and Young America's Foundation respectively.

Lifetime Courage Under Fire Award

MC for the night was the distinguished Phyllis Schlafly of the Eagle Forum. Schlafly was awarded with the Charlton Heston Courage Under Fire Award, which is rarely awarded at CPACs.

Schlafly's acceptance of the award was one of the sweeter and finer moments of the entire Reagan Banquet. She graciously accepted the award in amusement at the sight of the musket, which she gladly appreciated, considering that she has fired her share of high-gauge caliber rounds.

Newsweek conservative columnist George F. Will introduced the keynote speaker for the event — Republican Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels, whose supporters were outside of the ballroom handing out "Mitch Daniels for President" campaign materials and campaign buttons.

Keynote Speech by Governor Daniels

Governor Daniels, an advisor to President Reagan and longtime supporter of Reagan's 1968, '76, '80, and '84 presidential campaigns, gave a speech critical of the federal government and outlined his agenda for the country.

Governor Daniels criticized "our mortally obese government," which he said was in need of "bariatric surgery."

In referring to the present course of the nation under President Obama, Gov Daniels stated, "In this room we all know how much change is needed," going on to call for a return to Reagan's policy of 'Peace through Strength'

Daniels tackled the nation's bloated national debt, which he described:



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It is the new Red Menace, this time consisting of ink. We can debate its origins endlessly and search for villains on ideological grounds, but the reality is pure arithmetic. No enterprise, small or large, public or private, can remain self-governing, let alone successful, so deeply in hock to others as we are about to be.

Upon equating the nation's deficit with the threat of communism, Daniels rightly recognized that the consequences of the debt toward personal freedom, a coloration often made by Congressman Ron Paul in his critique of the nation's wasteful spending and overseas borrowing perpetuated by the Federal Reserve bank.

Governor Daniels never did address or mention the Federal Reserve in his speech, which puts in to question just how much "change" Daniels is really proposing concerning the nation's economy.

Focusing on the debt, Daniels said, "It is our generational assignment. It is the mission of our era." Daniels continued, "Forgive the pun when I call it our 'raison debt' "

After saying "raison debt" Daniels looked around and remarked "I should've cut that line," which was followed by laughter from the audience.

Another humorous highlight and comparison of liberal Democratic economic solutions to Soviet Communism came in the following anecdote:

A friend of mine attended a recent meeting of the NBA leadership, at which a small-market owner, whom I won't name but will mention is also a member of the U.S. Senate, made an impassioned plea for more sharing of revenue by the more successful teams. At a coffee break, Mr. Prokhorov, the new Russian owner of the New Jersey Nets, murmured to my friend, "*Ve tried that, you know. It doesn't vork.*" (in a Russian accent).

Americans have seen these last two years *what doesn't vork* (again in the same Russian accent).

This line was followed by laughter from the crowd, as well. Daniels went on to proclaim that the primary purpose of the federal government "should be private growth," continuing:

So lower and flatter, and completely flat is best. Tax compensation but not the savings and investment without which the economy cannot boom.

Second, untie Gulliver. The regulatory rainforest through which our enterprises must hack their way is blighting the future of millions of Americans. Today's EPA should be renamed the "Employment Prevention Agency." After a two-year orgy of new regulation, President Obama's recent executive order was a wonderment, as though the number one producer of rap music had suddenly expressed alarm about obscenity.

Mitch Daniels for Con-Con?

Despite a few lines of laughter and an array of well written conservative talking points, there was one line that Governor Daniels said, which although received no response from the audience or attention from the media, that did raise a eyebrow of suspicion at *The New American*:

We should distinguish carefully skepticism about Big Government from contempt for all government. After all, it is *a new government we hope to form*, a government we will ask our fellow citizens to trust to *make huge changes*. (emphasis added).

Governor Daniels speech was written with words carefully chosen, but it is unlikely that that these two lines — emphasized in italics — meant little more than the generic clichés of gradual change that



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presidential candidates often express.

In all practical purposes the word government is the method or system of rule over a state. The government of the United States is a republic — a rule of law protected by a system of checks and balances comprised of divided branches of government. This system of government is outlined in the U.S. Constitution, which is the government of the United States.

Henceforth a “new government,” especially one based on “huge changes,” can only be created under a new U.S. Constitution — i.e. a Constitutional Convention (Con-Con).

Governor Daniels has, in the past, already endorsed and advocated for a Constitutional Convention for the state of Indiana to replace his states’ 1851 Constitution with a brand new constitution. If Governor Daniels sees a Con-Con as the only way toward addressing the problems of Indiana then what is to stop a President Daniels from proposing a Con-Con as the only way toward addressing the problems of the United States.

It is not the Constitution of either Indiana, and more so that of, the United States that is at fault, but rather the lack of adherence to it as originally intended by those who framed the document.

If these are the “huge changes” that Governor Daniels is proposing, then he most decidedly is one for constitutionalists to be wary of.

True conservatives, (whom we prefer to label “constitutionalists”) such as Phyllis Schlafly, recognize the inherent danger and threat of a Con-Con. Any call for Con-Con, whether it is FreedomWorks, the Madison Amendment, or a so-called Amendment Convention, opens the Pandora’s Box of having the left hijack such an initiative with their belief in second-generation (socialist) rights, as outlined by President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s call for a “Second Bill of Rights,” in his December 1944 State of the Union address.

The Great Compromise, as the Constitution has historically been referred to, has also been dubbed the “Miracle at Philadelphia.” No compromise made with today’s liberal opposition: Barack Obama, Nancy Pelosi, Harry Reid, or Maxine Waters would hardly be anything constituting a miracle.

With Con-Con initiatives already citing prior state conventions of decades past as “precedent” to proceed on to the “next phase” of implementing a new Constitution, a Con-Con could theoretically come to ratification by circumventing the process as laid out in Article V, just like so many parts of the current U.S. Constitution is circumvented and ignored, such as Article I, Section 8; the Ninth Amendment; and Tenth Amendment — just to name a few of the more obvious ones ignored.

A Con-Con is hardly becoming of a “conservative” as it threatens the very fiber and integrity of the Republic that is the United States. Therefore, if this is what Mitch Daniels has in mind, his candidacy as a governor and possible 2012 Presidential nominee should be evaluated and heavily examined before it proceeds any further.

Ronald Reagan Award Recipient

Following Governor Daniels speech, David Keene, the chairman of the American Conservative Organization (ACU) and CPAC presented the 2011 Ronald Reagan Award to Tom McCabe of Olympia Washington. In presenting the award Keene described the recipient as follows:

Tom McCabe, during his tenure as the Executive Director of the Building Industry Association of Washington (BIAW) for more than 20 years, built the organization into a force for free enterprise and conservative principles. Unlike most business associations across the nation, BIAW has been,



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under Tom's leadership, steadfast in its dedication to the defense of small business and entrepreneurship against the onslaught of the labor unions, trial lawyers, liberals and environmental extremists.

Tom's strength of character and dedication to conservatism made him a target of the liberals and the Democratic left who always oppose conservatives and even some Republicans who have attacked Tom and BIAW to please the left in furtherance of their own political ambitions. The Ronald Reagan award is given each year to a conservative warrior and we are proud to present this year's prize to such a warrior - Tom McCabe

The Reagan Banquet concluded with a special dessert — a Ronald Reagan 100th birthday cake, presented by Carlo's Bake Shop from the TLC hit television show "Cake Show" courtesy of Citizens United and Young America's Foundation.

Many of the attendees at the event also attended the Ronald Reagan Centennial birthday celebration held at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Library in Simi Valley, California, on February 6.

Upon leaving, attendees were given free copies of Newt Gingrich's *Winning the Future: A 21st Century Contract With America*, courtesy of Regnery Publishing.

Photo: Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.) poses for a picture with a birthday cake for President Ronald Reagan at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Washington, Feb. 10, 2011: AP Images



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