

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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John Uebersax on Kevin McCarthy's Book: *Young Guns Fires Blanks*.

Paso Robles, CA – John Uebersax, a write-in candidate seeking to oust the unopposed Republican Kevin McCarthy in California's 22nd Congressional District, issued this statement today about the book *Young Guns: A New Generation of Conservative Leaders*, co-authored by McCarthy, Eric Cantor (R-VA), and Paul Ryan (R-WI):

Young Guns isn't a book; it's propaganda. It's devoid of content; mere pabulum. McCarthy should be embarrassed to be associated with it.

The book and is deficient and even harmful in four ways.

First is the lip-service it pays to principles. McCarthy and his co-authors see themselves and the Republican Party as the champions of American principles. The index lists over 40 pages that mention "principles". But when you read the book, it says nothing meaningful. Terms like individual liberty, economic freedom, and support for families are very vague. It doesn't mean anything to assert these things without talking about how they affect specific policy decisions.

Further, you can't meaningfully talk about principles without also considering where the principles come from. Philosophers discuss what are called *first principles*. These concern basic questions like "what is good?" and "what is happiness?" The worldview of *Young Guns* is based ultimately on materialistic first principles; it's assumed that happiness is the same as material and economic prosperity. That's by no means a given. This country was built by rugged farmers and pioneers who believed that life is not about money! The vision of America that McCarthy offers is one of SUVs, high-definition television sets, and country club soirees. These are not the values of salt-of-the-earth Americans.

Second, McCarthy and his co-authors are obsessed with political divisiveness. They're fixated on seeing all Democrats as evil, bent on the destruction of America. That kind of divisiveness is not the American way. We're all in this together. No solution can work without everybody's support. The next time McCarthy says the Pledge of Allegiance, he might pay more attention to the phrase, "One Nation, under God, indivisible", especially to the words "One" and "indivisible."

Third, one gets the sense that all three authors – McCarthy, Eric Cantor and Paul Ryan are not just career politicians, but that it's never even occurred to them there might be something wrong with that. McCarthy describes how he gets chills every time he walks down the steps to the House Chamber. That kind of sentimentality isn't what citizens want or need. We want someone to go to Washington, do our business, and then to step down and let someone else come in. McCarthy, Cantor, and Ryan are good examples of why we should have term limits.

However the books most worrisome failing is in the area of foreign policy. The US war in Afghanistan and the occupation of Iraq are scarcely mentioned. That's

incredible – it's disconnected from reality. You can't talk about fiscal responsibility and limited government without honestly confronting the universally recognized tendency of governments to provoke and use war to gain power.

Especially problematic in this regard are Eric Cantor's statements about Middle East policy. For example, on p. 83 he says:

"Our leaders need to recognize who our enemies are and remember who our friends are. America stands with Israel. Israel is not only a democratic ally and our only true friend in the Middle East; it is also a vital pillar of U.S. national security strategy."

Pablum again. There's no attempt to grapple with the complexities: should there be a Palestinian state? Should the government of Israel be settling the occupied territories? Is Israel really a "vital pillar" of our national security? All of the points in Cantor's quote above have been carefully dissected in the 2007 best-seller, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, authors with impeccable credentials. Whether our foreign policy – and our current belligerent stance towards the Islamic world – is overly influenced by conservative factions of the Israeli government is, we could say, a moot point. But these are clearly issues we need to be actively debating. Unfortunately, they seem off the radar screen of Cantor and McCarthy.

Overall, the book paints a picture of McCarthy and the other young guns as aloof and removed from the problems that really matter to their constituents. The entire book boils down to this: demagoguery.

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