

## Barack O'Bilderberg: Picking the President

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Sunday, June 8, 2008, marked the last day of this year's annual Bilderberg meeting, which took place in Chantilly, Virginia. The American Friends of Bilderberg, an American Bilderberg front group, which organizes the American participant list for the annual Bilderberg conference, issued a rare press release this year. It stated that, "The Conference will deal mainly with a nuclear free world, cyber terrorism, Africa, Russia, finance, protectionism, US-EU relations, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Islam and Iran. Approximately 140 participants will attend."<sup>1</sup>



Bilderberg, which has been meeting annually since 1954, is a highly secretive international think tank and some say, policy-forming group made up of representatives from North America and Western Europe and was founded by Joseph Retinger, Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and Belgian Prime Minister Paul Van Zeeland. The Bilderberg Steering Committee, made up of around 30 people, (with no official list available), "decided that it would invite 100 of the most powerful people in Europe and North America every year to meet behind closed doors at a different five-star resort. The group stresses secrecy: What's said at a Bilderberg conference stays at a Bilderberg conference."<sup>2</sup>

Usually, the Bilderberg Conference is held in Europe for three years in a row, with the fourth year holding a meeting in North America. However, the previous North American conference was held in 2006 in Ottawa. So why did they break tradition to hold the conference in North America this year? Speculation abounds around a discussion of a possible attack on Iran, the American-centered global financial crisis, as well as the current US Presidential elections.

Bilderberg has long been an important forum for up-and-coming politicians of Western nations to be introduced to the global financial elite; the heads of the major multinational corporations, international banks, world financial institutions, global governing bodies, think tanks, and powerful individuals of the likes of David Rockefeller and various European monarchs, including Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, daughter of founding member, Prince Bernhard, as well as Queen Sofia and King Juan Carlos of Spain.

According to The Globe and Mail, such Canadian Prime Ministers have, in the past, (often before becoming Prime Minister), attended a Bilderberg Conference as a guest, including Pierre Trudeau, Jean Chretien, Paul Martin and Stephen Harper.<sup>3</sup> Tony Blair attended Bilderberg before becoming

Prime Minister,<sup>4</sup> as did the current British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, who also recently called for the establishment of a "new world order."<sup>5</sup>

Interestingly, as the Washington Post reported, Vernon E. Jordan, a high-powered American executive, who sits on several corporate boards, including American Express, Xerox, J.C. Penney, Dow Jones, and Sara Lee, to name a few, also happens to be a very close friend of former President Bill Clinton. However, "it was Jordan who first introduced then-Gov. Clinton to world leaders at their annual Bilderberg gathering in Germany in 1991. Plenty of governors try to make that scene; only Clinton got taken seriously at that meeting, because Vernon Jordan said he was okay."<sup>6</sup> Clinton subsequently became President.

## Barack and Bilderberg

Recently, there has been much discussion about Barack Obama having possibly attended the recent Bilderberg conference in Virginia. This speculation arose when Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton sneaked off for a secretive meeting while in Virginia. As the AP reported, "Reporters traveling with Obama sensed something might be happening between the pair when they arrived at Dulles International Airport after an event in Northern Virginia and Obama was not aboard the airplane. Asked at the time about the Illinois senator's whereabouts, [Obama spokesman Robert] Gibbs smiled and declined to comment."<sup>7</sup>

The press that had been traveling with Obama were not made aware of the secretive meeting until the plane that they assumed Obama would be present on was moving down the runway, prompting many angry questions from the press towards Obama's spokesman, Robert Gibbs. One reported asked Gibbs, "Why were we not told about this meeting until we were on the plane, the doors were shut and the plane was about to taxi to take off?" to which he responded, "Senator Obama had a desire to do some meetings, others had a desire to meet with him tonight in a private way and that is what we are doing." This preceded another question, "Is there more than one meeting, is there more than one person with whom he is meeting?" Gibbs simply replied, "I am not going to get into all the details of the meeting." He again later repeated that, "There was a desire to do some meetings tonight, he was interested in doing them, others were interested in doing them, and to do them in a way that was private."<sup>8</sup>

On Friday, June 6, it was reported that Bilderberg tracker, Jim Tucker, "called Obama's office today to ask if he had attended Bilderberg. A campaign spokeswoman refused to discuss the matter but would not deny that Obama had attended Bilderberg."<sup>9</sup>

## Bilderberg to Pick Obama's Vice President

As the Financial Times reported in May of this year, Barack Obama appointed James A. Johnson, the former CEO of Fannie Mae, "to head a secret committee to produce a shortlist for his vice-presidential running mate." A short list was discussed by the article, which listed, other than Hillary Clinton, "Jim Webb, the former secretary of the navy, Vietnam veteran and senator for Virginia; Tim Kaine, the governor of Virginia; John Edwards, the former vice-presidential candidate in 2004; Ted Strickland, the governor of Ohio; and Kathleen Sebelius, the governor of Kansas." Other potential nominees include "Sam Nunn, the former chairman of the Senate armed services committee; and Wesley Clark, the former head of Nato in Europe."<sup>10</sup>

James A. Johnson, the man Obama asked to pick his running mate, played the same role for John Kerry back in 2004, and he selected John Edwards. As the New York Times reported, "Several people pointed to the secretive and exclusive Bilderberg conference of some 120 people that this year drew

the likes of Henry A. Kissinger, Melinda Gates and Richard A. Perle to Stresa, Italy, in early June, as helping [Edwards] win Mr. Kerry's heart. Mr. Edwards spoke so well in a debate on American politics with the Republican Ralph Reed that participants broke Bilderberg rules to clap before the end of the session." The Times further reported, "His performance at Bilderberg was important," said a friend of Mr. Kerry who was there. "He reported back directly to Kerry. There were other reports on his performance. Whether they reported directly or indirectly, I have no doubt the word got back to Mr. Kerry about how well he did."<sup>11</sup>

James A. Johnson, Vice Chairman of Perseus, a merchant banking firm, is also a director of Goldman Sachs, Forestar Real Estate Group, Inc., KB Home, Target Corporation and UnitedHealth Group Inc., is also a member of the American Friends of Bilderberg, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission and is an honorary trustee of the Brookings Institution.<sup>12</sup> It is likely that Obama's running mate will be chosen by Johnson at this year's Bilderberg Conference.

Notable among this year's Bilderberg guests are Kansas Governor, Kathleen Sebelius, who the Financial Times reported was on Johnson's short list of nominees. In fact, Sebelius is the only person mentioned as a possible running mate in the Financial Times article that was officially listed on the Bilderberg list of attendees.<sup>13</sup> Could this be a sign that she may be the chosen one? Time will tell. However, another Democratic politician present at the meeting was Tom Daschle, so perhaps he is working his way back into politics.

### Don't Forget McCain

Just because Obama's popularity dwarfs that of McCain's, is not reason enough to ignore the other candidate. After all, the elite never ignore both candidates, and in fact, ensure they have them both neatly packed in their back pockets. Among the guests at the Bilderberg meeting this year, included Republican Governor of South Carolina, Mark Sanford, as well as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice,<sup>14</sup> which would be a smart political pick for McCain, going up against the first black presidential candidate.

McCain has also received endorsements from former Secretaries of State, Henry Kissinger, General Alexander Haig, Lawrence Eagleburger and George P. Shultz.<sup>15</sup> These are not men without influence, as Henry Kissinger and George Shultz were also present at this year's meeting.<sup>16</sup> Also interesting to note is that George P. Shultz "associated himself with the Bush presidency early on, introducing the Texas governor to Condoleezza Rice at the Hoover Institution in 1998." Could Condi be in the process of being groomed for higher office, or is she simply at the meeting for foreign policy discussions?

Also important to note, is that McCain had a fundraiser in London held for him, which was hosted "by kind permission of Lord Rothschild OM GBE [Order of Merit and the Knight Grand Cross of the British Empire] and the Hon Nathaniel Rothschild." As the Washington Post reported, "Tickets to the invitation-only event cost \$1,000 to \$2,300."<sup>18</sup> The Post later reported, "Aides refused to talk about the fundraiser, or to say how much money was raised, and McCain dashed through the rain away from reporters after emerging. One guest said there were about 100 people at the luncheon. If they all gave the maximum, the event would have raised about \$230,000 for the campaign."<sup>19</sup>

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