

By Maureen Dowd

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I imagine that if you called the new consulting firm of Cheney, Cheney & Cheney and got put on hold, you'd hear the "Ghostbusters" theme:

If there's someone weak,

if you've sprung a leak,

if the world looks bleak,

if you hide and seek,

who ya gonna call?

OBAMABUSTERS!

It's hard to believe that the Bush dynasty, which limped away in disgrace after smashing our economy and the globe, has spawned another political dynasty.

But Jason Horowitz reported in The Washington Post that Mary Cheney, the younger daughter of the former vice president, is starting a consulting firm modeled on Kissinger Associates.

Since it involves the Cheneys, it's shrouded in unnecessary secrecy. But Mary's friends say her plan is to make it Cheney cubed, bringing in her dad and big sister, Liz, when those two finish cleaning out the Augean stables of Dick Cheney's legacy for his memoir.

Mr. Horowitz wrote that Mary, who is expecting her second child with her partner, Heather Poe, next month, may be hanging the shingle for the "gruff clan who speak in dour unison when bashing the current president, second-guessing the previous commander in chief and chiding wayward GOP leaders."

The influence-peddling firm will be wildly successful, no doubt, because if anyone has shown a golden touch, it's Dick Cheney. And there are bound to be oodles of clients who want coaching on how to make things look totally the opposite of what they are.

Saudis, right-wing dictators and Bernie Madoff calling for image makeovers? Scooter Libby calling to see how to get his career back after taking the fall for his scheming boss? Rush Limbaugh calling to strategize about how to buy an NFL team with black players as he says offensive things about blacks? Rupert Murdoch seeking tips on how to merge Fox and NBC into Brian O'Hannity?

You can hear a receptionist chirping: "Cheney, Cheney & Cheney. Who would you like to target today?"

Regarding bipartisanship with the same contempt as multilateralism and multiculturalism, the Cheneys have led the charge against President Obama, painting him as a wishy-washy loser who's turning America to mush. On Fox News last Sunday, Liz Cheney -- who still talks about having "liberated" Iraq -- called Mr. Obama's Nobel Peace Prize a "farce" and suggested that he "send the mother of a fallen American soldier to accept the prize on behalf of the U.S. military."

The blonde, 43-year-old lawyer, a mother of five hailed by her fans as "a red state rock star," teamed up this week with Bill Kristol to start a new group called "Keep America Safe." Mr. Kristol, of course, was the chief proponent of the wacky notion that Dan Quayle, and later Sarah Palin, could Keep America Safe, which somewhat undermines the urgency and gravity of the

group's moniker. And Liz's dear old dad was the one who made America less safe by straining our military to the breaking point while carrying out his knuckleheaded theory of preemptive war.

Still, Liz hopes her new enterprise will energize opponents of Mr. Obama's "radical" foreign policy, as she has tried to do so volubly on cable shows, and raise money by presenting the president as a callow, wobbly, golf-playing appeaser whose foreign policy will "make us weaker."

The Web site features a daily Willie Hortonish detainee feature, profiling one of the scary swarthy prisoners at Gitmo. And it will also have all kinds of fun reading, like memos by Bush lawyers on enhanced interrogation. (Or, as it's more commonly known outside the gargoyled gates of Cheneyville, torture.)

The "Keep America Safe" mission statement says that "the current administration too often seems uncertain, wishful, irresolute and unwilling to stand up for America, our allies and our interests."

It's evocative of an earlier effort by conservatives to prod a Democratic president to man-up, hectoring him about his "inadequate" foreign policy and his course of "weakness and drift."

That was a 1998 letter to President Bill Clinton from the Project for the New American Century, with signers such as Mr. Kristol, Paul Wolfowitz, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle and John Bolton, urging a strategy that "should aim, above all, at the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power." (Dick Cheney and Scooter Libby signed the project's statement of principles.)

Mr. Kristol joked to Politico's Ben Smith that the venture might serve as a launching pad for Liz to run for office. (A Senate bid from Virginia, where she lives, or Wyoming, which she still calls home?)

That raises the terrifying specter that some day we could see a Palin-Cheney ticket, promoted by Mr. Kristol.

Sarah would bring her content-free crackle and gut instincts; Liz would bring facts and figures distorted by ideology. Pretty soon, we're pre-emptively invading Iran and the good times are rolling all over again.