

Republican Perspective
30 November 2016
by Ed Manning

A LACK OF CIVILITY

“When they go low, we go high.” Michelle Obama

Senate Minority Leader, Harry Reid will be retiring at the end of this Congressional session. One can only hope that his replacement, New York’s Chuck Schumer, will restore some civility to a well respected position. The former boxer, Reid has delivered many pugnacious speeches against Republicans and conservatives from the Senate floor.

Reid on President-elect Trump: “The election of Donald Trump has emboldened the forces of hate and bigotry in America. White nationalists, Vladimir Putin and ISIS are celebrating Donald Trump’s victory, while innocent, law-abiding Americans are wracked with fear – especially African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Muslim Americans, LGBT Americans and Asian Americans. Watching white nationalists celebrate while innocent Americans cry tears of fear does not feel like America.” *When they go low, we go high.*

Reid often spewed his venom against the Koch brothers, some 139 times. He believed their financial contributions to political campaigns were evil. On the other hand, any money coming from Soros or Steyer into Democratic coffers were considered manna from heaven.

Reid’s lack of principle is most apparent when it comes to immigration. In the early 1990’s, when a Republican congress was trying to pass immigration reform, Reid vehemently opposed.

Here are some of his egregious comments: “Our borders have overflowed with illegal immigrants placing tremendous burdens on our criminal justice system, schools and social programs; Our federal wallet is stretched to the limit by illegal aliens getting welfare, food stamps, medical care and other benefits, often without paying taxes; Safeguards like welfare and free medical care are in place to boost Americans in need of short-term assistance. These programs were not meant to entice freeloaders and scam artists from around the world.”

When it came to birthright citizenship, Reid offered: "If making it easy to be an illegal alien isn't enough, how about offering a reward for being an illegal immigrant? No sane country would do that, right? Guess again. If you break our laws by entering this country without permission and give birth to a child, we reward that child with U.S. citizenship and guarantee a full access to all public and social services this society provides – and that's a lot of services."

Just after the surge of troops began in Iraq, Reid said at a press conference: "Now, I believe myself ... that this war is lost and that the surge is not accomplishing anything." A returning National Guardsman with a Purple Heart opined that Senator Reid was "Al Qaeda's most powerful ally."

Reid often made the Citizens Against Government Waste (CAGW) annual Pig Book. To be recognized by the CAGW is not a badge of honor as it lists congressmen that enjoy a penchant for fiscal irresponsibility. Reid made the Pig Book multiple times.

Reid's belligerence continued when he championed a Senate rule change for the confirmation of judges. But before becoming Majority Leader, when Democrats were filibustering George Bush's judicial appointees, Reid had a different viewpoint: "The filibuster is not a scheme, and it certainly isn't new. The filibuster is far from a procedural gimmick. It's part of the fabric of this institution we call the Senate." He went on: "To change the rules in the Senate can't be done by a simple majority. It can only be done if there is extended debate by 67 votes."

But the false narrative of Reid changed when Republicans were filibustering Obama's judicial appointments. Now he advocated the "nuclear option," where only a simple majority would be needed to confirm all nominees other than Supreme Court Justices. This would significantly diminish the power of the minority party, and would give the President virtually unchecked authority to appoint whomever he wished to various political and judicial posts.

In 2013, Reid called for a Senate vote on the nuclear option. Fifty-two senators, all Democrats and Independents, voted in favor of the rules change, which thus became the new Senate policy. Reid made it known that if Democrats won the presidency and Senate in 2016, the nuclear option might be invoked for Supreme Court nominees. Reid stated, "I really do believe that I have set the Senate so when I leave, we're going to be able to get judges done with a majority," he said. "It's clear to me that if the Republicans try to filibuster another circuit court judge, but especially a Supreme Court justice, I've told 'em how and I've done it, not just talking about it. I did it in changing the rules of the Senate. It'll have to be done again."

Farewell deplorable Harry Reid. *When they go low, we go high!*