

themselves under assault from erstwhile allies for not being left enough. (By pretending to centrism after the 1994 loss of Congress, Clinton avoided the fate.) Each time a split opened the way for new chapters in the resurgence of the modern, conservative GOP.

Personnel is policy when it comes to staffing administrations. The same holds true when a party is out of power. Positions such as chairman of the Republican National Committee demand the attention of someone who has both a creative understanding of the power of conservative ideas as well as the capability to implement a sharp, strategically and tactically sound, crystal-clear opposition agenda to the White House. The glaring weakness of the McCain campaign was McCain's feckless insistence on "reaching across the aisle" as opposed to being a Reagan-style leader of the conservative movement. Reagan wanted to win, McCain wanted to get along. Presumed to get mainstream media support and votes, the McCain approach got none.

It was a telltale sign of intellectual exhaustion. It is not a mistake Republicans should make again.

Can you say "Chairman Newt"? ❀

Jeffrey Lord is a former Reagan White House political director and author. He writes from Pennsylvania.

Grover G. Norquist

THE DEMOCRATS HAVE CAPTURED the White House, the House of Representatives, and the Senate. Now what?

We have been here before and we can learn from how we recovered after the Goldwater defeat of 1964, the Watergate election of 1974, the Jimmy Carter election in 1976, and the Bill Clinton election of 1992 that gave Democrats the White House and Congress. The establishment left explained that the GOP and conservatism were finished and that we "must" move to the left. We passed on this helpful advice and created the Reagan Republican Party based not on the man but on the principles of limited government, lower taxes, less government spending and regulation, and a strong national defense. Back in 1964, 1974, and 1976 we had a theory that such a movement could be successful politically and in governing. Today we know that a Reaganite campaign can win. We have won four presidential campaigns with this tested approach: 1980, 1984, 1988, and 2000. In two of those cases the candidate who ran as a Reagan Republican did not always so govern.

Now we must do triage. The Republican minorities in the House and Senate cannot stop every bad piece of legislation. But those bills that would change the correlation of forces, such as abolishing secret ballots for unionization, the Fairness Doctrine that would outlaw conservative talk radio, or changes that facilitate increased voter fraud such as national same-day registration, must be filibustered and stopped. If we demand that all bad bills be filibustered, our senators will eventually tire or break and be overrun. There must be a selective line in the sand against permanent damage to our team.

The second group of bills are bad ideas that do damage that can be repaired. Overspending. Tax hikes. The important point is to oppose those bills and vote against them—not try to improve them so that an 80-percent really bad bill passes with Republican fingerprints all over it. We have two recent models. In 1990 President Bush and too many Republican congressmen and senators went to Andrews Air Force base and agreed on a tax hike to fund increased spending. We lost the presidency two years later. In 1993 Republicans refused to provide a single vote for the Clinton tax hike and Republicans captured the House and Senate the following year.

Lastly, there are nonpartisan ideas such as transparency in government that can safely be supported and highlighted, so we are not seen as always obstructionist. ❀

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Mark Sanford

THOUGH I HAVE MANY THOUGHTS on the election, I will limit mine to what the Bible talks about in taking the log out of one's own eye before worrying about the splinter in the eye of another. The "other" in this case is represented by Democratic wins and the election of Barack Obama. It was a historic night, and the election of the first black president is a great commentary on opportunity and where we have come as a country. I wish him well.

Going back to the log in our party's eye, the election was not a repudiation of conservative ideals. It was a repudiation of a party that had come to stand for surprisingly little. In some ways Ted Stevens personifies what went wrong, as he did not stand for

conservative principals, and accordingly the party's problems were far broader than even the presidential race.

Republicans have campaigned on the conservative themes of lower taxes, less government, and more freedom—they just haven't governed that way. Words not matching deeds can be a deadly formula in the world of politics.

So during our "time in the wilderness" it's my hope that we go back to the basics of conservatism. In the business world, a political party is a lot like a brand. The thing that unites Caterpillar or John Deere customers is the way in which those products consistently walk the walk in delivering on what they advertise. We need to get back to the knitting of what I believe made this country and party great—a common-sense conservative approach. Though they have engineering expertise, when Cat or Deere run into problems they don't suggest making airplanes and cars as part of the solution.

Accountability will be important too. Rank-and-file Republicans indeed know what they're about, but I'm often struck by the conflicting actions of officeholders. Chick-fil-A does not say to its franchisees, "However you want to cook the sandwiches is cool with me." They are precise in what they expect, and it's my hope going forward that more conservatives in all corners of America will be equally precise and exacting in making sure their views are reflected by the party that supposedly represents them.

The time before us will prove to be a great opportunity in righting the party—if we take it. ☛

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Richard Viguerie

SO MUCH FOR "COMPASSIONATE CONSERVATISM"—or, as it's more accurately known, Big-Government Republicanism.

For the past eight years, Republican Party leaders conducted an experiment. For many decades, at least since the New Deal, Democrats used taxpayers' money and the coercive power of government to support organizations affiliated with the Democratic Party and to build loyalty to the party. Could Republicans do the same? Could they pass a Medicare prescription drug benefit, and buy the support of seniors? Could they get Latino votes by supporting amnesty for illegal aliens, and farmers' votes by subsidizing agribusiness, and parents' votes by federalizing edu-

cation? Could they use thousands of pork-barrel projects to protect Republican officeholders? Could they build the party by rewarding friendly faith-based groups with taxpayers' money, and by getting K Street lobbying firms to hire Republicans, and by bailing out the Bush administration's friends on Wall Street?

Could they out-Democrat the Democrats?

The results of the experiment are in. The results are: Majority Leader Reid, Speaker Pelosi, President-elect Obama.

Every Republican leader who helped conduct this experiment, at every level in the party and in the government, must go.

Those leaders must be replaced with principled conservatives—with new leaders who are in touch with the conservative values of most Americans:

- A Rasmussen poll released October 3, 2008, found that voters, by 59 percent to 28 percent, agreed with the assertion in Ronald Reagan's first inaugural address that "government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem."

- A Fox News/Opinion Dynamics Poll released October 10 asked: "In general, do you think government involvement is usually the solution or the problem?" By 53 percent to 17 percent, people selected "problem" over "solution." When they were asked "Do you think this is a good time for higher taxes and larger government or is this a good time for lower taxes and smaller government?" respondents selected lower taxes and smaller government by 76 percent to 13 percent.

- *Washington Post* polls conducted October 19–21 showed self-identified conservatives outnumbering self-identified liberals by roughly seven to four.

If we are to rebuild the conservative movement and, someday soon, achieve our dream of conservative government, we must build a new corps of conservative leaders—leaders from every segment of society, young (for the most part), and skilled in using traditional media as well as new and alternative media to organize conservatives and to promote conservative ideas.

Along with new leaders, we need a new approach to issues, an approach that applies conservative principles to problems facing grassroots Americans in the 21st century.

The Republican Party's current leadership is incapable of serving as an effective opposition to the Democrats. Conservatives must assume that role. ☛

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