Battle for Control of the Republican Party Begins

by Phyllis Schlafly

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Karl Rove has declared war on grassroots conservatives and Tea Parties. Rove, who had the richest Super PAC in 2012 (American Crossroads, which reportedly spent $300 million in the 2012 election cycle), has started a new fund called Conservative Victory Project to spend big bucks in the 2014 Republican primaries to defeat Republican candidates not approved by the Establishment.

Rove's big-money spending last year, which was similarly designed to help only Establishment candidates, especially if they had defeated a real conservative in the primary, was notoriously unsuccessful. Of the 31 races in which Rove aired TV ads, Republicans won only 9, so his donors got little return on their investment.

Establishment losers included Rick Berg who lost in North Dakota and Denny Rehberg who lost in Montana, even while Romney was carrying both those states. Other Establishment losers were George Allen in Virginia, Tommy Thompson in Wisconsin, Connie Mack in Florida, and Heather Wilson in New Mexico.

Meanwhile, Rove was helping Harry Reid to keep control of the Senate by trying to defeat real conservatives nominated by grassroots Republicans. Rove made nasty and hurtful remarks about conservative candidates he didn't like.

After Missouri Republicans nominated Todd Akin in the primary, Rove told his Super PAC donors that they should all apply pressure to "sink Todd Akin," and that if Akin were "found mysteriously murdered, don't look for my whereabouts." When this malicious comment was reported by Businessweek, Rove tried to pass it off as a joke, but suggesting the murder of a Congressman is not funny.

After Christine O'Donnell won the Delaware primary in 2010, Rove tried to defeat her by publicly accusing her of saying "nutty things." Now we know who says the nuttiest things.

There are two reasons why Rove and his rich donors don't like grassroots Republicans and Tea Partiers. The Establishment can't order them how to vote, and the Establishment

wants candidates to talk only about economic issues, never about social, moral, or national-security issues.

Karl Rove spent his big PAC money buying expensive TV ads instead of on getting out the vote for Republicans. Obama's strategists were smarter and didn't make that mistake; they spent their money on Get Out The Vote projects, which enabled them to win.

We'd like to know how much money Rove and his associates pocketed from buying millions of dollars of worthless TV ads. Television stations rebate a percentage of the price of TV ads to whoever places the ads.

Rove is supposed to be so savvy about politics, but let's test that. On election morning, he released his final predictions that "Romney will win Florida, North Carolina, Virginia, New Hampshire, Ohio, Iowa and Colorado." Obama carried all but one of those states.

Rove built his reputation on his role in electing George W. Bush, but President Bush and his phony "Compassionate Conservatism" did almost nothing for conservative goals. Bush tried hard to put the U.S. in an open-borders "North American Union" with Mexico and Canada, and he inflicted our schoolkids with federal control over education called "No Child Left Behind."

Establishment candidates should be called "me-too" Republicans, a label coined to describe two-time presidential loser Tom Dewey who said "me too" to obnoxious Democratic programs, and to Nelson Rockefeller (who lost three attempts to get the Republican presidential nomination). Me-too can also be applied to recent Establishment losers: Bob Dole, John McCain, and Mitt Romney.

Today, we call these me-too Republicans RINOs (Republicans In Name Only). It's time to revive the famous words of the late Senator Everett Dirksen refuting the Establishment: "We followed you before, and you led us down the road to defeat."

Fortunately, we are seeing an emergence of a new Reagan Republican Party. In 2010 and 2012, Republicans elected some real conservatives to the Senate after defeating Establishment candidates in the primaries: Rand Paul in Kentucky (who defeated Mitch McConnell's choice), Ted Cruz in Texas (who

defeated a fabulously wealthy Establishment candidate), and Marco Rubio in Florida (who defeated Establishment candidate Florida Governor Crist, who then showed his true colors and became a Democrat).

Jim DeMint (now with Heritage) was another successful non-Establishment Republican Senator. It's time for the grassroots to take control of the Republican Party away from the elitists who want to choose our candidates, tell them what to say, and how to vote.

Let's ask all Republican primary candidates: "Are you a Karl Rove candidate?" We want a real choice, not a Rove echo.