from Phyllis Sch1afly

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Spoilers in the Republican Party

For most Republicans, getting a favorable front-page story or a primetime segment on the evening network TV newscasts is difficult. But there is one surefire formula - attack other Republicans.

Richard N. Bond joined the ranks of unemployed Republicans on January 29 when he was replaced as the Party's national chairman. On that day, he imitated the Biblical parable of the unjust steward who, when fired by his master, used the last remaining hours of his stewardship to make deals that were disadvantageous to his employer so that the recipients of these surprise favors would welcome him into their ranks.

The setting for this drama was the January Republican National Committee meeting in St. Louis, where the number-one agenda item was the election of a new national chairman from among five announced. candidates. There was no difference of ideology among the four leading contenders; the race was waged on personal friendships and leadership.

No issues were debated. The four leading candidates. all proclaimed themselves pro-life. A fifth candidate, Craig Berkman of Oregon, tried to run as the pro-abortion-choice candidate, but he got only ten votes and was never a serious contender.

The headlines were grabbed by Rich Bond, who had been George Bush's handpicked Party Chairman. He used his swan song to try to excommunicate elements of the Party whom he called “zealots” because they stick to “principles.”

Like the thief who cries “stop, thief” to divert attention from his own thievery, Bond decried making abortion “a defining issue for our party” at the same time that he made abortion the heart of his speech. He deliberately upstaged the new Party chairman and thrust abortion back into the news.

If “intolerance” was the mortal sin at the 1992 Republican National Convention, no speaker was guiltier than Rich Bond himself, who said in Houston, “We are America; these other people are not America.” No other speaker displayed such partisan zealotry as to suggest that non-Republicans are not good Americans.

Bond's St. Louis speech. toadied to the liberal media who have kept up a drumbeat since the November election trying to pin the blame for George Bush/s defeat on the August convention, including a few speeches about traditional family values by the so-called “religious right,” and on the adoption of a pro-life plank in the Party platform. The media's own public opinion polls clearly refute this interpretation.

On the eve of the 1992 Republican Convention in Houston before any speeches were delivered, the ABC poll showed Bill Clinton leading George Bush by 21 points: 57 to 36 percent. On the Sunday following the Convention, the ABC poll reported that Clinton's led had been cut to only 5 points: 47 to 42 percent.

The CBS/New York Times poll just before the Houston Convention showed Clinton leading Bush by 18 points, 55 to 37 percent. Just after the Convention, this same poll reported Clinton only 2 points ahead: 48 to 46 percent.

The media's own surveys thus showed that the Convention gave Bush a big boost in popularity and put him within striking distance of winning. It’s too bad he couldn't continue the momentum.

The four major television networks hired Voters Research & Surveys to do massive exit polls on election day, November 3. This poll showed, of course, that the big majority of people cast their votes based. on the economy.

But, of the 12 percent for whom the issue of abortion decided their vote, 56 percent voted for Bush and 36 percent for Clinton. The abortion issue proved to be a 3 to 5 point advantage for the pro-life position.

Furthermore, 68 percent of voters surveyed in the exit pol1s said. that government should promote traditional rather than “nontraditional” family values. So much for the false assertion that family values were a loser for the Republicans.

The notion that “zealots” forced a pro-life Platform plank on the Republican Party in Houston is also a media fabrication, now regurgitated by Rich Bond. The Platform Committee voted 84 to LG to adopt the identical pro-life plank that had been a winner in L984 and l-988. The fu1l Convention then adopted the L992 Platform on a nearly unanimous voice vote.

The pro-abortion-choice Republicans had more than their fair share of the some 50 speakers who addressed the convention, but among the democratically elected delegates they were only a small minority. To make a motion for a floor fight on the issue required only six out of 50 state delegations, but they could muster only two out of the 50 states.

Rich Bond knows that his position was overwhelmingly rejected by the elected Republican delegates, but his flamboyant attack will make friends for him with the media, the Democrats, and the country club Republicans who were unhappy with the principled actions of the majority of Republicans.