

Christians Aren't the Only Former Reagan Coalition Voters the GOP Establishment Has Betrayed

The news that the budget deficit is projected to expand to \$544 billion, \$105 billion above last year's levels, prompts us to ask, "Is there any conservative principle or constituency in the conservative coalition that elected Ronald Reagan and won the historic elections of 2010 and 2014 that Capitol Hill's Republican leaders haven't betrayed?"

Consider the following facts about what the Capitol Hill Republican "leadership" has done on the agenda of each of the three legs of the Reagan coalition.

Economic and Fiscal Conservatives:

Despite record tax collections the past few years, the government has run a deficit every year that Republicans have had the majority under Speakers Boehner and Ryan.

In 2010 federal revenue was \$ trillion; in 2017 revenues are estimated to be \$ trillion—and Capitol Hill Republicans are on track to double 2010's tax collections by 2020. So much for the Republican Party's long-held goal of starving the Leviathan.

While national defense and national security outlays are down from 2010, outlays for the Department of Health and Human Services are up by about a third (\$ billion in 2010 to an estimated \$ trillion in 2017).

As our friend Rick Manning, president of Americans for Limited Government observed in a recent article, "the U.S. economy

performed worse over the past 10 years than at any time since the Great Depression, and at the same time, our nation's debt to GDP climbed from 63.9 percent to 103 percent."

National Defense Conservatives:

While Pentagon spending does not necessarily correlate to an improvement in our national security it is at least an objective metric that can't be spun, and it has steadily deteriorated since 2010. Despite the failure of Obama's national security policies in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, Libya, Ukraine and Eastern Europe and the Western Pacific-China theater of operations defense spending is down by \$80 billion (from \$666,715 billion in 2010 to \$586,834 billion in 2017).

And on the national security policy front Capitol Hill Republicans aided and abetted Obama's worst and most dangerous decisions; the Iran nuclear weapons deal and his creation of two more failed states, Libya and Syria, in the heart of the Muslim world.

Without the treasonous actions of Republican Senator Bob Corker of Tennessee the Iran nuclear weapons deal would have never met the constitutional threshold of two-thirds consent and passed the Senate, sanctions on Iran would not have been lifted and Iran would remain a pariah state with a hobbled economy. But with Republican help Obama has lifted sanctions on Iran, granted it access to the benefits of normal trade and made it the regional hegemon in the Middle East.

And the same goes for Obama's disasters in Libya, Syria and Iraq. Without the enthusiastic support of Republican Senators Marco Rubio, John McCain and Lindsey Graham there would be no "bipartisan" air cover for Obama's failed policies. As it now stands, Capitol Hill Republican leaders can share the blame with Obama and Hillary Clinton as Islamist armies destroy what little is left of western-leaning political support in the

Middle East and North Africa.

In President Reagan's day the prescribed requirement for the aircraft carrier inventory was 15, it was then dropped to 12; today we have only 10 carriers available, down from 11 when Republicans took over in 2010. The ship that would bring the number of carriers available back up to 11, the *Gerald R. Ford*, is behind schedule and over budget.

Cultural Conservatives:

The videos detailing how Planned Parenthood engages in the ghoulish practice of trafficking in human baby body parts shocked millions of Americans and engendered quick promises from Capitol Hill Republicans to strip federal funding from Planned Parenthood.

The result of all this outrage and those promises?

The end-of-year Cromnibus did not defund the Title X family planning or teen pregnancy prevention programs or include policy riders that would prevent Planned Parenthood from accessing federal health care funds, allow states to exclude Planned Parenthood or other abortion providers from their Medicaid programs, or allow employers to block their employees from receiving insurance coverage for abortion.

According to the Heritage Foundation, the data shows that Planned Parenthood Federation of America remains the country's largest abortion provider with affiliates performing more than 300,000 abortions per year, which amounts to approximately one out of every three in the country.

No freedom of conscience legislation has passed protecting health care and insurance providers from being forced to fund abortions.

And on the education front, the federal Department of Education received a \$1 billion-plus increase in funding, plus

passage of the massive 1,000+ page ESSA.

House Speaker Paul Ryan forced through the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) conference report—by a 359-64 margin—reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Ryan's actions were a repudiation of the Republican stance to abolish the Department of Education and return power to local districts and parents. The biggest loser in what Congress has done, said grass-roots education activist Erin Tuttle, are the kids. "Those little kids sitting in schools counting on us, counting on Congress to do what's right for them. It makes me angry."

And in another betrayal of the conservative grassroots, the bill, Tuttle said in an interview with our friend Ginni Thomas of The Daily Caller News Foundation, did not end Common Core.

"Wiggle room" was added to text language, Tuttle explained, that belie the claims of GOP sponsors that they limited federal power. Besides, the American Principle Project has said, "the highly prescriptive requirements for dictating standards, assessments and accountability systems" are still in the bill, regardless of what standards are named.

More spending, but not on the core constitutional responsibility of the federal government to provide for the common defense. A deteriorating national security posture and a rapid degradation of America's military capabilities, intrusive and extra-constitutional federal interference in education and other powers reserved by the Constitution to the states, and the complete abandonment of any pretense of governing according to cultural conservative principles are the legacy of the past decade of Republican "leadership" on Capitol Hill.

"Is there any conservative principle or constituency in the conservative coalition that elected Ronald Reagan and won the historic elections of 2010 and 2014 that Capitol Hill's

Republican leaders haven't betrayed?" Clearly the answer is NO, and without new leadership in the House and Senate Republican Conferences the betrayals will continue.

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