

Twinkle, Twinkle:

I would like you to read a quote from Ronald Reagan. This is the same Ronald Reagan who has been elevated to sanctity by the current leadership of the Republican Party. Ronald Reagan said this.

"We should emphasize the things that unite us and make these the only 'litmus test' of what constitutes a Republican: our belief in restraining government spending, pro-growth policies, tax reduction, sound national defense, and maximum individual liberty. As to the other issues that draw on the deep springs of morality and emotion, let us decide that we can disagree among ourselves as Republicans and tolerate the disagreement."

Sound advice indeed. But instead of taking this wisdom to heart his Party has made its 'litmus tests' precisely the issues that Reagan was cautioning them to be tolerant about. Abortion, sexual orthodoxy, embryonic research, gender roles and fear of immigrants are the contemporary cornerstones of a Party that is losing everything it had gained since Reagan, in a few short years. Since 2006 the Republicans have lost 51 seats in the House and 13 seats in the Senate. They did it in three years! Just three years to lose both Houses of Congress and the White House. That's not easy; you have to try really hard to pull it off.

And try hard they have. The movers and shakers on the Right have built themselves a lovely little party, one that is regionally isolated and painted neatly into a moralistic corner. One of the great things about moralists is that they are secure in their righteousness even when the house around them is falling apart. The fewer members their club has the smugger the remaining members become. They are like those tiny groups that know "the end" is near so they go to the top of a hill somewhere and wait. When, for the umpteenth time, the end doesn't come, they return to society and resume preaching about the next end. They are like the guy in a duel who shoots himself in the foot and says to his opponent, "There's more where that came from." The current administration would be wise (and it is) to just let the Limbaughtomites keep shooting themselves in the foot. The self righteous militants will feel better every time they blow off another toe. Meanwhile the rest of us can get on with living in a country that has room for more than one point of view. Everyone's happy.

I suspect that in about four or six years from now, after the Party has lost a few more Senate seats and another handful in the House, the faithful will start to wake up and take their leadership to task. The good citizens of Pennsylvania, for instance, will ask the Neocons in charge, "How in the heck did we lose 200,000 registered voters to the Democrats? How did we turn from a battleground state into a safe blue state?" The leadership will have the only answer they have ever had only this time it won't cut it with their crowd. They will repeat the same old exclusionary, self righteous balderdash that they believe about America. They espouse the white and male America. They see themselves as champions for all those nineteenth century bull stories about Destiny, Superiority and Righteousness.

And finally, with their last bit of bluster, the old guard will perish. Tom DeLay will write his memoirs from prison. Dick Cheney will be testifying before an empty room in his private compound about the efficacy of cruelty. Rush will finish as most stars do, in an explosion of super-heated gas, melting radios as he goes.

As surely as tolerance overcomes bigotry and reason tames fear, the super novas on the Right will take a place that all dead stars eventually do, as forgotten cold rocks in some distant corner of our galaxy.