

General Assembly Posturing for June and November

This General Assembly session is quiet compared to last year. That doesn't mean it's better for The People's business. The politicians in the House of Delegates face the voters this year in primaries (June) and general elections (November). They don't want to make waves. Oops, except for that so silly bill on droopy pants (a Democrat bill that Republicans supported). The politicians in the Senate are waiting to introduce more taxes next year after the state-wide gubernatorial race.

Speaking of which, Jerry Kilgore quit his Attorney General's job to get a few more weeks in raising money. He picked up former Governor Jim Gilmore's endorsement so he has the open support of every Republican in the Commonwealth, except the Mayor of Warrenton – who will challenge him for some reason. Yet, the unanimous support for Jerry Kilgore by all the Republicans doesn't translate to winning in November. Not by a long shot. The People need a reason more than 'it's my turn'.

When the big-government, tax-and-spend Republicans (RINOs) and the Conservative Republicans support the same candidate, what do they agree on? Taxes? Spending? Social agenda? The point of having political parties is to have partisanship. I know that word does poorly in focus groups, but prejudice, always born in ignorance, doesn't diminish the truth. If the Party doesn't stand for something, then it stands for nothing – except power. Yet, the Republican Party of Virginia has a creed on its website:

Who We Are

Virginia Republican Creed

We Believe . . .

- 1 That the free enterprise system is the most productive supplier of human needs and economic justice
- 2 That all individuals are entitled to equal rights, justice, and opportunities and should assume their responsibilities as citizens in a free society
- 3 That fiscal responsibility and budgetary restraints must be exercised at all levels of government
- 4 That the Federal Government must preserve individual liberty by observing constitutional limitations
- 5 That peace is best preserved through a strong national defense
- 6 That faith in God, as recognized by our Founding Fathers, is essential to the moral fibre of the Nation

So, who are we Virginia Republicans, really? A Republican politician who works for the Democrats to place a \$1billion dollar burden on Virginians in increased taxes is either a fiscally 'responsible' Republican or a tax traitor to the Party. Choose.

I'm so grateful we have a Two Party system. It's unlikely that the Republicans can clean

our own house by ourselves. It will take more losses, like the special election for Thelma Drake's old seat in Norfolk, before the Patrons of Power, 16 Republican Senators and 17 Republican Delegates lose their seats. The Democrats can help substantially.

Lt. Gov. Timothy Kaine, a man reported to have a Clintonesque respect for the truth, can win against a unified Republican Party that says, simply, "We like Jerry". We do, but it won't work for Jerry, like it did for Ike, because Jerry is no Ike. Nice guy, but not an Eisenhower stature. Kaine can run, honestly, on the slogan "We won't raise your taxes as much as the Republicans". The Democrats' proposal was \$1.5 billion less than His Lordship John Chichester's Senate 'Republican' demand.

Meanwhile, the House of Delegates goes through a 'clean your skirts' vote to repeal the sales tax increase, or was it the food tax, knowing that the Republican Lords of the Senate will kill it. The vote was cynicism crystallized. What a sham.

It's up to the Republicans to challenge Tax Traitors in primaries. It's really hard to find candidates with a fire in gut to go up against the money, the media, and the Party sycophants. But, then we had no one, no champion, to go against the Transportation Tax Scam in 02 until after Labor Day. Finally, Roger Pogge agreed to coordinate our grassroots effort (\$40k vs. their \$2.2m on The Peninsula). Armed with the truth, and eventually with Del. Tom Gear and a few others speaking out publicly, we, The People, won big. We only have three months to find candidates to challenge the Tidewater Taxmen - Oder, Morgan, Tata and Jones – where I live.

Do you know a Virginian, who lives in a RINO district, with the courage to risk losing while fighting for what is right? Someone, who stands for principles, against power serving the powerful, and for the good people of Virginia? If Republicans can't find such men and women, we Republicans deserve to lose.

James Atticus Bowden