Mullings

An American Cyber-Column

My Policies are on the Ballot

Rich Galen

Monday, October 6, 2014

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* Last week you heard a national groan by Democratic candidates from city council in Florida to U.S. Senate in Alaska.
* President Barack Obama said, in a speech at Northwestern University:

“Now, I am not on the ballot this fall … But make no mistake:  [My] policies are on the ballot -- every single one of them.”

* Arrrrggggghhhh!
* As Miracle Max (played by Billy Crystal) said in “The Princess Bride”

“While you’re at it, why don’t you give me a nice paper cut and pour lemon juice on it?”

* Why is this such a big deal? Because, as the Washington Post’s Dan Balz pointed out over the weekend, “This is an election that is … very much about how people view President Obama.”
* Ok. Democrats love the President, Republicans hate him, and Independents aren’t thrilled about him, right? So what?
* The “what” is, according to a  Stanford University professor, quoted by Balz:

“Republicans don’t like Obama and Democrats are lukewarm about Obama.”

* The Gallup organization published a poll late last week that tested whether voters were looking to send a message to President Obama less than a month from now.
* According to the poll, 20 percent of respondents said they were sending a message of support to the President. 32 said it was a message in opposition to Mr. Obama. The remaining 46 percent were not in the message-sending business.
* Those numbers are very close

SIDEBAR

I typed, then backspaced through, “almost identical” which is oxymoronic. Two things are either identical or they’re not.

END SIDEBAR

* … very close to the numbers confronting President George W. Bush in the run up to the 2006 midterm election: 18-31- 46. Democrats, that year, picked up six seats in the U.S. Senate.
* But, when you break it down by party, you begin to see how where partisans fall on the intensity scale. According to Gallup:

“A majority of Republican registered voters, 58%, say they will be sending a message of opposition to Obama with their vote this fall. In contrast, 38% of Democratic voters say they will support the president.”

* The unemployment stats released last Friday showed the most-watched rate drop below six percent for the first time in a long time. That’s good news. But, according to a CBS/NYT/YouGov poll released over the weekend, when asked about the economy, only 22 percent said it is getting better, 37 percent said it is about the same, and 36 percent said “getting worse.”
* So, the improving economy is not being felt around a great number of kitchen tables in America.
* As we come around the home turn before heading into the stretch run toward the November 4 elections, these are the kinds of things that can – and very well may – sway close elections. Voters will, like it or not, watch more commercials and pay more attention from here on out.
* As Balz wrote at the end of his column about the “policies on the ballot” line:

“That comment may have rattled nervous Democrats looking to keep their distance from the president, but it is the reality they know they must live with for the next four weeks.”

* And Gallup wrote:

“Obama himself may choose to be less active in campaigning for Democrats to avoid hurting Democratic candidates' chances.”

* It is very likely that ads showing photos of Democratic candidates on the screen along with President Obama will be paid for by <i>Republican</i> campaigns and PACs.
* On the <a href = “<http://www.mullings.com/dr_10-06-14.htm>**” <**b> Secret Decoder Ring</b></a> page today: Links to the column by Dan Balz and to the Gallup and YouGov polls.

Also a Mullfoto from downtown DC last week.

-- END --