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A Chink In The Narrative

Michael Sean Winters | Sep. 15, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

The most ridiculous part of the media?s narrative about the primaries has been the focus on the record turnout among GOP voters. For the first time since 1930, more Republicans voted in their primaries than Democrats voted in theirs. This, we are told, is more evidence of a GOP sweep in November.

In fact, the higher GOP turnout is evidence of the fact that there has been a civil war going on within the GOP between establishment conservatives and Tea Party crazies and it is far from clear they intend to kiss and make up in order to join forces in November. This morning, Republicans are running away from Delaware as fast as they can. In Alaska, Sen. Lisa Murkowski has still not endorsed Joe Miller, the Tea Party candidate who upset her in that state?s GOP primary. In NY-23, Doug Hoffman lost the GOP nomination yesterday but can still run on the Conservative Party slate, dividing the conservative electorate there and paving the way for Democrat Bill Owens to retain that seat.

I am not sure which is less likely: Will mainstream Republicans end up supporting candidates like Miller and O?Donnell and Buck and Angle who espouse some crazy ideas? Or will Tea Party enthusiasts whose candidates lost, such as J.D. Hayworth, end up supporting the more establishment candidate who prevailed in the primary? The answers depend on the individual races, and the relative zaniness of the candidates in question, to be sure, but what I do not see is a unified Republican Party and that would seem to be an essential ingredient in any tsunami scenario.

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