

GOP House Dog Whistling

Michael Sean Winters | Jan. 20, 2011 | Distinctly Catholic

The House voted yesterday to repeal the health care reform law passed last year. The headline said so, but I wonder why it was a headline at all. After all, there is no immediate consequence to the vote, nor any prospect of a consequence. This was Kabuki, not governance.

The purpose of the vote was exclusively PR and, in that case, I suppose it worked. It is easier to give a dog whistle on the right than on the left because of Rupert Murdoch who has created a vast echo chamber where news stories that don't matter nonetheless have legs. But, there is a danger in holding out the prospect of repealing health care - or any other prospect, for that matter. At some point, people want to see some achievements, not just Kabuki. The more rabid in the GOP base will not want to move on to something other than repealing "Obamacare," and they will get frustrated and eventually turn on their GOP dance partners. How long will it take before charges of betrayal? (Answer: within five seconds of the vote to extend the debt limit!) That is the problem with echo chambers. You only hear yourself.

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