NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Boehner's Problem

Michael Sean Winters | Jul. 11, 2011 Distinctly Catholic

Politico has a great article [1]up this morning that shows how limited House Speaker John Boehner is in budget negotiations with the White House and the Senate.

As I wrote at the time of last year's election, the GOP decided to feed the Tea Party tiger and then ride it to victory in the midterm elections. But, when you ride the tiger, you go where the tiger wants to go.

Boehner seems genuinely interested in striking a bargain, which is how our constitutional system is supposed to work. But, he is being hamstrung by anti-tax zealots in his own party.

In the event, I am delighted that the "grand compromise" has been avoided because President Obama, too, got out way in front of his party in suggesting changes to Social Security. The best solution to the budget negotiations is a modest agreement that raises the debt ceiling and cuts some federal spending, and allows the voters to weigh in next year on how they want the government to address its long-term fiscal difficulties. The second a budget deal is inked, Obama needs to work with House and Senate Democrats, and their propsective candidates for Congress, to ensure that they are all running on an agenda that combines tax increases on the wealthy, a streamlined tax code that closes loopholes and lowers rates, and produces only those kinds of changes in Social Security and Medicare that protect tha bond between those highly popular programs and the party that created them and defends them still.

If the GOP does not want compromise, great. This is a time for President Obama to be very clear, to articulate a clear agenda that defends the working class, and to run on it next year.

Let the GOP be left explaining why, after getting the President to agree to extend the Bush tax cuts last December, those tax cuts have not, as the GOP predicted, created a rush of new jobs.

Source URL (retrieved on *06/03/2015 - 18:42*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/boehners-problem

Links:
[1] http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0711/58662.html