



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 18, 2013

## Conservatives Accept Challenge from Obama to “Win an Election”

The president couldn't resist spiking the ball after scoring his “keep the status quo” touchdown earlier this week [in his remarks on Thursday](#):

You don't like a particular policy or a particular president, then argue for your position. Go out there and win an election!



Well that is exactly what [conservative challengers are attempting to do](#) against those who folded in the showdown over the debt ceiling and ObamaCare funding. In Mississippi, Republican Senator Thad Cochran is now facing State Senator Chris McDaniel in the Republican primary. Immediately upon making that announcement, McDaniel began receiving “a flood of support” from various groups eager to unseat Cochran, who is perceived by many to be a RINO.

In South Carolina, Republican Senator Lindsey Graham will face three challengers in his primary, including State Senator Lee Bright, who blasted Graham's support for the debt-ceiling deal: “We didn't get anything ... we surrendered again.”

In Kentucky, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell will be forced to face primary challenger Matt Bevin, a supporter of Texas Senator Ted Cruz. Bevin posted a web video saying:

This shutdown was completely avoidable if we had real leadership in Washington. Instead we have career politicians like Mitch McConnell and Harry Reid who make decisions based on what is political expediency for them — not on principles — and not on what is in the best interest of the American people.

In Tennessee, Republican Senator Lamar Alexander, hardly a favorite among conservatives (in August a coalition of 20 Tea Party and conservative groups sent him a letter asking him to retire), is now being challenged in his primary by two conservative aspirants.

In Wyoming, Republican Senator Mike Enzi will meet Liz Cheney, the eldest daughter of former Vice President Dick Cheney, in the primary. [Cheney has the backing of conservatives](#) in the race while the Republican National Committee is backing Enzi.

The timing looks favorable for conservatives, says even long-time liberal commentator Stuart Rothenberg, who [wrote](#), “If victory is taking over an emasculated, weak, unsuccessful Republican Party, if that is what they think victory is, then maybe they can have victory.”



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Despite the negative post-mortems pouring out of the mainstream media about how the intransigent, unyielding stance taken by Senators Ted Cruz, Mike Lee, and Rand Paul has severely damaged the GOP, there has in fact been little permanent or irreversible damage done, [according to Sean Trende](#), the senior elections analyst for *RealClearPolitics*. After slicing and dicing all the available polls from Gallup, Rasmussen, *The Economist*, Pew, NBC News, Reuters and Fox, Trende concludes that “the idea that [the GOP’s] prospects were seriously damaged is thin.” He noted that the single “most important electoral predictor for midterm elections” is presidential job approval and said:

Obama is nowhere near the type of job approval numbers that he’ll need before we can start talking seriously about Democrats taking back the House....

For now, there’s really not much evidence that Republicans took it on the chin ... electorally speaking.

By the time the midterms ramp up, the current “victory” in Washington will be but a distant memory. What will likely have a much greater impact is ObamaCare, the rolling disaster that the electorate will be more intimately, and painfully, aware of by then. As Senator Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) [explained](#):

Right now, Obamacare, for many Americans, is just a website that doesn’t work. But in a few weeks, in a few months, it’s going to start directly impacting millions and millions of people, costing them their existing coverage, costing them hours at work, moving them from full-time to part-time, costing them the relationship with their doctor.

As that perception becomes reality, more and more Americans may wish that the fight against ObamaCare, just lost, would have been won after all. That will likely work to the advantage of conservatives, Americanists, and Tea Partiers in 2014. Added Rubio:

We [may] have missed a golden opportunity to do something about [Obamacare], but we haven’t given up the fight. The one thing I want people to understand is they should not feel depressed about this or discouraged about the long-term of it.

We are going to prevail on this issue. It’s just a matter of time.

As deliberate as President Obama has been in the past to provoke the Republicans and excoriate their unwillingness to compromise, he may have blundered this time by telling them to “go win an election.”

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