



As the Filibuster Goes, So Goes the GOP

“When the people find that they can vote themselves money, that will herald the end of the republic.”

This was the nightmare of Ben Franklin.

Yet, with passage this spring of a \$4 trillion bailout of an economy facing historic losses because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Nancy Pelosi’s House having voted out another \$3 trillion, we may have reached Franklin’s peril point.

Indeed, if Democrats capture the Senate and win the White House, as many polls now project, it is not easy to see who or what prevents an uncontrolled explosion of fresh spending and a concomitant expansion of federal power.

Consider. In his eulogy to John Lewis at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Barack Obama called on Democrats, if victorious in November, to kill the Senate filibuster, all but calling the filibuster an instrument of systemic racism.

Yet, the filibuster has been and remains one of the distinguishing features of the United States Senate. It allows for extended deliberation by requiring, not 51 but 60 votes, a supermajority, to shut off debate and pass major bills.

If Democrats capture the Senate and abolish the filibuster, the Republican minority in 2021 would be stripped of virtually the only effective weapon in its arsenal to halt, slow, or shape U.S. law.

That is exactly what Obama was urging in his eulogy to Lewis.

“If politicians want to honor John,” said a surprisingly militant Obama, “Let’s honor him by revitalizing the law he was willing to die for ... (And) once we pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Act, we should keep marching.”

“Keep marching”? To where?

Said Obama: “By making sure every American is automatically registered to vote, including former inmates... By adding polling places, and expanding early voting, and making Election Day a national holiday... By guaranteeing that every American citizen has equal representation ... including the American citizens who live in Washington, D.C., and in Puerto Rico.

“If all this takes eliminating the filibuster, another Jim Crow relic ... then that’s what we should do.”

By calling the filibuster “another Jim Crow relic” the ex-president was putting progressives on notice



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that failure to get rid of it would be to collaborate with racists.

After abolishing the filibuster, says Obama, Democrats should ram through statehood for Puerto Rico and D.C., thereby expanding the Senate to 104 members, and adding four new Democratic senators.

That new Senate, says Obama, should enact every law possible to enlarge and expand the electorate, including extending the ballot to ex-convicts.

His eyes open to the potential of a Senate where 51 Democrats can enact a socialist agenda, Sen. Bernie Sanders hastily endorsed Obama's call:

"President Obama is absolutely right. ... Getting rid of the filibuster would enable Democrats to pass a comprehensive agenda to guarantee the rights and dignity of everyone in this country."

This is but the beginning. If Democrats deprive a Republican minority of the filibuster, there would be no one stopping Congress from passing or the president from signing new anti-gun legislation.

The door would be open to legislation putting DACA "dreamers" on a fast track to citizenship, and to granting amnesty to illegal migrants, and to putting the 11 million to 22 million who are already here on the road to citizenship and the ballot box.

With amnesties, open borders bills, a renewal of chain migration, an end to deportations and new restrictions on ICE and the Border Patrol, a Democratic Congress, by opening the gates to millions, could turn traditionally red states such as Arizona, Georgia and Texas as blue as New York, Illinois and California.

As The Wall Street Journal also notes, one of the agenda items of the Biden-Bernie-AOC Democratic Party is the raising of payroll taxes, personal income taxes, corporate taxes, capital gains taxes and estate taxes.

All of these newer and higher tax rates are included in a \$3 trillion package to which Joe Biden has signed on.

If Democrats gain control of Congress and the filibuster is killed, reparations for slavery, the Green New Deal, "Medicare for All" and harsh climate change laws are on the table for Democrats to decide alone, without hearing from the GOP.

In a 2017 public letter, Democrats endorsed the retention of the filibuster, both on principle and because of the unique character of the Senate: "We are steadfastly committed to ensuring that this great American institution continues to serve as the world's greatest deliberative body."

If the filibuster is thrown out, writes the Journal, "The door to radicalism is getting busted wide open, and Americans of both parties may not like what comes out the other side."

Another Ben Franklin quote comes to mind.

"A republic if you can keep it," Franklin told the lady in Philadelphia who had asked what kind of government they had created.

If the filibuster goes, and the Democratic left runs wild in the next two years, will that republic survive the disfiguring surgery?

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