



Rocky and Republicans

Rocky Marciano was the only heavyweight champion who never lost a single fight in his whole career — and, at the time, he seemed the least likely fighter to do that. In many a boxing match, he was battered, bruised and bleeding. One of the reasons Marciano took so much punishment in the ring was that he had shorter arms than most other heavyweights. It was easier for others to hit him than for him to hit them.



In a sense, Republicans today are in a similar position in the political arena. With most of the media heavily tilted toward the Democrats, Republicans are going to get hit far more often than they are going to get in their own punches.

The difference is that Rocky Marciano understood from the beginning that he was going to get hit more often, and prepared himself for that kind of fight. His strategy was to concentrate on developing punches powerful enough to nullify his opponents' greater number of punches.

Republicans take the opposite approach from that of Rocky Marciano — and often with opposite results. That may be why they managed to lose both houses of Congress and the White House in recent years, in a country where there are millions more people who call themselves conservatives than there are who call themselves liberals.

Knowing that they are going to get hit more often in the media, you might think that Republicans would put extra time and effort into developing a knockout message. In reality, however, Republicans seem to invest much less time and thought into getting their political message across than is done by the Democrats.

First of all, Democrats develop words and phrases that they all use, so that the public hears those same words and phrases over and over again, until they sink in. Republicans have nothing to match the Democrats' catch phrases like "social justice" or "tax cuts for the rich."

Back when George W. Bush first emerged on the national political scene in 2000, Democrats said that he lacked "gravitas." The media kept repeating it. People who had never used the word "gravitas" in years were suddenly saying "gravitas" 24/7 on news programs, interview shows and in the newspapers and magazines.

When have you ever known the Republicans to be that coordinated?

Not only do Republicans fail to take the initiative when it comes to political rhetoric, they are not very good at counter-punching when they are hit.

How often have you heard "tax cuts for the rich" from Democrats — without the Republicans saying anything to counter the implication that they are just looking out for a relatively few wealthy people, while millions of other people are losing their jobs and their homes?



Written by [Thomas Sowell](#) on February 15, 2011

The facts are all on the Republicans' side. But, unless someone articulates those facts, they will be like the proverbial tree that falls in an empty forest.

What are called "tax cuts for the rich" have been reductions in high tax rates under four different administrations, including the Democratic administration of John F. Kennedy. In each case, going all the way back to the 1920s, the reduced tax rates have led to increased tax revenues for the government.

"The rich" have ended up paying both a higher total amount of taxes and a larger share of all taxes than they did before what were called "tax cuts for the rich." The reason is very straightforward: high tax rates that people don't actually pay do not bring the government as much revenue as lower tax rates that they do pay.

High tax rates drive investors into tax shelters like tax-exempt bonds or drive their investments out of the country altogether, costing Americans jobs. This is not rocket science — and the data are there to prove it. But somebody has to say it.

Unlike Rocky Marciano, Republicans don't seem to see a need to work on their punches. They are going to need some knockout punches if Barack Obama calls their bluff on raising the national debt limit, and there is a government shutdown that will be blamed on the Republicans. A few light jabs will not save them.

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