

Compromising On Reality



When I was a kid back in the 80s, I looked forward to watching professional wrestling on television every Saturday morning. I liked the action, got a kick out of the personalities, and yes... I believed it was real. But there was one aspect of the programs that always confused me. From time to time, a new, mysterious wrestler would arrive

on the scene – one that came from “parts unknown” as the ring announcer would put it. As he’d walk to the ring, the announcers would comment on how little they knew of the muscle-bound stranger, and then react in astonishment as he pummeled his first opponent to a pulp.

There was only one problem. The wrestler wasn’t “new” at all. In fact, he was the same guy I had seen three weeks earlier on the same television program, just with a different hair style, a different outfit, and a different name. I mean, it was CLEARLY the same wrestler. Yet, the same two announcers that called his match three weeks earlier didn’t seem to recognize him, and the crowd appeared none the wiser. This perplexed me. Why didn’t anyone else remember this guy? Had the world gone insane? Eventually, my little boy mind accepted it and I moved on.

Now, one would think that such a blatant, absurd example of repackaging an individual could only be successful when presented to impressionable, young fans of choreographed warfare. Sadly this isn’t the case.

The 2012 presidential campaign has begun, and standing in this corner is Barack “The Compromiser” Obama.

Despite his dropping approval numbers, the Obama campaign believes they won the public perception battle over the recent debt ceiling hike, and they might be right. Polls did show that the electorate was not at all happy with the process they saw play out on television, and blame the Republicans in congress more than they blame President Obama. How did the president pull this off? He successfully portrayed himself as the adult in the room, willing to compromise his beliefs for the good of the country. Like any tainted victory, he had a little help from "outside interference", aka the news media who can always be counted on to run to the aid of their champion.

With no economic record for Obama to stand on in a campaign that is all about the economy, creativity is required to convince voters that he deserves four more years. We've seen that creativity play out in recent weeks. Suddenly, the man who spearheaded his unpopular, unread health care bill down Americans' throats without any Republican input or support is now blasting congress for an unwillingness to compromise. The man who demagogued Congressman Paul Ryan's entitlement-reform legislation is now calling on congress to put forth entitlement-reform legislation. The man who blew up our national debt on a failed stimulus is now lecturing us on fiscal discipline.

In the real world, such gall would be identified and challenged. In the world of politics, however, perception is reality and the media is the conjurer of perception. The commentators we see in the news media are often no different than those commentators sitting ringside every Saturday morning. They just dress better. They not only substantiate their champion's narratives but actively promote them. Historical context is ignored, the new persona is solidified, and casual viewers are none the wiser.

I actually think Barack "The Compromiser" Obama could be a winning character, possibly a main-eventer. He looks the part,

he plays the part well, and he doesn't have to answer for anything he did three weeks ago. And the best thing about it: If it doesn't work out between now and the election, there's plenty of other characters to choose from.

The Blame Game

✘ I'm a simple woman. I don't like complications. I don't always understand all the nuances. I'm not diplomatic. Maybe that's why I write columns under the heading, "I Don't Get It."

At the eleventh hour before a threatened government shutdown, an agreement was finally reached on the budget but not without a whole lot of drama.

While I watched all the posturing and maneuvering and chest beating in Washington these past few days regarding the budget, all I did was shake my head in disbelief.

I heard a lot about compromise which always reminds me of the words of an old friend and sage who told me, "when you compromise, you have two unhappy people; when you don't compromise, you have one unhappy person and one happy person. Which is better?" Well, that type of attitude may not make for a lasting marriage or solve all the problems in Washington D.C., but whenever I hear the word "compromise," I always pause.

I can't fault anyone with conviction as opposed to someone who has no core beliefs. I heard a lot of Democrats talk about the refusal of newly-elected Tea Party representatives to give a little on some issues. Well, I didn't see much willingness on the part of the Dems to compromise when the Republicans

were literally locked out of conference rooms when the 2,000+ page monster known as "Obamacare" was being brought to life.

There was also a lot of finger pointing and much wailing and gnashing of teeth at the thought of de-funding the likes of Planned Parenthood. Although some would have us believe PP is as important as our national defense, it isn't part of our life line and is not vital to our very existence, particularly when we just don't have any more money for discretionary spending. I don't know how PP got funded in the first place because I don't know where in the Constitution there's authority to fund this type of "public charities," but, unfortunately, the taxpayers are still going to fund this abortion mill.

In the end, what I'm really not getting is why there was so much blame pointed at Speaker John Boehner and the Republican-majority House.

Doesn't everyone know that the budget in contention was for the fiscal year **October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011**? Doesn't everyone realize that the Democrats, who controlled both chambers of Congress, had all of 2010 to come up with a viable budget which, of course, would have easily had the imprimatur of President Obama? He and Congress could've budgeted billions of dollars for all their useless pet projects, earmarks and further expansion of government. So, why didn't they?

Rep. Charlie Rangel told Bill O'Reilly the other night they had other things to deal with and never got around to it last year. That's a convenient answer but I'm not buying it.

The failure (or unwillingness) of the Democratic-controlled Congress to pass a budget last year was strategic. By putting the budget on the back burner, they were hoping that the taxpayers wouldn't remember they were a bunch of tax and spend loons ready to spend another gazillion dollars they didn't

have – but they didn't fool us. That's why so many were booted out in November.

So, instead of pointing a whole lot of fingers at everyone else, the blame for all the last minute chaos rests upon the Democrats in Congress because they refused to do what they should've done this time last year.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.