

Tribal Anger Toward John McCain's Parting Words



According to reports over the weekend, Senator John McCain, who continues to go through brain cancer treatment, has been meeting with a number of longtime friends at his ranch in Arizona. The conversations have included reflections on McCain's life, legacy and concerns for America's future.

Some of the senator's feelings have made headlines, including the fact that he doesn't want President Trump to attend his funeral service. Instead, Vice President Pence has been asked to represent the White House, and former U.S. presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush are slated to deliver the eulogy.

Another disclosure (as referenced in an upcoming memoir and documentary) was that McCain regrets asking Sarah Palin to be his running mate in the 2008 presidential election. Instead, he wishes he would have selected longtime friend Joe Lieberman (who was a Democratic senator at the time).

Neither of these revelations should have been particularly surprising or controversial.

There's been bad blood between McCain and Trump ever since Trump infamously mocked McCain in 2015 for being captured by the enemy (and later held and tortured for over five years) while serving our military during the Vietnam War. McCain has made no bones about his belief that Trump is a person of very low character, and that he's unfit for the presidency.

As for Palin, her selection as McCain's vice presidential nominee was largely seen at the time as a Hail Mary political move, in an election year that heavily favored the Democratic nominee. Republican strategists hoped Palin would appeal to women voters (who'd been let down by Hillary Clinton's Democratic primary loss) and conservatives (who were skeptical of McCain). McCain has long been complimentary and gracious when it comes to Palin, but it's no shocker that he would have preferred a different running mate in his ultimately unsuccessful bid.

Yet, the airing of these sentiments has compelled some notable voices on the Right to say some downright nasty things about the ailing Arizona Senator. One of those people is Charlie Kirk, who tweeted this response to a headline citing McCain's exclusion of President Trump from his funeral service:

But he wants Obama there

That tells you everything you need to know about McCain
<https://t.co/fJ6FEEDy4z>

– Charlie Kirk (@charliekirk11) May 6, 2018

Kirk isn't a household name, but he's been a *rising star* in conservative circles over the past few years. In 2012, Kirk (who's now in his mid twenties) founded the activist organization *Turning Point USA*, whose stated purpose is to

“identify, educate, train, and organize students to promote the principles of fiscal responsibility, free markets, and limited government.”

The organization is active on university campuses, where Kirk does a number of speaking engagements (when he’s not appearing at other political conferences). Kirk is also very active on social media, where he routinely tweets recycled conservative memes, slams on liberals and liberalism, and defenses of President Trump.

And apparently, in Kirk’s mind, McCain’s decisions for his own funeral warranted an ugly, Trump-style retort.

It should go without saying that judging the life and legacy of an American hero like John McCain, by whether or not his funeral is sufficiently partisan, is mind-numbingly idiotic and disgusting. Still, some were up for the task in their apt responses to Kirk:

This tweet tells you everything you need to know about Charlie Kirk. <https://t.co/orCoa9v7HZ>

– MiaMarie (@WahcaMia) May 7, 2018

John McCain doesn’t owe Donald Trump a goddamn thing. <https://t.co/bSYtEmigh5>

– Stephen Miller (@redsteeze) May 7, 2018

John McCain is an American hero. You’re Charlie Kirk. <https://t.co/Nhe3qMJRvF>

– Carl Prine (@CarlPrinetweets) May 7, 2018

Here’s further proof that Kirk and his TPUSA are a terrible

*influence on young conservatives or right-of-center individuals writ large. Tweet pithy lines, scream about how the left hates America, and be TV famous = \$\$?
And it's sad. He doesn't know a thing about honor and dignity
<https://t.co/yOzKrIrsWK>*

– Curtis Houck (@CurtisHouck) May 7, 2018

For others on the Right, it was McCain's words on Palin that had crossed the line:

A little class would go along way. To say something like this now is truly mean. <https://t.co/mahZWpu4ac>

– Mark R. Levin (@marklevinshow) May 7, 2018

The ONLY thing John McCain should regret in hindsight is seeking the GOP nomination PERIOD. Thanks McCain. Your spiteful vote gave us OBAMACARE. <https://t.co/a7vGV0iMNx>

– David A. Clarke, Jr. (@SheriffClarke) May 6, 2018

Again, McCain's thoughts on Palin (at least those that have been released to the public) have not come in the form of insults. In fact, he has continued to defend her performance as his running mate. His expressed misgivings were in the context of him believing that Lieberman would have been a better choice, a statement that Lieberman was reportedly quite touched by.

Still, some interpreted what McCain had said as a capital offense:

*Sen. McCain, Just Shut Up and Die With Some Class!
@realDonaldTrump @michellemalkin @IngrahamAngle @seanhannity
@marklevinshow @larryelder @MonicaCrowley*

<https://t.co/nLAzeVh8Iw>

– Larry Klayman (@LarryEKlayman) May 6, 2018

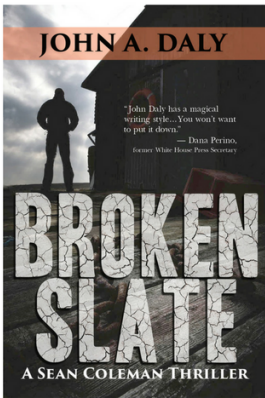
Larry Klayman is the founder of *Freedom Watch* and *Judicial Watch*. He is also a former U.S. Justice Department prosecutor who has had a big voice within the GOP for years. And because McCain said that he wishes he would have chosen Lieberman over Palin, Klayman wishes the senator would just “shut up and die”. Furthermore, he tagged the Twitter accounts of Trump-friendly pundits who he believed might actually be receptive to his statement.

I’ve always understood people’s political frustrations with John McCain. I’ve had several myself. But this kind of stuff is downright sick. A man who has served this country in a way that few of us could even fathom (let alone endure) deserves respect as he battles for his life.

If you view the airing of McCain’s likely final wishes and misgivings as just another opportunity to lay in some rib-kicks on the man, it’s probably time to take a break from cable-news and the Internet, and engage in a little self-assessment.

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