

“Real” Conservatives on a Suicide Mission

☒ Here’s how I come to my political opinions these days: I listen very carefully to what Eric Bolling says about a particular issue from his perch at Fox News. And then I take the opposite position.

Bolling is one of those true-blue conservatives who believes the words “moderate Republicans” are nothing more than a nice way of saying “no backbone weasel good-for-nothing Republicans.” He’s not alone, of course. Conservatives on talk radio think the only reason Democrats win the White House is because the GOP puts up moderates who turn off the base.

They want a “real” take-no-prisoners conservative to run next time. Deep down, they keep hoping that Ronald Reagan will rise from the dead and hit the campaign trail in 2016 and beat Hillary. What these hard right pundits never seem to understand is that Ronald Reagan was the *only* conservative to win the White House in the last 80 years. If being a “real” conservative is so popular, you’d think Reagan wouldn’t be the only one who became president.

But while conservatives in the media do have *some* clout, they don’t get to actually vote on bills in Congress and pass laws. This is where another “real” true blue conservative comes in.

Ted Cruz is the rookie U.S. senator from Texas who if he worked at Fox News would be Eric Bolling. Like Bolling, Cruz is on a mission. He wants Republicans to stand up for their conservative principles – and he’ll worry about the consequences later. In Mr. Cruz’s world, charging over the hill and running into the enemy’s bayonets is a noble thing to do. Like Bolling, Cruz has no time for those wishy-washy

moderates. But unlike Bolling and other conservatives in the media, Ted Cruz can do some *real* harm.

Cruz is the one leading the drive to de-fund ObamaCare. That would be great if he could succeed. But he can't. Cruz had a plan. He would go on TV and make speeches in order to drum up grass roots support across America that would once and for all put a stake through the heart of ObamaCare. But the grass roots – even though they don't like ObamaCare – never got passionate about de-funding it.

That didn't stop Cruz who like most zealots won't change course, no matter what.

So we don't get too deep into the weeds, here's a brief summary of what's going on: The House passed a bill that would de-fund ObamaCare but keep the rest of the government running. The bill has gone to the Senate where it has absolutely no chance of passing – or even being considered. Harry Reid, the Democratic Senate leader, will send the bill back to the House, absent the de-funding language, and then House Republicans will do ... who knows what?

I get the impression that Senator Cruz thinks if all this leads to a government shutdown President Obama and the Democrats will be blamed. After all, the thinking goes, Republicans don't want a government shutdown; they only want to shut down the Affordable Care Act. By refusing to go along, it's the Democrats who would really be shutting down government, if it comes to that.

It'll never play out that way. First, President Obama has the bully pulpit. He will blame Republicans for a shutdown and he'll get away with it, mainly because Mr. Obama's loyalists in the media will make it a story about GOP intransigence. ObamaCare is the law of the land, they will say, and Republicans, behaving like spoiled brats who detest this president (probably because he's black), are incapable of

accepting that. And if there is a government shutdown, expect lots of sad stories in the media about how our national parks are closed to the public and how veterans who lost their legs fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan can't get their medical benefits. On top of that, a majority of Americans still like the president personally – and pretty much don't like the Republicans, who they see as the party that's always saying no. They may agree with Ted Cruz that ObamaCare is a bad law. But they don't like him. That matters.

I wouldn't be surprised if the president secretly hopes all of this actually does lead to a government shutdown. It's his best chance, after all, of winning the House in 2014 – the House being the only thing standing in the way of the president passing a lot more of what's on his liberal wish list than he can now get away with. And if things go south for the GOP, we can thank Mr. Cruz and all the other "real" conservatives for that. Standing up for your principles is one thing. Committing political suicide is something else altogether.