'Immigration and the 2008 Republican Defeat:' A Postscript

BY MARCUS EPSTEIN

When I wrote my report, "Immigration and the 2008 Republican Defeat," I expected some criticism, but I was not prepared for hysterical attacks from major newspapers. The *New York Times* dedicated their lead Sunday editorial, "The Nativists are Restless," and a following online editorial to denouncing the report and the press conference where it was released, though they did not attend. "More notable than the report itself," though, is the fact that I am a "white supremacist." For what it's worth, I'm half Asian and half Jewish.

The editorial managed to squeeze in smears against Pat Buchanan, Bay Buchanan, J.D. Hayworth, Peter Brimelow, Jim Pinkerton, Lou Barletta, and Bill O'Reilly with terms like "racist," "nativist," "xenophobes," "extremist," and "fringe right-wingers." Good company, I suppose.

Then the *New York Daily News* ran an op-ed by Delores Prida, "Assimilate This," that also attacked my report. Ms. Prida implied it was "Hate Speech" and definitely "ignorant speech."

So what did I write to warrant such strong denunciations? Ms. Prida did not talk about the contents of the report except to claim that I wrote that white voters are "more important" than Hispanic voters. Perhaps to fill out space, she used that quote twice.

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Had she actually read the report, she would see that I said no such thing. In fact the word "important" does not even appear in it, and the word "White" is only used when referring to someone's last name. When I wrote about voting patterns in the past, I responded to the Republican panderers, by noting that "a white vote is just as important as a Hispanic vote." The *New York Daily News* eventually issued a retraction.

Marcus Epstein answers questions from the audience during the release of the "Immigration and the 2008 Republican Defeat" report at the National Press Club, January 29, 2009.

The *New York Times* dismissed my report as "nonsense" because it failed to take into account that "'anti-amnesty' hard-liners consistently lost to candidates who proposed comprehensive reform solutions."

Yet the purpose of the report was to demonstrate that this did not happen. I looked at every race where the Republicans lost a seat—both defeated incumbents and open seats—and simply noted the stated positions of both candidates.

Some of the losing Republicans that pro-immigration groups touted as "hardliners" include Christopher Shays and Randy Kuhl, who both received F- grades on amnesty from the immigration control group Numbers USA.

In other cases, many Democrats claimed to be tough on immigration. For example, North Carolina's Larry Kissel said his immigration stance was "more conservative than that of [Republican incumbent Robin] Hayes."

In all 26 losses, Steve Chabot was the only anti-amnesty Republican who lost to an advocate of "comprehensive immigration reform." But even his opponent qualified his support of a "broad" immigration policy by insisting that he "does not support amnesty for illegal immigrants" and wanted to make English the official language of the Ohio and the nation.

The *New York Times* did not address these points but instead pointed to two "single-issue xenophobes"—Lou Barletta and J.D. Hayworth—who they said failed by attacking illegal immigration as examples.

Hayworth's opponent Harry Mitchell's platform stated plainly "I oppose amnesty" and called for extending the border fence.

Barletta's opponent Paul Kanjorski posted an article on his website stating, "Kanjorski, Barletta see immigration similarly."

The *New York Times* ignored another key point about Barletta's race. As mayor of Hazleton, PA he gained national exposure by instituting a tough local ordinance to curb illegal immigration. He became so popular that he won the town's Republican primary with 94 percent and the Democratic primary as a write-in candidate with over 63 percent of the vote.

Hazleton, PA Mayor Lou Barletta addressed the American Cause conference on "Building a New Majority," June 20, 2009. Barletta "became so popular that he won the town's Republican primary with 94 percent and the Democratic primary as a write-in candidate with over 63 percent of the vote."

Hazleton and Pennsylvania's 11th district are overwhelmingly Democratic. Kanjorski faced no Republican challenger in 2004, and won in 2006 with 72.5 percent of the vote. That a small town mayor with 23,000 constituents came within a few points of unseating an 11-term incumbent in this electoral climate proves that border control is still a winning issue for Republicans.

The bait and switch at play is obvious. Democrats will claim that they are just as tough on immigration as their opponent when challenged from the Right. If they manage to fool the electorate, then the open borders advocates will suddenly claim that their victory is a mandate for amnesty.

The purpose of the attacks on me and other opponents of immigration control is to silence and marginalize opponents of illegal immigration through ad hominem smears. The *New York Times* and *New York Daily News* are not interested in an honest debate about the issue, and they definitely are not interested in helping Republicans win elections. ■