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In Case You Missed It

Abq. Journal Op-Ed by GOP Chairman Yates: Push N.M. Dems Back From Movable Feast

Albuquerque, NM—The following op-ed was written by GOP Chairman Harvey Yates Jr. and published in Saturday's edition of the Albuquerque Journal. You can read this op-ed online at: http://www.abqjournal.com/opinion/guest_columns/0921112opinion01-09-10.htm

Push N.M. Dems Back From Movable Feast

Albuquerque Journal guest op-ed
by Harvey Yates Jr.
Chairman, Republican Party of New Mexico

In July I suggested that Democrats in this state, at this time, are not constituted to clean up the state. (Albuquerque Journal, July 5, 2009)

That the state needs to be cleaned up should be a question in no one's mind. Are there Democrats in the state who are good, honest, intelligent folks? Yes, and several of them are my good friends.

The problem is that the Democratic Party, having been in power here for more than 70 years, seems to have gone through a reverse winnowing process which, somehow, has resulted in throwing out the wheat and keeping the chaff as the party's elite power brokers.

A significant portion of the individuals who constitute the Democratic Party's power structure, and upon whom a winning Democrat gubernatorial candidate would have to depend, seem to regard state government as a movable feast upon which they, or their friends, can gorge as if state resources are their personal property.

While not all of these power Democrats eat at the table of corruption, too few of those who do not have been willing to step in and stop the others.

Who recently has eaten at the table? Proven diners are two former state treasurers, one former deputy superintendent of insurance, and one former president Senate pro-tem. But, this is obviously the short list.

Let's now add Saul Meyer of Aldus Equity who pleaded guilty in New York and testified that his company had made investment recommendations to our state government that were "pushed on him by politically connected individuals" who stood to benefit financially or politically from the investments.

If we add all of those now under indictment or investigation, such as a former secretary of state, the space allotted to this article would be taken. But it must be clear that problem goes up through the Democrat power structure as is evidenced by this statement from the August letter written by the U.S. attorney: "The investigation further revealed that pressure from the Governor's Office resulted in the corruption of the procurement process so that CDR [a politically connected investment company] would be awarded the work."

The culture of the Democratic Party in this state must change. No longer must control of state government be regarded as an invitation to a feast which moves from department to department and agency to agency. But how can the culture be changed except through the cleansing fire of defeat brought on the party by disapproving voters?

Can change in the Democratic party be forced from within?

Perhaps, but the difficulty of that approach is evidenced by the fact that almost all of the corruption convictions in the state have come via the U.S. Attorney's Office, not by the very long string of Democratic state attorneys general. And, consider further that guilty pleas of the last two months involving New Mexico shenanigans have come as a result of the efforts of a Democratic attorney general from outside the state, not from New Mexico. Why?

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