

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: H <hrod17@clintonemail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 5:10 AM
To: 'Russov@state.gov'
Subject: Fw: my piece in the Washington Post:

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From: Burns Strider [mailto:]
Sent: Thursday, September 06, 2012 12:21 AM
To: H; 'Minyon Moore' <]
Subject: my piece in the Washington Post:

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http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/guest-voices/post/faithfully-democratic/2012/09/05/dccb2a02-f7d2-11e1-8398-0327ab83ab91_blog.html

Posted at 11:53 PM ET, 09/05/2012
 TheWashingtonPost

Faithfully Democratic
By Burns Strider

The Democratic National Convention is what one would expect – loud, passionate, diverse and uplifting. This one is also humid and wet. The remnants of Hurricane Isaac have the air sticky and heavy like a New Orleans night; a metaphor, perhaps, to this election and the discomfort Americans feel as they watch the paralyzing disdain and distrust the two major parties hold for one another.

Politics can be inspiring, or at least should be. And this convention has indeed inspired whether by showcasing a first lady who powerfully reminded us that compassion and care are the bedrock of the American dream. The words of mayors, governors and former presidents also exemplified the strength of conviction and the power of living what they preach.

I'm a Democrat motivated to action by my faith. This convention has been robust with opportunities for the faithful to join in reflection and worship as well as meet, coordinate and plan how we best share our testimonies with other people of faith around the nation.

I believe the party's platform, our basic principles for the next four years, has the most bold and unwrapped section on faith and our support of resources for faith-based programs and projects than any platform of any party

In fact, the platform is telling. Republicans were anxious to attack Democrats for having a platform that didn't specifically mention the word "God," which, by the way, was amended, by acclamation, to include the word "God."

Regardless, Fox News has been showcasing graphs that tally up the number of times Democrats and Republicans have written "God" over the years in their platforms, almost like a baseball game score.

I'm not into word counts. And, neither are Americans. We all know that we are known by the results of our labor. If some want to sit around and count words while Democrats build a platform that empowers people of faith so be it. The power of living what we preach is on display at this convention.

Values over process. Results over the superficial. Heart over strategy. Examples lived from the Word, not the example of a word.

Jena Lee Nardella closed the first night's proceedings with prayer. Nardella is a young evangelical Christian who helped found Blood: Water Mission, which works to end HIV/AIDS in Africa as well as provide clean drinking water. She is a powerful example of a new energy and strength of conviction within evangelicalism. In her prayer, from the dais the hall, she prayed for both President Obama and Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney as the delegates bowed in silence.

Former Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland, a Methodist with a master's in divinity from Asbury, spoke about the "dignity of a good job and a good salary." He reminded us that effort and hard work, along with a helping hand, has created the great American middle class.

Earlier in the evening, San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro said, "The American dream isn't a sprint or even a race, it's a relay." The young leader emphasized the democratic and American value that we are in it together, we stand united, working for the common good.

A healthy tension that exists in America is finding just the right degree of individualism and community. Our politics, be it over economics, social issues or the basic meaning of America, often comes down to this duality of thought. It's been with us since the beginning of our democracy.

There is no permanent answer. There is only a permanent debate.

It must be civil or we get lost in name calling and word counting. And, we all, both sides, certainly must affirm the need for both a passion for individual freedom and rights and pathways to opportunity as well as the community of Americans that supports and holds and serves one another, lending a helping hand.

This is what we see played out in the application of faith into politics, including the drama of the party conventions. And, much more is taking place than only what is seen on television. Off the big stage, meetings and panels are taking place. Old and young clergy as well as young faith activists are seeking a voice and many of us with a voice convene to listen to one another.

The Democratic Faith Council sponsored panel discussions to packed rooms with panelists who are Baptists, Mormon, Jewish, Catholic and the entire, diverse bandwidth of the American religious tradition. We discussed our role in sharing the narrative of our party. We discussed the power of our collective efforts as the voice who tells the story, the story of values and faith of the Democratic Party.

The story this week is about a political party that lives what it preaches, about allowing the fruits of our labor define us, not the word counters, and embracing the values of the common good, where we make sure our God given talents and dreams exists in a land flowing with opportunity.

Burns Strider is the principal and founder of Eleison and president of the American Values Network. He is former senior advisor and head of faith outreach for Hillary Clinton and former senior advisor to House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi.

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