43rd KZGN News Talking Points Editorial

What did you think of the blame game in Washington yesterday?

This is an editorial I once said that I would never get into. However, after the big news item a couple days ago, I just have to weigh in. I’m referring to the train crash in Philadelphia, where the Amtrak train derailed. Many were killed, and a lot more were injured. Turns out the train went into an area that had a 50 mph speed limit, doing 106 mph. What got me was how politicians in Washington started reacting to the crash. Some were already starting the political blame game before the rescue effort was even done. There were still people being rescued, and Democrats were blaming the Republicans for not funding necessary infrastructure improvements for the country. Are you kidding me? We just went through 6 years of the Democrat-controlled Senate, who never once passed a complete budget, as required by law. The government was funded for 6 years piecemeal by extensions or single line appropriations, never a whole budget at one time. Now they have the audacity to blame Republicans for funding problems, which have only had congressional control for 6 months. There’s someone calling the kettle black. The blame game is alive and well. Even today, I hear some Democrats still blaming President Bush for things, over 6 years into President Obama’s term. Boy, Bush was one powerful president. This is political lunacy at its worst. Even the mayor of New York jumped on the bandwagon of blaming the Republicans. I’ll be the first to agree that there are problems in Washington. I believe it was Obama’s former chief of staff Rob Immanuel that said, never let a catastrophe go untouched by politics, or something like that. I can’t remember his exact words.

To me, it would seem appropriate that politicians should stay out of a catastrophe, At least until all the potential victims have been recovered. The news this morning was even saying there are still unaccounted for people involved in this accident. Can’t these politicians even wait until there is something known concerning the facts of the accident? Are politics more important than common decency? Can’t they respect the people that are having their lives ripped apart by the catastrophe? Before someone starts beating me up for criticizing the Democrats, let me be clear. If it were republicans pilling on political rhetoric at this time, I’d say the same thing. Knock off the political blame game. For every charge against a Democrat, the Democrat can level a similar charge against the Republican. As far as this accident funding issue they claim, it points to funding for the emergency GPS tracking system for trains. The system is programed for the route the train travels, and automatically controls the speed of the train in accordance to its position on the programed route. It is designed to control the train and prevent it from exceeding speed limits.

In the happenstance of this accident, the automated system, if the train had been equipped with the system, would have slowed the train down from 106 mph to the proper speed.

Now the funding issue. It’s being reported that the congress did approve funding for this system upgrade for the Amtrak trains about 6 months ago. It just has not been installed into all the trains yet. Including the engine involved in this accident, but it is on the list for the installation. It will take quite a while to equip all the trains with the GPS tracking system.

So, what caused the accident? Seems the train engineer was just going too fast. Why? We don’t know. The engineer has lawyered up and isn’t talking. No surprise there. But the politicians sure are talking. But on the other hand, if these walking boxes of hot air were respectful of the victims and not talking, I might not have had anything to write about today.

In conclusion, come on Washington politicians. Let’s turn down the rhetoric. Let’s be civil. Let’s respect the people being affected by tragedy. Why bring politics into a bad situation? Respect those people you serve. Did you hear me? I said: respect the people you serve.

I’m Tom wiknich, and that’s what i think. I’d like to know what you think. If you have any comments about this editorial, or would like to discuss or recommend a topic, I’d like to hear from you. Please email them to info@kzgn.net.