

“Our Agenda Was Common Sense”

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The Republican Party doesn't need to bury the corpse. Its victim has been assimilated, like the Borg did with alien peoples in the Star Trek universe, or maybe it was just soaked up as if the GOP were a giant fungus amongus.

So, what's dead? The Tea Party, which was killed by partisanship, says Matt Kibbe, President and Chief Community Organizer at Free the People. He admits that the

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movement's obituary has been written many times, but, he argues, “this time is different. Republicans, now controlling both the legislative and executive branches, jammed through a ‘CRomnibus’ spending bill that strips any last vestiges of spending restraint from the budget process.”

Kibbe identifies the Tea Party's central theme simply: “Our agenda was common sense: We



demand that Washington politicians stop spending our money like it was theirs, and keep out of our health care. But in Washington, common sense is often seen as radical.”

This, he insists, was not a partisan movement.

But only Republicans played to it. Kibbe calls Sarah Palin a “political huckster” who “helped hijack our purpose,” and fingers Mitt Romney as the man who scuttled Tea Party “political momentum” in 2012. “And then Donald Trump split the Tea Party right down the middle, and that was the end.”

Nail in the coffin? The recent budget deal.

Kibbe signs the autopsy, but assures us: “American principles of individual freedom, fiscal responsibility, and constitutionally limited government, are all still very much alive.”

I sure hope so. But it takes more than a handful of Freedom Caucus members on Capitol Hill to realize it in practice.

Like a new citizen movement.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.