

James Nikora: To conservatives, politics is blood sport, and they are playing to win

James Nikora | Posted: Wednesday, February 23, 2011 5:55 am

Dear Editor: The Citizens United case, settled to the benefit of conservatives, was the proverbial left hook in what may be the final round of the political prize fight. Scott Walker's part in this national crusade to decertify the public employees' labor unions may be the right cross that knocks the progressive movement flat. Is it a coincidence that one of the major benefactors of the Citizens United case was David Koch who is also a major supporter of the Cato Institute -- an ultra conservative think tank -- the organizer of an annual meeting of conservative billionaires to map their strategy to influence politics, and significant contributor to Walker's campaign? Could it be a coincidence that both Clarence Thomas and Antonin Scalia who as Supreme Court Justices supported the decision, also attended last year's Koch meeting?

If Walker and the other eight or nine governors succeed, it may well change the entire nature of our system of government. Unions have lost influence in this country steadily since Ronald Reagan brought union busting into conservative vogue. Reagan also popularized the hatred of government. And, now we have the perfect storm -- we can act out our hatred of government by busting public employees' unions. Last year, unions ranked seventh or eighth in spending on political campaigns behind corporations. If they are broken, all the money will come from the corporations. And, with lower voter turn out, conservatives will win.

But liberals don't get it. They think politics is a gentleman's sport. They talk of peace and the environment, bipartisanship and compromise, civil rights, human rights, minority rights, social justice and equality -- they are trying to be their brother's keeper, in effect. The conservatives understand that it is blood sport. They are interested only in money and power. They see liberals as their mortal enemy. They march in lock step and will stop at nothing to win. They know that there are no rules in a fight to the death.

Unless liberals wake up and take off their gloves, we will likely have a one-party system within a generation.

James Nikora

Madison