



'Bipartisan' Christie shows true colors to right-wing think tank Cato Institute

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BY JOSHUA HENNE

COMMENTARY

On Friday, Governor Chris Christie once again jetted off to speak to a fawning out-of-state audience in his incessant quest to bolster talk about being a potential vice-presidential pick. This time it was at an awards banquet in Washington, D.C. sponsored by The Cato Institute – a right-wing think tank.

The next time Christie tries to tell someone he is bipartisan and there is room on the big boulevard of ideas in New Jersey, just remember these words from his speech:

"I could sit down and negotiate with the Democratic leadership and the Democratically controlled legislature to try to come to an agreement on these cuts, or, thanks to New Jersey's unique Constitutional structure, cut spending through executive order. Now, for those of you who watched me over the past two and a half years, if you believe I chose the former, then it is now time for you to leave. You are not smart enough to be here at the Milton Friedman Dinner." – Governor Chris Christie (5/4/2012)

In Christie's world, bipartisanship means others simply acquiescing to his desires both politically and policy-wise. The Christie definition of bipartisanship is dictating the policies and getting Democrats to vote for them. This is a stale retread of the "my way or the highway approach," rather than his lip service of meeting others on the boulevard of ideas.

Here is just a small sampling of Christie's "bipartisan" leadership:

- Demanding income tax cuts that overwhelmingly benefit the super-wealthy, rather than more equitable property tax cuts that help middle-class families
- Saying he had better things to do – like re-arrange his sock drawer – than debate a Democrat over New Jersey’s tax plans
- Refusing to even contemplate a millionaire’s tax
- Line-item-vetoing women’s health funding – which traditionally has bipartisan support in New Jersey
- Pushing an ALEC-approved raft of policy proposals
- Rolling back decades of environmental protections via the DEP Waiver Rules
- Pulling New Jersey out of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)
- Cancelling the long bipartisan-supported ARC Tunnel linking New Jersey to Manhattan
- Waging war on an independent judiciary
- Degrading defiant Democrats with name-calling – such as “jerk”, “numbnuts” and “liar”

** One more note from the Cato Institute speech that shows how Governor Christie plays fast and loose with the facts is when Bergen Record columnist Herb Jackson noted: “Christie stressed the importance of being honest with the public, but he also used exaggerated figures to make the deficits he closed and the tax cuts he’s enacted and proposed seem larger. For example, he cited the multiyear value of tax cuts.”

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