



US NUCLEAR ENERGY FOUNDATION

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Harry Reid and the Horse He Rode in On

Trump should revive the nuclear repository at Yucca Mt. in Nevada.

Nov. 14, 2016

Editorial Page Editor Paul Gigot on national protest and inflammatory rhetoric from Democratic Party leaders like Harry Reid. File Photo:

Harry Reid has done as much as anyone to pave the way for Donald Trump’s victory by promoting Washington dysfunction, so it’s no surprise that he has reacted to the election result by proving the point one more time.

The soon-to-be-former Democratic Senate leader issued a statement Friday that

showed his contempt for anyone who voted for Mr. Trump. “I have personally been on the ballot in Nevada for 26 elections and I have never seen anything like the reaction to the election completed last Tuesday. The election of Donald Trump has emboldened the forces of hate and bigotry in America,” he said.



“White nationalists, Vladimir Putin and ISIS are celebrating Donald Trump’s victory, while innocent, law-abiding Americans are wracked with fear—especially African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Muslim Americans, LGBT Americans and Asian Americans.

Watching white nationalists celebrate while innocent Americans cry tears of fear does not feel like America.”

Crazy Harry went downhill from there, and Democratic Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia was appalled enough to issue a public rebuke: “Senator Harry Reid’s statement today attacking President-elect Trump is wrong! It is an absolute embarrassment to the Senate as an institution, our Democratic party, and the nation. I want to be very clear, he does not speak for me.

“As difficult as it is for anyone to lose an election, the American people have spoken and Donald Trump is our President-elect. Senator Reid’s words needlessly feed the very divisiveness that is tearing this country apart. Now, more than ever, it is time for us all to come together as Americans.”

Mr. Reid will be gone with the current Congress but Republicans may miss him considering all he has done to help them. By killing the filibuster for nominees, he has made it easier for Mr. Trump to get his nominees confirmed and fill Antonin Scalia’s seat on the Supreme Court. By stretching the rules for budget reconciliation, he has set a precedent for Republicans to repeal much of ObamaCare by ducking a filibuster.

And by blocking vote after vote as Senate Majority Leader, Mr. Reid made it impossible for Democrats in swing states to differentiate themselves from President Obama and paved the way for a GOP Senate in 2014. A Republican Congress can now go far to repealing much of Mr. Obama’s legacy.

Oh, and we hope the Trump Administration takes another look at the nuclear-waste repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada. In an under-reported political bargain, Mr. Reid promised Mr. Obama that he would do the President’s dirty work on Capitol Hill if the President blocked the Yucca project. Mr. Obama named Reid aide Gregory Jaczko as chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in 2009, and a year later Mr. Jaczko shut it down.

Mr. Jaczko later resigned after the four other commissioners, Democrat and Republican, denounced his abusive management style. A pair of D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals rulings have since rebuked the Administration for violating the law in relation to Yucca, and in 2014 a government study found that the Yucca design for waste is environmentally safe. The U.S. still needs a solution for nuclear waste that is piling up at sites around the country.

Mr. Trump owes no political debt to Nevada, which due to Mr. Reid’s efforts voted last week for Hillary Clinton and defeated the GOP’s Senate candidate. Reviving Yucca would be a sign the Senate is moving past Mr. Reid’s era of dishonest political manipulation and partisan rancor.