

SOME ASTUTE POLITICAL OBSERVATIONS FROM YOUR RESIDENT GENIUS

And now, some astute political observations from the genius who predicted four years ago that Gov. Roy Barnes would win a second term in a landslide. Please have your pencil and paper ready. I don't do this often because it makes my brain hurt.

Astute political observation #1: There is a possibility that Republicans will lose their majority in the U.S. House of Representatives come November. If they do, it will prove once again that the people are still in charge. Everybody holding political office or wanting to should read "The House: The History of the House of Representatives" by Robert Remini, official historian of that body. Since the U.S. House first met in 1789, the group in power begins to act like they are elected for life and loses touch with the voters. The electorate then throws them out and brings in a new bunch, and the same thing happens to them and they get tossed. This phenomenon is as predictable as the tides at St. Simons, but politicians don't seem to get the message until it's too late. If you will recall, we booted the Democrats in 1994, and now it is the Republicans who are scrambling for their political lives. ...

Astute political observation #2: Sometimes I think political consultants have the brains of a sand gnat. Gov. Sonny Perdue's campaign was running some very nice ads featuring First Lady Mary, when a political consultant with too much time on his hands decided the governor ought to respond to challenger Mark Taylor's ad about his Florida land purchase. The result has been to keep the issue higher profile with the voters than the governor would like, plus it has been done with Perdue's own advertising dollars. What the consultant evidently doesn't understand is that Mary Perdue will get the governor a lot more votes than talking about his land deal will. Duh! ...

Astute political observation #3: Poor old Max Cleland still doesn't get it. Our former U.S. senator recently wrote an op-ed piece in the Atlanta newspapers ardently defending Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, who is in an ethics pickle in his home state of Nevada. Harry Reid? Nevada? Dear Max, guess how many people in Georgia care about Harry Reid and his financial problems in Nevada? About as many as care about what planet our Ambassador to Outer Space Cynthia McKinney will land on when she gets her new hairdo. No wonder you only served one term. ...

Astute political observation #4: Talk about a made-to-order political death wish. Georgia Republicans seem determined to resurrect H.B. 218, which provides a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. House Speaker Glenn Richardson and his cohorts want to take economic development negotiations — including how your tax dollars are spent — behind closed doors, although proponents cannot cite a single example of Georgia having lost a company relocation or expansion due to our open records laws. The state's newspapers are going to fight the effort tooth-and-nail, as well they should. I am, too. Nobody wanting this unneeded law has made a case for it, or if they have, they forgot to tell me. ...

Astute political observation #5: Politicians in Georgia should heave a big sigh of relief now that Stewart Rodeheaver, commander of Georgia's 48th Brigade Combat Team, has been named deputy commanding general of the U.S. First Army, and is second in command for U.S. combat training operations. As far as I am concerned, he could have run for just about any political office in the state after the outstanding job he did in Iraq, and won. If he was able to deal with Arab tribal leaders who would just as soon shoot you as look at you, he could handle anything we threw at him. He is a good man and an excellent leader. ...

Finally, because you have been so attentive you have earned a bonus astute political observation: I predict that Gov. Roy Barnes will win a second term in a landslide. (Or have I already said that?)