



EDITORIAL

by **Monsignor William J. Linder**

Remember these words uttered by a Republican senator not too long ago, “If we’re able to stop Obama on this, it will be his Waterloo. It will break him.” Of course, Sen. Jim DeMint (R-S.C.) was referring to health care reform, which the President has rightly placed on the front burner. If the President had his way, a bill would have already been passed and signed into law by the time Congress broke for recess last month. It was not to be, however, and we need to really face up to what is happening here. This battle over health care reform has become about so much more than simply hammering out an agreement that will provide relief to millions of Americans struggling with skyrocketing health care costs, including many of the nation’s 47 million uninsured. We should honestly admit it has become a battle more about Obama himself. There are forces out there that are bent on politically destroying Obama, the nation’s first African-American president.

The Battle of Waterloo happened to be Napoleon’s final struggle against those forces that had attempted for decades to bring him down. His defeat at Waterloo, a small town south of Brussels, Belgium, would forever be the epithet associated with him thereafter, despite the fact that he actually started out strong. For President Obama, recognizing what he is really up against in this fight over healthcare reform could be the first step in helping to bring about victory. We can argue all day long about the details of the various plans being put forth, but that will do little to quell the voices of those who simply have another agenda in mind. A far more personal agenda. One need only have witnessed the spectacle that played out in many town hall meetings across the country where the subject of reform was to be discussed, but where legislators instead were shouted down by unruly protestors.

It is during times like this that we will really miss the voice of Sen. Edward Kennedy, the most outspoken proponent and by far most passionate voice on the issue of health care reform. His passing last week from brain cancer at the age of 77 should serve as a catalyst for all fair-minded legislators and Americans rising up in opposition to the ‘Politics of Waterloo’ currently being played out in Washington. If we fail to achieve a victory on such an important life and death issue like health care reform, our family members, neighbors and friends will really be the ones going down in defeat.