
REMAPPING DEBATE

Asking "Why" and "Why Not"

Disrespect for Senator McGovern at his final hour

Commentary | By Craig Gurian, Lori Bikson | Media, Politics

Oct. 21, 2012 — In today's [obituary of Senator George McGovern](#) in The New York Times, the article states that, "Fair or not, [Senator McGovern] never lived down the image of a liberal loser."

Oughtn't an obituary of a political leader properly deal with more than image? Oughtn't it, reflecting lessons learned over 40 years, be able to put a life in perspective and to put the context within which that leader operated in perspective, as well?

Yes, Sen. McGovern was trounced in the election: trounced by an opponent who had committed and was committing impeachable offenses; trounced despite being farsighted in his opposition to American participation in the Vietnam War; and trounced despite defending values such as the dignity of work and the importance of seeing that America do better to live up to her ideals.

That reporters were more focused on the "trounced" part than on the "man of principle" part was appalling back in 1972; now, 40 years later, it is powerfully depressing that the press has still not gained a deeper appreciation of either the profoundly negative consequences of the results of the 1972 election or of the relative merits and demerits of the candidates who ran.

A nation that was living up to its ideals would offer its sincere thanks for Senator McGovern's life and service, and its deepest condolences to his family.

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