

Galston is Wrong

Michael Sean Winters | Mar. 31, 2011 Distinctly Catholic

Bill Galston, of the Brookings Institution, is a very smart man and I disagree with him very rarely. But, in [a post at New Republic](#) [1]this morning, he gives President Obama some really bad advice about answering the forthcoming budget proposals from Cong. Paul Ryan.

Ryan is one of the stars of the new GOP - he is articulate and smart, and he seems to know the budget inside and out, better than almost any of his colleagues to be sure. But, his proposals, if they track with his "Roadmap," are likely to take aim at some of the core programs Democrats hold dear, starting with Social Security and Medicare. Galston says the President should engage the debate and seek some kind of solution before the 2012 election. I think the President should frame the 2012 election as a choice about how to face our long-term fiscal challenges. The GOP wants to meet those challenges by cutting highly popular programs. The President should say we will meet those challenges by fixing our broken tax code and raising taxes on the super-rich. Let the voters decide. And, that way, come 2013, whoever wins will have a mandate for their specific recipe for long-term fiscal health. Obama did not have much of a mandate after the 2008 election, because it was run on unspecific themes of "hope" and "change." He will need a mandate if he wants to accomplish anything in his second term.

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[1] <http://www.tnr.com/article/the-vital-center/85988/obamas-ryan-budget-cea-deficit?page=0,0>