Rep. Tim Scott, A Jim DeMint Think-Alike, Appointed South Carolina's U.S. Senator

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Rep. Tim Scott, A Jim DeMint Think-Alike, Appointed South Carolina's U.S. Senator

By Michael Matthew Bloomer, Dec. 15, 2012.

"To know my story is to understand that there were people who had no reason to step up to the plate and help me,
but who did. I want to serve the community because the community helped me."
Soon-to-be-South Carolina Republican Senator Tim Scott
June 25, 2010, Myrtle Beach, SC

Here's what South Carolina's GOP Governor Nikki Haley's counter-cyclical mind apparently learned from the 2012 election: to succeed in the future, Republicans need to double down on the crazy and appoint freshman U.S. congressman Tim Scott to the state's vacant Senate seat following Jim DeMint's retirement. Admittedly, Haley's simply doing the bidding of the state's core constituency: four of their eight congresspeople are of 2010 vintage, and for 2011, as a group, they averaged a 96% voting record at the American Conservative Union.[1. Ratings, American Conservative Union (accessed 10-27-2012).] This state has not voted for a Democratic

party President since 1976.

Here's soon-to-be-Senator Scott's description of self, delivered during his two minutes of spotlight at the August 2012 Republican National Convention:

> You see, as a poor kid growing up in a single parent household in North Charleston, South Carolina, I felt like I didn't have much going for me. But I did have a couple of things. A mom who believed in tough love. And that love comes at the end of a switch. And my momma loved me a lot! And a small business owner who was my mentor. And taught me that I could "think my way out of poverty." He taught me that having a job is a good thing but creating jobs was even better.[1. Tim Scott at the 2012 Republican National Convention, CSPAN, Aug. 28, 2012, video.]

There's a lot of heft in those 98 words: Tough love . . . end of a switch . . . small business mentor (a Chic Fil A franchise owner) . . . "think my way out of poverty" . . . having a job is a good thing . . . but . . . creating jobs was even better. His mentor introduced him to Citadel-like discipline, Christian theology on steroids, and the writings of Zig Ziglar. His Mother, Frances, a single Mom, worked 16 hour days, according to Scott, to keep him and his brother off welfare.

Scott served first as a Charleston County Councilman (and received a congratulatory note from Strom Thurmond, and Scott - and then Scott served as an hohorary chairman of Thurmond's 2003 re-election campaign.). He then moved to the South Carolina House for one term. Then came 2010, and the Tea Party roll out. Mr. Scott was rolled out, with the endorsements of Tea Partiers and wannabes galore, including Eric Cantor and Sarah Palin. He won against an African American Democrat by a wide margin, and off he went to Washington, D.C. to represent the district where once resided a major entry portal for thousands of enslaved Africans.

His one term tenure in Congress (he had vowed to serve only four terms) included his belief that President Obama would usher in an era of socialism, particularly with the evil known as Obamacare. He supported Arizona-like immigration reform. He likes offshore drilling. He wants more Afghanistan, more yelling - or worse - at Iran. He's a garden-variety Tea Party balanced budgeteer, *i.e.* greatly undereducated. Pro-life. Pro life. Pro death penalty. No *new* taxes! No *old* taxes! No *any* taxes anymore forever! Proposed impeaching President Obama should he invoke constitutional authority for unilaterally raising the debt limit. He supported legislating the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Labor Management Relations Act the short distance remaining to dead letter status; he co-sponsored H.R 1167 which, among other draconian items, would prohibit a family from qualifying for the first time food stamp benefits whenever any "able-bodied work eligible adult member of such household is on strike."[1. H.R. 1167, 112th Congress (accessed 12-17-2012.] Of the 55 bills he sponsored in his freshman term, 27 were to suspend temporarily the duties on a wide variety of chemical agents like 4-nitrobenzoyl chloride, 4-Hydroxy-2,2,6,6-Tetramethylpiperidine-N-oxyl, and

1,1'-Methylenebis[3(hydroxymethyl)-2,5-dioxo-4-imidazolidiny]urea]. This kind of tariff reduction proposal is routine in Congress, but 27 bills? As they say, "What's up with *that*?" He's a bit of a pip. Like Adam West pip, but not quite as noisy. And now an appointed Senator.

It's interesting, his statement at the top of this post: "*I want to serve the community because the community helped me*." He recognizes that it takes a community to build an individual, to help guide him or her to goals sought. Many Tea Partiers do not understand this. Mr. Scott, though, as most right wingers do, fails to connect his small local community with the larger community, the community that made possible his ascendance to a Senate seat in the land of Strom Thurmond. His rise from poverty *is* a great American story, but does he understand this? His success was the hard fought and limited success of federal intervention in the 1960's that included the spate of anti-discrimination laws enacted over Strom Thurmond's strongest objections. The era gave birth to *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Heart of Atlanta Motel v. U.S.*, and gave injury and death to far too many lives dedicated to a future of equality for their children. The future. Children, like Tim Scott, born in 1965 amidst the struggle, and who 11 years later would come of voting age, during Ronald Reagan's nascent revolution.

It's doubtful, but can Tim Scott learn that the federal government has its usefulness? Not all of us came to maturity after much of the heavy lifting was done, like Tim Scott did. Few poverty-ridden families have helpful mentors along the way. Tim Scott was exceptional, as was his Mother, as was his mentor. As Senator Scott, let's hope he learns that few people, rich or poor, are exceptional. Most of those stuck in poverty are simply good people who seek simple successes, a job, a promotion, an education, a retirement, a Summer vacation. As a Senator, he needs to support those programs that lift up those unexceptional millions without his own drive, his Mother, or his inspirationl mentor.