



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

How Carl Heastie and John Flanagan are being Treated Differently

RUBEN DIAZ May 12, 2015

What You Should Know

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How Carl Heastie and John Flanagan are being Treated Differently

You should know that the changing of the guard has been something very usual and common in the New York State Legislature. Since 2009 when Senators Pedro Espada, Jr. and Hiram Monserrate organized and orchestrated the famous coup, instability, corruption and changing of leadership has become the topic of the day.

It is important for you to know that here in Albany, since that coup, everything has changed – the changing of the guard and new leadership comes into power – but the double standard of how people treat each other and deal with each other remains in place.

Starting back in 2009 with the treatment given to the Three Amigos for wanting to have more power and be part of the decision making, and comparing that with the different treatment that Jeff Klein and the four Democratic Members of the Independent Democratic

Conference received for doing and asking for the same things as the Three Amigos, to the way in which Carl Heastie was treated when he became the Speaker of the New York State Assembly, to the treatment of Senator John Flanagan when he became the Senate Leader – nothing has changed.

As you know my dear reader, Assemblyman Carl Heastie became the first African American – the first minority person – to become the Speaker of the New York State Assembly. When Sheldon Silver was accused, arrested and indicted on corruption charges, it took Carl Heastie two weeks to become the Speaker after Sheldon Silver had resigned – and everybody was pushing him to wait for a month.

Now, a new change of the guard has taken place, for the fourth time in the New York State Senate since 2009. Senator John Flanagan – in three hours from the time that Senator Dean Skelos resigned from his leadership position after being accused, arrested and indicted on corruption charges – has become the new Leader of the New York State Senate.

Senator Flanagan was hand-picked to be the Senate Leader by none other than Senator Dean Skelos himself. According to news reports, Senator Skelos agreed to resign only if he was allowed to pick his successor – and he picked John Flanagan to be his heir.

No one in the media, no one on TV and no reporter has said anything to criticize that action.

You should know, and I assure you that Carl Heastie would have never become Speaker if Sheldon Silver, a person under indictment, would have said that he wanted Carl Heastie to be his successor. And you know that is true. All of the newspaper front pages, columnists and TV reporters would have associated Carl Heastie with corruption and would have stopped him from becoming Speaker if Sheldon Silver had even mentioned his name as his

successor.

Can you imagine, even Governor Andrew Cuomo undermined Carle Heastie by stating that Sheldon Silver was still in power. My question to the Governor and to everyone else is: Is Dean Skelos still in power?

Another thing I do not want to even imagine is what would have happened to Carl Heastie if he would have taken time on the Floor of the Assembly to praise Sheldon Silver the way that John Flanagan took to the Senate Floor to praise Dean Skelos. I wonder.

Ladies and gentlemen, there are many other indicators and things I could say about how people are treated differently here in Albany. I cannot say for certain that it is because of race, religion, sex or cultural differences. I do not know the reason, but I do know that a double standard is always taking place in Albany, and it clearly shows with the treatment that was given to others compared with the treatment that was given to Carl Heastie.

I am State Senator Rubén Díaz and this is what you should know.

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