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Unmasked Conservatives The Other Side of the Tracks By Perry Redd BC Columnist

I've said it more often than not: "Don't become the thing you hate." Americans are growing up and reaching a political fork in the road: whether to lean left or to lean right. Young people are frequently presented with ugly examples of bad sportsmanship, disloyalty and blatant lying that borders on "un-Americanism." The Supreme Court's ruling upholding President Obama's landmark *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*, unmasked the deceptive forces of contemporary Conservatives.

I recall the double-tongued message of "compassionate conservatism" a generation ago, and it tasted bitter going down then. I heard environmentally harmful legislation cloaked in deceptive cover, like the "clear skies" bill. Do you also remember Republican success at killing an estate tax by coining it a death tax? Another example of deceptive politics occurred in North Carolina's House: the passage of *Restore Confidence in Government* Bill, which required all voters to present a government issued photo ID before voting. What a misleading title. I know American mothers teach their children **not** to lie, but with such benign titles, I can't help but feel somebody's out to snooker you and me! Each time Republicans introduce legislation that Conservatives applaud, it reinforces my conviction: I have never and definitely do not want to be a Republican.

Now that Chief Justice Roberts has sided with the liberal wing of the Supreme Court in upholding the constitutionality of the derisively coined "Obamacare," we get to see what modern conservatism really

is - when the mask comes off. When they don't win, everybody be damned...even if it damns the American people.

It's admitted that the decision stunned most political observers, including me. With current racist undertones coming from the legislative and judicial branches, most learned people expected yet another blow to Obama's progressive agenda. Even so, people with America's common and best interests in mind don't disrespect our jurists when their decisions are *constitutionally* grounded. They don't throw temper tantrums or tear up the house when they don't get their way.

Republican members of Congress, from the leadership to lesser-knowns, like Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-TX), degraded their hero, Justice Roberts by labeling him a "traitor" and even talked about the unrealistic possibility of removing him from the bench. Attack the messenger is what kids do when they don't like their parents' rules; and they fantasize about running away.

Why - with years of 5-4 decisions *against* the people (such as the *Citizens United* ruling) - the **one** time Roberts (righteously) opined with the more liberal side of the court, he became a demon? Neo-conservative radio commentator, Glenn Beck, who often takes his cry babying too far, offered \$30 each to listeners who could come up with a t-shirt depicting the Chief Justice as a "coward." How utterly juvenile...

Since the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* protects Americans who either can't afford insurance or are being taken to the cleaners by health insurance providers, or both, the legislation and the High Court's ruling (no matter how close the vote) represent compassion.

I hope our young people pay close attention over the next several days to Republican talking points about this historic ruling. They will hear and watch many political pundits characterize the ruling as the essence of true compassion (Democrats) or vilify and falsely claim it as a tax increase on the middle class (Republicans). I hope young people will be guided to see the ruling for what is: compassion under the law. More than anything, I hope young Americans remember their mother's words and not become the thing they hate. I hope they'll remember what conservatism and Conservatives look like, when the mask comes off.

BlackCommentator.com Columnist, Perry Redd, is the former Executive Director of the workers rights advocacy, Sincere Seven, and author of the on-line commentary, "[The Other Side of the Tracks](#)." He is the host of the internet-based talk radio show, *Socially Speaking in Washington, DC*. Click [here](#) to contact Mr. Redd.



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