

# **The BLACK C o M M e n t a t o r**

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## **New Chance to Change The Other Side of the Tracks By Perry Redd BC Columnist**

*[This commentary was written for submission prior to Tuesday's election results.]*

Another election has come and gone, yet not without controversy. In the future, I predict, elections will be even more controversial. As long as there are resources for the pillaging, elections - with the reins of power in sight - will be volatile. I hope the fever with which elections are fought brings progressive and necessary change.

After this election, we will witness a new America. If the incumbent wins, we will continue a course of policymaking that disbands corporate strangleholds on the people's power. Workers' rights will make a comeback. Legislation like the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act will come forth like fountains of fresh water - fresh, only because this country has walked back pro-worker legislation of the last 30 years.

If the challenger wins, we will see an accelerated growth in the privatization of services we once second-naturedly thought of as "the way things are supposed to work." Everything from policing to firefighting to public school teaching will be administered by private interests - with increasing profits as the underlying motivator for providing those services.

Though we see the race for the presidency in our frontal view, our periphery is rife with congressional and local races that are equally as important. The focus of a candidate, like Elizabeth Warren in Massachusetts, will accelerate if like-minded folks win elections. She

enjoys a reputation as a plainspoken voice of the people getting crushed by so many of this nation's predatory lenders and under-regulated banks. If her opponent, the incumbent Scott Brown - and those who support him - win, the wealth of this country will further concentrate in the hands of those who caused our current fiscal stranglehold.

The "battle for America's soul" isn't about a soul at all, it's about resources. The people who have traditionally held the lion's share of the nation's resources are fighting like gladiators not only to hold on to it but to keep it out of the hands of the majority. The ideology that under-educated or poor people wouldn't know how to use it or wouldn't appreciate it if they had it is what passes for a "battle for America's soul." This battle has been coined a "Culture War" in days past. This election draws a defining line drawn in the sand.

That line has proponents on one side who have shown up at the polls today. They have questioned citizens (as though suspects) who have stood in voting lines and others who were on their way to vote. Those proponents have executed unwarranted challenges to people legitimately lodging their vote. We have witnessed voter I.D. laws that all-of-a-sudden cropped up in the past two years and targeted specific demographic groups. The "battle for America's soul" only demonstrates a soul destined for hell. Race and racism have been re-generated as the tool of choice to win that battle.

This election actually represents change. I have said recently that Barack Obama - like our local mayor of Washington, DC, Vincent Gray, - didn't represent change upon his election; he represented "a transition to change." For true change to take place, one must eradicate the old - entirely. For Obama, he equivocated; he brought in old hands of the game. Change can't take place with old habits in tow. For Mayor Gray, he was an old hand. His administration revealed old habits as par-for-the-course. People have been indicted, convicted and sentenced. As those old hands are excised, a "transition" is taking place. The next round will bring *the* change.

You see, the people are sick & tired of being sick & tired. The question is: *What are the people going to do?* Some patients would rather not know they have cancer. Others would want to be informed - and involved in their treatment. Today is the beginning of a new direction. This is my chance - your chance - to change. *Will we?*

Mitt Romney is a candidate advocating for greater freedom for business to do what *they do*. If you like what businesses have been doing, then that's the direction we shall go, if Romney wins. Chevron, ExxonMobil, Shell, BP recorded obscene profits, by margins previously unseen in modern-day business. That's what businesses are doing. Employee salaries have remained stagnant. Average wages for working-class Americans are the most stagnant since 2007. Limited employment and wage prospects, together with high gasoline prices, are straining household budgets. So what we have here is a battle between corporate profits versus household wages. This vote will settle these arguments.

At the submission of this editorial, no winner has yet been declared, but I dare say America citizens must not vote against their own interests. My experience as a community organizer does not assure me that people will indeed do just that. My hope is the year 2012 will not be the year we miss the chance to change.

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