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The Election of Illusion The Other Side of the Tracks By Perry Redd BC Columnist

You saw what I saw...or didn't see. I've lived through twelve presidential elections, and I've never seen a show of deception so transparent and overt as this one. It was pure illusion and a frontal insult upon Americans - and to Blacks, in particular. The electorate didn't go for it, but how much more of this illusionism are we going to allow infect our discourse, social relationships and public policy?

Republicans are acting like they don't know what went wrong, why they failed to beat Obama. All election long, they tried to tell us that it's all about the economy. They framed each talking-head forum with the economy, and that anything else was a "distraction." Remember that? They're insane. We were insane for not calling the press out on that! Our lives are more than just the economy. Civil rights, abortion rights, labor, education, all mean the world to us. The illusion was that nothing else mattered, except the economy.

These people didn't care about America. They cared about white males, and that's what they won: white males. Unfortunately, this country is comprised of more than just white males. Obama won 60% of the youth vote, 69% of the Latino vote, 91% of the Black vote (that's a damn shame, should've been 100!) and 55% of women voters. By the way, we will now have a record with 20 women in the Senate (16 Democrats & 4 Republicans)! While the number of women - in both houses - is nearly 20% of the total, including the first woman senator from Massachusetts, the first openly gay woman and our first Buddhist, it is worthy to note that the United States *still ranks only*

91st in the world in terms of women holding elective office! And Republicans led us to believe that they had the female vote.

Conservative Republicans, like Karl Rove, are still saying they had a good election night! Look, winning 51% of the American vote isn't a landslide, but in our system of the Electoral College, Republicans got smashed! Obama finished with 332 to Romney's 206 electoral votes. That means Romney lost the states where they claimed he was competitive. Come on...are we stupid? The Republicans did not have a good night. The illusion is over. Greta Van Susteren was on the Sunday talk shows saying that it wasn't that big of a margin. Bush's 537 theft in Florida wasn't big; this win was big! Obama might have come up 8 million votes short of his 2008 campaign totals, but he won by 3 million more than Romney. That's no illusion.

I want you to fix your forgetter: Remember when Republicans said that "the president can't run on his record?" He could...and he did. They tried to couch it all in terms of the economy. They lulled America to sleep on the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, consumer protection overhaul, Wall Street reform, the auto industry bailout, same-sex marriage and Obamacare. A "do-nothing Congress" couldn't compare to the President's "record," but Conservatives created the illusion that his record wasn't progress. They were wrong. Were you?

We were told that the Republicans - and Mitt Romney in particular - had the "momentum" going into the election. I was turning over tables telling people to reject anything resembling that characterization of the voting public. Romney was lying his way all the way to election day. Rove spent \$300 billion dollars of OPM (other people's money); he insisted that Fox was wrong in calling Ohio for the President too.

Don't you know that the Republicans had an uphill battle beginning with the primary debates? How on earth could they even think they could win anything when they insulted every constituency that was *not* predominately white male? From Michelle Bachmann to Herman Cain to Newt Gingrich to Mitt Romney's support for the Defense of Marriage Act (when nobody is threatening marriage!), they each managed to offend a non-white male sector of our society - thereby, setting themselves up for a loss. Saying he would end Planned Parenthood when so many women depend on its reproductive health services is political suicide. And, "self-deportation" as the answer to immigration reform proved to be another suicidal position.

During the final two weeks of the election, Republican Conservatives tried their best to lead us into thinking that the consulate attack on Benghazi was the single make-or-break issue for voters. It wasn't. Most Americans knew that and didn't allow it to become an issue. For one, Benghazi ain't America; two, most Americans believe that we (USA) shouldn't be meddling in Libyan affairs any way (and since we are, we get what you deserve)! Fox News and Fox's Chris Wallace pushed the Benghazi issue especially hard (watch the many You Tube clips). The same people who told us that anything besides the economy was a "distraction," tried to use Benghazi as a distraction. And, Romney's **still** doing it! Romney referred to distractions as "bright, shiny objects." The bright, shiny objects are their illusions.

The worst illusion of all is that unspoken constituency (no, not the American Indian; they exterminated them long ago by giving them sovereignty): the Black vote. Republicans never even spoke to an issue of Black concern - except to insult us. From Newt Gingrich's "food stamp President" comment to not including Blacks in his ground game, Conservatives incorrectly thought that getting the Latino vote would be enough to win.

And don't even get me started on the polls! Rasmussen, ABC/Washington Post, Gallup were all garbage in telling us who was going to win. Good. We shouldn't even listen to them *anyway!* Their objective is to make us think that our side - whichever side that might be - has lost and your vote isn't needed. That is just another illusion.

They told us that President Obama "failed to lead," then *they* defined what leadership is. They were wrong; they are wrong. As late as this weekend, Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) said it again on ABC's *This Week*. Guess what? Racial divisionists don't get to define the debate... especially with me! We must stop allowing them to frame the debate. We know what's important to us. Ironically, what's important to Blacks are the same "bright, shiny objects" that are important to all Americans: fairness, empowerment, justice and equality. There...I framed it. Now, go out and destroy the illusion with truth.

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