

Meditation on Obama's victory and Romney's defeat

By

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The winning of Barack Obama over Mitt Romney in the last presidential elections was of no surprise to me because I previously predicted Obama's winning in two articles I wrote and posted on my website (1, 2). The first article was written more than six months before the elections started and the second was written one week before elections. In the first article, I presented the achievements of Obama during his first four years in the white House that would make him win a second chance, and in the second, I evaluated each candidate according to the views he presented during his campaign. The views of American writers, thinkers and reporters were also introduced. Romney never seemed to articulate a clear rationale for the presidency. There was a general consensus in fact that Obama was going to win the race to the White House.

The Republican Party is now standing at a crossroads, with not much track in sight. Romney lost embarrassingly among young people, African-Americans and Hispanics, a brutal reminder for Republicans that their party is ideologically out of tune with fast-growing segments of the population. Obama crushed Romney among Hispanic voters by a whopping 44 points, a margin of victory that likely propelled the president to victories in Nevada, Colorado and Florida.

"Latinos were disillusioned with Barack Obama, but they are absolutely terrified by the idea of Mitt Romney," said GOP fundraiser Ana Navarro, a confidante to former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and Sen. Marco Rubio.

There were modest upticks in Hispanic and African-American voter registration, shifts that overwhelmingly favored president Obama (3).

The shallowness we saw from Romney regarding his views concerning foreign policy, economic reform, and the arrogance he showed when claiming that America is destined to rule the world as well as his racism towards minorities, were not the only reasons for his downfall, but

something else more important and more crucial, it was the radicalism of the Republican Party.

In this article I will not repeat the factors which made President Obama wins the elections, but I will stress on the hidden but real factors that caused Romney's defeat.

What took Romney really down was the religious and political attitude of the Christian right. The erroneous attitude and the narrow view of the Republican Party and all groups affiliated to it (religious right, Judeo-Christian coalition, neo-conservatives) are the main cause for the downfall of Mitt Romney in the presidential election. People think that the religious right shares the values held in common by most Americans. If mainstream Americans really understood the religious right, they would be shocked. It is important therefore to bring its beliefs, actions and values into the open.

The true factors, which contributed to Romney's defeat, can be summarized in the following:

1- The religious right wants to impose its radical ideas on the American people by force.

Because Mitt Romney represents the Republican Party which is dominated by the Christian right, it is important to hear the concern of the American people about the religious right. However, before we go into that let us understand how the religious right thinks and functions.

The Christian right is a term used in the United States to describe right-wing Christian political groups that are characterized by their strong support of socially conservative policies. Christian conservatives principally seek to apply their understanding of the teachings of Christianity to politics and public policy by proclaiming the value of those teachings and/or by seeking to use those teachings to influence law and public policy.

In the U.S., the Christian right is an informal coalition formed around a core of white evangelical Protestants that draws support from politically

conservative Catholics, Jews, Mormons, and occasionally secularists who share their goals. The movement has its roots in American politics going back as far as the 1940s and has been especially influential since the 1970s. Their influence draws, in part, from grassroots activism as well as their focus on social issues and ability to motivate the electorate around those issues.

Much of the Christian right's power within the American political system is attributed to their extraordinary turnout rate at the polls. The voters that coexist in the Christian right are also highly motivated and driven to get out a viewpoint on issues they care about. As well as high voter turnout, they can be counted on to attend political events, knock on doors and distribute literature. Members of the Christian right are willing to do the electoral work needed to see their candidate elected. Because of their high level of devotion, the Christian right does not need to monetarily compensate these people for their work.

Led by Robert Grant's advocacy group Christian Voice, Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority, Ed McAteer's Religious Roundtable Council, James Dobson's Focus on the Family, and Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network, the new Religious Right combined conservative politics with evangelical and fundamentalist teachings.

The Christian right is notable for advancing socially conservative positions on issues including school prayer, stem cell research, homosexuality, contraception, abortion, and pornography.

Among the values shared implicitly by all Americans are 1) that persons ought to be free to do as they please so long as they do no harm to others, and 2) that every person is entitled to hold an opinion, and that no person's opinion is necessarily or intrinsically more valid than any other's.

The radical religious right does not play by those rules at all. From their point of view, those assumptions are secular (worldly), and therefore simply wrong.

The notion of compromise is alien to the radical religious right, because from their point of view either a belief comes from God, and is therefore absolutely and eternally true, or it comes from the secular world and ultimately from Satan, and is therefore utterly false, no matter how reasonable it may seem.

In fact, fundamentalist Christians believe that Satan (considered a completely real being) uses reason to deceive the sinful human mind. Reason is bad, faith is good.

Another common error is that many people who consider themselves Christians, but who are not part of the radical religious right, feel that they can understand the radical religious right based on shared Christian beliefs.

In fact, the religious perspectives of the religious right differ markedly from those of moderate, nominal Christians.

Extreme fundamentalist Christians actually regard moderate, nominal Christians, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (II Timothy 3:5), as worse than unbelievers. "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." (Revelation 3:15-16).

They may pity unbelievers, but they distrust or even despise moderate Christians, in whom God has invested more of his grace and light, but who have chosen not to respond wholeheartedly. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." (Luke 12:48).

A further marked difference between the fundamentalist Christians and others is that most people are motivated by the desire to find happiness. Those who adhere to Christian fundamentalism do not regard the pursuit of happiness to be a valid motivation, but instead consider "doing the will of God by submitting utterly to the Lordship of His Son Jesus Christ" to be the only acceptable reason for living.

Those two motivations lead to very different choices and personal values.

How could a group with such distinct values have become so powerful in the United States, a society where power derives from political appeal?

The radical religious right has gained power only by keeping its true intentions under wraps, by using the Republican Party as a cover, and by portraying itself as conservative rather than radical. Part of the success of the radical religious right has come by infiltrating the main stream Republican Party. The religious right has been able to gain a foothold in that party by playing down its more radical leanings.

For their part, the Republicans in the United States have been happy to see their party energized by the fervor and commitment that religious right true believers can bring to the political process. Since the late 1970s the religious right has steadily transformed the Republican Party from a basically secular, conservative, civic-minded party to become the public face of legitimacy for the otherwise radical values of the religious right.

As mentioned before, the Religious Right is against abortion and considers it as the murder of unborn children. The Religious Right is also against same sex marriage and opposes the gradual acceptance by the American mainstream that gay people can be good citizens. A third area has been the issue of prayer in public schools and the teaching of biological evolution.

The religious Right neglects the fact that the United States is among the most religious and religiously diverse nations in the world. Religious freedom is one of her most treasured liberties. This fundamental and defining aspect of America's national character is undermined when religion is used as a license to discriminate against others or to impose beliefs on others as usually the Christian right do.

The freedom of religion and belief is one of the Americans most cherished liberties. The First Amendment protects their right to believe whatever they choose. It allows them to live according to their own deeply held values, not to force those values on everyone else (4).

The Christian Right is trying to impose its religious beliefs and practices on the rest of America. A 2005 poll conducted by the ADL found that 45% of Americans thought that Christian Right leaders wanted to impose their religious beliefs on everyone; even 35% of fundamentalist, evangelical, and charismatic Christians believed that as well.

The Christian right seems to forget that freedom of religion is a cherished right that should be zealously defended. But that freedom includes the right to be free from impositions based on the religion of others. In America, the First Amendment, often referred to as the First Right, includes not only the freedom to practice a religion, but the freedom not to have any religious beliefs imposed on people by others. Religious freedom means nothing if it does not stop any religion from forcing their doctrine on others through their wealth, influence, or numbers.

The Christian Right thinks that religious freedom only includes the right of religious institutions to impose their views on others, using whatever means of coercion is at hand, including employment, economic power, and contracts. Any move by the government to prohibit such impositions on others is viewed as a “war on religious belief”.

Some accuses the Christian right with a radicalism similar to that of Islam because Islam also prohibits abortion, homosexuality, and sex outside marriage. Since religion of God is only one, what the Christian right calls for is also found in Islam and all other religions. From the Islamic point of view, the Christian right has all the right to believe that same sex marriage, homosexuality, adultery and abortion are sinful. The Christian Right is therefore not to blame when it strives to persuade others to follow its lead. However, this must not be done by force but through tolerance and good preaching.

The Christian right must understand that compulsion is incompatible with religion because religion depends upon faith and will, and these would be meaningless if induced by force.

God says in the Koran:

No compulsion is there in religion. Rectitude has become clear from error. (Al-Baqarah, 256).

The Christian Right in order to be effective in its teachings must address the people in gentle voice of peace otherwise people will break away from it as was clearly shown in the last elections.

In Islam, the Prophet of God was sent to teach and direct people on the way. He was not sent to force their will, or to punish them. Punishment belongs to God alone. And punishment is certain in the Hereafter, when true values will be restored.

The Koran says:

Then remind them! Thou art only a reminder; thou are not charged to oversee them (Al-Ghashiyah, 21, 22).

The Prophet of Islam came as a mercy to all mankind. His religion is universal; it is addressed to the Arab pagans as well as the Jews and the Christians. Muhammad came to invite the People of the Book to Islam, if they refuse and reject, the Prophet is only responsible for relating the Message.

The Koran says:

And say to those who have been given the Book (Jews and Christians) and to the common folk (Arab pagans): "Do you submit yourselves (to God in Islam)?" If they do, they are rightly guided; but if they turn their backs, thine it is only to deliver the Message; and God sees His servants (Al-Imran, 20).

This means that he who chooses to follow the path of rectitude shall only profit his own soul, and he who chooses to stray shall only harm his own soul. The prophet is not here to watch over their stubbornness and folly.

Say: 'O men, the truth has come to you from your Lord. Whosoever is guided is guided only to his own gain, and whosoever goes astray, it is only to his own loss. I am not a guardian over you.' (Yunus, 108).

In other words, the Christian right in order to preach its religious ideas must adopt flexible and gentle approaches instead of imposing its ideas by force. This force has been felt by the American voters and cost Mitt Romney the election.

The Koran teaches that God pays every man or woman his or her account in full, and that a man or a woman shall have to their account only as they have labored. Their account falls only upon God, and God is swift at the reckoning.

We read in the Koran:

Say: 'Shall I seek after a Lord other than God, who is the Lord of all things?' Every soul earns only to its own account, no soul laden bears the load of another. Then to your Lord shall you return, and He will tell you of that whereon you were at variance (Al-An'am, 164).

The Christian right must understand that imposing religious thoughts by force is wrong; its role however is only to gently deliver the Message. God is the One who will recompense every soul for its earning.

As we read in the Koran:

...then upon Us shall rest their reckoning (Al-Ghathiyah, 26).

Freedom is a decision about oneself and a setting of one's own life for or against the Good, for or against the truth, and ultimately, for or against God. Accordingly, assurances to the people were needed from Romney that the religious principles of the Christian right although are divine and important; it is up to the people to believe or not to believe in them. God will punish people for what their hands have forwarded and not the religious right. No evil deed people do is but written in their account. God will pay them their account in full, for their account falls only upon God. In other words, what the religious right calls for is but a reminding, and not obligatory.

Mitt Romney should have known that God created man a rational being, conferring on him the dignity of a person who can initiate and control his

own actions. God willed that man should be left in the hand of his own counsel so that he might of his own accord seek his Creator and freely attains his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him.

Christian fundamentalists understand that God does not want them simply to be passive in the political sphere, minding their own business and practicing their religion in private. They believe that their God has solemnly enjoined them to force their biblical beliefs upon all levels of government, from local school boards to Congress and the Supreme Court.

At the same time, Christian fundamentalists believe that because of their active presence in the US political process, and because of earlier generations of pious Americans, the United States is special in the sight of God. Therefore, patriotism and militant nationalism are consistent with fundamentalist Christian beliefs.

What kind of place will the United States be if the radical religious right continues to consolidate power and enforce policies of its choosing?

An obvious change will be that children in public schools, or private schools publicly funded through vouchers, will receive religious instruction based on the ideology of Christian fundamentalists. Of course, the scientific view of biology will no longer be taught in public institutions, except as a cultural oddity to be rejected.

Those are perhaps some of the least dramatic changes, although they will eventually lead to the United States slipping from its preeminent role in science. In the eyes of the fundamentalist, “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God” (I Corinthians 3:19).

Regions where religious fundamentalism prevails can sometimes produce good science, and very occasionally might even produce excellent science, but arguably almost never brilliant or ground-breaking science.

A society under the strict control of the religious right would arguably suppress the cultural factors that support a dynamic and innovative

knowledge-based economy. For that reason, a political coup by the religious right would likely be regarded by capital markets as being unfavorable to long-term growth.

American Christian fundamentalists during the past few decades have increasingly embraced a view that Jesus wants them to be wealthy. Conspicuous consumption by believers is regarded as a beneficial display of God's power and His love for His people.

A more troubling and perhaps less obvious effect of the exercise of power by the radical religious right will be the rise of militant nationalism in the United States.

Many people fail to understand this because, again, they are thinking of the religious right as being Christian, and that Christianity is a religion that teaches peace. That view misses the mark on several levels.

Christian fundamentalists believe in biblical literalism and the Judaeo-Christian bible is actually full of references to war and an angry, aggressive God, and certainly does not condemn war.

In addition, the religious right is rooted in the American South, which has a longstanding culture of militarism. Many people in the South have lived as professional soldiers or in communities that support military bases, and have done so for generations.

For the radical religious right, an American foreign policy based on militant nationalism has an almost holy virtue. They believe that the United States has been especially dedicated to Jesus Christ for His purposes. To question or resist militant nationalism is to be unpatriotic, and to be unpatriotic is to be non-Christian in the eyes of the religious right.

As do most radicalized political movements, the radical religious right considers itself to have been persecuted by mainstream society.

Christian fundamentalist leaders teach their followers that the educational, legislative, and judicial institutions of the West are in the

hands of what they refer to as secular humanists, which are determined to curtail the rights of true Christians, either overtly through public policy or more stealthily through relentless exposure to the corrupted “worldly” media.

Just as Nazis claimed that Germany had been aggrieved by Communists and alleged Jewish internationalist conspirators, the belief in having been aggrieved by the American coastal urban establishment will be used as justification for the restrictions that the religious right will begin to impose on freedom of thought and expression in the United States.

Similar also to the Nazis, the religious right will seek to uphold what they deem to be the morality of common people, railing against degeneracy (as the Nazis railed against entartete Kunst).

Once fully in power, the religious right will regard alternative viewpoints as unacceptable rivals in their efforts to control the cultural life of the nation.

Admittedly, the legal tradition in the US makes it difficult for a government to directly curtail freedom of expression, but the radical religious right will work relentlessly to weaken legal protections and to impose their restrictions through any means possible.

Quite possibly the political proxies of the religious right in the executive branch of government will use security concerns as a cover for clamping down on freedom of expression.

The cycle will have come fully around when the radical religious right begins to prohibit competing religions. This is not as surprising an outcome as it may seem.

Many Christian fundamentalists take a dim view not only of nominal moderate Christians, but also of Catholics, whom they regard as Mary-worshippers and idolaters, and certainly of Buddhists, Hindus, Mormons, and Muslims, all of whom they consider to live in spiritual darkness.

Overt opposition will only radicalize the radical religious right even further. In fact, if they fail to get their way through legitimate political means, they might eventually turn to terrorism, as some have done in bombing abortion clinics and shooting physicians who practice abortion.

When groups become radicalized, they start to believe that the nobility of their ends justifies any means, and they slip into thinking that any action, including violence and lying, is necessary and appropriate.

People who hold such beliefs feel little commitment to improving present institutions or to working to solve ecological problems. Many feel that global ecological disasters are inevitably part of the “end times” that were supposedly predicted in biblical verses (5).

Radicalism of the religious right and its bad influence on the Republican party cost Romney the election.

2- Apparent racism

In a conference call with donors, Romney attributed his loss to the president playing Santa Claus by showering minorities and young voters with “gifts” – health care, student loans and those things Americans clearly don’t need.

If you took a moment during the heat of the presidential race to drop by the Mitt Romney campaign office, the number of white people working to get him elected would have shocked you. About the only color you would have seen were the red and white in the Romney-Ryan posters.

Romney said during the conference call, “The Obama campaign was following the old playbook of giving a lot of stuff to groups that they hoped they could get to vote for them and be motivated to go out to the polls, specifically the African-American community, the Hispanic community and young people. In each case they were very generous in what they gave to those groups.”

Romney also said, “With regards to African-American voters, ‘Obama care’ was a huge plus – and was highly motivational to African-American

voters. You can imagine for somebody making \$25-, or \$30-, or \$35,000 a year, being told 'You're now going to get free health care' — particularly if you don't have it, getting free health care worth, what, \$10,000 a family, in perpetuity — I mean this is huge. Likewise with Hispanic voters, free health care was a big plus.”

The fact is that Mitt Romney could not accept reality and his judgment on his loss is more than suspect. People had to smack Romney for his ignorant comments. Obama won a second term in the White House because he offered a more inclusive message to a cross section of people than Romney did. Romney wanted to protect the richest of the rich, and President Obama saw that providing a pathway to college to a wider number of Americans, as well as confronting the health crisis was vitally important.

Mitt Romney thought that minorities and young people are a bunch of victims who just want free stuff, or as he called them, gifts. Mitt Romney failed to realize that America is not only for the white people, but also for black people, Muslims, Hispanics and Chinese. These minorities rejected his racist views. American people needed a president who offers a vision for a more inclusive America, not one who sees health care, college loans and an initiative to deal with immigration reform as “gifts”(6).

The white racism factor was in play and manipulating the decision of white voters. Mitt Romney was speaking to a segment of the population who does not like to see people other than a White man in a White House or any other elected position. The results of the elections showed that gender gap cost Mitt Romney the election. The results revealed that Caucasian males, in deserting Obama en mass were swimming against history. Over fifty per cent of Caucasian females voted for Romney too. Not as many of them as white men, of course, but a solid majority. Indeed, as a proportion of the total, more white women voted for Romney than voted for George W. Bush, in 2004, or for John McCain, in 2008.

However, white females make up a smaller proportion of the overall electorate than they used to—thirty-eight per cent in 2012 compared to

forty-one per cent in 2004—and Obama racked up enormous majorities among non-white women, who are growing in numbers. Ninety-six per cent of black women voted for Obama; seventy-six per cent of Hispanic women voted for him; and so did sixty-six per cent of women of other races, including Asians. Since about one in six voters is now a non-white woman, those votes were enough to cancel out the reverse gender gap among white women and turn the female vote as a whole into one of the key elements of Obama's victory.

Without much doubt, attitudes about race—and even outright racism—played a role, although one that is hard to quantify. On average, white men and women tend to be richer than non-whites, and voting Republican is strongly correlated with income. (In families that made less than a hundred thousand dollars a year, Obama won by eight points. In families that made more than a hundred thousand dollars a year, Romney won by ten points.) Age is another factor. Whites, on average, tend to be older than non-whites, and older people (male and female) tend to vote Republican in greater numbers. Religion is also part of the story. Most white women, like most white men, are churchgoing Christians, a group that is strongly Republican—especially evangelicals, who voted for Romney by almost four to one (7).

According to exit polls, Romney won 59 per cent of the white vote, just short of his 60 per cent target. But even a 60 per cent showing with white voters wouldn't have won him the popular vote. That is because the GOP bubble remained as tight as ever: Only white people voted for Mitt Romney. Romney won 48.1 per cent of the overall vote. White people who voted for Romney made up 42.5 per cent of the overall vote. That works out to 88 per cent of Romney voters being white. Two per cent of Romney's voters were black, 6 per cent were Latino, 2 per cent were Asian, and 2 per cent had some other ethnic classification.

Obama's support was 56 per cent white, 24 per cent black, 14 per cent Latino, 4 per cent Asian, and 2 per cent other. Obama won because he was the popular choice of Hispanics, African-Americans, Muslims, single women and highly educated urban whites.

The Republicans must now understand that the demographics in America are changing; it's not a traditional America anymore. Twenty years ago, an establishment candidate like Mitt Romney would have roundly defeated President Obama. The white establishment is now the minority. And the voters, many of them, feel that this economic system is stacked against them and they want stuff.

It was foolish of Romney not to consider the weight of the Hispanic vote because more than 70% of Hispanic voted for Obama when he announced his position on illegal immigration.

Obama won the Latino vote, 71 to 27. He also won the Asian vote, 73 to 26 (8).

Overall, 52% of voters said Obama was more in touch with people like them, compared with 44% for Romney.

These results showed clearly that Mitt Romney as well as the Republican Party were concentrating on only white Americans thus ignoring other ethnic minorities like Hispanics, black and Asian Americans, and Muslim Americans representing a significant electoral vote.

This racist attitude of the Republican Party contributed immensely to Romney's defeat. In Islam there is no racism, all people are equal before Allah. The most honorable of them before Allah are the most god-fearing.

The Koran says:

O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races and tribes, that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the most god-fearing of you. Allah is All-knowing, All-aware (Al-Hujurat, 13).

Most American racists lean right, not left. At best, Republicans in general have opinions commonly believed to be racist, and that is far from undeniable. We must not forget that there have been so many efforts

from some on the right to question Obama's "American-ness," his religion, his belief and loyalty to America, and even his intelligence, which is what Trump is alluding to in his silly \$5 million offer for the president to release his college transcripts and application.

John Sununu's comment that Colin Powell's endorsement of Obama was due to them sharing skin color is one example. It meant that intelligence and reasoning could not possibly be a factor. It also said that Powell was not to be trusted because remember, he too is black. Sarah Palin's "shuck and jive" comment was another thinly veiled hearkening to the stereotype of the shiftless and lazy Negro.

In none of the cases did we hear Romney himself stand up and say such talk was not welcome on his behalf and in his name.

"My party is full of racists." That is what retired Army Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, a Republican and former chief of staff to Colin Powell said. He added, "My party, unfortunately, is the bastion of those people — not all of them, but most of them — who are still basing their positions on race. Let me just be candid: My party is full of racists, and the real reason a considerable portion of my party wants President Obama out of the White House has nothing to do with the content of his character, nothing to do with his competence as commander-in-chief and president, and everything to do with the color of his skin, and that's despicable."

These racists that harbor negative feelings toward blacks, Muslims, and other ethnicities have a strong sense that they are losing the America they fantasize about and expect it to be. They don't like seeing so many people of color in places they didn't expect, they didn't expect to see women not asking for, but demanding equal pay, and still having the power of choice for themselves.

This explains all the posters and yard signs and phrases we hear along the lines of "We want our America back." What they do not get or do not want to get, is that America is not ever going back to what she was. America has come too far to go backwards on gender equality and women's choices. America is not going back. The genie is out of the bottle and won't go back in.

In conclusion, Mitt Romney was defeated because his only possible ticket to the White House came from a blatant, brazen racist campaign strategy, combined with racist laws to block the votes of the poor, elderly, students and minorities pursued by governors and legislatures of his party.

3- Hate mongering Christian leaders and Republicans against Muslims

The birth of the New Christian right is usually traced to a 1979 meeting where televangelist Jerry Falwell was urged to create a “Moral Majority” organization. Soon, Moral Majority became a general term for the conservative political activism of evangelists and fundamentalists such as Pat Robertson, James Robinson, and Jerry Falwell.

On November 9, 2009, Pat Robertson the founding father of the Christian right said that Islam is “a violent political system bent on the overthrow of the governments of the world and world domination.” He went on to elaborate that “you’re dealing with not a religion, you’re dealing with a political system, and I think we should treat it as such, and treat its adherents as such as we would members of the communist party, members of some fascist group.”

Robertson has earned notoriety for his scathing attacks on Islam, Prophet Muhammad and Muslims. He has called Islam the “religion of the slavers” and described Muslims as “satanic” and “worse than the Nazis”.

He said the Qur’an was a “fraudulent” and Prophet Muhammad “an absolute wild-eyed fanatic, a robber and a brigand...a killer”.

Robertson believes Americans who embrace Islam exhibit “insanity” and advises against appointing Muslims to government positions.

Six years after the 9/11 attacks, American Muslims, estimated at nearly seven million, complain of discrimination and stereotyping because of their religious background.

Robertson, founder of the Christian Coalition and a presidential candidate in 1988, has once advocated assassinating Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez for allegedly intending to become “the launching pad for communist infiltration and Muslim extremism.”

Pat Robertson claimed that Islam is not a religion but a violent political system. He also said, “These Islamic fundamentalists, these radical terrorists, these Middle Eastern monsters are committed to destroying the Jewish nation, driving her into the Mediterranean, conquering the world.”

Pat Robertson was stunned that president Obama won re-election. He said, “What have they got? He doesn’t seem to have any program and yet he’s been able to win a re-election, what is going on with the American people?”

The deceased Jerry Falwell held views in opposition to Islam. Falwell called Islam “satanic”. In a televised interview with 60 Minutes, Falwell called Muhammad a “terrorist”, to whom he added: “I concluded from reading Muslim and non-Muslim writers that Muhammad was a violent man, a man of war.”

Terry Jones the pastor of Dove World Outreach Centre, a small nondenominational Christian church in Gainesville, Florida announced that Islam promotes violence and that Muslims want to impose sharia law in the United. He authored a book titled, Islam Is of the Devil. On April 28, 2012, Jones, and about 20 others, burned copies of the Koran. He was fined \$271 by Gainesville Fire Rescue for burning books without authorization!

Herman Cain, Republican presidential candidate and winner of this year’s Arizona and Georgia Tea Party straw polls, has a campaign slogan: “Let’s Get Real.”

He was just keeping it real when he recently declared that he was not “comfortable” appointing an American-Muslim to his Cabinet or to a federal judgeship. He announced that he would require a loyalty oath from any Muslim seeking a job in his administration, but would not

require the same for Christians or Jews. Cain added that he has never personally met a Muslim who would take an oath disavowing sharia laws based on the Koran – so it would appear that none could be qualified for a job in the Cain administration.

Based on such announcements, Herman Cain is either a bigot, ignorant or simply a politician using fear mongering for political gain. Regardless of his motivation, Cain is in essence posting a sign: “Muslims Need Not Apply.”

Civil Rights Act prohibited discrimination by employers based on religion. However, while Cain’s comments are alarming, even more concerning is that not one of the other Republican presidential candidates has denounced his outrageous statements.

In 2007 Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney stated that if he were elected president, he would not pick a Muslim for his Cabinet – not because they were a threat to America, but because there were so few in America, they didn’t merit a Cabinet position.

Cain was applauded when he said he was uncomfortable with a Muslim in his cabinet. Republican Newt Gingrich was cheered when he joined Cain’s call for a loyalty oath for Muslims.

Gingrich equated American Muslims with communists and Nazis, saying, in part, “I’m in favor of saying to people, ‘If you’re not prepared to be loyal to the United States, you will not serve in my administration, period. We did this in dealing with the Nazis and we did this in dealing with the communists.’”

During his presidential campaign, Gingrich announced that the Palestinians are an invented people, meaning that they have no right to have their own independent state.

Americans must never remain silent in the face of bigotry. They must condemn those who seek to divide them. In all quarters and at all times, Americans must teach tolerance and denounce racism, anti-

Antisemitism and all ethnic or religious bigotry wherever they exist as unacceptable evils.

Cain and the like should not be given a free ride to spread fear just because his chances of winning are low. He must be confronted by mainstream Republicans who oppose his views so they send a clear message to America that the GOP is not the party of hate, but an inclusive one – for all Americans (9).

The Republican Allen West joined the Congressional Black Caucus on January 5, 2011. He is the first Republican to join the caucus since former Congressman Gary Franks retired in 1997.

Ideologically, West has cast his work overseas in historical terms, theorizing that America is following in the footsteps of Charles Martel at the Battle of Tours, or the 300 Spartan Hoplites at the Battle of Thermopylae, in defending Western civilization against Muslim threats from the Middle East.

In speaking on what he believes to be Islam's proclivity for violence, West remarked that "Something happened when Mohammed enacted the Hijra and he left Mecca and he went out to Medina, it became violence." In lieu of this view, in February 2011, West cited the threat of "radical Islamic terrorists" as his motivation for voting to extend provisions of the Patriot Act; however, he voted against another extension in May 2011.

In January 2011, West joined House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairwoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) in condemning the official flying of a Palestine Liberation Organization flag in Washington D.C. West said that the raising of the flag is "an attempt to legitimize an organization with a known history of terrorist actions".

West's rhetoric has won him both support and condemnation from differing groups along the American political spectrum. Members of the conservative movement view him as a "torch bearer" and "conservative icon", with Sarah Palin and Ted Nugent both recommending him for Vice President, and Glenn Beck supporting him for President. Several

remarks by West have caused differing degrees of controversy. These include calling President Obama “an abject failure”, ordering both pro-Palestinian demonstrators and the views of “chicken men” Democrats to “get the hell out” of the United States, opining that drivers with Obama bumper stickers are “a threat to the gene pool”, and pronouncing that black Democrats are trying to keep African Americans “on the plantation”, while casting himself as the “modern-day Harriet Tubman” ferrying them to rescue. In a critical summation of West’s stylistic bombast, the left-leaning Mother Jones magazine opined that “[for West] every sentence is a proxy war in the larger struggle between patriots and the ‘people in this world that just have to have their butts kicked.’”

Allen West claimed that Islam is not a religion but is instead a “totalitarian theocratic political ideology” that is a “very vile and very vicious enemy.”

When asked during an interview with The Shalom Show how he would work with others “like Keith Ellison, who supports Islam” West stated that Ellison, a Minnesota Congressman and practicing Muslim, represents the “antithesis of the principles upon which this country was established.” West later argued that his initial comment was misconstrued. He said the comments were “not about his Islamic faith, but about his continued support of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).” In a Boynton Beach Town Hall meeting, West told the Miami leader of CAIR that “I will always defend your right to practice a free religion under the First Amendment, but what you must understand, if I am speaking the truth, I am not going to stop speaking the truth. The truth is not subjective.”

It was not strange then that Allen West, the outspoken Republican and tea party favorite narrowly lost to Democrat Patrick Murphy in Tuesday’s elections.

Almost two weeks after Election Day, a recount of ballots from Florida’s 18th congressional district showed that Allen West lost by an even wider margin than expected. NBC called the race for Democratic freshman Patrick Murphy, rendering a harsh blow to the Tea Party.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, welcomed the rejection of Islamophobic candidates by voters nationwide. In addition to Congressman Allen West who was defeated in Florida, Republican Congressman State Representative Adam Hasner, was defeated in his bid for Congress. Hasner once co-hosted an event featuring Dutch anti-Islam politician Geert Wilders that was also sponsored by Anti-Muslim hate group leader Pamela Geller. In 2009, Hasner attempted to block a “Florida Muslim Capitol Day.” In 2007, he sponsored a screening of the anti-Muslim film “Obsession: Radical Islam’s War Against the West” for state legislators.

A third Florida anti-Muslim candidate, Terry Kemple, lost his bid for the Hillsborough County School Board. Kemple’s main issue in the race was seeking to keep Muslim speakers out of local schools.

Muslims have been angry with the Republican Party over the anti-Islam campaigns played by its candidates to win votes.

Former House speaker Newt Gingrich had described Islamic Shariah as a mortal threat to the United States. Gingrich had also called for a ban on all mosques near Ground Zero “so long as there are no churches or synagogues in Saudi Arabia.”

Former Republican candidate Rick Santorum had also described Islamic Shariah as “an existential threat” to America.

Cain, who withdrew from the race for the White House, later modified his position by calling for an unconstitutional “loyalty” oath for Muslim appointees.

Recently, a Republican Missouri lawmaker described Islam as a disease like polio while another Alaska Rep. branded Muslims as ‘occupiers’ of American neighborhoods.

In early 2011, Rep. Peter King (R-NY) implied that American Muslims are not “American when it comes to protecting our nation during times of war.”

“When a war begins, we are all Americans, but in this case, this is not the situation. In addition, whether it is pressure, whether it is cultural tradition, whatever, the fact is the Muslim community does not cooperate anywhere near to the extent that it should. The irony is that we’re living in two different worlds.”

King held a series of five anti-Muslim hearings that was opposed by a broad spectrum of community groups.

According to an analysis conducted by CAIR, the hearings had the U.S. House Congressional Anti-Muslim Caucus ultimate effect of disproving King’s two main allegations against American Muslims.

In the last congressional elections, King easily defeated his opponent.

In 2011, Republican Michele Bachman (R-MN) claimed that sharia, or Islamic religious principles, may replace the Constitution, saying its consideration in American courts “would usurp, and put Sharia law over the Constitution, and that would be wrong.”

In 2012, she led a McCarthy-like campaign that sought to portray essentially any Muslim in public service as an infiltrator worthy of suspicion.

Islamophobe Frank Gaffney, a leading proponent of government interference in Islamic religious practices, admitted spending “hours, over several days” with Bachmann briefing her on his anti-Muslim conspiracies.

Republican Michele Bachmann won by less than two percent of the votes cast.

American Muslims have hailed the downfall of candidates known for their hostile tone against the Muslim sizable minority and their religion in Congressional elections.

Muslim leaders have given credit to efforts by American Muslims to raise public awareness about Islam, which led to the defeat of Islam phobic

candidates. The elections witnessed an increased political awareness and mobilization effort among American Muslims that dealt a major blow to the Islam phobia machine (10).

Remarks by Republican candidate Gabriela Saucedo Mercer that the lifetime goal of Middle Easterners is to cause harm to the United States sparked outrage for preaching hate and bigotry against Muslims in the country. Her un-American and intolerant remarks were an insult to the millions of Americans of Middle Eastern heritage who had contributed so much to America.

Mercer, a Tea Party-backed candidate, won the support of the Republican Party on Tuesday to run in an Arizona congressional district that flanks the Mexican border.

Muslim Congressman Keith Ellison denounced the Republican candidate for sowing fears and division in the congressional race.

“I am disappointed in Gabriela Saucedo Mercer’s decision to inject division and fear into the election in Arizona’s Third District,” Rep. Ellison, the first Muslim elected to Congress, said, “America was founded on the fundamental belief in liberty and justice for ALL, regardless of race, religion, nationality, or background.”

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, a non-sectarian civil rights and civil liberties group, also slammed the Republican candidate’s words, according to Reuters.

Mercer’s remark once again exemplified the bigotry and racism rampant within the Republican Party, and politics as a whole.

American Muslims had to empower the Muslims vote in 2012 election and combat racism and bigotry of the Republican Party.

Since 9/11, US Muslims have become sensitized to an erosion of their civil rights, with a prevailing belief that America was stigmatizing their faith.

Anti-Muslim frenzy has grown sharply in the US in recent months over plans to build a mosque near the site of the 9/11 attacks in New York, resulting in attacks on Muslims and their property.

Moreover, US Muslims have been sensing a growing hostility since Republican Representative Peter King held a hearing on what he described as “radicalization” of US Muslims.

Lawmakers in at least 13 states have introduced proposals forbidding local judges from considering Sharia when rendering verdicts on issues of divorces and marital disputes.

American Muslims, whose religiosity and family values traditionally attracted them to Republicans in the 2000 elections, were becoming increasingly irritated by a growing anti-Muslim rhetoric on the Republican campaign trail. As it showed, the Republicans were all falling over each other to demonize Muslims and Islam. As the race heated up, Muslims were disturbed by a growing anti-Muslim rhetoric overshadowing Republican electioneering.

Although there are no official figures, the United States is believed to be home to between 6-8 million Muslims. With large concentrations of Muslim voters in key swing states such as Ohio, Florida, Virginia, and Michigan, the American Muslim community has the potential to be influential in determining the next president of the United States.

The political empowerment of minority communities can only be accomplished through positive civic engagement and by building coalitions with other Americans who seek social justice. Accordingly, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) partnered with American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) in order to strengthen the political voice of the diverse American Muslim and Arab-American communities in the November elections.

The new CAIR-ADC partnership was organized to coordinate voter empowerment and election activities. The two national organizations worked together on hosting voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives, phone banks, town hall meetings, and candidate forums.

American Muslims realized that it is only through such partnerships and coalitions that a united voice can rise against the hate and bigotry.

The coalition believed that voting is power and that it is incumbent upon all American Muslims to address all forms of fear mongering, including this most recent form of islamophobia, wherever they rear their ugly heads. American Muslims deserve the same rights and respect as other citizens. This time Muslims were committed to making sure their community's voice is heard in this critical election cycle (11).

It is obvious that the Muslim vote helped Obama defeat Romney in the 2012 presidential election. There is no real way to tell how effective the Muslim vote was, but we can make assumptions based on statistics of high concentration of Muslims around the important battleground states. There are several states that were extremely important for Romney but he lost them. The Muslim vote played a major role in swinging the state for Obama against Romney in Virginia, Florida and Ohio. Let's look at the results for each state and then the estimated Muslim population from "2010 U.S. Religion Census: Religious Congregations and Membership Study" in those states:

Virginia: President Barack Obama 1, 852, 123; Mitt Romney 1, 745, 397
Difference 106, 726. Estimated Muslim population 250,000 +

Florida: President Barack Obama 4, 129, 360; Mitt Romney 4, 083, 321
Difference 46, 039. Estimated Muslim population 400,000 +

Ohio: President Barack Obama 2, 672, 302; Mitt Romney 2, 571, 539.
Difference 100,763. Estimated Muslim population 150,000 + (12).

The seven million strong American Muslim community – remained under siege since 9/11 tragedy – has decided to actively participate in the nation's political process in a bid to make its voice heard. Muslim community's political activism was reflected at the Democratic National Convention where the number of Muslim delegates had quadrupled since 2004. There were more than 100 Muslim delegates representing some 20 states at the Democratic convention in Charlotte, N.C., in September last. That's up from 25 delegates in 2004.

Muslim Americans perceive Mitt Romney as the more anti-Islamic candidate due to his irresponsible comments regarding sensitive Middle Eastern issues, including the on-going Arab-Israeli conflict. American Muslims were also disappointed with the Republican Party when its convention adopted an amendment to their platform supporting a ban on foreign law (read Sharia). The so-called anti-Sharia legislation has become another tool to foment hatred against Islam and Muslims. At the same time many Republican leaders continued rhetoric against Islam.

Republican candidates found it tempting and beneficial to bash Muslims as a way to attract voters. They didn't understand that in twelve states minority groups, including American Muslims played a decisive role in Romney's defeat.

4- Islam phobia industry

It had been almost 11 years since the September 11, 2001 attacks were carried out by a group of Islamic fundamentalists part of Al Qaeda. You would expect anti-Muslim bigotry to decrease after the wounds of 9/11 healed, after it became clear that the vast majority of American Muslims have no inclination to attack their own country. You would be wrong.

Nathan Lean exposes the multi-million dollar cottage industry of fear mongers and the network of founders and organizations that support and perpetuate bigotry, xenophobia, and racism, and produce a climate of fear that sustains a threatening social cancer.

This Islam phobia industry perpetuates the utterly insane theory of Frank Gaffney's that the Muslim Brotherhood has infiltrated the U.S. government and is subverting it from within.

There is an industry of hate mongers that have gone to great lengths to sell its message to the public. It strives to whip up public fear of Muslims. The most important nodes in this industry are the online peddlers of hate. I hear focus on Pamela Geller, the blogger at the front of the network of Islamophobes in the U.S. You can see Geller's fingerprints in many of the public battles over Islam in the U.S., most prominently the ginned-up hysteria over the Park 51 Islamic centre. Currently, Geller is in

the spotlight for a series of anti-Muslim ads she has put up in New York, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.—with more on the way. She has used her celebrity, boosted by Fox News (a principal player in the Islam phobia industry), to create cross-continental activist networks against Islam. Robert Spencer, Geller’s partner in crime, is also involved in such hate mongering. People such as Robert Spencer, Daniel Pipes, Bill Warner, Sam shamon and Martin Kramer, all online Islamophobes, spread each other’s postings and write-ups to their own audience. With each new click of the mouse, the story grows.

These hate mongers have produced books, movies, TV shows and blogs in order to push a message of fear by selectively quoting Islamic hadiths completely out of context or with no context at all that sound potentially violent in nature.

Their game plan is to push the idea that Islam is a political system that should be illegal, that there is a “stealth jihad” movement against the United States, and that Muslims are “near enemies,” meaning that they are taught to appear friendly while deceiving others about their true nature.

In a 140-page report, researchers at the Centre for American Progress have traced the origins of rising Islam phobia in the United States to what they call a “small, tightly networked group of misinformation experts guiding an effort that reaches millions of Americans through effective advocates, media partners, and grassroots organizing.”

The report features profiles of some figures – blogger and activist Pamela Geller and think tank denizen Frank Gaffney- who will be familiar to regular Salon readers. It names Gaffney and four others as the leading “misinformation experts” who generate anti-Muslim talking points that spread in the media: Daniel Pipes of the Middle East Forum; David Yerushalmi at the Society of Americans for National Existence (who is also the architect of the anti-Shariah movement); Robert Spencer of Jihad Watch; and Steven Emerson of the Investigative Project on Terrorism.

The report also reveals that a small group of little-known foundations have in the past decade provided more than \$40 million to groups promoting Islamophobia. There are five major players who we call the central nervous system of the Islamophobia network. They're primarily responsible for creating the talking points and manufacturing the messages and memes that get distributed and mainstreamed via the network. The second aspect of it is the grass-roots organizations and the religious right. Examples include Act for America, Eagle Forum and Stop Islamization of America. They take these talking points – such as, “Shariah is a legal-political-military doctrine that will supplant the United States Constitution” – and promote them. Then these ideas – such as “Obama may be a Muslim,” “Shariah is a threat,” “mosques are Trojan Horses” – are mainstreamed through a media megaphone. That's primarily Fox News but also radio shows like Sean Hannity, Glenn Beck and Rush Limbaugh and websites like WorldNetDaily, FrontPage Magazine and JihadWatch. Finally, we see how mainstream politicians use these talking points.

The eight foundations mentioned as funding this effort include, almost exclusively, ones founded and funded by Jewish donors. Lest readers not be aware of this fact, the Center for American Progress lists not only the other beneficiaries of the charities and foundations (most of them having Jewish or Israel in the title) but also goes to the trouble of naming the individuals behind these charities – not just the donors but also those who serve on the boards.

The report also stokes the view that rich Jews operate behind the scenes and use their wealth to control the media and government policy (politicians are also mentioned as being ensnared in this web).

It is therefore evident that the Islamophobia industry does not just exist in the fever swamps of the online world. There are disparate players in this industry. They come, principally, from right-wing Zionism and evangelical Christianity, uniting to form a Judeo-Christian front in their battle against Islam. Their founders, too, come from these worlds— though the right-wing Zionist world has fueled the majority of anti-Muslim activists.

It is this Christian Zionism that closely binds right-wing evangelicals with strong supporters of the Jewish state. The Zionists who spread anti-Muslim bigotry can be placed in three camps, according to Lean: religious (Jewish) Zionism, Christian Zionism and political Zionism. “For Religious Zionists, prophecy is the main driver of their Islam phobic fervor. For them, Palestinians are not just unbidden inhabitants; they are not just Arabs in Jewish lands. They are not just Muslims, even. They are non-Jews—outsiders cut from a different cloth—and God’s commandments regarding them are quite clear.” And there is the political Zionism that sheds religious language but is still hostile towards Muslims. As Max Blumenthal wrote, these figures, some of whom are neoconservatives, believe that “the Jewish state [is] a Middle Eastern Fort Apache on the front lines of the Global War on Terror.”

Lean also pinpoints how anti-Muslim bigotry has spread from the Internet world to the very heart of some government policies on terrorism. From the New York Police Department’s surveillance program to Peter King’s hearings on “Muslim radicalization,” anti-Muslim bigotry has become institutionalized in some quarters of government.

Lean correctly focuses on how the right has manufactured fear and hatred of Muslims. But it would be wrong to leave out the other side of the equation: how liberals in this country who are part of the Democratic Party have also helped anti-Muslim sentiment to spread.

This is not to say that Democrats spew Islam phobia in their election campaigns. No, the Democratic Party does not go that far. But they are largely silent when ugly anti-Muslim bigotry comes into play, which allows the right to step into the vacuum in a debate over Islam in the U.S. When the Democrats run away from the issue, there is no one left in the mainstream to challenge the right’s Islam phobia (13).

Under the guise of defending freedom and American values, right-wing anti-Muslim activists are campaigning to prevent Muslim-Americans from freely worshiping and practicing their religion, curtail their political rights, and even compel their deportation. A growing faction in the American Right claims that Muslim-Americans, who comprise just 1% of the population, are subverting the Constitution and taking over the country.

These accusations have helped to foster anti-Muslim hostility, reflected in the rise of anti-Muslim prejudice and increased attacks on Muslim-Americans and houses of worship. Tied in with hatred of President Obama, fear of religious diversity and hostility toward immigrants, anti-Muslim rhetoric and paranoia has become a mainstream if not ubiquitous part of the conservative movement and the Republican Party.

To Muslims the Republican Mitt Romney represents the Christian right and the Judaeo-Christian coalition working against Islam. During his campaign, he did not raise a finger to oppose the bigotry and intolerance of his party towards Muslims and their religion. This is why Muslims did not give him their votes.

5- Mitt Romney surrounded himself with Islamophobe hate mongers and took as a foreign adviser John Bolton an incompetent politician known by his enmity to Muslims and the Palestinian cause.

John Bolton has direct ties to the Romney campaign, serving as an unpaid adviser that regularly appears at campaign events stumping for the presumptive GOP presidential nominee. "John Bolton insists on good results for America and is someone I respect," Romney said in December. "I think he's a fine man with great capacity."

It is truly disturbing that a presidential candidate of any party would seek the advice of a person with such a clear record of anti-Muslim bigotry. Former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton blocked every attempt the Palestinians submitted to the United Nations to get their independent state. He announced, "The Palestinians push for the U.N. to vote on their statehood is a fantasy effort and a result of the Obama administration's incompetent diplomacy." Bolton also told Fox News that if the Palestinians go to the U.N. General Assembly for approval after the expected U.S. veto in the Security Council, the move should be ignored." Bolton also said, "Well if I were Israel and/or the United States, I wouldn't pay any attention to a General Assembly resolution. Look, the General Assembly could vote this week to make Disney Land a state and it wouldn't have any more impact outside of the General Assembly hall for Palestine or Disney Land."

On Frank Gaffney's radio show, Mitt Romney foreign policy adviser John Bolton defended Rep. Michele Bachmann's (R-MN) call for the U.S. government to investigate suggestions that government employees — including a top aide to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton — are affiliated with a Muslim Brotherhood plot to infiltrate the U.S. government.

On Gaffney's radio show (Gaffney is the brains behind Bachmann's campaign), Bolton said Bachmann and some of her fellow Republicans are just asking questions, adding that he's "mystified" by the criticism Bachmann has received.

During his campaign, Mitt Romney did not mind having a picture with Pamela Geller the well-funded Islam phobic racist hate monger. In the picture, a broad smile was drawn on Romney and Geller's faces. The smile of Romney was that of a man deceived, for Geller had succeeded to ensnare him in her Islam phobia trap, while that of Geller was of a sneaky woman saying, "We will bring to the White House another Islamophobe hate monger."

Was Mitt Romney so naive as to forget that Pamela Geller is a part of a group of islamophobe hate mongers spreading dissension and discord between Muslim and non-Muslim Americans? He didn't care about Muslims' feelings when their religion was tarnished at the hands of Pamela Geller and a bunch of morons heavily financed by the Zionists and Christian right.

More serious than Geller posing in a pic with Mitt Romney is the insidious nature of Romney's ties with the Islam phobia movement. Romney's senior foreign policy adviser is none other than former Bush era UN Ambassador John Bolton. Romney should have been questioned about his ties to radicals and joining an Islamophobe hate monger like John Bolton to his staff.

It is disturbing enough that the senior foreign policy adviser to Mitt Romney, John Bolton, has the ear of anti-Islam extremist, Pamela Geller who has in turn strong relationship with the Islamophobe hate mongers Tommy Robinson (EDL), and Robert Spencer.

Mitt Romney has not expressed his view on the witch-hunt against Muslim-Americans supported by Michele Bachmann. But his foreign policy adviser John Bolton defended Bachmann and her allies in an appearance on anti-Muslim, anti-Obama conspiracy theorist Frank Gaffney's radio show. Bolton told Gaffney that he was "mystified" by the criticism of Bachmann and that she was "simply raising the question." Bachmann, for her part, is beyond raising questions: last week she declared, "There has been deep penetration in the halls of our United States government by the Muslim Brotherhood."

American presidents have traditionally been the governors and the senators of key states. Mitt Romney should have understood that the rise of sizable politically active Muslim populations in those states positions Islamic groups to exert a strong influence on national politics. A governor or senator who seeks out Muslim support to be elected at a state level must gain Muslims' votes in these states.

Like California, Texas and New Jersey—Virginia and Ohio now rank among the top ten Muslim populated states in the country.

Urban representation is another factor. Muslim populations are still negligible even in the top ten states, but they are often clustered in urban areas. Muslims made up 10 per cent of the population of Washington D.C. in 2000. The numbers are probably higher today.

In order to win the vote of Muslims Mitt Romney should have considered the political weight of Muslims in swing and battleground states. He should have ridden his campaign from the Islamophobe hate mongers. He should have not listened to Bolton's destructive advises regarding the Palestinian Israeli problem. Following Bolton's advice, Romney looked as if he were saying, "Those of us who are rich owe our success to hard work and strong values, and those who are poor have only themselves to blame." Bolton connected Romney's view to Netanyahu's strategy. Talking about the Palestinian Israeli conflict Romney said, "The Palestinians are undeserving of a state, so why should Israel be pressured to give them one, or even to keep alive the prospects of one?"

At the private fundraiser held May 17 Mitt Romney spoke about the Palestinian case. He proclaimed that peace in the Middle East is not possible and a Palestinian state is not feasible.

At an intimate dinner, at the home of controversial private equity manager Marc Leder in Boca Raton, Florida, with tickets costing \$50,000 a plate, during the freewheeling conversation, a donor asked Romney how the “Palestinian problem” can be solved. Romney immediately launched into a detailed reply, asserting that the Palestinians have “no interest whatsoever in establishing peace, and that the pathway to peace is almost unthinkable to accomplish.” Romney spoke of the Palestinians as a united bloc of one mind-set, and he said, “I look at the Palestinians not wanting to see peace anyway, for political purposes, committed to the destruction and elimination of Israel, and these thorny issues, and I say there’s just no way.” Romney did not believe in the peace process and, as president, would aim to postpone significant action: “So what you do is, you say, you move things along the best way you can. You hope for some degree of stability, but you recognize that this is going to remain an unsolved problem...and we kick the ball down the field and hope that ultimately, somehow, something will happen and resolve it.”

This bias and irresponsible statements of Romney showed clearly that he was blindly adopting the poisonous views of the religious right and Zionist organizations regarding the Palestinian cause. These wrong and injuring views are also embraced by John Bolton, Romney’s adviser in foreign policy.

Muslims know perfectly well that the Religious right embraces Zionism. The religious right and Zionism joined forces and set up a conference by the name of “The Interfaith Zionist Leadership Summit”. The summit resulted into certain ugly resolutions: (1) Islam is a terrorist religion (2) the problem is not radical Islam but the problem is in fact Islam (3) the expulsion of all Palestinians into Jordan – the two State solution of the Zionist far right (4) actually there are no such people as Palestinians, they are simply Arabs who have no claim to the land Israel currently occupies (5) there can be no quick fix through peace road maps, it is a

war, one side will win; and one side will lose; Israelis must defeat the Palestinians.

It is noteworthy to mention in this respect that the Christian leaders in the Middle East and the Al-Quds (occupied East Jerusalem) are on a holy mission to expose Christian Zionism as a pseudo-religious movement that twists Christianity for its own political purposes.

“We don’t consider these people [Christian Zionists] a legitimate Christian sect or denomination,” Munib Younan, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, said.

Younan co-signed the landmark Jerusalem Declaration on Christian Zionism along with leaders of seven other major churches in the Middle East.

In the document, the Christian clergy denounced the so-called Christian Zionism as a heretic movement whose ideas and ideals are incompatible with authentic Christian teachings: “It’s a false teaching that corrupts the biblical message of love, justice and reconciliation.”

Jerusalem Declaration on Christian Zionism signatories include Patriarch Michel Sabbah, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Archbishop Swerios Malki Mourad of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate and Bishop Riah Abu el Assal head of the Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

In the declaration, the eight church leaders reiterate opposition to alliance between Christian Zionists and the right-wing Israeli government. They warned that the alliance would inevitably lead to unending cycles of violence all over the Middle East.

“And to Christian Zionists we say, you are not welcomed here. Don’t come to our country to dupe and mislead people with your money and poisoned ideology.”

“The views of the Christian Zionists have nothing to do with true Christian teachings and ideals,” insists Bishop Younan. “It is actually a heresy.”

Bishop Younan said that their declaration is to communicate certain messages to all those concerned with what happens in the occupied lands, including Christian Zionists themselves.

“To the Americans and the world at large, we would like to say that the Christians of Palestine stand firmly with their people for freedom and justice and deliverance from the Israeli occupation.”

“To the Palestinians and the Arab world, we say do not lump Christian Zionists with true Christianity which stands with the oppressed and the weak against the oppressor,” says Bishop Younan (14).

The views of Romney regarding the Palestinian Israeli conflict showed clearly his shallow understanding of foreign policy. John Bolton misguided and deceived him when fed him the views of the Interfaith Zionist Leadership Summit. Mitt Romney should have known that the United States is the strongest when she is realistic, when she respects the views and needs of other countries. Romney did not understand that President Obama had to deal with the inheritance that he got from the erroneous policies of his predecessor George W. Bush. Obama tried to reconcile the world with US policy. President Obama’s speech to the Muslim world in Cairo aimed exactly at that. He cared for the Arabs and the Muslim world. He cared for the Palestinians and the Israelis, and he wanted to solve the Palestinian problem as much as he could. The man who is the President of the strongest nation on earth has compassion in his heart that compels him to feel the misery of others and hastens to solve their problems.

To give an example showing the difference between Obama and Romney’s attitude towards Muslims, we can listen to Obama’s words during his last visit to Myanmar (Burma). Myanmar considers the Rohingya Muslims to be illegal immigrants from neighbouring Bangladesh and the government does not recognize them as citizens. In recent months there was an organized attack from the majority Buddhists against the Muslim minority in the western state of Rakhine that has killed at least 167 Muslims. The Buddhist Government didn’t interfere to stop the massacre but let it to continue.

With at least 32,000 people displaced by the latest violence – and at least 107,000 since trouble broke out in June – thousands have sought safety in refugee camps around the Burmese town of Sittwe. Those camps are at crisis point, according to Refugees International, which estimates that nearly a quarter of children were malnourished.

During his last visit to Myanmar President Obama told a packed audience for a speech at Yangon University, “For too long, the people of this state, including ethnic Rakhine (Muslims), have faced crushing poverty and persecution. But there’s no excuse for violence against innocent people.”

“The Rohingya ... hold within themselves the same dignity as you do, and I do. National reconciliation will take time, but for the sake of our common humanity, and for the sake of this country’s future, it’s necessary to stop incitement and to stop violence.”

Another example is a quote from Obama’s election night victory speech:

“It doesn’t matter if you’re black or white, or Hispanic or Asian, or Native American, or young or old or rich or poor, able, disabled, gay or straight,” President Obama told his crowd of supporters gathered in Chicago. “You can make it here in America if you’re willing to try.”

What’s most interesting about Romney’s foreign policy rap, other than its belligerent emptiness, is that it is so remarkably close to the underlying foreign policy principle of the Bush-Cheney administration, which treated the entire world as composed of small and unruly children whose most important need was for “resolve” and “discipline” from Big Daddy. I thought we abundantly learned in those years that “resolve” was a poor substitute for skillful diplomacy and a foreign policy/national security strategy a bit more complicated than “cross us and we’ll blow you up.” Romney does talk a lot, though not with any clear connection to the Middle East, about free trade. At a time when Americans are more than a little ambivalent about free trade, does he really think that is going to be our triumphant, self-evidently attractive formula for addressing the world’s or the Middle East’s problems? (15).

Mitt Romney's only possible ticket to the White House was based on a blatant, brazen racist campaign strategy, combined with racist laws to block the votes of the poor, elderly, students and minorities pursued by governors and legislatures of his party.

John Bolton deceived Mitt Romney when he concealed from him the fact that only when there is peace in the Middle East, can there be peace throughout the world, and as the Middle East goes, so goes the rest of the planet.

Obama however, had a wider vision; he realized that the Middle East is but a microcosm of the macrocosm known as planet earth, and that the direction of global peace, or war, can be easily judged by what is happening right there in Israel, in Palestine, and among the many neighboring nations.

It is clear that the extreme and often incoherent Romney campaign contributed to his downfall. The Republican Party's primary process included some incendiary comments about Muslims that were hard to forget. Trust towards Romney was thus broken not only because of what had transpired in the primaries, but also in his campaign's portrayal of Obama as a Muslim, as if being a Muslim was a crime. Muslim Americans believed that he was exploiting an Islam phobia that had recently become very mainstream for conservative, right wing pundits and some politicians in the Republican Party.

No wonder that Romney's ignorance of foreign policy and apparent bigotry, and racism towards Muslims and the Palestinians cost him the votes of the American Muslims and those supporting them. Romney was therefore not an acceptable alternative.

6- A large sector of the Americans fear the Christian right

It seems that Mitt Romney was not aware of the role of the religious right in the Republican Party. Many Americans characterize religious right evangelicals as a "cancer" in the Republican party that will not go away, taking the party down with them.

The evangelical explosion in politics began in 1980, when millions helped Ronald Reagan win the presidency and evangelical leaders like the late Rev. Jerry Falwell and the Christian Broadcasting Network's Pat Robertson rose in national political prominence. Evangelicals were credited with helping George W. Bush win the presidency in 2004 with 79 per cent of the evangelical vote.

In the 2012 election, 79 per cent of white evangelicals voted for Republican Mitt Romney. The evangelical vote consisted of 27 per cent of the overall electorate — the highest it has ever been in an election, but the evangelical right's social conservative agenda concerning marriage equality and abortion was rejected.

In the Obama-Romney's elections, the American people were aware of the extremism, the misogyny, the anti-woman platform, anti-abortion platform that many evangelicals hold. This election season, right wing Roman Catholic bishops also joined the Republicans with their message that President Obama was "anti-religious." The evangelicals have dug themselves in a very deep pit that they cannot get out of. In the elections the Roman Catholic bishops, the evangelicals have proven to be very ineffective. However, the right wing evangelicals are not going to go away because of the big money they enjoy and because they cannot budge from their ideals that are rooted in their faith.

The whole matter in fact rounds about money, the leadership. It is Karl Rove, Ralph Reed, Mike Huckabee — they earn a lot of money off pushing this agenda and saying you gives us donations, millions or 25 bucks a pop, and we will deliver the vote. They have failed miserably and they have taken the Republican Party down with them.

Mitt Romney should have introduced to the voters his future vision concerning the conservative ideas of the Christian right which uses the Republican Party as its political arm. Mitt Romney should have known that culture had been pushed further and further into the background. He should have realized that there's an inexorable demographic evolution going on, one in which older, more culturally conservative people are dying off, as younger, more culturally liberal people become adults and play a larger political role. Mitt Romney should have thought about how

would he handle the shrinking of the Christian right appeal? How the religious right is to undergo its own evolution. Mitt Romney should have offered his vision concerning this evolution.

During his campaign however, if we add up all the time Mitt Romney spent talking about the business and the wonder of markets and compared it to the time he spent talking about abortion and same-sex marriage, the ratio would probably be ten to one or more. The Tea Party may have been made up in large part of cultural conservatives, but they swore up and down that all they cared about was their economic agenda(16).

Mitt Romney should have felt the fear of the American people that the religious right, if in power, could pull America backwards and undo all the progress that has been made.

All these issues should have deserved from Mitt Romney careful attention and reflection. However, he did not, or let us say, 'his adviser out of ignorance and incompetence misguided him.

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