

## Hate and racist politics have become the ideologies of the day

Mario T. García | Aug. 21, 2012 NCR Today

Mitt Romney's selection of Paul Ryan as his vice presidential running mate is clearly to throw red meat to the extreme right wing of the Republican Party. This only continues the move of the party in that direction since the 2008 election.

The defeat of John McCain that year convinced many of the extreme right that a more moderate candidate like McCain not only couldn't win, but also did not represent the heart and soul of the party. The election of President Barack Obama only exacerbated the takeover of the Republican Party by the extreme right in the disguise of the tea party.

What rankled these people was not only that they lost the election, but they lost it to a black man. Signs or symbols are important in a culture. We respond to them, whether they come in the form of a religious one, such as a cross, or a commercial ad. The same applies in politics. We all have grown up to accept the sign or symbol that an American president is a white male. Some of us, obviously, believe or believed this more than others.

Obama does not match this sign or symbol. Although he is half-white, that's not the sign he conveys, since he clearly in color resembles more his African father. Hence, he is a black president. This was and is unacceptable to some, especially to extreme right-wing Republicans. They associate him with all of their fears about the changing demographics of the country, where in many places race minorities such as blacks and Latinos, Asians and those of Middle Eastern backgrounds represent the majority.

They further link these changing demographics to their fears that the country is losing its American values and principles that are being replaced by "foreign" influences ("I want my country back!"). This, of course, is nonsense, but they believe it. When Romney and Ryan, for example, say Obama is "destroying the country," what do they mean by this? When have we ever heard this before where a duly-elected president is accused almost of treason?

No, this is hate and racist politics, and it has to be called out. I'm not saying Romney and Ryan are racists, but they and their extreme supporters are using code words and signs and symbols that, in my opinion, convey racist implications. Good Americans of whatever political allegiance have to stand up and not allow this type of divisive politics to take over. We have to take our country back.

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