

The 2012 Election is Over, But the Fight Goes On!

By Charles Mock



After a long grueling struggle for the right to vote without egregious barriers, advocates of true democracy have won! Our fight was against goliath money and powers that threatened true democracy—democracy that is *of* the people, *by* the people and *for* the people. We fought against members of the Goliath family on battlefields across this nation: goliath voter suppression states, goliath corporate power and privilege and goliath Super-PACs that collectively used “Jim Crow Jr.” strategies to wage a war against certain peoples’ right to vote.

In honor of our ancestors that suffered, bled and died, and the ongoing struggle for equal opportunity, we have successfully fought the good fight of faith for our families and our nation.

In the last few years in particular, African Americans, along with a supportive cast of other people of color and our white brothers and sisters, have come face to face with civil rights moments, most recently, Troy Davis and Trayvon Martin. Time and again we have taken on the spirit of our ancestors - though dormant for a season- and proven that it is now awake, alive and well! Our ancestors’ spirits have arisen and made their way from the meditations of our hearts, to our distressed minds and into streets in the form of protest, proving once again, we *“ain’t gonna let nobody turn us around!”*

African Americans owe a great deal of gratitude to the NAACP in these dark and discriminating days of surging racism, sexism and classism. The NAACP’s courageous leadership has relentlessly led African Americans and other People of color alongside our justice-minded white brothers and sisters into the battlefields of streets and courtrooms. They blew the trumpet of truth, justice, and transparency and we responded in unprecedented ways.

Undaunted by long lines, inclement weather, hurting feet and arthritic hips, and learning that President Obama had already won re-election, we were not deterred on election day. We fought against voter suppression whenever and wherever it raised its ugly head. We fought intimidating tactics, bait and switch, deception, lies and misdirection. We fought together with folk who neither President Obama’s nor Romney’s campaigns focused on, the ones I have come to call the “L” People.

The “L” People—the least, the last, the lost, the lowly, the lonely, the loved-less, the low-income--these are the folk who my son, Brentin Mock, a journalist for *COLORLINES* (www.colorlines.com), stated,

“...missed work and had to pay babysitters to stand in lines that long bore the burden of democracy so that we could move forward...”

“...people of color and those of limited resources who ended up at the front lines, mainly because it was their necks that were on the chopping blocks under these laws...Low-income and working-class voters, black, Asian, Muslim, Latino and LGBTQ voters all jumped through hoops to make this election, and this democracy, as free and fair as possible, even when the campaigns failed to mention them.” (source: http://colorlines.com/archives/2012/11/waiting_in_the_long_lines_toward_democracy.html).

We fought against being called lazy; against legislators who tried to redefine and legitimize rape. We fought against those who tried to turn us away once we reached the voter tables. We fought against internal spirits of anger, cynicism and pessimism born of months if not years of unemployment. We fought against purged voter rolls and challenges when it came time to cast our vote.

With the NAACP in the lead and historically African American denominations connected at the hip, together we fought for freedom and our families through our faith. While Monday morning quarterbacking continues and analysts theorize why Governor Romney lost, there is a theory that I have not yet heard registered by the political pundits. The theory is rooted in biblical thought and grounded in our liberating Christ. It is simply this: ***“If God be for us, who can be against us?”***

Through a partnership with the NAACP, historically African American churches found reason to put their doctrinal differences behind them to create common ground on behalf of those who needed and sought a unified effort against the 21st century Goliaths. As a member of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. under the leadership of Dr. Julius R. Scruggs, I



I am encouraged by a partnership that sent no uncertain signal regarding the domestic implications and ramifications for our nation in the November 2012 election. African Americans became persuaded that the 2012 Presidential election would determine to a large extent the vision that would guide domestic and foreign policy. It was an election that would determine whether austerity or prosperity would be the lens through which we would move forward. An austerity-centered lens would mean draconian cuts to programs dedicated to the most vulnerable citizens of our nation—struggling seniors, financially strapped students vying for a viable future, families with physically or emotionally challenged children and families trying to hold it together with non-living wage jobs with little or no benefits.

As President Julius R. Scruggs stated on a number of occasions to his constituency throughout the NAACP and NBC, USA, Inc.-led “Get Out The Vote” campaign,

“While we may disagree with President Obama on the issue of same-sex marriage, let it be crystal clear that we are not a one-issue oriented convention...”

“Indeed, we have great appreciation for our president and for many of the stands that he has taken. For example, we appreciate his positions on health care reform, public education, student college loans, ending of the war in Iraq, leading in turning around the U.S. auto industry, expanding Pell Grant spending, expanding health care for children, providing payment to wronged minority farmers, framing a foreign policy that has improved America’s image in the global community, advocating freedom and justice for all people, regardless of race, creed, color, ethnic background or gender.” (source: <http://www.nationalbaptist.com/about-us/news--press-releases/the-same-sex-marriage-issue,-voting-and-christian-responsibility.html>)

The 2012 election is over but it would be naïve to believe the fight for freedom, our families and our faith is over. We must continue to hold together the partnerships and coalitions we’ve forged during this election cycle and leverage our strengths and assets for the struggles to come. Giants will continue to come, confronting and attacking democracy, but there is one thing for sure: *“The bigger they are, the harder they fall.”*

From time to time in recent history, African American denominations and the NAACP have been knocked down and found it difficult to organize against anti-democratic giants and forces of evil. While we were down, movements took place across this nation that set African Americans and other people of color back economically, socially and politically. However, true to the lyrics in the Donnie McClurkin song, *We Fall Down, But We Get Up*, in some strange and mysterious way, the Tea Party, racists, sexists, states’ rights legislators, Super PACs and other forces had a hand in provoking us enough to, *“get back up again.”*

Now that we are back on our feet we must stay on our feet. We must financially champion the Civil and Human Rights Associations, leaders, coalitions and partnerships that are fighting in streets, suites and state courtrooms. Now that we are back on our feet, we must continue on the path of securing Truth, Justice, Righteousness and Freedom of Choice: fighting for our families with the same determination and resilience with which we fought for our right to vote.

Charles E. Mock is the executive secretary of the Home Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. and a Co-Chair along with Rev. Nelson Rivers III, Vice President for Stakeholders Relations of the NAACP, and Dr. James Allen, Vine Memorial Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA of the NAACP and NBC, USA, Inc. 2012 *Get Out The Vote* Partnership.
cjenmock@gmail.com | 814-504-9957