

Liars Don't Lead They Mislead

Written by Dr. Wilmer J. Leon, III
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A leader is defined as a person who manages the process of social influence in which he/she honestly enlists the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. A liar is a person who intentionally delivers a false statement to another person in order to deceive that person. Liars don't lead, they mislead.

Leadership was a common theme articulated throughout the Republican National Convention. Republicans contend that President Obama lacks the leadership necessary to move the country beyond the current economic crisis and does not possess the leadership necessary to navigate the treacherous international waters going forward. Republicans contend that former governor Mitt Romney and Rep. Paul Ryan (D-WI) possess the leadership qualities to effectively manage the economy and strengthen America's position on the global stage.

There are honest, fact-based debates between President Obama's supporters and detractors regarding his current record, leadership style and negotiating skills. Many have questioned the President's willingness to make concessions during budget and healthcare negotiations. His foreign policy decisions, including Guantanamo, the use of drones to perform bombing raids and the assassination of Muammar Gaddafi. The difference between legitimate debate and what was presented at the Republican convention is the utter lack of factual content by too many Republican speakers. They did not make misstatements, exaggerations, mistakes or errors. They lied.

During his acceptance speech, Rep. Ryan falsely accused President Obama of "raiding" Medicare by \$716 billion. Ryan falsely attacked President Obama for failing to keep open a Janesville, WI GM plant that actually closed under Bush in 2008. He castigated the president for walking away from the Simpson-Bowles Commission's recommendations to cut the deficit. Of

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course, Ryan never mentioned the fact that he was on the committee and that he voted against the committee's recommendations. Ryan also lied by blaming Obama for a budget deficit mostly created by programs that Ryan himself voted for. According to the NY Times, Ryan "lamented the nation's credit rating — which was downgraded after a debt-ceiling standoff that he and other House Republicans helped instigate."

During his acceptance speech, Ryan said, "I accept the duty to help lead our nation out of a jobs crisis and back to prosperity..." No Mr. Ryan, you can't "lead our nation" by lying to it and failing to take responsibility for problems that you helped create. Liars don't lead, they mislead.

Former Secretary of State Rice spoke on behalf of the Romney campaign telling America that we "can't lead from behind." Well, suffice it to say, she's been lying a long time and her lies are well documented. Go to Rep. Henry Waxman's (D-CA) report Iraq on the Record: the Bush Administration's Public Statements on Iraq. According to the report, "Between September 8, 2002, and September 28, 2003, National Security Advisor Rice made 29 misleading statements (lies) about the threat posed by Iraq in 16 separate public appearances...Ms. Rice made significantly more statements that were false — 8 — than any of the other four officials (Cheney, Rumsfeld, Bush, or Powell)..."

Finally, at the top to ticket the truth is just as hard to find. Romney said, "Unlike President Obama, I won't raise taxes on the middle class of America." According to the Tax Policy Center, his tax plan lowers on the top 2 percent of earners and raises taxes on everyone else; taxes on the middle class would go up by about \$2,000 to pay for Romney's tax cut for the wealthy. Romney also stated "And unlike the president, I have a plan to create 12 million new jobs." The truth is, President Obama proposed the American Jobs Act, and it was killed by congressional Republicans. According to PoliticusUSA, "The second part of Romney's lie was a bit more devious. Romney promised to create 12 million new jobs, (knowing) that economic forecasts show that if nothing is done, the economy will create 11.8 on it's own..."

Another lie that Romney told during his speech was, "I will begin my presidency with a jobs tour. President Obama began with an apology tour..." As The Washington Post's Fact Checker put it, "The claim that Obama repeatedly has apologized for the United States is not borne out by the facts, especially if his full quotes are viewed in context." In other words, Romney's proclamation is a lie.

In his speech Romney said about Ryan, "...I saw in Paul Ryan - a strong and caring leader who

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is down to earth and confident in the challenge this moment demands.” Ryan’s not down to earth. He’s a man who has willingly constructed a narrative to create artificial distinctions between President Obama and himself. He’s not a leader, he’s a liar.

Romney said about himself, “Americans have a choice. A decision. To make that choice, you need to know more about me and about where I will lead our country.” Well, Romney will lead America back to the polices of Bush 43 and VP Dick Cheney but they were conspicuously absent at the convention, not invited.

Romney/Ryan can’t lead America down the right path with lies and deceit. We saw that movie with their Republican predecessor with the help of Ms. Rice.

Romney pollster Neil Newhouse stated, “Fact checkers come to this with their own sets of thoughts and beliefs, and we’re not going to let our campaign be dictated by fact checkers...” In a representative democracy facts do matter and checking the facts is how we hold our representatives accountable. Romney and Ryan have based their campaign on “smoke and mirrors,” “slight of hand,” political prestidigitation, lies and deceit.

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