

## 51<sup>st</sup> State

Kris King – November 29<sup>th</sup> 2012

<http://www.rantinaminor.co.uk/2012/11/51st-state/>

I don't know if you've heard about this but, apparently, there's been a big election of some kind recently? I can't remember where, it was only mentioned briefly on the news ... I think it was Australia, but in any case I get the impression that a lot of people thought it was a really big deal. I suppose that's always going to be a problem, living on a tiny island like ours; we're so cut off from the reality of what's going on in the world, and in the lives of other people, that we exist in a near-permanent state of total ignorance. If we're honest with ourselves, though, we'd have to admit that it's ultimately *our* fault that we never seem to know what's going on because, for the most part, we seldom venture outside our self-imposed bubble and, because we've built up such a formidable wall of self-delusion where our knowledge should be, whenever we *do* emerge from the anti-chrome shelters we built in the 1950s to keep all the colours out we end up exposing ourselves as a bunch of arrogant, self-serving, jizz-buckets who are doomed to perpetual, and miserable, failure for holding in the utmost contempt anyone and everyone who's even slightly different from us. Oh, hang on a minute ... sorry, I've gone and gotten myself confused again. When I said "us" and "we", I actually meant "Republicans". Fucking Republicans ...

You could, I suppose, be forgiven for thinking that I should be cock-a-hoop with joy that the world's most tawdry money-spunking competition was won by the guy who, broadly speaking, leans in the same essential political direction as I (and who, in fact, spunked significantly less money in achieving his victory). It would also be perfectly natural for you to assume that my pronounced exasperation at the end of the previous paragraph, in which the mere thought of having the vanquished party crossing the threshold of my consciousness and wiping their feet on my cerebral doormat filled me with a loathing that could only be removed by flushing my internal organs with Cillit Bang, in some way heralded the arrival of a tirade of self-satisfied gloating at having seen some of the most contemptible wank-flannels ever to have a suit put on them by their valet getting thoroughly arse-raped by a nation that had finally had enough of the lies being ejected night and day from the industrial shit-pumps in their faces. The truth is that I'm simply not in the mood to do a couple of celebratory somersaults or spend any time trolling the fuck-nuts on Free Republic; the best I've managed so far is an occasional giggle because I *really* don't feel joyous at all – I am, if anything, relieved at the result, but frustrated at the fact that the underlying problem **still** remains.

That problem, of course, is the Republican party itself. It may be the party of Abraham Lincoln (if only historically), but those days are long gone, and with them the notion that, barring a few enlightened souls, there might still be a single one among them who has **any** clue about how life in the real world actually works. *They just don't get it.* If you could pin the humiliating defeat that Mitt Romney, and the GOP as a whole, suffered at the hands of the electorate on any one thing it would be that they are fundamentally out of touch with the overwhelming majority of Americans. In some cases, they're even out of touch with reality itself. The party is almost entirely made up of white, wealthy, old, racist, misogynistic, homophobic, Christian men, and they wear every one of these characteristics with a sense of pride that makes Mardi Gras look like a quiet night in watching "Antiques Roadshow" with your easily-embarrassed nan; it's in the words they speak, the gestures they make, the policies they write, and the laws they enact, and if you don't share those self-same qualities you are **nothing** to them.

"Oh, come on!" you opine, "there are plenty of womens, gaybos, or people of colour who are members of the Republican party! You're just making an unfair generalisation to support your point!" Really? You're going to tell me the GOP is a cauldron of ethnic, cultural, sexual, and gender diversity? I don't think we need a demographic breakdown of Republican membership to say that's complete bullshit. Your denial insults and demeans us both. We've all seen Michelle Bachmann and Sarah Palin show total contempt for their own gender by campaigning and voting to restrict, or outright strip, millions of American women of their reproductive rights; we've seen the appalling way the Log Cabin Republicans took President Obama's announcement of his support for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community as just another opportunity to bash their Democratic rival; we've seen black

Republicans stand behind a party that has repeatedly tried to paint Obama's success as being the result of scrounging blacks and Hispanics who voted for him with one hand because the other was stretched out and waiting for the free welfare money they wanted in return.

These people put loyalty to party and dollar before race, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity; in their minds, their own basic fucking *humanity* is secondary to their allegiance to a group that actively **despises** some quintessential aspect of who they are as individuals. These are people who are not black or white, gay or straight, male or female; they are *Republicans* and, at the end of the day, nothing else matters when it comes to expanding one's wealth and influence ... not even country is all that important to them (if you can pocket a few million for yourself by sacking a third of your employees and outsourcing the work to China for a fraction of the cost, then that's what you do – who cares what effect it has on the nation's unemployment figures or economy?) Everything they do as a party is about extending their reach, or furthering their own financial interests (or those of their in-group), even if it is ultimately against their own self-interests.

But ... *is it*, though? Are they really shooting bullets into their feet while stuffing ever bigger fistfuls of cash into their pockets? Are they fuck! These people don't worry about denying rights to themselves because they know that they're rich enough, and influential enough, for the rules to never have to apply to them. You don't think that if Ann Romney, say, ever wanted an abortion she couldn't get one, no waiting, no jumping through hoops, no questions asked? A simple phone call and a big enough cheque, job done. You don't think that some monied-up gay republican ever worries about the protections that marriage equality would afford him when he's got a wad of notes and a lawyer on speed-dial to make sure he can get whatever he wants? A few million in the bank can buy you a lot of protection ... and discretion ... and cock. These people don't worry about their rights – they don't need to; who needs rights when you and your friends are running the fucking show?

These are the kinds of people who take great pains to pay as little tax as possible, and do everything they can to avoid ever being held accountable for anything. Look at Mitt Romney himself; during the campaign he dodged every request to be open about his tax returns – the most he was prepared to do was show his returns for the previous year only (in other words, back to around the time when he decided to make a run for the presidency). Why would he be willing to release the last 12 months worth of tax records *only*? Because if you went back any further you'd find that he paid less tax than the average American with barely one-hundredth his income – once he'd decided to run he'd have undoubtedly, under suggestions from his campaign advisers, paid his taxes like a good boy just in case the issue came up. This is a man, remember, who is on record as saying he enjoys firing people, and that he doesn't give much of a flying fuck about 47% of the population simply because, in his mind, they're a bunch of tax-avoiding, work-shy, welfare-scrounging losers (caution: combustible irony).

The idea that anyone who has ever worked a day in their lives could vote Republican is, quite frankly, insane; they don't represent the average, working American at all, and they certainly don't represent the middle class because they're the ones who have enough education to know how badly they're getting bum-fucked and, more importantly by whom (the working class, meanwhile, are too busy worrying about the pain to turn around to see who's causing it). There's an old joke, heavy on the satire, and frequently adapted as the situation demands. The version I'm familiar with goes like this ... a Tory MP (for those unfamiliar with UK politics that's a Conservative Party member of parliament), an immigrant, and a labourer are sitting down together for tea. On the table between them is a plate with 10 biscuits – immediately, the MP grabs nine of them before turning to the labourer and saying, "That immigrant is going to take your biscuit".

In Britain, the Tories (our political equivalent to the GOP) are known, with good reason, as "The Nasty Party", a moniker which would be equally as suited to their fellow conservatives across the pond. Todd Akin's comments as to how the female body can "shut down" the process of conception in the cases of "legitimate rape" are some of the most revolting ever uttered by a modern-day politician implying, as they do, that any woman who gets pregnant as a result of forced sexual assault in some way *wanted it*. When not engaging in the vile practice of victim-blaming, prominent Republicans are also in the habit of equating homosexuality with bestiality (Rick Santorum), comparing it to incest and paedophilia (Vicky Hartzler), declaring it somehow a choice (Newt Gingrich and others), or even, quite outrageously, suggesting that slavery was a "blessing in disguise" (Jon Hubbard). There are also numerous photos of attendees at campaign rallies for Mitt Romney wearing T-shirts that read, "Putting the WHITE back in the White House".

At this point I can hear the sound of a large number of glenohumeral joints snapping as arms are

thrust skyward in a desperate indication of the desire to set the record straight. "You can't tar the whole party with the brush of a few bad apples from the thin end of the iceberg!" you scream (possibly even with the comically mixed metaphors). "What about the many voices of compassionate conservatism emanating from the GOP?" You mean those really distant, barely-audible whispers that seem to be pleading for someone to rescue you from drowning in the tsunami of Republican arse gravy the party is permanently awash with? This dismissive, arrogant, ivory-tower, "fuck you" attitude is *endemic* to the right-wing (not just in America, but here in the UK too); it's native to their way of thinking. Don't believe me? How many high-profile members of the party condemned Akin's rape comments? How many stood up to criticise him when he claimed breast milk could cure homosexuality? My point **exactly** ...

Now, I'm not in *any* way trying to suggest that the Democrats are completely innocent in all this; the left are just as capable of being cack-brained, financial brigands, and self-righteous criminal bigots as the right, but this tends very much to be the exception rather than the rule. When it comes to this kind of behaviour Republicans are the greatest offenders by a country light-year and, since admitting to one's failings is considered to be the most shameful weakness a human can exhibit (except possibly for changing one's opinion based on new information), they have perfected the art of doubling-down on their intolerance and stupidity. In addition, they have somehow enshrined lying so successfully into party dogma that Romney pulled off the remarkable feat of lying, denying that he'd ever uttered the lie, then denying that he'd ever even denied it. The Republican party is so spectacularly full of shit that, to borrow Christopher Hitchens' judicious phrase, if you gave them an enema you could bury every last one of them in a matchbox.

Dishonesty is rule number one in the GOP play-book; there is no other reasonable way to explain how, when it comes to verifiable facts, they are wrong *so* often, and so *massively*, short of suggesting that they might be lifetime members of the One Direction fan club. It is, for instance, a demonstrable fact that Americans have **always** been financially worse off under Republican administrations for at least the last *fifty years* (people forget that Clinton inherited a deficit and turned it into a surplus, which Bush then turned into the biggest deficit in US history). They blame Obama for an economic crash that occurred on *their* watch, then announce that both the deficit and unemployment are growing when the exact opposite is true. Romney admitted he would have refused the auto-industry bailout and let them fail before going on to declare that Jeep were shipping jobs overseas (a flat-out lie that even Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne felt compelled to call bullshit on).

The inevitable question that any rational person must be asking right now is surely, "Who on earth would *vote* for these cock-twanglers?" When the fact that the states with the worst education, highest unemployment, and greatest dependence on welfare are red – *Republican* – states proves beyond doubt that these people specialise in running everything into the ground, you have to wonder who in the name of fuck would say, "Yeah, we'll have more of that!" When you can look at successive administrations over the last century and see that the Democrats have spent almost all of their time cleaning up the mess of the last Republican fuck-up, you have to question whether they, with their shit-eating grins, their god-bothering, aspartame-drenched, bullshit-scented faux-patriotism pouring from every orifice, are perhaps the greatest propagandists since Josef Goebbels, or whether the American people might be the most gullible fuckwits ever to possess a central nervous system?

It would be grossly unfair, not to mention completely untrue, to suggest that it's the latter; however, the former gives the Republicans far too much credit. What I think it comes down to is that on one side you have the average American who, in my experience, has always been warm, welcoming, and friendly, and on the other you have an unscrupulous shyster who will happily exploit their fellow countrymen's trusting nature, or make cynical appeals to their basest fears, if there's anything they could possibly gain from it. Look at how they've duped Americans into opposing universal healthcare; what kind of selfish fuck-nugget can seriously say the words, "Why should my hard-earned tax dollars pay for someone else's healthcare?" and call themselves a decent human being? By playing on their fear and greed, the Republicans can take an ordinarily good-hearted and generous American and turn them into a selfish bastard who would rather some stranger's head-wound go untreated if it meant having a few more bucks in their wallet.

I'm **proud** to know that when I'm not sick my national insurance contributions are helping someone who is, and I'm sure most Americans would be too; they do tend to lead from their heart (this is also their Achilles heel, sadly, as it makes them far more susceptible to manipulation). I was disappointed to hear that three of my American friends had voted Republican in the November election, but I was not entirely surprised; I was, however, quite taken aback to discover how they had all justified their

choice in *exactly* the same way – “I need to put **my** family first”. Now, this is a horrible point to argue against, because you run the extreme risk of coming across like a douchebag; however, argue against it I must. No one, least of all me, would *ever* try to persuade anyone that putting their family first is anything other than the absolute right thing to do – *if* your needs and those of whom you place at a lower priority are **comparable**. And, in this case, that’s simply not true ...

See, the thing is you probably already have your healthcare covered by your employer; some people don’t even have *jobs*, let alone healthcare. You will also undoubtedly be in possession of the right to marry the person you love (some of you will have even exercised this right); others are not so fortunate to have their relationship recognised and protected under the law. We’re talking about people’s *basic human rights* here; you are white, heterosexual Americans – you’ve *got* your rights, they were fought for and won a long time ago. You have healthcare. You can marry your partner. You can adopt children. You can be honest about your sexuality without fear of being fired. The one thing you *can’t* do, though, is put having a few extra coins in your pocket above civil fucking rights and expect us to believe that you still care for people as much as before. Sorry, but that’s **exactly** what it means to sell out other’s rights. Stop deluding yourselves, and stop insulting our intelligence and dignity by lying to us.

I don’t want you to think that I’m blaming Republican voters, because I’m not (at least, not entirely); Americans, as I said, are generally very warm-hearted people, but they’re also very trusting, and that’s led to them being filled with the kind of poison that results in millions of women voting for an absurdly misogynistic party that is *actively* working to strip them of their reproductive rights (many Republicans want Roe v Wade overturned, they’ve introduced laws that force women to have an invasive vaginal ultrasound before an abortion as a slut-shaming exercise, and they bleat about how “Wah, they want us to pay for their contraception, they want us to pay for them to have sex!” – for fuck’s sake, no, they just want their medical insurance to cover contraception; *they’re the ones still paying for it, you fucking imbecile!*) If you’re a person of colour, a woman, or a member of the LGBT community, and you vote Republican, you need to have a very urgent word with yourself.

It’s often been said (albeit with a satirical tongue buried deeply in the wall of a sarcastic cheek) that Great Britain is America’s 51st state, but the reality is far more intangible. It’s actually the place where Republican delusion resides; a world of picket fences, nuclear families, and teeth that are whiter than every neighbourhood. It’s a world where gay means happy, abortion is something godless communists do, and poor people haven’t been invented yet. The 51st state is where they teach the Republican math you do in your head to make yourself feel better. It’s an America that doesn’t exist, and never has (not even in the 1950s). It’s a world where you don’t need to think for yourself, because you’ve got a Republican government to do that for you, scaring you shitless that your perfect world is about to be ruined by atheists, homosexuals, and negroes. Work, marry, reproduce, consume, pray, vote ... repeat until dead ... that’s the only way to keep America pure and decent. Everything will be fine ... **we’ll** look after you.

The Republicans want you all to live in the 51st state; in *their* America ... don’t. Just say no. Let the fuckers secede instead ... no-one will miss them, least of all the stronger, brighter, smarter, happier America they’ll leave behind ...

