

An Open Letter to Obama Voters

Did you vote for **Barack Obama** in 2008? A lot of people did, obviously.

What a time. There's still room for improvement, but what a testimony to just how far we as a nation have come in terms of racial harmony, tolerance and diversity.

Only decades earlier a man like Barack Obama—a black man—couldn't even drink from the same water fountain as a white man, let alone become president of the United States. A hundred years prior to that, and he may well have been counted another man's property.

On Nov. 4, 2008, millions gathered at the ballot box to prove, once and for all, that, in large measure, we as a nation have healed from our disgraceful, self-inflicted wounds of racial abuse, bias and division.

That we could elect an African-American to lead the free world is indeed a very good thing.

We just happened to elect the wrong African-American.

In life, we sometimes find that the idea of a thing is far better than the thing itself. As a boy, I once ordered, from a comic book, a pair of X-ray glasses that promised to allow me to see the bones beneath my hand (my motives were a bit more ignoble). The two weeks it took for the glasses to arrive seemed like an eternity.

Once they did arrive, I ripped into the package and put them on, darting my head to-and-fro. It's difficult to express my level of disappointment. As I quickly discovered, the glasses merely formed a halo effect around objects, creating the

illusion of transparency. I felt embarrassed. I got took.

Barack Obama's presidency has been a halo effect. Like I did so many years ago, in 2008 America fell victim to false advertising. As the past four years have demonstrated beyond any serious debate, the idea of **President Obama** was far better than the reality of President Obama. We were promised the world. We were promised transparency; but we were sold an illusion. We got took.

Indeed, during the 2008 campaign, a then-Sen. Barack Obama promised us that, if elected, we would look back upon the moment he took office and "tell our children that this was the moment when we began to provide care for the sick and good jobs to the jobless; this was the moment when the rise of the oceans began to slow and our planet began to heal; this was the moment when we ended a war and secured our nation and restored our image as the last, best hope on earth."

That was the idea of President Obama. That was what many good, well-meaning people voted for. That was the hope offered and the change promised.

That was not what we got.

Though it's certainly not a comprehensive analysis, during the second presidential debate, **Mitt Romney**, in response to Obama's attempts to gloss over his mounting leadership failures, summarized a few of the big ones. While addressing an audience member who, perhaps like you, voted for Obama in 2008, Romney observed, in part, the following:

"I think you know better. I think you know that these last four years haven't been so good as the president just described and that you don't feel like you're confident that the next four years are going to be much better either. ...

"He said that, by now, we'd have unemployment at 5.4 percent. The difference between where it is and 5.4 percent is 9

million Americans without work. ...

“He said he would have, by now, put forward a plan to reform Medicare and Social Security, because he pointed out they’re on the road to bankruptcy. He would reform them. He’d get that done. He hasn’t even made a proposal on either one.

“He said in his first year he’d put out an immigration plan that would deal with our immigration challenges. Didn’t even file it.

“This is a president who has not been able to do what he said he’d do. He said that he’d cut in half the deficit. He hasn’t done that either. In fact, he doubled it.

“He said that by now middle-income families would have a reduction in their health insurance premiums by \$2,500 a year. It’s gone up by \$2,500 a year. And if **Obamacare** is ... implemented fully, it’ll be another \$2,500. ...

“The **middle class** is getting crushed under the policies of a president who has not understood what it takes to get the economy working again. ... [T]he number of people who are still looking for work is still 23 million Americans.

“There are more people in poverty, one out of six people in poverty.

“How about food stamps? When he took office, 32 million people were on food stamps. Today, 47 million people are on food stamps. How about the growth of the **economy**? It’s growing more slowly this year than last year—and more slowly last year than the year before. ...

“The president has tried, but his policies haven’t worked.”

Recently, my wife and I attended an outdoor festival in central Virginia. Although the event was not political, there were people from both the Obama and Romney camps handing out campaign stickers and other items. I suspect that if a poll

were taken, liberals out-numbered conservatives by about two-to-one.

That's why I was so taken aback. Although we saw dozens of people wearing Romney stickers, we only saw one man wearing an Obama sticker.

We walked up to a fellow with a gray pony tail, John Lennon glasses and Birkenstocks. He was wearing a Romney sticker.

"Mind if I ask why you're voting for Mitt Romney?" I asked. "I assume you are."

His reply—and these were his words, not mine—was short and to the point: "Because I refuse to be that stupid twice."

Changing one's mind doesn't always reveal a tendency toward indecision. Sometimes, changing one's mind reveals a tendency toward wisdom.

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Editor's Note: *The opinions expressed in this article are solely those of Matt Barber and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Charisma editorial staff.*