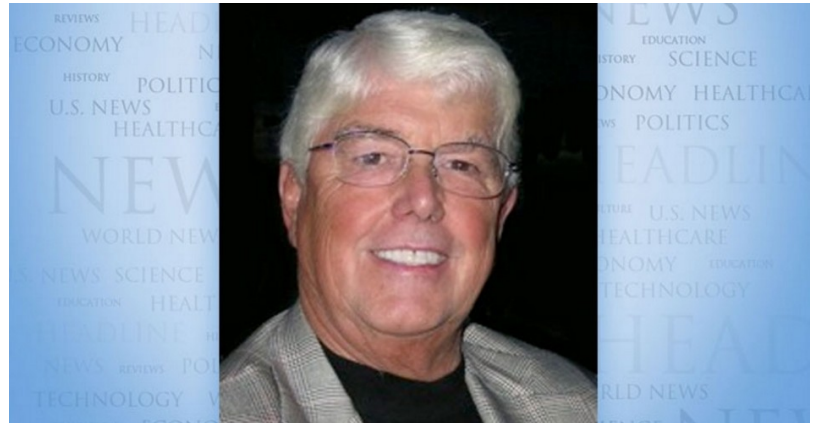




Written by [Wallis W. Wood](#) on November 8, 2013

Conservatism Didn't Die on Tuesday

Liberals are gloating that Tuesday's election results prove that committed conservatives can't win the big races. Their main exhibits are two Gubernatorial races: the defeat of Ken Cuccinelli in Virginia and the success of Chris Christie in New Jersey. The left's message can be summarized in four words: Conservatives lost big time. And, boy, do they love to rub it in.



There's just one problem with all of their self-satisfied jubilation: The facts don't support their claims. A much more accurate statement is that, once again, conservatives got sucker punched by liberals. And the GOP's so-called leadership has a lot to answer for, too.

To see what I mean, let's take a closer look at the race for Governor in Virginia. Yes, it's true; Terry McAuliffe, the Democratic operative and longtime friend of the Clintons, beat his Republican challenger, State Attorney General Cuccinelli, by 2.5 percentage points. But considering how Cuccinelli got sandbagged by his own team, it's surprising that the race turned out to be this close.

The biggest lesson from this week's elections is that there is no substitute for having plenty of money to spend. And McAuliffe, the longtime Democratic operative, sure did. He outspent Cuccinelli by some \$15 million — most of it on the nastiest and dishonest sort of attack ads.

Four years ago, the Republican National Committee spent some \$9 million on the Governor's race in Virginia ... and won. This year, it managed to come up with only \$3 million for Cuccinelli. Do you think the fact that establishment types control the purse strings at the RNC had anything to do with their pared-down support of a Tea Party favorite?

The spoiler in the Virginia race for Governor turned out to be Robert Sarvis, the Libertarian candidate. Thanks to having a record amount of money to spend for a third-party candidate, Sarvis managed to garner 6.5 percent of the vote. That was enough to tip the scales in McAuliffe's favor.

But here's an interesting rumor that's not getting much play in the national press. It's that Democratic operatives poured a ton of money into the Sarvis campaign, knowing that he'd siphon a lot more votes from Cuccinelli than their guy. Sad to say, their bet paid off with a victory for McAuliffe.

Now that they've proven how to split the conservative/libertarian vote, want to bet that the formula won't be tried in a lot more places in 2014? What are the chances this story will make the headlines on the nightly news shows? Don't hold your breath waiting for that to happen.

The media have been full of stories about how voters in Virginia were so angry over the 16-day government shutdown that they held their noses and voted for McAuliffe. This is probably true in the northern Virginia counties adjacent to Washington, D.C. Is anyone really surprised that the bureaucrats, lobbyists and others dependent on government largesse want to make sure the good times don't end?



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Cuccinelli did his best to make the election a referendum on Obamacare, and he almost succeeded. Despite being vastly outspent in the closing days of the campaign, he closed the gap dramatically. A month ago, polls said that McAuliffe had a double-digit lead. By the time the polls opened on Tuesday, the race was virtually neck and neck.

Exit polls in Virginia revealed that 53 percent of the people who voted on Tuesday are opposed to the Affordable Care Act. Of that number, more than 80 percent voted for Cuccinelli.

Brian Baker, the president of a conservative political action committee that supported Cuccinelli, said the election proved that "Obamacare is toxic." And he added: "If the shutdown had ended a week earlier, or the election had ended a week later, Cuccinelli would have won. This is a bad omen for Democrats in 2014."

Indeed it is. Of course, that's not how the mainstream media are calling it. But as the debacle that is Obamacare continues to grow, and millions more Americans lose health insurance they like (and get forced into a much more expensive government-mandated program), this is one issue that could win a lot of elections for Republicans in 2014. And maybe even 2016.

Speaking of the 2016 elections, the only surprise in New Jersey was the size of Christie's victory. The Republican incumbent was re-elected governor by a margin of 60 percent to 38 percent. There was no surprise in how quickly the national media moved to crown him as the front-runner for the Republican nomination for President in 2016.

Of course, Christie was only too happy to play into those expectations. Listen to what the rotund politician said in his victory speech:

I know tonight, a dispirited America, angry with their dysfunctional government in Washington, looks to New Jersey to say, "Is what I think happening really happening? Are people really coming together? Are we really working, African-Americans and Hispanics, suburbanites and city dwellers, farmers and teachers? Are we really all working together?"

As Alex Castellanos, one of the political analysts on *CNN*, said afterwards, "It wasn't an acceptance speech, that was an announcement speech."

But in his campaign in New Jersey, Christie moved far to the left of most Republicans. Here's how John Gizzi, chief political columnist for [Newsmax](#), put it:

By winning Tuesday night in a landslide election for his second term as governor of New Jersey, Chris Christie moved so far to the left it may be difficult for him to win the Republican nomination for president come 2016.

The GOP governor won in one of the bluest states, where President Barack Obama beat Republican Mitt Romney by 18 points in 2012. To win, Christie had to morph close to not only blue-state values and views, but become close to Obama himself — and he did just that.

Of course, that won't stop the left from hailing the maverick Governor as the new savior of the Republican Party.

According to the left, the Republican in primary in Alabama's first Congressional district was another Tea Party failure last Tuesday. But since three of the largest national Tea Party groups — FreedomWorks, the Tea Party Express and the Club for Growth — all refused to take sides in the Republican primary there, it's certainly stretching things to claim that they failed.



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Finally, what is there to say about the election for mayor of New York City? Voters there chose ultra-leftist Bill de Blasio over Joe Lhota, his Republican opponent, by a margin of 74 percent to 24 percent. You sure can't call that one close.

The Big Apple is about to get its first Democratic mayor in 20 years. De Blasio has promised that he will usher in a new era of extreme liberalism, including raising taxes on the wealthy. His "progressive" administration will be good news for Texas and other no-tax States, as more of the productive and successful flee the city for friendlier climes.

Tuesday's elections did prove a couple of things: One is that money can buy elections. That certainly shouldn't come as any surprise. The other is that there are plenty of voters who will cast their ballots for the big-government candidate. But we knew that too, didn't we?

Are there enough of us left to keep them from spending this country into bankruptcy? Looks like we're going to find out — whether we like it or not.

Until next time, keep some powder dry.

Chip Wood was the first news editor of *The Review of the News* and also wrote for *American Opinion*, our two predecessor publications. He is now the geopolitical editor of *Personal Liberty Digest*, where his *Straight Talk* column appears weekly. This article first appeared in [PersonalLiberty.com](#) and has been reprinted with permission.



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