NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Americans deserve more than mudslinging and fear-mongering

Mario T. García | Jul. 16, 2012 NCR Today

In our local *Santa Barbara News-Press* on Thursday, there was an article about a talk presented by Monica Crowley, an author I have never heard of. She spoke at the Ronald Reagan Ranch Center just north of Santa Barbara, Calif., that hosts talks by conservative Republicans.

The reason I mention this is because of what Crowley had to say about President Barack Obama that was not apparently challenged by anyone in the audience and that the reporter, Samantha Gilman, didn't even bother to raise any questions about the assertions made by Crowley, including at least asking local Democrats to comment on the assertions.

What were the assertions? Crowley accused the president of imposing socialism on the country through a redistribution of wealth that, according to her, has made "America unrecognizable." She added that "Obamacare" was an example of such socialism and that history showed that socialists and Communists want to control health care.

"Why?" she was quoted as saying. "Because if the government controls health care, it controls you."

She went on to allege that the president's parents were active Communists and that in college, the president sought out to study with the most Marxist, Communist and liberal professors. Moreover, she accused the president of harboring avowed Communists as his advisors. After four years in office, she said of the president, "We still know nothing about him except that he is a radical who is taking down our country." At the end of her speech, the audience gave her a standing ovation.

What is this all about? How do we explain such wild and false accusations that are allowed by the media to pass as acceptable political discourse? Is this all Republicans have to offer: a neo-McCarthyism? How can even Republican citizens sit and listen to such garbage and not raise any questions? Instead of engaging with the president's policies, they seem comfortable in simply listening to demagoguery. What is it about President Obama that seems to rile such people? I don't recall such irresponsible accusations against President Bill Clinton, for example.

Perhaps raising earlier questions about the whether the president was really born in the United States that, in my opinion, had more to do with the president's skin color and race than it had to do with his nationality and hence creating him as a stranger, as un-American and anti-American, it is a convenient next step to red-bait him and suggest that he is a socialist and closet Communist. This is unacceptable and should be repudiated by more ethical Republicans. The media, even conservative media, also have a responsibility to challenge unproven accusations or at least to provide a counterpoint of view.

But this local episode also tells me why the Republicans, led by Mitt Romney, are not going to win the presidency because all they have to offer the American people is scandalous lies about President Obama. They, themselves, have nothing more to offer. They have no real plans to help average Americans since, for them, average Americans are millionaires who only need fewer taxes. They have nothing to say about jobs, better

wages, health care for the uninsured, how to help the poor, about improving the schools and so forth. All they can do is lament how they are losing "our country" that, translated, means "our white country." I believe most Americans want to hear candidates and parties tell them how they will improve their lives, not candidates and parties who just engage in mudslinging and fear-mongering.

Source URL (retrieved on *02/13/2016 - 11:31*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/americans-deserve-more-mudslinging-and-fear-mongering