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“Well, I think you hit a reset button for the fall campaign,” said Romney spokesman Eric Fehrnstorm to *CNN*. Romney’s front-man was explaining how his boss, the man who believes in everything and nothing, will move away from conservatism (?) so as to appeal to the nation’s soft, gooey center. “Everything changes,” continued Fehrnstorm, “It’s almost like an Etch A Sketch. You can kind of shake it up and restart all over again. But I will say, if you look at the exit polling data in Illinois, you’ll see that Mitt Romney is broadly acceptable to most of the factions in the party. You have to do that in order to become the nominee ...”

Needless to say, Romney’s GOP opponents were quick to capitalize on the gaff. “We’re not looking for someone who’s the Etch A Sketch candidate,” said Rick Santorum while holding an Etch A Sketch.

“Imagine ... had Mitt Romney been around at the time we were drafting our Constitution,” said Santorum as he flipped an Etch A Sketch over and began shaking it, “He’d have ... just shook it up, after it was approved, to re-write it. We’re talking about big things here, folks. This isn’t a joke or a game.”

Newt Gingrich couldn’t help but have a little fun at Romney’s expense. “My children had Etch A Sketches,” said Gingrich holding the toy before a crowd in Louisiana. “They were great for car rides. But you’ll notice that their pictures aren’t permanent. There’s nothing locked down. You can re-do it anytime you want. And that’s the problem. If you’re somebody who invents RomneyCare, and at the signing ceremony you say that your closest collaborator was Teddy Kennedy, it’s pretty hard to explain to us it’s really conservative. And if you ran for governor saying you loved gun-control laws and thought that the gun-control laws of Massachusetts are terrific, it’s pretty hard to convince pro-Second Amendment folks that you can be trusted. And if you ran as a pro-choice candidate who actually wrote Planned Parenthood into RomneyCare by name, it’s a little tricky to convince us you’re right-to-life. And so, here’s Gov. Romney’s staff ... I mean, they don’t even have the decency to wait till they get the nomination to explain to us how they’ll sell us out. And I think having an Etch A Sketch as your campaign model, raises every doubt about where we’re going.”

Then Gingrich looked to the row of guests sitting before him, “Now, this is a spare Etch A Sketch, so I’m going to give it to you guys to play with.” And with that, Gingrich handed the toy to a nearby youngster. “You can now be a presidential candidate,” Gingrich told the tot.

In what had to be a first in presidential politics, Romney went before the press to do a little damage control on behalf of his spokesman.

“The issues I’m running on will be exactly the same,” Romney told reporters in Maryland. “I’m running as a conservative Republican, I was a conservative Republican governor, I’ll be running as a conservative Republican nominee — or, excuse me, at that point, hopefully, nominee for president. The policies and positions are the same.”

Romney has yet to articulate those conservative policies ... someone must have shaken his Etch A Sketch.

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