

Commentary Michael Costello Rice allies play the racist card

Michael Costello/Lewiston Tribune

As the Susan Rice saga demonstrates we will never be rid of racism. That's because liberals need it. It's their last redoubt when all else fails.

Rice is Barack Obama's ambassador to the United Nations. Few Americans could have named the person filling that job prior to her Sunday morning talk show fabulism tour a couple of months ago. She was dispatched by her boss to spread the politically expedient lie that the four Americans murdered during the 9/11 terrorist attack on our Benghazi consulate were done in by Libyan film critics upset over a YouTube video. The obvious intent was to smother any mention of the "T-word" (terrorism).

After such a stellar performance, Rice immediately became Hillary Clinton's likely successor as secretary of state for Obama's second term. Unfortunately, there are those in Congress who adhere to the rather quaint notion that America's top diplomat should be someone whose word can be trusted, at least when she is speaking to the American public or to the Congress.

But in Washington these days, there's a word for such old-fashioned folks. They're called "racists." Oh, and they're also called "sexists" too. If Rice were a lesbian, they'd be homophobes as well.

You see how this works? If you have the proper victim credentials, then you may use those credentials to shield yourself from all criticism.

The Obamatons have argued that when Rice went on those Sunday shows, the intelligence community had not yet assembled an airtight case for terrorism. That's nonsense. The CIA knew within minutes that it was terrorism and even knew who had done it. That information was supplied immediately to the White House.

But let's suspend our incredulity for a moment and grant the Obamatons their point. Even if terrorism wasn't a certainty, it still remains that there was absolutely zero evidence for the version of events that Rice tried to force-feed the American public. The film critic story wasn't a mistake. It wasn't a misinterpretation. It was a bald-faced lie.

But, as we are now learning, pointing out such obvious deficiencies constitutes racism. Several Democratic members of Congress marched out to the ever-present cameras and microphones that the mainstream news media keep at their disposal and accused Republicans of employing racist code words, such as "incompetent."

Does anyone else find it odd that it's only liberals who think of African-Americans when they hear words like "incompetent?"

But I digress.

The Washington Post described GOP opposition to Rice as "bizarre" and then went a step further by pointing out that roughly half of Republican congressmen who signed a letter objecting to Rice's likely nomination represent former Confederate states.

The Post should be asking why most of the rest of Congress is indifferent to Rice's five-stop serial lying tour.

But only Democrats are permitted to shelter under victim's status. We recently had a highly intelligent, supremely competent, African-American, female secretary of state also surnamed Rice. She routinely had to endure unambiguous racist smears and taunts from those who claim to have an ear for code words, including the Washington Post.

For example, former Washington Post political cartoonist Ted Rall frequently targeted Condoleeza Rice. He might have hit rock bottom with one cartoon in which he characterized her as George W. Bush's "house niggah."

No, I am not making that up.

Another Washington Post icon, Pat Oliphant, contributed his own racist caricature of Secretary Rice that would have embarrassed the editors of most Southern newspapers back in the 1950s. In his cartoon, Rice was portrayed as a fat-lipped parrot who would repeat anything Bush ordered her to say.

The New York Times got into the racist smear campaign against Condoleeza Rice as well. Cartoonist Jeff Danziger's "art" is syndicated by the New York Times. Danziger published a caricature of Rice as a thick-lipped, semi-literate black Southern nanny dressed in a grain sack dress, drawling out in what Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid would call a "negro dialect."

Back in 2001, Bush nominated Honduran immigrant Miguel Estrada to the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. Democrats vehemently opposed his nomination. In a strategy memo that was leaked to the press, Democrats cited his Latino heritage as the primary basis for their opposition.

I don't recall reading any complaints about that from the Washington Post. I certainly don't think that the Post thought that targeted Democratic obstruction of a Latino was bizarre.

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