

OBAMA'S GRANDMAMA AND THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF AN HONEST DISCUSSION OF RACE

By Don Feder

Posted March 30, 2008

Is Barack Obama guilty of elder abuse? Has granny-bashing become the centerpiece of his campaign?

The frontrunner for the Democratic nomination is touted as the president for post-racial America – the messiah who will heal our wounds and unite us in a common cause. Black and white together, we shall overcome- -- on the day Barack Hussein Obama becomes the 44th. President of the United States.

In truth, Obama is old racism in a new bottle. He is the latest in a long line of race-hustlers, from Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. and Jesse Jackson to Al Sharpton and the Reverend Jeremiah A. Wright. While easier on the palate than his predecessors, the vintage (Chateau Blame Society) is the same.

The left was delirious over Obama's "A More Perfect Union" speech, intended to excuse his association with racist Wright. MoveOn.org called it "one of the most honest and inspiring speeches on race in American history." Not to be outdone, Chris Matthews of MSNBC's Soft-In-The-Head Ball said it was "one of the greatest speeches in American history."

In the oration nonpareil, Obama compared Wright's acid anti-Americanism and racial obsession to his granny's admission that she was occasionally frightened by black men she encountered in public.

Such moral equivalency is the left's stock in trade. Recall that in the early 1980s, Jimmy Carter compared America to the U.S.S.R., claiming we both had "political prisoners."

Obama equates a timid, old lady (whose fear may have been racially tinged) with a man who spewed racial venom, anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism from the pulpit for over 30 years to tens of thousands of congregants.

In light of comments that the candidate's exploitation of the woman who raised and "sacrificed" for him, to justify his refusal to reject his lunatic pastor, was, shall we say, less than chivalrous, Obama tried to justify his ingratitude and opportunism:

"The point I was making was not that my grandmother harbors any racial animosity (*that was precisely his point*), but that she is a *typical white person*. If she sees somebody on the street that she doesn't know – there's a reaction in her that doesn't go away and it comes out in the wrong way," Obama told an interviewer on WIP radio in Philadelphia, 3 days after delivering the greatest speech since the Sermon on The Mount.

Obama was saying that when the "typical white person" sees a black man he/she doesn't know, they react "in the wrong way" – by stereotyping them – and that this is just as bad as Rev. Wright (Obama's pastor for 20 years) calling on God to "damn America ... for killing innocent people" and "for treating our people as less than human!"

According to Obama, Jesse Jackson is now a "typical white person." In a 1996 interview with *US News*, Jackson confided, "There is nothing more painful to me...than to walk down the street and hear footsteps, then look around and see somebody white and feel relief."

Why relief? Because, snake-oil salesman that he is, when it comes to his personal safety, Jackson reacts rationally. He knows that he's far more likely to be robbed or assaulted by an African American (especially a young male) than by a person of the Caucasian persuasion.

In this case at least, his perception is reality-based.

According to the New Century Foundation in its 2005 report "The Color of Crime," blacks (who are 13% of the population) commit more than half of all murders and muggings.

Back to Barack's grandmother. What was the context of her anxiety-causing encounter(s)?

Did she get the vapors every time she encountered a person of color in the street or on a public conveyance? Did the black men who frightened her do anything menacing? What did they look like? Did they harass her?

Would Barack's typical white person feel trepidation at the approach of, say, a middle-aged black man in a Brooks Brothers suit carrying a leather briefcase? How about a young, tough-looking dude with heavy gold neck chains, wearing a baseball cap backward and with a perpetual scowl on his face?

Would the typical black person behave the same way in either or both situations?

How would an attractive black woman feel if she heard footsteps behind her while walking down a darkened street and turned to see a Salvation Army band on the way to a recital? What if she instead encountered several white men in biker gear, with tattoos and nose rings? Would she have "a reaction in her" that "comes out in the wrong way"?

Why is it no one worries about being followed by roving gangs of Jewish accountants?

But, never fear, Barack is here -- to calm our racial jitters and help America transcend its perennial pigmentation problems.

Please note the sarcasm.

How did Obama choose to deal with his increasingly embarrassing association with a flaming bigot? Through moral equivalency and reminding us (will they ever let us forget?) of white America's sins of the past.

The post-racial candidate started with the standard lecture on our racial history periodically delivered by liberals of all hues.

There was slavery at America's founding (that lasted all of 85 years), there were segregated lunch counters 50 years ago, and Obama's white grandmamma was once frightened by a black man -- so it's perfectly understandable that the Reverend Jeremiah A. Wright said "We (*Americans*) believe in white supremacy and black inferiority and we believe in it more than we believe in God." Although Obama did allow that his spiritual

mentor used “incendiary language to express views that have the potential to widen the racial divide.”

After criticizing Wright – then telling us how much he loved the big lug (“I can no more disown him than I can disown the black community”) -- Obama got down to business.

The furor over Wright’s hatemongering reflects “the complexities of race in this country that we’ve never worked through – a part of our union we’ve yet to perfect,” the Senator informed us.

There followed the usual litany of lame excuse-making:

“Segregated schools were, and are, inferior schools: we still haven’t fixed them, 50 years after *Brown v. Board of Education* , and the inferior education they provided, then and now, helps to explain the pervasive achievement gap between today’s black and white students.”

“Legalized discrimination – where blacks were prevented, often through violence, from owning property, or loans were not granted to African-American business owners, or black homeowners could not access FHA loans That history helps to explain the wealth and income gap between black and white, and the concentrated pockets of poverty that persists in so many of today’s urban and rural communities.”

“A lack of economic opportunities among black men, and the shame and frustration that came from not being able to provide for one’s family, contributed to the erosion of black families .. .”

Instead of “A More Perfect Union,” Barack should have called his speech: “Speaking Cliches To The Credulous.” We’ve been hearing these anemic excuses since the 1968 Kerner Commission, created by LBJ to place the blame for urban riots on white society and exonerate the thugs who torched and looted their own neighborhoods.

Like the rest of the race industry, Obama claims it’s all about our collective sins.

Blacks have consistently poor academic performance? Blame segregated schools, and inferior schools and under-funded schools. (Despite

the billions poured into inner-city schools, and indeed the inner-cities, since the 1960s.)

Don't blame the fact that so many black children are being raised in fatherless families. Oh, I forgot, there's an excuse for that too – the “shame and frustration” caused by “not being able to provide for one's family” compels the majority of black men to abandon the women they've impregnated and the children they have fathered.

What is not to be blamed is an inner-city culture that glamorizes violence, inculcates macho irresponsibility and denigrates academic achievement as “acting white.”

Don't blame lack of initiative for the black/white income gap - notwithstanding 40 years of affirmative action, preferential admissions and minority set-asides. Blame “legalized discrimination” that ended almost half a century ago. (Barack's grandmother represents the only group in America it's still legal to discriminate against.)

The foregoing resolutely ignores the fact that, when education is factored out, for intact black families the income gap disappears. Blacks from the Caribbean and Africa – who weren't raised on a steady diet of racial resentment and blame-the-man – are recreating the success story of past immigrant groups.

America isn't ready for an honest discussion of race. Demagogues like Wright, who've gotten fat and sleek stoking the fires of black rage, aren't ready for it.

White liberals, who embrace black victimology as another reason to hate America and expand welfare programs, aren't ready for it.

Black men who would rather blame George W. Bush and the Republicans for being unemployed than get the training to get a decent job aren't ready for it.

Black women who'd rather collect a welfare check for baby-farming than act responsibly – and who let the street raise their children – aren't ready for it.

And the “typical white person” – who will do anything and everything to avoid being called a racist, no matter how irrational and unfair the charge – isn’t ready for it.

^The last person who tried to tell it like it is on race didn’t get a ticker-tape parade down Fifth Avenue. If he was white, he would have been dismissed as a racist/bigot/Nazi/Klansman. That he is black complicated matters.

In 2004, Actor/Comedian Bill Cosby (who has a PH.D. in education) had the audacity not to blame segregated schools, or inferior schools, or past economic discrimination, or the “shame and frustration that came from not being able to provide for one’s family” for the pervasive everything-gap between black and white Americans.

“It’s almost analgesic to talk about what the white man is doing against us, and it keeps a person frozen in their seat. It keeps you frozen in your hole that you’re sitting in to point up and say, ‘That’s the reason why I’m here,’” Cosby told an event marking the 50th. anniversary of Brown vs. Board of Education.

TV’s Dr. Huxtable went on to charge: “We got too many young girls who don’t know how to parent, turning themselves into parents.” “These young girls have no business having sex!”

And “young men and old men, you’ve gotta stop beating up your woman because you didn’t find a job, because you didn’t want an education and now you are (*earning*) minimum wage.”

“Brown or black versus the Board of Education is no longer the white person’s problem. We have got to take the neighborhood back. People used to be ashamed. Today a woman has eight children with eight different ‘husbands’ or men or whatever you call them. We have millionaire football players who cannot read. We have million-dollar basketball players who can’t write two paragraphs. We as black folks have to do a better job.”

“People marched and were hit in the face with rocks to get an education, and now we’ve got these knuckleheads walking around. ... These people are not parenting. They are buying things for kids. \$500 sneakers for what? And they won’t spend \$200 for Hooked on Phonics.”

“I’m talking about these people who cry when their son is standing there in an orange (*jump*) suit. Where were you when he was 2? Where were you when he was 12? Where were you when he was 18 and how come you didn’t know that he had a pistol? And where is his father? Or who is his father?”

It wasn’t an “I have a dream” speech, but more a “This is a nightmare and we did it to ourselves” speech.

The establishment did not hail Cosby as the prophet of post-racial America. *The New York Times* didn’t lionize Cos in an editorial headlined “Mr. Cosby’s Profile In Courage,” as it did Obama, after his Philadelphia performance.

Memo to Cliff Huxtable: When discussing the ills of the black community, if you want to be taken seriously, it is imperative to talk about slavery, segregation, under-funded education and the ongoing legacy of blah-blah-blah, as well as referencing Obama’s grandmother as a “typical white person.”

An earlier version of this appeared at GrassTopsUSA.org