

The Promiscuous Use of the R Word

☒ Let's count the number of people who think Donald Trump is a racist. On second thought, let's not. We'll be here all day. But a short list includes Whoopi Goldberg, Joy Behar, David Letterman, Bob Schieffer, some guy named Ed Schultz who screams a lot on MSNBC, and Chris Mathews who says Trump is appealing to "right-wing rubes" who "just don't like him [Obama] because he's black." Even Seth Meyers, the comedian who hosted the White House Correspondents' Dinner on Saturday night, took a jab at The Donald, who was in the audience. "Trump said recently that he has a great relationship with the blacks," Meyers told the crowd. "But unless the Blacks are a family of white people, I'll bet he's mistaken."

Yes, they're all liberals and liberals tend to see racism all over the place. It's one of the things that make them feel morally superior to everyone who doesn't see racism all over the place. It's one of the ways liberals tell black people, "We're the good white people. So please don't blame us for the past."

The ammo Trump handed his critics started with his fascination with Barack Obama's birth certificate. At the Correspondents' dinner, Mr. Obama, Comedian-in-Chief for the evening, returned the fire. "Donald Trump is here tonight," the president said. "Now I know that he's taken some flak lately, but no one is prouder to put this birth certifcate to rest than The Donald. Now he can get to focusing on the issues that matter. Like, did we fake the moon landing."

Big laughs from the journalists and their guests.

But some others who had The Donald in their cross-hairs weren't laughing – not after Trump said that Mr. Obama should

get “off his basketball court or whatever he is doing at the time” and pressure OPEC to lower gas prices. And not when he wondered out loud whether Barack Obama got crummy grades at Columbia and still managed, somehow, to get into Harvard Law. Can you say affirmative action?

On the View, Joy Behar said, “It’s very racist. He can’t fathom that a black man could be that smart. That’s what’s behind this.”

Whoopi Goldberg said, “I’m getting tired of trying to find reasons not to think of stuff as being racist. Being black, when you say, ‘You know, this is racist,’ 9,000 people say, ‘Oh, no, you’re just playing the race card!’ Well, you know what? I’m playing the damn card now!”

Bob Schieffer of CBS News said, “That’s just code for saying he got into law school because he’s black. This is an ugly strain of racism that’s running through this whole thing.”

David Letterman said, “It’s all fun, it’s all a circus, it’s all a rodeo, until it starts to smack of racism. And then it’s no longer fun.”

Ed Shultz kept it short and sweet: “I think Donald Trump is a racist.”

Let’s see if I have this right: It’s racist if Donald Trump questions Barack Obama’s academic credentials, if he wonders what kind of grades he got in college – but it was perfectly okay for liberals to make fun of President Bush because of his so-so grades at Yale. Really?

Of course it’s not just what Donald Trump said about Mr. Obama’s grades. The fact is if you say just about anything negative about President Obama there’s a good chance you’re going to be called a racist. Against his stimulus bill? You’re probably a racist. Against ObamaCare. Yup, you’re a racist. And it started even before he was elected.

Back in 2008, when Mr. Obama was running for president, Jacob Weisberg wrote a piece for Slate, the online magazine, which ran under this headline:

If Obama Loses

Racism is the only reason McCain might beat him

Are there some racists out there who hate Barack Obama simply because he's black. Sadly, yes. Are the birthers, especially the ones who still don't believe Barack Obama was born in the United States, unbearably stupid. Yes again. In a country of more than 300 million people, there are going to be some stupid bigots in the crowd. But the haters don't begin to represent all, or most, or even a significant percentage of the president's critics. The nuts and the haters play at the fringe. And whatever one may think of Donald Trump, he is no racist. His many New York liberal friends would have spotted it years ago if he was, and would have dropped him like the proverbial bad habit.

Yet, even smart liberals apparently can't fathom that it might be Mr.Obama's liberal policies that Donald Trump and the vast majority of conservatives don't like, not the color of his skin. So let's make it easy for my liberal friends. Let's play pretend.

Let's pretend that two years ago voters elected America's first black president. Except this one is a Republican and as conservative as Rush Limbaugh. Let's call him President Smith.

President Smith is against raising taxes on the wealthy. He's against massive healthcare reform that forces everyone who can afford it to buy an insurance policy. He's against going on a world tour apologizing for America's supposed sins. He's for lowering taxes on individuals and businesses. He's for cutting federal spending to get control of both the short term deficit and the long term national debt. He thinks citizens should have the right to own a gun and he's against any federal money

going to pay for abortions – or NPR.

Okay, here's the question: Are we supposed to think that Donald Trump or any other critic of President Obama would condemn our pretend President Smith because he's an African-American? I don't think so. Not even if he had a Muslim-sounding first and middle name. Not even if his father was born in Kenya. Not even if he had questionable grades way back in college and liked to play basketball. My guess is the overwhelming percentage of conservatives would be thrilled that they finally, at long last, had a true-blue conservative back in the White House and couldn't care less if he was black.

And who would be criticizing our make-believe President Smith for his hard right positions. Not Donald Trump. Liberals would, that's who. Does that make them racists? After all, Mr. Smith is black?