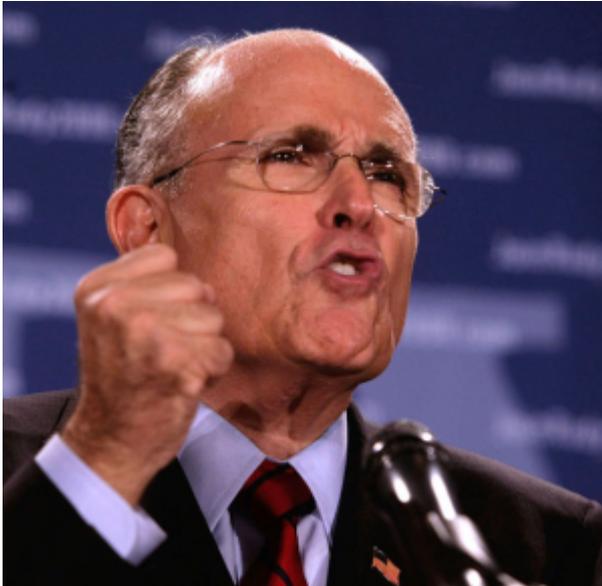


Rudy Giuliani Throws GOP Into Tailspin; So Says Media



When former New York mayor and presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani told a crowd earlier this week that he doesn't believe President Obama loves the United States, the media response was strong. It was also warranted.

Giuliani, after all, is a notable national figure. Though he's retired from public service, he remains a distinguished presence and powerful communicator in politics. A man of his stature saying something so undeniably presumptive and provocative does indeed constitute a national news story.

Giuliani was understandably hounded by many within the media to elaborate on his comments and he did just that, going on Sean Hannity's radio show to qualify his point.

"We have a president who spends all his time criticizing us," he told Hannity. "The president does not exude, in his rhetoric, the kind of love of America that American presidents traditionally exude, that we are exceptional, that we're wonderful, that we have done things that no other nation has ever done. And then, as a footnote to that, that we have our faults, and they have to be worked on, but we're one of the few countries that can really correct its faults."

Giuliani has since doubled-down on his comments, offering additional examples including the president's statements on

religion, and the fact that he held a press conference following the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, but not last week after Islamic State militants killed hostages.

Conservatives have had a mixed reaction to Giuliani's remarks. The liberal media and Democratic politicians have not; they've universally condemned them.

How the story evolved from there, however, is much different than it would have had Giuliani been a Democrat. As one would expect in today's predominantly left-biased media environment, Giuliani's words suddenly became a problem not just for him, but also for – you guessed it – the Republican Party.

"Post-autopsy, are you OK with the GOP rebranded as the party that decides who loves their country?" Ron Fournier of the *National Journal* asked RNC Chairman Reince Priebus.

Fournier later tweeted, "GOP owns this until somebody has guts/sense to say stop."

On MSNBC's *Morning Joe*, Giuliani's comments were *all about* the Republican 2016 field.

"The bigger picture is how other Republicans – presidential contenders – react to this," said Mika Brzezinski.

Mark Halperin said Giuliani's comments were "so unhelpful to Republicans in winning back the White House."

"This is a chance for Jeb Bush to say whether he's a leader or not," added Donny Deutsch.

In a piece on CNN.com, Alexandra Jaffe writes that Giuliani's comments "have put potential Republican presidential contenders in a bind, caught between a desire to criticize the President and the need to respect the office of the presidency."

Several other columnists have echoed Jaffe's thoughts.

Who knew that the opinion of one man who hasn't served in elected office since 2001 could throw the entire Republican Party, and the GOP's chances of winning back the White House, into a tailspin?

Can you imagine if a presumptive *Democratic* presidential candidate like Hillary Clinton were pressured by the media to weigh in on issues of infinitely higher importance within an administration that she was actually part of, and helped shape policy in? Me neither.

Anyway... Whether or not you agree with what Rudy Giuliani said, the notion that his comments are the GOP's problem is beyond absurd, and totally inconsistent with the standard the media routinely uses to critique figures within the Democratic Party.

When former Democratic senator Jim Webb said he was tempted to punch President George W. Bush in the face when he first met him (an undeniably more provocative statement than the one Giuliani made), the media exuded a collective smirk and did not call upon prominent Democrats to denounce Webb.

When former vice president Al Gore screamed to a roaring crowd that Bush had "betrayed" the country, the media explained that Gore was no longer a public servant and did not call upon prominent Democrats to denounce him.

When the current vice president, Joe Biden, said that the GOP wanted to put black people back in chains, Democratic leaders were not summoned for comment. It was just "*Joe being Joe.*"

When actual heads of the DNC, like Howard Dean and Debbie Wasserman Schultz, make one vitriolic statement after another, they're occasionally held accountable by the media, but the Democratic Party is never held accountable for *them*.

Even Anthony Weiner's perversions were never portrayed as a problem for the Democratic Party, nor were Elliot Spitzer's or

Bob Filner's. They were the acts of individuals, thus not reflective of the party.

You see, when a Democrat is taking heat for something they did, it's that Democrat's problem. Lots of times, the media won't even bother to mention that person's political affiliation in the story because they don't recognize the party as being relevant.

When a Republican is taking heat, however, it's portrayed as a symptom of a larger issue that party leaders had better answer for or else risk the perception of an endorsement. And you can bet the farm that that person's party affiliation will show up (likely multiple times) in each and every newscast and print-column on that story.

It's a blatant double standard, but it's widely accepted and sadly, it's probably not even recognized by many of the people in the news media who use it. They're that unself-aware.

As far as I'm concerned, political parties should never be held accountable for the words spoken by people who have retired from public service (whether it be Rudy Giuliani, Al Gore, Sarah Palin, Howard Dean, or former U.S. presidents). Doing so is pointless, unfair, and hopelessly partisan.

I want a free flow of ideas and thoughts (even the controversial and over-presumptive ones) in our national discourse, not a paralyzing political narrative every time someone speaks their mind.

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