

# When the Ends Justify the Meanness

☒ Those old, angry, white Republican guys are at it again. They just can't control their worst instincts. They see a black face and they go nuts.

Now they're going after U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice, not because she went on five Sunday news shows and told a fairy tale about why four Americans were killed in Benghazi, but simply because she's a black woman.

At least that's the story some liberals in the worlds of politics and media have come up with to counter GOP opposition to Ms. Rice, whom President Obama will almost certainly nominate to be the next Secretary of State.

Ninety-seven Republicans in the House recently signed a letter telling President Obama that, "Ambassador Rice is widely viewed as having either willfully or incompetently misled the American public in the Benghazi affair." They want him to pick somebody else. In the Senate, John McCain and Lindsey Graham are leading the effort to block her nomination.

This has riled many sensitive liberals who see in this opposition the twin devils – racism and sexism. Congresswoman Marcia Fudge, a Democrat from Ohio and the next chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus told reporters that, "It is a shame that anytime something goes wrong, they [Republicans] pick on women and minorities."

And a magazine called The Week chimed in, opining that, "Republicans are trying to take the newly re-elected Obama down a peg by getting 'Rice's scalp.' But in the end, Republicans will only compound their problems with women and minority voters if [Senator John] McCain filibusters Obama's black, female ambassador over this 'absurd' criticism."

TheGrio, an NBC News Web site aimed at African-Americans, ran a story that said, "The Republicans really need to lay off UN Ambassador Susan Rice. The image of a party of angry old white dudes going after an accomplished black woman will not give them the image makeover they need."

And the Washington Post went even further, with an editorial that read in part: "Could it be, as members of the Congressional Black Caucus are charging, that the signatories of the letter are targeting Ms. Rice because she is an African American woman? The signatories deny that, and we can't know their hearts. What we do know is that more than 80 of the signatories are white males, and nearly half are from states of the former Confederacy."

This is especially nasty. After the mandatory, "we can't know their hearts," the Post says in essence, maybe we can't but we know that those Republicans are white, that they're male and that a lot of them came from states that had slaves *way more than 100 years ago* – and that's all we need to know to convince us that they're racists. The Post should be ashamed but we all know nobody responsible for that smarmy editorial will feel the least bit guilty.

So there it is: If you criticize Susan Rice for putting out false information – possibly to protect the president who was busy telling voters that thanks to him al-Qaeda had been decimated – you're a racist. Never mind that there is not so much as a shred of evidence to support the allegation. In cases like this, facts don't matter. Opponents are bigots simply because they're white and come from the South. The ends justify the meanness.

But this isn't only about Susan Rice. This is a sordid lesson in how liberals use race and sex to smear their opponents and render them illegitimate.

So, if you ever opposed, say, President Obama for just about

anything, it couldn't be an honest disagreement over policy – not as far as those good white liberals are concerned. It must be because you're a bigot. You think Eric Holder is doing a lousy job. That proves just one thing. You hate him because he's black.

Former Newsweek White House correspondent and current MSNBC political analyst Richard Wolffe said as much, telling Chris Matthews that John McCain is leading a “witch hunt” against “these people of color, let's face it around this president, Eric Holder, Valerie Jarrett, now Susan Rice.” When Matthews asked, “You're saying that McCain is being driven by racial prejudice here?” Wolffe said, “There is no other way to look at this.”

Actually there is another way to look at this. Why not accept that McCain and the others oppose Susan Rice because they disagree with what she did, and that her skin color has nothing to do with anything? Why not accept that, since there is no evidence that any of them are racists?

Criticism of white politicians is perfectly legitimate, of course. Just ask George W. Bush or any other Republican who has ever run for president. But the same rules apparently don't apply to African American public officials – if they're *liberal* African American officials. Liberal elites can say whatever they want about Clarence Thomas, Condoleeza Rice, and (soon-to-be former) Congressman Allen West. They're black *conservatives*, which means they're fair game. It's perfectly *permissible* to call them Uncle Toms, house Negroes and the like. But utter a discouraging word about a black *liberal* and you're in for a heap of trouble

Black liberals must be protected. Their honesty and their competence cannot be questioned. No criticism, no matter how reasonable and legitimate, is permitted. And so, their detractors must be slandered as racists. Liberal African American officials – especially those of the highest rank –

can't be held accountable *precisely because they're African Americans*. You get the impression that simply being a black liberal is a kind of get out of jail free card? Oops, is that racist?

Is this what the most important movement of the 20th century – the great Civil Rights Movement – has come to?

To their everlasting credit, liberals were on the right side of the civil rights struggle. So it isn't difficult to understand their belief that racism lurks just beneath the surface, even in today's America. But what they seem *not* to understand is that racism is an ugly thing even when it's the soft kind, pedaled by supposedly *well-meaning* white liberals who are too eager to look the other way when black politicians – like every other kind of politician – get into trouble of their own making. Calling critics bigots is not progress. It's not even liberal.