

A Black Physician Reflects on the 2013 Inaugural Address

Despite the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, many of us were too busy seeing patients to hear President Obama's second inaugural address. It was less painful to read the transcript.

"What binds this nation together is not the color of our skin or the tenets of our faith or the origins of our names," he stated. Then let's end the government's obsession with African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and Asian-Americans (but never European-Americans). We are all Americans. I feel some moral authority and passion on this subject as a black American whose family moved here from England in the 1600s. I am a full-blooded American!

I can't bear to hear one more person say, "I'm so glad we have an African-American president." How ironic: Martin Luther King, Jr., urged that we judge people by the content of their character, not the color of their skin.

The head of the Congressional Black Caucus admitted that the CBC treats the President with a "deference" not accorded to a white President, and that the CBC is "hesitant" to criticize the current President. "With 14 percent unemployment [versus 6.9 percent for whites], if we had a white president, we'd be marching around the White House."

This Administration and/or its tools use race as a crutch when facing legitimate criticism, for example Susan Rice's willful or incompetent misleading of Americans about the Benghazi deaths. Rep. Jim Clyburn said calling Susan Rice "unqualified" to be Secretary of State was a racist "code word."

Curiously, "unqualified" was not a "code word" when used against Clarence Thomas in his Supreme Court hearings. It was noted that he was particularly unqualified because he had served on the D.C. Circuit for only one year and four months.

God forbid we should raise the same question about Elena Kagan or Thurgood Marshall (whom Thomas replaced), who were never judges at all.

And what about the other Rice? Who can forget how a former Secretary of State, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, was maliciously attacked as a “house slave” in the Bush Administration?

We next learned that the “patriots of 1776 did not fight to replace the tyranny of a king with the privileges of a few, or the rule of the mob.” I guess President Obama and Nancy Pelosi are not part of the Spirit of '76 since the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA or “ObamaCare”) was rammed through Congress with a five-vote margin, 34 Democrats and all 178 Republicans voting against it. Obama only had one open discussion session, breaking his campaign promise to have open negotiations on C-SPAN.

Instead, Democrats in the White House and Congress made private, multibillion-dollar deals with hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, other special interests—and each other.

Moreover, said Obama, “Together we discovered that a free market only thrives when there are rules to ensure competition and fair play.” Rules are fine when the President makes them up along the way. ACA waivers come to mind.

“We must make the hard choices to reduce the cost of health care.” Now that we are learning how “reform” will increase costs, it is clear that naming it the Affordable Care Act was a marketing tool. The most bothersome aspect is that we don’t yet know the identity of the “choosers” who will decide whose care to ration or whose bank account to raid. It is very telling that Obama did not proudly extol the virtues of his signature legislation.

“We understand that outworn programs are inadequate to the needs of our time.” Then, Mr. President, encourage Harry Reid

to act on congressional legislation that attempts to restructure Medicare and Social Security instead of deriding these efforts as throwing Granny off a cliff.

Sadly, a thread woven throughout the speech was that Obama will liberate us from our autonomous, free, yet nonetheless pathetic, unhappy existence. He asserted several times that only a select few were making it in America, and he was going to do something about that!

We can only hope that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was right: "A lie cannot live."

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