

The Zimmerman Speech Obama Should Have Given

Editor's Note: Liberty Counsel Action vice president Matt Barber offers up the text of a speech he feels President Obama should have given.

My fellow Americans:

I am your humble servant. You have entrusted me with the tremendous honor and responsibility to serve you as president. I am not president of black America, Hispanic America or white America. I am not president of liberal America or conservative America. I am president of the United States of America.

Regrettably, as a nation, we have become divided. I confess that I have contributed to this division. For this failure in leadership, I ask your forgiveness.

We were each created equal by a God of forgiveness. It is now time that we do as He commands: that we forgive one another as we are forgiven and that we come together, once and for all, as one America.

With this goal in mind, I ask that every American join me in praying for the family of **Trayvon Martin**. No parent should have to bury a child. I also ask that you join me in prayer for **George Zimmerman** and his family. This tragedy has taken an unimaginable toll on both families. Finally, I ask that you join me in praying for national calm and **racial reconciliation**.

Today I will share with you certain truths that may be difficult for some to hear. But truths they remain.

First among these truths: The death of Trayvon Martin was a horrible tragedy.

But not all tragedies are crimes.

This case should never have gone to trial. Probable cause for charges of second-degree murder did not exist. Unfortunately, it has become evident that charges were filed based upon a purely political calculus, rather than upon the legal merits of the case. This is legal malpractice, and those responsible should be held accountable.

Before charges were even filed, I publicly and inappropriately said, "If I had a son, he'd look like Trayvon." This was irresponsible of me. It was a politically motivated abuse of the presidential bully pulpit. It presumed Mr. Zimmerman guilty until proven innocent. The implication was racially charged and cynical. To the extent that I may have contributed to the spurious filing of charges, I apologize to Florida. I also apologize to George Zimmerman, his family and the American people.

Nevertheless, the trial did go forward and, after 20 days in court and 16 hours of thoughtful deliberation, a jury of **George Zimmerman's** peers ultimately found him not guilty. Whether or not we agree, this is our criminal justice system, and the system worked as designed.

Justice was served.

Although none of us were there—and few can know for sure—the not-guilty verdict indicates that the jury found, based upon the weight of the evidence, that this tragic shooting was, in fact, legally justified on self-defense grounds. This is true whether or not George overreacted by following Trayvon in the first place. Florida's "stand your ground" law was never even triggered.

The jury further found, by all accounts, that at some point during their interaction, Mr. Martin turned, pursued and attacked Mr. **Zimmerman** without legal provocation. This decision ultimately cost him his life.

How does this make sense? How could this have justified the shooting? Although initially unarmed, witness accounts and forensic evidence suggest that Trayvon punched Mr. **Zimmerman**, jumped on him and began slamming the back of his head into the concrete sidewalk while allegedly proclaiming, "You gonna die tonight, [expletive]." At this point the sidewalk became a deadly weapon. From this, any reasonable person could conclude that George Zimmerman feared for his life and, therefore, took defensive action.

A needless tragedy? Yes.

A crime? No.

Here is another truth: This case is neither now, nor has it ever been, about race. That is, it wasn't about race until I and others made it so.

There are those who, under the guise of "civil-rights advocacy," have a tarnished history of exploiting this and other such tragedies for their own political and financial purposes. This is race-profiteering. It is shameless, dishonest and never productive. For the good of our nation, it needs to stop.

Furthermore, much of the media are likewise to blame. It is clear that, for whatever reason—ratings, perhaps—many journalists chose to intentionally fan the flames of racial discord. NBC even went so far as to splice and edit the recording of Mr. Zimmerman's 911 call to make him sound racist. This may well be defamation per se, and NBC should be held to account.

In reality, the overwhelming evidence indicates that Mr. Zimmerman is anything but racist. He is just as much a "person of color" as am I. He is Hispanic, not white as the media narrative goes. George is half Hispanic, just as I am half black. He is no more a "white Hispanic" than am I a "white black." This is the theater of the absurd. It's but another

example of the media's disingenuous bid to sensationalize this case as a white vs. black civil-rights clash.

It is not.

In reality, **George Zimmerman's** past strongly suggests that he is utterly color blind. He once went to bat for a black homeless man against the police department he desperately hoped to join. He also has a history of mentoring black children, has dated black women, has black relatives and is a registered Democrat who voted for me—the first black president in American history. Finally, an extensive FBI investigation determined that Mr. Zimmerman is simply “not a racist.”

I understand that many people are very upset over this verdict. I sympathize with them. My heart also breaks for Trayvon's family. Still, we are a nation of laws, not a nation of mob rule. Make no mistake, threats to George Zimmerman's safety and civil rights will not be tolerated and will be investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Moreover, I have instructed Attorney General Eric Holder to cease and desist in all efforts to manufacture federal **civil rights** charges against Mr. Zimmerman. There is simply no case, and to pursue one would actually violate Mr. Zimmerman's civil rights.

Let's get back on track. Let's return to Dr. King's dream of an America in which people are “judged by the content of their character” and not “by the color of their skin.”

It's time to move on. It's time to heal. It's time to come together as “one nation under God.”

God bless you.

And God bless America.

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