

# Chicago Tribune

## Why do liberals fear success?

By: Cal Thomas – April 2, 2013

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There are many successful liberals, so why do so many of them wish to subsidize failure for the poor, instead of showing them how to succeed?

Take Dr. Ben Carson, as one example. Dr. Carson, the renowned neurosurgeon at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Md., is enjoying a certain amount of celebrity unrelated to his profession for speaking his mind about how individuals and the nation might succeed if more Americans were less dependent on government.

Dr. Carson, who is African-American, has been denounced as insufficiently black because he won't toe the liberal line when it comes to big government and the implication that those in the African-American voting bloc, huge supporters of the Democratic Party, who fall below the poverty line, cannot succeed without it. The fact that many have not succeeded with government has apparently escaped the notice of his critics.

Speaking with Megyn Kelly on Fox News' "America Live" last week, Dr. Carson addressed some of the slurs tossed at him, saying they are what you might expect to hear "on a third grade playground." He appealed to his detractors to "move beyond" such rhetoric "and let's have a real discussion about the real facts. If somebody disagrees, let's talk about why they disagree, let's talk about the pros and cons, let's see if we can find some accommodation."

That is precisely what the left does not want to do, because to have such a discussion would expose liberalism's failure to solve the problems of poverty and education -- to cite just two examples -- through government.

MSNBC's Toure Monday has called Dr. Carson a token "black friend" to the Republican Party. I don't recall Carson ever saying he belongs to the Republican Party, do you? Even so, labels should not define the man. What Carson is saying and what he represents ought to be the beginning point for the discussion he is trying to initiate.

Dr. Carson dismissed one suggestion he might be an "Uncle Tom" this way: "Well, obviously they don't know what an Uncle Tom is because they need to read Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' You'll see that he was very, very subservient, kind of go along to get along type of person. Obviously, that's not what I'm doing."

Obviously.

In the Kelly interview, Dr. Carson hit his main point about liberal reaction on subjects ranging from Obamacare to higher taxes: "They feel that if you look a certain way then you have to stay on the plantation."

Isn't such a personal attack also a form of racism? All whites don't think alike, why should all African-Americans be expected to?

If government were the solution and not the problem, shouldn't we expect that the amount of money spent on anti-poverty programs -- \$15 trillion since 1964, according to a CATO Institute analysis -- might have moved the needle on poverty? Instead there are nearly as many poor people today as there were 49 years ago. According to the Wall Street Journal, "Enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, as the modern-day food-stamp benefit is known, has soared 70 percent since 2008 to a record 47.8 million as of December 2012." Government as solution isn't working and Dr. Carson wants to discuss why. For this he is attacked?

The nightmare for liberals would be if Ben Carson became a role model for the poor instead of a target. If more of the poor had mothers like his (and maybe active fathers, which he didn't have), who focused on reading and discipline, more might grow up to be like him. They might reject the lie that they are incapable of succeeding because of their circumstances.

In addition to Carson's remarks about government dependency, he is also under attack for his unorthodox positions on same-sex marriage and evolution, which the National Review Online reports has led to a petition being circulated at Johns Hopkins Medical School asking that he be disinvited as commencement speaker. That would add censorship to racism.

The late newsman David Brinkley said, "A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him."

By that standard, Dr. Ben Carson is building a mansion.