



## Sterling, Sharpton, and Jay Z

The racialism at the heart of the Left.

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Donald Sterling. Al Sharpton. One famous mostly in the precincts of Los Angeles, real estate, and sports. The other a household name.

Here's the first man, quoted talking to a potential Clippers coach in 1983, as [reported](#) over at *Deadspin*, which has published what it calls "Your Complete Guide to Decades of Donald Sterling's Racism": "I wanna know why you think you can coach these ni--ers."

And here's Al Sharpton talking about then-New York Mayor David Dinkins, as was [reported](#) in this space: "David Dinkins.... You wanna be the only ni--er on television, the only ni--er in the newspaper, the only ni--er to talk.... Don't cover them, don't talk to them, cause you got the only ni--er problem...."

So it is nothing if not fitting to know the Los Angeles Chapter of the NAACP was set to honor both Donald Sterling and Al Sharpton — together — at a dinner on May 15, as the *Los Angeles Times* reported [here](#). Sterling was set for a Lifetime Achievement Award and Sharpton for a "Person of the Year" award.

Now comes Sterling's [latest](#), a taped string of racial insults — and the NAACP is giving him the heave ho. But Sharpton? His lifetime of racialism nobody seems to mind. Only the other day Mr. Obama and his attorney general appeared at a gathering of — yes — Al Sharpton's National Action Network.

And let's recall: Just a few weeks back liberals were applauding Mozilla for dumping CEO Brendan Eich for making a \$1,000 contribution to California's Prop 8 that banned same-sex marriage. For this Eich was condemned as an anti-gay bigot. Yet, as we documented in the story in this space linked above, there is Al Sharpton big as life on video tape charging a TV audience member and bellowing: "You ain't nothing, you a punk faggot. Now come on, do something!"

In spite of this, Sharpton gets his own MSNBC TV show, the president of the United States and the attorney general of the United States show up at his meetings, and the NAACP bestows on him an award. In a world of hypocrisies this one is hard to top.

But the Left will give it the yeoman try, as they always do. So let's get to it. And the volunteer to step forward here is... Michael Tomasky over at the *Daily Beast*. As many have pointed out, Sterling contributed to two Democratic campaigns years ago, but Tomasky [writes](#) that — gasp! — Sterling is a registered Republican! Ohhhhhhhh the humanity!

In truth, neither Sterling's contributions nor his registration are important. What's important here is Mr. Sterling's apparently long (forgive me, I stick with the Red Sox and until this controversy had never heard of Clippers owner Donald Sterling) record of racist comments. As word leaks that Sterling's reputation on race was everywhere in Los Angeles — and the NAACP was willing to give him his award anyway until this latest flap — it emphasizes just how far this once stellar organization has gone to throwing away its moral authority.

Mr. Tomasky goes on:

Let's say for the sake of this column that [Sterling] is a Democrat. What would it prove? I think it's quite clear what it would prove: There's one racist Democrat in American public life, who doesn't even have anything to do with politics beyond a few many-year-old contributions.

Find me another. And I mean a real, serious racist who's said real, seriously racist things. I don't mean Joe Biden, for calling Obama "clean and articulate." That was a stupid racial comment; ditto Harry Reid's statement about Obama having "no Negro dialect" unless he wanted to affect one.

Conservatives love to point to those two remarks, and I'm certainly not defending them. But here's the contextual difference that conservatives either can't understand or won't concede. Biden and Reid both have long, long histories of supporting the Voting Rights Act, affirmative action, civil-rights expansions, a view of the Constitution that endorses a broad interpretation of the equal-protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment—and federal judges who back all those things. Likewise Bill Clinton, who made some dubious comments in the heat of the 2008 primaries, like telling Ted Kennedy that "a few years ago, [Obama] would be getting our coffee." A horrible statement, but one made by an ex-president with a long record of backing civil rights (and at a time when they were under pretty stern assault from Newt Gingrich's House of Representatives).

This is something conservatives don't understand. Or rather, they understand it—but they can't acknowledge it. They can't acknowledge this larger context of Democratic support for the things that have mostly improved black people's lives and Republicans' almost total opposition to them since at least the 1980s. To acknowledge all that would be to acknowledge that they've been wrong on one of the most searing issues in American political history.

First of all, is Mr. Tomasky really that stunningly clueless or willfully ignorant of the historical link between racism and liberalism/progressivism? Jimmy Carter would never have been elected governor of Georgia in the first place without the help of legendary Georgia racist Roy Harris, documented in detail by Carter biographer James Wooten, who covered the campaign as a

reporter for the *New York Times*. Lyndon Johnson would never have been a congressman much less president if he hadn't spent a career castigating blacks. Woodrow Wilson was in fact an out-and-out racist who segregated the federal government, although that was before he went on to showcase the Klan-celebrating film *The Birth of a Nation* at the White House. Franklin Roosevelt appointed former Klan member Hugo Black to the U.S. Supreme Court, with Black writing in 1968 that FDR had told him there was "no reason for my worrying about my having been a member of the Ku Klux Klan. He said that some of his best friends and supporters he had in the state of Georgia were strong members of that organization... nor did he indicate any criticism of me for having been a member of that organization."

And hello? Which party has made economic empowerment — for African Americans included — a major and successful — priority? That would be my two former bosses, Ronald Reagan and Jack Kemp. As economist Richard Rahn of the Cato Institute and the Institute for Global Economic Growth [noted](#) just last year:

- Under Reagan, adult black unemployment fell by 20 percent, but under Mr. Obama, it has increased by 42 percent.
- Black teenage unemployment fell by 16 percent under Reagan, but has risen by 56 percent under Mr. Obama.

Rahn adds: "Reagan thought like an entrepreneur, and thus intuitively understood that economic growth creates opportunities for everyone." So too, of course, did Jack Kemp think like an entrepreneur. A key player in the Reagan economic success story for black America, Kemp was constantly preaching — correctly as it turned out — the benefits of economic growth to black America. Kemp understood exactly where people like Sterling and Bundy get their racial attitudes, and discussed it in his 1979 book *An American Renaissance*. Said Kemp of the Democratic Party: they were "implicit defenders of white supremacy, the Solid South and the Ku Klux Klan." *Or*, to update, the politics of skin color.

Ever the most upbeat and optimistic of men — he wrote that "I really do believe that it is *natural* for human beings to desire to better their condition" — Kemp believed passionately in a colorblind America. The phrase he used in that sentence was "human beings," not blacks or Latinos or Asians or Native Americans. Separating Americans by race — a left-wing standard — was something neither Kemp nor Reagan believed in because they saw people as individuals.

For the Left, though, it's all about race. The entire objective is to divide people by group. President Obama does it, Attorney General Eric Holder does it, and yes, Joe Biden, Harry Reid and a lengthy list of liberal politicians do it.

Take Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor's "wise Latina" comment, a pluperfect example of racial thinking. Just the other day, Justice Sotomayor wrote a 58-page dissent railing against the idea of a colorblind ban on racial preferences in, among other things, college admissions. It is amazing that the dream of Martin Luther King has now been stood on its head.

Or take the growing number of black conservatives who are directly challenging the progressive line. Dr. Ben Carson, for instance, has bluntly [noted](#) on Mark Levin's show of white liberals that: "Well, they are the most racist people there are because they put you in a little category, a little box. You have to think this way." Americans who happen to be black like Deneen Borelli ([blacklisted](#) by the NAACP and author of *Blacklash*) or Star Parker or Niger Innis or Herman Cain or Justice Clarence Thomas hear no end of epithets hurled their way.

Or recall the recent to-do over the Food Network's Paula Deen. Ms. Deen was banished for a long-ago use of "the 'n' word." But as I [noted here](#), there is someone else who does the same thing. In fact, distinctly unlike Paula Deen, who most certainly never used the word on television, this person is out there making big bucks with songs that have lyrics like this — and here I'll edit a tad:

*Yeah, I done told you ni--gaz  
9 or 10 times stop f--in' with me  
I done told you n--gaz  
9 albums, stop f--in' with me  
I done told you n--gaz  
The 9 on me, stop f--in' with me  
You n--gaz must got 9 lives  
9th wonder*

The person who is monetizing the "n word" here and making gazillions? That would be President Obama's friend and major donor Jay Z.