

Eric Holder's no healer

by L_Brent_Bozell

We've endured two years of endless journalistic jawboning about Barack Obama, the great racial healer who would bind us together, the man who would get everyone singing on a sun-soaked hilltop with a bottle of Coke and a smile. So now that he's in, what has he got? We have Obama's attorney general, Eric Holder, telling us how Americans remain "voluntarily socially segregated," and that while we have the foolish pride to think of the United States as an ethnic melting pot, we have always been and continue to be a "nation of cowards."

Whether you support him politically or not, Obama's election could not help but cause Americans to grow more positive about the state of American race relations. ABC News polls showed the number of Americans saying racism is a "big problem" dropped by more than half, from 54 percent in 1996 to 26 percent now. It was down sharply among blacks and whites alike. Not only that, 58 percent guessed Obama's presidency would improve race relations. How does the Obama administration react? We are a "nation of cowards."

If anyone was cowardly about frank conversations on race, it was Obama and his supporters in the news media. They're the ones who refused to raise the issues of racial quotas, profiling and illegal immigration, no doubt for fear of upsetting the white troglodytes. They're the ones who kept Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton in a storage closet for more than a year. They're the ones who spun themselves dizzy insisting that the lunatic rants of his minister Jeremiah Wright only made Barack Obama look nobler. Obama was the man who declared he couldn't disassociate himself from Wright, and then did exactly that a few weeks later when Wright's fanaticism had become apparent to all.

And his administration is now lecturing us on "cowardice"?

Then there were the journalistic cowards covering the "nation of cowards" speech. Wait, did I say "covering"? You couldn't find a news story about it in that alleged paper of record, the New York Times, Time magazine or on CBS. It's not like the coward line was hard to find. It was the first sentence of the second paragraph of Holder's remarks.

Others tiptoed past it. The Washington Post gave it a tiny brief of 222 words. NBC anchor Brian Williams simply offered one clip, calling it "a very blunt speech." George Stephanopoulos sat in the evening anchor chair at ABC and also offered only one soundbite, describing it as "an emotional analysis of racism." No one had time for outraged critics.

Some print reporters gave it a full story without finding any critics. The Associated Press dispatch by Devlin Barrett was 727 words long, and featured Holder's spokesman, Hillary Shelton of the NAACP, calling the speech "constructively provocative," and an Ohio State professor saying it was "right on the substance," if it wasn't the most "politic" way of putting it.

Among the major print media, only the Los Angeles Times successfully located a Holder critic. After citing liberal Mary Frances Berry calling the speech "very gutsy," reporter Josh Meyer quoted black Republican Joe Hicks, who nailed it perfectly: "Here's the first black attorney general appointed by the first black American president," he said, "and he's espousing views that appear to be almost ultra-left in their approach to race in America" that blacks are victims and whites are intolerant and accepting of quasi-racist views."

Holder sure sounded "ultra-left" as he lectured about the civil-rights movement that "most people, who are not conversant with history, still do not comprehend the way in which that movement transformed America." He boasted that other "major social movements" of the Sixties, from the feminists to the anti-war protesters, were all "set free" by the spirit of the quest for black equality. You'd have to be a leftist to see surrender in Vietnam and legalized abortion as glorious historical landmarks.

Some passages were simply ludicrous. Holder claimed bombastically, "On Saturdays and Sundays America in the year 2009 does not, in some ways, differ significantly from the country that existed some 50 years ago." Has this man never been to a sporting event on the weekends? He claimed outside the workplace, "there is no significant interaction between us." Does this man have no concept of the growth of racial intermarriage since 1959?

Eight years ago, these same earnest liberals who claim to love racial healing were beating new Attorney General John Ashcroft senseless with rhetorical clubs, as if he were a vicious slavemaster like Simon Legree. None of them has enough decency to acknowledge that Ashcroft showed more respect for his opponents and much more love for his country and its people than Eric Holder has mustered.

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