

September 2009

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## “There he goes again!”

*Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;* --Hebrews 12:15

On Saturday, 61,889 Husky football fans “went nuclear” as their *Dawgs* upset third-ranked USC Trojans 16-13. Not since 2001 has Washington prevailed against Southern Cal. Considering that the 2008 Huskies became the first 0-for-12 team in PAC-10 conference history, it’s obviously a different “field of play” under new head Coach Steve Sarkisian. But, we wonder if a lot of fans are ecstatic because the new gridiron skipper is the right color? The fired former coach happens to be a black man.

Absurd? Race-baiting you say? What about a former president who does that?

Last week, Jimmy Carter was asked about the widespread opposition to President Obama’s health care plan and the correspondingly large turnouts at recent congressional town hall meetings. Carter said, “I think an overwhelming portion of the intensely demonstrated animosity toward President Barack Obama is based on the fact that he is a black man.”<sup>1</sup> As Ronald Reagan quipped during his 1980 debate with Mr. Carter, “There he goes again!”

Curious if skin color in America is a significant factor in the key spheres of cultural influence, we invited our *Pastor-Advisors* to take our “culture quiz.” They scored very well! Following is a scaled version for our readers. (See “endnotes,” if necessary):

1. This media icon was born in 1954. She is an Academy Award nominated actress, producer, literary critic and magazine publisher. Her self-titled multi-award winning talk show has become the highest-rated program of its kind in history. She is: \_\_\_\_\_
2. This actor/director also born in 1954, has garnered much critical acclaim for his work in film since the 1990s. His portrayals of real-life figures include Steve Biko, Rubin Carter, Malcolm X, Frank Lucas and Herman Boone. \_\_\_\_\_ recently topped a list of 16 public figures in entertainment, politics and religion with a high favorability rating of 42-to-1.<sup>2</sup>
3. This actress, former beauty queen, and fashion model, was born in 1966. A fashion editor once named her the most beautiful woman in the world. She has received Emmy and Golden Globe awards for *Introducing Dorothy Dandridge* and an Academy Award for Best Actress in 2001 for her performance in *Monster's Ball*. She is: \_\_\_\_\_
4. The achievements of \_\_\_\_\_, a standup comedian who grew up in a Philadelphia project, span five decades and virtually all media. His hit weekly sitcom, depicting an upper middle-class black family, aired some 197 episodes from 1984 to 1991. Insiders say it almost single-handedly revived the sitcom genre and NBC’s ratings fortunes.
5. This record shattering former pro-basketball player (born in 1963) led his team to six National Basketball Association championships. His biography on the official NBA web site states: “By acclamation, \_\_\_\_\_ is the greatest basketball player of all time.”

6. In 2005, at the age of 29, \_\_\_\_\_ won his 10th major golf championship, placing him fourth on the all-time list behind Jack Nicklaus, Walter Hagen and Bobby Jones—and first to hold four professional major championships at the same time. His worldwide earnings thru 2007--\$94M.
7. The 51-year-old \_\_\_\_\_, former Lieutenant Governor of Maryland (2003-07) has been an occasional stand-in for talk-show host Sean Hannity on the *FOX News* network. As current chairman of the *RNC*, he is the top official in the Republican Party.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ is a retired four-star Army General, former Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the 65<sup>th</sup> United States Secretary of State during the first term of President George W. Bush. He was vigorously pursued by both major parties to run for President.
9. Born in 1954, \_\_\_\_\_ is a professor of political science at Stanford University, a former diplomat and national security expert—serving as National Security Advisor (2001-04) and Secretary of State (2005-08). In the Bush 41 White House, this person served as the Soviet and East European Affairs Advisor during the dissolution of the Soviet Union and German reunification.
10. As a small child in Pin Point, Georgia, he lived in a one-room shack with dirt floors, no plumbing, and no electricity. After his father abandoned the family, his maternal grandfather took him in. In 1991, \_\_\_\_\_, then 43, was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, replacing the late Thurgood Marshall.<sup>3</sup>

Everyone knows that each of the above is of African-American lineal descent and each enjoys extraordinary public affection. Oprah Winfrey, for instance, remains among the top ten “most admired Americans” since first appearing in an annual survey in 1988. More recently, Colin Powell and Condi Rice (even Magic Johnson appeared once) have joined her. They too, have enjoyed the recognition, awards and accolades of peers—it’s part of the American dream.

It is beyond incredulity that a racial minority constituting only 13.5 percent of the population can boast of two recent Secretaries of State, the current U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, the U.S. Attorney General, a U.S. Supreme Court Justice, not to mention the President of the United States—and still be considered by some to be oppressed.

So, if “Blacks” in America are among the wealthiest, best known, most admired, most influential, and most powerful people, who is telling them otherwise—and to what purpose? Answer: the same person who told Adam and Eve they were naked—and for the same reason.

In both *Testaments*, we are warned to guard our hearts—that there not be among us “a root bearing bitterness or wormwood.” Acts 8:23 says, “For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.” In Hebrews, the writer suggests that an apostate—one who fails the grace of God, becoming an avowed enemy of Christ, can defile many others. Is it not possible there are bitter men in our day who have defiled others—maybe even a racial group?

As can be observed, “...the tongue is a fire...that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature...” (James 3:6) Application: The White House is never happy when a former president upstages the current president. Writes the *Oakland Press*, “With one casual remark, Carter managed to steal all the headlines and turn the battles over health care, energy reform, or economic recovery into a raging debate on race.”

Like President Obama may have privately said, “There he goes again!”

*Rick Forcier*

<sup>1</sup> *NBC News* with Brian Williams, 9/15/2009

<sup>2</sup> *A little more salt please*, Christian Coalition Newsletter, Dec 2006, The Barna Group, [www.barna.org](http://www.barna.org), Oct 2006

<sup>3</sup> QUIZ: 1.Oprah Winfrey, 2.Denzel Washington, 3.Halle Berry, 4.Bill Cosby, 5.Michael Jordan, 6.Tiger Woods, 7.Michael Steele, 8.Colin Powell, 9.Condoleezza Rice, 10.Clarence Thomas