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THE NEW YORK TIMES VS. HELMS, PART 529,876

by Ann Coulter
July 9, 2008

Last Friday, on the Fourth of July, the great patriot Jesse Helms passed away. John Adams and Thomas Jefferson also went to their great reward on Independence Day, so this is further proof of God.

Helms is now the second great American patriot I've always wanted to meet and never will, at least in this lifetime. The only other one is the magnificent Reagan aide Lyn Nofziger. (Wikipedia quote: "I sometimes lie awake at night trying to think of something funny that Richard Nixon said.")

After a week of hundreds of Helms obituaries -- one or two of which were not completely dishonest -- I will mention just a few items that were not addressed or given sufficient attention.

The two most obsessively discussed topics among Senate staffers are: (1) Who is the stupidest senator? (Sen. Barbara Boxer pulled into the lead when Sen. Lincoln Chafee retired), and (2) which senators are beastly and which are wonderful to their staff?

When I worked in the Senate in the '90s, the two senators famous for being absolute princes to work for were Sen. Helms and -- it pains me to tell you this, so you know it has to be true -- Sen. Teddy Kennedy. (He was so nice to his staffers, he frequently offered them rides home in his car after parties.)

I never knew -- and you never knew, unless you read one of the two honest obituaries this past week -- that in 1962 Helms and his wife "Dot" adopted a 9-year-old orphan with cerebral palsy. They already had two daughters and Helms was 41 years old at the time. But it was Christmastime and they read about Charlie in a newspaper. He said all he wanted for Christmas was a mother and father.

In the 1976 North Carolina Republican primary, Helms engineered Ronald Reagan's upset victory over Gerald Ford, the sitting president. That victory carried Reagan to the convention and made him the front-runner in 1980. The night Reagan won the 1980 presidential election, Helms famously uttered the beautiful words: "God has given America one more chance."

In 1984, Helms' re-election campaign was the then-most expensive Senate race in history. His Democratic opponent, Gov. Jim Hunt, received campaign contributions from the usual dotty liberals: Barbra Streisand, Phil Donahue, Marlo Thomas, Paul Newman, Woody Allen -- all, no doubt, steeped in North Carolina politics.

Shockingly, Hunt also received a donation from Arthur Sulzberger, publisher of the nonpartisan, totally objective, straight-down-the-middle New York Times. Which I guess explains the nasty obituary last week.

Meanwhile, Helms received contributions mostly from America's two most dangerous fringe groups: housewives and businessmen. His few celebrity supporters included Gene Autry and Ellin Berlin, wife of composer Irving Berlin, the patriotic Jewish immigrant who wrote "White Christmas" and "God Bless America."

Other Republicans loved to run in years when Helms was up for election because, like a Marine exposing himself to enemy fire to let his comrades escape, all the Hollywood money would be dedicated to defeating Helms.

On election night 1984, a friend of mine was at a Republican victory party in Michigan when suddenly a group of Hasidim broke out in cheering and dancing. Was "Fiddler on the Roof" being made into a major motion picture? He looked up at the mammoth TV screen. It read: "Jesse Helms Wins North Carolina."

Helms was viciously and falsely portrayed as a racist -- including in the totally objective New York Times obituary last week. In January 1963, a decade before Helms would run for office, he editorialized about Harvey Gantt, the first black student to be admitted to Clemson University in South Carolina.

Helms praised Gantt to the skies, saying he had "stoutly resisted the pose of a conquering hero" and had "turned away from the liberal press and television networks which would glorify him." Gantt, Helms said, just wanted to be an architect and "Clemson is the only college in South Carolina that can teach him how to be one."

Funny how that little tidbit didn't make the Times obituary. They must have cut it for "space."

Helms was for integration; he was simply against "movements." He would later hire James Meredith, who was the first black to attend the University of Mississippi -- with the assistance of federal troops. By 1989, Meredith's views had come around to those of Helms, not the other way around.

After years of reading and studying and attending law school at Columbia University, Meredith concluded that blacks had been better off when they worked for themselves and not for white liberals. (Having worked for white liberals myself, I couldn't agree more.) Meredith claimed Helms fired him as domestic policy adviser after a year because he was too right-wing for Helms.

Which reminds me: I'll have to try to meet Meredith before the next Fourth of July.

Liberals discount Helms' hiring of Meredith on the grounds that Meredith had wandered off the reservation. (Blacks are allowed to have only one set of political views.) It just shows you how stupid liberals are: Blacks don't live on reservations; Indians do.

It's pretty much the same thing liberals are accusing B. Hussein Obama of right now. In its July 4 editorial, the Times harangued Obama for his diversions from the liberal line on Iraq, the domestic surveillance bill, capital punishment and guns. I believe the editorial was titled something like, "Get in Line, N-word."

To paraphrase Dan Quayle, to be called a racist by these people is a badge of honor. Rest in peace, Jesse Helms: New York Times stock was recently lowered to a notch above junk bond status.

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