

Analysis

Do Black People Support Obama Because He's Black?



(AP) -- Are black people supporting Obama mainly because he's black? If race is just one factor in blacks' support of Obama, does that make them racist? Can blacks' support for Obama be compared with white voters who may favor his Republican challenger, Mitt Romney, because he's white?

These questions have long animated conservatives who are frustrated by claims that white people who oppose Obama's policies are racist. This week, when a black actress who tweeted an endorsement of Romney was subjected to a stream of abuse from other African-Americans, the politics of racial accusation came full circle once again.

Stacey Dash, who also has Mexican heritage, is best known for the 1995 film "Clueless" and the recent cable-TV drama "Single Ladies." On Twitter, she was called "jigaboo," "traitor," "house nigger" and worse after posting, "Vote for Romney. The only choice for your future."

The theme of the insults: A black woman would have to be stupid, subservient or both to choose a white Republican over the first black president.

Martin Luther King Jr. fought Jim Crow laws, which deprived blacks of political rights after Reconstruction, upheld by Southern Democrats. But black voters switched after Democratic President Lyndon B. Johnson pushed through the 1960s civil rights legislation and Republicans successfully pursued the votes of white people who disliked the civil rights agenda.

Since then, Democrats have persistently wooed black voters with programs

and platforms that African-Americans favor, and the party has been rewarded every four years.

Clinton got 83 percent of the black vote in 1992 and 84 percent in 1996; the third-party candidate Ross Perot probably sliced away some of Clinton's black support. Al Gore got 90 percent in 2000; John Kerry got 88 percent in 2004. Obama captured 95 percent in 2008, and 2 million more black people voted than in the previous election.

Sherrilyn Ifill, a law professor at the University of Maryland, wrote a column last week exploring why so many black voters are rejecting Romney. She said it has less to do with the candidate than with his party's treatment of Obama, such as John Sununu calling the president "lazy" after the debate, a congressman shouting "You lie!" during the State of the Union address, claims that Obama is not a citizen and more.

In an interview, Ifill said that for black voters, such accusations feel like white people are attacking their own dignity. "In essence," she says, "they are closing ranks around Obama."

She noted that women were justifiably moved by Hillary Rodham Clinton's candidacy and Catholics flocked to the polls to elect President John F. Kennedy. Comparing black pride in Obama to white pride in Romney is a "false symmetry" because of the history of black oppression, she says, and she asked for patience from America at large.

"There should not be this resistance to pride over the first black president," Ifill says. "If we get to the fifth one, I'll be with you."

Space

Scientists: Moon not bone dry

(UPI) -- The moon is covered with soil containing a water substructure created by the constant stream of charged particles coming from the sun, U.S. researchers say. The substructure, known as a hydroxyl, consists of one atom of hydrogen and one of oxygen, or OH, rather than two of hydrogen and one of oxygen, or H₂O, the researchers from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, University of Michigan and California Institute of Technology reported in the journal *Nature Geoscience*.

Scientists have known for about five years that the traditional view that the moon was bone dry was incorrect.

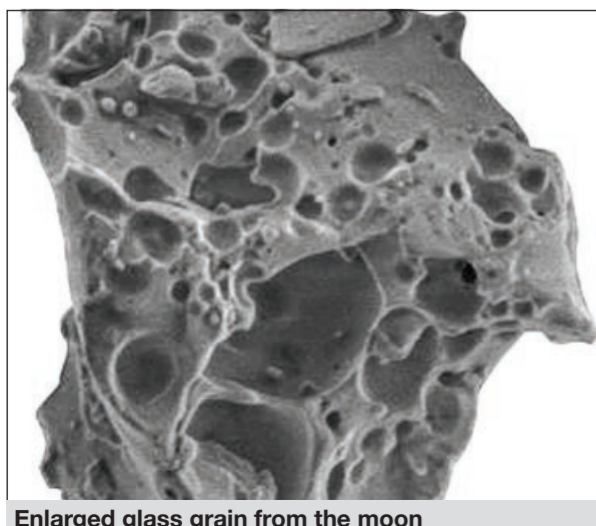
Spacecraft observations and new lab measurements of Apollo lunar samples found icy drops of water on the lunar surface.

NASA's robotic Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite crashed into a permanently shadowed southern lunar crater at 6,200 mph in 2009. The crash -- equivalent to detonating 2 tons of TNT -- sent a plume of material into the sky that scientists discovered was rich in water ice.

But they weren't sure how the water got there. It could have been indigenous or been a result of other sources, such as collisions from water-bearing comets. The researchers concluded in the *Nature Geoscience* study that positively charged subatomic hydrogen proton particles coming from the solar wind -- a stream of charged particles ejected from the

sun's upper atmosphere -- appear to have combined with oxygen on the moon's surface to form the OH hydroxyls. The result is an "unanticipated, abundant reservoir" of OH and water in the dust, soil, broken rock and other loose material on the lunar surface, the authors wrote in the study, published online Sunday. "Our work shows that the 'water' component, the hydroxyl, is widespread in lunar materials, although not in the form of ice or liquid water that can easily be used in a future manned lunar base," Michigan geological sciences Professor Youxue Zhang said. "This also means that water likely exists on Mercury and on asteroids such as Vesta or Eros further within our solar system," lead author Yang Liu from Tennessee said. "These planetary bodies have very different environments, but all have the potential to produce water." Vesta is the second most-massive asteroid in the solar system's asteroid belt between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. Eros is a near-Earth, Mars-crosser asteroid that the NEAR Shoemaker probe observed in a 1998 flyby and in 2000 photographs before landing on it in 2001.

Earth would receive the solar wind too, but its atmosphere and magnetic field deflect it. The moon has no such protection.



Enlarged glass grain from the moon

Twitter



Cristiano Ronaldo

@goal_intl : Cristiano Ronaldo is the most popular footballer in the world on Facebook, amassing over 50 million likes <http://bit.ly/RLDFAw> #RMCF #LaLiga



Rihanna

@TMZ : Rihanna Causes an Outbreak <http://youtu.be/djGjgxmEw0s>



Joe Hart

@goal_intl : England & Manchester City goalkeeper Joe Hart has the potential to be the best in the world - Jerzy Dudek <http://bit.ly/TTGCDy> #EPL #MFC



Emma Watson

@NowMag : Emma Watson terrified by trespasser in woods while filming new film Noah in New York: The actress screams after ... <http://bit.ly/>



Santi Cazorla

@goal_intl : Santi Cazorla reveals he bases his own game on Spain team-mate & Barcelona star Andres Iniesta <http://bit.ly/RLtnR4> #AFC #FCBarca



Andres Iniesta

@goal_intl : Andres Iniesta: The perfect player would be a mix of Falcao, Puyol, Xavi, Messi, Busquets & Cristiano Ronaldo <http://bit.ly/Xd1qF5> #FCBarca



Kristen Stewart

@NowMag : Kristen Stewart: I'm scared somebody's going to kill me if my location is Tweeted: The Twilight actress thinks s... <http://bit.ly/Wc828C>

National

HH THE AMIR OPENS THE FIRST ACD SUMMIT

(KUNA) -- His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah announced an initiative of USD two billion for financing development projects in non-Arab Asian countries.

HH's announcement came during an opening speech of the first Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit, which opened yesterday. Welcoming the distinguished guests, HH the Amir said that their participation in the event "indeed confirms your keenness on preserving this important dialogue, and the need for all of us to work on its activation, development, and promotion to meet our aspirations and expectations."

"It also pleases me to welcome the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan as member in our forum, which reflects the growing interest in the forum, and its objective in promoting development and stability for the people of our Continent." HH the Amir went on to say that "this Summit is being held after more than a decade of the establishment of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue Forum, under changing political circumstances and suffocating economic crises at the global level; their consequences are still being felt and are causing serious challenges to our continued efforts and attempts at upgrading the levels of development of our continent, in achieving the ambitions and aspirations of its peoples."

"This requires that we all intensify our efforts, and



utilize our meetings to discuss in depth, and with objectivity these challenges, analyzing their causes and containing their impact, in order to avoid their recurrence. This will preserve the stability of our countries and permit them to achieve ambitious and effective levels of growth." HH noted that "by convening the annual meetings at the ministerial level to discuss the means to ensure high level of cooperation and coordination among our countries, which we appreciate. The Member States of this Forum have clearly demonstrated its vitality."

"Today, we find that we are called upon to develop the mechanism of our cooperation, taking into consideration the visions and the common determination commensurate with our deeply rooted relations, that characterized the ministerial meetings, and enabling us to advance our

joint work to a wider horizon." In this regard, HH called for submitting scenarios and concepts consistent with the size of responsibilities, in order to pave the way for their implementation.

"In this concern, the State of Kuwait has the pleasure to host any mechanism which would be agreed upon by experts of our countries in their coming meeting." "Achieving the economic cooperation we desire requires the creation of an investment-friendly environment and the necessary enactment of legislations to promote such environments, to stimulate intra-regional trade between our countries, as well as attention to infrastructure common to our countries, particularly in the fields of transportation and communication, that will increase the exchange of goods and services," HH Sheikh Sabah stressed in his speech.

International

A PEACE PRIZE FOR A TROUBLED CONTINENT

If, upon hearing the news that the Nobel Peace Prize is going to the European Union, the first response is "You've got to be kidding", the second must be... "they've got a point." The third is: But how much of a point?

You've got to be kidding is easy enough. The demonstrations, the strikes, the protests. An unprecedented police presence in Athens to ensure the prime minister of friendly Germany, Angela Merkel, is safe from angry mobs. The military in Spain hinting they may intervene to stop the country breaking up. A stream of opinion pieces speculating on Greek exit, euro collapse... and/or German domination. A faltering of the belief, on the part of most European intellectuals, that the EU was a unique, enlightenment project that showed the world (and particularly the United States) what peaceful, consensual spread of civic virtues looked like.

And then, in the midst of this, with no guarantee that all will be well, the European Union gets the Nobel Peace Prize, joining past winners Martin Luther King Jr., Lech Walesa and Andrei Sakharov, among others. One of these is not like the others.

This latest prize, then, has echoes of the Nobel committee's last beguiling selection: Barack Obama. I thought in 2009 that it was a bad idea, not because I didn't admire him, but because I did. I admired



him for his intelligence, his ability to enthuse and his seriousness, but I didn't know how good a president he would be (nor, of course, did he). To give him a prize before he had proved himself one way or the other was to fall into the same trap as much of the media: that is, to conflate the fact that he was the first black president of the U.S. with his ability as a president -- to assume that because race no longer automatically barred some ethnicities from the highest office, that he was already a world historic figure (shouldn't the prize have gone to the U.S. electorate?). It was to make race the defining element in him. Yet here was a man who was an American, an intellectual, and a politician and who made it clear, as he had throughout his career, he was to be judged as such.

If Obama was a prize too soon, the EU's award seems one too late. The Union was indeed conceived by its founding fathers as a mechanism

first of all for ending war. To award it now seems out of joint. It's meant, it seems, as an encouragement, a way of saying that times are tough, but remember you were great once and can be again. But Europe is in too much contention for a gesture of that kind. Its fissures are too wide and too real. The Gulf at the core of it -- that the crisis demands greater integration while the people of Europe seem to oppose it -- is much wider than it has ever been. The job of European politicians in nearly every state is a doleful one for as far ahead as we can see. It is to cut and cut again, to reduce, radically in some instances, what Europeans had come to assume was their birthright -- an efficient and generous welfare state.

These conflicts may yet be resolved. Leaving aside extremists, no European -- whatever view she holds on the utility or desirability of the Union -- can seriously wish collapse. The consequences have been shown, clearly enough, to be deeply harmful, not just to Europe but also to the world. The Union, if it is to survive, has great changes to make, changes that will strain its fabric and exhaust its leaders. If and when they succeed, that would be worth a Nobel Peace prize. But they've already got it -- like Barack Obama -- before they've properly begun.