

Right wing steps up Michelle Obama attack

By Ashahed M. Muhammad
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CHICAGO (NNPA) — The wives of U.S. presidents are referred to as "First Ladies" and, historically, even the wives of candidates running for the nation's highest office are afforded a certain level of respect. This, however, has not been the case with Michelle Obama who has been insulted and maligned at every turn by right wing conservative radio and television talk show hosts.

Despite the vicious and seemingly ubiquitous critical comments, the 44-year-old Princeton University and Harvard Law School-educated executive has carried herself with dignity and class throughout the entire campaign, gaining the admiration of many.

"In today's world, a woman of this caliber who is the mate of one who is a nominee for president of the United States deserves all of the recognition, admiration and respect that she has so well earned," said Dr. Dorothy I. Height, chair and president emerita of the National Council of Negro Women. "When I follow many of the stories and comments, I realize that we have come a long way, but there is a long way to go," added Height, who has known every first lady of the United States since Eleanor Roosevelt.

Height referred to the wife of Sen. Barack Obama as "a woman of considerable accomplishments."

Already a veteran campaigner who withstood the "kitchen sink" strategy of vanquished Democratic presidential rival, Sen. Hillary Clinton, Sen. Obama seems to have realized that in the age of the Internet and 24-hour news cycles, nothing is sacred.

According to the Obama campaign, there is a deliberate misinformation and disinformation campaign of smears being waged by the Republicans.

In May, following a political advertisement sponsored by the Republican Party of Tennessee using comments made by Michelle Obama taken out of context, Sen. Obama insisted that political rivals and the media "lay off" his wife.

Despite Sen. Obama's request, the tenor and tone of the criticism has increased, and the insults — specifically directed at his wife — appear



Michelle Obama has become a target of heated rhetoric from GOP right-wing zealots.

to have no end.

A rumor has circulated about a videotape of Mrs. Obama railing against "Whitey" in a vitriolic diatribe at Chicago's Trinity United Church of Christ. The rumor — repeated by conservative talk show hosts such as Rush Limbaugh — implies this "October Surprise" could torpedo Sen. Barack Obama's historic quest for the presidency of the United States.

Sen. Obama was even asked about the mythical tape by a mainstream reporter aboard his airplane.

During an June 11 appearance by conservative minion Michelle Malkin on the Fox News Channel a graphic element was used on the lower third of the TV screen referring to Mrs. Obama as "Obama's baby mama," which is a slang term widely understood as a pejorative reference to a female who is the mother of a man's child but without the status of wife or girlfriend. Malkin has previously referred to the media as "Obamedia," implying favoritism toward the Obama campaign, and referred to Mrs. Obama as Sen. Obama's "bitter half." She immediately posted comments on her website absolving herself of any responsibility for the graphic miscue.

"I did not write the caption, and I was not aware of it when it ran (the Baltimore studio doesn't have a monitor). I don't know if the caption writer was making a lame attempt to be hip, clueless about the original etymology of the phrase, or both," wrote Mrs. Malkin.

Others reject the characterization of Michelle Obama as bitter, describing her as an "asset" for Sen. Obama and

his presidential campaign. They say Sen. Obama and his wife have been examples of grace, dignity and class under difficult circumstances.

"There is nothing bitter about her, but there is a lot of honesty about her, and I appreciate her for being the

woman that she is," said Dr. Wynetta Frazier, president of the National Hook Up of Black Women Inc. "She is in touch with the people, and to say something negative about her is an affront to Black women period."

Just after crossing the del-

egate threshold June 3 to lay claim to the Democratic presidential nomination, Sen. Obama said, "What you won't hear from this campaign or this party is the kind of politics that uses religion as a wedge, and patriotism as a bludgeon—that sees our opponents not as competitors to challenge but enemies to demonize."

Sen. Obama's opponents, however, have repeatedly failed to live up to those lofty ethical standards.

In another recent verbal gaffe, E.D. Hill, was removed from her position as anchor of Fox News Channel's "America's Pulse" after referring to the widely publicized June 3 celebratory fist pound between Michelle Obama and her husband as a "terrorist fist jab."

Hill later apologized for the comment. "I certainly didn't mean to associate the word terrorist in any way with Sen. Obama and his wife," she said.

Still fresh in the minds of many are analyst Liz Trotta's May 25 comments — also on Fox News Channel — joking about Sen. Obama's assassination and Fox talk show host Bill O'Reilly's snide comment and apology for using "lynching party" in February remarks about Mrs. Obama.

Incessant rumors forced the Obama campaign to set up FightTheSmears.com specifically to counter lies, rumors and half-truths.

In addition to point-by-point denials of many of the most pervasive rumors, a copy of Sen. Obama's birth certificate and a photo of him being sworn in using a Bible are posted.

Mrs. Obama appeared on the popular, female-oriented daytime show "The View" on June 18 in an attempt get beyond the smears and sound bites of this year's presidential campaign.

Ashahed M. Muhammad writes for the Final Call.

Your Horoscope Says... June 26-July 2

ARIES

Strong vibrations make for a series of dramatic interactions with others this week. Practice your art with your heart, and let your energy carry you upwards to your best, highest self. Keep emotions calm.

Soul Affirmation: I know where I'm going because I know where I've been.

Lucky Numbers: 32, 38, 43

TAURUS

You'll be energizing others this week as you speak what's on your mind regarding spiritual matters and masters. The quality of your thoughts is very pure; write yourself a love letter.

Soul Affirmation: My imagination is the source of my happiness.

Lucky Numbers: 17, 23, 29

GEMINI

Surprises are in order this week, and you can roll with everything that comes at you unexpectedly. Healing can happen in a relationship if you just show up. That's power! Use it for the good of others.

Soul Affirmation: This week is the week the Lord has made. I rejoice in it.

Lucky Numbers: 12, 16, 18

CANCER

You want a comrade who doesn't place inordinate expectations or demands on you, and who is creative, intelligent, a good conversationalist, and highly spiritual. Perhaps you should be out looking this week with eyes wide open!

Soul Affirmation: Cooperation with others is the key to success for me this week.

Lucky Numbers: 13, 24, 41

LEO

Work calls and you are not completely happy with current divisions of labor. Do your part as a member of the team, and you'll be glad that you did. Others will notice that you are a committed team player.

Soul Affirmation: I master life by mastering myself.

Lucky Numbers: 23, 45, 48

VIRGO

Business looks good this week as you discover a new way of increasing exposure to your product. Let hope and optimism lead you into new beginnings and fresh starts. All vibes are good. Go!

Soul Affirmation: I enjoy flirting with new ideas.

Lucky Numbers: 16, 19, 27

LIBRA

You seem preoccupied this week, and it's because your mind is filled with a vision of love for the entire planet. Use your gifts to assist others in seeing the world as you do, in glorious color. Check the details on paperwork that you have to do, dreamer.

Soul Affirmation: I release internal pressure by enjoying the beauties of the world around me.

Lucky Numbers: 22, 34, 55

SCORPIO

Everybody's in a good mood this week, and you'll want to join friends or family in sharing good food and feelings. You may be asked to grow, or move. Think seriously about it, because it could enhance your spiritual growth.

Soul Affirmation: In order for money to come, I must think about money as my friend.

Lucky Numbers: 45, 47, 51

SAGITTARIUS

At work, some matters have been on hold, but now you will get the green light. Continue to work as diligently as you have been in the past to ensure success. Have faith that your plans are on target.

Soul Affirmation: Anticipation of a beautiful immediate future lights up my week.

Lucky Numbers: 14, 53, 54

CAPRICORN

Remember that you are in control of your emotions this week. Things will look brighter as soon as you let yourself feel like the glowing spirit that you are. Co-create your reality this week by using positive emotions to remind yourself of how wonderful you are.

Soul Affirmation: I will ask joy to marry me.

Lucky Numbers: 14, 28, 35

AQUARIUS

You are in the middle of a dream coming true. Watch for signs that your wish is about to be granted. You'll be very happy with what you've achieved.

Soul Affirmation: Love is easier than breathing.

Lucky Numbers: 12, 45, 48

PISCES

Overall, the vibrations surrounding you this week are very good, very good indeed. Go with the best, and refuse to allow any minor inconvenience to spoil your sunny mood. You are going to have a lovely week.

Soul Affirmation: He who doesn't ask will remain a fool forever.

Lucky Numbers: 13, 19, 22