

Rice: Election inspires citizens all over world

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice says the country is not “race-blind” and “we shouldn’t deceive ourselves that we’re race-blind,” but said the election of Barack Obama as the first African-American president was a key moment in history.



“I think all Americans were quite taken with the fact that we were able, after the long history we’ve been through... that we’ve elected an African-American.”
— Condoleezza Rice

“I think all Americans were quite taken with the fact that we were able, after the long history we’ve been through, that initial birth defect of slavery, that we’ve elected an African-American,” Rice said in an interview taped recently on CBS’ “Sunday Morning.” “And that’s enormously heartening for people in the country, but also people worldwide who still have trouble with differences.”

Rice, who left segregated Alabama to eventually become the first African-American female to be secretary of state, warned that the United States still has problems with race.

“But I do think we’ve gotten to the place that we don’t see a person and say, ‘That’s a Black person, therefore they must be...’ And that’s an enormous step forward.”

Rice, who was Bush’s national security adviser when the U.S. invaded Iraq and then became secretary of state in Bush’s second term, said the opportunities that are available in the United States still draw people from around the world to this country.

“People, even in difficult economic times, still admire, maybe even envy a little bit, the entrepreneurship of this country and its capacity to be productive,” Rice said. “But what really draws people to this country is that anybody can come here and go from modest circumstances to extraordinary achievement.”

Americans aren’t “united by nationality,” she added. “We’re not united by religion. You can be African-American or Mexican-American or Korean-American, and still be American. You can be Jewish or Presbyterian or Muslim or nothing at all, and still be American. But there are very few Americans who don’t really believe that

it doesn’t matter where you came from, it matters where you’re going. And that’s what unites us, and that’s also what people worldwide find so remarkable.”

Rice said she plans to write at least two books when she gets back to Stanford, one about foreign policy and one about her parents.

“I’m where I am today because I had great parents who believed that anything was possible and then who gave me every opportunity to prove that anything was possible,” she said. “And I think that’s a story that needs to be told, because it’s in the context of that last group of parents before segregation ended in Alabama.”

Rice said she isn’t ready to think about how history will judge her as secretary of state. “The legacy will be for historians years down the road. But what I will remember most is that I think we stood for freedom and liberty for everybody, not just for a few,” she said. But she is confident in her work in Washington, despite critics who have called the Bush administration one of history’s worst.

Rice said the attitude about Bush’s handling of Iraq would change for the better “when the final chapters are written and it’s clear that Saddam Hussein’s Iraq is gone in favor of an Iraq that is favorable to the future of the Middle East.”

Rice, who golfs, enjoys watching football and plays piano, said she is ready to slow down, saying: “I’m looking forward to getting up and not having so much of a calendar and reading the newspaper and not thinking I have to do something about what’s in it.”

GOP chairman shocked by Obama parody song

WASHINGTON (AP) — The chairman of the Republican National Committee said Saturday he was “shocked and appalled” that one of his potential successors had sent committee members a CD this Christmas featuring a 2007 parody song called “Barack the Magic Negro.”

In spite of RNC Chairman Robert M. “Mike” Duncan’s sharply negative reaction, former Tennessee GOP leader Chip Saltsman said that party leaders should stand up to criticism over distributing a CD with the song. He earlier defended the tune as one of several “light-hearted political parodies” that have aired on Rush Limbaugh’s radio show.

Saltsman, who managed former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee’s presidential campaign, is seeking the RNC chairmanship.

During the presidential campaign, GOP officials denounced efforts by those in the party who criticized or mocked Democratic nominee Barack Obama along ra-

cial lines.

A spokesman for Obama, now the president-elect, declined to comment on the matter.

The ditty by conservative comedian Paul Shanklin refers to a March 2007 opinion piece in the *Los Angeles Times* by David Ehrenstein headlined “Obama the ‘Magic Negro.’” In the article, Ehrenstein argued that voting for Obama helped White voters alleviate guilt over racial wrongs in the past.

Shanklin’s parody is sung to the music of “Puff, the Magic Dragon.” Among other Shanklin tunes on the 41-track CD that Saltsman sent with a Christmas message: “I Can Talk Like a Coal Miner’s Daughter,” “Love Client #9” and “Down on the Farm with Al Gore.”

“Barack the Magic Negro” calls into question Obama’s racial identity. Born to a Black father and White mother, the president-elect was raised primarily by his White grandparents.

“The 2008 election was a

wake-up call for Republicans to reach out and bring more people into our party,” Duncan said in a statement. “I am shocked and appalled that anyone would think this is appropriate, as it clearly does not move us in the right direction.”

In a statement that followed Duncan’s, Saltsman said: “Liberal Democrats and their allies in the media didn’t utter a word about David Ehrenstein’s irresponsible column in the *Los Angeles Times* last March. But now, of course, they’re shocked and appalled by its parody on the ‘Rush Limbaugh Show.’” “I firmly believe that we must welcome all Americans into our party and that the road to Republican resurgence begins with unity, not division.

But I know that our party leaders should stand up against the media’s double standards and refuse to pander to their desire for scandal,” he said.

One of Saltsman’s competitors for the GOP chair-

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March set for F Street closure

Special to Sentinel-Voice
Residents of West Las Vegas miffed about the possible permanent closure of F Street plan to march on Wednesday at 7 a.m. to protest the plans.

The community march will begin at Bonanza Road and F Street.

“What we hope to have in the next two weeks is to be in court requesting an injunction that would prohibit any further construction or permanent closure of F Street until we can have a full trial,” Matthew Callister, the attorney hired to represent the residents, told folks gathered

at a community meeting last week at F Street and McWilliams Avenue. Callister is a former county commissioner.

The gist of the argument is this: West Las Vegas residents who use F Street as a direct route to downtown, City Hall, the new IRS Building and other destinations south of Bonanza claim that they weren’t informed of plans to close the road.

Both the Nevada Department of Transportation and the City of Las Vegas have approved the closure. During an October public forum on the proposed permanent clo-

sure of F Street, residents claimed that neither NDOT nor the city gave them due and timely notice of plans for the street.

Residents, along with Stop the F Closure LLC, filed an injunction to halt construction.

“If we can get an injunction,” Callister said, “a trial would commence about six months later, where we will ask city officials to reconsider altering the NDOT decision.”

The protesters will march to City Hall to meet with city redevelopment officials.

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