

RELEASE IN PART
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From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, August 23, 2011 11:40 AM
To: cheryl.mills[redacted]
Subject: FW: Waters to Obama aide: Say 'black'

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To: Mills, Cheryl D
Subject: Waters to Obama aide: Say 'black'

POLITICO

Waters to Obama aide: Say 'black'

By: Jennifer Epstein

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Rep. Maxine Waters and other black leaders lobbed heated questions at one of President Barack Obama's top jobs advisors on Monday, pressing him to confirm the White House is focusing on creating jobs in struggling African-American communities - and to say the word "black."

Don Graves, the executive director of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness, said at a nighttime forum at a black church in Miami that the president is "focused on every community across the country," the Miami Herald reported.

But when he added that "certain communities have been hit harder than other communities," Waters pushed him. "Let me hear you say 'black,'" the California Democrat said.

As the crowd cheered, The Washington Post said in its report on the Congressional Black Caucus-sponsored event, Graves quietly said: "black, African-American, Latino - we're going to focus on getting people back to work."

The approach that assisting all communities helps African-Americans get jobs is "a bunch of bull," Rep. Laura Richardson (D-Calif.) said, according to the Post. Later, she asked Graves if he could help shuttle dozens of pieces of jobs legislation authored by CBC members to the president so that he could enact them using executive authority.

"You all don't need to go through me to get to the president," Graves said.

But Richardson disagreed. "Let's be honest. We have met with the president. We are asking you in the capacity of your position [at the council on] jobs, are you willing to review our bills, to work with us?"

"You may not feel like the president is listening to you, but he hears you loud and clear," Graves said, referring to the growing anger from African-Americans that was on view last week as Waters spoke at a much-covered CBC town hall in Detroit.

Graves said that one obstacle to job creation are "folks who are going to stand in the way and block the legislation that the Congressional Black Caucus has proposed."

Waters interrupted him. "What people are you talking about?" she said, according to the Herald. "Say tea party. Say it!"

Graves did, though the Post described him as doing so "reluctantly." "It was tea party Republicans," he said.

Waters hasn't been shy about her criticism of the tea party movement. At event over the weekend, after being attacked by tea party-affiliated Rep. Allen West (R-Fla.) as an "overseer" of the "21st century plantation" of blacks in the Democratic Party, Waters said "the tea party can go straight to hell."

The day after West criticized Waters and other black Democrats, his younger brother was at a job fair that Waters and other CBC members had organized in Atlanta. (West is the only Republican member of the CBC.)

But Waters wasn't the only person on the dais Monday night who was attacking the tea party movement. Rev. Jesse Jackson, who West also described as an "overseer" said that the movement should be called the "Fort Sumter Tea Party that sought to maintain states' rights and slavery," the Herald reported.

"The tea party is a new name on an old game," he said. "Dr. King fought a 'tea party' in Alabama... He had no weapons, but he confronted the tea party."



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