

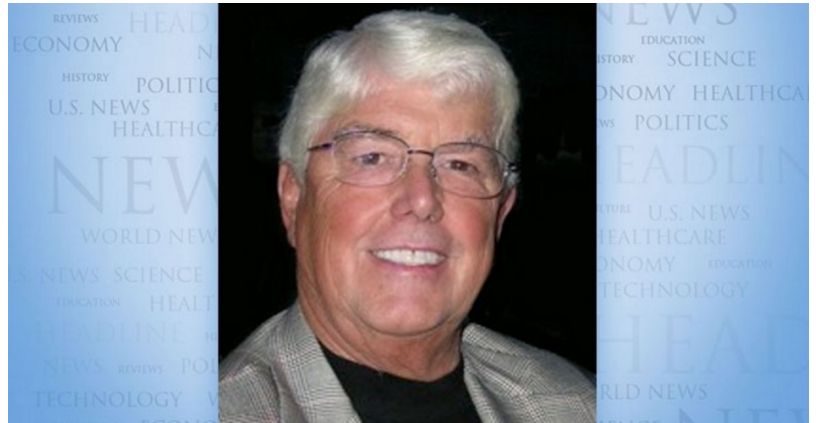


Written by [Wallis W. Wood](#) on May 1, 2014

Hey, Don't Blame Conservatives for Donald Sterling

The Left must really regret that Donald Sterling, the beleaguered owner of the Los Angeles Clippers, isn't a conservative Republican. Wouldn't they just love to slap the "racist" card on us, as they've tried to do with Clive Bundy?

But so far as we can tell, the bigoted billionaire has never given a penny to anyone on the Right. On the contrary, he's been a faithful supporter of all sorts of politically correct endeavors, including (please note the irony here), the NAACP. In fact, his previous contributions to that organization were enough to persuade them to bestow a "lifetime achievement" award on him five years ago.



Once apparently was not enough. The NAACP was all set to give him yet another lifetime achievement award next month, when news of his racist comments made headlines across the country.

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In the recording, a man identified as Sterling told his girlfriend V. Stiviano (apparently, she has no first name, just an initial) that he didn't care if she dated a black man, made him dinner, or even slept with him. But he didn't want her to take a picture with one, or bring one to a Clippers game.

Talk about a strange set of priorities! Here's an 80-year-old rich guy, telling his very young girlfriend that he doesn't care if she sleeps with a black man, just don't have your picture taken with him or accompany him to a basketball game.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar picked up on this in an op-ed he wrote for the *Time* magazine blog. After commenting on the "Extreme Finger Wagging" and "Morally Superior Head Shaking" that Sterling's comments have provoked, the basketball legend wrote:

And now the poor guy's girlfriend (undoubtedly ex-girlfriend now) is on tape cajoling him into revealing his racism. Man, what a winding road she led him down to get all of that out. She was like a sexy nanny playing "pin the fried chicken on the Sambo." She blindfolded him and spun him around until he was just blathering all sorts of incoherent racist sound bites that had the news media peeing themselves with glee.

At this point in time, we don't know why Stiviano recorded the telephone conversation or how a copy of it reached the media. She says she didn't do it. However it happened, the audio recording first appeared on the gossip site *TMZ*. The contents were explosive enough that they ignited a firestorm of controversy.

The first reaction came from the team's players, who turned their warm-up shirts inside out before Sunday night's game, so the team's insignia couldn't be seen.



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Next, the Clippers' advertisers and sponsors began distancing themselves from the team. State Farm Insurance announced it was "taking a pause" in its relationship. Used-car dealer CarMax said it was ending its nine-year sponsorship. Adidas, Kia Motors, Virgin America, Red Bull and Aquahydrate also said they were suspending their deals with the team.

Clippers' coach Doc Rivers, when asked if he wanted to meet with Sterling to discuss the situation, said he would pass. Rivers did say, "I sympathize with my players. They didn't sign up for this."

Amazingly enough, his players didn't let the media circus affect their playing when they met the Golden State Warriors in their playoff series on Tuesday night. They managed to win game five of the series, 113 to 103.

Of course, many of the usual publicity seekers promptly jumped in front of the TV cameras. The Rev. Al Sharpton, who is always ready for a racist rant, demanded that Adam Silver, the commissioner of the National Basketball Association, meet with him and some other civil rights leaders, to discuss the issue. But first, Sharpton said, he had to fly to Washington, to sit down with the Congressional Black Caucus. We can imagine the racist rhetoric that will be coming out of both meetings.

Even Michael Jordan, who almost never speaks out on racial matters, was upset by Sterling's comments. The Hall of Fame basketball player, who is now an owner of the Charlotte Bobcats basketball team, issued a statement saying:

As an owner, I'm obviously disgusted that a fellow team owner could hold such sickening and offensive views.... As a former player, I'm completely outraged. There is no room in the NBA — or anywhere else — for the kind of racism and hatred that Mr. Sterling allegedly expressed.

The biggest question, once the scandal broke, was what would the NBA do about it? The hot potato was tossed in the lap of Adam Silver, who had been named commissioner of the NBA just three months ago. This past Tuesday afternoon, the NBA commissioner revealed the verdict: Sterling would be banned for life from the NBA. In addition, he would be given the largest fine the league could impose, \$2.5 million. Plus, Silver promised he would do "everything in my power" to get the NBA Board of Governors to force a sale of the team.

Under the lifetime ban that Silver imposed, Sterling may not attend any games or practices, enter any Clippers' facility, attend any league meetings or activities, or take any part in business or personnel decisions concerning the team.

Moments after Silver announced the penalties, the Clippers issued a statement supporting his actions. "We wholeheartedly support and embrace the decision by the NBA and Commissioner Adam Silver today," the team said. "Now the healing process begins."

If he is forced to sell the team, Sterling certainly won't be hurting financially. He paid \$12 million when he purchased the Clippers back in 1981. According to *Forbes* magazine, the team is currently worth around \$575 million. That represents around one-quarter of Sterling's estimated \$1.9 billion fortune. The guy may be hurting for friends, but he sure won't be hurting for dough.

Does the NBA have the legal right to force Sterling to sell his team? According to Commissioner Silver, it does — if three-quarters of the 30 team owners say so. Sterling has been quoted as saying he won't sell, so it looks like the matter will be heading to the courts.

In the meantime, Sterling is even having trouble giving some of his money away. After Silver's press conference, UCLA announced that it was rejecting a \$3 million gift from the Donald T. Sterling



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Charitable Foundation. The university said it was doing so because “Mr. Sterling’s divisive and hurtful comments demonstrate that he does not share UCLA’s core values as a public university that fosters diversity, inclusion and respect.”

Yes, indeed, the Morally Superior Head Shaking continues. But at least this time the media can’t blame us nasty reactionaries for the mess. Donald Sterling may be a racist bigot. But he’s not one of ours.

Until next time, keep some powder dry.

Chip Wood was the first news editor of *The Review of the News* and also wrote for *American Opinion*, our two predecessor publications. He is now the geopolitical editor of *Personal Liberty Digest*, where his *Straight Talk* column appears weekly. This article first appeared in [PersonalLiberty.com](#) and has been reprinted with permission.



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