



Written by [Thomas Sowell](#) on October 24, 2013

Race-hustling Results: Part II

Bob Costas is one of the premier sportscasters and a very smart guy, so it was somewhat surprising to see him join the chorus of those decrying the fact that the owner of the Washington Redskins is resisting the pressures to change the name of his football team.

The argument is that American Indians are offended by the name, though there is no compelling evidence that most American Indians are worked up about it. Nor is there any evidence that anyone intended the name to be insulting, either by this team or any number of other sports teams that have called themselves some variation of the name "Indians."



After all, neither individuals nor teams give themselves names that they consider insulting, whether they are calling themselves Indians, Vikings or The Fighting Irish.

Nevertheless, Dartmouth, Stanford and other colleges that once called their teams Indians succumbed to the politically correct pressures and changed their names. But that is no reason why the Washington Redskins should succumb to those pressures.

Among the reasons why they should not is the fact that being offended is one of the tactics of a race hustling industry that is doing more harm to Indians and other minorities than any name is likely to do. Some people are in the business of being offended, just as Campbell is in the business of making soup.

Shelby Steele's best-selling book *White Guilt* provides sharp insights into the many counterproductive consequences of white guilt that can be exploited by race hustlers, to the detriment of blacks and whites alike. The sports team gambit is just one of many.

So long as the race industry — the Al Sharptons, Jesse Jacksons, and their counterparts in various minorities — can get political or financial mileage out of being offended, they are going to be offended. The only thing that will put a stop to this racket is refusing to be taken in by it or intimidated by it.

Looked at in isolation, Bob Costas' opinion about the names of sports teams is one that reasonable people might agree or disagree with. But, unfortunately, this issue is not something that exists in isolation. It is part of a whole grievance-generating campaign that poisons race relations. That campaign is conducted not only by the race industry but also by all too many in the media and in the education system, from elementary schools to the universities.

Young blacks are especially susceptible to the message that all their problems are caused by white people — and that white society is never going to give them a chance. In short, they are primed to resent and hate individuals they have never seen before and who have never done a thing to them.

During the same week when Bob Costas was criticizing the name "Washington Redskins," the *New York Daily News* reported an incident in which a gang of young blacks attacked a white couple in a car,



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beating the man severely and dragging the woman out of the car by her hair down to the pavement, and beating her as well — all the while shouting racist obscenities.

Episodes like this have occurred repeatedly, in dozens of cities, all across the country. The only thing that was missing in this particular episode were public assurances from police authorities and the mayor that race had nothing to do with what happened. Such dishonest assurances have been common in the wake of such plainly racist attacks. Officials in various cities are obviously trying to keep the lid on this incipient race war.

But you cannot keep the lid on forever. In 1961, James B. Conant's book *Slums and Suburbs* warned that "social dynamite" was accumulating in American cities. Just a few years later, ghetto riots erupted all across the country.

Social dynamite can accumulate among whites as well as among blacks. White extremist hate groups already exist, though they are a fringe, as the Nazis were once a disdained fringe in Germany. It was the people's loss of confidence in the respectable institutions of society that gave the Nazis their chance for power.

The blind and dishonest political correctness of our media and educational institutions on racial issues today can eventually forfeit the confidence of Americans and give similar extremist groups their chance to ignite a race war in the United States. And once a race war starts, it can be virtually impossible to stop.

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