



Written by [James Murphy](#) on October 6, 2019

Rashida Tlaib: “Non-African Americans Think African Americans all Look the Same”

While President Trump is sometimes considered “loose” with his language, his rhetorical missteps are nothing compared to Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.; shown). The congresswoman, who promised a rabid band of supporters in January of this year that she and Congress would “impeach this mother*****,” is now in the news for another verbal blunder.



While touring the Detroit Police Department’s Real Time Crime Center on Monday, the [Detroit News caught Tlaib](#) suggesting that analysts assigned to a new facial recognition program should all be African-American.

Tlaib told Chief James Craig that analysts “need to be African-American, not people that are not. Because let me tell you, no, it happens all the time. It’s true. I think non-African Americans think African-Americans all look the same.”

The first term congresswoman from Michigan’s 13th District is a member of the so-called “Squad,” which features herself, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.), and Ayanna Pressley (D-Mass.). The far-left congresswomen are considered by many to be the new thought-leaders of the Democrat Party.

And if they are the thought leaders, let’s just say that the Democrats are in a lot of trouble moving forward.

Apparently, not realizing her racist faux pas, Tlaib went on to explain her assertion, “I’ve seen it even on the House floor,” the congresswoman said. “People calling Elijah Cummings John Lewis and John Lewis Elijah Cummings. And they’re totally different people. I’m just saying.”

After presumably picking his jaw off the floor at the absurdity of Tlaib’s comments, Chief Craig, a black man, said, “I trust people who are trained. Regardless of race, regardless of gender.”

“I know. But it does make a huge difference with the analysts,” Tlaib told the chief.

Tlaib was invited to tour the Detroit facility after [tweeting in August](#) about her distrust of facial recognition software. “@detroit police You should probably rethink this whole facial recognition bulls**t.” In the tweet, Tlaib also offered a link to a [Vice story](#) critical of the technology.

It’s fair enough if Tlaib wants to criticize facial recognition. A lot of people don’t trust it as a law enforcement tool. But does she always have to be so vulgar?

When the *Detroit News* [questioned Tlaib](#) about whether her words also meant that African-Americans should not work as crime analysts in predominantly white communities, the congresswoman offered



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only a confusing “Look it up” for an answer.

Chief Craig blasted Tlaib’s comments. In an interview with Detroit’s Fox 2, he said, “It’s a double standard. Certainly, as the police chief of this city, if I had made a similar comment, people would be outraged. They’d be calling for my resignation.”

“I’m not going to even try to understand why the comments were made. Let’s just say it was improper. It wasn’t right. And we should be talking about other things,” the chief said.

A spokesperson for the congresswoman tried to come to her rescue. “The studies [that Tlaib referred to are] related to cross-race effect or other-race effect,” the spokesperson said in a statement. “This has shown that individuals are less accurate when identifying people from a race other than their own.”

But Tlaib is not backing off of her original comments — not at all. [In an op-ed](#) published by the Detroit News on October 4, she doubled down on her assertions.

“My comments weren’t racist, out of order or ‘inappropriate.’ It is inappropriate to implement a broken, flawed and racist technology that doesn’t recognize black and brown faces in a city that is over 80% black,” Tlaib wrote.

“Calling out racism isn’t racist — but this technology is,” Tlaib said.

Despite herself, Tlaib — in her undeniably racist way — may have stumbled onto an actual civil liberty issue. The use of artificial intelligence such as facial recognition may or may not turn out to be inherently racist but there’s a possibility that it may be [inherently anti-human](#). And there are [real questions](#) about whether facial recognition technology is a boon to crime fighting or breach of privacy.

But Tlaib, obviously, shouldn’t be the one out in front of this issue. As a “new” Democrat, she sees everything in terms of race and identity politics. If facial recognition programs couldn’t discern one white person from another she wouldn’t care in the least. She and her other “squad” members would be out lobbying for its use everywhere.

Photo of Rep. Rashida Tlaib



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