

Condoleezza, please stop smiling

By Lawrence Hagerty, January 30, 2002

Of all the Bushwacker spokespersons, Condoleezza Rice is the one that irritates me the most. I think it must be because of that know-it-all smile always pasted on her face. Of course, it isn't difficult to understand why Condoleezza is always smiling. Anyone who has a résumé like hers is bound to have a smug look on their face from time to time. Just look at a few things she has accomplished:

- Tenured professor at Stanford University
- Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institute on War, Revolution, and Peace
- Nuclear Strategic Planner for the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- Director of Soviet and East European Affairs for the National Security Council under Bush the elder
- Member of the Council of Foreign Relations
- Director of the Chevron Oil Company

I could go on, for Condoleezza's list of influential positions is quite long. However, there is something about her résumé that bothers me. Her only major work experience outside the halls of academia and government seems to be in Big Oil. Not that there is anything inherently wrong with that. It just seems to suggest a potential conflict of interest.

This is what I mean:

- In the summer of 2001, shortly before the events of September 11th, Taliban officials were in Houston, Texas meeting with Unocal oil company officials in an attempt to negotiate a pipeline deal.
- When no agreement was reached, the Taliban officials were allegedly told to accept our offer of "a carpet of gold or you'll get a carpet of bombs."
- When Vice President Dick Cheney was running Halliburton, the oil field services company, he won a multi-billion dollar contract with Chevron to build a Caspian Sea pipeline for them to use in moving oil out of the Tengiz field in Central Asia.
- The Taliban has now been bombed out of power and a pipeline across Afghanistan is almost certainly in the works.

Now, I'm not saying there is any connection between these facts and Condoleezza Rice's role as one of the principal architects of the bombing and terror our country has inflicted on the people of Afghanistan. But to the casual observer, it sure seems like the masters of Big Oil are at least pulling a few strings. Maybe I am reading more into this than I should. Perhaps the thing that is really bothering me it is the fact that Chevron prized Condoleezza's services so highly they even named an oil tanker after her. Maybe I'm just jealous.

For the sake of argument, however, let us say that there is absolutely no conflict of interest in Condoleezza Rice's orchestration of the war in Afghanistan. Let's say she honestly believes she is making her decisions based solely on the best interests of our country, and that it is only a coincidence her former Big Oil masters are the primary beneficiaries of her policies. Even then, if I were her media advisor, I would advise her to get rid of that ever-present smile. It is just not polite to gloat so much over one's successes. And this is particularly true when success is paid for by sacrificing the lives of so many thousands of innocent children, women, and men whose only offense was to live in a country through which Big Oil coveted another pipeline.

Other opinions by Lawrence Hagerty
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