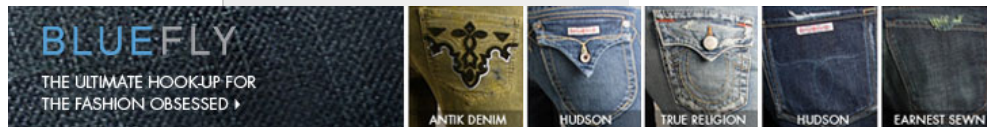


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Powell, Rice take stand on 'U' policies

By Jeremy Berkowitz, Daily Staff Reporter

1/21/03

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In a surprising incidence of disagreement within the Bush administration, two prominent members of his inner circle, Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, spoke out this weekend supporting certain facets of the University's admissions policies.

Bush announced Wednesday that he believes the University's use of race in admissions is unconstitutional, and would file a brief in support of the Center for Individual Rights, a Washington-based law firm that is suing the University in two cases regarding LSA and Law School admissions policies.

On CBS' "Face the Nation" Sunday, Powell reinforced his full support for the University's admissions policies, which he first expressed three years ago. But Powell emphasized he believes Bush is a supporter of overcoming racial prejudices in higher education.

"In the Michigan case, whereas I have expressed my support for the policies used by the University of Michigan, the president, in looking at it, came to the conclusion that it was constitutionally flawed," Powell said. "But I do know that he is absolutely committed to diversity and the manner in which the brief has been filed to the Court allows the Court to make its choice on the Michigan case but doesn't go to the underlying issues."

Meanwhile, the views expressed by Rice were not as clear-cut. After a Washington Post article Friday suggested she was responsible for influencing Bush's decision to file an amicus brief supporting CIR's position, Rice released a statement saying she is against race-conscious

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admissions.

"I believe that while race neutral means are preferable, it is appropriate to use race as one factor among others in achieving a diverse student body," Rice said.

But on NBC's "Meet the Press" Sunday, Rice, a former Stanford University provost and faculty member, was more reluctant to state her position on the University's policies. Although she said she benefited from Stanford's efforts to diversify, she was less at ease to say that she disagreed with Bush's beliefs and more inclined to express her dissatisfaction with the University's policies.

"I think that the president has come out in exactly the right place here. I am fully supportive of what he has done," Rice said. "I happen to think personally that there are problems with the Michigan case ... It is important to take race into consideration if you must - if race neutral means do not work - if you must take race into consideration, to do it in a way that looks at the total person, that does not assume certain things about a person's race just because of the color of their skin."

In addition, Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.) said yesterday during Martin Luther King, Jr. day celebrations that she, along with several Senate colleagues, would file an amicus brief supporting the University's admission policies.

"There are many ways to get to the promised land of integrated higher education. There is nothing wrong with what the University of Michigan is doing," she said.

Political science Prof. Michael Traugott said he did find Rice and Powell's comments unusual, but said they will not have much impact because in the end, the Supreme Court makes the final decision."It's especially uncommon in this administration, which places a high priority on towing the official administration line," Traugott said, referring to Powell and Rice's public statements.







"It won't have any effect because within about six months, the Supreme Court will have spoken and that will be the law of the land."

Traugott said he does not think Powell and Rice are in jeopardy of losing their positions because the issue at stake is more strategy-based rather than issue-based.

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anonymous851

anonymous851

posted 1/21/03 @ 2:49 PM EST

As a Caucasian, I don't understand racism except from an experiential point of view. However, if I achieved a higher GPA and were more qualified in important areas of eligibility and were passed over for what was my professed goal in life on the basis of the fact that I was not Afro-American or Latino-American, I would be disappointed to say the least. (Continued...)

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anonymous851

anonymous851

posted 1/21/03 @ 5:15 PM EST

I am a 1975 graduate from the University of Michigan and a direct beneficiary of affirmative action. I am a Hispanic female from deep South Texas whose family worked in Michigans cucumber fields in the summers. (Continued...)

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posted 1/21/03 @ 6:32 PM EST

Despite all the political rhetoric (on both sides). affirmative action is an out dated wav to

ensure racial diversity among college campuses. It seems that those in favor of affirmative action continually wave the "racism still exists" flag (not a debatable point , it does) but to imply that college admissions officers choose not to select the brightest and best for their institutions based on skin color seems almost ridiculous. ([Continued...](#))

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