

COMMUNITY ORGANIZER

Sarah Palin, self-described "pit bull in lipstick," [took two swipes](#) at community organizers last night. First, when she claimed that community organizers have no responsibilities:

I guess a small-town mayor is sort of like a community organizer, except that you have actual responsibilities.

And again when she suggested community organizers were only seeking personal discovery.

My fellow citizens, the American presidency is not supposed to be a journey of personal discovery. (Laughter, cheers, applause.) This world of threats and dangers, it's not just a community and it doesn't just need an organizer. (Laughter.)

I agree with [billmon](#)—this is a Republican dogwhistle at its very best.

Used the way the GOP speakers used the words tonight (i.e. with a sneer), community = ghetto and organizer = activist.

It essentially was a coded way of pointing out Obama's work in, with and for the black community (see? even I'm doing it) on the South Side of Chicago. Also the fact that his work involved helping low-income people stand up for their legal rights, as opposed to a GOP-sanctioned "real" job like business owner or career military officer (or moose hunter.) They were trying to put Obama back on the same level as Jesse Jackson – i.e., the black protest candidate – and mocking him for it.

To cut right to the nasty, they were using "community organizer" as a

euphemism for "poverty pimp."

[snip]

I gotta admit, I'm impressed in spite of myself. When it comes to playing the dog whistle, these guys are Mozarts.

Though I'll go billmon one better. I think they're setting up a very specific attack on Obama's push to register people to vote that will play right into their expected attempts to use voter ID laws to do vote caging on a massive scale.

You'll recall that in 2006, the GOP made a concerted effort to go after ACORN, which does a lot of community organizing as well as voter registration of lower-income people. In Missouri, after ACORN self-reported some problems with some of its (former) organizers, Brad Schlozman made a federal case out of it just in time for the elections. But there were hints all over the country of investigations targeting ACORN organizers. In fact, this obviously coordinated national attack on ACORN is, I [suspect](#), at the root of Brad Schlozman's own legal problems.

So the Republicans have already laid the ground work for a nationalized attack of the work ACORN does to register and mobilize low-income voters.

Well, what is one of Obama's big pushes this year? Registering voters—particularly African Americans—and turning them out to vote in November.

Redstate's Erick Erickson was just [insinuating](#) a connection between Obama and ACORN last week. I suspect we'll see more, similar moves to equate Obama's voter registration efforts with ACORN's efforts to give people a voice.

I plan to return to this attack. But as for interpreting dog whistles, I think this laid the groundwork for attempts to deny those the Obama campaign registers in the next few weeks their right to vote in November.

Update: Marc Ambinder [follows](#) the RNC twitter feed so you don't have to:

- *To Republicans, "community organizer" evokes Marxism and ACORN and corruption.*
[17 minutes ago](#)