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Malcolm X Explains the Georgia Senate Race

By Mike Tully

There is something unique about the race for the U. S. Senate in Georgia that pits incumbent Democrat Raphael Warnock against Republican Herschel Walker. It's so unique that the use of the terms "Democrat" and "Republican" fail to describe the contest. A better way to understand the Warnock – Walker race is to view it through the lens of the antebellum South. Our guide is a black activist from the 1960s, Malcolm X.

"So you have two types of Negro," [he told an audience at Michigan State University in 1963](#). "The old type and the new type. Most of you know the old type. When you read about him in history during slavery he was called 'Uncle Tom.' He was the house Negro. And during slavery you had two Negroes. You had the house Negro and the field Negro."

"The house Negro usually lived close to his master," he explained. "He dressed like his master. He wore his master's second-hand clothes. He ate food that his master left on the table. And he lived in his master's house--probably in the basement or the attic--but he still lived in the master's house."

"His master's pain was his pain," added Malcolm X. "And it hurt him more for his master to be sick than for him to be sick himself. When the house started burning down, that type of Negro would fight harder to put the master's house out than the master himself would."

Malcolm X described the other type. "But then you had another Negro out in the field. The house Negro was in the minority. The masses--the field Negroes were the masses. They were in the majority. When the master got sick, they prayed that he'd die. If his house caught on fire, they'd pray for a wind to come along and fan the breeze."

Hershel Walker is indisputably one of the worst U. S. Senate candidates in American history. Consider [his recollection of his time](#) as a patient in a psychiatric hospital: "They told me I had a mental problem...I remember sitting here in this hospital and going, 'Whoa, these people here are crazy, and I'm not like them.'" And there is this quote: "And people say, 'Herschel, you played football.' But I said, 'Guys, I also was valedictorian of my class. I also was in the top 1% of my graduating class in college.'" Not only was he not the valedictorian, he didn't even graduate from college. He has also lied about supervising hospitals and being an FBI agent.

And who could forget this: "But since we don't control the air, our good air decide to float over to China, bad air. So when China gets our good air, their bad air got to move. So it moves over to our good air space. And now we've got to clean that back up."

Despite the inanity of these statements, not to mention the recent persuasive evidence that Walker – a radically anti-abortion candidate – paid for a girl friend’s abortion, the Republican establishment fully embraced him. Why? Because he’s a loyal, reliable house Negro.

Walker is a Senate candidate because Donald Trump wanted it that way. In 1984, Trump bought a struggling football team, the New Jersey Generals of the flash-in-the pan United States Football League. Walker was the star of the team. He was Trump’s house Negro.

Last October, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said this about Walker: “Herschel is the only one who can unite the party, defeat Senator Warnock, and help us take back the Senate. I look forward to working with Herschel in Washington to get the job done.”

The old Kentuckian knows a loyal house Negro when he sees one. Walker will do what he’s told, when to do it, and how to feel about it. Sure, he’ll make statements that make Republican leaders skin crawl. But they know he’ll serve his masters and that’s good enough for them.

Politico reported that “Raphael Warnock won his seat running as an activist preacher.” His fellow Democratic Senator, Cory Booker of New Jersey, remarked, “There’s never been anybody like him in the United States Senate.” Warnock is the field Negro to Walker’s house Negro.

Politico draws the contrast this way: “Warnock — the first Black senator from Georgia and the first Black Democrat in the Senate from the South, and not just a pastor but the pastoral heir of Martin Luther King Jr. at Atlanta’s Ebenezer Baptist Church — has made his life’s work a response to systemic racism. Walker has all but denied racism’s existence.”

The GOP has grown more openly racist during the Trump years and Walker is their perfect house Negro. Warnock is their greatest fear.

The race for the U. S. Senate in Georgia this year is not Democrat versus Republican. It’s field Negro versus house Negro. And Malcolm X saw it coming nearly six decades ago.