



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

What You Should Know

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A Word or Three about Yellow Journalism

You should know that the Saturday, October 27th New York Post column “State Dems shaking off scandals in polls” used the photos of three minority Senate Democrats: Pedro Espada, Jr., Hiram Monserrate, and Shirley Huntley to highlight corruption in the State Senate.

The New York Post, apparently disappointed with recent polls showing that New Yorkers want the Democrats to take back control of the State Senate, pointed out

how Black and Hispanic Democrats have been indicted, belong in jail, or are accused of corruption. This New York Post article includes Senators Malcolm Smith, John Sampson and Eric Adams in their story, despite the fact that none of these Senators has ever been indicted or nor found guilty of anything – except being Black.

New York Post readers need to be wary because the Post somehow continues to overlook the corruption that is, has been, and continues to exist in the Republican Party by those Senate colleagues.

Lawmakers facing corruption charges are not exclusive to Democrats, nor are they exclusive to Black and Hispanic Senators, but the New York Post seems to make believe or ignore these facts. It may be the case that they are using their paper to slant their story or lie to their readers.

There are many ways of lying. You can lie by purposely ignoring the truth or speaking in half-truths. You can lie by only releasing the part of the story that you want to release. You can lie by making people believe that “this” is the whole truth while you knowingly hide the rest. You can lie by slanting the truth.

In this case, the New York Post exposes and accuses only Democratic Senators - highlighting Black and Hispanic Senators - while hiding the truth that there are at least as many among the ranks of the Republicans in the New York State Senate who have been accused of corruption and have been or may belong in jail.

Let's start at the top.

Republican Senate Leader Joseph Bruno's corruption was so egregious that it resulted in the Public Corruption Prevention and Enforcement Act. (I have no recollection of any stronger piece of legislation that resulted from the scandalous acts of any Black or Hispanic Senate Democrat.) Judge Gary L. Sharpe chastised Republican Senator Joseph Bruno during sentencing by telling the Republican Senate Leader: “You trampled on the integrity of the State Legislature.”

Disgraced Republican Senator Guy Velella ended his political career in the New York State Senate after he was convicted of bribery and went to prison.

Republican Senator Vincent Leibell is a convicted felon, guilty of taking kickbacks from a charity he founded which was funded with millions of taxpayer dollars. He pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice and tax evasion.

Republican Senator Nick Spano pleaded guilty to tax evasion. During his sentencing, Manhattan U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara stated: "When Nicholas Spano took the oath of office, he swore to uphold the law, and yet he did exactly the opposite. There is absolutely no place in government for lawbreakers, and we will continue to do everything within our power to prosecute and punish them."

There are calls to investigate Republican Senate Deputy Majority Leader Tom Libous about a downstate law firm hiring his son, which, according to a witness in a recent federal corruption trial, was in exchange for the promise of more business.

Let's not forget the story about Republican Senator Jim Alesi, who doesn't exactly make the Republican Party shine. Senator Alesi trespassed on a homeowner's property, fell and broke his leg. Although the owners declined to press charges against him, Senator Alesi proceeded to sue the building contractor, DiRisio Builders. The New York Daily News editorial "State Sen. James Alesi is suing constituents when he should be apologizing for acting like an idiot" began with the following: "Remember the old joke about the kid who murdered his parents, then pleaded for mercy on grounds of being an orphan?"

While there is so much more to share about the Republican Senate, I will stop here, for now.

I ask my readers to always keep in mind that just because something appears in a newspaper, in a tabloid, or on the internet doesn't mean it's true. I also ask my friends in the media to keep in mind that just because the majority of New Yorkers want to see Democrats control the New York State Senate doesn't mean that the New York Post or anyone else should engage in the use ugly racial tactics to try to undercut these hopes.

Remember God hates ugly.

This is State Senator Reverend Rubén Díaz and this is what you should know.