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# OP-ED: If Black Lives Really Matter to Black People, then It's Time to Stop Watching the NFL

By Chris B. Bennett (The Seattle Medium/NNPA Member)

For years, the African American community has been asking and insisting that our professional athletes do more for our community. We ask them to give money towards initiatives and good causes, we ask them to be role models, and we ask them to stand up, speak up and speak out on issues affecting our community.

And yet, as you read this article today, there are pro football players that have taken a stance against oppression, police brutality and the killing of Black people by law enforcement officers all across this country. Yet, these athletes are under attack by the media, by "fans" who claim that they have ruined the game of football, because they will not stand during the national anthem...and yes, the players have even come under attack by the 45th occupant of the White House.

The Black Lives Matter movement and the many of the NFL players are standing up (or kneeling) for justice and "just us." We are demanding justice for things that happen to just us. We demand justice for the racial profiling that happens to just us. We demand justice for the excessive force that is used against just us. And we are demanding justice, on behalf of millions of voiceless African Americans all across the country, for the lives that have been lost as a result of law enforcement officers shooting us (unarmed, Black Americans) at alarming rates.

Numbers don't lie, and videos don't lie either. Black men are killed by police officers in extrajudicial shootings at much higher rates that far outweigh the rate of that White men are shot and killed by police officers, which indicates to me that these killings repeatedly happen to just us; and think about the number of videos that we have seen that show Black people gunned down, choked out,



Chris Bennett, the co-publisher of The Seattle Medium, challenges the Black community to support Colin Kaepernick (pictured) and current NFL players that continue to protest police brutality. This photo was taken during the San Francisco 49ers vs. Green Bay Packers game at Lambeau Field on September 9, 2012. (Mike Morbeck/Wikimedia Commons)

manhandled and beaten; while at the same time we see videos of Whites blatantly disrespecting police officers and daring them to do something to them, and those suspects are able to walk away unharmed.

In protesting these atrocities, Colin Kaepernick chose to take a knee during the national anthem, because he didn't want to stand up for the flag of a country that oppresses Black people and people of color. In fact, Kaepernick was quoted as saying, "To me, this is bigger than football and it would be selfish on my part to look the other way. There are bodies in the street and people getting paid leave and getting away with murder."

For taking such a stance, Kaepernick is no longer employed as an NFL player. We hear all the excuses about why he does not have a job as a quarterback in the NFL. You can believe the excuses if you want, but I would challenge you to answer this question: Do you honestly want to see Colin Kaepernick playing quarterback against your favorite team on Sunday? Your honest answer would probably be "No," because despite any flaws or inconsistencies that he may have in his game, Colin

Kaepernick is a game changer. He is a legitimate dual threat quarterback, who can find his way to the end zone anytime he touches the ball. So, why is he unemployed? You can answer that question for yourself.

As a result of what many believe was the blackballing of Kaepernick by the NFL, many people across this country, many of them Black women, decided to boycott the NFL this season; and the boycott is and was successful, so much so that the NFL, mainstream media and the 45th occupant led people to believe that the low ratings of NFL games this season were a result of White men not watching the NFL, because Black players were protesting that national anthem. Then, the 45th occupant of the White House, in his puppeteering ways, stepped forward and said that the NFL should fire anyone, who refuses to stand for the national anthem, and accused those who chose to kneel during the national anthem of disrespecting the flag and being unpatriotic. Black folks took offense and I believe that they decided to watch the games in protest to "45"; I bet the ratings increased, too.

Now, fast forward to

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones stating that players on his team, who do not stand for the national anthem will not play, and "45" praises him for doing so. Ironic? I don't think so. Don't let them fool you, "45" and NFL owners have been joined at the hip in the process from the very beginning. The 45th occupant of the White House carried the water of the NFL owners, helped sway some sort of public opinion against the players and now the owners feel empowered to

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bring down their oppressive hammers on the players. The 45th occupant of the White House will take credit for bringing "law and order" to the plantation, and the NFL owners will walk away with little or no blood on their hands.

The real story is that a handful of players have stood up for what they feel is right. Now the question is, what is the African American com-

munity going to do to support them? Do you have the courage to turn the channel when your favorite team(s) play on Sunday? Do you have the courage to publicly tell people that you support the players who choose to take a knee for justice and not just us? Do you have the courage to proudly wear the jersey of Colin Kaepernick, Michael Bennett or any other player who chooses to kneel or sit during the national anthem? Do you have the courage to start your own personal social media campaign supporting those players who take a knee to say that Black lives matter just as much as any other lives in this country? Are you willing to show your unwavering support for those who are standing tall by taking a knee during the national anthem? Will you write a letter, email or tweet to the NFL, the 45th occupant of the White House and your congressional delegation expressing your concerns about this issue? Do you have the backbone to stand up and advocate for freedom, justice and equality for those who are no longer here to speak for themselves?

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Administration for the Estate of Gary Lee McKee Jr, Deceased, were issued on November 7th, 2017, in Cause No. C-1-PB-16-002094, pending in the Probate Court No. One, Travis County, Texas, to: Stephanie McKee.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

c/o: Cara L. Surell

Attorney at Law

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DATED the 30th day of November, 2017.

/s/ Cara L. Surell

Cara L. Surell

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### NAACP Objects to Trump Attending Museum Opening

by: Darlene Superville | Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — President Donald Trump's plan to attend the grand opening of a Mississippi civil rights museum is drawing pushback, including from the NAACP.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Tuesday that Trump will travel to the state on Saturday to help open the Museum of Mississippi History and the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum as he celebrates the state's bicentennial.

But the NAACP said in a statement that Trump should cancel his planned appearance because of his record on civil rights issues. Other activists are also threatening to boycott or protest Trump's participation.

"President Trump's statements and policies regarding the protection and enforcement of civil rights have been abysmal," NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson said in a statement. He called Trump's planned attendance "an affront to the veterans of the civil rights movement."

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said earlier Tuesday that protests and boycotts of the event would be "honestly, very sad."

"I think this is something that should bring the country together to celebrate the opening of this museum and highlighting (the) Civil Rights Movement and the progress that we've made," she said.

Trump visited the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington this year.



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