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Divergent Views with Racial Underpinnings

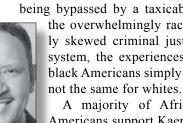
Kaepernick's right to self-expression

BY MARC H. MORIAL Social protest is a fundamental element of American democracy. The right to self-expression, the right to dissent, and the right to confront those in authority with

the Constitution.

Thus, San Francisco 49er Colin Kaepernick's decision to protest police violence against African Americans by declining to stand for the National Anthem meanwhile, have burned Kaeperis a profoundly patriotic act.

country, the reality of day-today life for white and black Americans can be vastly different. Most black men and women in America know the humiliation of being targeted – by police, by store clerks, by security



A majority of African Americans support Kaepernick's choice, while a majority of whites do not. Ac-

responsible for their actions

poll the National Urban League lethal force when necessary. conducted among our followers, an overwhelming 88 percent say stand for the National Anthem, I they are proud of Kaepernick.

Some white football fans, nick's jersey and have engaged While we live in the same in hateful racial invective on social media.

The divergent views on Kaepernick's action reflect the nick's protest has raised, he has divergent views on the very reason for his protest – the use of excessive and fatal force by police, disproportionately directed August, 22 NFL players have officers - for nothing more than at people of color, and the failure joined his protest, as have ath-

their appearance. Black children of authorities to hold officers acare viewed as older and more countable for misconduct.

According to a recent survey, than white children of the same the vast majority white Amerage. From minor offenses like icans hold a favorable view of being bypassed by a taxicab to police, while a slight majority the overwhelmingly racial- of black Americans hold an unly skewed criminal justice favorable view. A majority of system, the experiences of whites believe police generally black Americans simply are are held accountable for their misconduct, and a majority of blacks believe they are not. A majority of black respondents said police are too quick to use lethal force, while most white ones grievances are enshrined in cording to an informal Twitter respondents said police only use

> While I myself will continue to support his right to protest. And while I wholeheartedly share Kaepernick's despair over excessive force and the failure to hold police accountable, I would support his protest even if I did not.

Despite the outrage Kaeperignited a movement of sorts. Since Kaepernick since first declined refused to stand in late

leagues, and colleges all across able to see. the country.

It's interesting to note that, while no white NFL player has yet joined the protest, many of the high school and college students protesting are white. Young people have the power to change the future, and it is encouraging that their eyes are open to the racism and injustice

letes in high schools, youth many of their elders seem un-

It is not merely Kaepernick's right to register his discontent with the status quo. Some would argue it is a moral imperative. As Abraham Lincoln said, "To sin by silence when they should protest makes cowards of men."

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