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Stealing Our Vote If They Get the Chance

Voting rights have been lost before

BY DIALLO BROOKS

One October morning in Rich-

mond, Va., 32-year old Joseph Cox watched his friends and neighbors go to the polls for the first time.

The fight to get to that moment had been long, bloody, and vi-

cious. But as a black man newly campaign to weaken voting rights discrimination, Cox did something that would've seemed incomprehensible only a decade before: He won an election.

Cox was one of 24 black reprethat year -1867.

But the response to that progress was vicious.

to find new justifications for stripping the voting rights of African American men (women could not vet vote), alleging voter fraud and implementing heinous tactics like literacy tests, poll taxes, and voting roll purges.

Today, too many people take for achieved during the civil rights movement are still firmly in place. But progress is neither promised nor irreversible.

weakened, and then lost before.

eligible to vote after a lifetime of is Donald Trump's "Election Integrity" Commission, which Trump convened after absurdly claiming that he only lost the popular vote because millions of people voted illegally. But there's sentatives elected across Virginia not one shred of evidence of widespread in-person voter fraud in the United States.

Racist white politicians worked used to prop up voter suppression tactics during the Jim Crow era claims that such measures preserve the integrity, efficiency, and sustainability of elections — are being unapologetically recycled today.

tion only to face a brutal Jim Crow voting rights alive today — peo- time "— putting voters at risk of progress and regression. backlash underscores an import- ple who've built careers on stripant theme in our country's history: ping the voting rights of thousands Voting rights have been won, then upon thousands of eligible voters Spakovsky, a former Justice De- Richmond in 1867, and when I of color.

Kansas Secretary of State Kris granted that the advances Kobach, who co-chairs the commission, is among the worst.

After requiring Kansans to tect voting rights."

losing their most essential right.

partment lawyer described by former colleagues as "the point person for undermining the Civil Rights Division's mandate to pro-

When I think of Joseph Cox Another member is Hans von winning his right to vote in think of my grandparents having to fight for that same right in that same place all over again a century later, I wonder how so many Americans have forgotten the

The same sham justifications used to of the long right-wing prop up voter suppression tactics during the Jim Crow era — claims that such measures preserve the integrity, efficiency, and sustainability of elections — are being unapologetically recycled today.

The same sham justifications show a passport or birth certificate in order to register to vote —a allowed to vote twice in an elecmove that blocked nearly 20,000 eligible voters — a federal court said Kobach had carried out "mass denial of a fundamental right."

Kobach also promotes the "Interstate Crosscheck" program that Trump's new voter suppression claims to identify in-person voter The fact that thousands of Af- commission, which met for the fraud. But in reality, the Washingrican Americans voted and held first time in July, is led by some ton Post reports, the system "gets elected office during Reconstruc- of the most strident opponents of it wrong over 99 percent of the America is a one filled with both at People for the American Way.

is basically non-existent. While the commission might claim to be about promoting the integrity of our elections, their true task is to find justifications for laws that make it harder for members of have forgotten. certain communities to vote.

Of course, no one should be fragility of this precious right.

I wonder how so many are tion. But voter impersonation blind and indifferent to the assault on the right to vote — a right people fought and died for - happening right before our eyes today. We've seen these attacks before. And not all of us

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Threats Move World Closer to Catastrophe

Trump's adolescent bellicosity

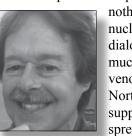
BY MEL GURTOV The problem with

Donald Trump's "fire and fury" statement on North Korea isn't

ready tense situation. Nor is it US is unstable and prone to vijust another example of Trump's inappropriate, childish language when faced with a complex is- of North Korea that attacking domestic agenda that has gotten sue.

seems to have no grasp of how his remarks might play out in real-world international politics. Trying to one-up the North Koreans with threats may give Trump the false sense that he is besting them, since he believes—as always, from his business experi- hold to that view? ence-threats work.

of how threats are received in ment leadership, have concluded drumbeat of war that the media



capitals. Trump's language does

venom relations with madness. North Korea and to spread view else-

olent actions.

it sooner rather than later is the nowhere. Nuclear weapons, Ko-Most worrisome is that he best way to resolve the nuclear rean history, North Korean motiissue. Bill Clinton disproved that in 1994 by rejecting an attack on North Korea's nuclear facility at Yongbyon and instead entering into an Agreed Framework with Pyongyang that prevented war. Does Trump still

Seoul, Tokyo, Beijing, and other ic, with immediate one million rea's missiles, I doubt that many deaths and economic costs of nothing to move the around \$1 trillion. Needless to nuclear issue toward say, Koreans north and south, dialogue, but does Japanese, and Chinese would much to further en- pay the heaviest price for such

But Trump, with his wellsupport the wide- known ignorance about nuclear weapons, seems blissfully unmerely that it intensifies an al- where that the president of the aware of such matters. He would rather talk about "fake news," at-

tack critics, lie about his accom-In the past Trump has said plishments, and keep pushing a vations, and the art of diplomacy are outside his area of interest, and to say he is not a fast study is to be overly polite.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson responded to questions about Trump's latest threat by saying "Americans should sleep Numerous specialists, and well at night," dismissing the But he has no awareness Trump's own defense depart- threat as "rhetoric." Given the

Pyongyang, not to mention in that war would be catastroph- has engaged in over North Koinformed Americans are sleeping well. I doubt that US military leaders in particular are sleeping well; they have an inexperienced, unpredictable commander-in-chief who just might issue ans and Japanese are not sleep- land State University.

ing well.

Warlike rhetoric from the US president can never be dismissed. In a word, President Trump is loose cannon, a serious threat to national and international security.

Mel Gurtov, syndicated by an order to attack North Korea. PeaceVoice, is professor emeri-And most assuredly South Kore- tus of political science at Port-



