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a Better Future Now

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**SPECIAL ISSUE:
BLACK HISTORY**
Feb. 22



Opinion

Republicans Will Ride with Trump Forever

After every Trump outrage, we go through a similar routine. Trump says or does something that most sane people believe to be over the top; he is roundly condemned; some Republicans shake their heads; masses of people ask that something be done...and then it all fades into the next news cycle.

What was different in connection with Trump's recent alleged remarks against Africa, Haiti and Latin America—the notorious “s-thole remarks”—was that some Republicans who were in the room at the time of the alleged remarks first played dumb and then claimed that the remarks had not been verbalized. At that point, there was laughter in the audience.

Yet, in talk show after talk show there is a question that keeps getting asked: why isn't something being done about this situation? Why can't Trump be brought back to the standard of a respectable politician? The answer is not very difficult, but has several parts. Here goes.



Bill Fletcher Jr.
The Global African

First, he is not now nor has he ever been a “respectable” politician. Whether as a reality-show celebrity or candidate for office or now as President, he has insisted on being provocative. He believes in stirring things up. It is this modus operandi that inspired his right-wing populist base. They were not looking for what they believed as more of the same. On top of that it remains far from clear that Trump would understand how to be a respectable politician in either case. It seems to run against his nature.

Second, who will do anything about Trump? The Republicans control both houses of Congress, the White House and the U.S. Supreme Court. They look at Trump as a blunt force object that serves the interests of their agenda. Many

of them may be personally uncomfortable with him, but they know that if they move to take him down, they may provide momentum for the Democrats. They would rather that the United States become and remain a global laughing-stock, than lose the political edge.

“Trump's infatuation with authoritarianism is not a simple rhetorical device used to increase ratings

Third, the so-called moderate Republicans who are deeply uncomfortable with the crudeness of Trump worry that they will be challenged in Republican primaries by the extreme right should they move against Trump. Perhaps they wonder and hope that there will be deeper revela-

tions in the Mueller investigation of alleged Trump/Russia ties, but for now they will do nothing.

Thus, holding Trump accountable is a matter of political power. It is not a matter of morality and good will. If those who see the Trump regime as a threat to humanity do not engage in mass political action, including, but not limited to, electoral politics, the situation will go from bad to worse. By worse, I mean growing authoritarianism. And here we must all be clear that Trump's infatuation with authoritarianism is not a simple rhetorical device to increase the ratings. It seems to reflect the centerpiece of his worldview: Life is about Trump; Trump is the savior of the U.S.; Trump's ideas are the greatest that humankind has every experienced. Those who get in the way of Trump's truth, therefore, are enemies who must be removed.

The challenge is now ours.
Bill Fletcher, Jr. is a talk show host, writer and activist. Follow him on Twitter @BillFletcherJr, and Facebook.

What We've Lost During Trump's First Year

The year leading up to his inauguration in 2017, as the Republican presidential nominee, Donald Trump espoused senseless, baseless and ultimately empty assertions about the state of Black Americans and our communities.

“What the hell do you have to lose?” he screamed in front of a predominantly White crowd in a small, predominantly White suburb of Lansing, Michigan.

After Trump was inaugurated, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) found it prudent to answer his question. In March, the CBC Executive Committee, led by our Chairman Cedric L. Richmond (D-La.), presented Trump with a 130-page policy document entitled, “We Have A Lot To Lose: Solutions to Advance Black Families in the 21st Century.”

The document, which was compiled by the entire 49-member Caucus, outlined policy solutions down to the bill text for issues facing our communities. Voting rights, criminal justice reform, economic justice, education, health care, immigration – these were just some of the topics we presented to continue our progress.

Unfortunately, these are the issues that Trump and his administration have chosen to ignore. The President, who has not commented on the document since we presented it to him, obviously has had other ideas, almost as if he wanted to answer his own



Rep. Karen Bass
Senator (D-Calif.)

question in his first year, to show us what we can lose.

The truth is that in this first year, we've lost a lot.

Almost immediately after being elected, Trump established the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity and appointed a known vote suppressor to lead it. The commission was designed to intimidate voters and Trump—because of political and legal pressure—

“Hard-earned progress will never be safe so long as bigotry, hatred and racism hold power

recently decided to dissolve it into the Department of Homeland Security.

Throughout the past year, Trump has stacked the federal courts with judges with nothing short of scandalous records when it comes to voting rights. Among his nominee group was Thomas Farr, who helped lawmakers draft and defend a 2013 law that the Fourth Circuit Court of North Carolina ruled targeted Af-

rican American voters “with almost surgical precision.”

On the criminal justice front, Trump has used the Department of Justice to embrace mass incarceration and shy away from transparent policing. One example of this is an FBI report published last August entitled, “Black Identity Extremists Likely Motivated to Target Law Enforcement Officers.” One problem with the report is that the term “Black Identity Extremists” is an invented group that does not exist. There are no Black people organized to kill law enforcement officers. When I asked Attorney General Jeff Sessions, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein and FBI Director Christopher Wray about the origins of this report, none of them could tell me what the report was even based on or how the term was created.

Economically, Trump has gone after our consumer protections. Congress is working to repeal Dodd-Frank, a landmark piece of legislation designed to protect consumers from the wreck of the 2009 recession. Trump's favoring of big banks will ultimately leave consumers in the same spot they were during the recession, or worse. In 2014, for the first time ever, the majority of public school students in the United States were non-White. Secretary DeVos has been less than helpful to these institutions, ignoring grave disparities in how students of color are disciplined compared to White students,

and supporting a budget that would further attack services that public schools provide.

Trump has also gone after our healthcare by actively sabotaging the Affordable Care Act, continually issuing statements citing death spirals and other doomsday prophecies in addition to cutting funding for advertisements and allowing health insurance companies to sell short-term plans with inadequate coverage. Trump and other Republican leaders have already openly discussed cuts to the social safety net, meaning Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security, as justification for their deficit-exploding tax plan.

Trump has spent a considerable amount of time attacking Black immigrants and their countries with both his racist words and policies. In addition to referring to Haiti and African countries as “shitholes,” he's attacked recipients of the Diversity Visa Program, rescinded the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and scheduled the elimination of Temporary Protective Status for many countries like Haiti and El Salvador.

The entire reason we have this program is to help protect immigrants from ills in their home country, which can range from famine to civil war. To deport hundreds of thousands after opening our borders to them is unconscionable.

When we look at the is-