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Opinion

Trump, the Republicans and the Neo-Confederate Objective

It became very clear to anyone who was watching that in the lead up to the Nov. 6 elections, Trump and his allies focused on two things: putting their hands on your wallets and, in order to do that, reinforce the idea that the USA is a White republic (and keep White people thinking about that and only that). To put it another way, they want to restore the Confederacy.

Trump had many tactical options in the weeks prior to the election as a way of inspiring his base. He could have played to the economy which has continued to grow, largely as a result of decisions made during the Obama era but claimed by Trump. The problem is that the results of the economic improvements have been very uneven and working-class people have largely stagnated. Despite that, he could have made the argument. Trump regularly fudges the truth.

Trump and his Republican acolytes chose a different route, one with a long history in US politics. They first used the Justice Kavanaugh hearings to reaffirm male supremacy, making it appear that men are under attack in the USA and that women's concerns about sexual as-

Bill
Fletcher Jr.*The Global African*

sault are misplaced. This rally the white men challenge was followed by an equally nefarious tactic: a call for an all-out mobilization against a mythical, so-called immigrant invasion coming from Central America. Facts to the contrary, Trump — and re-

“When [Trump] and his followers suggest that their way of life is being threatened, they mean that the privileged status of whites and men — compared with people of color and women, respectively — has been called into question by those of us who believe in democracy and justice

peated by some of his key allies — argued that the several thousand refugees in Central America were threatening the US way of life.

The response was truly remarkable and clarified that

Trump's messages are not for the US electorate but for the white American electorate. When he and his followers suggest that their way of life is being threatened, they mean that the privileged status of whites and men — compared with people of color and women, respectively — has been called into question by those of us who believe in democracy and justice. Thus, Trump plays not to an abstract fear but a specific fear among large numbers of whites; a fear of the future.

What do Trump and his

supremacy and male supremacy held sway and when forces of dissent — forces for justice — were literally and figuratively chained.

The right-wing fear of the future is a fear of not only the demographic changes in the USA, which will render white majority rule moot by the middle of the 21st century, but there is a broader fear that successes on the road toward a consistent democracy will mean a change in the relations between men and women, but also changes in the economy as wealth polarization along with the environmental catastrophe will necessitate a different set of economic priorities.

Trump and his allies have played to fears that have existed in the White electorate since the 19th century. He achieved considerable success via this demagoguery. But the results of the election showed that millions more see no future in the past but believe that another way forward is not only possible, but essential.

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is the former president of TransAfrica Forum. Follow him on Twitter, and Facebook. Pick up his murder mystery, The Man Who Fell from the Sky from Hardball Press.

Is the FBI Underreporting the Surge in Hate Crimes?

The FBI has released its 2017 hate crimes statistics which revealed a 17 percent increase in incidents since 2016. In 2017 there were 8,493 victims and 6,307 known offenders. By comparison there were 7,509 victims and 5,727 known offenders in 2016, according to the data.

“This report is a call to action — and we will heed that call,” Acting Attorney General Matthew Whitaker said in a statement. “The Department of Justice's top priority is to reduce violent crime in America, and hate crimes are violent crimes.”

The report contrasts with the prior year when there were 6,036 single-bias incidents, or occurrences where the perpetrator has one bias against a community or group. By comparison, in 2017, there were 7,106 single-bias incidents reported.

According to the FBI, “58.1 percent were motivated by a race/ethnicity/ancestry bias, 22.0 percent were prompted by religious bias, 15.9 percent resulted from sexual-orientation bias and 1.7 percent were motivated by gender-identity bias.”

“This [report] is shocking and requires Congress's full attention,” NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson said in a statement.

“Shouldn't this urgent cri-

Stacy Brown

NNPA Columnist

sis be the subject of the first post-recess Senate Judiciary Committee hearing today, instead of ramming through more Trump judges? Our lives are at stake,” Johnson said.

Also, some organizations are skeptical of the FBI statistics and say underreporting

“Anti-Black or African American” bias accounted for nearly half of all crimes motivated by race or ethnicity, which rose 18 percent

remains a significant problem in its annual survey.

In a statement, the Arab American Institute (AAI) expressed concern and disappointment with the release of the 2017 hate crime statistics.

The organization claims that the data contained some glaring omissions, including three of the most severe acts of bias-motivated violence committed last year. And while career officials at the Department of Justice continue to demonstrate a commitment to serving communities and preventing hate crime, officials at the AAI said they remain dissatisfied with the

response from this administration.

Of 34 reportable bias motivation categories, all but five reported an increase in 2017. With 2,013 incidents reported, “Anti-Black or African American” bias accounted for nearly half of all crimes motivated by race or ethnicity, which rose 18 percent according to the FBI data, while “Anti-American Indian or Alaska Native,” “Anti-Multiple Races, Group,” and “Anti-Hispan-

crime decreased in 2017 but remained well above historical averages with 273 incidents reported.

Based on state-level hate crime statistics reported through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system, which the FBI also uses to publish its annual report, the AAI was expecting an increase of crimes motivated by sexual orientation in 2017 statistics.

While an increase was reported in the federal data, it was less significant than expected, the organization noted in a statement.

Analysis from AAI shows that in multiple states, official state-level data reported a greater number of incidents than what is reported in the FBI's statistics.

Crimes motivated by disability, gender, and gender identity, which are more recent additions to the data collections and generally produce smaller annual totals, were significantly affected by these discrepancies.

For example, the Kentucky State Police reported 41 gender-motivated hate crime incidents in official state-level statistics, whereas only 46 incidents were reported nationwide according to the FBI data.

Read the rest of this commentary at
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