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Opinion

Sounding Increasingly Desperate, Trump Attacks Black Congresswoman at Minnesota Rally

By **Lauren Victoria Burke**
NNPA Columnist

As the 2020 campaign for
the White House enters
the final stretch, Pres-
ident Donald Trump
is looking and sounding in-
creasingly desperate.

After a debate performance
featuring a call to support-
ers to go to the polls and ob-
serve followed by a backlash
for not denouncing white
supremacy, Trump’s Republi-
can supporters in the halls
of Congress are increasingly
concerned his presence at the
top of the GOP ticket will im-
pact the party down ballot.

The day after a debate he
was roundly criticized for,
Trump went to an old stand-
by: Attacking African Ameri-
can women in positions of
leadership.

During a rally in Minnesota
on September 30, Trump said,
“What is going on with Omar?
I’ve been reading these re-
ports for two years about how
corrupt and crooked she is.

Let’s get with it. Let’s get with
it.”

Trump was referring to
unverified claims linking the
Congresswoman to a “ballot
harvesting” scheme. A con-
servative website that traffics
in conspiracies attempted to
make the unverified informa-
tion go viral on September 28.

“Not only are
Minnesotans
welcoming of
refugees, they
have sent one
to Washing-
ton to repre-
sent them

Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.)
said on Oct. 1st that she was
not surprised by President
Trump’s attacks.

“This man is a white su-
premacist. It’s no surprise
that he has ideas of feeling
that Somalis are worthless...



Representative, Ilhan Omar (D-MN) speaking at a Hillary for MN event at the U of MN, October 2018. (Photo: Lorie Shaull / Wikimedia Commons)

We are very clear that in
Minnesota, we are greater
than hate. That is why he
didn’t win Minnesota in 2016,
“Rep. Omar said during an in-
terview on MSNBC.

“Not only are Minnesotans
welcoming of refugees, they
have sent one to Washington
to represent them. We are
very clear that in Minnesota
we are greater than hate. That
is why he didn’t win Minne-
sota in 2016, and why he’s not
going to win Minnesota in
2020,” he added.

Trump has attacked Omar

before, along with Reps. Max-
ine Waters (D-Calif.), Rep.
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
(D-NY), Rep. Rashida Tlaib
(D-Mich.) and Rep. Ayanna
Pressley (D-Mass.).

Polling in Pennsylvania,
Minnesota, Wisconsin and
Arizona shows that Trump
is trailing Vice President Joe
Biden. States such as Georgia
and South Carolina, usually
reliable for Republican vic-
tory, are in play with either
Biden tied with Trump or
only one or two points be-
hind.

Genetics, Diagnosis, Treatment: NIH Takes on Sickle Cell Disease Globally

By **NNPA**

Each year, some 150,000
children in Nigeria are
born with sickle cell dis-
ease, the most common—
and often life-threatening—
inherited blood disorder in
the world.

“I was not happy when I
read that Nigeria will have
the highest contribution to
the global burden of sickle
cell disease by 2050—if we
continue at the present birth
rate and the level of inactivity

and Asian-Americans, too. To
help address the problem on
a global scale, the NHLBI has
been supporting programs
in sub-Saharan Africa, where
more than 75 percent of the
sickle cell disease births
worldwide occur. SPARCo,
with a hub in Tanzania, and
additional sites in Nigeria
and Ghana, works to develop
an infrastructure for sickle
cell disease research, health
care, education, and training
to take place in Africa.

“We are showing that with

“The genetic diversity of Africa’s
population allows scientific re-
search that will increase our un-
derstanding

in newborn screening,” said
hematologist Obiageli Nnodu,
M.D., the lead researcher in
Nigeria for the Sickle Pan Afri-
can Research Consortium
(SPARCo), funded by the Na-
tional Heart, Lung, and Blood
Institute (NHLBI), part of the
National Institutes of Health.
“As a country, we can do bet-
ter than that. After all, this
is a disease where children
die undiagnosed, and largely
from preventable causes such
as bacterial infections.”

Sickle cell disease affects 20
million people worldwide, in-
cluding at least 100,000 in the
United States, mainly African
Americans, but Hispanics

effective partnerships, sig-
nificant advances in health
and biomedical science can
be achieved,” said Tanza-
nia-based Julie Makani, M.D.,
Ph.D., who leads the SPARCo
consortium. SPARCo, in col-
laboration with the Sickle Afri-
ca Data Coordinating Cen-
ter, led by Ambroise Wonkam,
M.D., in South Africa, created
Sickle In Africa, which has a
growing electronic registry
of more than 10,000 individu-
als with sickle cell disease.

“The genetic diversity of
Africa’s population allows
scientific research that will
increase our understanding
of how a disease caused by a



“A person’s health should not be limited by their geographic location, whether it’s in rural America or sub-Saharan Africa,” said Gary H. Gibbons, M.D., director of the NHLBI. “Harnessing the power of science is needed to transcend borders if we want to improve health for all.”

single gene can manifest in
such different ways,” Makani
explained.

Newborn screening, as Nno-
du noted, is the first step to
reduce mortality and suffer-
ing for these children, and
for that, they need good tests
readily available at the point
of care. That’s why NHLBI
supports research towards
development of diagnostics,
such as a new rapid result test
that is relatively inexpensive,
accurate, and can provide a
timely diagnosis of sickle cell
disease. The test does not re-
quire sophisticated labora-
tory equipment, electricity, re-
frigeration, or highly trained
personnel—a critical advan-
tage for countries with few
resources.

On the treatment front, a
large multinational NHL-
BI-funded clinical trial found
that a daily hydroxyurea pill

was safe and effective for
young children living with
sickle cell disease in sub-Sa-
haran Africa. The NHLBI also
has its sights on developing
genetic therapies for the dis-
ease, as part of a newly an-
nounced NIH collaboration
with the Bill & Melinda Gates
Foundation. The goal of the
partnership, which also ad-
dresses HIV, is to advance
possible gene-based cures to
clinical trials in the United
States and relevant countries
in sub-Saharan Africa within
the next seven to 10 years.

“A person’s health should
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graphic location, whether it’s
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haran Africa,” said Gary H.
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to improve health for all.”