

Trump at War with Dissent

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Trump continues finding ways to disgrace himself, the latest episode Friday evening, criticizing legitimate dissent.

*It's the highest form of patriotism, the comment attributed to **Thomas Jefferson**, whether or not he actually said it.*

In 1961, The Use of Force in International Affairs publication used the phrase, asking

“(i)f what your country is doing seems to you practically and morally wrong, is dissent the highest form of patriotism?”

During the height of the Vietnam war in 1969, New York **Mayor John Lindsey** said

“(w)e cannot rest content with the charge from Washington that...peaceful protest(s) (are) unpatriotic...The fact is that this dissent is the highest form of patriotism.”

The late **Howard Zinn** and other distinguished figures said the same thing in similar or identical language.

During a Friday campaign rally in Alabama, Trump disgraced himself by irresponsibly blasting NFL players – kneeling, not standing, during the national anthem, their legitimate right of dissent, and why not. There’s plenty to dissent about America’s rogue state policies at home and abroad.

Black players protesting police brutality deserve respect for doing the right thing. Not according to Trump, bellowing

“(w)ouldn’t you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, to say, ‘Get that son of a bitch off the field right now. Out! He’s fired. He’s fired!’ ”

“You know, some owner is going to do that. He’s going to say, ‘That guy that

disrespects our flag, he's fired.' And that owner (will) be the most popular person in the country."

During America's 1899 - 1902 war on the Philippines, **Mark Twain** blasted another venerable US symbol.

Saying "I am an anti-imperialist," he added "I am opposed to having the eagle put its talons on any other land," harshly criticizing ruthless US mass slaughter and destruction.

Twain is an iconic figure in US history. Imagine what he'd say today about America smashing one country after another. He'd be a vocal Trump critic.



Unsigned NFL quarterback **Colin Kaepernick** began what's perhaps becoming a trend - during the national anthem, kneeling, not standing, honorably protesting against cops killing unarmed Black men and youths, getting away with cold-blooded murder, Kaepernick so far punished by NFL owners for his righteous stand against injustice.

In response to Trump's hostile remarks, Minnesota Vikings player **Bishop Sankey** tweeted:

"It's a shame and disgrace when you have the president of the US calling citizens of the country sons of a bitches."

NFL **Commissioner Roger Goodell** issued a statement saying:

"The NFL and our players are at our best when we help create a sense of unity in our country and our culture. There is no better example than the amazing response from our clubs and players to the terrible natural disasters we've experienced over the last month."

"Divisive comments like these demonstrate an unfortunate lack of respect for the NFL, our great game and all of our players, and a failure to understand the overwhelming force for good our clubs and players represent in our communities."

NFL players association executive director **DeMaurice Smith** separately said

"(t)he peaceful demonstrations by some of our players have generated a wide array of responses."

"Those opinions are protected speech and freedom that has been paid for by the sacrifice of men and women throughout history. This expression of speech has generated thoughtful discussion in our locker rooms and in board rooms."

"However, the line that marks the balance between the rights of every citizen in our great country gets crossed when someone is told to just 'shut up and play.' "

New York Giants co-owners **John Mara** and **Steve Tisch** said the following:

“Comments like we heard last night from the president are inappropriate, offensive and divisive. We are proud of our players, the vast majority of whom use their NFL platform to make a positive difference in our society.”

Miami Dolphins owner **Stephen Ross** said

“(o)ur country needs unifying leadership right now, not more divisiveness. We need to seek to understand each other and have civil discourse instead of condemnation and sound bites.”

San Francisco 49ers CEO **Jed York** sharply criticized Trump saying:

“The callous and offensive comments made by the president are contradictory to what this great country stands for. Our players have exercised their rights as United States citizens in order to spark conversation and action to address social injustice.”

Green Bay Packers President and CEO **Mark Murphy** said

“(i)t’s unfortunate that the president decided to use his immense platform to make divisive and offensive statements about our players and the NFL.”

Teresa Kaepernick, Colin’s mother, responded to Trump calling protesting NFL players “sons of bitches,” tweeting:

“Guess that makes me a proud bitch.”

Will other NFL owners individually or together by joint statement responsibly denounce Trump’s hostile remarks?

He disgraced himself. His reckless agenda speaks for itself.

A Final Comment

Trump extended his war on dissent to the NBA, disinviting Golden State Warrior’s star **Stephen Curry** to the White House – because of his public criticism of the president.

NBA star **LeBron James** responded calling Trump “U bum.” A spokesman for the University of North Carolina national championship team said a White House visit was cancelled, citing a scheduling conflict, likely polite criticism of the president.

The key issue isn’t Trump. It’s America’s deplorable state. He’s a front man for rogue state ruthlessness, threatening humanity’s survival – what warrants universal criticism and activism against.

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