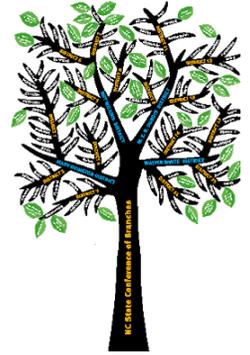


NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE #5480 NORTH CAROLINA STATE CONFERENCE

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Beneath the New Normal: A Statement on An Old Reality

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic and on March 13, 2020, a national emergency was declared in the United States of America. What some describe as a new normal is rapidly ordering change into our turbulently troubled world laying out a peculiar landscape for the world to navigate. But how deep will this “new” normal permeate?

During this unprecedented time of crisis when the deaths of Americans has climbed to well over one hundred thousand (100,000) causing this nation to take the global lead in casualties due to the novel coronavirus allow me to beg the question, are we done sighing? One truth that will ever remain is that the darkness that tagged along with COVID-19 has shone a light so tremendously bright that an utterly broken democratic system whose disparities we have been shouting about for far too long has been brought into full view for the whole world to see. Yet, beneath the “new” normal, there lingers an old stark and ugly reality that seems to be permanently knit into the fabric of our society; a reality that baits and berates us; a reality that exhausts and expels us; a reality that grips and grieves us; a reality that haunts and hates us; a reality that racializes and ravages us; a reality that terrorizes and traumatizes us. In that old reality we find ourselves plagued by the freedoms of those who are privileged to show up armed at the homes of law abiding citizens too often locked out of the liberties of equal protections under the law and ill-prepared to properly respond to the sudden and shocking appearances of their unexpected visitors, who often work by day as law enforcement officers and freelance in the cloak of night as Ku Klux Klanners. As Dameon Shepard tried to be a normal teen who played video games in his Rocky Point, NC home while his mother Monica slept, a crowd of 15 terrorizers violently disturbed their peace.¹

Are we done sighing? As we sit in rapt attention glued to social media sites witnessing encounter after encounter girding ourselves for the worst yet hoping for the best as, this time, the black man Christian Cooper used his cell phone as a tool to bring us front and center in Central Park NY in a disturbing confrontation with the white woman Amy Cooper who used her cell phone as a weapon to falsely articulate and dramatically exaggerate circumstances that could well have resulted in the death of Christian but turned out justly causing Amy Cooper to reap just what she sowed.² It is good to know that God’s justice still works.

Perhaps we are done sighing, but are we done crying? Over our daughters into whose apartments police wrongfully force their way and take no responsibility for the murders they commit? We cry and mourn the loss of Emergency Medical Technician Breonna Taylor, shot at least eight times and succumbed to death in Louisville, Kentucky on the day the pandemic was declared a National Emergency in these United States.³ Question is, when will a National Emergency be declared for the lives of our sons and daughters accounted as sheep to the slaughter in the racial pandemic of this nation’s choosing that has lingered for years. Breonna’s

¹ May 3, 2020

² May 25, 2020

³ March 13, 2020

blood now joins and mingles with the blood of Trayvon and Jordan, Michael and Tamir, Sandra and Eric, Keith and Jonathan, Cynthia, Addy Mae, Denise and Carole, Freddy and Emmitt and scores of others and cries out from the blood-drenched ground which opened up to receive it.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, How long will it be until we are indeed done dying at the hands of domestic terrorists and you finally refuse to allow the tempter to work in us beyond the capacity of our strength? Please, We beseech Thee to permit your Name to be glorified and praised in us. You know just how much we can bear.

From February 23, 2020, the date of the brutal murder of Ahmaud Arbery as he jogged to his ambush through a neighborhood in Brunswick, GA to May 25, 2020 when George Floyd was asphyxiated by the knee of a lawless enforcement officer in Minneapolis, MN, there were a mere 92 days. But established on May 6, 1857 was the creed of the Roger B. Taney Supreme Court that has driven the engine of white supremacy all the way through the last days of slavery and the Civil War, all the way through the first Reconstruction, the days of Jim Crow, the days of the Civil Rights Era and seem to still be driving us through these present times. The creed that has driven the engine which comes straight from the Dred Scott decision is that “a black man has no rights that a white man is bound to respect” and for 59,560 days that creed has become a stronghold over our lives. The creed waters our doubts and heightens our fears; it dampens our spirits and makes us feel as though we have been baptized in ice water.

Are we done sighing? Are we done crying? Are we done dying? Probably not! The lawless thugs who killed Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd will continue to conspire and kill. But when we begin to ask ourselves how much more will it take until a tipping point is reached in this nation perhaps we can close some gaps. And although flawed, one way to beginning closing gaps is to get out and **VOTE**.

We need Governors like Timothy James Walz of Minnesota to deliver clear messages acknowledging the pain that African Americans feel after the murders of George Floyd, we do not need pandemicidal governors like Brian Kemp bent on reopening the very sites you mainly frequent to test your resolve. **VOTE** for mature candidates who can clearly see the hand of white supremacy capitalizing on these painful deaths to ignite your anger and lure you into more riotous living and loss of more life. **VOTE** for seasoned minds that will advocate for policies that will benefit the poor and deal harshly with breakers of the law. Just as rapidly as change was ordered into our troubled world by the coronavirus, it could be ordered in to stamp out racism as well, with a sincere change of heart and true change of mind and the right people in office. **VOTE**. In order to remove some old realities, we must elevate our levels of thinking and be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Contrary to popular belief “Courage is not the absence of fear, but the strength to do what is right in the face of fear.” In the most tumultuous times of our lives, I encourage you to face your fear and get out and **VOTE!**

Harder yet may be the fight
Right may continue yielding to might
Wickedness a while may reign
Satan’s cause may seem to gain
But there’s a God that rules above
With hand of power and heart of love
And if we’re right, He’ll fight our battles
We shall have peace someday⁴

Done in the city of Greensboro, this 30th day of May in the Year of Our Lord two thousand and twenty by the hand of The Reverend Dr. T. Anthony Spearman, President NC NAACP

⁴ Beams of Heaven (Hymn lyrics 3rd Stanza)

Building Within While Battling Without