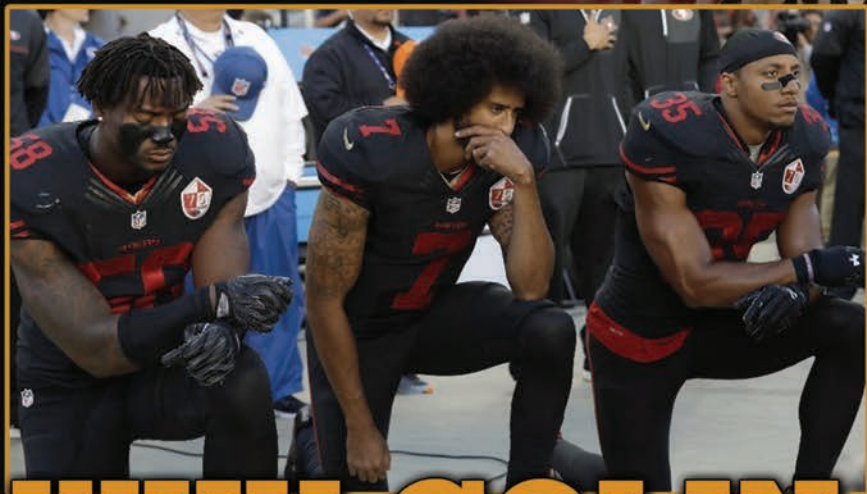
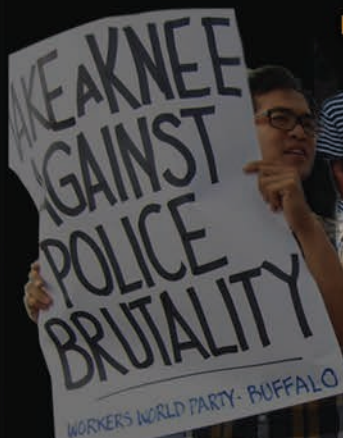


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**MUNDO OBRERO**  
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# WHY COLIN KAEPERNICK IS RIGHT



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Monica Moorehead and Minnie Bruce Pratt, both born in Alabama, are WW managing editors.

# Kaepernick: 'This generation's Muhammad Ali'

*By Monica Moorehead, May 24, 2017*

[WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW170524MM](http://WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW170524MM)

Last October, Colin Kaepernick, the African-American former quarterback for National Football League's San Francisco 49ers, was asked after a game why he was wearing a Muhammad Ali t-shirt. He said, "To pay homage. [Ali] fought a very similar fight and was trying to do what's right for the people. ...

"He is someone who helped pave the way for this to happen. What he did and what he stood for, people remember him more for that than ... as a boxer.

"I can't let him die in vain. I have to be able to carry that on and try to fight that same fight until we accomplish our goal." ([nbcbayarea.com](http://nbcbayarea.com), Oct. 17)

The "similar fight" Kaepernick referred to is the ongoing struggle against racist oppression, especially police violence, which he protested by taking a knee during the national anthem at every 2016 regular season NFL game. Kaepernick remarked that he could not respect a flag of a country that did not respect the lives of Black people.

After Kaepernick's symbolic protest demanding justice for Black and Brown victims and survivors of police brutality made national and international headlines, similar protests were carried out by teams and individual athletes in many sports on all levels — elementary, high school, college and professional.

Kaepernick paid homage to the Muhammad Ali who came to global prominence not only as the heavyweight boxing champion, but also as an activist who fought U.S. governmental repression against national liberation movements during the late 1960s. Ali was stripped of his boxing title and denied matches during his prime boxing years, 1967 to 1971, after he refused to be inducted into the U.S. military to fight in Vietnam. He refused because of his religious beliefs as a Muslim and his opposition to the war.

Although Kaepernick has gained millions of admirers, including NFL players from other teams, he has also been ostracized by right-wing politicians, NFL owners and coaches. Since his release from the 49ers following the 2016 season, he has not been signed by another NFL team.

Kaepernick has organized "Know Your Rights" conferences in the Bay Area, Chicago, New York City and other places to help bring about positive change for youth of color who are prime targets for "stop and frisk" harassment by the police and for mass incarceration.

Kaepernick was criticized for publicly saying he was not going to vote for either Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump for president due to their racism.



## **Carrying forth Ali's legacy**

Dr. Harry Edwards is a sociologist, activist and founder of The Olympic Project for Human Rights. He attempted to organize a boycott of Black athletes during the 1968 Summer Olympics, where Black sprinters John Carlos and Tommie Smith gave the Black Power salute.

Recently Edwards called Kaepernick, “This generation’s Muhammad Ali.” (Chicago Sun-Times, May 18)

Just as Ali was willing to give up his livelihood for his political convictions, the same holds true for Kaepernick, who has stated that to resist white supremacy, he is prepared not to ever play again in the NFL.

Kaepernick’s Twitter feed continues to bring to light police terror. For example, he broadcast the fact that a white police officer, Betty Shelby, was found not guilty on May 18 of fatally shooting yet another unarmed Black man, Terence Crutcher, in Tulsa, Okla. Crutcher’s murder was captured on videotape last September.

To help put into perspective how Black lives are dehumanized, Tyler Jones, a young Black man from Cincinnati, was sentenced to 19 years in prison, also on May 18, for multiple felonies, including wounding a police dog. Jones did not fatally shoot anyone.

Kaepernick is fighting against endless racist atrocities. In the early morning of May 22, Richard Collins, a 23-year-old Black man scheduled to graduate from Bowie State University the next day, was stabbed to death while simply waiting at a Maryland bus stop. His attacker? A white supremacist and neo-Nazi belonging to the “Alt Reich: Nation” Facebook group. A Baltimore FBI agent had the nerve to question whether this horrendous murder was a “hate crime” or not. ([nbcwashington.com](http://nbcwashington.com), May 22)

A 7-year-old special-needs Latinx child, Yosio Lopez, was put in handcuffs at his school by Dallas police on May 16 after being Tased by school officials for banging his head against a wall. Lopez is diagnosed with “attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder and another mood disorder.” The child was then sent to a mental hospital without his mother’s permission. She was denied the right to visit her son for nearly a week. ([cnn.com](http://cnn.com), May 19)

Acting head coach for the National Basketball Association’s Golden State Warriors, Mike Brown, who is African American, was nearly arrested by the California State Highway Patrol for trying to enter a gate at his own home arena before the May 16 playoff game in Oakland. The patrol was escorting the San Antonio Spurs, the visiting team, into the Oracle Arena when Brown was stopped and harassed.

Even as Brown kept telling the police that he was the Warriors coach, a cop yelled at him, “I don’t care. You, stop!” (Mercury News, May 16) If this had been the Warriors head coach, Steve Kerr, who is white, the police would have responded very differently.

These recent examples of white supremacy help to deepen the legitimacy of Colin Kaepernick’s heroic protest, spurred on by the defiance of the great Muhammad Ali of the 1960s. Both continue to inspire millions of people into actively defending Black and Brown lives. ♦

## Why is Colin Kaepernick unemployed?

*Editorial, March 28, 2017*

[WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW170328ED](http://WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW170328ED)

Super Bowl LI occurred less than two months ago on Feb. 5 and already there is much talk in the sports world about which quarterbacks are available for the upcoming 2017-18 National Football League season. One of those quarterbacks is Colin Kaepernick, who recently opted out of his contract with the San Francisco 49ers to become a free agent.

Kaepernick, who is African-American, took a heroic stance last season when he protested during the playing of the national anthem to bring worldwide attention to police brutality and other forms of U.S. racist oppression. Kaepernick also stated that there was no fundamental difference between Trump and Clinton when it came to the elections.

His action of taking a knee drew both admiration among other athletes and wrath, especially among NFL owners. While lesser talented quarterbacks have already been reassigned, Kaepernick hasn’t received one offer as of now. Many prominent people are asking: Has Kaepernick been labeled a “distraction”



because of his political stance or because he was on a poor football team?

It is no secret that some of the NFL owners, many of whom are billionaires, have expressed political hostility toward Kaepernick and view him as a social pariah. Some are outright Trump supporters like Robert Kraft, the owner of the New England Patriots.

Filmmaker Spike Lee, an avid sports fan, stated on his Instagram account after having lunch with Kaepernick, “How Is It That There Are 32 NFL Teams And Kap Is Still A Free Agent? WTF. Smells MAD Fishy To Me, Stinks To The High Heavens... What Crime Has Colin Committed? Look At The QB’s Of All 32 Teams. This Is Some Straight Up Shenanigans, Subterfuge, Skullduggery And BS.” (March 13)



The Undeclared, an online sports ESPN magazine, printed an article from Bomani Jones, a Black ESPN commentator, titled “Colin Kaepernick is called a distraction, but from what?” Jones states in defense of Kaepernick, “But let’s stop pretending teams are that afraid of ‘distractions.’ Don’t forget the New York Giants, one of the ‘classy’ organizations, held on to a kicker [Josh Brown] embroiled in controversy after abusing his wife until the story got too big to ignore. [University of Oklahoma’s] Joe Mixon’s incidence of violence against a woman, captured on video, will hang over the rest of his life, and some team will happily take him at a discounted price in the 2017 NFL draft.” (March 27)

And then there is Johnny Manziel, the former Cleveland Browns quarterback, a known abuser of women as well as drugs and alcohol. Manziel is now being considered as the backup for the New Orleans Saints lead quarterback, Drew Brees, who openly criticized Kaepernick for his protest.

Kaepernick has stated that he will end his protest for the upcoming season. This, however, does not matter to those influential bosses who neither forgive nor forget athletes like Kaepernick whose actions they know will continue to resonate within growing movements for many years to come. ♦

# The political rebellion of Colin Kaepernick

*By Monica Moorehead, September 8, 2016*

[WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW160908MM](http://WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW160908MM)

Much has happened since Colin Kaepernick, the 28-year-old San Francisco 49ers quarterback, made national and international news when he was spotted sitting during the playing of the U.S. national anthem at a National Football League pre-season game on Aug. 26. Although he took the tactic of quietly sitting in protest of police brutality and the general oppression of Black and other people of color, the result created a loud firestorm of both support and criticism.

What Kaepernick has done since Aug. 10, when he sat during the anthem in the first pre-season game, is nothing short of a heroic political act of rebellion. His stance has tarnished even more the façade of the U.S. being the “greatest democracy” on the face of the Earth. He boldly stated on Aug. 27 that “I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses Black people and people of color. ... There are bodies in the street and people getting paid leave and getting away with murder.” (See Aug. 30 WW article, [tinyurl.com/zgdyrt3](http://tinyurl.com/zgdyrt3)) Some of the police getting paid leave were those recently acquitted for the murder of Freddie Gray in Baltimore.

On Aug. 28, a Black GI started #VeteransForKaepernick on Twitter to answer critics who said that Kaepernick’s protest disrespected veterans and active duty soldiers. Thousands of military personnel came to Kaepernick’s defense, stating that they defended his constitutional right to protest. Many GIs were angry that right-wing critics were speaking on their behalf. They wanted to thank Kaepernick for helping to give them a voice for their issues as well. The tweets were posted by Black GIs, men and women, speaking on the police brutality that they face at home, along with their family members. Others raised the general plight of veterans, who fight imperialist wars abroad but return home traumatized with mental, emotional and physical trauma. They spoke of facing no hospital care, homelessness and no jobs, resulting in an average of 22 vets committing suicide every day.

#VeteransForKaepernick became the No. 1 trend worldwide on Twitter for almost two days.

## **Police, NFL hierarchy attack Kaepernick**

As to be expected, police organizations, especially in the Bay Area, have condemned Kaepernick’s views on police brutality. The San Francisco Police

Officers Association issued a letter to NFL commissioner Roger Goodell and 49ers CEO Jed York, demanding that Kaepernick be strongly reprimanded and apologize for his “foolish” statements. Some members of the Santa Clara police “union,” who “work” the 49ers games, have threatened to boycott those games, particularly in response to Kaepernick’s wearing of socks during practice sessions that depict the police as pigs.

High-profile athletes can help expose the myth that the police as a force are protectors and servers, rather than the deadly occupiers they really are — whether it’s Kaepernick or even members of the Women’s National Basketball Association’s Minnesota Lynx, who wore Black Lives Matter T-shirts following the police murders of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile in July. Police also threatened to boycott the Lynx’s games.

Seven anonymous NFL executives launched vile attacks on Kaepernick, including labeling him as a “traitor.” Interviewed by Mike Freeman of Bleacher Report, an online sports publication, one executive stated, “He has no respect for our country. F – k that guy.” Another executive told Freeman that he would rather resign than sign Kaepernick to a team. A NFL general manager told Freeman that he had never seen a player more hated by NFL executives than Kaepernick. ([theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com), Aug. 31)

### **Groundswell of solidarity**

On Sept. 2, before the start of the last pre-season game for the 49ers versus the Chargers in San Diego, a heavily militarized city, Kaepernick was joined by another Black teammate, Eric Reid, in kneeling down while the national anthem was played. “I just wanted to show my support for him and the cause that he is trying to bring awareness to,” Reid stated. ([49ers.com](http://49ers.com), Sept. 2) On the same day, Jeremy Lane, a Seattle Seahawks player, sat during the anthem in a game against the Oakland Raiders. Lane told the Seattle Times: “I wasn’t trying to say anything, just standing behind Kaepernick. I just liked what he’s doing



Left: Eric Reid and Colin Kaepernick; Right: Jeremy Lane.



and I like standing behind him.” ([Yahoo.com](http://Yahoo.com), Sept. 2)

And then there is Megan Rapinoe, a professional soccer player with the Seattle Reign, who bent on one knee during the playing of the anthem before a game in Chicago on Sept. 4. Rapinoe, who is white and a lesbian, is the first known non-NFL player to openly take “a nod from Kaepernick.” In an interview with *espnW*, she stated: “I am disgusted with the way he has been treated and the fans and hatred he has received in all of this. It is overtly racist. ... We need a more substantive conversation around race relations and the way people of color are treated.” ([espn.com](http://espn.com), Sept. 5) She has pledged to keep kneeling before every game this season.



Megan Rapinoe kneeling.

Support for Kaepernick’s stand has come from the legendary singer Harry Belafonte and actors Susan Sarandon, Tim Robbins and Rosie O’Donnell. The number of supporters will continue to grow.

### **Kaepernick: Actions ‘bigger than football’**

Kaepernick’s protest has even helped to expose the racism behind the words of “The Star Spangled Banner,” written during the War of 1812 by Francis Scott Key, an aristocrat and slaveowner. The third stanza of the anthem celebrates the massacre of the Colonial Marines, Black men who escaped slavery and joined the British Royal Army to win their freedom outright. There is a growing debate on whether the anthem should be played at any sports events.

Kaepernick, as an individual, reflects the Black Lives Matter struggle ever since he stated on Twitter that the police murder of Alton Sterling was a “lynching.”

Calling Kaepernick “a noble and courageous man,” Belafonte told TV One’s Roland Martin in an interview: “To mute the slave is always been to the best interests of the slave owner. ... When a Black voice is raised in protest to oppression, those who are comfortable with our oppression are the first to criticize us for daring to speak out against it.” ([newsone.com](http://newsone.com), Sept. 1) ♦

# Kaepernick 'effect' grows with every police atrocity

*By Monica Moorehead, October 5, 2016*

[WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW161005MM](http://WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW161005MM)

Oct. 3 — Since Aug. 26, when San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick explained why he began to sit and then kneel during the playing of the national anthem to protest racist police violence, at least 20 more Black people have been murdered by the police. They include California residents Alfred Olango, a Ugandan immigrant in El Cajon; Reginald Thomas Jr. in Pasadena; and Carnell Snell Jr. in Los Angeles.

What is also intensifying is that more and more athletes are taking a visible stand against police brutality, including in the National Football League, the most popular sport in the U.S., which is more than 70 percent Black. Duane Strong, a Houston Texans tackle, wrote an Oct. 2 Sports Illustrated column titled “I stand with Colin Kaepernick: We won’t — we can’t — just ‘Stick To Sports.’”

A native of Richmond, Va., Strong described what happened to him once he moved to Houston: “Like so many other young black men, I was pulled over in a routine traffic stop that ended up as anything but routine. I hadn’t committed any crime, but that didn’t stop the officer from treating me like a criminal. Why was I driving a rented car with an out-of-state license? I wanted so desperately to defuse what he had made into a confrontational situation that I tried pulling up a recent article on my phone to prove I was a member of the Texans. He still didn’t believe me, instead opting to make me sit on a curb for upwards of 45 minutes in intense heat so he could exercise his power over me.”

Strong explained, “The entire experience made me feel incredibly angry and frustrated, but even worse, it made me question the legitimacy of law enforcement; something to this day I remain reticent to do on account of the countless public servants who put their lives on the line every single day to uphold the oaths they have sworn to. Still, if someone like me could be treated like that—simply because of the way I looked—other innocent people surely endure much, much worse.”

[\(tinyurl.com/hh2chsu\)](http://tinyurl.com/hh2chsu)

## Refusing to stay quiet

Jared Odrick, a Jacksonville Jaguars player, also wrote a Sept. 12 Sports Illustrated column titled “Football, the Flag and the Right to Speak Our Minds.” In it, he stated: “When we step outside the bounds of third-down efficiency we are told to keep quiet. ... Social injustices can’t be ignored.”

Odrick continued, “We’ve forgotten that we’re supposed to loathe falling in line. So-called renegades shouldn’t be embraced only after decades have passed and their causes deemed by historians to be acceptable or inevitable. Muhammad Ali challenged our country in fundamental ways while captivating audiences with his skill in the ring. He is viewed now as a cultural warrior, when in reality he lived as a pariah in his prime.”

“Millions of fans tie their identities to our teams’ successes, but they don’t know the men behind the face masks,” stressed Odrick. “When Kaepernick bucked the system, he forced people to reflect on the constructs they’ve accepted or, worse, had never considered.” ([tinyurl.com/jugpaat](http://tinyurl.com/jugpaat))

While at least 13 NFL teams have seen individual players either kneel or raise their fists before their games, what has become known as the “Kaepernick effect” has had a profound impact on college and high school players, including whole teams like the Monroe High School Varsity football team in Rochester, N.Y., and the Plainfield South Varsity football team in Illinois.

Players on the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth football team protested against police brutality on Oct. 1. One of them was Raziel Pena-Vargas, a 23-year-old Dominican American, who stated, “I would like for our government or police forces to find a solution to stop shooting unarmed black men. We have to find a solution because this is becoming an epidemic in this country. ... When I saw Colin Kaepernick not stand for the National Anthem, I thought, ‘Wow, that takes a lot of guts.’” When Pena-Vargas was a teenager in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., he was beaten by police at a bowling alley. ([southcoasttoday.com](http://southcoasttoday.com), Oct. 1)

Fourteen non-football athletes who have recently protested the anthem are players from the Women’s National Basketball Association; the entire Rochester, N.Y., boys soccer team; the entire girls volleyball teams at Tindley Accelerated School in Indianapolis, Ind., and Westside High School in Anderson, S.C. Band members and team spectators have refused to stand for the anthem all over the country.

On Sept. 26 Walmart bakery workers in McDonough, Ga., in the Atlanta-metropolitan area, refused to decorate a cake reading “Blue lives matter” at the request of a cop’s daughter. They said the cake could be perceived as racist.

Kaepernick called the Sept. 26 Trump/Clinton debate “embarrassing” and said that both candidates attempted to show which one was less racist than the other. ♦



Tindley Accelerated School volleyball team kneels in protest, Oct 1.

# Sparked by Kaepernick — Sports protests pummel racism

*By Minnie Bruce Pratt, October 13, 2016*

[WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW161013MBP](http://WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW161013MBP)

Colin Kaepernick's lone action condemning police brutality against Black people has multiplied into the most widespread mass protest against racism in U.S. sports history.

Kaepernick, a San Francisco 49ers quarterback, has refused to stand for the game day national anthem since Aug. 10. Since then, 59 National Football League players from 13 teams have knelt, lifted a fist or sat down during the anthem. On three teams, all the players, of all nationalities, have either linked arms or held hands to show unity.

By Oct. 7, resistance had sprung up swiftly in other sports and related activities, including soccer, volleyball, swimming, cheerleading and band performances. Fourteen Women's National Basketball Association players from three teams protested during their playoffs.

Eight men's National Basketball Association teams, including the world famous Los Angeles Lakers, locked arms in protest. Lakers center Tarik Black said, "There needs to be equality."

Anthem protests have occurred in at least 44 high schools, 21 colleges and two youth leagues in 34 states in the U.S. and three nations abroad.

According to a Guardian database, U.S. police have killed 156 people since Kaepernick's protest began. Between 20 to 25 percent of these were Black, a number far exceeding the proportion of Black people in the U.S. population.

Racist reaction to the protests has been horrific, so the bravery of those continuing to act must be acknowledged. On Oct. 1, at a game against the University of North Carolina, 19 East Carolina University band members knelt as the national anthem was played. They were booed, spat on and had bottles thrown at them. The school threatened to rescind their scholarships, and a faculty member said



Eli Harold, Colin Kaepernick and Eric Reid, Oct. 2.



Left: Students refuse to stand during national anthem at first-ranked University of Alabama football game. Tuscaloosa, Oct. 1. Right: East Carolina State band members kneel during national anthem. Greenville, N.C., Oct. 1.

she'd bring her gun to school to exercise her "constitutional rights."

The ECU student government came to the band members' support. A hundred students, Black and white, gathered for the Black Student Union's die-in, complete with Black Power salutes, at the center of campus.

Right-wingers are jeering, "Keep politics out of sports." But many athletes, coaches and even referees have given forceful accounts of being subjected to racist profiling, having guns pulled on them by cops, or losing family and friends to cop killings. Guard DeMar DeRozan of the Toronto Raptors basketball team has related how a close friend was killed by police recently — shot 17 times.

Big money interests are trying to enforce allegiance to status quo racist "America" as a "condition of employment" on students earning scholarship money through athletic or band performance or on more mature athletes who are formally workers for their "owners."

Kieran Shanahan, vice chair of ECU trustees, who is leading athletic boosters in a \$55 million fund drive, said the band members' protest was as unacceptable as a student making a political statement in a classroom. Not grasping the concept of academic freedom any better than constitutional freedom of speech, Shanahan also disclosed his bedrock belief that working students were in an "employ at will" status to the university's big business trustees.

Seattle Seahawks receiver Doug Baldwin recently revealed that at least one owner of an NFL team has strictly forbidden players on "his" team to protest. In an interview with HBO's "Any Given Wednesday," Baldwin said the owner told players, "You're going to stand on the line with your hand on your heart and you're going to sing the national anthem because this is my stage." There is no Black owner of an NFL team.

Corporate media blame the protests for an almost 20 percent decline in NFL viewing ratings this season. Savvy insiders are saying the decline is due to the stranglehold that NFL business heads exert over all aspects of the sport to try to maximize profits.



The widespread protests break with the myth that U.S. “democracy” offers “equal rights for all.” To prop up fading working-class allegiance to dead-end capitalism in the U.S., the Department of Defense has paid millions for pregame and halftime propaganda at sports events. DOD gave money for huge flags and military honor guards, marching bands and flyovers to 18 NFL teams, eight NBA teams and six NHL teams. The Buffalo Bills received \$650,000, while their coach Rex Ryan spouts support for racist, woman-hating Donald Trump.



Florida State students sit during national anthem, Oct. 8.

New York Knicks center Joakim Noah highlighted the connection between U.S. racism and U.S. imperialism in his recent decision not to attend a team dinner at West Point, the U.S. Military Academy, because of his anti-war stance. Noah is on record as supporting Kaepernick’s anti-racist resistance. (New York Times, Sept. 30)

Meanwhile, the protests roll on. As first-ranked University of Alabama played Kentucky on Oct. 1, about 30 students stuck to their seats in opposition as the anthem played. Alabama has won four of the last seven national college football championships, and protesters faced down over 100,000 fanatic fans in Denny Stadium. In an interview with *Crimson White*, the UA student newspaper, junior Dwyer Freeman said the action was in solidarity with those “harmed under the flag that’s supposed to represent them.” ♦

# The intersection between sports and fighting police violence

*By Monica Moorehead, July 19, 2016*

[WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW160719MM](http://WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW160719MM)

The ESPY Awards honor individual and team athletes in the U.S. and world-wide for outstanding achievements on a yearly basis. It is sponsored by ESPN, arguably the most well-known international sports network. Its Sports Center shows are extremely popular. ESPN, a partner of the ABC commercial network, has a reputation of mixing sports with social issues, including those dealing with racism, sexism and homophobia.

In light of the recent police murders of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, La., and Philando Castile in St. Paul, Minn., this year's ESPY broadcast took the unusual step of opening with four prominent African-American National Basketball Association All-Stars — Carmelo Anthony, Chris Paul, Dwayne Wade and LeBron James — who presented moving and heartfelt soliloquies reflecting on the issue of race and police killings.

Paul specifically mentioned the names of Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Sterling and Castile, all murdered by racist state repression, and emphasized how Black and Brown people are disrespected. Wade made a call for racial profiling to stop, although he didn't directly link profiling to police terror.

What these messages reflect is a recent trend among well-known and lesser-known athletes. Before the awards took place, members of the Women's National Basketball Association's Minnesota Lynx and the New York Liberty wore warm up T-shirts with the names of Sterling and Castile. The Lynx are the current WNBA champions. Their T-shirts also included a small Dallas police emblem with the words "Black Lives Matter" above it.

Lynx Head Coach Cheryl Reeve posted this powerful statement on her Twitter account: "To rebut BLM with 'All Lives Matter' implies that all lives are equally at risk, and they're not. #BlackLivesMatter doesn't mean your life isn't important if you aren't Black — it means that Black lives, which are seen without value within white supremacy, are important."

Off-duty police "walked off the job" during the Lynx game in protest and refused to do security.

A valid question is when will NBA teams, not just individuals, step to the plate and follow the lead of the WNBA.

Jalen Rose, a retired basketball player and ESPN sportscaster, made a very important point on the "First Take" show July 15, when he stated that police

brutality is rooted in slavery and the 1857 Dred Scott Supreme Court decision, which legally sanctioned that Black people were “three-fifths a human being.” He also implied that white supremacy hasn’t been overcome in the 50-plus years since the Civil Rights bills were passed. Rose stated that police brutality is nothing new; what is new is the videotaping of this violence that allows it to be widely disseminated so quickly on social media. These graphic videos have traumatized viewers, but also helped to raise consciousness on this brutal police war.

Colin Kaepernick, the San Francisco 49ers quarterback, characterized the murders of Sterling and Castile as lynchings.

There is very little doubt that the protests that have shut down interstate highways, organized by the Black Lives Matter movement since the deaths of Sterling and Castile became widely known, have inspired these athletes to take a more visible stand.

Many young whites have stood shoulder to shoulder with Black and Brown people in the streets. It is very unfortunate that white athletes, except for a few, have been virtually silent on police killings. This works to the advantage of the police and those they serve.

In many instances, these athletes have made a decision to equate the deaths of Black people at the hands of the police with the deaths of the five Dallas police officers at a BLM protest on July 7. The reasons for doing this may vary, from those who want to show support for the police to those who want to minimize any backlash. Many athletes also reflect a general societal idea that there are good cops and bad cops.

Because the police see themselves as above any reproach, many of them view anyone supporting the BLM movement as being anti-police and, therefore, their enemy. It is an attempt on the part of the police to divert any attention away from the fact that they expect unconditional respect and fear.

## **All violence is not the same**

President Barack Obama hosted a televised town hall meeting, “The President and the People: A National Conversation” in Washington, D.C., that was broadcast the evening of July 14. Obama answered questions from Sterling’s son, a BLM activist and pro-cop representatives, among others. Seated in the audience was Lezley McSpadden, the mother of Michael Brown. Erica Garner, the daughter of Eric Garner, was not allowed to participate in the discussion, which was recorded and edited earlier in the day.

Obama’s main plea, very similar to the one he made at the memorial for the five slain Dallas cops, was for communities of color and the police to dialogue to iron out differences in order to work more closely together. This narrative plays into the myth that since everyone should be viewed as equal, the responsibility to end violence should be equally shared.

LeBron James made a plea for all violence to stop. How can that be when the U.S. is the world’s most powerful capitalist country, built on the backs of

slavery, the theft of Indigenous lands and two-thirds of Mexico, wars, occupation and the superexploitation of workers' labor despite borders?

Capitalism relies on class relations in which a tiny, ruling elite of billionaires, widely known as the 1%, needs a huge repressive state to keep it in power to make more and more profits off the backs of oppressed labor. These rulers rely on the police to keep them in power and the masses in check. What other reason could there be that 99.9 percent of killer cops don't face arrests, indictments or convictions, when Black, Brown and Indigenous peoples are expendable in their eyes? Instead, the most these cops may face is "administrative leave," "desk duty" or rarely, "firing." The laws under capitalism exist to legally shield the cops, not to bring them to justice.

Let's be clear. Gun violence in communities of color is not the same as gun violence by the cops. This continues to be an ongoing debate, including among large sectors in society. When oppressed people are forced to exist in subhuman conditions, especially in urban areas where there are no jobs, lack of decent housing, cuts in education and the militarization of schools, mass incarceration, hospital closings and more — when there is no escape from dire poverty — homicide rates and drug abuse take place in disproportionately higher numbers.

The police as a repressive force are armed occupiers of these communities who become judge, jury and executioner. Killings and brutality based on racial profiling are rubber-stamped by the capitalist state on behalf of the interests of the bosses and bankers. The reality is that the police, along with other repressive institutions like the FBI, CIA, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the prisons, etc., are above the law because they maintain the racist status quo.

Many of these athletes are now trying to figure out how best to turn their words into actions. Some are afraid that if they speak out too loud and too militantly, they risk losing millions of dollars in endorsements. Others may fear losing some of their fan base. And, of course, many fear some kind of retaliation from the police, just as the Lynx experienced.

What is most important for revolutionaries to prioritize is continuing to broaden the political support for Black and Brown activists who refuse to let demonization, marginalization and isolation push back the Black Lives Matter movement, especially in light of the Dallas killings, the Baton Rouge shooting of police on July 17 and other diversions the police and politicians may use to gain back any dwindling sympathy for them.

The strengthening of this political support will reinforce confidence among athletes to take bolder actions, like those of the great Muhammad Ali, when he refused to be recruited into the military to fight in Vietnam, or Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who raised clenched fists at the 1968 Olympics to protest racism at home. They will continue to bring attention to police violence, with the understanding that they will not be alone in their efforts. ♦

# Athletes repudiate NFL's trip to Israel

By a guest author, February 13, 2017

[WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW170213GA](http://WWW.TINYURL.COM/WW170213GA)

**Bulletin:** According to the Times of Israel, six out of the 11 National Football League players slated to visit Israel for a public relations tour, have boycott the trip. (Feb. 15) Besides Seattle Seahawk Michael Bennett, who wrote an open letter below on why he repudiated the trip and Miami Dolphin Kenny Stills, the other four players are Seahawk Cliff Avril, New England Patriot Martellus Bennett, San Francisco 49er Carlos Hyde, Denver Bronco Justin Forsett and former linebacker Kirk Morrison.



*Michael Bennett (above), a defensive end with the National Football League's Seattle Seahawks, posted this statement on his Instagram and Twitter accounts on Feb. 10. Since this statement was released, two other NFL players, the Denver Broncos' Justin Forsett and the Miami Dolphins' Kenny Stills, stated they were withdrawing from the trip to Israel. Colin Kaepernick praised the stance taken by these athletes, coming on the heels of an open letter posted Feb. 9 on thenation.com signed by Alice Walker, Angela Davis, John Carlos, Harry Belafonte and others, which appealed to the NFL to cancel this trip in protest of the racist treatment of the Palestinian people under Zionism.*



*Dear World,*

*I was scheduled to make a visit to Israel with fellow NFL players. I was excited to see this remarkable and historic part of the world with my own eyes. I was not aware, until reading [the Feb. 5] article about the trip in the Times of Israel, that my itinerary was being constructed by the Israeli government for the purposes of making me, in the words of a government official, an “influencer and opinion-former” who would then be an “ambassador of goodwill.” I will not be used in such a manner. When I do go to Israel—and I do plan to go—it will be not only to see Israel but also the West Bank and Gaza so I can see how the Palestinians, who have called this land home for thousands of years, live their lives.*

*One of my heroes has always been Muhammad Ali. I know that Ali always strongly stood with the Palestinian people, visiting refugee camps, going to rallies, and always willing to be the “voice for the voiceless.” I want to be a “voice for the voiceless” and I cannot do that by going on this kind of trip.*

*I know this will anger some people and inspire others. But please know I did this not for you, but to be in accord with my own values and my own conscience. Like 1968 Olympian John Carlos always says, “There is no partial commitment to justice. You are either in or you’re out.” Well, I’m in.*

*Sincerely,*

*Michael Bennett*

# Desatada por Kaepernick — protestas deportivas golpean el racismo

*Por Minnie Bruce Pratt, 18 de octubre, 2016*

[WWW.TINYURL.COM/MO161018MBP](http://WWW.TINYURL.COM/MO161018MBP)

La acción solitaria de Colin Kaepernick al condenar la brutalidad policial contra el pueblo negro se ha extendido para convertirse en la protesta masiva más generalizada contra el racismo en la historia del deporte estadounidense.

Kaepernick, un mariscal del equipo de fútbol 49ers de San Francisco-California, ha rehusado ponerse en pie ante el himno nacional tocado durante los juegos desde el 10 de agosto. Desde entonces, 59 jugadores de 13 equipos de la Liga Nacional de Fútbol (estadounidense) se han arrodillado, levantado el puño o se han sentado durante el himno. En tres equipos, todos los jugadores, de todas las nacionalidades, se entrelazaron los brazos o tomaron de manos en muestra de unidad.

Para el 7 de octubre, la resistencia había surgido rápidamente en otros deportes y actividades relacionadas, incluyendo el fútbol, voleibol, natación, animadoras de deportes y en actuaciones de bandas. Catorce jugadoras de tres equipos de la Asociación Nacional de Baloncesto Femenino protestaron durante sus eliminatorias.

Ocho equipos de la Asociación Nacional de Baloncesto Masculino, entre ellos los famosos Lakers de Los Ángeles, entrelazaron los brazos en señal de protesta. El jugador de centro de los Lakers, Tarik Black dijo: “Es necesario que haya igualdad”.

Protestas ante el himno se han producido en al menos 44 escuelas secundarias, 21 colegios y dos ligas juveniles en 34 estados de los EUA y en tres naciones en el exterior.

De acuerdo con una base de datos del Guardian, la policía estadounidense ha matado a 156 personas desde que comenzó la protesta de Kaepernick. Entre el 20 al 25 por ciento de éstas eran negras, un número muy superior a la proporción de las/os negros en la población de EUA.

La reacción racista a las protestas ha sido terrible, por lo que el valor de quienes continúan protestando debe ser reconocido. El 1 de octubre, en un partido contra la Universidad de Carolina del Norte, 19 miembros de la banda de la Universidad de Carolina del Este (UCE) se arrodillaron cuando se tocó el himno nacional. Fueron abucheados, escupidos y les lanzaron botellas. La Universidad amenazó con rescindir sus becas, y una miembro de la facultad dijo que traerá su arma a la escuela para ejercer su “derecho constitucional”.

El gobierno estudiantil de UCE apoyó a las/os miembros de la banda. Un centenar de estudiantes, negras/os y blancas/os, se reunieron en el centro del campus para una protesta convocada por la Unión de Estudiantes Negros, incluyendo la expresión del Poder Negro (puño en alto).

Los derechistas dicen “la política fuera de los deportes”. Sin embargo, muchas/os atletas, entrenadoras/es e incluso árbitros, han dado cuentas contundentes de haber sido sometidas/os a perfiles racistas, amenazados con armas por la policía, o perdido familiares y amigos por asesinatos policiales. El guarda DeMar DeRozan, del equipo de baloncesto de los Toronto Raptors ha relatado cómo un amigo cercano fue muerto por la policía recientemente — baleado 17 veces.

Grandes intereses corporativos están tratando de hacer cumplir lealtad al status quo de la “América” racista como “condición de trabajo” a las/os estudiantes que obtienen becas a través del rendimiento deportivo o musical, o en las/os atletas más maduros que son formalmente trabajadoras/es para sus “dueños”.

Kieran Shanahan, vicepresidente de administración de la UCE que dirige impulsores de atletismo en una campaña para levantar un fondo de \$55 millones, dijo que la protesta de los miembros de la banda era tan inaceptable como un estudiante haciendo una declaración política en un aula.

Sin comprender el concepto de libertad académica ni la libertad constitucional de expresión, Shanahan también reveló su creencia de que las/os estudiantes que trabajan estaban en un estado de “empleo a voluntad” por los grandes negocios fiduciarios de la universidad.

El receptor de los Seattle Seahawks Doug Baldwin reveló recientemente que al menos un propietario de un equipo de la NFL ha prohibido protestar a los jugadores en “su” equipo. En una entrevista con la serie de HBO “Any Given Wednesday”, Baldwin dijo que el dueño le dijo a los jugadores, “Van a ponerse en pie con la mano en el corazón y van a cantar el himno nacional porque este es mi escenario”. No hay ningún propietario negro de un equipo de la NFL.



Miembros de la banda de la Universidad de Carolina del Este (UCE) se arrodillaron cuando se tocó el himno nacional.

Los medios corporativos de comunicación culpan a las protestas por una disminución de casi 20 por ciento en índices de audiencia de la NFL esta temporada. Los conocedores están diciendo que la disminución se debe al dominio que las cabezas de negocio del NFL ejercen sobre todos los aspectos del deporte para tratar de maximizar las ganancias.

Las protestas generalizadas rompen con el mito de que la “democracia” estadounidense ofrece “igualdad de derechos para todos”. Para apuntalar la anémica lealtad de la clase obrera al capitalismo sin salida en los EUA, el Departamento de Defensa ha pagado millones para propaganda antes del partido y durante el medio tiempo en eventos deportivos. El DdD dio dinero para enormes banderas y guardias militares de honor, bandas de música y espectáculos aéreos a 18 equipos de la NFL, ocho equipos de la NBA y seis equipos de la NHL. Los Buffalo Bills recibieron \$650.000, mientras que su entrenador Rex Ryan exhibe apoyo al racista y anti mujer Donald Trump.

El jugador de centro de los Knicks de Nueva York Joakim Noah, quien está contra la guerra, puso de relieve la conexión entre el racismo y el imperialismo estadounidense en su reciente decisión de no asistir a una cena en West Point, la academia militar estadounidense. Noah ha dado constancia de su apoyo a la resistencia anti-racista de Kaepernick. (New York Times, 30 de septiembre)

Mientras tanto, las protestas continúan. Cuando la Universidad de Alabama, clasificada de primera, jugaba contra la de Kentucky el 1 de octubre, alrededor de 30 estudiantes se quedaron en sus asientos cuando se tocó el himno. Alabama ha ganado cuatro de los últimos siete campeonatos nacionales de fútbol universitario, y los manifestantes se enfrentaban a más de 100.000 aficionados fanáticos en el estadio de Denny. En una entrevista con Crimson White, el periódico estudiantil de la UA, el estudiante Dwyer Freeman dijo que la acción fue en solidaridad con los “perjudicados bajo la bandera que se supone que los represente”. ♦

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