



NATIONAL BLACK PROSECUTORS ASSOCIATION
34th ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND JOB FAIR
Cleveland, Ohio
July 16, 2017 – July 22, 2017

NBPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

PRESIDENT

WILLIAM JORDEN
Assistant District Attorney
19th Judicial District-East Baton Rouge Parish
Baton Rouge, LA
william.jorden@ebrda.org
(225)389-3400

July 29, 2016

VICE PRESIDENT OF PROGRAMS
LAKEISHA FIELDS

Assistant District Attorney
Philadelphia District Attorney's Office
Philadelphia, PA
lakeisha.fields@phila.gov
(215) 686-6309

Mr. Rupert Murdoch
Chief Executive Officer
Fox News Channel
1211 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10036

VICE PRESIDENT OF PLANNING

JOSEPH WHITFIELD
Deputy District Attorney
18th Judicial District Attorney's Office
Centennial, CO
jwhitfield@da18.state.co.us
(720) 874-8500

RE: William James O'Reilly Jr.'s comment that slaves who built the White House were "well-fed and had decent lodgings provided by the government."

VICE PRESIDENT OF MEMBERSHIP

ERIKA GILLIAM-BOOKER
Assistant State's Attorney
Cook County State's Attorney's Office
Chicago, IL
membershblackprosecutor@gmail.com
(773) 674-3020

Dear Mr. Murdoch,

Please accept this letter as the National Black Prosecutors Association's ("NBPA") call for the Fox News Channel ("Fox News") to take an executive and corporate action in response to your employee, *William James O'Reilly Jr.'s* ("O'Reilly"), most recent insensitive and hurtful commentary regarding White House slaves being "well-fed" and having "decent lodgings provided by the government."

SECRETARY

BROOKLYN SAWYERS
Assistant United States Attorney
United States Attorney's Office
Eastern District of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN
secretaryblackprosecutorsorg@gmail.com
(865) 773-9029

Founded in 1983, NBPA is a national organization comprised of local, state, and federal prosecutors, dedicated to the advancement of African Americans in the prosecution field. As a premier professional law enforcement organization, we are committed to the pursuit of justice for all people. Consistent with that commitment, we condemn any statement by any person that denigrates the horrors of the undeniable evil of chattel slavery, and O'Reilly's commentary that the slaves who built the White House were "well-fed and had decent lodgings provided by the government" does just that. We cannot and will not stand idly by and accept belittling comments by your employee regarding one of America's most horrific, divisive, and irremovable stains of oppression, which continues to infect the very moral fabric of this country some 151 years after the passage of the United States Constitution's Thirteenth Amendment that ended slavery.

TREASURER

JESSE GIDDINGS
Deputy Assistant State's Attorney
Office of the State's Attorney
Hartford Judicial District
Hartford, CT
treasurerblackprosecutorsorg@gmail.com
(860) 566-5090

As William Lloyd Garrison so aptly characterized it in 1854, "[we] cannot but regard oppression in every form-and most of all, that which turns a man into a thing-with indignation and abhorrence." Garrison's words were true then and they are true today. Yet, O'Reilly's comment implies that somehow slaves who were "well-fed and had decent lodgings provided by the government," a statement that he offered without providing factual support, were less subjugated, less oppressed, less beleaguered, than chattel slaves who were not well fed and provided decent lodging. Slavery is slavery. The suppression of a person into owned property, regardless to the conditions of that enslavement, is evil.

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

MELBA V. PEARSON
Assistant Chief, Career Criminal/Robbery Unit
Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office
Miami, FL
melbapearson@miamisao.com
(305) 547-0410

JOB FAIR CHAIRPERSONS:

AUDREY S. MOORE
Executive Assistant District Attorney
Chief Diversity Officer
Chief of Special Victims Bureau
New York County District Attorney's Office
New York, NY
(212) 335-4205

O'Reilly's comment, which was minimally conjecture and maximally an insensitive, racist rant and mischaracterization of historical fact, has no place on any major, respected national news network such as Fox News. When one of your employees makes such a comment through the national forum you provide him, his words have a greater, more lasting, and more hurtful

TANYA C. APPARICIO
Deputy Chief
Domestic Violence Unit
Special Victims Bureau
New York County District Attorney's Office
New York, NY
(212) 335-4113

National Black Prosecutors Association
1507 East 53rd Street Suite 108 Chicago, Illinois 60615
www.blackprosecutors.org

impact than they would otherwise. You must take a stand against such statements and remove your de facto endorsement, which is implied through your silence.

Thus, it is with grave conviction that this group of prosecutors, justice fighters if you will, urges you to consider the impact of O'Reilly's statement. Slavery is deplorable, the legacy of which remains America's great and unhealed evil. As prosecutors of color, who toil hand-in-hand with law enforcement every day, we strive to help America move forward to a place of healing and peace from a place of pain and a legacy depravation. However, O'Reilly's comment picks at the proverbial unhealed wound that will never heal when the O'Reillys of the world make insensitive and hurtful comments that depreciate the horrors of the evil institution of slavery. In the 21st Century, you must distance yourself and your network from such thoughtless supposition.

As discussed by the United States Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 494 (1954), "the impact [of a wrong] is greater when it has the sanction of the law." While we are fortunate that O'Reilly's comment does not carry with it the sanction of the law, until you repudiate his words, they carry with them the sanction of you and Fox News. Remove that sanction. Help us help America continue down the long and tortuous road of healing from America's chattel slavery legacy. Take your rightful place in history consistent with Chief Justice Earl Warren's sentiment in *Brown* rather than an antiquated and unenlightened *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896) position that understated slavery's legacy. Make a decision today that puts you on the right side of history when it comes to what should be a well-settled issue-slavery's unquestionable deplorability; a fact that is not dependent upon the diet or living quarters of the oppressed, and renders any comment about how "well-fed" or decent the lodgings of no material consequence.

Based on the foregoing, we ask that you publically condemn O'Reilly's statement with swiftness. We ask you to use this moment, in the wake of the domestic terrorist attacks in Dallas, Texas and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, which continue to pull America further and further into a racial abyss, to help heal the racial divide in America, to help that age-old wound that so many Americans are trying to heal, do just that. Be a loud voice of reason rather than a silent voice of acquiescence. Stand for what is right along with Garrison, who stated he "[would] not go with the multitude to do evil . . . slavery is of the devil."

O'Reilly's words were ignorant, asinine, and beneath the dignity of the press and, particularly, your esteemed network. Publically condemn O'Reilly's statement and, on behalf of Fox News, issue an apology to all Americans for his comment.

Sincerely,

\s\ William Jordan

William Jordan,
President