

The dilemma about kneel standing during the national anthem

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" I feel in my heart it is right to continue to kneel during the national anthem, and I will do whatever I can to be part of the solution." as stated by Megan Rapinoe At first thought, an individual may question, Is this a issue of patriotism or just a matter of being right, If you take a step back to fully understand the situation, like Optimus Prime of the Transformers says" there is much more than what meets the eye". There is deep rooted problem on both sides but if you take time to digress you might be able to understand that whichever side you agree with both sides have a valid point. More so, as I sit and think about all the atrocities that have been going on in the world as of late I can understand the viewpoint of the players, staff or personnel who are choosing to kneel during the National Anthem, I feel like in my heart that I truly understand the reasons behind the individuals who are choosing to kneel and they have a valid and justified argument to kneel during the National Anthem. Until we as a country make certain changes to our laws or hold our law enforcers who are breaking our laws accountable the unrest will continue on. But I agree with the NFL players who are kneeling to raise awareness for what is going on in our nation for the life of our minority community. As I write this essay to my fellow nation men and women we will take a gander at the different views that can be explored in this argument such as President Donald Trump and his cabinet, Eric Reid the NFL players and myself.

First of all, I think americans are oblivious to what our government is doing President Trump and Vice President Mike Pence are basically telling the professional athletes in the NFL or any athlete in pro sports who are using there spotlight as a podium to raise awareness for the travisties that are

being committed on a daily basis to, " Shut up and play." The individuals who are against athletes or anyone for that matter of taking a knee during the National Anthem are feeling like the National Football League and their players are sending a message to our country and especially to our military veterans that our message while the National Anthem is playing is more important than the sacrifice you make on a daily basis." But I do not believe that to be the case.

The force that is driving this issue is ignorance I do believe that people would rather live in their bubble than to see what is going on in the world. Americans always play the if it does not directly affect me why should I care card all too often. This debate would not even be a debate if we took time to care about others the way we care for our love ones and stop the hatred for one another and instead show love and concern. Each side of the debate think that they know what is best for the nation but I honestly feel that President Trump and his cabinet are targeting the NFL and their players for political reasons feels like he is just spewing toxic waste for political theatre or political gain. He feels like the kneelers are spoiled, bratty and privileged professional football players who couldn't possibly truly understand or be disturbed about lives lost to the racial injustice going on in the United States, but there have been tons of situations that have arisen since President Trump took over the oval office and there has only been a handful as I know of that he has bothered to speak on or mention in a press conference or a speech.

There millions of fans who boo and threaten to boycott the NFL and the ratings have steadily dropped over the years fans are accusing the players of

being cry baby, spoiled millionaires who are ruining football the sport that many including myself hold dear. On Sunday afternoon on May 12, 2018, Vice President Pence went to a NFL game and left after the National anthem was paid because he saw players kneeling during the anthem to myself and other swwho watch this was a political act. It was an act to force the NFL to change their policy which they eventually did. But let's take a closer look shall we all fans saw was the Vice President is leaving a game for x or y reasons so if he is leaving and not supporting them why should I. I want to be a good upstanding american so I won't support the NFL either which in turn made their stock drop and of course they lost a lot of money as President Trump was probably thinking mission accomplished.

Secondly, As I had you had that pit feeling in the middle of your stomach like you have been kicked or punched in the gut over the course of the first month of last year NFL season, if it made you feel like what is happening to the sport I love the sport I grew up watching should I support the football players and commend them for what they are trying to accomplish or should I stand up for lady liberty and the anthem because what the players are doing is making me uncomfortable, there was an article I read last year about Eric Reid of the San Francisco 49ers he speaks about racial injustices going on in America with total disregard for minority lives and how they have been going on for a very long time without a end and no one of power President included have not spoken on or done anything about it or as recently with the new policy set in place either stand or banned also get fined.

The Cowboys owner Jerry Jones when he tells his players they can either stand for the National Anthem or sit for the entire game, also the Cowboys starting QB Dak Prescott spoke on the issue and said " Its not the time to protest during the National Anthem". My question to him is then when is the time Dak should we stand for something we do not believe in? As a 17 year veteran in the US Army my initial reaction was one of defense for the National Anthem, my veteran community, and to this great country. In recent sports history there has not been a more talked about or debated situation than the stand or kneel debate it is talked about all over the world in fact when I see my fellow soldiers that the first conversation that is sparked off. It's simply so much going on, on both sides you find yourself sometimes flip flopping back in forth on your own stance on of two reasons sometimes it makes it impossible to make a stance is a situation like Stephon Clark. Clark was a unarmed black man shot in the back eight times while in his grandparents backyard by Sacramento police officers because they mistook his cellphone for a weapon when all they had to do was check later after they investigated it was made public that out of eight of those shot, six hit him in the back. Now on the other side you have a decorated Marine who risked his life to save his fellow leathernecks Lance Cpl Jordan Haerter. Haerter was a Marine on guard duty who died in Ramadi, Iraq, April 2008 Haerter opened fire on a truck carrying over 2, 200 pounds of explosive coming towards their base. The truck exploded killing him instantly but on that day he save 150 of his battle buddies lives. Whose death you think deserves more media attention Clark or Haerter?

It's unjust and untrue if anyone thanks the players of National Football League have made a mockery of the sacrifices that myself and my comrades have made over the years. If anything, I feel these players have in the past and present try to show how much they respect and appreciate the military and what we have done and the sacrifices we continue to make on a daily basis. A survey in 2017 showed that over a 150 players and personnel and coaches have either a family member or someone they know or are close to in the armed forces. For instance Larry Fitzgerald a wide receiver for the Arizona Cardinals aunt and uncle are both Army colonels. Also John Fox coach of the Chicago Bears father was a Navy Seal. David Irving Dallas Cowboys defensive end, father is a US Marine master sergeant, and two of his brothers are also serving as Devil Dawgs. As for the Mr. Reid, his mother is an Army veteran. That has not change his mind or stopped him from being vocal or kept him from taking a knee to bring to the nation attention the death of Alton Sterling, shot by two white police officers at close range in Reid's hometown of Baton Rouge in 2016 no charges were found against the two officers they were considered justified in their use of lethal force " If I need to say it every time y'all ask me, this is not about the military; this is not about the flag; this is not about the anthem," Reid said (Rapp, Timothy).

So what is this about to me the players are taking a stance on racial injustice too many times a black man has been shot down and the cop or cops walk away without being charged when is America going to wake and see that these players are standing up for what we are supposed to believe in freedom and equality for all. Change has to happen sooner rather than later

before the point of no return a situation will arise that there will be no turning our heads or us being able to run away from a situation that we have to face head on a one nation, one country as one but we can not do that if we continuously hate each other or kill each just because the color of our skin is different. In my words I feel like Reid and the other NFL players who chose to kneel during the anthem are using their NFL spotlight to help raise awareness for what the injustices that keep happening in America today. Also Vice President Pence had every right to utilize his platform or spotlight to further his argument about those who serve/served or have died for this great nation(Johnson, Alex and Rueters). Whatever we may think of President Trump or his VP or the cabinet, millions of people feel like the deeply and legitimately believe that during the anthem is the wrong time for players to make a stance for their cause no matter the situation many feel like at that time the focus should be on the anthem and what it stands for not the politics of today no matter how newsworthy it may be. Among those who feel this way as I said earlier Dallas Cowboys star QB Dak prescott , also White House chief of staff John Kelly, a retired Marine general who lost his son Robert in Afghanistan to a IED. Told CNN, “ Every American should stand up and think for three lousy minutes.”

Third of all, in the first two paragraphs of my essay I showed both sides of the argument now I am going to talk about my stance. First I will start off by giving you a little background info on myself so it can better help you understand my position on the matter. I joined the military in 2001 as part of the Dept. of the Navy I served for six years as my family grew I knew I

needed to be home more not only for my wife but for my kids. In 2007 I took my talents to the US Army where I served in JBLM (Joint Base Lewis Mcchord), Germany and FT. Hood I also been down range several times in Iraq and Afghanistan just to name a few. I spent my time in the latter getting bombed and shot at for two reasons to protect my family and the American people and so that my children and americans have a right to their free speech (that seems like four reasons to me). I tell you that to tell you this I agree with the players who are taking a stance and trying to bring awareness and shed a spotlight on this unjust, unreliable judicial system unless we make a change to what is going on in our country unless we really take a step back and realize we have to hold people whether they are cops, politicians or the President himself accountable for their actions instead of consistently looking the other way we a nation cannot move forward. I have lost plenty of friends, comrades, battle buddies in combat but one thing I know is this they would be proud to see how these athletes are standing up for what it right.

IN conclusion, I feel like in my heart that I truly understand the reasons behind the individuals who are choosing to kneel and they have a valid and justified argument to kneel during the National Anthem. I feel like I have written this essay to my fellow nation men and women we have taken a look behind the steel curtain at the different views that was explored in this argument such as President Donald Trump and his cabinet, Eric Reid the NFL players and myself. We now hopefully have a better understanding of what is going on we certainly know where my stance is on the situation. We all have

a voice the freedom to think to act but at the end of the day it is about what you choose to do with this freedom the NFL players chose to stand up for the injustices going on in society today and I choose to stand with them what about you?