

My fellow constituents,

It pains me to write this statement, but I knew that with my role in leadership and advocacy the day would arise where I had to address my people due to unlawful injustices.

To ease some concern, this is not about any direct incident regarding Fredonia. This is much deeper than that, our brothers and sisters across the nation have become subject to attacks and brutality. Rather than become, I should say continued because this fight has been one we have been fighting for generations. For 400 years we have carried this nation on our backs, and for what? To have it thrown down on us, and to have us buried under it.

Social media has altered the course of history in its own right. This is the first era in history, where one can open up an electronic device and see a cold blooded murder. I am not sure if that's a good thing, or if it plays into the deeper issue. As I woke up this morning preparing myself for my day as I always do, I opened my phone to a video of a young black man and his 90 year old grandmother being tackled and brutalized by 5 or 6 guns drawn police officers. I watched a video of armed white men and women attacking police officers without an ounce of remorse, with no police retaliation. Seeing police officers walk around with "Make Whites Great Again" hats and apparel, is mentally debilitating.

I watched Ahmaud Arbery be targeted, followed, attacked and murdered in cold blood.

I watched George Floyd..

I watched George Floyd struggle for his life

Knee to the neck

Breath escaping his body

His soul rising above the squad car that apprehended him.

The system in which we are trapped under, the climate we seemingly cannot escape was no accident. Understand that my brothers and sisters, we were put in this position with malice intentions. The very own who are sworn to protect us, in 2020 are our biggest oppressors. We live in a nation where the highest leader in the land publicly persecutes and humiliates people of color, people with disabilities and the broader. Under these conditions we walk around with a prison mindset, but how could we not? Every time I walk outside my mother fears for my life. I left the city of Rochester years ago, I escaped one flame to come to the suburbs and walk into a blazing inferno.

I have seen many of my constituents say "Out with Dr. King and in with Malcolm X". Which I struggle to understand, why choose one or the other. Rather than taking the strongest and most effective qualities of them both. By any means necessary, but also have a dream of a strength so enormous that no man or woman can strip you of it. October 16th of 2020 is the 25th Anniversary of the Million Man March. It's been almost 60 years since the March on Washington, and here we begin again.

We try to impress these people in power when these people in power are the ones who oppress us

We want love, we want peace, we want equality. We will fight for what is owed to us, but we will not fight just in the physical form. We will fight with pen and paper, we will fight with speech and feet, we will fight with love, but also passion and fire.

I learned many years ago that there is nothing that white America fears more than an educated Black man, we are their weakness. Which is why we are under attack, but we will fight back with books and brawn.

As you all may know there have been riots happening across the nation, in Minneapolis specifically. They are at a breaking point, and as are we. Change starts with us, but change will not come until those who are unaffected are as fed up as those who are affected.

Barack Obama once said:

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

Our ancestors fought to get out of chains, just for us to be put in invisible ones. Just for them to put a ceiling over our heads, just for them to replace our floors with quicksand.

Understand this Black men and women.

We built this nation, we are the backbone of this country, we are the true foundation. They say history repeats itself, and I see that coming to light. Invisible chains, shackles in prison, and batons instead of whips. It has come full circle, meaning we must stand tall and we must object to the injustice being perpetuated in our communities. We must stand with the families fighting this fight across this country. Stand behind your leadership, but be your own leader. I will fight for you from the beginning to the end and I put my heart on that statement, but I do not want to fight alone. We must stand tall, when they knock us down we must stand up. When we cannot stand, we must lend a helping hand. No one man can win this fight alone, we must become a united front, we need change.

Educate your fellow Black men and Black women, show them the truth of what is going on outside your four walls. Teach them what life is really like, so they can stand with you. We will rise hand in hand, and every step will be one step forward.

I want all white readers to understand one thing, we are not in opposition to you. We are opposing the system your people alike have created and forced us into. We are opposing the murders and abuse our people face for the smallest of instances. To those of you who stand

with us, thank you. Thank you for your valiant efforts, you will never truly understand what it is like to be Black in America- but you can see some of our pain. We appreciate you walking with us.

To those of you who do not stand with us.

Rather than giving you grief and lecturing you with my burning words of hurt and anguish, I will leave you with this. Having you as an adversary, would call for a momentous celebration, but considering our current circumstances there is no time for celebration and there is no time to plead with you. Your support would help, but we have fought this fight for 400 years and we will continue to do so. With or without you.

Black is powerful
Black is beautiful
Black is monumental

See the power and strength in Black. See the use of capitalization, it was of no coincidence. Whether it starts the sentence or ends it, keep that B above the latter. Show our brawn and solidity, show how we rise above. We do not conform to every other word of a sentence, we stand out above all else.

We are Black Kings and Queens, we are not colored people.

Do you answer to white America ?

Or are you a slave to it?

It's funny because you call me colored, you call me the N word

But I'm just brown

You're red when you're mad, green when you're sick, blue when you're sad and pink when you're nervous

But I'm the colored one

I Israel Ortiz, your current Sophomore Class President stands with you. I will stand beside you, I will stand behind you and I will stand in front of you . I will hold you up, I will push on with you, I will support you.

With my deepest regards and the utmost love.

Thank you
And stand tall

-Your Fellow Black Man

