**OH, SAY CAN WE SEE 2**

**Is America Headed Towards Yet Another Civil War?**

**By E.D. Mondainé**

The Dred Scott case, AKA, "Dred Scott v. Sandford," became a decade-long fight for freedom for a Black enslaved man, sir named "Dred Scott." The case moved through several courts and finally reached the U.S. Supreme Court, whose decision incensed abolitionists. The abolitionist viewed the ruling as a method to silence the debate around slavery in the two territories. This unprecedented decision opened the door to the anti-slavery movement, becoming a pathway to the Civil War.

The passing of the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, would end slavery for those that lived in the Confederacy. Still, it would be another three years until Congress passed the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery in the United States. Although the Amendment called for abolishing slavery, Black Americans have had a continuous fight for true freedom and equality.

The Amendment of 1865 dismantled the individual personal enslavement of one person by another. Still, it did not end the "culture of slavery,”. Key to that culture was the perception that the white population felt it their duty to suppress and control Black freedom. Whites used several mediums to facilitate this idea, such as lynching mobs and massive incarceration, especially during the institutionalized-slavery system of Jim Crow. The Jim Crow law helped perpetuate the idea that Blacks were outsiders. Black people were to be disciplined, controlled, denied the necessary privilege of recognized citizenship or the ability to own land, and be misanthropically imprisoned. In actuality, slavery was not abolished in America until the 1960s, upon the Jim Crow system's fundamental dismantling.

The long fight for justice pursued by Black Americans has rendered political violence a norm. The Black community has been a constant target for the interruption of the right to vote byseverely chilling participation in voter registration, thus attacking citizens' rights.

The display of lawless and treasonous acts of insurrection in an unprecedented exhibition of United States citizens posing as Patriots cautions us to become concerned about our civil freedom. Should we be surprised? I think not! The same spirit of the Dred Scott decision to uphold slavery has been the Trump White House's driving force. The fires of white resentment are burning at the vastly changing tide of America. What was witnessed on "Shameful Wednesday" in our nation's Capitol was a blatant white supremacy declaration. There is no doubt that multitudes of white people prefer to live in a white dictatorship than in a melting pot democracy. If democracy means sharing power with people of color, especially Black peoples, they want no part.

The recent siege of the U.S. Capitol is an inevitable consequence of the nation's tolerance of white racism. The Trump administration has viciously and vicariously promoted civil unrest and publicly caressed the mayhem perpetrated in America's streets and our Nations Capitol. Twelve years ago, one would have never fathomed the idea of America facing a reconstituted Civil War. Nearing four years of a President Trump White House, we are watching what was once thought unbelievable. Should we be mystified as to how we arrived at such a time as this? Early as 2019, America has watched in horror as Right-wing, mostly White, militia thugs have taken to the streets backed with a flint faced nod by white Evangelicals.

The summer of 2019 birthed scores of Black and Brown people and empathetic allies, taking the fight for equality to the streets across America. The peaceful protest was met often with police brutality. Law enforcement often clashed with demonstrators, deploying tear gas and rubber bullets, bruising faces and bodies. Here in Portland, demonstrators were beaten, teargassed, and kidnapped in the name of law and order. In the meantime, on Wednesday, President Trump hosted a rally, and afterward, thousands of his supporters marched to the Capitol. The crowd violently and illegally entered the capitol building, as lawmakers were convening to count presidential electoral votes. Lawmakers and staff, forced to shelter in place, and law enforcement was notably absent. Does this come as a surprise, or haven't we been paying attention? A good question would be, "Where were the attack dogs, rubber bullets, water hoses, batons, and cattle-prods, used to control the peaceful demonstrations of Blacks in the south at the height of the civil rights movement?

How did we get here? Sir Winston Churchill told us that," Dictators ride to and fro upon tigers which they dare not dismount. The tigers were loose and running wild as the cowardly dictator hid. There is indeed a double standard!

And so where do we start in the reparation of such an egregious breach in the guardrails of democracy? Our republic must speak to the pain from the oppressive weight and exclusion of Black and Brown people. There is a crippling deficit of trust that haunts the Black community as history has outlined White America's reluctance to share in the prosperity of the wealthiest nation on the planet, notwithstanding an enormous wealth gap.

In over to achieve the kind of anti-racist society hoped for, it will be imperative to start with our educational systems. Segregation in our schools became outlawed after the Brown v. Board of Education, 1954 Supreme Court decision, yet our nation still has predominantly white schools. We must also address slavery, Reconstruction, and the Civil Rights movement in the study of U.S. history in our classrooms.

We must make quick work of preparing for an economic crisis. Experts in the field of economics have warned that our country is facing a nationwide downturn. Undoubtedly black Americans will be affected worse than most other communities. The existing dilemma of access to capital will spiral at alarming rates. This action will handicap black business owners and the imminent closure of black businesses, not to mention the coming landslide of evictions that most assuredly will displace black renters across the country.

The disparities of police accountability have been a perpetual plague on the Black Community. Black people anticipate less equitable treatment than whites in interactions with the police and the criminal justice system. Immediately addressing health care disparities in Black and Brown communities is crucial. Effectively managing inadequate quality of care in black communities is vital. An immediate push for much-improved data systems, new initiatives to properly trained medical professionals, and better regulatory vigilance is critical. It is imperative to recruit providers from disadvantaged minority backgrounds. We must identify and implement effective strategies to eliminate racial inequities in health status and medical care.

The good news is the situation our nation has found itself in is not beyond reconciliation. "We, the people," have the fortitude to rewrite the narrative.

The United States of America, conceived in liberty and devoted to the premise of all men being created equal," began as a slave society, that has left an indelible imprint on the soul of our nation. "Shameful Wednesday," January 6, 2021, has shown us that if we as a nation refuse to push rapidly for change, the hefty and tragic price of a calamitous civil war will befall us. Before we can form a new democracy, we must rid ourselves of that most undemocratic institution of racism.