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Written by **James Murphy** on July 22, 2020

Major League Baseball Endorses Kneeling for National Anthem

Another American institution has decided to abandon its roots and go all-in on the anti-America sentiment that is sweeping parts of the nation in the wake of continued rioting over so-called police brutality. On Monday, Major League Baseball (MLB) tweeted its endorsement of kneeling for the national anthem — a practice begun by former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick in 2016.

San Francisco Giants manager Gabe Kapler and several Giants players knelt for the anthem prior to Monday night's exhibition game in Oakland against the Athletics. Kapler is believed to be the first manager or head coach in American professional sports to kneel while the national anthem is played prior to the beginning of a sporting contest. Kapler informed his players and the team of his intention prior to the ballgame.

"I wanted them to know that I wasn't pleased with the way our country has handled police brutality," Kapler said after the game. "I told them I wanted to amplify their voices, and I wanted to amplify the voice of the Black community and marginalized communities as well."

Among the Giants players taking a knee for the national anthem was outfielder Jaylin Davis. "I don't like putting myself out there. My instinct is to keep quiet and not make waves," Davis wrote. "But unless we all find a way to openly talk and genuinely listen to each other about racism, we have no hope of rooting it out."

MLB's official Twitter page then tweeted a video of the shameful event along with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter, signaling the league's endorsement of the disrespectful behavior. Later, MLB explained that their endorsement of kneeling for the anthem was not out of any disrespect for the flag or the military.

"It has never been about the military or the flag. The players and coaches are using their platforms to peacefully protest."

MLB doubled and tripled down on their stance. In answer to a tweet asking them not to bring politics into the sporting arena, MLB tweeted: "Supporting our players and supporting equality is not political." In answer to another tweet begging them to keep politics out of baseball, MLB tweeted: "Supporting human rights is not political."

> Supporting our players and supporting equality is not political.

— MLB (@MLB) July 21, 2020

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Whether their stance is political or not could be debated — although their stated support for the neo-Marxist organization Black Lives Matter would seem overtly political. But one thing their new stance will be is costly. In a season already stripped down to 60 games due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with games to be played without fans in the stadiums for the time being, is it a wise decision for MLB to alienate much of their fan base in this way?

President Trump did not specifically address MLB's decision to endorse the behavior, but he has been an outspoken critic of NFL players kneeling in the past. On Tuesday, the president tweeted: "Looking forward to live sports, but anytime I witness a player kneeling during the National Anthem, a sign of great disrespect for our Country and our Flag, the game is over for me!"

President Trump is not the only one showing contempt for MLB's new "woke" stance. After the Giants pulled their stunt on Monday, the hashtag #BoycottMLB began trending on Twitter.

For those of us who truly love the game, MLB's stance presents a serious quandary. Were it just unenlightened individuals such as Kapler choosing to kneel, we might be able to look past the behavior and still enjoy the game. But now that MLB has taken a stance in favor of dishonoring the flag and what it represents, they leave us little choice but to walk away from the professional game and enjoy baseball in other ways.

Kapler, Davis, and MLB can say that the kneeling is not about disrespecting the flag or the military all they want — but in the end, that's exactly what they're doing. Regarding Kapler and Davis — two individuals — a case can be made that it's their right to peaceably protest by kneeling for the anthem. In the case of MLB, their endorsement of the practice is a corporate decision to bow to a sometimes violent mob. Unless, they're looking for a fan revolt, they need to rethink this policy quickly.

Image: screenshot from YouTube video

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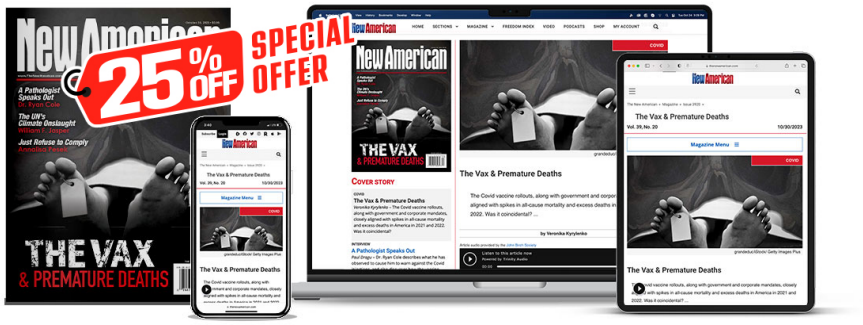

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