Dear Friend,

I won't sugarcoat it. We're facing a catastrophe.

The pending one-party domination of our government poses serious dangers for Black folks, immigrants, women, the LGBTQ community, and many more. We are facing a future that is not unlike the period after Reconstruction was overthrown. Then, like now, a presidential election resulted in the wholesale abandonment of the democratic promise of Reconstruction, leaving the fate of newly freed citizens to the whims of those who were determined to keep them under foot. Eight decades passed before the descendants of freed citizens could dream of full citizenship once again.

Many activists, advocates, pundits, and political operatives insist that now is the time to fight back. And of course, they're right—we cannot acquiesce to a long winter that may never end.

But how do we fight back? And with what tools, what resources, what strategies?

We at the African American Policy Forum know a little something about the challenge ahead. We've been facing down the ugly underbelly of Trumpism since the 2020 Executive Order 13950 which banned equal opportunity trainings for all federal government employees, contractors and grantees.

We've sounded the alarm as Trump's attacks on Critical Race Theory and the 1619 Project metastasized into so-called "divisive concept" laws that spread to red states and suburbs across the country, damaging the education of nearly 25 million children.

We got to work when anti-truth activists attacked Black history and we organized thousands of stakeholders to call out institutions like the College Board for capitulating to "anti-woke" extremists like Gov. Ron DeSantis in Florida.

We galvanized civil rights groups, teachers, the Divine 9, and clergy to march on the Supreme Court opposing the white washing of our history and demanding the Freedom to Learn.

We hit the road and visited 17 states to give away thousands of books when Moms for Liberty and so-called parents rights groups called for the censoring of books written by people of color or LGBTQ writers.

So we've been in the trenches to fight every effort to rob us of the ability to see and transform our lives. We do it because we know that in the absence of accurate history and critical literacy, millions of Americans will believe myths, defamatory disinformation, and outright lies.

Democracy dies not in darkness, but in the broad daylight when truth is framed as division and division is embraced as the truth.

That's why we at AAPF understand how Tuesday happened, even as pundits seek to minimize, evade, or deny what we can all see with our own eyes.

SUPPORT OUR WORK

Right now, even as we are reeling from the shockingly raw racism and misogyny that were on display at Madison Square Garden less than two weeks ago, pundits are reluctant to acknowledge how such poisonous politics have destroyed our democracy time and time again. Instead, they offer a colorblind analysis of the 2024 election that focuses on everything *except* the racism, the sexism and its particular intersections that ran rampant throughout this election. In this denial, they are gaslighting us directly in the face of all that we have witnessed with our very own eyes.

Well at AAPF, we won't be silenced by the organized denial of reality. We call it out, head-on, whether we're challenging state-level book bans, the defaming of diversity, equity and inclusion, or the rolling back of civil rights as promoted by Project 2025.

But we know that just as the challenge of speaking these truths has grown exponentially since Tuesday, so has our need for your support.

FUND OUR FUTURE

AAPF's work is urgent. Our communities need institutions that will amplify their voices, protect their stories, and defend their humanity. We need research, like the Race-Forward Messaging Project, to equip racial justice stakeholders with the tools they need to fight back. We need community-building opportunities, like the Critical Race Theory Summer School, to carry forward the spirit of Freedom Summer into today's efforts to defend the Freedom to Learn.

These next four years will shift the ground under our feet. Everything is up for grabs, which is why we look to you to steady the ground on which we stand.

AAPF is dedicated to being that pillar of resilience, support, and hope. We hope we can count on you, once again, in our efforts to remain defiant, steadfast, and devoted to a better future.

Join our community, amplify our mission, and support our work.

Our democracy, our freedoms, and our future are worth every effort.

Kimberlé Crenshaw
Co-Founder and Executive Director, AAPF