

Stephen A. Smith: an obnoxious poser bloviating misinformation and sucking up to fascists.

This is Bob Avakian—**REVOLUTION**—number 128.

A lot of people are turned off by the obnoxious rants of Stephen A. Smith about basketball and other sports—commentaries that are often “off the subject” and in any case “missing the mark.” (Another time, I may get into what is essentially wrong with Smith’s commentaries on the NBA.)

But what is far worse is the way Smith, a prominent Black man, has been sucking up to fascists. He criticized the NAACP for not inviting Trump to its annual convention—as if an organization whose stated goal is to oppose racism and fight for civil rights should provide a platform for a fascist like Trump, who has made it one of his top priorities to *promote* racism and *aggressively roll back gains that have been made in the fight against brutal discrimination*. (If Stephen A. Smith doesn’t know that this is true of Trump, then he needs to learn some basic facts. If he doesn’t *care*, that is even worse.)

This is not just a “one-off” with Smith’s sucking up to fascists—there is a *definite pattern* of his *repeatedly* doing this. He has recently built up Candace Owens, a Black fascist who is famous (or infamous) for saying that if Hitler had just been a “nationalist”—if he “just wanted to make Germany great and make things run well”—that would have been “fine.” Owens later tried to “clean this up” by adding that Hitler after all was a “homicidal, psychotic maniac” and “mass murderer” of Jews and others. (In works available through revcom.us, there is extensive analysis of Hitler’s overall aims and actions, and the larger context in which this occurred, including the conflicts among imperialist powers.) But the essential reality is this: *Hitler’s genocide against the Jews, as well as murderous repression of communists, gay people, the Roma, and others, cannot be separated from—and in fact was a crucial part of—his moves to “make Germany great again,” as was his military expansionism and massive war crimes*. So, despite Owens’ flimsy attempts to “clean up” her comments about Hitler, these comments are not simply a matter of gross ignorance, but something far more terrible. And terrible as well is Stephen A. Smith’s praise of Owens.

Along with this, Smith *actually blamed U.S. Senator Alex Padilla* for the way he was crudely disrespected—and aggressively attacked and handcuffed—by government agents at a press conference by fascist Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem in Los Angeles. Smith claimed that Padilla was at fault because he didn’t wait for Noem to finish her “remarks” before he “interrupted” her. Even if that were the heart of the matter, there is no justification for *anyone* in those circumstances being abused the way Padilla was. And, as Padilla pointed out, if this is how a U.S. Senator is treated, imagine how the Trump regime treats “ordinary people.” Further, there is an important context to all this: When Padilla “interrupted” Noem, she was openly declaring that the Trump fascist regime was utilizing the National Guard and Marines to “liberate” California from its elected officials—which amounts to a declaration of a coup. That Padilla found Noem’s comments outrageous, and felt compelled to “interrupt” this to ask Noem a question, is completely justified. That Stephen A. Smith in effect defends Noem and condemns Padilla is not only completely *unjustified*, but says something very bad about where Smith is coming from and what he is supporting and promoting.

Here, I am going to speak directly to what some may raise: Why am I criticizing a prominent Black man when there are lots of others, especially white people, who are doing terrible things? The fact is that, in these social media messages of mine, in my writings and talks, and my life's work overall, since the 1960s, I have actively opposed, sharply exposed, and deeply analyzed the fundamental causes of, the oppression of Black people, and other people systematically subjugated and persecuted under this system—showing how all this is rooted in the very nature of this system of capitalism-imperialism and its historical development in this country, and how all this can finally be uprooted through a revolution to abolish this whole system and replace it with a far better system.

At the same time, it has to be said that there is something particularly disgusting about someone Black sucking up to blatantly racist fascist oppressors—just as there would be something particularly disgusting about someone Jewish justifying and prettifying the Nazis who committed massive genocide against the Jews. And I am going to call out what needs to be called out, even if some people may not like my speaking the truth.

Stephen A. Smith is not the only Black person with a prominent platform peddling Trump's fascist poison. "Charlamagne tha God" has recently expressed agreement with Trump's declaration that he intends to deport *citizens* who are "bad people": "Charlamagne" insisted that, if you have committed horrible crimes, even if you are a citizen, he doesn't care where they send you. Does "Charlamagne" really not recognize that sending people to be tortured in other countries, in violation of the law and the Constitution, as Trump has already done, cannot be justified, no matter what those people may have done, or been *accused* of doing? Does he not understand that torture morally and politically corrupts and degrades the whole society that allows it? Does he really not know that many people, especially Black people, are denounced as "monstrous criminals" while being convicted of crimes that they did not actually commit? Does "Charlamagne" not recognize that for Trump "bad people" means anyone who opposes him, everyone he chooses to denounce as "enemies"—again without regard to the Constitution, law and due process of law? Has "Charlamagne" not seen how Trump declared he was going to round up and deport "the worst criminals," but his masked, armed thugs have actually attacked and dragged away "ordinary" brown-skinned people—some of them documented, some of them actual citizens—who are just going about their daily lives, not committing crimes? Does "Charlamagne" not get that violations of the law and the Constitution threaten the rights of everyone who might oppose—or be accused of opposing—the regime in power?

Trump/MAGA fascism is defined by its overall tyrannical rule, its overt racism, its hatred of women and LGBT people, its lawless persecution of immigrants (including documented immigrants), its aggressive insistence on American supremacy, its deranged and cruel lunacy, and the grave danger this poses not only for people in this country but for humanity as a whole.

There can be no tolerance for any promotion of this fascism, by anyone.

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