



Order

Client	MoveOn Civic Action C4
Ref #	R2R Call 8/20 (White Supremacy)
Order #	TC0230050446

How did we do?



If you rate this transcript 3 or below, this agent will not work on your future orders

Need Help? <mailto:support@rev.com>
Get this transcript without table formatting

Mehrdad: Good evening everyone. Thank you so much for joining tonight's Ready to Resist emergency call. My name is Mehrdad Azemun from People's Action. I'm facilitating tonight's call. For those who are able to, we encourage you to join the livestream of the call since you'll be able to see slides the trainers are using. You can access that livestream at moveon.org/readytoresist. If you're listening tonight with a group, there's a one-page conversation guide also posted at that same website, moveon.org/readytoresist that you can download and help facilitate a conversation after the call. A recording of the call, the slideshow, additional materials for further learning will be available after the call at moveon.org/readytoresist.

I want to thank the many cosponsors for the call tonight, so many that I'm going to read them in two groups. We thank Color of Change, Progressive Change Campaign Committee, Women's March, the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, Our Revolution, Black Alliance for Just Immigration, Democracy for America, Resist, Million Hoodies, Moms Rising, Daily Kos. I want to remind folks we've had over 34,000 people RSVP for this call. It's one indication of this harrowing, angering, and hopeful week that we've had. I want to thank the rest of our sponsors, Working Families Party, Ultraviolet, Indivisible, Win Without War, All of Us, Moveon.org, United We Dream, the Leadership Conference, and Center for Popular Democracy Action.

Now, I want to give a quick reminder on logistics. Please press star three if you want to ask a question. One of our great volunteer screeners will work to get to you and you can also get to moveon.org/readytoresist to listen to this call via your computer or your device and watch the presentation there. You'll probably want to grab something to write with because we're going to take a lot. You may want to take notes on this call. There's going to be a lot of information and actions.

If you're just joining the call, this is Mehrdad Azemun. I'm with People's Action. People's Action is a national network of over 45 grassroots organizations in 32 states working day and night for racial and economic justice. You can learn more about us at peoplesaction.org. We want to use this call to make meaning of what's happening and also to take action. It's been a week in which we've witnessed senseless violence and Donald Trump doubling down in favor of white supremacy. These events force us to confront how we understand our own history and the direction we choose as a country. I want to preview the agenda. We're going to hear from a local leader from Charlottesville, Virginia, and then get a special training about white nationalism. We'll hear about opportunities to take action from three allied organizations and a member of congress and we will open up for questions.

Tonight, we're going to be discussing how we confront white supremacy in all of its forms. Since Trump's campaign began about two years ago we've seen a horrific spike in the number of organized hate groups and the number of hate crimes targeting people of color. We hold Heather Heyer and her family in our hearts, as well as those injured last week in Charlottesville. She was among the latest people targeted by a member of a hate group because of their race or beliefs. Timothy Kauffman was brutally murdered by a white supremacist just four months ago in New York City. We remember the members of Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston in June 2015 by Dylann Roof. We think of the victims of Islamophobia. The list, unfortunately, goes on and on.

What are we to do? A lot of us have actually already taken action. I'm wondering, I want to actually, we open these calls up for polls and I want to ask folks who are on the call right now, did you attend a vigil last weekend or last week or just yesterday in solidarity with Charlottesville? For those on their phones, please press one for yes or two for no. Did you attend a vigil last weekend or recently in solidarity with Charlottesville?

Our work here is the difficult work of standing against white supremacy in every single one of its forms, by opposing hate groups, by taking down racist monuments, by opposing hate speech, and by rooting out and reversing laws that are based on ideas of white supremacy, which we know can show up in so many different forms. The Trump regime's deportation force and the Muslim ban that's destroying families that's a form of white supremacy. The full court press to suppress voting rights, that is a form of white supremacy. The budget cuts, tax plans to slash Medicaid, Medicare. Those plans are also informed by white supremacist values. The impact of all of this, of all the visible and less visible forms of white supremacy, whether it's hate crimes or the quieter and deadly forms of budget cuts for social programs, all of that has led to a war on communities of color, the warehousing of black and brown bodies in our prisons, and people being erased. That's what we are here to fight.

Another big part of this story, however, is our own victories. Sometimes it's hard to see this, but sanity and decency have actually prevailed, partly because of leadership, courage, and good organizing. Of course, we're concerned about Trump. Of course, we're concerned about his endorsement of white supremacists, but remember he is a failed leader, less relevant than ever and abandoned by so many people this week. CEOs, fellow Republicans. He's played a massive game of subtraction and, on our end, we keep adding. The folks who stand on the side of love, we keep winning. We keep growing. Just a few of those victories, there's one less white supremacist in the White House. Thanks to months of pressure and organizing, Trump fired Steve Bannon who went running back to his same old job at the hub of racist internet trolls, otherwise known as Breitbart News.

Second, partly because of the great work of Color of Change and many other organizations, today there are 10 fewer Confederate monuments in the country than there were even a week ago today. We'll hear more about that work later. Third, just a week after the murder of Heather Heyer and the violence in Charlottesville, the Movement for Black Lives, The Majority, and many other organizations, held an incredible series of nonviolent actions yesterday. 40,000 people in Boston, outnumbering the far right rally by a factor of more than 4000 to one.

I want to transition us to our first speaker tonight, Russ Bellamy of Charlottesville. We also want to give a shout out to the many organizations to organize in Charlottesville last weekend, including local Black Lives Matter activists, Democratic Socialists of America, Industrial Workers of the World, and others who put their bodies on the line. We want to recognize, also, the local role played by Virginia Organizing. Celebrated a birthday just yesterday. They were founded in Charlottesville itself in 1995 with a goal of dismantling structural racism. For tonight's call, we wanted to make sure we understood the local context and the organizing that's happened there around racial equity. We

welcome to the call the vice mayor of Charlottesville, Wes Bellamy. Wes?

Wes: Thank you for having me. I really appreciate you having me on. Before we get started, I would be remiss if we didn't show some love and a very short moment of silence and our condolences to the family of sister Heather, as well as the two police officers who lost their lives last week. Our thoughts and our prayers are with them. Thank you all, once again, for having me on the call. I also want to give a quick shout out to my guy Joe Szakos who's the director of Virginia Organizing. Much love to him, as well as our local Black Lives Matter, DSA everybody else who's been organizing down here. I'll be very brief and if anyone has any questions after this, please feel free to send me an email at wbellamy@charlottesville.org. Again, that's wbellamy@charlottesville.org.

I want to talk about a couple of things while I have your time. Initially, some background on why the racists chose to come to the city of Charlottesville. I think several people in the media, as well as many of you, have been hearing that people, these white supremacists and these other groups decided to come to Charlottesville because of our decision, city council decision, to remove the statue of Robert E. Lee and I want to be clear that that is not in itself true. They're hiding and masking their hate and their bigotry behind the statue, but what they really want to do is create an ethnostate, as they've been clearly pointing, and they see Charlottesville as this city that, while we are not perfect in any shape, form, or fashion, we are trying to do everything that we can to create equity in terms of moving forward, whether that's equity in affordable housing, whether that's equity in our city budget and public parks, whatever the case may be.

Yes, we took a very bold action, not just led by myself, but also kudos to my "partner in crime" Ms. Kristin Szakos, another councilwoman on Charlottesville City Council who's been beating the pavement and pushing really hard for us to not only move the statue, but, again push equity. This is a place where these individuals, like the Jason Kesslers of the world and some of these other racists and white supremacists, they felt as if what was their's was being taken away and they're right, because it's being spread out throughout the city. Nothing belongs to just one entity or one group of people and we want to send one very clear sign that in the city of Charlottesville we will have equity throughout. We're going to fight for it, come hell or high water and we're going to fight for it until the day we die.

That made a lot of them upset. Obviously, they wanted to come here. They wanted to attack me. They wanted to attack Ms. Szakos. They wanted to, again, try to think that they could intimidate us, but it didn't work. It actually backfired. We're now stronger, we're much more encouraged. We're rallying even more so together. As I'm speaking right now, I'm at back to school kind of bash, handing out book bags, at a community park, at Town Center Park, and we had maybe 200 people come out and everybody was all very appreciative. Spirits are upbeat, so we know we're willing and we're ready to keep working.

As you all can see on the slide, you'll see how we're not only adjusting the issues of white supremacy and institutional racism with our words, but with our action and many of you have heard about the equity package that I proposed earlier in the year and it got passed. I actually must also give kudos, once again, to Ms. Kristin Szakos. While I did

write up most of the stuff in the package, it was her who I consulted with and she and I together worked all the specifics out and figured out exactly how we can make the figures add up and then we pushed really hard to get where we needed.

As you all can see on your screen, there's \$4 million in total to help bridge the gap and create equity. You have \$950,000 to our African American Heritage Center, which is the initial first African American school in the city of Charlottesville, and that was the school for all of the African American kids in the area, and while they were having some issues, we wanted to make sure that we showed as a city our commitment to them to make sure they could continue doing the great work that they're doing. We provided them with \$950,000.

This same very park where I'm at right now, Town Center Park, we allocated \$250,000 to do renovations and update the park and people are very, very excited about that and what's going to transpire moving forward. \$2.5 million to public housing redevelopment, which is a very, very key initiative for us so that's \$500,000 allocated over the next five years, which allows us to be able to begin redevelopment over our public housing sites. As you all can also see on the screen, \$50,000 annually for free GED training for anyone who lives in public housing. As well as we created another scholarship opportunity for young people who live in the area to encourage them to attend HBCU, historical black colleges and universities, and also to change the narrative. We looked at and finally got a position passed for a youth opportunity coordinator, which essentially will work at changing the narrative for black men and black boys in the area. It's a position that's funneled through our BMA, Charlottesville Alliance for Black Male Achievement.

That is how we are moving the needle again, not just with our words, but with our actions. In order to do this, it requires bold action. It requires some political will and political capital from your local elected leaders. Listen, this is the kind of situation we are in right now where you've got to go hard or go home. The days in which we just stand idle and kind of meekly push through are behind us because the white supremacists are not going to be kind in the way in which they come and attack all peoples. Not just black people or just Jewish people or whomever, they want to attack everyone. We have to be smarter and use politics to our advantage.

I'm told that's my time, but again if anyone needs anything else, feel free to contact me at wbellamy@charlottesville.org. Lastly, before I get off the phone, people are asking me what can they do next. I would encourage you to do three things. One, look at how you can implement policy to create equity. Equity and equality are two different things. You want equity and not equality. Secondly, please pray for us as much as you can. Our community is stronger, we're going to continue to get strong, but we need all your support. Lastly, please offer your support and look to the Virginia gubernatorial races and the New Jersey gubernatorial races, because those two races for the governorships there are really going to tell a true story of how our country is truly resisting the bigotry of 45. Let's make sure we stand up. Let's resist together and tell 45 he needs to get his act together or send him home. Thank you all.

Mehrdad: Thanks Mayor Bellamy. Thank you so much for joining in the call. Thank you so much for your leadership. I was already hopeful. I'm even more hopeful and feel even more

vigilant as a result of hearing about the organizing that's been happening and this case study of this equity package is incredible work that folks can take home. Wes made a very important point that helps us to transition to our two, we're very lucky to be joined by two senior trainers who will draw back the curtain about what white nationalism means and Wes talked about a couple of the tactics that white nationalists are using to literally and figuratively cloak their speech and some of their political tactics.

I want to transition to that training about white nationalism. We're very lucky to be joined by Eric Ward, senior fellow at the Southern Poverty Law Center, and Tarso Ramos of Political Research Associates. They are two experts in white nationalism. They're going to lead a training on white supremacy, its history in America, how we got here, and what it looks like today. I believe Eric is speaking first and begin. Thank you so much for joining this emergency Ready to Resist call. Eric? Eric, maybe, perhaps you're still on mute?

Eric: I want to thank everyone who has stepped up to join the call this evening and everyone who has sponsored this evening conference. Particularly, I want to thank everyone who stood in Charlottesville and around the country, whether it was a 14-year-old African American woman or a 68-year-old white male, I'm just humbled by everyone's commitment to create a society where everyone can live, love, and work free from fear and discrimination. I think it's important, before we talk about white nationalism, its goals and what we can do, to understand that white nationalism is a response to a lot of the progress that we have made over the last 50 years. There is still much work ahead of us and we need to step up in this moment and embrace that work, but the reaction in large part, and the growth of white nationalism, has to do with the 1964 civil rights movement and we'll move to the first slide.

As we know, in the midst of the 1960s in the United States, a very significant civil rights movement arose and that civil rights movement was very effective in pushing back against white supremacy, which was codified by law. In the wake of the victories of that movement, the white supremacist movement, or white supremacy as we know it, began to retreat. Within that retreat emerged something new, something known as white nationalism. White nationalism sought to create an ethnostate. It used antisemitism as its fuel to create the loss, its loss during the civil rights movement. If its rhetoric under white supremacy had been that black people were inferior, were less intelligent, it needed a reason to explain its significant loss. It began to create a model of antisemitism that mirrored what had happened in Europe, centering Jews as a secret cabal that was at work to destroy the white race.

We see the next appearance of a white nationalist movement in 1979, during the Greensboro Massacre. What was significant in that moment is that we began to see elements of neo-Nazis, clansmen, skinheads, armed paramilitaries beginning to unify around the idea of no longer trying to retake the United States of America, but in fact to overthrow it. In many ways, white nationalists shifted their movement from trying to protect white supremacy to creating an ethnostate where people of color would no longer be allowed. In the spring of 2017, we began to see this movement take root in the streets of Portland with the murder of two individuals who stood up for two African American women on public transportation. They were murdered as a result. In the wake

of that, it signaled to the white nationalist movement that it could begin to expand and to build a mass base, particularly under the shadow of the electoral success of Donald Trump. Next slide.

White nationalism's goal, we should be clear, is to seize state power. Their understanding is that the best way to dismantle American government is by being in control of American government. The best way that they believe they can create an ethnostate is by controlling the present apparatus and deconstructing that apparatus. They seek to do that through fear and intimidation such as what we saw on the streets of Charlottesville. They also believe that attacking a multiracial society is critically important. For white nationalism to take root, they need to prove that a multiracial society cannot work. This is why it's important for leaders on this call to step up and to deal with some of the systemic assaults both on our institutions of democracy, but also addressing some of the underlying bias and discrimination that undercuts our ability to build a real, inclusive society. This undermining of democratic institutions, standoffs with the federal government, standoffs and ignoring laws at the city and state levels is to prove to the American public that they are a stronger force.

It is important to realize that bigotry and prejudice are not the goal. These are not simply hate groups. It's not a behavioral problem. This is a social movement that seeks to use prejudice and bigotry to seize the state. What can we do? If you have ever wondered, and we can move to the next slide, what you might have done during the 1960s civil rights movement, it is whatever you choose to do today. This is a moment where it's critical for each of us to step up as leaders. We need to talk to your neighbors and friends. We need to break the paralysis and build solidarity. If we are unable to work up the courage to talk to our neighbors and friends, how we will we ever build the courage to confront a social movement that seeks to undercut the idea of a people-centered democracy? Next slide.

We need to find creative responses. Counter protests are important, but we also need to seize ideas that allow us to be proactive. I often think of in Germany in one town where neo-Nazis march every year that the community now has responded by creating a celebration and turning this annual Nazi march into an annual fundraiser. They have gotten so much into the celebration that they have actually created banners and confetti and have drawn on the streets so that neo-Nazis know that at every pace this is how much money they have raised for anti-hate work in Germany. We need to be creative in terms of counter protests, but also understanding that it's not simply a street battle, but its about advocacy and policies. Next slide.

We need to build an inclusive democracy that is people-centered, transparent, and accountable. This is how we inoculate our community. It's important to understand that hate groups don't simply come to town bringing racism or antisemitism or homophobia. They simply organize the bigotry that already exists. Be a leader. Join one of the organizations cosponsoring this call. Double your activities with the organizations that have cosponsored this call. Talk to your neighbors and family and tell elected officials to take a stand. When you stand up for your neighbors, you're standing up for yourself and for your family.

Whether your hashtag is not one more or no DAPL or black lives matter or model minority mutiny, resist, or never again, what we are saying is that we are seeking room to breathe, that we are trying to build a real democracy and this democracy will only occur if we deal with the underlying issues of bigotry and discrimination in our society and, as well, counter a white nationalist movement. This is not an either/or proposition. In this critical moment in history, we need each one of you on this call to stand up and be a leader. Thank you for allowing me to join you this evening.

Mehrdad: Thank you Eric. I think Tarso are we transitioning to you?

Tarso: Yes. Thank you Mehrdad. Thank you Eric for that excellent overview. I also want to thank all the call sponsors and the many thousands of people joining us tonight to confront white nationalism and fight for justice. I also want to honor the courage of those in Charlottesville and to give a shout out to my Boston people for the incredible turnout yesterday. White nationalism will not prevail. Eric, I'm glad you mentioned Oregon, in part because it's really important to point out that this is not a Southern problem, this is a national problem and, to some extent, an international problem. I want to start with just a very quick word on my organization, PRA. Since 1981, PRA, Political Research Associates, has produced investigative research and analysis on the US right wing supporting social justice advocates to defend human rights, overcome their organized opponents, and advance social justice. It's an honor to be on the call with you tonight.

Related to today's call, some of you may have seen the reporting analysis that PRA has produced on Trump's coalition, on Charlottesville, on right wing paramilitaries in Oregon and beyond and on the white nationalists self-described alt-right. Could I have a slide, next slide please? PRA has been at this a long time, but our work builds upon and is indebted to the black freedom movement, antifascist organizers, and many other movements past and present. Most of what we produce can be found for free online at politicalresearch.org. I encourage you to go there for a deeper dive on these issues, to read Eric's fantastic essay on white nationalism and antisemitism, and then you can follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Time is short, so I'm going to make only a few key points on this call. Could I have the next slide please? The first is that I want to talk about white nationalist coalition building efforts. There are intersecting targets for the right, race, religion, gender, class, and sexuality and it's important for us to come to each other's aid. White nationalists of the sort that Eric has been describing, have sought to build beyond their fairly small ranks with Trump supporters and others by mobilizing fear, resentment, and anger against multiple groups. Courting relationships with, for instance, Islamophobes within and outside the religious rank, with anti-government patriot paramilitaries such as the Oathkeepers and Three Percenters and also the men's movement, misogynists, and the immigrant activists and so on. The alt-right moniker that we've heard so much of, coined by Richard Spencer who gained infamy through his Sieg Heil video captured just after Trump's election. That moniker, in part, reflects this attempt to reach beyond people willing to openly embrace belief in white racial superiority on the one hand or on the other racially and culturally exclusionary definitions of who is a real American.

Islamophobia has been an especially effective tool, because we saw it in the June anti-Sharia rallies in part because it masks, to some extent, the racial element of white nationalism by coding it within religion. These correlations have also allowed white nationalists to blend in with pro-Trump rallies and to use the free speech card as was tried again in Boston just yesterday. Antisemitism, xenophobia, and anti-black racism were all very prominently on display in Charlottesville. The chants of "Jews will not replace us," "Blood and soil," which comes directly from the Third Reich and so forth.

I want to be sure that we're also paying attention to the intense misogyny, such as the way the Daily Stormer, the white nationalist website mocked Heather Heyer after her death, the woman killed in the car attack. Women protesters in Charlottesville were regularly threatened with rape. White nationalism involves a cult of violence and of hyper masculinity that is intensely misogynist and this, too, has to be confronted as white nationalists recruit from women hating online clubs and the like.

The second key point I want to make is that the Nazification of the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville with very prominent neo-Nazis and other explicit and overt white supremacists David Duke and others were scheduled to speak, maybe a double-edged sword for our racial justice and democracy work going forward. On the one hand, it shocked the nation and it fundamentally changed the way major news outlets reported, in a positive way, and it even compelled members of Trump's party to strongly denounce the Unite the Right rally and to challenge Trump for making excuses for the neo-Nazi rampage in Charlottesville. As we saw yesterday in Boston, it will be much harder for the next white nationalist rally to claim to be about free speech.

On the other hand, talk is cheap and denouncing a neo-Nazi rally after the fact is hardly an act of courage. It's our job to keep focus on the racist policies of this president on immigration, the Muslim ban, police violence, mass incarceration, women's health, health insurance, voter suppression, access to education, and on and on. We cannot let the focus on Nazis serve to mainstream other militant parts of the far right, such as the armed paramilitaries like the Oathkeepers whom the Portland Republican party, Portland, Oregon, has decided to use as a security detail and, which has cooperated with local police in arresting counter protestors to white nationalist rallies. Unless we are clear on the relationship between the vigilante white nationalism and the racist nationalism also from the Trump government, these cultural mobilizations on the far right can open up more space for racist public policies and repressive policing. Slide.

My third point is that white nationalism is a social movement and Eric was lifting this up, a social movement with a political agenda. It mobilizes hatreds for certain, but when we think and talk about them as haters it's easy to lose sight of the fact that they are part of a larger anti-democratic ecosystem that threatens the possibility of racial democracy in the United States. To contend with this broader onslaught, we practice democracy in our resistance. Some principles to consider, if you come for any of us, you must come through all of us, a practice of deep solidarity. Also, we will defend those targeted for political retaliation, whether it's a singling out of the Black Lives Matter movement or other movements.

Third, we will never give up on the formal institutions of democracy, however

inadequate they may currently be as guarantors of justice and equality. Also, we must keep our hearts open and lead with love even as we passionately defend human rights. Finally, as we all know, defense is never enough. We must lead with an alternative vision of democracy and human rights. I believe we'll be hearing some of ideas of that on this call.

I want to conclude with a story from a conference that I recently attended on the rise of the far right in Europe and in the United States where I had a chance to meet with freedom fighters from Turkey and Hungary and Poland and Britain and France and many other countries and then a side conversation with an organizer in Hungary, he told me that, "Here in Europe, especially in Eastern Europe, we are looking to the United States for leadership on this question." Now, my heart sank a little because of how difficult things have become for organizing here and I asked him why he was looking to the US and he said, "Because, in Hungary, we've already lost the fight as to who is a real Hungarian. We've already lost the fight in terms of the public consciousness and belief as to whether or not we are a multiracial and multiethnic and pluralist society. People believe we are not, that there is a Hungarian ethnicity that defines who we are as a people." In the United States, that has not yet happened. Everyone recognizes that this is multiethnic, multiracial society, and we're having a heck of a fight over what that means, but we have not lost that fight over multiracial democracy and who is an American.

That's right and those are the stakes. The mobilizations in Charlottesville and Boston and other places give us hope that this is not a fight that we're going to lose. Finally, I want to encourage anybody interested in a deeper dive on these topics or for regular updates on white nationalism to check us out at politicalresearch.org and I turn it back to you, Mehrdad, for facilitation.

Mehrdad: Tarso and Eric, thank you very much. That was both really chilling and informational and also just really moving and I really want to thank both of you for your really combined decades and decades of leadership on this. We're going to have time just for one question on this. It's a question that came online from Judy who's in Washington, DC, and Judy asks, "What more can I do to dismantle white supremacy?" This is a person who lives in DC and is a member of multiple organizations, makes multiple contributions per month, and she's wondering what more can she do to dismantle white supremacy. Tarso or Eric, do you have a response?

Tarso: I have a very quick one and then I'll turn it over to Eric. I think that the opportunities abound to confront white supremacy in your locale, in your location. There's tremendously important policy work to be done and there's tremendous work to be done confronting white nationalist mobilizations on the street as we recognize the relationship between those things. The cultural organizing that happens with far right mobilizations like that in Charlotte are intended to normalize white nationalism in ways that open the door for more racist public policy to be advanced. Whether we're engaging directly on questions of policy, whether we're standing toe to toe and standing down white nationalist organizers, whether we're reaching out, as Eric said, to our neighbors to have difficult conversations about who is an American and how we stand together to resist attempts to divide us, there are tremendous opportunities. I want to

follow Eric's point in encouraging folks who perhaps are not already members of racial justice organizations to join and contribute to racial justice organizations and will give you opportunities to plug in. Anything from you Eric?

Eric: I think that's wonderful. I just want to thank the person who gave us the question for all you have done already and everyone on this call for standing up and it is just now a time for all of us to amplify what we have already done and I think Tarso has given some great suggestions.

Mehrdad: Well, listen, thank you again Tarso Ramos and Eric Ward for your time and leadership on this and for drawing back the curtain on a movement, a scary movement, but a movement clearly that we can all defeat. Thank you. We're going to move on to the action portion of our agenda and what is exciting about this is that we have so many opportunities to defeat white supremacy and the message to our elected officials, and we're very lucky to be joined by a member of congress in just a moment, our message to our elected officials it's just not enough that people tweet to disavow white supremacists. Speaker Paul Ryan did so earlier this week. It is completely inadequate.

We are asking our elected officials to act and the demand that we're saying is that tweeting that you denounce Nazis is not enough. We need action. White supremacy and racism is a structure and we'll hear about demands, an exciting set of demands, some of which are being organized by members of congress and the great thing is that members of Congress are home right now during August recess and there are events all over the country. You can find one near you or sign up to host an event at resistancerecess.com. For the first set of actions, for this first set of demands, we're very, very happy to, I'm hoping that she's on the line, to welcome Congresswoman Bonnie Watson-Coleman.

Bonnie: I am here.

Mehrdad: She represents New Jersey's 12th Congressional District. Congresswoman, thank you very much for joining the call. The Congresswoman is going to talk about an exciting new effort that's just been organized around censuring Donald Trump.

Bonnie: First of all, let me just thank each and every one of you for standing up and standing strong and not giving in and be willing to put [inaudible 00:37:32] your hair and put your feet to the ground to make sure that this country is a country that we all will enjoy and feel safe in. Couldn't have done it without you. Couldn't have done this, what we did, without working families and without the progressives and I'm particularly grateful to Hetty Rosenstein and Analilia out of New Jersey who worked with my office as we put together this resolution to censure the president because of his support of these initiatives and because he has not spoken out forthrightly and with clarity against white supremacy and because he needs to rid his whole cabinet of those embrace these ideologies.

We have together, we've put together the resolution of censure against the president. We have about 50 people who are already, from members of Congress, who've signed on. It's Nadler and Jayapal from Wisconsin. We think it'll be representative, a black woman. There's an Asian Indian woman and there is a Jewish man who represent, I

think, the diversity of this country. We're asking all members to sign on. We think that this is an opportunity for those Republicans who have tweeted their support for a better and kinder country and to repudiate this kind of toxic language that has been going on to actually be on the record. This censure resolution establishes a record condemning what the president has done and it is important because Congress has had numerous opportunities to speak up against things that this president has done, but for one reason or another they have opted not to. This is, I think, a very modest opportunity for them to speak up and to let the people know that they represent that these are not the ideals of the United States of America. We repudiate neo-Nazism, neo confederation, neo ... White supremacy, whatever, this is not acceptable in the United States of America and we will not tolerate it out of the president.

What we are asking is for those who are around the country to reach out to their members of Congress to tell them, to demand that they sign on to this resolution, to put it on the record what you say you stand for and to show that you're representing your constituents and that you do not put Donald Trump ahead of this country. What does that mean? It means that we have this on the record. It means that it's the deployment of one tool, a tool, that will register the sense of the Congress in opposition to this president and the way he's handled these issue. We should use every tool we have. We have, in addition to this, we have members of Congress who are putting together articles of impeachment. We should not let this moment pass without being on the record and condemning it. I thank each and every one of you, particularly working families in my community, working families and the progressive groups, because you helped us to get this moving and to bring people onboard.

Mehrdad: Congresswoman Bonnie Watson-Coleman. Thank you so much for those words, even more than that, for your effort to formally censure Donald Trump alongside Congressman Nadler, along Congresswoman Jayapal and for folks who are on the call, you heard it straight from the congresswoman. It's time to go to your individual member of Congress to see if your member of Congress has signed on in favor of this censure resolution. You don't have to be a member of Congress to add your support. You can go straight to moveon.org/censure to add your name and support. Again, you can find or host an event related to this and other issues to press on members of Congress at resistancerecess.com.

I want to then start with the next poll question. It's very specific, which is will you call your member of Congress tomorrow, on Monday, to ask them to censure Donald Trump. Press one for yes. Press two for now. Again, will you call your member of Congress Monday to ask them to censure Donald Trump. Press one for yes, press two for no. That's the current poll question. I want to move us to our next speaker. We are really, really lucky to be joined by Arisha Hatch. She's the managing director of campaigns at Color of Change and she's going to be talking about two different campaigns that Color of Change is moving right now that will go straight to defeating, helping defeat white supremacy. Arisha?

Arisha: Thank you. Thank you so much for having me. Like many of you, these last few weeks, these last few months really, have brought up so much for me. One of my earliest memories I was maybe four. My brother had just been born and we were riding in the

family minivan on our way to our grandmother's house in a small town, country town, in the South. It was the mid-80s and I remember my brother crying in the background, my mother trying to soothe him as traffic slowed to a stop. There was a police officer there to direct traffic as white hooded members of the Klan marched with torches to a rally off to the side of the road. I didn't know who they were then. I didn't know what race was then. I thought that I was orange, like Ernie on Sesame Street, but it was clear from the demeanor of my parents that I should be afraid.

Years later, visiting my great-great-grandfather in a nursing home, I overheard him telling a story of his childhood best friend being lynched. The Klan became a part of my childhood nightmares, real life ghosts. For me, and so many other black people, the resurfacing of this movement has triggered so many old memories, so many old family stories of terrorism, so many fears. I've been thankful in this moment to be able to work for an organization like Color of Change, the country's largest online black led racial justice organization to channel all of that anxiety into strategic action, giving people something to do with their outrage and fear.

Since January, we've been asking members to take strategic options to push back against enablers and normalizers of Trump's dangerous rhetoric and policies asking elected officials and corporations to pick a side, to not comply. After Trump announced the Muslim ban, Color of Change launched a campaign demanding that Uber quit Trump's business council, which they did. After months of back and forth with companies on the council like Tesla, Disney, and Pepsi, company after company made the decision last week to quit the council, forcing Trump to disband his business councils, which was a huge victory. Yet, we still have more work left to do.

I'd like to point folks to a few more strategic actions that you can still take. I'm going to ask folks to do something really hard. I'm going to ask you take out your cellphones and send a text message. The first demand is to tear down all Confederate symbols. This campaign work started after the Charleston church massacre, which led to the Confederate flag being removed from South Carolina state capitol. Now we're focused on monuments in our nation's capitol. If you text the word down to the phone number 225568 you can sign our petition demanding continued removals. Once again, text the word down to the phone number 225568.

Finally, this next action is so important, next slide, because it has the potential to deal a major financial blow to hate groups across the country, many of whom are responsible for the terrorism in Charlottesville. It's our No Blood Money campaign, which you can read more about at bloodmoney.org. Big payment processing companies like Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover are processing funds for over 100 hate groups and profiting from it. Last week, PayPal and Apple Pay announced they would no longer support these kinds of hate groups and Visa, MasterCard, and American Express have begun to remove their payment from these sites.

Now, this is so important. I need everyone to text one more time. If everyone on this call texts it would be so great. Text the word blood to 225568. Once again, go back to your text messages and text the word blood to 225568. We're going into meetings early this week with credit card providers and we have to show them that the country is still

outraged by the movement we're seeing and Trump's refusal to disavow it. Once again, please text the word blood to 225568 to add your name to that petition before we head into meetings tomorrow. Thank you so much for your time.

Mehrdad: Appreciate it. Thank you so much for joining the call. Thank you for sharing your story with us and your vulnerability and for transforming the fear and anxiety that so many of us feel into incredible action. Again, we encourage folks to take action. What's exciting about this is that 98% of the folks on the call, related to that first ask around censuring said that folks would call, said that they would call Congress tomorrow. That's over 5000 calls that we're going to generate to Congress tomorrow about censuring Trump. In addition to taking down symbols and cutting off support for white supremacy, we're going to also talk about public education and I want to transition to my colleague, Keron Blair. He's the national director for AROS, the Alliance to Reclaim our Schools. Keron.

Keron: Good evening everyone. I'm really excited to be on the call. I've been saying this all week. What a time to be alive. It is important, as Mehrdad said, for us to understated that racism and white supremacy show up not just in hooded folks in Charlottesville, but also in public policy. No place is some of that more evident than in policies regarding public education. The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, one of the nation's largest coalitions fighting for racial justice in public education, made up of educators, parents, and teachers, just launched a campaign to push back against the cuts being proposed by Donald Trump and the Republicans. These cuts are not just bad, they are, frankly, racist. They want to cut funding for title I. They want to eliminate nearly \$2 billion in programs that support afterschool programs, community schools, and the arts in low income and black communities. They want to eliminate \$400 million that helps school districts address school climate and reduce the use of exclusionary discipline practices that push black and brown kids out of schools and strengthen the school to prison pipeline.

As I see it, as we see it, similar to that car that James Fields drove into the crowd in Charlottesville, we think that these cuts, if allowed, do serious harm to parents, children, and educators. They do serious harm to the bright future that we hope that public education can afford all of us, especially in communities of color. The good news is we are ready to resist and with our No Cuts campaign, we are demanding that we do not cut resources to public schools, but that we invest in schools and black and brown communities. This is not a moment to just think. We must do. It is not a moment to just be along. We must take action. I invite you to take action in a few ways. First, we have to build an army, an actual army of pro racial justice and pro public school advocates.

I invite you to visit our website, reclaimourschools/summer-2017 and sign the open letter to Betsy DeVos. This open letter condemns these cuts and calls on deep investment. I know, I know many people sign letters, but just like the folks who showed up in Boston yesterday, 40,000, it is important now more than ever that we show that there are more of us than there are of them. Then we want to make education part of the conversation over the recess break. Visit our website again. The information is on the slide before you. Reclaimourschools.org/summer2017 and see the questions to ask your representatives. Tell them to end education profiteering and the expansion of vouchers and then take action. Confront your congressional delegation and let them know that you care deeply about public schools and you will do whatever it takes to

make sure that we invest and not cut. This is our moment. Let us fight back and win. The future awaits. Thank you.

Mehrdad: Keron, thank you. Thank you to listeners for taking action on public education. I'm going to transition us quickly to talking about our last set of actions and demands, which is all about immigrant families and I want to welcome to the call Greisa Martinez. She is the director of advocacy and policy at United We Dream. Incredible set of freedom fighters that have done just some earth shattering work over the years. Greisa?

Greisa: Hi everyone. My name is Greisa Martinez Rosas. I am the daughter of [inaudible 00:51:36] and Elia Martinez. I am undocumented, unafraid, and here to say. I serve as the advocacy director for United We Dream, an immigrant youth-led network that [inaudible 00:51:47] working class people of color. For years now, 11 million undocumented people have been hunted down by ICE agents paid for by your tax dollars. They come into our homes [inaudible 00:52:01] deport us. They deported my dad nine years ago and my life has never been the same. Under Trump, the hunt has intensified. He has aggressively promoted racism and hate against immigrants and people of color. He has unleashed agents to carry out a white supremacist agenda that racially profiles us and now he's asking for a bigger budget to do more.

We are the [inaudible 00:52:26] of Charlottesville. We felt the pain [inaudible 00:52:32]. This is [inaudible 00:52:34] agenda is a white nationalist agenda and now me and about one million other people [inaudible 00:52:44] DACA and TPS. [inaudible 00:52:48] stands for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. This is a victory [inaudible 00:52:54] and one of the victories of our progressive movement. DACA means that me and about 800,000 young people are able to be protected from deportation, but we have the ability to work and we have the ability to live with more freedom. TPS is a temporary protective status program that protects 300,000 people from countries in crisis and it's similar to DACA. In 16 days, on September 5th Trump will [inaudible 00:53:23]

Mehrdad: Greisa, Greisa this is Mehrdad. Is it possible your call is breaking up a little bit? Is it possible for you to move to maybe better reception?

Greisa: Yes, thank you for that Mehrdad. I got really excited about the deadline that's coming up.

Mehrdad: I'm sorry I broke your mojo, but please go ahead.

Greisa: It's okay. In 16 days, on September 5, there will be a big deadline. Trump will have to decide whether he will keep DACA or not. Let me be clear, this means that on September 5th, white nationalists like Jeff Sessions and Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton want to end DACA and TPS and leave one million people like me vulnerable to deportation. We need you to join us and to defend DACA and TPS. If you believe that families belong together, if you believe that we should divest your tax dollars from ICE agents that hunt us down, if you believe that we must defend DACA and TPS, then you're a freedom fighter.

Freedom fighters, I need you to do two things tonight. One is text defend DACA to 877877. Defend DACA to 877877. Number two, I need you to join me and demand that your member of Congress say no to Trump's deportation budget and to keep DACA and TPS in place. They're telling me that they're not hearing from you. Let's prove them wrong. United We Dream worked together with Indivisible and NILC to put a guide together to help you stand with us. Visit standup.indivisibleguide.com for more information.

Sisters and brothers, I know that the days ahead you might feel disillusioned and alone, but I want you to know that you're not. I want to share some words from our sister June Jordan that keep me going. We have come to far, we won't turn around, we'll flood the streets with justice. We are freedom bound. Thank you.

Mehrdad: Oh, Greisa, thank you so much. I just got chills listening to you and I think, I really think of something that Tarso shared with us, especially reflecting about the story of your dad and I would hope that the thousands of people listening on this call that for folks who come for somebody, they have to go through all of us, and that's exactly how I feel and I think thousands of people listening to you on this call feel about immigrant families, especially since I'm an immigrant myself. Greisa, thank you so much to you. Thank you to United We Dream.

We are just about four minutes til the close of the call, so unfortunately we can't take questions, additional questions, but I do want to remind folks about very, very important resources. First of all, you've already heard about this, but resistancerecess.com. Again, this week and next through Labor Day members of Congress are home. Demand that they co-sponsor the resolution to censure Trump. There'll be additional resources that'll be posted at moveon.org/readytoresist and that'll include a recording of this call. We've had people online and through the phone system ask about how they can get a recording of the call. It will be available.

There's also something that our friends at the Women's March are doing. We know there's so many people, including white people, are taking action or wanting to take action against white supremacy, but are struggling to figure out what to do. Our friends at the Women's March with partners are hosting a week of community potlucks to bring together people to break bread, share tools, prepare to have daring discussions with those in our communities who have different political views from us. Remember, both Eric and Tarso asked us to show courage in the basic interactions that we have with people who may have different views than us. These community potlucks are a perfect chance for people to do that.

We're going to do our last poll for tonight. If you want to host a community potluck to bring together friends, loved ones, neighbors, please press one on your telephone or your computer keypad. If you want more information, press two. If you don't want to host a community potluck, press three. Once again, if you're interested in hosting one of these community potlucks hosted by our partners at the Women's March and many other organizations, again, press one if you want to host a community potluck. Press two if you want more information on hosting a potluck and press three if you're not interested in hosting a potluck.

To begin to close the call, those who study history say that it moves in small steps or waves and sometimes it moves in spasms. We're living through one of those spasms right now. We're being forced to face the ugly heritage of our great shared country. The forces of hatred see this as a great chance to spout their vitriol and get airtime for their divergent ideas. Just remember, there are more of us. Those who stand on the side of love have a rare and urgent opportunity to keep pushing our country into the light. That's exactly what we're doing on this call. I want to thank our sponsors, again, our sponsors for this call and to really push people into action, I'm going to read some of the powerful eulogy from Heather Heyer's mom, with apologies to her, of course, because I think it's just very poignant.

What she shared during the memorial service for Heather Heyer, her mom said, "You ask me what I can do and I want this to spread. I don't want this to die. This is just the beginning of her legacy. You need to find in your heart that small spark of accountability. What is there that I can do to make the world a better place. You poke that finger at yourself, like Heather would have done, and you make it happen. You take that extra step. Find a way to make a difference in the world and remember in your heart if you're not outraged, you're not paying attention. I want you to pay attention. Find what's wrong. Don't ignore it. Don't look the other way. Make a point to look at it. What can I do to make a difference? That's how you're going to make Heather Heyer's death worthwhile." This is what she said, "I'd rather have my child, but, by golly, if I have to give her up, we're going to make it count." That's it everyone. That's the close of the call. Let's go. Let's lead. Let's go make it count. Good night.

How did we do?



If you rate this transcript 3 or below, this agent will not work on your future orders