

Local non-profits and organizers know their communities—and know what they need in order to fight hunger and homelessness and violence in their local area.

I know some of you are about to move to a new community, each with its own unique historical context and social fabric. And just as many of you moved to Durham four years ago and adopted this city as your own, I hope you'll learn about your new home's past, present, and future. Find its changemakers and boundary-breakers. And bring your own unique gifts to the table, to engage in the real, tangible bettering of your community.

There is wisdom, strength, and power in community. You've learned that here at Duke. But don't forget it as you find and build community elsewhere.

Lead with Love

And third: When you feel lost in this tangled web of problems, know that in truth, the way out of it is simple. Instinctual, really.

It's **LOVE**. Love should be your North Star. Let it guide you.

Maybe this sounds more like song lyrics than a serious point. But I believe it with every fiber of my being.

Think about what it actually means to let yourself feel and show love for your neighbors.

It means being curious about their lives. Genuinely wanting the best for them. Investing in their success.

And once we recognize our interdependence—our mutuality—it's clear that love is precisely what our society needs: To take care of and look out for each other.

There are nearly 8 billion people on the planet: 8 billion strangers. What does it mean to love people we don't know?

It means letting go of fear and embracing our shared humanity.

Practically, it means things like ensuring everyone, everywhere, can access the coronavirus vaccines—because we know that until we're all vaccinated, we're all at risk.

It means ensuring everyone is safe from the worst consequences of the climate crisis—especially in communities already undermined, under resourced, and under water.

To paraphrase the indigenous Australian activist Lila Watson, love means that your liberation is bound up with mine—and mine with yours.

Professor Cornel West has a word for what this kind of love looks like in public. That word is justice. Love in public takes the shape of justice.

And I'll close with one final story about that.

It's about a man named Desmond Meade. He grew up in Miami, graduated from high school, and joined the army.

He served this country as a helicopter mechanic, dreaming of one day sailing the skies as a pilot. But along the way he struggled with a painful addiction. He was convicted of felony possession.

He served his time and came out committed to staying clean. But he reentered

attacks. We were called garbage, scum, fake news, the lowest form of humanity, enemies of the people, traitors to the country. We were subjected to endless acts of intimidation. They included assaults on our professional reputations, costly lawsuits, threats against our businesses. Journalists were harassed and physically menaced. Many required special security measures to protect them from personal harm. We were targets for no reason other than that we did the work the First Amendment calls us to do. We exposed what a president wanted to conceal, including abuses of power. 08:04 We pointed to a pattern of deceit and we would never yield to a president's bullying insistence on servility and sycophancy.

We were able to withstand this unprecedented assault on a free and independent press because the *Washington Post* was a strong institution. It had a heritage of practicing journalism of courage and credibility. All of us in that newsroom adhered to common values. They motivated us to get the truth and tell it. All of us work together with a shared sense of higher purpose. It is no exaggeration to say that over the years, journalistic institutions have contributed mightily to sustaining American democracy.

None of them was perfect. They made and make mistakes. Journalists suffer from being human, like professionals in any other field, and our institutions, like others, are flawed, but whether it was during the Watergate scandal that held the president to account or when the Pentagon papers were published exposing years of lying about the Vietnam War, or today while holding law enforcement responsible for wrongful arrests and deaths, the institutions of journalism have kept citizens better informed. They pressed this democracy of ours to stay true to its founding ideals. My purpose in saying all of this is not to focus entirely on journalism, though I believe its contributions to our communities and our country routinely are taken for granted. My purpose here is to talk about the need for strong institutions of all types and the need for all of you to make them stronger at a time when the temptation has been to tear them down.

Major institutions in this country over the decades have suffered a crisis of trust. The military and small business still inspire confidence, the medical system gained trust during the pandemic, but almost all others, religious institutions, police, Congress, the presidency, banks, technology companies, the press, even educational institutions have seen trust erode among the public. We can understand why. Many institutions have failed the public and those failings are fresh on our minds: abuses by police, court systems that treat the powerful gently and the weak harshly, technology companies that accumulate revenue but evade responsibility, financial speculators who escape accountability when their gambles bring an economy to its knees, a press that acts as if it knows all the answers before it has gone seeking them, politics that is more lousy performance art than serious problem-solving. We have been left with weakened institutions.

They need to be restored. They need your help. Only with your help can they become stronger and better. The past few years have highlighted the urgency of this task. We once had confidence that our country was different from others that had tried democracy and failed. Ours, we believed, had a sturdy foundation and strong,

didn't it? The issue here is not about whether to leave Afghanistan. The issue is Joe Biden's staggering incompetence and gross negligence. He doesn't know where the hell he is. You think, he's running the government? He's not running the government. Creating the greatest strategic humiliation that we've ever seen as a country. And it was something that we should've stopped and the general should have done something. They should have done something.

They should have talked to him and said, "Look, Commander in Chief," but you just couldn't have done that. If he had that evacuate... If he just moved the people out, he should have done it and he should have done it first. He had to have done it first. Sometimes in life decisions are made and when those decisions are made, if they're bad decisions, you've got to get away from them and you've got to get away from them fast. And if you don't get away from them, you're not going to have a country anymore. I said about elections, if we don't have great elections, if we don't have borders, if we don't have the things that are being taken away from us, we're not going to have a country anymore. And certainly, we're not going to have a respected country anymore. . . .

But with swelling in our hearts, the spirit of America is stirring ourselves. And I say these words to you, and you've heard these words before, in some cases many times before, we will make America powerful again. We will make America wealthy again. We will make America strong again. We will make America, despite what you're seeing today so sad and so pathetic, we will make America proud again. We will make America safe again. And you know what it is, we will make America great again. Thank you, Alabama. God bless you all. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Print Citations

CMS: Trump, Donald. "Rally Speech in Cullman, Alabama." Speech at Trump rally, Cullman, AL, August 22, 2021. In *The Reference Shelf: Representative American Speeches, 2020-2021*, edited by Micah L. Issitt, 41-48. Amenia, NY: Grey House Publishing, 2021.

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Congresswoman Testifies on America's Black Maternal Health Crisis

By Cori Bush

St. Louis, Missouri Congresswoman Cori Bush testified before Congress with regard to the specific challenges faced by black women in accessing healthcare and health services. Bush speaks about her own experience with reproductive health and provides information on why black women are disproportionately disadvantaged in the health-care system.

First of all, let me just say that I think it is disgusting that we have colleagues on this hearing who won't acknowledge Black women's suffering, that there are stark differences in our pain, but...

St. Louis and I thank you, Chairwoman Maloney and Congresswoman Kelly, for your leadership in convening this all-important hearing. It is an honor to join my sisters-in-service Congresswomen Pressley, Underwood, and Adams as part of today's panel.

I sit here before you as a mother, a single mother of two.

Zion, my eldest child was born at 23 weeks gestation, versus what is considered a normal pregnancy at 40 weeks. When I was early in my pregnancy with him, I didn't think there could even be a possibility that there could be a complication. I became sick during my pregnancy. I had hyperemesis gravidarum which was severe nausea and vomiting. I was constantly throwing up for the first 4 months of my pregnancy.

Around 5 months, I went to see my doctor for a routine prenatal visit. As I was sitting in the doctor's office, I noticed a picture on the wall that said: "If you feel like something is wrong, something is wrong. Tell your doctor."

I felt like something was wrong, so that's what I did. I told my doctor. I told her that I was having severe pains, and she said, "Oh no you're fine. You're fine. Go home and I'll see you next time."

So that's what I did. I went home.

One week later, I went into preterm labor. At 23 weeks my son was born. One pound, three ounces. His ears were still in his head, his eyes were still fused shut, his fingers were smaller than rice, and his skin was translucent. A Black baby, translucent skin—you could see his lungs. He could fit within the palm of my hand.

We were told he had a zero percent chance of life.

Delivered on May 6, 2021 to the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, US House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Mr. Blumenthal: Thanks Senator Blackburn. I call on Senator Cantwell.

Ms. Cantwell: Thank you Mr. Chairman, and thank you Ranking Member Blackburn for this hearing today and for your long standing work on this very important public policy area. I think it's very important to understand that our committee would like to move forward on stronger privacy legislation. And yesterday's hearing clearly crystallized that we need to update the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. And this hearing, I'm sure will put even more focus to the fact that we need to do that. I want to thank Senator Markey for his questioning yesterday. This month, *The Wall Street Journal* published a series of articles about Facebook and Instagram showing the management knew a great deal about the impacts of these products, the harm to children, the harm to teenagers, and in spite continued to bury that knowledge.

So as our colleges said, data collection of children is something that should have more aggressive attention. They should not have the products and services track and follow these young children and updating CAPA will be essential. As we said yesterday, the committee talked about also, first time privacy and data security violations. There was unanimous support for that. So it's very important that we continue to take steps on this issue. I agree that the safeguards in place are not enough and we need to do more. So I look forward to hearing from the witness today.

Mr. Blumenthal: Thank you, Senator Cantwell. Senator Wicker do you have any [crosstalk]?

Ms. Cantwell: Yeah, thank you Senator Blumenthal. And I'll be brief because we need to get to our witness. Facebook is one of a handful of Big Tech companies wielding immense power over our internet experiences. Using its market dominance, Facebook maintains unprecedented control over the vast flow of news, information and speech on the internet. To maintain a free, open, safe, and secure internet, many of us on this committee have long called for more transparency and accountability from Facebook and other social media platforms. Today, the content moderation and data collection practices of Big Tech remain largely hidden to consumers. Too often, Americans are left wondering why their own line posts have been deleted, demoted, demonetized or outright censored without a full explanation. Users also remain in the dark about what data is being collected about them, how it's being used and to whom it's being sold and for what purpose.

Recent reports from *The Wall Street Journal* may have shed new light on why Facebook's platform management practices have been kept from public view. This month, the journal revealed that Facebook's so-called crosscheck program reportedly exempts certain public figures from its terms of service and community standards. The journal also disclosed Facebook's own internal research documenting the harmful mental effects of the platform and its photo-sharing side effects on children and teens. Both of these reports are deeply troubling and only amplify concerns about Facebook's inconsistent enforcement of its content moderation policies and its disregard and wellbeing for children and teens. This morning, I hope Facebook will be forthcoming about its platform management practices and take this opportunity to address *The Wall Street Journal's* reports. I also hope Facebook will

When we met in April, we agreed to strengthen our efforts as we head to COP26 in Glasgow.

Today, I've called us together again to candidly assess our progress.

I'm grateful to those of you who've—who've strengthened your contributions under the Paris Climate Agreement and put forward ambitious targets for 2030.

And thanks to your leadership, countries representing more than half of the global GDP are committed to taking steps that will keep us within reach of our joint pursuit of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

But — but we know there's still a lot of work to do, and, if anything, our job has—in my view—has grown more urgent.

The countries representing the Major Economies Forum account for 80 percent of global emissions.

Without adequate commitments from every nation in this room, the goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees slips through our hands. And that's a disaster.

And here's what I believe we have to do right now and what we—we're advancing here in the United States: We have to bring to Glasgow—we have to bring to Glasgow our highest possible ambitions.

Those that have not yet done so, time is running out.

For our part, in America, I'm working to pass historic investment in—to modernize our more climate-resilient infrastructure, to build a clean energy future that creates millions of jobs and ushers in new industries of the future.

As part of this work, the United States has committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions between 50 and 52 percent below 2005 levels by the year 2030.

And, you know, we've set a goal that by [2035] our power sector will be with—free of carbon. And 2030, 50 percent of cars sold in the United States, we believe, should be and must be electric vehicles.

A further step we're working with the European Union and other partners to launch is a Global Methane Pledge to reduce global methane emissions by at least 30 percent below 2020 levels by 2030.

This will not only rapidly reduce the rate of global warming, but it will also produce a very valuable side benefit, like improving public health and agricultural output.

We're—we're mobilizing support to help developing countries that join and pledge to do something significant—pledge and seize this [vital] opportunity.

You know, we've already taken big steps domestically to tackle these emissions and create good-paying jobs, introduced by plugging leaks and capping abandoned wells and gas wells.

We believe the collective goal is both ambitious but realistic. And we urge you to join us in announcing this pledge at COP26.

Now, you know, we also have to make additional progress to support developing countries.

At the time, at the Leaders Summit in April, I announced the United States is working to double our climate finance, triple our support for adaptation by 2024 for developing nations.

The following year, Attorney General Loretta Lynch dedicated a commemorative plaque for the tree.

And today, I am humbled to have the honor of announcing the permanent installation of this plaque.

This plaque reminds us that the threat from foreign terrorists like those involved in the September 11 attack is one we must constantly guard against.

As I said yesterday, we rededicate ourselves at the Justice Department to doing all we can to protect the American people from terrorism in all its forms—whether originating from abroad or at home – and to doing so in a manner that is consistent with our values and the rule of law.

What we must do—what we have done—is to learn from the past to better anticipate and prepare for the next threat and to seek to disrupt it.

It is an awesome responsibility. But it is one that we undertake together, and that, in and of itself, gives us strength.

Thank you.

Print Citations

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