



Clergy Addressing Todd Rokita's Racist Remarks

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On behalf of Concerned Clergy of Indianapolis, Baptist Minister's Alliance, and National Action Network of Indiana, organizations who have advocated for civil rights in the community for more than 60 years, are sending a formal response to Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita concerning his offensive comments towards African Americans when responding to whether Black Lives Matter is a political movement.

Dr. Martin Luther King wrote in 1947 for the Morehouse College newspaper "***If we are not careful, our colleges will produce a group of close-minded, unscientific, illogical propagandists, consumed with immoral acts. Be careful, brethren! Be careful, teachers!***" Dr. King was against such comments made by Attorney General Rokita, who is trying to limit diversity, equity, and inclusion being a part of the education process in Indiana. The Attorney General does not comment on partisan textbooks which are used by the majority of School Systems in Indiana that often promote or hide systemic racism and white privilege. He also does not comment on the fact that it is his remarks and decisions, like this one, that are causing racial conflict.

It is extremely ironic for Attorney General Rokita and other legislators to believe that Black Lives Matter and any other organizations raising racial equity issues should not be part of the educational process. If that is their opinion, our faith-based organizations believe that events, such as Big Ten football, NFL Combine, NBA All-Star game should be moved from the City of Indianapolis. To have these sports that are made up of majority minorities to be coming to a State that is against Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is hypocritical. The message must be clear that if honest African American history and experience cannot be taught and included in our schools, then Indianapolis should not host events that are majorly dependent on Black athletes whose racial history and experience is not respected by state politicians.

Indiana education does not need to be seclusive, but it needs to be more inclusive. Dr. King said, "***To save man from the morass of propaganda, in my***



opinion, is one of the chief aims of education. Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction. We cannot run from information or limit information to all students in Indiana! We need to be more inclusive! Now is the time!!!

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