

## National Affairs by Claire Hoy ? Victimized because he's black?

I wasn't going to write about Colin Kaepernick. Ever.

But, with the National Football League season under way, and at the time of this writing, Kaepernick still not signed with any of the league's 32 teams, the papers last week were full of yet more stories about how the former quarterback is still being victimized because he's black.

The general tenor of the stories is that a) ? Kaepernick is better than some backup quarterbacks who are signed; b) ? he's being punished because he decided to take a knee during the National Anthem to protest what he says is widespread police brutality against blacks; and c) ? NFL owners are racists.

This common media theme doesn't just apply to the Kaepernick situation. Rarely does a day pass without seeing a story attacking police for their supposed racism or wringing collective hands over what some see as an epidemic of racism both here and in the United States.

Never mind that 70 per cent of NFL players are black. NFL white owners, we're told, are out-and-out racists, which is why none of them has signed our hero.

Never mind also that, even at his best, Kaepernick was a mediocre quarterback on a good team, and with the number of quarterbacks with NFL and top college experience still looking for jobs, it's surprising he'd be on the top of anybody's list.

Certainly some people are racists. And not just white people, incidentally. Look at those who marched in Charlottesville, Va., for example. Well, yes. But what is deliberately overlooked in the one-sided coverage of that event is that there were only about 500 of these racist idiots and they were widely outnumbered by people who saw them as they are and came out to protest their protest. What's more, the riots weren't just caused by the neo-Nazis, but were also provoked by the violent antifa groups, as well as Black Lives Matter, both of which have a real stake in promoting the notion that racist attitudes are more prevalent than ever in our society. When Trump pointed out this reality, alas, he was accused of being a Nazi. And so it goes.

Had these knuckleheads marched in Virginia, oh, maybe 25 or 30 years ago, they would have attracted a large adoring throng. Not now. In today's climate in North America ? although not everywhere in Africa and Asia ? racists are generally not tolerated, let alone celebrated as they once were.

There is an entire industry based on the assumption that racism ? specifically white racism ? is so endemic that even white racists don't recognize their affliction. The idea that by any objective standard, things have actually improved is an anathema to these people. All those who disagree must, by definition, be racists themselves.

Take the case of L'Oreal's first transgender model Munroe Bergdorf, fired after tweeting, in part: ?Honestly, I don't have the energy to talk about the racial violence of white people anymore. Yes, ALL white people.?

In case you read that as her saying ALL white people are racists ? which is clearly what she is saying ? Toronto Star columnist Shree Paradkar wants you to know you are wrong. Apparently, we're told, Bergdorf is talking about ?systemic racism? ? a favorite expression of activists who can't find real racists out there. Anyway, L'Oreal model Cheryl Cole, who is white, didn't get fired when she was involved in what a judge called an ?unpleasant piece of drunken violence,? i.e. beating up a black nightclub toilet attendant. For sure, that doesn't sound fair. But it doesn't mean Bergdorf didn't say what she said and shouldn't have expected some consequences.

Which, of course, brings us back to Kaepernick, a man so concerned with improving U.S. democracy that he didn't even bother to register to vote in the last election.

There exists, mainly on the left, a widespread notion that since people have the right to free speech, they are entitled to say whatever they want.

Yes, short of advocating violence against people or groups, they are entitled. But that doesn't mean there are no consequences.

And by the way, Kaepernick did have a job with the 49ers, but he opted out of his contract, hoping to get a better deal.

Had he gone out on the street to demonstrate his anger at what he likely genuinely sees as police bias against blacks, that would be one thing. But he didn't. Instead, he exploited his platform as an NFL player and opted to do what many Americans, blacks, whites and Hispanics, judging by the reaction, saw as an insult to their National Anthem and a slap at all those brave people who have defended their country through several wars.

As they say, ?play with the bull and you get the horn.? And that, dear hearts, applies equally to one and all.

