

John Gray, Harry Jackson, Darrell Scott, Alveda King Accused of Racial Betrayal Over Trump Meeting

Black pastors who met with President Donald Trump this week about criminal justice reform were accused of betraying their race, or “Uncle Tomming,” by other pastors.

Baltimore Pastor Jamal Bryant blasted the pastors in a video posted to Facebook.

“The role of the prophet is never to comfort the king,” Bryant said. “We live in a time where basketball players and rappers have more moral authority than preachers.”

He continued: “Preachers, when you all went around that table, and after you stopped uncle Tomming, and thanking him for the privilege to be there, did any of you ask him how it is that he has separated brown and black children and put them in cages like pit bulls?”

Bryant said he went to Greenville, South Carolina, where Gray’s Relentless Church is based, to speak with Gray, but Gray didn’t respond to Bryant’s request. Bryant said he also reached out to other attendees to ask them about their attendance.

Gray posted a video to Facebook explaining his decision to attend the summit.

In the video caption, he wrote:

Optics. It’s never about what it is. It’s about what it looks like. My wife told me “If you go, no one will hear what you say. They won’t understand why you’re there. And any good

that could come out of it will get lost in translation.” Wise words from a loving, discerning wife. I had not one thing to gain by being there. Not. One. But I asked the Lord when I was asked to be present in this initial meeting about potential prison reform-that could greatly end up benefitting many people who look just like me-Lord, Do you want me in that room? My first mind was no. The pain of so many is too real. The hurt. The isolation. The sense of disenfranchisement. The real hate that has bubbled to the surface of the national discourse. I myself have been vocal about my personal disagreements with key policy decisions of this administration. I have everything to lose. Credibility. Reputation. Every natural inclination says stay home. Don’t get played. But I did the one thing I can’t shake: I prayed again and asked God. Do you want me in that room? My attendance gives the answer. My heart was pure as was my motive and intention. But the pain of those who have been hurt is real. And I would be a dishonorable man not to acknowledge that. But I will honor what I believe was the mandate on my life to be there and available to God should He choose to give me voice. This post is in no way attempting to invalidate the visceral reaction of those who can’t imagine why I would be in the room. The question becomes who did Jesus turn away from? This said, I went to this meeting to listen. And I do pray for comprehensive prison reform so people can have the second chance they need. And I also understand the pain and questions. May my heart translate beyond the optics. (OH YEAH, the pastor who said the current president was the most pro-Black president ever WAS NOT ME-so get that STRAIGHT) love y’all.

Jackson gave a similar response to CBN News.

“What [Bryant] doesn’t understand is that you can’t be a prophet to the culture while you’re standing outside of the room,” Jackson said. “Many of the people who came into that meeting knew they would be misunderstood, disrespected, lied

on, talked about, but they came anyway because the needs of the people, especially returning citizens, are so important.

“I believe this is the greatest civil rights issue of our generation. The overcriminalization of minorities and what are we the church gonna advocate for? So, I’ve got more courage than to let Jamal Bryant’s opinion keep me from speaking to the most powerful person on Planet Earth. That’s how I see it,” Jackson said.

Other meeting attendees included Dr. Alveda King, Darrell Scott, “Choco” DeJesus and Van Moody.

*I feel bad for my colleagues who attended the Whitehouse meeting today with pure motives, being castigated and criticized by the very people they were there advocating for.
#NoSelloutsorTomsorCoonsintheRoom*

– Scott (@PastorDScott) August 2, 2018

Van Moody, founder and senior pastor of the Worship Center Christian Church in Birmingham, said, “Much has been made about my comments to President Trump yesterday about ‘caring for all people,’ as some individuals have incorrectly interpreted that statement to mean a blanket endorsement of everything he has done. That was not the intent of my statement.”

He continued: “I know that in many ways I’ve been vilified on social media. ... Much has been made about my comments to President Trump yesterday about ‘caring for all people,’ as some individuals have incorrectly interpreted that statement to mean a blanket endorsement of everything he has done. That was not the intent of my statement.

Moody credits his faith for his decision to attend the meeting.

“As believers, we’re called to be part of the solution, not

part of the problem. It transcends who might be in the White House,” Moody says.

But not all the feedback was negative.

I Agree, President @realDonaldTrump is the Most Pro-Black President in History. #PrisonReform

– Pastor Mark Burns (@pastormarkburns) Aug. 2, 2018