A Black Fed's Conflict: Deric Gilliard on Promoting Trump Administration Policies

[00:00:00] **Bob Gatty:** Hey guys. Thanks for joining lean to the Left. When Donald Trump campaigned for the presidency the second time around, he promised Black Americans he would be the best president for them since Abraham Lincoln.

[00:00:15] What's he done?

[00:00:16] He's fired thousands of career black federal employees along with others for no reason other than he wanted to.

[00:00:24] Incredibly many of those workers were from Red States, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee. He's canceled the Department of Education, which has supported programs aimed at helping all Americans gain the education they need to prosper in our country. He's attacked Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act an action that if eventually fully implemented will be devastating to millions of families who rely on those programs for their healthcare. He's ordered elimination of all diversity, [00:01:00] equity and inclusion, or DEI programs from the federal government, and many states and businesses are following suit. On and on. Most recently, he's scrubbing references to the horrors of slavery from the displays at the Smithsonian Institution. As if wiping out displays means slavery didn't happen. His tariffs are sending the cost of everything from food to toys skyrocketing on the false promise that Americans will eventually benefit.

[00:01:35] Can you imagine having to work for this guy? Our guest today did that. In fact, Deric Gillard, a black activist, retired in 2022 after 25 years in federal service, having worked under five presidents, including Trump and Biden. He's the author of The Longest Four Years of My Life, A View From the [00:02:00] Field by a Black Fed, which chronicles the highs and lows of what he calls the most controversial and disruptive presidency of the modern era.

[00:02:10] Deric, thanks so much for joining us on the Lead to the Left Podcast. I really appreciate it.

[00:02:16] **Deric Gilliard:** Great. Great to be here, Bob. Looking forward to it

[00:02:19] **Bob Gatty:** Now, tell us Deric, about what you did in the Trump administration and why it was the longest four years of your life.

[00:02:26] **Deric Gilliard:** Sure. And if I could start by saying why I was hired?

[00:02:31] Okay. I was hired actually in 1998. Okay. I was leaving Dr. King's organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, where I'd worked for four years as the National Communications Director when the Old Lion, Joseph Lowry, who gave the benediction at the end of Obama's first inauguration.

[00:02:51] He was retiring and it was clear the organization was not going to be what it had been. So I was looking for another [00:03:00] opportunity and the only one time in my life I'd applied to a newspaper ad and actually got a job

[00:03:07] **Bob Gatty:** and I was hired

[00:03:08] **Deric Gilliard:** by a white liberal nurse who was the political appointee over the US Department of Health and Human Services, region four, which is the eight Southeastern states.

[00:03:19] **Bob Gatty:** Okay.

[00:03:19] **Deric Gilliard:** And for health and human services. And she said, I want my office, my staff, to more accurately reflect the people we serve in the eight Southeastern states.

[00:03:30] **Bob Gatty:** Okay.

[00:03:30] **Deric Gilliard:** And of course, as bob from, North Carolina Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina.

[00:03:40] South Carolina. Oh my god. The crown jewel. South Carolina. Yeah, I live in South Carolina. There you go. That's the first of all the, as you. You mentioned in, in a sense the blackest region in the country.

[00:03:52] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah,

[00:03:52] **Deric Gilliard:** it's the country with the dire health disparities. It's called the stroke belt, for lots of reasons.

[00:03:59] It's [00:04:00] it's it very rural in many instances, this region. And and it's red. It's very red. Yeah. So I went to work then and stayed on as a public affairs advisor. So my job was several things. I was I wrote the news releases would write opinion pieces that we were trying to get placed.

[00:04:22] I wrote the public service announcements and I also did an internal newsletter, but I also was the point person for the organizations we worked with or supported. For example, the federally qualified health centers, which a lot of people in this country don't know supply primary healthcare for ... 40% of the primary healthcare in this country is delivered by these federally qualified health centers, and there are dozens in each state. And one of the things that they do is they give you this service on a sliding fee scale. If you don't make any money, you won't pay any money.

[00:04:59] But if you [00:05:00] make a little money, you pay a little bit. So I worked with those organizations. We would work with city managers and mayors and all types of people, Congress people. We didn't. Didn't get to do much with senators, but we worked closely at that time with congressionals, the House of Representatives.

[00:05:18] And that was largely what I did. And that role pretty much stayed the same through, 'cause I stayed through the Bush administration, the Obama administration, the Trump administration in the first two years of the Biden administration. So that's what I did for Trump. And, as, as well. Okay.

[00:05:36] All right. Did you, you worked actually for

[00:05:39] **Bob Gatty:** HHS though,

[00:05:39] **Deric Gilliard:** right? I did. I did. Yeah. So yeah, so I always worked for the political appointee, okay. Over the eight Southeastern states. And so there are like 14 agencies within HHS. A lot of people may not know, including the 800 pound gorilla as we called them, the CDC, the FDA, the NIH, [00:06:00] HRSA, which manages all the the health centers. So yeah. Okay. That's what I did. Yeah.

[00:06:05] **Bob Gatty:** Alright. So you had an opportunity to see firsthand the impact of, trump's policies on absolutely on people. And we were,

[00:06:14] **Deric Gilliard:** we were responsible for implementing them, and I saw firsthand the impact of them. And I would say that in my new book that you referenced the longest four years of my life of youth in the field by a black

Fed in the Trump administration that I detail dozens and dozens of examples of how his policies impacted people, particularly around like the Affordable Care Act. Which of course, he was, I won't say demon possessed, but he was obsessed with replacing and repealing, right? Yeah. Over 70 times in courts across the country. They tried to do that.

[00:06:54] Yeah. And so I talk about how that impacted families and communities, [00:07:00] particularly in, of course, focus on the eight southeastern states, but across the country. Talk about how his policies his lack of decisiveness and it's slow to make a decision on, on cOVID cost hundreds of thousands of lives.

[00:07:16] Yeah. Yeah. And particularly, certainly in big cities, but in the rural states it took longer to impact the rural states. Yeah. And then, some of his other, even some of his positions on immigration, because for us, we didn't separate the children from the parents at the border, but our responsibility were caring for those childrens at those UACs, those unaccompanied children centers.

[00:07:37] And our office actually had played a role in identifying and vetting some of those SIS centers that were later established. And we supported those centers in various ways. That was very painful to me because it reminded me too much of some of the times post [00:08:00] reconstruction.

[00:08:01] Thinking about chattel slavery, because I just thought that they were inhumanely treated. We all know that we need a better system around immigration and

[00:08:10] **Bob Gatty:** Oh, absolutely.

[00:08:11] **Deric Gilliard:** But the way we treat people still, I believe should be humane.

[00:08:15] **Bob Gatty:** Oh, it's inhumane. It really is. Now, I just have to ask you did, when you were doing this at for the section of HHS where you were working, did you have to defend, did you have to defend those policies of his?

[00:08:33] **Deric Gilliard:** So fortunately I did have to defend them in the sense that I was told to send this news release out. Yeah. Or to send this opinion piece out. And so I had to do it because even though I didn't believe frequently them to be telling the truth or to be earnest.

[00:08:53] And so that, that was my role. Now, I never had to stand in front of a microphone, uhhuh [00:09:00] and do that fortunately. That was good.

[00:09:01] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah, that

[00:09:02] **Deric Gilliard:** was good. And the reason was, to be perfectly honest, that was an administration that really held a very tight guard on who could say what. Rarely did we get to speak on behalf of the of the administration.

[00:09:16] And so more specifically, I should say, so I work for the Office of the secretary. So all of these regional, these 10 regional directors reported directly to the HHS secretary as appointees. But I will give you an example of something you'll find curious. Sure. So there was a North Georgia editor who I sent disseminated one of these messages about, and she wrote me back a very fury email and she said, look, this isn't true, and I know this isn't true. She said, I'm a Republican and I know this is hogwash and if you send this me any more of this garbage uhhuh, I'll put you into my spam and you'll never be able to send me [00:10:00] anything again.

[00:10:00] **Bob Gatty:** Okay?

[00:10:01] **Deric Gilliard:** And so I'll be honest. Working in five administrations, that's the first time that ever happened and it ha happened more than once in the Trump administration. Yeah.

[00:10:10] **Bob Gatty:** Did you, when you were working in the other administrations, and tick off for me please, the presidents that you worked for while we're at it.

[00:10:18] Sure. I

[00:10:18] **Deric Gilliard:** started with Clinton in 98 and then I worked through the Bush administration, the Obama administration. Trump first administration, and then through the first two years of the Biden administration, retiring in 2022.

[00:10:33] **Bob Gatty:** Okay.

[00:10:33] **Deric Gilliard:** Alright.

[00:10:34] **Bob Gatty:** When you were working in these other administrations, did you ever have to, did you ever feel uncomfortable about what you had to put out there for public consumption?

[00:10:44] **Deric Gilliard:** No, I can't say that. I did, certainly not to this level. And I disagreed with all five presidents I worked for sure. About something. Sure. And if you don't, you're, it's only human. Yeah. That right? Yeah, exactly. But nobody else. I'll have to say [00:11:00] honestly, this is the first president in my lifetime, certainly my adult lifetime, that I felt did not love this country, had no, I felt like where I disagreed with them all on policies for somewhere or another. I thought they all were trying to do what was best in their mind for this country. Sure. I don't see that here quite honestly.

[00:11:22] **Bob Gatty:** I don't know how you could okay. You mentioned the, cOVID situation. To what extent do you think Trump is culpable for the deaths of all those people who died from COVID?

[00:11:36] **Deric Gilliard:** I absolutely do. Number one he said for months and months it was just gonna disappear, right? Disappear, he did,

[00:11:44] **Bob Gatty:** yeah.

[00:11:44] **Deric Gilliard:** And he told people to inject. Themselves with Clorox.

[00:11:49] Yes. And so I, I think that he was. A very unserious leader at the time, we needed a Churchill, or at [00:12:00] least a John McCain. We needed somebody that would really say, this is gonna be a hell of a time for our country.

[00:12:06] **Bob Gatty:** Right. We're

[00:12:07] **Deric Gilliard:** gonna go through it, but we're gonna do it together. And this, these are the facts.

[00:12:11] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah.

[00:12:11] **Deric Gilliard:** And I'm leaning on the experts, but he, instead he shut the experts down. Yeah. And he didn't want them to tell the truth.

[00:12:18] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah. And

[00:12:19] **Deric Gilliard:** I think that yes, he is absolutely culpable. Yes. Project warp speed was a great success, but had it started when it should have, we'd have saved hundreds of thousands of lives.

[00:12:30] And so I chronicle, lots of people. I chronicle at least two or three, who made deathbed confessions that they didn't believe that this was real, because in, in part, they believed Donald Trump that this was not a serious disease. And so I think that he really yes, he owns this and, but you never see him take responsibility for anything?

[00:12:54] No, of

[00:12:55] **Bob Gatty:** course

[00:12:55] **Deric Gilliard:** not.

[00:12:56] **Bob Gatty:** Today I just read that RFK [00:13:00] Junior notified doctors that if they did not follow CDC guidelines regarding vaccines, including COVID vaccines, that they could be held liable financially. That's a threat. What do you think about that?

[00:13:19] **Deric Gilliard:** I. We have fallen so low, Bob, to the point that somebody who has not taken one class an epidemiology.

[00:13:28] **Bob Gatty:** Yep.

[00:13:29] **Deric Gilliard:** He has no formal background. No. As a doctor No. Or any, anything close? No. That he is leading our system and we know he's a COVID. He's a vaccine denier, right? He told us that and he made promises to people like the Republican senator from Louisiana to Kennedy that he was not going to disband the COVID task force, which he did, and then he replaced he, he reinstituted it, reconfigured it with all these [00:14:00] people who believe what he believes. Yeah. And so for, it's inconceivable that we would have this person at our helm. And but he's a loyalist, right? Yeah. And so that's why he is there.

[00:14:11] And it makes sense. It fits in. So I think that it's terrible. I think that they are muting, trying to mute all the scientists who have spent their lives doing this research and knowing what works and what doesn't.

[00:14:25] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah.

[00:14:26] **Deric Gilliard:** And so a real difference is a hundred years ago when we had the the last pandemic and I've seen a picture in New York City where people are stretched miles along, around the blocks to come get their shots. There was no, but we have created such a dis belief, a distrust, mistrust for our government now that people don't know what to believe and which is sad. Yeah. And a part of it is that because anybody can grab a microphone and call themselves a media [00:15:00] person with Sure.

[00:15:00] No training, no sense of

[00:15:02] **Bob Gatty:** Exactly. Yeah.

[00:15:03] **Deric Gilliard:** So those are that, those are the concerns I have there.

[00:15:06] **Bob Gatty:** Those legitimate concerns now. Let's move on to the firing of the federal workforce and what, and his killing off of the Department of Education and attacking Medicaid, the A CA Snap and more.

[00:15:23] Talk to me about that.

[00:15:25] **Deric Gilliard:** All of our bedrock institutions are safety nets as well, that we have depended on. I remember when I was at HHS and the Bush administration and my regional director and I went to Oxford, Mississippi to, for an event, and this was the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Medicare.

[00:15:45] When Medicare was instituted, a lot of people said, oh, it's a joke. It's not gonna work. It's not real. And now where would we be without Medicare? Oh, absolutely. Medicare is bedrock. It's like social security. Absolutely. To, to people. [00:16:00] And all of these are being threatened.

[00:16:01] All of these institutions and safety nets that we have are under great duress. And he says one thing. Does another, and if we read Project 2025, read the Cliff notes, you'll see that he is systematically going down, checking, following it one step after the other. Yes. Yes. Which he denied he even knew about.

[00:16:23] Absolutely. He didn't know, but he doesn't know about anything. Gotcha. Oh, I, he didn't know that Gislaine Maxwell was being moved to the, yeah. To the plush prison that she was being moved in. And the problem is I think that he is hurting everybody. And he's not just hurting Democrats, he's just not hurting liberals.

[00:16:43] He's not just hurting black and brown people. His policies are gonna hurt everybody. He,

[00:16:48] **Bob Gatty:** even the people that voted for him. Absolutely. And they're so freaking foolish. I

[00:16:54] **Deric Gilliard:** foolish. Yes. And so like for example, I'll tell you this. So like with our eight of [00:17:00] our seven, seven of our eight states when the Affordable Care Act passed Uhhuh in 2010, and then they said, look, we don't want nothing, anything to do with it because every state was supposed to expand Medicaid. That was the way it was designed. They said, if you wanna do that, you go into the state, you fight our insurance commissioner. 'cause most of them were no help at all. You set up the coalitions, you set up the whole processes, and those were called federally facilitated marketplaces. So of our eight states, only Kentucky said, look, we need the help. We'll take it. We're happy to get it. Sure. The rest of, we had to go in and fight the administrations, fight the governors fight the health insurance commissioners.

[00:17:42] Yeah.

[00:17:42] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah.

[00:17:42] **Deric Gilliard:** And that was that was the way that worked. And then, but for our region, I'll tell you this Bob, at the end of the day, our eight states of the 10 regions, we were responsible for coordinating the enrollment of just under 24% of the people in the entire [00:18:00] country. Wow. Wow.

[00:18:00] And we did that in these states that were totally averse because we were dealing with people who had never had access to health insurance before. So then for Trump to come in and his whole thing was to starve the Affordable Care Act, he forbid us. And we had always been out. In the regions.

[00:18:18] I spent a ton of time in Columbia. I spent a ton of time down in Spartanburg and all these other places, and they told us we could no longer be out supporting these coalitions that were providing the healthcare, the health insurance navigators, the federally facilitated marketplaces, all these places, we couldn't work with them the FQHCs anymore.

[00:18:40] So that was really crazy because it was still the law of the land. Yet they told us we couldn't be supportive of the law though. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And that's what's gonna happen again on steroids. Right now, because we're

expecting a minimum of 17 million people to lose their health insurance because any of the [00:19:00] subsidies are going to be taken away.

[00:19:01] And the network's gonna be narrower again, fewer providers.

[00:19:05] **Bob Gatty:** But of course, it doesn't take effect until after the midterm elections.

[00:19:09] **Deric Gilliard:** That's true. That's true. And so there

[00:19:11] **Bob Gatty:** is a good opportunity for the Democrats to, turn things around.

[00:19:16] **Deric Gilliard:** To turn things around if they can be, have a backbone and be beyond message.

[00:19:23] Right.

[00:19:23] **Bob Gatty:** And if they can overcome all this gerrymandering crap that,

[00:19:26] **Deric Gilliard:** that's true. Trump is

[00:19:27] **Bob Gatty:** pulling with Texas and other states.

[00:19:29] **Deric Gilliard:** Absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. I gotta give

[00:19:31] **Bob Gatty:** Newsom credit for doing what he's doing in California.

[00:19:34] **Deric Gilliard:** Yes. Yeah. I know that people, most of the people on this side of the country tend to not think very highly of him, but I tell you what he's doing something that nobody else has shown the courage to do. We'll see if people yeah, that's right. And I,

[00:19:48] **Bob Gatty:** I love the way he's trolling Trump too, on social media. Yes he is. And then pissing Trump off. No end. That's true. That's true.

[00:19:56] Anyway, I saw him today where there was a [00:20:00] picture of Newsom and a picture of Trump and it was a Newsom thing. And it was, make the President handsome again or something.

[00:20:09] Oh

[00:20:10] **Deric Gilliard:** man. You specifically mentioned Department of Education and for example, like one of the things that is at high risk heads pro, head start. So a lot of these kids, these poor kids, they may be inner city or they may be rural,

[00:20:27] **Bob Gatty:** right? But.

[00:20:27] **Deric Gilliard:** They're starting behind already. So if you can get them in the head, start and give them a good chance of being on an equal footing.

[00:20:36] But if you're gonna cut that, what you're doing ultimately is ensuring more children fail. More children are part of the prison. Yeah. Pipeline. We're, you're just setting us more people up to struggle. You're setting more people up to be on welfare. Yeah. To, to.

[00:20:54] And if the goal is to have people standing on their own feet and being [00:21:00] contributors to society why don't we make people, give people the tools to do that. And you're gonna, you're gonna cut all that out from people. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:21:11] **Bob Gatty:** Why do you think it is that he had such a I don't want to use a bad word that he had it in for the Affordable Care Act?

[00:21:19] I think a

[00:21:19] **Deric Gilliard:** lot of his, 'cause it was

[00:21:20] **Bob Gatty:** Obama.

[00:21:21] **Deric Gilliard:** It was, I think it was that was it. I, it's my, I think a lot of us started, do you remember the correspondence dinner that they have every year? Uhhuh, Uhhuh and Obama was kinda laughing at Trump and you could see Trump over there steaming because he pointed out that Trump was the father of the birther Right.

[00:21:38] Theory. He's not a real American. He wasn't born. So he poked a little fun at him. And I. Think this, and I guess I can say it on this show, I believe that 45 had a hard on to destroy Obama's legacy. I was going to

[00:21:52] **Bob Gatty:** use that. That's exactly the word.

[00:21:54] **Deric Gilliard:** Yeah. And I actually wrote it.

[00:21:56] There were people who didn't like that I wrote it, but I really, because he was [00:22:00] absolutely about doing that. Yeah. And do you know. The Congressman Joe Wilson, and I don't know which. Yeah. Uhhuh. So do you remember what Joe Wilson said? He says it's the politically correct thing to be against the black man in the White House.

[00:22:13] **Bob Gatty:** And

[00:22:13] **Deric Gilliard:** you remember that? McConnell said his goal was to make him a one term president. So I think there was this real. Push. Yeah. There was this real backlash against this black man being in the White House. Oh, I think so. This black family?

[00:22:28] **Bob Gatty:** I think so. And the fact that he was such a good president really pissed him off.

[00:22:32] Pissed Trump off. And the Republicans, I think Obama was a great president. I really do.

[00:22:37] **Deric Gilliard:** And you think about it, when he got in there, everything was gone to hell, right? Yeah. The banking industry for sure. The dotcom industry, the auto industry. Yep. And I have one of my relatives say, you let you get the country in as bad a shape as you can, and then you give it to a black man to bail it out.

[00:22:53] And so I think you're right. I think he did a great job. There's things I wish he would've pushed back on, like when they wouldn't let [00:23:00] him nominate the Supreme Court judge.

[00:23:02] **Bob Gatty:** The,

[00:23:02] **Deric Gilliard:** the justice. And so now you see where we are. Oh, yeah. But I understand that he had a lot on his shoulders being the first, and he would, he had to walk that squeaky clean line.

[00:23:13] Yeah. And I think he did it marvelously. Yeah, absolutely. I think so too. I think so too.

[00:23:18] **Bob Gatty:** Now you mentioned having worked for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. What do you, what do you think Dr. King would have to say about what's going on today in our country?

[00:23:30] **Deric Gilliard:** I think that he would be distraught because the hard fought gains of the. Early sixties, 64 Civil Rights Act of 64 Voting Rights Act of 65. In 1961, when the Freedom Riders came south to test that public transportation was, the new laws and their bus was fire bombed in Aniston and many of them were beaten. So these things are being rolled back.

[00:23:58] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah.

[00:23:58] **Deric Gilliard:** We are moving [00:24:00] into this autocracy that we have never seen in this country. Exactly. And I that he would be really turning in his grave actually, because, we are just listen, if you're not a white male, I, in my opinion, Bob, you are not you are an outcast in this country 'cause we know how this administration has victimized what it thinks about women and the leadership of this administration thinks about women, and we see what all Latinos are rapists and thieves, that Asian flu, the China virus, black run cities. Who's safe from that? And so we're seeing the clock being turned back before our very eyes, and we're also seeing these cities. I think that we could be well headed toward martial law.

[00:24:49] **Bob Gatty:** Oh, I think we could too. I'm really concerned about that what's going on in DC with the National Guard, and they're now talking about taking that to [00:25:00] Chicago and other Yeah. And other cities like that. And they just happen to be democratic cities too, don't they?

[00:25:05] **Deric Gilliard:** Democratic cities and black run cities. Yeah. Exactly. And I think there's this part of this is we're gonna keep these people in their place.

[00:25:13] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah. Okay. I wanted to ask you about. The difference between when you were working for Trump and then you were working for Biden, how was that different?

[00:25:29] **Deric Gilliard:** I think that, biden sought to try and restore all the things, or as many of the things as he could that trump had clawed back and taken away. For example the funding for the Affordable Care Act, the, all of the advertising dollars had been cut by two thirds. The navigators had been cut.

[00:25:51] In a similar fashion, the funding for these entities. And and despite that, quite honestly, during the Trump administration, [00:26:00] people still enrolled people because, it's hard to take something back from people after you give it to 'em and they find out how it benefits them. Yep. And so I, I think that is was one of the big things.

[00:26:12] For example, when of course COVID was still. Very much an issue when Biden took over. And I think that he he put a lot of funds in place to support families who, and it's, people like you and I, Joe, like during. The heart of COVID. I worked from home for a good year and a half. Almost exclusively. I was on a thousand Zoom calls, it seems five and six a day. Sure. And some of them were all about COVID I'd be on a call that. Dealt with the supply chain vaccination centers access to to, to those systems. All I did that two times a day, early in the morning and then afternoon, and then I'd have to file a report about it. But Biden [00:27:00] made sure, I think that people who didn't have the luxury of, working from home. People who cut hair, who park cars, who stock grocery stores, who worked in meat plant systems, processing cattle and cows and chickens.

[00:27:17] Those people who were in the migrant workers in our field, he, I think he tried to make sure that they had access to healthcare and vaccines and people who were mothers who, their choice was staying home with their children or going to work, single mothers. I think that so a lot of those things were put in place by him.

[00:27:37] I think they kept us floating and for that period of time. Yeah. Do you? And I think he did everything he could too. I don't think, I think he was honest about where we were right. With COVID and I think that he put every resource he had into into trying to make sure that was we had a, we have a chance to Right.

[00:27:57] To get through that.

[00:27:59] **Bob Gatty:** Okay. [00:28:00] Of the five presidents that you worked for, which one was the best and why?

[00:28:04] **Deric Gilliard:** I. I, I'll tell you this for me, as a public affairs person

[00:28:09] **Bob Gatty:** Yep.

[00:28:10] **Deric Gilliard:** And there's a lot of criticism of this guy, but around Katrina and the weapons of mass destruction, but Bush was really good to work

for because he had the true Republican perspective of, I really don't care how you get the job done, but get the job done. So he gave us a lot of leeway to Okay. To do what we did. So from a public affairs perspective he was good to work for. I. I really did. So I'll be honest, in the Clinton administration, I was figuring out which way was up. I was there the last two years, first time working in government, all these agencies, all these people that we had to work with.

[00:28:49] But certainly I thought. The Obama administration was the best. And I'll say that the Biden administration was really good too. It's probably equally good, but for me [00:29:00] personally to be able to work for the first black president. Sure. After working for Dr. King's organization, that must have

[00:29:04] **Bob Gatty:** been really proud.

[00:29:08] You must have been really proud to do that. I,

[00:29:10] **Deric Gilliard:** I, so I was so proud. Yeah. You must

[00:29:13] **Bob Gatty:** have been.

[00:29:13] **Deric Gilliard:** I really was. Was it, and this is another ironic thing it's worth mentioning, Bob, we, of the 10 regions in the country, we had the only all black regional staff. That supported the regional director, the political appointee.

[00:29:29] So yeah, it was really good for us to be able to implement this thing that seven presidents before had tried,

[00:29:36] **Bob Gatty:** right to

[00:29:36] **Deric Gilliard:** have universal healthcare. And this one got it through and for us to go do it and to do it in this region with the deepest vestiges of slavery and Jim Crow.

[00:29:45] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah.

[00:29:46] **Deric Gilliard:** And with seven Republican governors, it was.

[00:29:49] It was so special to do that, to be part of that, and then in, in a sense, and certainly he's not the total fulfillment of [00:30:00] it, but in a sense,

Obama's election was partial fulfillment of Dr. King's dream. To see that happen, that this country had gotten to the part place that we were able to do that.

[00:30:12] Yeah. And now then of course you have the retribution for that.

[00:30:16] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah. I didn't see that coming. I didn't, I should have, but I didn't see it coming. I didn't see, I didn't see America turning so far into hate and racial hate.

[00:30:32] Now, we've talked a lot about all this stuff that's happened. Let's talk about your book and some of the highlights in it.

[00:30:41] **Deric Gilliard:** Sure. Bob, I king's organization and basically the. My family's history, my father and his six brothers all served and their father's father. So I feel, and none of 'em said they had bunyons and so they couldn't serve for Right. Any reason like that. So I feel this country [00:31:00] is as much of mine as anybody, and I know absolutely it's that the wealth generated quite honestly, through and rice and some of these other things was largely due to slavery. Yeah. And the importation of people who never will get back what they invested in this country. So I write from those perspectives. And like I said, I really focus on how families and people were impacted by Trump's policies. In fact, I started documenting from day one because we had a I'll give you an example.

[00:31:37] We had. And this is a difference between his administration and every other administration I worked for, of the 10 regional directors across the country, every other time at least half of them were women. Okay. Usually six and seven of the regional directors were women. Okay. And the Trump administration.

[00:31:56] The first one, only one woman. And it was for [00:32:00] our region. She actually was a North Carolina congresswoman named Renee Elmers. And she was a Trump attack dog. In other words, she was viciously, she was vehemently against the Affordable Care Act and very articulate, and she could tell you why she was a former nurse.

[00:32:19] Now, I liked her personally. Had a great relationship with her. Of course, I disagreed with her about that, but. It wasn't my job. My job was to make whoever I worked for look good. And put and to put forward their policies as convincingly and as earnestly as I could. And but she was the only one, and she didn't stay long because she kept talking about how she'd be in the

meetings with the other nine and their leadership and they kept, they kept mansplaining on her and wouldn't listen to her and wouldn't give her a voice. And she was actually the most she came in with probably the best doc, the most established resume.

[00:32:58] She was the only one that was a former [00:33:00] congresswoman. And she'd worked with Tom Price, who was the first HHS secretary. So she ended up leaving. And the crazy thing about it that was a real difference, Bob, is that even though she was a former congresswoman. Close to Trump, they would not let her have a media stage.

[00:33:16] They would not give her an opportunity to talk to media.

[00:33:19] **Bob Gatty:** Right.

[00:33:19] **Deric Gilliard:** And it, so not only did they didn't trust us, but they didn't trust her. And that's why soon. And one of the things that she really. Pushed and she wanted them to engage in was telehealth. Okay. When she first got there and we saw how important telehealth became.

[00:33:36] Sure. As COVID got, we got deeper and deeper into COVID, and one of the big issues was all of these sick and elderly and vulnerable people wouldn't come in. To get their checkups wouldn't come in to see the doctor because they were afraid of getting around people that would catch COVID and take them out.

[00:33:53] And so we were behind. We could have been a year earlier on. Telehealth had they listened to [00:34:00] her and explored that instead of just shutting her down. So that was a real difference with the Trump administration.

[00:34:07] **Bob Gatty:** Okay. Listen, it's, Derek, it's been a pleasure talking to you. And, you've had a great career, man. You really have. So I thank you for joining us on our little show here. I do appreciate it. I appreciate

[00:34:19] **Deric Gilliard:** that. One other thing I should tell you that I talk about and really focus on.

[00:34:23] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah.

[00:34:24] **Deric Gilliard:** So the, trump really went after the justice marches, right?

[00:34:28] He wanted to make them about patriotism and the flag, right? You know what he told? He tell he, he and Laura Ingram said, just shut. He told LeBron just shut up and dribble, right? And he told Jerry Jones, the Dallas Cowboys president, he, he told him to fire those sons of bitches, right? But in reality, it was about over policing, usually of unarmed black and brown men.

[00:34:52] And we know, we saw George Floyd executed in public daylight, right? Yeah. Arm Maud Arbery was really did, chased [00:35:00] down and like he was an escaped slave. I know what I'm saying. And so America got to see these things in broad daylight. And so I talk about how he was the most divisive president, certainly in our lifetimes.

[00:35:15] And so he but people. When things changed in the sixties, white people came and became part of the movement for change. And that's what happened during that period of time. Yeah, it just didn't last. And so I do a lot of critique of that as well. And so people can get my, but if they just Google my name.

[00:35:35] Okay. It'll take them and they'll learn a lot. Okay. See other things I've done, go to my website www.dericgilliam.com Okay. And you'll find out about my first book.

[00:35:46] **Bob Gatty:** Okay. Yeah, I was gonna mention that. Living in the Shadows of a Legend, Heroes and Sheroes who Marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

[00:35:55] **Deric Gilliard:** And they're white, they're black, they're young. They're old from all over the country, right? And they're [00:36:00] either. People who worked on his staff. Yeah. Or people in these towns and communities where he sent his people to support these movements towards justice equality. The Civil Rights Act of 64. The Voting Rights Act of 65.

[00:36:16] **Bob Gatty:** Okay. Your books are available on Amazon.

[00:36:19] Right.

[00:36:20] **Deric Gilliard:** Yes, they are particularly the new one. Okay, the first one the first one they may have to get from me to go to my website. Okay.

[00:36:27] **Bob Gatty:** But I will tell you that you guys that are watching and listening to this in the show notes for this episode, I will have a link, a direct link to Amazon for his new book.

[00:36:38] And so if you want it, you can just click on that link. It'll be easy. Oh, and the other thing too Derek you're the first that I've told this to, but I am planning on all the authors that I interview. I am going to have a book club on my website. Awesome. And everyone will have [00:37:00] their a picture of their book a little description of it a link to purchase it.

[00:37:06] And it'll be all under my lean to the left.net website. And at the top it says Book Club Now. You can go there now, but you're not gonna see anything except for my book. But 'cause this is a big data project to get done. I've interviewed, I don't know. Over a hundred authors. Wow. And I want to get everybody's book on there.

[00:37:30] And it's just a goal I have. And I don't really know why I want to do it, but I do. So anyway, you're gonna be there. You be there, friend, everybody.

[00:37:40] **Deric Gilliard:** Thank you. Thank you Bob, for everybody, and thanks to your audience.