



**TAKING TUESDAY IN STRIDE:  
WAKING UP WEDNESDAY STILL IN STRUGGLE**

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**DR. MAULANA KARENGA**

**A**S WE WAIT FOR THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE 2020 election, I refer us to the article I wrote in 2016 under similar circumstances. And the point remains, whatever happens, the struggle will and must continue. No matter how things go down Tuesday night, we must wake up Wednesday morning still in struggle and reaffirm without unrealistic hope or paralyzing horror, that there is still much to do and it is up to us to do it. For indeed, as we always said, *the time is now, there is no other; struggle is the way forward, there is no alternative; and we are the ones, there's no avoiding it.*

Even after the elections, after all the Wednesday morning confessions of things not done, seen, felt or finished, and after all the corrections and correctives for lies told and damages done, and no matter who wins or loses, there will still be a compelling and continuing need to struggle. For an election in itself is not, for us and the masses of disempowered people of the country and the world, a freeway, highway, back road or path to power. The power of the office goes to the elite endorsed, elected and put in power by the masses who aren't always aware of their own power and their right and responsibility to hold their self-defined representatives accountable.

Elections always leave so much still to be done, issues to be addressed, betrayals to be thwarted and agendas promised to be pursued with vigilance and tenacity. Therefore, if we assess what is really at stake, we know the election is just one battleground among many, because as Paul Robeson reminds us, "the battlefield is everywhere" and Malcolm X reaffirms that wherever Black people are, it is a battleground and "whether we are in the north or south, east or west, you and I are living in a country that is a battleline for all of us".

We still must secure food for the hungry, housing for the homeless, affordable healthcare for all, economic security, security of person, an end of police violence and massive incarceration, and as always we must secure freedom for the oppressed, justice for the wronged and injured, power of the people over their destiny and daily

lives, and a just and lasting peace for the world. So let's be honest about ourselves and our situation, and not get caught up with those who might celebrate and those who might mourn, but see ourselves as we are since we have been here—a moral and social vanguard whose struggle has not only expanded the realm of freedom in this country, but also reordered how people think about freedom and justice.

We've been through it all with Obama and know that even if Hillary (or Biden now) wins, the strength of any election is the effective and continuous participation of the people in struggle to hold elected officials accountable; to demonstrate continuously active concern for the quality, direction and future of their lives, as well as and always, consideration for the well-being of the world. Everyone knows that Black participation is and will continue to be critical to a Democratic victory, that is to say, to Hillary Clinton's victory. Indeed, the whole world is hoping we'll step in and once again stem the tide. But if she wins, the media and the pundits will not give us credit, just like they would not give us credit for being decisive and indispensable to the election of Obama. And if she loses, they are revving up to claim it was all our fault, but we know who we are and what we've done and do, and we do not need the nightly news or talk show panelists to inform us of our history, current conditions or future possibility. And we certainly know the difference between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump.

Such talk about voting and voting turnout does not deal adequately or at all with the various efforts and actions of those who have used various efforts and actions to suppress our vote. They have tried every angle, trick and scheme to deny us our democratic right to choose, to speak, and to vote. They have reduced the number of polling booths; filed legal challenges to disqualify voters; required and rejected IDs; engaged in racial redistricting; employed police and vigilantes to intimidate Blacks and other peoples of color at the polls, but still, even in early voting, Blacks and others have defied them and dared to vote. Whether this and all the other progressives voting

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can win the election is another question. But in any case, we have to struggle; indeed, refusal to act is not an option in such a critical situation. For again, our vote is not for a candidate, but for our people, for our history of struggle and a different and more dignity-affirming and life-enhancing world.

When all this is over, we must get back to the hard and difficult questions that must be raised and answered, not only about elections, but about this country and the people in it, and what kind of lives we want to live and how much will we sacrifice and struggle to achieve these goals. But let's try to be honest and truthful. Let's not talk superficially or insincerely about morality in politics or things like integrity, courage of convictions, and all the other virtues by which we measure and admire men and women, if we do not mean it. History will certainly remember with deservedly harsh judgment those who were silent in the face of a long train of events by which Trump and his Trumpites and Trumpeteers, open and undercover, brought us to this place, teetering at the abyss.

Let's be honest about who Trump is. He is the monster side of America and every monster is one that a society creates from within itself, whether it imagines it or gives birth to it. It creates it by how it acts and treats, not only its own vulnerable people, but also the peoples of the world. America, especially White America, must ask itself, whether Trump wins or not, how could he have come so far without a substantial amount of Americans feeling what he feels, supporting what he feels and promises to do. How could we have come so far if they had not decided to support him regardless his racism, sexism, mockery of the disabled, his hatemongering against Muslims, immigrants and refugees, his interlaced and endless

lies, his promise to build an apartheid wall, to torture suspected "terrorists" and kill their whole family, imprison his opponent(s) and to make war without restraint. If Trump is elected, those who supported him deserve what he will bring and it will not be the fantasies he has fed them.

So, regardless of the outcome of this election, we must reassert our historical initiative and reaffirm our self-conception as a social and moral vanguard whose ethical mission and rebuilt Movement is world-encompassing and ongoing. It is a millennia-old mission which reaches back before presidential elections and this country and will continue and gain even greater urgency and importance in the difficult and demanding years and struggles to come. It is found in the ancient sacred texts of our ancestors which call on us to seek and speak truth, do and demand justice and constantly repair, renew and reconstruct the world, making it more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it. And there is no special day, decade, season or situation in which to do this.

**I**NDEED, THIS TASK IS REAFFIRMED IN MORE recent times by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune's reminder that "we must remake the world" and Dr. Anna Julia Cooper's "stand on the solidarity of humanity, the oneness of life and the unnaturalness...of all forms of favoritism" and oppression. And it calls to mind Min. Malcolm X's teaching that there is no substitute for historical grounding, cultural revolution, a deeply reflective "journey to our rediscovery of ourselves" and a sustained liberating self-practice and social movement that radically transforms us, society and the world. So, let us set aside all illusions, keep the faith, hold the line and increase and continuously advance the struggle.

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