



**BLACK PEOPLE, BESIEGED PALESTINE AND RAMPAGING ISRAEL:  
RIGHTFULLY RESISTING THE RADICAL EVIL OF GENOCIDE**

*Los Angeles Sentinel, 11-02-23, p. C-1*

**DR. MAULANA KARENGA**

**S**URELY IN THESE TIMES IN WHICH THERE IS complicit silence and active support for the radical evil of genocide waged through war by Israel and aided by the U.S. against the Palestinian People in Gaza, we, as a people, must find ourselves firmly and rightly in the ranks of the international resistance to it. Announcing their genocidal intentions towards the Palestinians of Gaza, the prime minister, as well as other leaders of Israel, have declared openly and aggressively their intent to wage a war without restraint on the people they have called “human animals”. Indeed, the prime minister recently used his sacred text to underwrite his evil intentions, recounting a biblical narrative of a previous genocide, saying, “You must remember what Amalek has done to you, says our Holy Bible. 1 Samuel 15:3 ‘Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and asses’ ”.

Since the October 7<sup>th</sup> attack by a unit of the military wing of Hamas on Israeli soldiers and civilians, Israel has declared and waged a total war on the Palestinian People of Gaza, bombing relentlessly and mercilessly without discriminating between civilian and soldier, killing at this writing over 8,000 Palestinians, mostly children and women and reducing to rubble structures and objects of every kind. And in spite of the propagandistic pretense of just targeting Hamas fighters this is definitively disproved by the saturated and indiscriminate bombing of homes, hospitals and entire residential areas; schools and universities, mosques, churches and marketplaces; water and power systems; refugee camps and roads and routes of escape from the carnage; ambulances and other emergency vehicles;

UN service and sanctuary sites, leaving no person or place safe, sound and untouched. In a word, the Israelis are waging a total war which by UN and any moral definition is a genocidal war.

Surely, in the monstrous face of such massive destruction of human life and the conditions and capacity for life and the radical evil this represents we are morally obligated to condemn and resist it. We are called to affirmation and resistance by both history and heaven, that is to say, by essential lessons learned and gleaned from our lives and struggles and foundational moral mandates of our various faiths. Certainly our centuries of suffering, oppression and resistance have cultivated in us a deep and enduring commitment to an indivisible freedom, an inclusive justice and equal human rights for everyone everywhere and all the time.

Our history calls on us to remember and emulate Nana Harriet Tubman who refused to embrace an imaginary safety of individual escape and affirmed the indivisibility of freedom. It calls on us to remember and emulate Nana Haji Malcolm who opened space for our building solidarity in struggle with the Palestinian People in the radically transformative decade of the 60s linking our struggle with the oppressed and struggling peoples of color in the world. Likewise, we are called by our history to remember and emulate Nana Dr. Martin Luther King who rejected the betrayal of silence, the morality of convenience and the narrowness of the field of moral vision and concern during the Vietnam war. And we are also called by our history to remember and emulate Nana Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune who taught us that we are a world-encompassing world-concerned people and “our task is to remake the world. It is

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nothing less than this”, a world of shared freedom, justice and other human goods.

Clearly, the moral mandates of our various faiths urge us to seek and speak truth, to do and demand justice, and especially to be concerned with and care for the most vulnerable among us. Indeed, our various sacred texts teach and tell us that a definitive measure and mirror of our morality is how we treat the different and vulnerable. Surely it is written in the Bible that we will be judged worthy by how we treat the “least among us”, the poor, the stranger, the hungry and thirsty, the ill and the prisoner. And we are asked in the Qur’an how can we not fight for “those oppressed men, women and children who cry out” rescue us from our oppressors and give us a protector and helper. And we are morally obligated by the Husia “to bear witness to truth and set the scales of justice in their proper place among those who have no voice”, the voiceless, the devalued, disempowered, dispossessed, different and vulnerable.

But if we are to audaciously, effectively and rightfully stand in solidarity with the Palestinian People in this particular historical moment of unfolding genocide against them, we must reject the oceans of misinformation, and disinformation peddled and pushed. Indeed, as we teach, one of the greatest powers on earth is the power to define reality and make others accept it even when it’s to their disadvantage and contributes to their oppression and the oppression of others. One of the most difficult problems faced by many of our people is the conflation of ancient Israel which they see as a moral ideal and modern Israel which is designated an apartheid state by UN experts, international human rights organizations, and former victims of apartheid in pre-liberation South Africa. Here we have to determine our support of any state, government, people or person by what they do, how they treat other persons and peoples,

especially as our sacred texts tell us, how they treat the least among us, the vulnerable, different and oppressed. In this regard, it is also important that we don’t find ourselves giving equal or greater moral status to the oppressor than the oppressed, the robber than the robbed, the colonizer than the colonized, the occupier than the occupied. As Haji Malcolm taught, if we are not careful “they’ll have us hating the oppressed and loving the oppressor”.

In addition, if we are a moral people and moral persons, we cannot give anyone, even a relative or friend and certainly not a wrongdoer or oppressor, immunity from criticism or accountability. The American president has given Israel and its government immunity from criticism and accountability, given them diplomatic cover, political and military support, and special money for an unjust and genocidal war better used for the poor, housing, health care, education and other needs of the American people. Indeed, in addition to the annual nearly \$4 billion given to Israel, he has asked for \$14 billion more for the indiscriminate bombing and killing,

Certainly, we also cannot practice the selective morality of Biden, Netanyahu and their crime partners in their awesome crimes against the Palestinian People and against humanity. We can’t be outraged by the killing of civilians in one place and of one color and culture and then be morally and emotionally numb and non-caring for civilians killed in much greater numbers and in more numerous places. Nor can we accept Israel and the U.S. government’s single answer for their extensive and ongoing massive atrocities against Palestinian children, women and men. No one doubts or denies Israel’s right to self-defense, but also we also reaffirm equal rights for Palestinians and everyone else in the world, including ourselves and our right of resistance.

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**M**OREOVER, WE QUESTION ISRAEL'S and America's claims, as Nana Fannie Lou Hamer taught us, the lies, half-truths, the racial and political aspects of this all-purpose claim of self-defense. Thus, we cannot begin and end at October 7<sup>th</sup>, rather we must ask about the Nakba (The Catastrophe) that happened in 1948, which the Israeli government officials declared they will create again and in worst ways. We must ask about the systemic and apartheid violence of the siege before the recent total siege, and we must ask how does killing en masse the Palestinian People who did not commit the attack on October 7<sup>th</sup> count as self-defense?

Finally, as Haji Malcolm taught, "one of the most important things we can do today is to think for ourselves". Indeed, as we say, our oppressor cannot be our teacher and our allies cannot be our tutor. The oppressor will always exonerate themselves and blame the oppressed and they will always get their god to underwrite their oppression, teaching a divinely ordained dominance and manifest destiny. And as Nana Frederick Douglass teaches us, they will oppress us until we righteously and relentlessly resist. For he says, "power concedes nothing without demand. It never did and it never will".▲

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