UNDISCUSS DIMENSIONS OF MASS KILLINGS:
TRANSFORMING A PROFOUNDLY SICK SOCIETY
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PART 2. THE RECENT OPEN ADMISSION
and general concession that the pretend-
ing president is a racist came with much
reluctance and continuing reservation. For
even with all his mean-spirited and harmful
practices, and his garbage pitching and ped-
dling, Trump is seen as serving White, corpo-
rate and Christian right-wing interests. In-
deed, he is protected and promoted as the
biblical King Cyrus, vice-ridden and vulgarly
flawed but useful. Also, by some millenary
evangelicals, he is seen as a god-sent bibi-
cal-like savior in a time of trouble and com-
ing chaos. And for others, he represents a
breath of strangely invigorating stale air
reeking with the stench of an unadorned and
undisguised racism, so cherished and cham-
pioned by White supremacists.

So, yes racism, as personal and social
sickness, resides in high and low places in
American society, in both secular and self-
described sacred spaces. And yes, the pre-
tending president is a racist and thus sick too
with his White supremacist language and de-
clusions of “invasions,” “infestations,” phobi-
as of all kinds and his lying as a way of life.
But who elected him when he gleefully and
openly expressed and exhibited the addiction,
not only to racism, sexism, classism, ableism,
homophobia, xenophobia, and almost reli-
gious commitment to capitalism and milita-

And even after the election, who in se-
cret, silent or open ways supports and enables
him? Let’s face it; it is difficult for any soci-
ety to concede its sickness. And it is even
more difficult for a society so proud of itself,
its wealth and weapons, its technology and
self-deceptive talk of freedom, democracy
and defense of its people; its triumphalism,
exceptionalism, chosen-peopleism, consum-
erism and its self-declared capacity to oblite-
rate its real, imagined and conveniently in-
vented enemies.

It’s easier to call other societies sick,
for example, Nazi and fascist societies, or
developing societies, condemning them for
the gaping holes American imperialism and
its allies brutally bombed in them and merci-
lessly dug in them to extract material and
human resources. Here we see it is not only
about gun violence in America, but about
violence on every level of life and all over
the world.

It is a common psychological contention
that pathology is to be defined in terms of
how individuals function in a given society,
how they fit, adjust, cope and concede. But
what if the whole society has problems?
Sanity would dictate or at least encourage
and support righteous and relentless re-
sistance to change the society, not only to
cure it of its illness, but also to open up new
horizons for human freedom and flourishing.

The psychologist, Na’im Akbar, intro-
duces us to the concept of “democratic sani-
ty,” a questionable process and condition in
which sanity is determined by the consensus
of the majority, regardless of objective evi-
dence to the contrary. In other words, the
shared views and values of the majority de-
termines mental health, even if they, them-
selves, are insane, unsane, unhinged and in
direct need of help. The psychiatrist, Alvin
Poussaint, tells us, that this is the problematic
position the American Psychological Associa-
tion took when decades ago a group of
Black psychologists argued for racism to be
put on its index of mental disorders in its Di-
agnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental
Disorders.

In a word, he says, they saw racism as
“normative - a cultural problem rather than
an indication of psycho-pathology.” And he
rightly argues that this position lends legiti-
macy to racism when it is posed as norma-
tive, rather than a mental disorder and for this
essay, also a social disorder, given the link
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It’s about facing the fact that racists can be and are both sick and those who must be held responsible for harm and killings they commit.

And it’s about U.S. society’s recognizing and responding psychologically and socially in the most transformative sense to the fact that in spite of the hymns, banners and bugle-blowing about “America the beautiful and the great,” there are immigrant cages for children of color cruelly separated from their families at the border; Black children and young men and women falsely charged, caged and killed, victims of a truly criminal justice system and of police abuse and violence in the cities. And there are torture chambers at Guantanamo, American war, warmongering and military bases around the world on which trillions are spent, and yet inadequate budgets for education, housing, healthcare, and other necessities “to establish justice” and “promote the general welfare.” In a word, society is deeply implicated and involved in the racism and White supremacy that cages, cripples, disadvantages, disables and destroys in numerous ways.

AND THUS, IT IS NOT ONLY THE ILLNESS of a few, but also the illness and oppression of society that must be treated and eliminated in righteous and relentless struggle at every level of society and social life. With such a comprehensive conception of the problem, we can focus on one or many things for immediacy. But we must never forget or fail to act on the fundamental principle of an urgent need to radically transform this society, creating for everyone a post-imperial, post-oppression life, indeed, a new history and expansive promise for ourselves and humankind.

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