



**AFRICAN LIBERATION, SOUTH AFRICA, PALESTINE AND US:  
SOME NOTES ON RADICALLY REORDERING THE WORLD**

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**DR. MAULANA KARENGA**

**A**S WE CELEBRATE THIS YEAR'S AFRICAN Liberation Day (May 25), it is important to note that we are passing through a pivotal and powerful moment in African and human history. And the central sites for this time of radical turning are in Palestine, South Africa, in this country and on countless campuses and elsewhere around the world. And we as African peoples are linked to it in various ways as allies in struggle and as midwives and co-makers of a new unfolding history, not only for Palestine and the Palestinian people, but also for us and indeed, for the world. For the issues raised and struggled over are issues critical to creating just and free societies and the good and sustainable world we all want, struggle for and deserve. This pivotal struggle around Palestine unites the progressive and radical forces in the world around issues of the right to life, freedom, justice, security of person and people, and the right to all the material and other conditions and capacities essential to life.

And it raises the question of whether we are going to have a rule and law governed international order or continue deference to the racial and religious myths and practices of Whites as the elite, the chosen, the superior and divinely anointed to rule, ruin and ravage the lives and lands of the majority others, amorally considered Amaleks and less. Surely, in our ethical and spiritual texts and teachings, we are taught by our honored ancestors in the *Odu Ifa* that all humans are divinely chosen. And they are chosen, not over and against anyone, but rather chosen with everyone to bring good into the world. And this, the sacred texts teach us, is the fundamental mission and meaning of human life, to bring a shared and inclusive good in the world, for the world and all in it. For the greatest goods are shared goods: the good of

life and love, of family and community, of freedom and justice, of peace and prosperity, of health and happiness and of the well-being of the world and all in it.

As we contemplate this unfolding reordering of the world, let us pay rightful recognition and praise to the Palestinian people for their incredible resilience, their radical refusal to be defeated and their righteous resistance in every way possible, eventually exposing the systemic savagery of the occupation, siege and now open genocide by Israel and its crime partners, and winning new allies in resistance. Let us also recognize and praise the consistent reciprocal support of Palestine liberation and audacious legal and political initiatives of South Africa under the leadership of the highly competent and deeply committed Foreign Minister, Naledi Pandor. Indeed, South Africa added a new dimension to this international struggle, dared against all threats to charge Israel with genocide at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), win a decision of "plausible" commission of genocide and return to win another ruling to order Israel to stop its genocidal attack against Gaza in Rafah Palestine. And in this regard, let us also raise and praise former International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda of Gambia for opening this path to prosecution of European powers including the U.S. and later Israel for war crimes and crimes against humanity directed against the Palestinian people when others, even the current Prosecutor Karim Khan first bowed to pressure. Even before it was revealed that Israeli former head of Mossad (its version of the CIA) repeatedly pressured and threatened her, she continued with audacious defiance to open a formal investigation into the issues.

In this country, let us praise also African Americans who from the very beginning supported the Palestinian liberation struggle and

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know its larger meaning for us and all oppressed and struggling people. Here, let us give rightful praise to the Nation of Islam and its leader, Nana Hon. Elijah Muhammad, who built alliances, employed Palestinian teachers and taught the unity and struggle of the dark peoples of the world. Clearly, central to these initiatives was Nana Haji Malcolm who taught and built the linkage in the NOI and afterwards. It is he who further influenced the Black conscious community, built alliances with the leaders of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), and wrote his now much referred to essay "Zionist Logic" in which he criticized it as illogical, imperialist, immoral, racist and requiring righteous resistance.

Here also we must raise the name and praise the work of Nana Ethel Miner, former NOI member and SNCC director of communications. She had studied the history and politics of the Palestinian struggle in college, built friendships with Palestinians, and organized a study group on their struggle inside SNCC. Moreover, she joined the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) under the leadership of Haji Malcolm, continued her work, and after Haji Malcolm's martyrdom, joined SNCC where, as mentioned, she organized and led a study group and was principal writer of SNCC's 1967 Statement on Palestine.

In addition, we of the Black Power Period of the Black Freedom Movement who also saw ourselves as descendants of Haji Malcolm along with the OAAU and SNCC, i.e., Us, RAM, BPP, RNA also supported the Palestinian people in their liberation struggle. And this tradition of allied struggle with the Palestinians was continued by the Black Lives Matter Movement and other similar progressive and radical forces in more recent times, especially after the Ferguson Revolt. Indeed, such support also fits well within Black activists' and activist scholars' call for

and commitment to Third World (people of color) unity and struggle. It is what Nanas DuBois, Bethune, Muhammad, Malcolm et al called the oppressed and "dark peoples of the world", seeing and embracing our and their struggles as the rising tide of a new history for humankind.

Surely, we also praise the students of all ethnicities and nationalities who reject the current social and world order where lying and war against the vulnerable is a way of life, savagery is defined as self-defense, the depraved disregard for human life, especially in terms of the peoples of color, is institutionalized internationally, and governments deny and then seek to redefine and justify genocide when they can no longer gaslight the world. It is important to note again, that Palestinians in Palestine and in the diaspora are at the center of their own struggle which has implications for us all and the world. And it is good to see Jewish students, professionals, intellectuals, and others join in the vanguard of this righteous struggle for a new world and way of life and relating, not equating Judaism or Jews with Israel and any policy it conjures up, and countering the false and much abused charges of antisemitism for criticizing occupation, siege, oppression and genocide.

No one can seriously believe the struggle is even half over, for there is no easy walk or way to freedom, justice and other shared human goods. But certainly new ways and possibilities have been opened. Clearly important is the world-encompassing reach and relevance of this struggle in terms of unity built in struggle for a new world; and the ongoing education in and earnest efforts to reorder this interrelated order of White supremacy and its unrepentantly predatory relatives—racism, racial capitalism, settler colonialism, imperialism and apartheid. Also, an important achievement of this world-encompassing struggle is the breaching of the wall

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of immunity from criticism and impunity from accountability of the state of Israel and its falsified image of victimizer as victim or as Haji Malcolm taught, turning the criminal into the victim and the victim into the criminal.

**I**NDEED, THE SMOKE AND MIRRORS OF A compliant media, that Haji Malcolm identified as a central source of this manufacturing and manipulation of imagery, has been challenged by the social media images of the tens of thousands of Palestinian blooded, charred and dead bodies, the scattered limbs, the headless bodies, the indiscriminate and

saturation bombing of everyone, everything and everywhere in a land and of a people that refuses to be erased or defeated. And finally we are reaffirmed in our position that we must have a world-encompassing concept of African peoples and the African liberation mission. It is not a question of freeing ourselves in isolation and alone, but in unity, a world-encompassing unity, realizing the teaching and aspiration of Nanas Garvey, Bethune and Nkrumah for us that we, in being ourselves and freeing ourselves, become a definitive force for a shared, inclusive, enduring and great good in the world.▲

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