



**AGAIN STANDING FIRM AT SELMA WITH C.T. VIVIAN:  
RELENTLESSLY RESISTING GENOCIDE, INJUSTICE AND  
OPPRESSION EVERYWHERE**

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**DR. MAULANA KARENGA**

**A**S TRUMP AND NETANYAHU HUDDLE together in their twin blood-soaked cocoons and caves of hubris and holocaust denial of the Israeli genocide against the Palestinian people and plot what new atrocities they will impose on the different and vulnerable, it is urgently important that we, as persons and a people, self-consciously resist and refuse to find ourselves complicit by the betrayal of silence, the atrocity of support or the self-degradation of acceptance. Indeed, it is the sacred teachings of our honored ancestors that we are morally compelled never to turn a blind eye to injustice, a deaf ear to truth or a cold and uncaring heart to suffering. On the contrary, they tell and teach us that we are called by the ethical imperatives of heaven and the well-learned lessons of history to bear witness to truth and set the scales of justice in their proper place, especially among those made voiceless and vulnerable, the devalued and degraded, the downtrodden, occupied, mercilessly starved and mass murdered.

Indeed, our sacred teachings tell us that the arc of our moral concern must be inclusive and world-encompassing, that narrow notions of our interests are unworthy of us and that the talk of peace without justice is a mockery of both, and a clear call to continue and intensify the struggle. As I mull over the many issues that confront us and this country, I know that it is easy to declare with a thin sense of justification that we have too many problems ourselves to be concerned with the fate and future of the suffering, oppression and even genocide of others. And we might also say this, not only about the people of Palestine, but also about the peoples of Haiti,

Sudan, Congo and other sites of savage oppression, and injustice. But this is by no means the best of our moral reasoning, the compelling evidence offered by our history, and the dignity-affirming, life-enhancing and world-preserving ways forward for us, this country and the world.

We are ever standing at the crossroads of history with our ancestors, confronted with critical moral and life shaping choices, and we must choose to think, feel and act in the most considerate, ethical and effective ways. Indeed, given the world threatening problems and possibilities that confront us and all humans, we are morally compelled to see the linkage and interrelatedness of all struggles for freedom, justice and other human goods and to righteously and relentlessly resist genocide, injustice and oppression everywhere.

Regardless of media manipulation and the definitional dominance that the system-supporting media attempts to totalize, we must still resist the Orwellian world that these and other gangsta governments and their proxies seek to impose on us. We must realize and speak the truth to the people and to power that the phrase “never again” has been transformed for many to “never again just for us and why not again for others different and vulnerable?”. And we must accept that we are witnessing in real time formerly oppressed people committing similar slaughters of others and that genocide and oppression are being committed in our names, financed with our monies and resources desperately needed for housing, healthcare, education, income support, social security, poverty alleviation,

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disaster relief, and life-saving initiatives in countless areas.

Indeed, we who believe in the indivisibility and shared good of freedom and justice and the sacredness and right of life for all must not join the genocidists, their enablers and supporters. On the contrary, we must radically refuse to endorse, support or accept the White supremacist Borg myth that resistance is futile, savagery is self-defense, and genocide is a justified fate for those with coveted land, hated presence and the audacity to resist their occupation and annihilation. Nor can we accept the vicious and inhumane attempt at reasoning away the right of a people to freedom and security in their own land, and the perverse pretension that bombing and starving them mercilessly to death and slaughtering them at alleged sites of food distribution is a context to discuss anything except its end first and foremost.

As I'm writing this I am thinking of several critical lessons of life, work and struggle of our ancestors who have paved a good path for us to follow and to inform us in our going forward and upward in this critical time of turning turbulence and continued struggle. I think here of Nana Rev. C.T. Vivian, an important leader during the Black Freedom Movement standing on the steps of the Dallas County courthouse in Selma, Alabama, demanding and defending his right to vote and be free. He defies the brutal sheriff blocking the way for our people to register to vote and turning his back to them. Nana Vivian says to him that "You can turn your back on me but you cannot turn your back on the idea of justice. You can turn your back now and you can keep the club in your hand but you cannot beat down justice". He rightly accuses the sheriff of violating his constitutional rights, viciously beating the people and trying

to hide the blows he's inflicting on them. And he finally asks a question that is an ongoing question for America, Israel, us and all human beings and that is "What kind of people are you?" In other words, what kind of people are you that you would do such anti-human and inhuman things?

Now this question, "what kind of people are you?" is both an indictment of the oppressor and an instruction to us all to continue to ask ourselves as we do in Kawaida, who are we, are we really who we are and are we all we ought to be? Nana C.T. Vivian is raising the question of how could this human being act in such inhuman ways; how could this person who claims to represent law and order so crudely be the embodiment of illegality, immorality and chaos? He does not want to believe, given his faith tradition, that this is a totally lost human being and thus in this question is also an invitation to this early man bully and batterer to demonstrate even an ounce or iota of humanity. It is the question we have asked since we've been here. How can these people hate us so intensely and we have not done anything to them? And how is it that the racists need to stand on our heads in order to get a sense of height themselves, to call us ugly in order to feel somewhat beautiful themselves, and to oppress us in order to feel free themselves?

And the Palestinian people constantly ask, how can someone escape a holocaust and impose a Nakba and genocide on them? And how can the Israelis and the Americans want self-determination, freedom, justice and security for themselves and deny the same to the Palestinians and others? How can they expect the Palestinians not to resist oppression, occupation, erasure and annihilation? And how can they honestly and humanly, continuously and wantonly kill innocent and

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unarmed babies, children, women, men, elderly, disabled and all other vulnerable people without distinction, using the best weapons America and Europe can produce and provide?

Nana C.T. Vivian is right, no power on earth can beat down or destroy the ethical idea and the human desire, need and struggle for justice and freedom and other similar goods. And Trump and Netanyahu are grossly wrong with their early man mentality and modern military clubs in hand, committing genocide in Palestine, bombing Iran, violating international law and making themselves, us and the world less safe. And if the moral arc of the universe that bends toward justice continues to demonstrate its vigor and

value, all these aggressions and the depraved disrespect for human life will eventually come back to haunt and hold the violators accountable.

**A**LWAYS AND FOREVER, BUILDING ON THE best of our tradition and moral reasoning, we must for ourselves, history and humanity continue the struggle, keep the faith and hold the line. For we are indeed a central moral and social vanguard of victorious struggle, keepers of the faith that does not fail, and struggling servants of the people and workers for a new world of shared and inclusive good, holding the line for the good, the right and the possible. ▲

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