

The U.S. Tolerates Domestic Extra-Judicial Killings, Persecution, Racial Discrimination, and Genocide

Justice for Trayvon Martin Also Means Joining the International Struggle Against U.S. Lawlessness

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As a mother of a young Black man whom I pray for nightly and worry daily about his life being violently ended senselessly either by someone marginalized by the unjust social structure of U.S. life or by some rogue officer of the law or one pretending to be a policeman, I offer my sincerest condolences to the Martin family and friends over their loss of their son Trayvon. Each loss is irreparable and I have no words that can succor the pain that this entire nation is feeling. Further, I wish to extend my compassionate sympathies to the hundreds of thousands of victims of police brutality, racial profiling, and the millions wrongfully ensnared in the American gulag prison-industrial complex.

All of my life, no matter how my reputation has been assailed and vilified, I have struggled to promote justice and dignity to those people most adversely affected by the racist, intolerant, predatorily capitalistic, and venal society that we increasingly see metastasize daily into a society with a feel more and more like when Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, or Martin Luther King, or martyred Floridian Harry T. Moore walked the Earth decades ago.

April 4, 2012 will mark the 44th anniversary of our observance of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King; Jr. April 29, 2012 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Los Angeles Uprising of 1992. According to Dr. King, the U.S. was “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world.” Forty-five years later this fact remains true with some frightening new additions. The U.S. imprisons more of its citizens per 100,000 persons than any other nation on earth. In 2011, the USA ranked fifth in the world in execution of prisoners, and annually police murder scores of citizens. If the number of persons murdered by the police were included in the sum of executions, America would rank third in executions globally—just behind Iran. In spite of the fact that the United States ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) which obligates all levels of government to comply with the treaty, the United States Department of Justice, according to the ACLU 2009 report regarding the persistence of racial profiling in the United States has done virtually nothing to combat the clear evidence of systemic racism the nation. Therefore, I cannot say that anyone can be certain that justice will be served to the many Trayvon Martins and their grieving families. It is sobering and hurtful to believe that America’s first Black President and first Black Attorney General will allow this nation to possibly descend into greater levels of intolerance and tension, when the laws and mechanisms to address the problems exist on the books.

This should be an easy one for the people of this country to face. President Obama called

for us to push him to stand for the people. Now is the time for us to push so hard that President Obama has no choice but to stand and show us—who are tired of mourning Stolen Lives in this country—that he is equally able to lead as well as compromise and bow to his political rivals. President Obama, along with the people of this country, can act and begin to remove the legacy of hatred, violence, and injustice before the U.S. is consumed by it—because our community of leaders and followers lacked the will to be a better society.

To the people who care and sacrifice daily for the marginalized and the dispossessed among us, I wish to remind you that I led a Congressional delegation to the United Nations World Conference on Racism in Durban South Africa in 2001 despite President Bush and Zionists daring us to go. It was my hope that the African American leadership would discover the realm of international law, as was the dream of Dubois, William Patterson, Paul Robeson, Malcolm X, and Dr. King. The traditional Civil Rights leadership must become more effective and adroit in presenting the plight of our human rights before the international community. We have enough experience to know that our progress has always been linked to international pressure because we are in a ‘majoritarian democracy’ that tramples on the rights of minorities.

We must push within and without the United States to bring the egregious slaughter of our young people and the mass incarceration and oppression of Black and Brown people to an end using all tools that we can secure. We cannot wait for another so-called ‘random slaying.’ It is clear that the President does not speak in our names when he denies the existence of racism (in the United Nations follow-up Durban conferences) as he has done twice. We know that we are world citizens with rights that every Mark Furman, Rick Santorum, or George Zimmerman must respect—even if our only venue for redress is before the people of the world. Chattel slavery and Jim Crow Apartheid were, in part, overturned because of the joint domestic and international efforts. Let us honor the agreement of Dr. King and Malcolm X to have a two-fold struggle for our human rights and full freedom. In the 1940s, we called this the double victory over Nazism and fascism abroad and racism and Jim Crow at home.

At home, the U.S. tolerates extra-judicial killings, violation of human rights, persecution, racial discrimination, and genocide—yes, genocide. So, if leadership inside the U.S. will do this to their own citizens, what is done to others outside the U.S. should come as no surprise. The real answer lies in what “we the people” of the United States are going to do differently to stop this madness. Clearly, what we’ve all collectively done in the past is not nearly enough. If you harbor any doubt about that, just ask young Trayvon.

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