



**WAGING WAR ON THE WORLD:
HYPOCRITICALLY SHOCKED AND AWED BY ITS CONSEQUENCES**

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DR. MAULANA KARENGA

THERE IS TODAY A GLOBAL TOTAL WAR being waged by the U.S., its allies and proxies with no end in sight, no just or honest proposals for peace and no real relief from the war's devastating effects on the lives and lands of the people who are its targets and victims. Nor is there adequate consideration concerning the impact of this massive destruction of lives and lands on the future of human relations and on the earth, itself. And there is grossly inadequate and mostly military concern about the consequences it is having already as the targeted people wage righteous resistance and some among them respond with similar unrestrained violence against the invaders, not only in their own countries, but also in the home countries of the invaders.

Indeed, you don't have to be a farmer, philosopher or a follower of Min. Malcolm to remember and reflect seriously on his moral reminder that chickens come home to roost, and that those who sow seeds of destruction in the wind abroad can't be hypocritically surprised when they reap a whirlwind of similar devastation at home. Although such a total war has its roots in European peoples', including America's, earlier racist imperialist wars of conquest, colonization, enslavement and genocide, it finds its modern expression in the post-9/11 capitalist catastrophic wars of aggression and acquisition, billed as the "war on terror". So, Trump might expand the war with his infantile and untutored understanding and assertions about the world and what the U.S. can and cannot do, but he boards a train already on the military-industrial track of war-making and war-mongering laid long ago.

It is, therefore, an irony of badly conceived history and unashamed hypocrisy that the so-called "war on terror" has become a "war of terrorism" itself. For the savage bombing of cities, villages, hospitals, houses, schools, wedding parties, water and food supplies, mosques, public meetings and market places can only be defined and described as terrorism, whether committed by a small group or a large country. Here *terrorism is defined as the intentional attacks or threats*

against non-combatants, civilians and any other innocents to kill, injure, cause fear or attempt to bend them to others' will. Such practices are inherently immoral and cannot be justified by a group or a state or country. And state terrorism, the terrorism by a country or government, is clearly more devastating. For it means the state uses its most modern, deadly and devastating weapons—drones, bombs, missiles, rockets, planes, helicopters and tanks to kill in mass and destroy without restraint, restriction or distinction. Regularly, we hear about the terrorism of a group, but we have no real or widespread discussion on the terrorism by a country or its rulers who call for, wage and gloat over waging a total and terrorist war of "shock and awe" against those vulnerable and having coveted resources and strategic value.

Surely, there is no small amount of undiluted hypocrisy and self-delusion to wage a "shock and awe" war and then be "shocked and awed" by a similar response to it. But all oppressors are shocked and awed by any resistance—righteous as well as unrestrained, and thus easily and gladly confuse and conflate the two. But we must and do make a clear line of distinction between group and state terrorism and righteous resistance. Terrorism by its very nature is inherently immoral, but righteous resistance to all forms of oppression is inherently moral. Indeed, *righteous resistance is morally compelling struggle to protect our lives, to achieve and secure our freedom, to realize our right to justice and to exercise our right to live secure, free, full and meaningful lives as persons, peoples and human beings.* And we realize these human goods are shared goods and therefore we stand in active solidarity with other oppressed, struggling and progressive persons and peoples in their righteous resistance to evil, injustice, unfreedom and oppression in its various forms. Thus, if we are ever to rid ourselves of this "night-and-daymare" of the vicious cycle of war, the rulers and leaders of this country must be confronted and held accountable through righteous and relentless resistance.

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As I argued in an earlier article, Bush didn't have to declare war on al-Qaeda, the group held responsible for the terrorist attacks on 9/11. He could have treated it as a criminal act, pursued and caught the suspects and saved the millions of victims in these countries and the U.S. itself from this total and terrible war. And if we are a moral and thoughtful people, how can we in good conscience not recognize and rise up against the havoc being wreaked on the vulnerable peoples in the resource-rich areas of the world?

With all our talk about caring for the poor and have-nots, welcoming the stranger and refugee and protecting the earth, can we honestly say we are not simply practicing a *selective morality of concern* for those of the favored race and religion, the current favorite "minority" or ethnic group and the parts of the earth we occupy and identify with? Indeed, who is morally courageous enough to bear witness to truth and set the scales of justice in their proper place among the Haitians, Palestinians and Yemeni and all the others not to be even mentioned or given superior moral status to their oppressor, let alone supported in their righteous struggles to free themselves from occupation, domination, deprivation and degradation?

Now, after 15 years of total war and the use of the most advanced weapons, killing-committed allies and satellites, armies of mercenaries, contracted security and suppression forces, "special operations", numerous extraordinary rendition or torture-interrogation sites, overthrowing and killing of rulers who were no longer useful or who simply rightfully resisted the imperialist project, the prematurely declared "mission accomplished" and victory have not been achieved. In fact, it all adds up, not only to military failure, but also to a great moral human failure, war crimes

against whole peoples and crimes against humanity. After all, what would we call similar devastation in this country or in the country of an ally, coalition "partner" or unashamed puppet—millions killed, millions more wounded, millions of refugees and displaced persons traumatized continuously, massive suffering, infrastructures destroyed, food insecurity, lack of clean water, cholera epidemics caused by so-called saviors and others who siphoned off the aid funds for their and their cronies' capitalist projects at the expense of the masses?

Thus, in spite of all the monies spent, the self-praise propaganda and the vulgarly self-serving claims of bringing freedom, democracy, progress, etc., the peoples of Haiti, Palestine, Yemen, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and forgotten Libya know only a deep, undeserved and imposed suffering and the devastation described above without any letup or lessening in sight. And we can console ourselves with self-medicating myths of needing to kill without conscience or constraints to protect ourselves, but eventually it will be brought home to us and our allies that there is no security in oppression, none in domination, deprivation and degradation of others.

Moreover, *there is no oppressor who has a moral status or claim equal to those they oppress and certainly no superior one*, regardless of racial and religious claims to the contrary. And there is no good future for a country or people who act as vampires, vultures and predators against the vulnerable peoples of the world. Eventually, seeds sown will have to be harvested. And it is a good and promising practice if we dare to sow seeds of justice, freedom, peace and all things good which point toward and make possible the continuing flourishing of humanity and the ongoing well-being of the world.

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