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AUGUST 16, 2017

TOPIC: SYMBOLIC AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S FAILURES TO DENOUNCE  
SYMBOLIC AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE WITHIN  
AMERICA IS NOT THE WAY TO "MAKE AMERICA  
GREAT AGAIN"

RECENT POLITICALLY-BASED ISSUES SURROUNDING THE REMOVAL OF CONFEDERATE MEMORIALS AND STATUES HAVE RESULTED IN MANY ACTS OF PEOPLE EXPRESSING OR REPRESENTING THEIR VIEWS, IDEAS OR QUALITIES ABOUT AMERICA'S DARK DAYS OF SLAVERY. FOR MANY DECADES, AMERICANS OF ALL RACES, GENDERS, AND BELIEFS HAVE WORKED UNDER THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT WOULD CREATE A PATH TOWARDS EQUALITY FOR ALL AMERICANS, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT WOULD MAKE AMERICA GREAT FOR EVERYONE. BUT AS I WATCHED ON T.V. THE TRAGIC EVENTS IN CHARLOTTEVILLE, VA UNFOLD, I WAS REMINDED OF THE DAY WHEN I REALIZED I BECAME "COLORED." ONE'S RACE IS IMPOSED ON US BY SOCIETY, SO IT IS SOMETHING WE "BECOME" (i.e., BLACK, HISPANIC, ASIANS, ETC.) BY VIRTUE OF HOW WE ARE TREATED BY WHITES IN THIS NATION. THEREFORE, WHEN PRESIDENT TRUMP HAS FAILED, AND CONTINUES TO, COMPLETELY AND FULLY DENOUNCE THE EVILS OF HATRED; ONLY REINFORCES THIS FORM OF SYMBOLIC AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE WHICH HAS PLAGUED THIS NATION SINCE INCEPTION.

SYMBOLIC/STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE IS THE FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL INJUSTICES THAT ARE INGRAINED WITHIN ALL RIGHT-WING POLITICAL GROUPS THAT CONSIST OF PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT NEO-NAZISM, WHITE SUPREMACY, AND THE KU KLUX KLAN. SO UNTIL PRESIDENT TRUMP PUTS "A HUMAN FACE" ON DOMESTIC TERRORISM AND CLEARLY DECLARES TO ALL AMERICAN THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO JUSTIFICATION FOR WHAT HAPPENED AT THE RECENT CHARLOTTEVILLE, VA DEBACLE; I BELIEVE HE WOULD ONLY DISHONOR THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF THE YOUNG WOMAN WHO WAS RUN OVER BY A DOMESTIC TERRORIST. PRESIDENT TRUMP NEEDS TO STOP THE FOOLISH "BLAME GAME" BY TRYING TO GIVE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC A REASON OR ATTEMPTS TO JUSTIFY RACISM.

PRESIDENT TRUMP SAID TWO (2) DAYS, AFTER THE FACT, THAT HE DEPLORES THE DEMONSTRATIONS THAT TOOK PLACE IN CHARLOTTEVILLE, VA. BUT HIS STATEMENTS AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE, I'M SORRY TO SAY, TRULY FELL SHORT AND INADEQUATELY EXPRESSED A SIMILAR CONCERN BY FELLOW CONSTITUENTS, IN HIS OWN PARTY, FOR THE CONDITIONS OR CIRCUMSTANCES THAT BROUGHT ABOUT THE PROTEST IN THE FIRST PLACE. THE FLAGS OF CONFEDERACY, NEO-NAZISM, AND KLANISM ARE SYMBOLIC OF JINGOISM, HATRED, OPPRESSION, AND VENGEANCE. BUT THE "AMERICAN" FLAG IS SUPPOSED TO MEAN A DIVERSE NATION OF PEOPLE STANDING TOGETHER AND HONORING THE PAST, THE DEAD, AND SAYING "NO!" TO ALL FORMS OF TERRORISM.

SOME OF THE KEY FACTORS BEHIND SYMBOLIC AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE INCLUDES MISCONCEIVED SOCIAL HIERARCHIES, SOCIO-ECONOMIC/HEALTH-CARE INEQUALITIES, GENDER DISCRIMINATION, RACISM, AND THE

MANY DIFFERENT WAYS IN WHICH PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL DIFFERENCE MAY NATURALIZE, NORMALIZE, OR EVEN CHALLENGE THESE INEQUALITIES. SO MY QUESTION IS TO MY READERS IS TO CONTEMPLATE THESE FACTORS IN RELATION TO CURRENT EVENTS, IN YOUR OWN LIVES, AND HOW THE PRESIDENT'S RHETORIC IS A REAL REFLECTION OF TODAY'S SOCIETY. ONE MAY EVEN SUGGEST THE PRESIDENT OF THE GREATEST NATION ON EARTH TOLERATES AND ACCEPTS THE SYMBOLIC AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE THROUGHOUT OUR NATION BY DISMANTLING MILLIONS OF AMERICANS ACA HEALTHCARE COVERAGE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING, AND THE EGREGIOUS ABUSES OF PARAMILITARY POLICING WITHIN URBAN CITIES; OR THE VIOLENCE DESIGNED TO BREAK ONE'S SPIRIT BY TEARING DOWN THE INDIVIDUAL. SERIOUSLY, PRESIDENT TRUMP PROMISED TO "BUILD THE WALL" TO SEPARATE THE U.S./MEXICO BORDERS, BUT THE ONLY WALL HIS ADMINISTRATION HAS BUILT IS BETWEEN AMERICAN CITIZENS BASED ON FEAR AND THEIR HEALTHCARE COVERAGE!!! AND THIS IS HOW HE WILL "MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN?"

FOR THE RECORD, "STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE" HAS BEEN DEFINED AS "THE VIOLENCE COMMITTED BY CONFIGURATIONS OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES THAT, IN THE END, HAS INJURIOUS EFFECTS ON PEOPLE'S BODIES." [CITATION OMITTED] HENCE, THE REALITY OF PRESIDENT TRUMP'S "SHARING THE BLAME ON BOTH SIDES" BELIEF COMPELS ME TO PONDER THIS QUESTION:

"DOES THE DAMAGES OF LONG-TERM GENERATIONAL RACISM GO FAR BEYOND PHYSICAL ACTS OF HATED? IF SO, WHAT ARE THE LASTING IMPACTS ON THE PSYCHE AND IDENTITY OF PEOPLE WHO ARE RACIST OR WHO SUFFER FROM RACISM?"

AS MEMBER OF THE "HUMAN RACE", WE ALL SEEK SOME FORM OF SELF-WORTH; THROUGH THE VALIDATION OF OUR INDIVIDUAL ABILITIES AND INVENTIVENESS BY THE WORDS OF OTHER PEOPLE. THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED BY MEAN OF PERSONAL CONTACT AND COMMUNICATIONS, YET, EMOTIONAL ISOLATION IS INDICATIVE OF PRESIDENT TRUMP'S REALITY BECAUSE HE HAS VERY LIMITED OUTSIDE-OF-HIS-CIRCLE CONTACT, SO IT IS DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO HAVE AND/OR SHOW EMPATHY BECAUSE HE CANNOT VIEW "AMERICA" THROUGH THE EYES OF MARGINALIZED PEOPLE. THIS LATEST INCIDENT ONLY FURTHER ALIENATES HIM FROM THE VERY THINGS THAT OTHER PRESIDENTS HAVE KNOWN TO PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE A MORE "INCLUSIVE" AMERICA; THAT IS, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MINIMIZE DOMESTIC TERRORISM OR RACISM AND BY BEING ABLE TO GENUINELY DENOUNCE SUCH ACTS IN HIS WORDS AND IN HIS DEMEANOR WHEN ADDRESSING THE AMERICAN PUBLIC.

THE SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE OF "THE FLAGS OF HATRED" IN CHARLOTTEVILLE, VA, HAS HAD, AND CONTINUES TO, WREAK GREAT DAMAGE ON THE PSYCHE AND IDENTITY OF ALL PEOPLE IN THIS ALREADY GREAT NATION. THIS SYMBOLISM OF RACISM CAUSES MORE ISOLATION AND BREEDS DISCONNECTION AND FEAR. PRESIDENT TRUMP SEEMS TO BE IN THE "BUSINESS OF MANUFACTURING SYMBOLIC/STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE" CONDITIONS IN AMERICA SOLELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCONNECTING U.S. CITIZENS CONTACT AND DIALOGUE WITH ONE ANOTHER. BY LOSING THE ABILITY TO IMAGINE FREEDOM AND EQUALITY WILL POTENTIALLY DECIMATE THE DESIRES OF MOST AMERICANS TO HEAL THE WOUNDS OF PAST RACISM AND TEAR DOWN THESE WALLS AND

BARRIERS THAT HAVE BEEN IN PLACE FAR TOO LONG. IT HAS AUTOMATICALLY/DISTURBED OUR NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS, WHICH IS SHAPED IN LARGE PARTS BY THE MEDIA AND OUR CURRENT POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, AND PROVIDES US WITH A PICTURE OF OURSELVES AS A NATION OF "US" VERSUS "THEM." THIS SYMBOLIC AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE IS REAL AND ARGUABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN DETERMINING BOTH THIS NATION'S PLACE AND ROLE IN THE WORLD AND THE NATURE OF THE SOCIETY WE LIVE IN.

SYMBOLIC/STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE IS MEANT TO DO ONE THING; TO "CAUSE HARM...."

IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS/REBUTTALS, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO LEAVE YOUR MESSAGE ON THIS BLOG AND/OR WRITE ME AT MY ABOVE MAILING ADDRESS. UNTIL NEXT TIME, TAKE CARE, BE SAFE, AND "WAKE UP!"

IN SOLIDARITY,

Zakee  
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