

Dreaming of a True Memorial Day

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Today I took a visiting friend to view the tomb of Martin Luther and Coretta Scott King. We went inside Ebenezer Baptist Church, where Dr. King once preached, and listened to him give his own oration on how he would like to be remembered:

“If any of you are around when I have to meet my day, I don’t want a long funeral. And if you get somebody to deliver the eulogy, tell them not to talk too long. Every now and then I wonder what I want them to say. Tell them not to mention that I have a Nobel Peace Prize, which isn’t important. Tell them not to mention that I have three or four hundred other awards, that’s not important. Tell them not to mention where I went to school. I’d like somebody to mention that day, that Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to give his life serving others. I’d like for somebody to say that day, that Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to love somebody. I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try to feed the hungry. And I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try, in my life, to clothe those who were naked. I want you to say, on that day, that I did try, in my life, to visit those who were in prison. I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity.

“Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice; say that I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the other shallow things will not matter. I won’t have any money to leave behind. I won’t have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind.”

And for a moment I reflected on how Dr. King had been ridiculed in the “mainstream” press—all complicit in the U.S. Government’s unethical and sometimes illegal program of COINTELPRO.

I remembered how his son, Martin III, had run for office in Atlanta and again was ridiculed by the local Atlanta newspaper.

I thought briefly of how that same local newspaper often through its black female editor derided the King Family, including Martin’s widow Coretta, as if COINTELPRO never ended and murdering one of America’s greatest sons was not enough.

Then my brain switched to thoughts of my Congressional Panel entitled “Murder of MLK” where TV’s popular Judge Joe Brown appeared and announced unequivocally that the rifle known to all Americans as the murder weapon is, indeed, not the murder weapon. And Dr. William Pepper, longtime King Family friend and lawyer at the famous 1999 Memphis trial in which the jury found that the government was part of a conspiracy to assassinate Dr. King. In fact, in that trial, testimony revealed that a very sophisticated operation to kill Dr. King was hatched in the bowels of the Pentagon and brought together the Mob, local Memphis

police, and US military intelligence to accomplish the objective. In fact, Dr. King's family had been under surveillance by our Government since the 1920s!

In short, everything you think you know about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s murder is a lie. What they teach our children in the schools about the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is a lie. How many other lies has our Government told us and that are substantiated and corroborated by the "mainstream" corporate press?

Why does our Government lie to us?

Today is a day of deep reflection because it is Memorial Day. I'm sad today because I believe the most fundamental values of our country have been purposefully undermined before our very eyes.

I'm sad because the people seem so powerless against the lies our Government tells us, when the Government is not supposed to be them, it's supposed to be us!

And finally, I'm sad because I don't want Dr. King to have died in vain, yet, with every passing day I fear that might be the case.

We, the American people, have been lied to.

Our young men and women are dying in a far-off land; those of us who dissent are spied upon by an Administration that violates the Constitution. Our economy has been wrecked by massive theft occurring in the guise of war and disaster profiteering. Our tax money has been used to fly people to places around the world so they can be tortured—whether they're guilty of anything or not. And innocent people all over the planet die as a result of policies carried out in our name that include subversion, sabotage, terrorism, torture, death squads, and drug trafficking. Innocent Afghanis die today so that the U.S. can control both the heroin and the oil trades.

Dr. King was murdered because certain people in power felt that he threatened the American way of life. Today, it's people in Afghanistan, Colombia, Haiti, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Palestine, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Democratic Republic of Congo who die for this thing called the American way of life. Yesterday, it was Cuba, Vietnam, Guatemala, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Chile, Argentina, Libya, Grenada, Nicaragua, Indonesia, and East Timor.

What exactly is that American way of life?

Well, Agence France Presse just ran a story announcing that two separate studies found that the U.S. has the most expensive health care system in the world, yet the worst, most notable for its lack of universal coverage.

According to the Pentagon, we have 16,000 single moms serving in Iraq, an unprecedented number.

The 2000 Presidential Election result was based on the illegal denial of the right to vote of duly registered voters by way of a purposefully corrupted "convicted felons list" that included people guilty of nothing but being black, Democrat, and registered to vote in Florida.

The 2004 Presidential election results in Ohio, according to Professor Bob Fitrakis of Ohio, were tallied on machines that housed Republican Party-oriented websites and that used software written by Republican Party loyalists.

A recent study found that one-third of adults in Washington, DC—our nation's capital city—are functionally illiterate, not being able to fill out job applications, read maps, or understand bus schedules.

The Innocence Project just announced its 200th innocent released from a prison system that now occupies the number one slot in the world for number of people incarcerated.

The University of Michigan just released a study confirming what we already knew: that hazardous waste facilities predominate in poor, minority neighborhoods. Hull House of Loyola University released a study finding that it would take 200 years for black Chicagoans to catch up to the quality of life experienced by white Chicagoans.

According to United for a Fair Economy it will take 1,664 years to close the home ownership gap between blacks and whites.

Our country now claims the top slot as the debt capital of the world.

And with the amount of money that we've already spent on the war, according to the National Priorities Project, Americans could have had instead:

1.8 million new teachers;
Over 20 million college scholarships;
Health insurance for over 60 million children;
Or nearly 4 million new housing units.

Is this the American way of life that our children are dying for and the government lies to us for?

Or is it the record profits of Exxon, Microsoft, Apple (and I love my macs), and others while the share of national income going to wages and salaries is at a record low?

We should expect more from our elected leadership.

The Democrats didn't fight for their own true election results in 2000 or in 2004, so why should we expect them to impeach an illegitimate Administration that has violated the U.S. Constitution and international law, lied to the American people, and sent our young men and women into harm's way?

In fact, the Democrats have just now made themselves complicit in impeachable crimes of the Bush Administration. On March 17, my birthday, at the antiwar protest at the Pentagon, I declared that by voting to fund George Bush's wars, the Democrats had become explicitly complicit in war crimes, torture, crimes against humanity, and crimes against peace.

The American people voted for peace in last November's election. And they voted for justice. We didn't get peace and we don't have justice.

What about a livable wage for America's workers?

What about the right of return for Katrina survivors?

What about repealing the Patriot Act, the Secret Evidence Act, and the Military Tribunals Act?

Why is impeachment “off the table”?

How can the Pentagon “lose” 2.3 trillion dollars!

Why can't we get that money back for jobs, health care, education, and our veterans?

One year to the day before he was murdered Dr. King, under tremendous pressure from other blacks and “civil rights leaders” to tone down his antiwar rhetoric, responded thusly:

“For those who say to me, ‘stick to civil rights,’ I have another answer. And that is, that I’ve fought too long and too hard now, against segregated public accommodations to end up segregating my moral concerns. I’m not gonna do that. But others can do what they want to do. That’s their business. If other civil rights leaders, for various reasons, refuse or can’t take a stand or have to go along with the Administration, that’s their business. But I must say tonight, that I know that justice is indivisible: injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

I’m deeply disappointed on this Memorial Day 2007 in what the current leadership of both political parties has allowed our country to become.

Many of you know I’m a Star Trek Trekkie. And in a powerful exchange between Spock and Bones, the following is said:

SPOCK: “Evil does seek to maintain power by suppressing the truth.”

BONES: “Or by misleading the innocent.”

I believe the innocent people of our country have been purposely misled while the truth has been suppressed. I will continue to work to expose the truth—as I have done in the past. And I certainly hope that by next year’s Memorial Day, the United States will have once again become the beacon of peace and justice and truth that we know it can be. And that Dr. King’s sacrifice and that of his family will not have been in vain.

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