

OPINION



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Let Us Not Be Wreckless When Considering War

A community that in some form has a belief in God, the Supreme Being, the Unmoved Mover, Allah and other references to recognize a power beyond ourselves, in which we may need to ask a somewhat uncomfortable question about this God concerning war, especially that God of the Christian-Judaeo perspective. Question: Does a God of grace, mercy, justice and salvation sanction war? If an individual comes to the conclusion in the affirmative mode about God and war, then will that same individual continue to believe in and serve that God? A God ultimately is involved in what's taking place in the Middle East and allows the war to take place and people to die, friends loved ones, and strangers. Question: Who's side is the God of the Christian belief

on? It would not be the first time that this God sided with the seemingly wrong side to show the seemingly right side that it is really the wrong side. Therefore, this writer asks the questions as a foundation for discussion: What is Truth?

Surprise! Surprise! Surprise! Not in the least. What is surprising is the lack of comprehension by intelligent people not realizing how once again that history is repeating itself. War is not an unknown event. The world and this nation have been in wars almost from their very conception. Even within the Christian-Judaeo belief, the understanding is that war will ever be with us. Therefore, why should we be in a shock-wave of astonishment about this particular war taking place in the Middle East? No, war is not nice, war is an ugly, devastating act -- but war is a reality. A reality that at this moment we are forced to deal with. No one in their right mind wanted this war to take place, but it is now with us everyday. Technology has utilized

itself to the point that all airwaves (radio, television, etc.) bombard us with information about the Middle East Crisis -- Desert Storm -- Showdown in the Desert. The media act as if this war is an old western flick where the villain Saddam Hussein gets his by the good guy - George Bush, and our president rides off into the sunset, victorious. Maybe these two personalities ought to have a duel in the desert and whatever will be -- will be. But this is just too simple, isn't it?

The issue of history repeating itself must be addressed before we involve ourselves in the God question. As we well know, there are functions in our community that are pro-war or pro-supporters of the troops in the Middle East, and there are the anti-war protesters whocould also be interpreted as anti-supporters of the troops risking their lives whether or not war is right or wrong. Of course, anti-war protesters may just be against the war, not against the soldiers, our troops fighting this war. However, we as a nation cannot forget

Vietnam. The same type of ideological divisions were present then as they are now. Also, the cry for peace was very prevalent during that moment in history and a large number of people in America were of same mind as today when we hear people singing the words: "Let's Give Peace a Chance." After the war was over and peace was given that chance, another kind of war erupted in America that discriminated against those Vietnam Veterans who were and should have been declared heroes. Americans and the American Government came to the realization that a serious atrocity had been enacted upon the American soldiers of the Vietnam War. Let us be careful and not careless. Those men and women, regardless of color, race or religious belief, are human every minute, hour and day that they are there in the Middle East. We are our brother's and sister's keeper, and that is the bottom line! Now, I Ask You: Is This Truth?

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African-Americans Must Unite in an Effort to Build Better Future

By Brandon Williams
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As January arrives every year, there also arrives the annual dispute over the National recognition and deceleration of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. A holiday which many people believe should be recognized at the national, state, and local levels.

Not every state is so enthusiastic about this proposal, such as Arizona. Governor Mecam's reason was that the state did not have the finances to establish another paid holiday. To date, there are three states that still do not recognize the holiday: Arizona, Montana, and New Hampshire. With all of the young and old black people all over America who constantly articulate this issue, I say "why are we still playing in kindergarten?"

First, I would like to state that I, myself, believe that Martin Luther King does indeed need to be recognized, as well as many other Black men who have devoted their lives, and in some cases, died for the liberation of Black

people. In my opinion, we as Black people need to remember these men in our hearts and souls, and day to day lives. We do not need to beg the government to recognize men who fought to change the society, the very government that, in some cases, has taken them from our midst. We ask to recognize them as great leaders of society.

Men such as Dr. King did not fight inhumane people with humanity and love so that we would establish a holiday for him. Malcolm X did not promote consciousness, the right of self-defense, promote Pan-Africanism, and expose injustices in the government to have a holiday established. W.E.B. DuBois did not research the social aspects of racism and the color line so we can fight the government to recognize him. All of these men and many more, served their purposes. We as Black people must take a part of each of them in our daily lives as we carry on the fight for the liberation of Black people in America and abroad.

We as Black people must work to rebuild our communities and rid them of crime and drugs. It is up to us to guide them on the way to progression. If we do not begin to focus our minds on matters that will promote our progress into the next century, we may not have enough intelligent, strong Black men to have a long, lasting future.

At a time when there are more Black men in prison and in the Armed Services than there are in post-secondary education, can we afford to focus our minds on less important matters? This travesty is even seen here at Winston-Salem State University where Black women outnumber black men at a ratio of two to one.

If we as Black people are going to unite and fight for a cause, please, let it be for a cause that promotes our progress as a people into the future, and not a cause that still has us playing in kindergarten.

Multi-Racial System in South Africa and the United States Examined

Brandon Williams
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A report released by the Sentencing Project, a non-profit organization, says that the United States is currently ranked number one in the number of men incarcerated. The U.S. now has over a million men in prison, and at the present time, there are approximately six hundred and ten thousand black men in prison.

A report released in late 1990 by the same non-profit organization said that one of every four black men between the ages of twenty to twenty-nine were incarcerated or on probation. Black women also topped the list among women who are incarcerated.

These results can cause Black people to lose faith in black men or become apathetic and ignorant to the situation, and cause false stereotypes of Black men. We must analyze this situation on a broader perspective because the country with the second highest number of men in prison is South Africa. U.S. Black men are incarcerated at an enormously higher rate Is this a

coincidence that, in the two countries where racism or white supremacy are most practiced, that black men top the countries' prison rates?

The South African government practices an inhumane infraction against the Black South Africans, who are the majority in South Africa. Within this apartheid system, white police officers are given authority to brutalize Black South Africans, and throw them in jail, and hold them for thirty days or more without being told of their offenses or being charged. Black South African men can be murdered or thrown in jail for any number of reasons for their protest against the government. Mandela spent 28 years in prison. This government is out to destroy black men of South Africa without a doubt, and in a very open way.

The U.S. practice a similar injustice against Black men of the U.S.? But unlike South Africa, it is done in such an articulated manner that many Black and White people do not see it, or just wish not to. U.S. police force is able to brutalize Black men, jail them, and in many cases, take their lives without facing

prosecution?

An attorney by the name of Charles Jerome Ware, author of a statewide report on police brutality, said that 27 out of 28 reported police brutality cases involved Black males in a single quarter in the city of Baltimore. Many people will say that it takes barely nothing to file police brutality. But historically, police have proven their bias toward Blacks, men, especially.

There are numerous cases in which black men were murdered by police officers, and the only resolution was to sue. But how many of these cases result in the prosecution of officers? Without a doubt, Black men are entangled in a criminal justice system where they are given harsher sentences than their White counterparts who committed the same crime. Does America indulge in a system that prosecutes and murders black men on the same level as that of South Africa, but in a more covered up and highly deceitful approach?

Many will argue my claim, saying that Black men put themselves in their position due to the recent rush of Black men indulging in drugs. In response, I

say that if you have a pest such as a mouse in your home, and you want to get rid of that pest, you set a trap, leave cheese as bait, and then the cheese draws the mouse to the trap where it is then killed.

Finally, the next time you hear, read, or even see black men being arrested, murdered, etc, do not be so quick to judge black men as violent or prone to commit crimes, because they are held within a system that anticipates their destruction. If a Black man is guilty of a crime, then give him a sentence that is equal to a White male who commits the same crime; or the next time a police officer wrongfully takes a Black man or any man's life, let him pay as any man would.

In conclusion, the next time you think of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, or the Bill of Rights, when you may have to enter a courtroom and deserve your equal rights under these items, remember this: in 1776, we as Black people, were only free to do whatever our masters told us to do.