

WHAT IS AN AMERICAN? by Abdul Malik KAMALI

THIS QUESTION CONTINUES TO COME UP IN CONVERSATIONS WITH VARIOUS BROTHERS SO... I THOUGHT THAT I'D PUT DOWN A FEW THOUGHTS...

BEING AS MY ANCESTORS WERE FORCIBLY BROUGHT TO THIS ENGLISH COLONY IN 1619. (SEPARATED FROM THEIR FAMILIES, HOMELAND, LANGUAGES, AND RELIGIONS!) AND CONVERTED TO "AMERICANS", BY RASH, LYING, AND MURDER! I FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO IDENTIFY AS AN "AMERICAN". I'D BE ASKED TO SPITTING IN THE FACES OF MY ANCESTORS! SUBCONSCIOUSLY ACQUIESCING TO SOCIOCULTURAL OPPRESSION & AFRIKANIST EXPRESSION/DENIAL(S)! WHILE ACCEPTING THE SOCIOCULTURAL & POLITICAL NORMS OF THEIR CAPTORS. A FORM OF SELLING OUT, IN MY VIEW. I RESIST SAID DESIGNATION...

SOME BROTHERS SAY THAT, BY VIRTUE OF BEING BORN IN AMERIKA, ONE IS "AMERICAN". TO THIS I SAY, "AT THE CREATION OF THE 13 COLONIES OF THE U.S. OF A... THE FOUN-
-ING MEN, (WHOM MAJORITY OWNED AFRIKANS BTW) CRAFTED A CONSTITUTION! AS ONLY EUROPEANS PARTICI-
-PATED IN THE CREATION PROCESS, NO CONSIDERATION(S) WERE GIVEN TO (FOR ENSLAVED) HUE-MANS. LEADING TO LEGALIZED ENSLAVEMENT OF CAPTURED AFRIKANS! AND THEFT & GENO-
-CIDE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES! AND AN ACCEPTED DOCTRINE OF WHITE SKIN SUPREMACY / DARKER PEOPLE(S) INFER-
-IORITY! ONLY DUE TO A CIVIL WAR, AND A NEED FOR THE "NORTH" (I.E. NON-SLAVE CAPTORS) TO UNDERMINE "SOUTHERN" FORS! WERE ENSLAVED AFRIKANS FREED FROM BONDAGE.

→ ... AND THEN THE STRATEGY WAS ONLY TO UTILIZE NEWLY FREED CAPTIVES TO DEFEAT SECESSION ARMY! NOT TO GIVE THEM EQUALITY OR JUSTICE. THE ONLY DIFFERENCE(S) BETWEEN NORTH CAUCASIANS AND SOUTH CAUCASIANS WERE: ^{A)} ONE WANTED TO CONTINUE TO SUSTAIN ITS ECONOMY VIA FREE (SLAVE) LABOR & THE OTHER WANTED ACCESS TO SAME, SO AS TO EXPLOIT THEM SOCIOECONOMICALLY, WITHIN THEIR FACTORIES UP NORTH! AND ^{B)} ONE WAS OVERTLY RACIST & THE OTHER COVERTLY RACIST! THE PROOF OF THIS IS FOUND IN THE FACT THAT THE NEWLY FREED AFRICANS HAD TO WAIT ¹³ 13 YEARS AFTER THE SO-CALLED EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION TO BE RECOGNIZED AS U.S. CITIZENS! ⁵ 5 YEARS AFTER EMANCIPATION, TO BE GIVEN THE RIGHT TO VOTE! FACTS!

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE READS, "I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND TO THE REPUBLIC FOR WHICH IT STANDS, ONE NATION UNDER GOD, INDIVISIBLE, WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL". THE AFOREMENTIONED TRUTHS EXPOSE THIS PLEDGE AS EITHER: AN OUBTROUS LIE ²¹! EXCLUSIVE TO CAUCASIANS ²¹! OR DE- LUSIONAL ²¹! TO GO EVEN FURTHER...

THROUGHOUT THE NEXT HUNDRED YRS. (1865-1965), THE U.S. GOVT. (K=KKK) TURN A BLIND EYE AS EMANCIPATED CAPTIVES WERE THREATENED, BEATEN, RAPED, FIREBOMBED OUT OF BOTH HOME(S) AND CHURCH(S), FINALLY... BE HUNG BY THE THOUSANDS! IN ADDITION, THOSE ATTEMPTING TO EXERCISE THEIR 'SO-CALLED' VOTING RIGHTS! WERE ASSAULTED & INTIMIDATED OUT OF VOTING ²¹! THE STATE(S) CREATED VARIOUS BARRIERS TO DISCOURAGE THESE NEWLY EMANCIPATED CAPTIVES FROM VOTING! BARRIERS SUCH AS: LIT- ERACY TESTS, IDENTIFICATION MANDATES, ETC! THIS IS UNCONSCION- ABLE, IN THAT MOST EMANCIPATED FOLK COULD NOT READ! WRITE!

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→ ... yet, were expected to eventually pass literacy tests. They were "free", in name only it appears. "Citizens" of this country, no less!

It was only after publicized killings... of both Caucasian civil rights workers (ML), four beautiful black children in a church, culminating with televised images of Alabama KKKops turning fire hoses onto peacefully protesting U.S. citizens. Various civil rights legislation was passed. Thousands of lives lost... thousands of folk forcibly displaced. All U.S. citizens by the way!

In the 54 yrs. since the Voting Rights Act of 1965, many things have occurred. The U.S. of A has experienced the industrial revolution, various laws protecting gays, fetuses, and prisoners. Two world wars... 9-11 terrorist murder(s)... wars initiated, in which thousands of U.S. soldiers have been killed and/or wounded. Many of whom were folk of color. Seen as "patriots" when in uniform waving "old glory". And yet, once back in the U.S. of A, the reality of "nigger" comes into view. (NOTE: World Wars occurred prior to 1965)

The reality of "nigger" is a coarse way of saying "institutionalized racism". For the majority of African descendants living in the U.S.A., being not Caucasian translates into a very unpredictable →

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→ AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS EXISTENCE(S)! FROM DISCRIMINATORY HOUSING, JOB OPPORTUNITIES, AND POLICING! THE DESCENDANTS OF ENSLAVED AFRICANS ARE ACUTELY AWARE OF THE PENALTY(S) OF BEING COLORED! THE REALITY OF BEING FOLLOWED BY SECURITY AT ALL STORES! DENIED JOBS BECAUSE OF ONE'S AFROCENTRIC HAIRSTYLE(S) OR NAME(S)! PROFILING BY KKKOPS, CONDITIONED BY ANTI-AFRICAN SOCIALIZATION! THEY'RE PULLED OVER, INTERROGATED, INTIMIDATED! WHEN THEY ASK WHY THEY WERE PULLED OVER? THEY'RE TOLD STANDARD KKKOP SPEAK, "YOU WERE DRIVING ERRATICALLY, YOU CHANGED LANES WITHOUT SIGNALING! YOU ACTED SUSPICIOUS! ETC ETC... AS IF ONE'S INNATE FEARS(S) OF KKKOPS, BROUGHT ON BY A LIFETIME OF ABUSE AND/OR DEATH AT THE HANDS OF KKKOPS, WAS NOT ENOUGH TO PUT A BLACKMAN/WOMAN IN ABJECT FEAR OF IMMEDIATE HARM?!

THE DRAMATIC INCREASE(S) IN SHOOTING DEATHS BY KOPS UPON OFTEN TIMES UNARMED MEN/WOMEN OF COLOR! CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES THE FACT THAT THEY/WE ARE NOT DEEMED CITIZENS! Simply put... BLACK/AFRICANS BORN IN U.S. LIVES DO NOT MATTER! HOW CAN I, OR ANY PERSON OF AFRICAN ANCESTRY FOR THAT MATTER, IGNORE THE CONSISTENT EXAMPLES OF BIAS(ES), HATRED, AND GENOCIDE PERPETUATED AGAINST OUR BROTHERS/SISTERS? IN SO DOING, CONTINUING TO EITHER CLAIM, OR WILLINGLY ACCEPT BEING DESIGNATED AS AN "AMERICAN"? I AM NO AMERICAN! I AM, AS BROTHER MALCOLM (nee: HATTI MALIK - SHABAZZ) SAID, "... A VICTIM OF AMERICANISM".

I identify as "New African"! Which is, a proud descendant of Africans, enslaved & forcibly brought to the

English colony! The 'New Afrikan' promotes unity within a higher ethnic community. But also - a desire for solidarity to (with other ethnic communities, based on class (i.e. poor working-class) and objectives)! 'New Afrikan' ideology is rooted in struggle... an acute understanding of the historical miscarriage(s) which caused us to be enslaved (colonialist expansion (a need for free-labor)) and in turn, exploited socioeconomically from 1865 - today! Until we, as a disfavored minority, are truly the recipients of: freedom, justice, and equality! I am not able to, nor am I willing to accept any 'Amerikan' designation(s)!

In the spirits of: George H. Jackson, Fred Hampton, James 'Doc' Holiday, and all of the unnamed he/she-roes of the New Afrikan Independence Movement (N.A.I.M.) we stand firm!

In Struggle -

Abdulmalik KAMAU

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