

The One-Way Road

by [Myron Gananian](#) (July 2020)



The Promised Land (detail), Michael Armitage, 2019

It is disheartening to contemplate that the current Leftist Black Leadership is leading its community to a future which holds no promise of success, benefit, or improvement for either them or the rest of our nation and will likely guarantee the destruction of everything we are hoping will lead to a secure and better society for all. The proportion of the United States' population and the potential of the contribution of black people to our nation should compel them to heed the warnings that follow.

Ask what distinguishes the goals and motivations espoused by their leaders from every preceding social and

political attempt in the United States to improve the status of a segment or even all of our nation?

What was, for the most part, lacking in our Revolution, our relations with England after the War of 1812, in Reconstruction, in our dealings with Spain after the Spanish-American War, in our attitude toward the vanquished after both World Wars, integration of the Military, the efforts of Dr. King, the Civil Rights Act, school integration, and virtually every single attempt to achieve social and political progress?

What was absent in all of these great strides in the growth of our nation was the attitude of *revenge*. Consider that the current attempts at racial equality under the guise of justice are in reality revenge. This great nation has had many solutions for conflict but resorting to revenge was not one of them. It is impossible for revenge to lead to anything but endless grief. Grief is always the end product of revenge for perpetrator as well as recipient, it is omnivorous and insatiable. Revenge will never have enough revenge. No finer certification of Shakespeare's, "As if increase of appetite had grown. By what it fed on . . . ". Revenge has many handmaidens. One is *comeuppance*. White folks are getting their due. That is sure to benefit the black community. What is the payoff from *retaliation*? Where does one find *vindictiveness* in Dr. King's words? Oh, but how about *retribution*! Surely that will uplift Blacks! And consider the salve of *payback*. Lest we forget; Revenge's Cousins, Anger and Hate.

"Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves."—Confucius

Revenge does not countenance justice. Justice and revenge will never meet. Of the many aspects of revenge the most malignant may be the conviction in the absolute certainty in the righteousness and purity of the cause. It is well to remember Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr's profound

observation: "Certitude leads to violence." The litany of evil from revenge is long-hate, intolerance, anger, deafness, and blindness. Therefore, revenge is not a recommendation as a solution for a single one of the world's problems. Look far and wide for an example of benefit from revenge and you will find none. Do not use the inability of our Founding Fathers to eliminate slavery at the birth of our nation as the starting point of your efforts for consolation. Their concern was tempered by the political and social realities of the time. You discount history at your peril. It is a high compliment to them to be held in such high regard as to have had the ability to solve such a vexatious blight as slavery with the stroke of a pen.

Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation."—Martin Luther King

Sentiments of this ilk are universal. But in the United States they were never the primary motivation and were held in check. How and when, then, did the discourse change? There can be no denying that such a transformation did indeed come to the surface though formerly absent. Perversely this likely occurred coincident with Blacks achieving the status in our society which was long sought-being included in the political system, experiencing fame and acceptance in politics, the entertainment and sports fields, the end of miscegenation, appearing in TV ads as part of biracial families, in virtually every TV commercial, movies, and in Academia. It is painful to speculate that these very achievements permitted or even encouraged Blacks to allow the all too understandable malignancy of revenge to surface and to dictate our interaction. What an affront to Dr. King's legacy. It is not a compliment to the Black Community that having a Black President may have helped to unleash such a self-destructive attitude, as if by tacit permission. Furthermore, insisting that institutionalized racism is rampant silences

every attempt to put this stain behind us.

Is it possible that this unspoken evil force underlies the current conflict of the Black Community with authority? Revenge absolves the vengeful from obeying society's norms. Might this be the reason for the greater likelihood that Black encounters with the police will escalate? Absolution from authority is the soul of anarchy.

The past provides much evidence for the futility of efforts based on such a dark, self-defeating ambition. History does not lack for evidence of revenge as a driving force. The most glaring examples reside in the Middle East, the birthplace of religions, permanently imbued with the hatred engendered by revenge and its progeny. The Middle East is nothing if not vengeful. Revenge has devoured the Middle East, and has kept it from contributing significantly to modern progress for almost two millennia. Recovery most likely impossible. This historical fact should warn the Black Community about what will sprout from what they sow.

In contrast the opposite outcome was achieved as well as could be anticipated in South Africa at the end of Apartheid. Though far from satisfying everyone, unquestionably it avoided the blood bath which could rightly have been expected, no small feat. To establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission at the dawn of the end of Apartheid speaks eloquently to the effort to keep the ugliness and malevolence of revenge out of the shaky future of that cursed country. The current situation confirms that even such a laudable effort is unable to resist the lure of getting even.

If it is agreed that if any of this is reasonable then at a minimum Black Leadership must stop listening to and playing the siren song of revenge, for it has an irresistible appeal for demagogues in buying the connivance of their followers. Remember Germany after Weimar. Revenge always wears camouflage. Be warned-exit from such dead ends is very

difficult. The greatest difficulty may come from an unappreciated consequence, the divisiveness, the centrifugal effect, of parsing out one segment of our nation from another. This is what slavery did.

The noble quest for justice is easily corrupted. Therefore we must all listen to this dire tocsin from Dr. Byram Karasu: “There’s a greater pleasure in the unconsciousness of revenge. It’s more powerful than success.”

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