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**From the Perspective of the Betrayed: An Organizing Strategy  
Represent Our Resistance  
By Dr. Lenore J. Daniels, PhD  
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board**

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“Maybe nothing ever happens once and is finished.”

-William Faulkner, *Absalom! Absalom!*

“comrade, tell them what the scoundrel’s doing to  
the people,  
to those of us who carried him to the top where  
he laughs  
like a laughing hyena over our sorrows,  
tell it, tell it like it is, comrade, neither my death  
nor

our long suffering is important because the struggle is

long,

but break out about this suffering,

speak out, comrade, don't forget."

-Pablo Neruda, "Luis Cortes"

Noam Chomsky has argued that the U.S.'s charge that it is battling "foreigners" in Iraq and Afghanistan, that these "foreigners" are wrecking havoc in the streets and rural areas with their "foreign weapons," is a display of the U.S. Empire's arrogance. The U.S. "occupation" in Iraq and Afghanistan doesn't recognize itself as "foreign" with a "foreign military" wrecking havoc with its "foreign weapons" on the population in these countries.

Dr. Ron Walters has suggested that Sen. Barack Obama's success is due in part to the language of his campaign. It is a campaign that refers to "we" and "us" rather than the typical "I" as in "I can do for you," heard from other political candidates. And his "we" - his lesser known "we" are corporations. He likes this "we" to have all manner of subsidies while his "we" excludes Katrina victims and those on death row like Mumia Abu Jamal and countless others like him (see Joshua Franks, "Why I Can't Support Barack Obama").

Sen. Hillary Clinton, in her final campaign speech, explained that she had fought for those people struggling to provide housing for their families. They want to be able to pay bills and purchase food, she said, and "have a little left over at the end of the month." A little left over at the end of the month - is normalized! A little left over at the end of the month - to spend at the mall?

Clinton then urged these people with "a little left over at the end of the month" to see themselves as "equal" with others like herself and Obama (millionaires)! "We are all Americans" and "we" need to "work hard to elect Barack Obama." That "work hard, again. But this time, work hard for Obama, for the Democrats. Then "we" won't bother *you* again because "we" will forget *you* (people-with-a little-left-over-at-the-end-of-the-month, people living paycheck to paycheck) until the next election!

Then I heard the word "suffrage." Sen. Clinton forgot that for Native, Blacks, Latina, and Asian Americans "suffrage" refers to a different history. For Black Americans, "suffrage" refers to that betrayal of Black women, enslaved women, represented by Sojourner Truth who argued for the inclusion of Black women. "Ain't I a woman?" she asked. But the Americans - the white men and white women - referred to the narrative of white supremacy and conjured the horrors of Black freedom, the wild beast among the enslaved - Black men! Burnt out of their homes and off their lands, Native American women and their children were hunted down and killed on sight.

This deliberate manipulation of language by New World people desecrates the graves of the Old World's people.

March 12, 2008, the Human Rights Tribune (HRT) reported an announcement. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) based in Geneva, Switzerland, announced for the second time in less than two years that it has found

"stark racial disparities" in U.S. institutions. CERD, for example, raised concerns "about the death penalty and the sentencing of minors to life without parole" - in the U.S. This government responded with a written and oral testimony in which it claimed that "more black children get life without parole because they commit more crimes." Black children commit more crimes! CERD found this laughable.

The U.S. government refused "to take effective actions to end racist practices" against American Indians, Alaska Natives, and indigenous peoples, Blacks, Latino/as in the areas of "criminal justice, housing, healthcare, an education." According HRT, "the CERD also voiced strong concerns regarding environmental racism and the environmental degradation of indigenous areas of spiritual and cultural significance, without regard to whether they are on 'recognized' reservations lands."

Lenny Foster, Dine (Navajo), representing the Native American Prisoners Rights Coalition as a delegate to CERD observed, according to HRT, that the U.S. was "in denial."

Ajamu Baraka of the Human Rights Network, representing some 250 rights advocacy organizations said that the U.S. "has exposed to the world the extent to which racial discrimination has been normalized and effectively made permissible in many areas of American life."

CERD also considered the "indefinite detention" of "enemy combatants" at the Guantanamo prison. We now know that to be a "sovereign" nation again Iraq must agree to U.S. military bases and agree to immunity for its soldiers and private, corporate contractors. Americans, after all, are not "foreign."

The business of dehumanizing others, particularly people of color, is the business of normalizing violence against us.

But more---

On June 9, 2008, the HRT reported that the U.S. has disengaged from the UN Human Rights Council. It has abandoned the victims of its violence and has normalized the process of betraying the people. Love America if you are "foreign;" wave flags, wear flag pins, and pay homage to America if you are Native, Black, Brown, and Yellow Americans and be betrayed as your reward!

The U.S. Empire "actively" participated in the universal Periodic Review (UPR) process where 32 countries were "scrutinized" in April and May, according to HRT. The Empire "actively" scrutinized and contributed recommendations regarding Romania, Japan, Guatemala, Peru, Tunisia, Ukraine, Indonesia, and others." Others!

Peter Splinter of Amnesty International said that the government "has lost its mind. How could it believe it is going to improve human rights by running away?"

Poor Mr. Splinter! He seems astonished to discover what the Left has known for a long while. It never had a "mind," as in human mind. It never had a "heart," as in human heart. It has always had a fantasy of grandeur in which it strives to make reality. The U.S. doesn't run away from anything; it simply writes the Others' obituary, constantly, while depicting itself as *the* benevolent patriarch of the world.

But the "victims" of this violent fantasy are the betrayed.

Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) read all 35 articles of impeachment against King George on the House floor, June 9, 2008, and while the motion to send the measure

to the Judiciary Committee - that's the committee Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.) chairs - the "Democratic leaders in the House seem determined to block" the measure (*Raw Story*). Conyers takes his orders from "impeachment-is-off-the-table"-Speaker Nancy Pelosi, from the cabal of neoliberals in cahoots with the regime of Empire.

And the King himself, while apologizing to the Germans for *saying* he was a shoot'em up cowboy - for *saying*, (for publicly verbalizing the narrative of white supremacy), he was going to "smoke'em out" - his regime has pulled out of the UN Human Rights Council! And the neoliberals sit by - silent!

Paulo Freire told us that he could not give his name to "peacemakers," to a neoliberalism (in conjunction with the neoconservatives) that calls "upon the wretched of the earth to be resigned to their fate." "My voice is in tune with a different language, another kind of music. It speaks of resistance, indignation, that just anger of those who are deceived and betrayed" (*Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, And Civic Courage*). This "fatalistic philosophy of neoliberal politics abandons whatever threatens "the values of the market."

We of the Left are reminded by Freire to speak from within an ethics that is not "afraid to condemn the kind of ideological discourse" that exploits labor, that manipulates truth and turns it into "mere rumor," that fabricates illusions to entrap the weak and defenseless. **This ethics of the Left must feel "itself betrayed and neglected"** (my emphasis).

We know about snakes who claim they will not bite us but will gladly take us across the river on their backs. And we when we arrive on the other side, the snakes have commenced to consume us. We have asked why, and the snakes have answered that it's our memory of betrayal that has failed us. They are merely snakes, doing snake business!

And if we can't remember our history in the U.S. or this African tale, there's another story from long ago in which a young man asked a group of "friends" to stand by him, to witness with him on a night that tests his commitment to the ethics of betrayal. He *knew* "friend" Judas was all ready with the ruling regime, already talking and revealing his whereabouts. The remaining, *self-proclaiming* "friends" swore they would stay at his side. They would stay up and "tarry" here and "watch" because, after all, they had spoken out against the injustice facing the poor, hungry, homeless, and exploited. The betrayed. But the "friends" fell asleep. While they slept, the young man reflected on his commitment to the people and what was to come. He prayed and looked within himself, remembering what he couldn't abandon, couldn't betray.

The "friends," the neoliberals of his time, slept.

Judas, paid for his collaboration with the regime, returns with the regime's soldiers at his side. He kisses the regime's target, and the "friends" scatter. In this seemingly peaceful garden, the young man *knew* the betrayal of his people and himself. It's a knowledge that he doesn't take to his grave, for the "friends" write about it - after the fact, of course.

The implications of this episode are forgotten today by the collective right-wing and left-wing, Black and white, halleluiah choir. Today, thanks to corporate media, *Judas* has witnesses. The betrayed don't have witnesses. Within the regime or among the cabal of neoliberals, Black or white, there are profiteers who continue to betrayal of the masses of suffering people; they continue from on high and low to collaborate with the capitalist Empire of the U.S. They witness - but they are witnesses of


consumerism and the values of the market.

"Maybe nothing ever happens once and is finished." But we of the Left must make a stand similar to that young man - here and now. We must organize as witnesses for human interests, not market interests. We must do so from the perspective of the betrayed because we are the Left, among the betrayed people of this our Earth. We must stand and never forget!

**BlackCommentator.com** Editorial Board member, Lenore Jean Daniels, PhD, has been a writer, for over thirty years of commentary, resistance criticism and cultural theory, and short stories with a Marxist sensibility to the impact of cultural narrative violence and its antithesis, resistance narratives. With entrenched dedication to justice and equality, she has served as a coordinator of student and community resistance projects that encourage the Black Feminist idea of an equalitarian community and facilitator of student-teacher communities behind the walls of academia for the last twenty years. Dr. Daniels holds a PhD in Modern American Literatures, with a specialty in Cultural Theory (race, gender, class narratives) from Loyola University, Chicago. Click [here](#) to contact Dr. Daniels.

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