Government is the Ultimate Teacher: Buffalo, Uvalde, Ramallah and Ukraine

A ram may bully with its heart instead of its horns.
Ghanaian Proverb

The government of a nation teaches the *whole* people. Parents, teachers, spiritual leaders, scholars, journalists, coaches all attempt to teach our youth, our children; but the government teaches the *whole* people. How can Biden, Putin, Zelenskyy, or Bennett, with their hands and mouths dripping with blood, declare that 'violence is not the answer?' Especially, as they are spending billions on war and mass death; providing a clear, unambiguous, lesson that, to them, violence, killing, and murder is the way to solve problems, whether real or imagined. These government leaders certainly believe that violence is a solution to problems and disagreements.

United States Supreme Court Justice, Louis Brandeis in the early 20th century makes clear: "government is the potent, the omnipresent teacher. For good or for ill, it teaches the whole people by its example. If the government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for law; it invites every man to become a lawbreaker; it invites every man to become a law unto himself."

If, for example, a POTUS can be elected after being heard on tape bragging about grabbing women in their private parts, the chances of respecting the autonomy of women are slim to none. When a POTUS defies the laws of science and scientists every Tom, Dick and Harry becomes, an expert, a law unto himself, and fighting Covid becomes a personal, private matter.

The murderers in Buffalo, N.Y., Uvalde, TX, Ramallah, Palestine and Ukraine learned their lessons from their government, this time under teachers like POTUS Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister, Naftali Bennett and President of

Russia, Vladimir Putin; and, we must include on this list, President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Each one of them a War Criminal and guilty of Crimes Against Humanity. Each one of them without an ounce of mercy or compassion, for the people suffering for their arrogance and hubris. And, like the individual criminal, a nation's defiance of International Law, as promulgated by the United Nations (UN), the International Criminal Court (ICC), or International Court of Justice (ICJ) "invites every [country] to become a law unto [itself]". Defying, undermining, even sabotaging, some of the major institutions providing the infrastructure for "International Law" the "creation of a world government" Einstein spoke of as the "only salvation for civilization, or even the human race."

Ajamu Baraka, *Black Agenda Report* editor and columnist and Green Party Vice Presidential candidate makes the following observations. "It is important that we understand that the racist assault on the Black community in Buffalo did not occur in a socio-cultural or political vacuum. The premeditated murder of thirteen human beings, eleven of them Black, by a young white man wearing a sonnenrad or black sun, one of the symbols of white supremacy that the white supremacists wear in Ukraine, had a perverted logic perfectly consistent with the values of the U.S. settler-colonial project. And while the liberal, white supremacist settler corporate press tries to muddle-up the connection between the Buffalo shooter and Ukrainian white supremacists, we must make the connection, including the attempts to obscure the relationship by the media, and we must be clear on its political implications."

Baraka questions, as should we all: "Morally, what is the difference between the attack on Libya by NATO, an instrument of white supremacist state power that resulted in up to 50,000 African people dying and was largely supported by the public in the West, and the mass shootings of (Dylann) Roof and Payton

Gendron?" The Charleston, S.C. mass murderer and the Buffalo. N.Y. mass murderer, respectively.

Danny Haiphong, BAR contributing editor, adds: "And the fact that Payton Gendron was wearing a white supremacist Black Sun symbol so commonly seen on the uniforms Nazi Azov fighters in Ukraine is no coincidence. White supremacy is a global system of social control that is directed at any person, government, or movement (Russian, Chinese, Black American, Muslim, Arab, etc.) that is perceived to threaten the domination of Euro-American imperialism. Joe Biden is a champion of and supports this system."

Indeed, as noted by Ben Norton, journalist at the *Grayzone*, in December 2020 and again in November of this year (2021) the UN General Assembly voted on the Resolution "combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fueling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance." In 2020, 130 countries voted in favor of the resolution, 51 countries abstained, and 2 countries voted against the resolution. The latter two were Ukraine and the United States.

Yes, "a ram" or a government may "bully" with its horns, its weapons, even weapons of mass destruction. Or it may "bully" with its heart; that is, with compassion, helpfulness, mercy, and love. The West has yet to reach this level of Civilization. Which is why when asked what he thought of western civilization, Gandhi replied: "I think it would be a good idea."

Gandhi's precocious and precious pupil, Martin Luther King, Jr., warned us, prophetically, with what far too many take as simply oratorical or poetic pabulum. In his memorable speech in Memphis on the eve of his death, King expressed in clear terms the urgency and necessity of non-violence: "Men for years now have been talking about war and peace. Now no longer can they just talk about it. It is

no longer a choice between violence and non-violence in this world, it is non-violence or non-existence."

Fritz Pointer is a retired professor of English and African Studies. He is the vice president of ***Democratic World Federalists*** *and has published numerous scholarly articles and three books: A Passion to Liberate: La Guma's South Africa (2001): African Oral Epic Poetry: Praising the Deeds of a Mythic Hero (2013). Being the older brother of the popularly known singing group,* The Pointer Sisters*, he has co-authored Fairytale: The Pointer Sisters' Family Story (2020). Pointer's main interests include combating racism, advancing human rights, ending war, eliminating nuclear weapons, and nonviolent solutions to global and domestic problems.*