

We Cannot Breathe Until We are Free



FREE DEMOCRATIC
PALESTINE
M O V E M E N T

The Palestinian American community stands steadfastly with our Black sisters and brothers in their uprising to stop the rampant and deliberate violence inflicted on them by the state. We understand your pain and believe that our peoples' fight for justice are organically and historically intertwined. The civil Rights and Black Power movements have always drawn this connection and highlighted this strong bond since the early 1950s. Today, with the Black Lives Matter movement (BLM), this connection has never been more visible.

This popular uprising of the “unheard and ignored” did not erupt as a reaction to an isolated incident, it is rather a cry in response to the ongoing historical suffering that the black communities have been experiencing for the past 400 years. We, Palestinians, fully understand. The tenacious and resilient spirit of the Black community, their love of peace and freedom, and their stand for justice, despite the great sacrifice and toll on their lives, paid in pain and blood is uplifting. They keep rising no matter what the odds are and what the system deploys against them. They will achieve their goals of freedom and liberation as will all the victims of injustice.

Black communities in America are acting in self-defense. They live under a constant threat from deadly racism, poverty, air and water pollution, drugs, the Criminal Justice system, and its prisons, and police. How can one live under the continuous fear of whenever a loved one leaves home that they might not return? Palestinians living under Zionist military occupation and oppression know the feeling very well. But the Black community keeps rising as do the Palestinians. This unshakable determination is the biggest fear of White supremacists and Zionists. Trump echoed this fear by threatening to kill the protesters, “when the looting starts, the shooting starts.” This phrase was coined by white supremacist, Miami Police Chief, Walter Headley, who used violent reprisals on black protesters in 1967. Some things never change.

The racist crime inflicted on George Floyd is the latest in a historical systematic trend that took countless black lives, started with a savage enslavement of millions of Africans. This violence that is being perpetrated upon Black people, and the oppressed and disenfranchised is being committed by the same system that exacted a genocidal destruction of native American nations. This also parallels the US Empire's systematic crimes against brown people in many parts of the world, to maintain a hegemonic structure of domination and exploitation.

The mainstream media is focusing on “looting” to demonize the protesters and their cause, while ignoring the fact that Blacks, Native Americans, and brown peoples of developing countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, have been looted and killed continuously. The media attacks on the BLM activities is in part caused by its stance in support of Palestinian human rights. The source of violence and injustice springs out of the racist political system not from its victims. Blaming the victim is an archaic trick and does not pass anymore.

The “comfortably numb” US public must begin to realize how the US system and government practices are contradictory to peace, justice, and sustainable habitat on this planet. The US system and policies that perpetrates extreme economic and social injustice while extolling alleged virtues of human rights,

freedom, and democracy is deceiving and needs to be changed. The problem is not in the mere retraining of the racist behavior of the police force, which is symptomatic of the system, but rather digging deep for the root causes of the problem; it is the political system, and this is where we ought to begin.

We in the Free Democratic Palestine Movement (FDPM) stand firmly with the Black Lives Matter (BLM) in their struggle for Justice, Freedom, and Liberation from oppression. The way the US police killed George Floyd and others, resembles the slave patrols who committed massacres against Blacks during slavery. This is an extension of the same system that destroyed the Native American Nations in the name of religion, just as the Zionists did in Palestine.