



In Solidarity with Black Lives Matter

June 21, 2020

“I can’t breathe,” said George Floyd as he was murdered. We lost him, but we did not lose the truth that lives in his telling words. Just as with innumerable martyrs before him in the enduring struggle for justice, George’s words bear witness. They bear witness to the struggle for Black lives to be fully respected, always and everywhere.

We in Insaniyyat, a society of Palestinian anthropologists, affirm George’s testimony. We too can’t breathe. We cannot and will not breathe the toxins of racial oppression. We cannot and will not breathe our relegation by the state to impoverishment, illness, and incarceration. We cannot and will not breathe the supremacy that makes white lives matter more than Black lives, and Native-American, Latinx, and immigrant lives, for that matter. The Movement for Black Lives teaches us that we must insist on breathing justice, indivisible and unalienable, towards all lives in the US and around the world. We must insist that centuries of enslavement and imperial destruction not defeat the desire of Black men, women, and children to live and flourish everywhere and at all times in full equity and dignity.

We live together in a world whose racial systems value some lives more than others, grieve some deaths more than others, and protect some livelihoods more than others. George’s murder reminds us, a reminder that has unfortunately proved necessary, that the story of justice is indivisible. Infractions inflicted upon it in Mississippi or Minneapolis, Louisville or Tallahassee, Cleveland or Georgia, Los Angeles or New York are inevitably entwined with infractions inflicted upon it in Palestine, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, Myanmar, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Brazil, Iraq, and, no doubt, wherever else the US military-industrial criminal complex extends its power to maintain the global capitalist order.

It is this complex of racism, not Black lives, that should be deprived of breath. We hope that today a world is uprising to cut off all oxygen from the dragon of criminal global capital. The powers that wreak havoc on Black bodies and lives should never again be greater than our joint struggle to protect all of our bodies and lives and to forge a just common future.

For we will only defeat the dragon if we recognize the intertwining of our oppression and the equal necessity to intertwine our struggles. Let us truly listen to stories and see faces so we can begin to understand the specific textures and tactics of state violence in the US, Palestine, and around the world. History teaches us that oppression begins to end when the disempowered refuse to let their oppressors’ insecurity defeat them, when they come together and unleash their power.

Here are some resources to support the struggle:

- The Deadly Exchange campaign recognizes the danger of militarized police and state violence.

- Blacks for Palestine addresses the dehumanizing effects of incarceration that harm Black and Palestinian communities, framing them in a robust critique of capitalism, colonialism, and racism.
- The “Together We Rise” curriculum shows how movements can connect to make them all stronger.
- Donations to bail funds (a list prepared by Black Anthropology section of the American Anthropological Association) help free protesters in the current uprising.