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"All it Takes is One"

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Introduction

Malcolm X is often quoted as saying, "The study of history is sufficient to reward all research." In other words, you will be rewarded if you have studied the history of topics and know them in their totality. Now connect the quote with the fact that humans are unique in their ability to transmit the spoken and written word down the generations. Bringing these two important points together helps us to recognize a key fact of history: Ethnic groups that occupy a common geographical territory and reflect a history of one group exploiting or oppressing the other group naturally find their way to violent conflict—unless there is an escape mechanism. The moral of this historical fact is that, if two ethnic groups fit the just elaborated description, then they should rush to fashion an escape mechanism or prepare for war. Another important fact is that history often shows that there is one incident or one person who sparks the conflict between ethnic groups who have experienced the oppressor-oppressed paradigm; hence the title of this essay. Importantly, no matter how long two ethnic groups live in "peace" after experiencing the oppressor-oppressed paradigm, all it takes is for one individual to call forth the memories of the past in order to spark the violent and vicious clashes that characterize these conflicts.

This essay seeks to explore these historical phenomena in detail. First, we assess the "power of one" in an effort to comprehend how one individual is sufficient to stimulate change. We then turn our attention to the multiple historical cases of oppressor-oppressed relationships that ended in violent conflict after periods of "peace." Critically, we find that a key to the avoidance or minimization of conflict is the availability of an escape valve in the form of exodus, partition, or nation formation. We undertake this exercise as a warning to the people of the United States who fit perfectly the oppressor-oppressed paradigm and an extended period of relative peace. History predicts that, at some point in the future, White and Black Americans will experience the type of widespread violent conflict that groups in an oppressor-oppressed relationship have experienced unless they separate beforehand.[i]

The Power of One

We are reminded of one of the most powerful examples of the "power of one" when we define ourselves religiously. Buddhist, Judeo-Christian, and Islamic traditions are all built on the concept that one individual was elected out of the mass of available populations to initiate a new message. The Gautama Buddha, Abraham, Jesus, and Muhammad were lone individuals who

started world changing religious philosophies using the "power of one." This idea of one individual with a transformative presence is also highlighted in religious literature in the pursuit of one who can set things right and preserve mankind. In the case of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the question boiled down to, "Is there one righteous man in the city?" The answer was "yes" and he will be spared."[ii] In the context of the end of time in the Christian tradition as related in the *Revelations* there is a search for one who is worthy/capable of unsealing the great book. The Lamb is found to be sufficient.[iii]

While these examples of the "power of one" are related to producing positive outcomes, history is also replete with examples of the power of one for evil. In the 20th century, the iconic symbol of the "power of one" for evil is Adolf Hitler.

We must add a new category to the "power of one" in addition to good and evil those who use the "power of one" to bring about delayed justice. In the American context, whether we call the names of Nat Turner, Denmark Vessey, H. Rap Brown, or Stokley Carmichael (aka Kwame Ture), these were individuals who sought to stimulate violent action as a way to create long-denied justice. Although oppressors may characterize these personalities as evil, the oppressed, on the other hand, view them as sparking slave rebellions, civil rights protests, and riots as paths to justice.

Oppressor-oppressed relationships do not always have to end in violent conflict. For example, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela used their "power of one" in an effort to resolve ethnically charged situations using a non-violent approach.[iv] What history tells us is that, if there is an escape hatch, then two ethnic groups can end their prolonged and tense relationships amicably. We examine the range of possible outcomes for parties in oppressor-oppressed relationships below. But before we engage in that analysis, let us discuss the nature of long-awaited justice.

Long- Awaited Justice

There are many historical occurrences when oppressor-oppressed ethnic groups exist for extended periods in relative peace before action is taken to usher up justice for the oppressed. The classic case from 2,500-to-3,500 years ago is the case of the Hebrews being oppressed by the Egyptians.[v] This biblical story ends with the Hebrews escaping to the "promised land." Conflict is avoided because there was an escape hatch. Otherwise, history would have been written differently. In all likelihood, we would have found that the Hebrews ultimately engaged in violent clashes with the Egyptians. Either the Egyptians would have defeated them, or the Hebrews would have found a way to defeat the Egyptians. In a worst case scenario, the Egyptians may have been successful in fully absorbing the Hebrews into their society through intermarriage and we would have never known the story of the biblical Jews. In fact, given that Black Americans often identify with the biblical Hebrews, the former face the same possible scenario as did the latter.

In addition to the Hebrew exodus, below we discuss the following oppressor-oppressed relationships: Hindus-Muslims of India; the Hutus-Tutsis of Rwanda; the Christians-Muslims of

Bosnia-Herzegovina; the Sinhalese-Tamils of Sri Lanka; and the Northern-Southern Sudanese. In each case we provide a summary of the conditions that led to conflict. Most importantly, we identify lone individuals who played the most significant role in initiating the conflict or in bringing a just conclusion to the conflict. In each case, we look for the critical "power of one."

Exodus' Hebrews and Egyptians

As the biblical story in Exodus goes, Yahweh calls Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. He is instructed to go with his brother Aaron to Pharaoh and tell him to "let the people go."[vi] Because Pharaoh was benefiting from the oppression of the Israelites, he forbade them to depart. Ultimately, after several rounds of plagues, Pharaoh reluctantly agrees to the request.

You may ask, "Didn't Pharaoh understand that two peoples who experience the oppressor-oppressed paradigm end in violent conflict?" Yes, Pharaoh may have understood this phenomenon. However, Pharaoh had a plan. He cleverly thought that the Egyptians would absorb the Hebrews into Egyptian society. Remember his command to the midwives to kill the male children?[vii] Pharaoh planned to limit the reproductive capacity of the Hebrews, then to take the women and produce his own kind with them. But as the story goes, he did not have a chance to work his plan. The children of Israel escaped across the Red Sea, while Pharaoh and his army drowned.

The key points from this story are that the Egyptians and the Israelites were locked in an oppressor-oppressed relationship, which would likely have ended in violent conflict had it not been for the escape hatch, and that Moses used the "power of one" to effect the liberation of—effect long-delayed justice for—his people.

India's Hindus and Muslims

Beginning with the onset of the Vedic civilization of India and up to around 1100 BCE, Hinduism as a religion formed and pervaded the Indian subcontinent. Over time, that part of the world was subject to infiltration by a variety of cultures and traditions, but Hinduism held sway. It was during this period that higher caste Hindus established themselves as rulers over the lower caste Dalits. After about 700 CE, Islamic sultanates formed in various areas of the subcontinent as Muhammadanism spread its influence. During this period, many Dalits converted to Islam in order to escape the oppression visited upon them by upper-caste Hindus. In 1525, there was a new and powerful incursion of Islamic origin into India that formed the basis of Moghul rule, which dominated the subcontinent until about 1860. However, even during the Moghul era, rulership was tolerant and amenable to Hinduism. This history allowed sizeable populations of Hindus and Muslims to develop jointly in India.[viii]

The British came to rule India at the end of the 19th century. By the early 20th century, it became clear to certain Muslims that, because of an oppressor-oppressed relationship, Hindus and Muslims should form separate communities. Under the British, and with their support, the Hindus pushed down hard on the Muslim population. The writer/philosopher Allama Iqbal was the first major proponent of such separation. Iqbal, in his 1930 address to the All India Muslim

League, called for the formation of a separate Muslim nation.[ix] Iqbal's "power of one" drove this idea forward to the 1947 Indian Partition, at which time Muhammad Jinnah led the formation of a Pakistan State.

In the events surrounding the 1947 partition, from 500,000-to-1 million Muslims and Hindus lost their lives in inter-communal violence as massive numbers of Muslims and Hindus traveled in opposite directions to occupy East and West Pakistan and India.[x] Arguably, even more lives might have been lost over the course of history if the two groups had not chosen to separate at partition. This argument has great weight given the continued high levels of tension and clashes that have characterized the relationship between Pakistan and India and Hindus and Muslims in India even to this day. Clearly, the escape hatch, which minimized loss of life, was partition. Nevertheless, it was the economics and ethnocentric nature of the oppressor-oppressed relationship of the Hindus and Muslims, respectively, which forced partition, and Iqbal was a key actor in fashioning a life-saving escape hatch.

Rwanda's Tutsis and Hutus

In 1994, the Hutus of Rwanda committed genocide against their fellow Tutsis. Tutsi leaders ignored the escape hatch that was available and initiated an insurgent war that produced the genocide against them. Why? Was justice served? What was the nature of the oppressor-oppressed relationship?

Although the scholar Jan Vansina produced certain evidence that ethnic differences surfaced in Rwanda as early as the 17th century, and that Rwandans were not eternally united prior to the advent of European colonizers, popular history traces Rwanda's ethnic problems to the colonizers.[xi] That history argues that the Germans (1890-1916) and Belgians (1918-1962) created and defined ethnicity in Rwanda. First, the colonizers made Tutsi cattle holders to be more highly valued than farming Hutus, while Twa hunters were placed at the bottom of the social hierarchy. The Germans employed the Tutsis to serve as the fulcrum of the former's indirect rule of Rwanda. As a result, Tutsis controlled wealth and positions disproportionate to their population. When the Tutsis leveraged their position to seek independence during the 1950s, the Belgians unearthed the Hamitic immigrant (from Northeast Africa) status of the Tutsis to motivate the Hutus to oppose the Tutsis as controllers of Rwanda. In November of 1959, the Hutus rose up against the Tutsis, killing some 1,000 of them and sending a sizeable contingent of Tutsis into exile in Uganda. A key leader of this Hutu movement was Grégoire Kayibanda, who was an important signatory to the "Bahutu Manifesto," which sought to legitimize Hutu's historical right to rule Rwanda. Under the Hutus' leadership, Rwanda gained independence from Belgium in 1962, with Kayibanda's serving as president.[xii]

In 1972, Kayibanda was replaced by Juvénal Habyarimana in a *coupe d'état*. The latter extended Hutu oppressive practices against Tutsis who remained in the country. Nevertheless, Hutus and Tutsis lived in relative harmony until 1990. At that time, a Rwandan Patriotic Front /Army (RPF/A) of Tutsis rose up in Uganda and poured back into to Rwanda to initiate an insurgent war against the Hutus. Paul Kagame was a key decision maker in this Tutsi effort to claim their right to live respected lives in the Rwandan nation that they had inhabited for centuries.[xiii]

Unfortunately, this insurgency ultimately led to the assassination of President Habyarimana and precipitated the horrific genocide of the Tutsis to which we referred at the outset of this section. From 500,000-to-1 million Rwandans (Tutsis and Hutus) lost their lives during this genocide.

Irrespective of whether all Rwandans lived in peace prior to colonization, or whether the colonizers instigated ethnic conflict, the fact remains that the Tutsi minority had a 1959 escape hatch to leave Rwanda. Out of commitment to justice, they ignored the safety of that escape hatch and sought to force change on Rwanda with the 1990 insurgency. Ultimately, the RPF/A succeeded in forcing change on Rwanda—although at a very high cost. Today, Paul Kagame leads Rwanda in its efforts to place the horrific genocide in the past and to move the nation forward.

The case of the Tutsis and Hutus of Rwanda differs from most cases cited in this essay because the Tutsis, although a "minority" population-wise, exercised power over the majority—at least at the outset of the story. They were viewed as "oppressors". Many of them were forced out of their homeland, but fought their way back in. Nevertheless, the magnitude of the genocide that occurred in Rwanda will not be lost to history, and it may be difficult to create a future in which Tutsis and Hutus view each other as equals. As long as there is a chance that future Hutus will view themselves as oppressed and the Tutsis as oppressors, then either a new escape hatch will have to be formed for the Tutsis, or we may see renewed rounds of genocidal violence in Rwanda. Importantly, Paul Kagame used the "power of one" to help create conditions under which the Tutsis and Hutus can make an effort to live together in peace in Rwanda today.

Bosnia-Herzegovina's Muslims and Christians

While all hell was breaking loose in Rwanda, a different crisis was unfolding in what we know today as Bosnia-Herzegovina (BH)—a republic in the former Yugoslavia. It is a very complicated story that goes back several hundred years. Nevertheless, we condense the story so that you can witness another case of ethnic groups engaging in genocidal war after living together in relative peace for an extended period.

The Islamic Ottoman Empire came to control what was the former Yugoslavia during the 14th century. It was successful in converting to Islam many Serbians and Croatians who were living in that part of Eastern Europe. The Serbs were Eastern Orthodox Christians and the Croats were Roman Catholics.[xiv] Add in newly converted Muslims who are known as Bosniaks and you have an interesting mix of religious ethnicities—and a basis for ethnic nationalism.

One cannot argue that there was perfect peace in the region from the 14th to the 19th centuries. However, there was no major genocidal war between the groups on the order of that to be discussed here. Ethnic nationalism began its expression in a pronounced way in the 20th century. Following World War I, the Serbs came to control the territory known as the former Yugoslavia. The Croats, however, pushed back on the Serbs during the 1920s and 1930s because they viewed Serbian rule as brutal. When the German Nazis invaded the territory during World War II, the Croats took the opportunity to establish a fascist regime (the Ustasha), which took vengeance out mainly on the Serbs.[xv]

After World War II, Field Marshall Josip Broz Tito established a communist state in the former Yugoslavia with six republics (BH, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Slovenia, and Croatia) and two autonomous provinces (Vojvodina and Kosovo). He maintained control and kept the nation unified until his passing in 1980. At that time, communism began to lose its grip as the Cold War came to an end. Fearing that the state would fall into disarray, the Serbs accepted Slobodan Milosevic as their leader.[xvi] Milosevic used his "power of one" to begin to consolidate Serbian power in the former Yugoslavia based on ethnic nationalism. However, his rush to consolidate power beyond Serbia over other republics at the national level caused Croatia and BH to seek independence.

Milosevic, who controlled what remained of Yugoslavia's national army (the JNA), attacked Croatia when the latter claimed independence in 1991. That same military would turn on BH when it claimed independence in 1992.

BH was occupied by Bosniaks (44%), Serbs (31%), and 17% Croats. BH used a referendum to decide whether to seek independence. Serbs who supported Milosevic under ethnic nationalism boycotted the referendum. After independence was declared, many BH Serbs took up arms against their fellow Bosniaks and Croats. Because Serbs occupied no specific area of BH, the stage was set for war throughout BH. Under Serbian nationalism, BH Serbs and the JNA began an ethnic cleansing process within BH to establish a purely Serb republic, which could join Serbia under Milosevic's rule.[xvii] The Serbs were successful in carving out of BH a new republic—the Republika Srpska.

At the same time, under the banner of Croatian nationalism and backed by Croatian forces, BH Croats began their own ethnic cleansing effort against Bosniaks and Serbs to carve out a Croat republic, which could join Croatia under the leadership of President Franjo Tudjman. However, BH Croats and Croatian military forces aligned with BH's army (comprised mainly of Bosniaks) during portions of the conflict to fight BH Serbians and the JNA.[xviii]

The fighting continued until 1995. Due to a United Nations (UN) enforced arms embargo, the Bosniaks were left with limited fighting capabilities. Fortunately, they were able to transform certain factories that they controlled into arms producing units. Nevertheless, they were forced to fight an unwinnable war against the Serbs and, at times, against the Croats. Ultimately, a world outcry against the inhumanity being visited upon the Bosniaks caused UN and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces to enter the region and to help bring the fighting to an end.[xix]

Before they could stop the fighting, however, it is estimated that well over 100,000 citizens of BH—most of them Bosniaks—lost their lives. Hundreds of thousands were injured by the fighting. Keep in mind that life for the living was not pleasant. Many Bosniak males and females were placed in concentration camps under horrific conditions and the latter were often raped by Serbs and Croats as an expression of power and control.[xx]

This genocidal conflict ended with BH being partitioned into the Republika Srpska (49% of the territory) under Serb control and the Federation of BH (51% of the territory) under joint control

by the Bosniaks and Croats.[xxi] To cast it in best terms, the UN acted to make sour lemonade out of lemons.

This is a case of the "power of one" (Milosevic) being used to produce very undesirable outcomes: Genocide; the imposition of inhuman conditions mainly upon Bosniaks; and the partition and physical destruction of a country. Unfortunately, no Bosniak rose up with the "power of one" to seek successfully justice for his/her people. Consequently, we should not conclude that the "case is closed." On the contrary, it may very well be that, at some point in the future, Bosniaks will rise up to serve vengeance on their Croat neighbors and on Serbs with whom they now share a border.

Sri Lanka's Sinhalese and Tamils

Arguably, the Sinhalese-Tamil conflict dates back to the arrival of Tamils to the Island of Ceylon (today, Sri Lanka) in the 2nd century BCE because the two groups jockeyed for territory from the outset.[xxii] On the other hand, one could argue that the conflict originated at the point of independence from the island nation's final colonial master, the British, in 1948. Whatever the starting point, politicization of the two groups' differences by Sinhalese politicians in the 1950s in order to win votes caused Tamils to begin losing faith in the nation's ability to operate democratically and fertilized the seeds of a separatist movement. Fearing relegation to second-class status, Tamils sought self-determination under self-rule.[xxiii]

Although there were periodic frictions, Sinhalese and Tamils lived mainly peaceably together on the island—even under colonial rule (1517-1948). During the 19th century and first half of the 20th century, the British used the Tamil minority to administer the former's affairs using the English language in a traditional "divide and conquer" scheme. Therefore, Tamils held key governance positions, which they desired to maintain. After independence, the majority Sinhalese Buddhist gained control of governance and, under the leadership of Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, sought to solidify that control by formulating a "Sinhala-Only" language policy in 1956. Almost 20 years later in 1972, a new educational standardization policy permitted Sinhalese students to enter science and medicine programs with lower scores than Tamils on admittance exams. Also in 1972, Sri Lanka's Constitution conferred special status on Buddhism, which was an affront to Tamil Hindus. These ethnically divisive actions caused communal riots to erupt in 1958, 1961, 1974, and 1977 in which Tamils were killed, robbed, maimed, and rendered homeless.[xxiv]

Throughout this period, the Tamils organized and formed many groups that opposed Sinhalese discriminatory acts. After founding the Tamil New Tigers (TNT) in 1972, Velupillai Prabhakaran rose to lead the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)—the most important Tamil group. He shaped the LTTE into a finely-tuned organization with military, educational, administrative, financial, diplomatic, and international arms.[xxv]

In July/August 1983, the Sinhalese began a Tamil ethnic cleansing campaign, which was ostensibly sanctioned by the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL). The Tamils fought back and started a war that would extend through the spring of 2009. Noted for suicide bombings that

killed high-ranking GOSL leaders, the LTTE used all available tactics to impose death and suffering on the Sinhalese who comprised an outsized majority. For this ruthless and relentless fighting, much of the world branded the LTTE a "terrorist organization." At the same time, the GOSL permitted its military to act indiscriminately, at times, as it inflicted death and suffering on Tamils.[xxvi]

There were numerous attempts to resolve the crisis over the 26 years that it lasted. India contributed its assistance to resolve the problem. European nations, particularly the Norwegians, came to help. After the turn of the millennium, a 2002 Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) was negotiated, and peace talks between the GOSL and the LTTE were conducted in key cities around the world. The international community pledged USD4.5 billion to assist the nation in reorganizing and rebuilding in a way that would permit the LTTE to have certain autonomous rights in a federal governance system.[xxvii] For a variety of complicated reasons, the CFA broke down. By 2006, the two parties were engaged in full-scale war again. Under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapakse, who was elected in November of 2005, the GOSL raised defense expenditures dramatically and directed its military to squeeze the LTTE out of the northern and eastern regions of the country that the latter occupied.

By 2008, the LTTE was pushed out of its eastern stronghold, and concentrated its forces in the northern province of Jaffna. In late 2008, the Sri Lanka military began attacking Jaffna. Ground and air attacks systematically reduced the territory controlled by the LTTE.[xxviii] Civilians were caught in this squeeze and thousands died and were injured. There were reports of Sri Lankan Air Force bombings of civilian targets on the one hand, and reports of LTTE forcibly conscripting Tamil youth to fight the war on the other. The international community took notice of the bloodbath that was unfolding in northern Sri Lanka.[xxix] On May 18, 2009, Sri Lanka's defense forces captured the last LTTE positions in Jaffna and the LTTE surrendered. On the 19th of May, Prabhakaran was killed along with his top aides as they tried to escape the region in an ambulance.[xxx] The war was over.

Although Prabhakaran and the LTTE were logical in their pursuit of autonomy, their actions were extremist. They were successful in assassinating key leaders and shocking the world with their violence, but they turned the world against them. Moreover, the LTTE's terrorism ultimately motivated the GOSL to initiate an all out war against them. That is not to say that the Sri Lankan military was circumspect in all of its actions. This almost endless war in this small island nation got out of control. Expert negotiators were unable to reconcile the parties. Something besides the principles on which the war was started entered the picture—possibly the wealth that war can bring—and took the entire affair off course.

Unlike other oppressor-oppressed ethnic conflicts, the Sri Lankan War had no heroes who used the "power of one" to secure justice and peace. This war produced at least 70,000 dead; tens of thousands wounded; hundreds of thousands homeless; massive amounts of destroyed infrastructure; billions of dollars wasted; and a fractured Tamil society that may rise up to fight the Sinhalese again.

Sudan's North and South

The story of Southern Sudan, too, evolves out of an economic and ethnocentric oppressor-oppressed relationship. The British, under pre-independence control of the territory that is now Sudan, sought to establish two areas: One in the north for Arabs, and one in the south for Zurgas or Blacks.[xxxi] As independence was unfolding in the mid-1950s, Sudan was already engulfed in its first north-south civil war, which lasted from 1955 until 1972. In 1972, under the leadership of Lt. Gen. Joseph Lagu Yanga, an Addis Abbaba Accord was reached, which called for the establishment of an autonomous region in the south of a newly independent nation of Sudan. That arrangement fared well for nearly a decade. However, in 1983, Sudanese President, Gaafar Nimeiry, nullified the autonomous status of Southern Sudan and declared that Sudan was one nation.[xxxii] This sparked a second civil war, which spanned 1983-2005. While a peace agreement was reached in 2005, ethnic-based (genocidal) atrocities continued in Darfur and elsewhere in the southern portion of the country. Finally, in January 2011, a referendum was conducted in the south and 99% of the electorate voted for independence. On July 9, 2011, the nation of South Sudan was established formally.[xxxiii] Even so, Sudan continues to retaliate against the newly established South Sudan with military attacks. The latter is rich with timber, petroleum, iron ore, copper, chromium, zinc, tungsten, micra, silver, gold, diamonds, hydropower, hardwood, and limestone.

Although there were many important leaders from Southern Sudan over the past 50 years, including founders of the very important Sudan People Liberation Army and Movement (SPLA/M; Joseph Oduho and John Garang), the most important leader was Joseph Lagu Yanga. He was the first to bring to the attention of the people of Southern Sudan the importance of autonomy to develop, manage, and benefit from their rich mineral and other natural resources.

Therefore, the case of South Sudan brings together elements of economics and racial minorities (the Black tribal groups of Southern Sudan) to fashion an untenable oppressor-oppressed arrangement that festered through two civil wars. While complete peace remains elusive, at least definitive steps toward peace are possible under the current complete separation of Southern from Northern Sudan. History tells us that hundreds of thousands of lives could have been saved had South Sudan been successful in forming an independent nation after the first civil war. It also tells us that Joseph Lagu Yanga's "power of one" was sufficient to drive the vision of nation formation for South Sudan to its ultimate conclusion.

The Best Option

The four stories of the Hebrews and Egyptians, the Hindus and Muslims of India, the Christians and Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Northern and Southern Sudanese reveal a common thread: "It took nation formation to avoid, minimize, or resolve violent conflicts that resulted from oppressor-oppressed ethnic relationships." The remaining two stories (Rwanda and Sri Lanka) that we tell in this essay concerning wars that ended with oppressor-oppressed groups continuing to occupy the same national space do not have clean and final endings. One can easily imagine that Tutsis and Hutus and the Sinhalese and Tamils may find themselves

reengaged in horrendous wars in the future to find an ultimate solution to their historical animosities.

Consequently, our reading of selected history leads us to the conclusion that, if two ethnic groups are locked in an oppressor-oppressed relationship (even when that relationship is an artifact of past history), then the two groups should move toward complete separation through nation formation.[xxxiv] If they do not adopt this approach, then there is a high probability that the "power of one" will spark a violent conflict—to superimpose oppression or to secure justice—that could otherwise be avoided.

Conclusion

Despite our accelerated march toward greater knowledge, the human race continues to fail to resolve amicably resource distribution issues. This is particularly true in the context of oppressor-oppressed relationships. In other words, although we continue to increase our intellectual sophistication, we continue to forge conditions that result in violent conflict. We are not too civilized to be uncivilized. In fact, today we use every media means at our disposal to spread the gospel of militarization, and we increasingly teach ourselves how to fight. We do not take lightly the adage, "prepare for war in times of peace." If you discount the likelihood of violent conflict, then simply talk to the survivors of recent genocidal conflicts. They, too, had no inkling that they could become the target of massive violence seemingly overnight.

Therefore, it is almost inevitable that two groups that are brought together through history in an oppressor-oppressed relationship will ultimately clash in violent conflict. At some point, the "majority" group may look for a way to incite the violence, because it fears the "minority" group will find a critical weakness and exploit it. Conversely, the minority (out) group fears that it will be locked in a subservient role forever, and may seek to turn the table. Whatever the rationale, it is logical to expect violent conflict in this scenario. This essay sought to show that the way to avoid such conflict is for the two groups to separate under a mutually agreeable arrangement. If they do not, they only delay the day when conflict comes, and/or they ensure extended rounds of violent conflict.

This essay also sought to show that "all it takes is one": One individual to extend oppression or to liberate the oppressed. In the American context, every time we see one more Black male or female incarcerated, murdered in the street, or aborted, we know that we may have lost an important "power of one."

Given that White America does not seem to take seriously the potential for conflict within its borders (or dismisses the idea because of its police powers), Black Americans must take it upon themselves to secure their future by opting for nation formation. If we do not, then we guarantee future violent conflict. If conflict is in the offing, then we only hope that the one who sparks the conflict is a Black supreme strategist.

[i] This is not to say that such violent clashes have not already occurred; e.g., the November 18, 1898 Race Riot in Wilmington, North Carolina; The May 31, 1921 Riot in Tulsa, Oklahoma; the January 1923 Rosewood, Florida Massacre; and the riots that have visited America's major cities at various points during the 20th century.

[ii] See the 18th and 19th Chapters of *Genesis*, *Holy Bible*.

[iii] See the 5th Chapter of *Revelations*, *Holy Bible*.

[iv] This paper does not address non-violent approaches to resolving ethnic-related crises.

[v] We should note here that there continues to be a great controversy over whether the so-called Hebrews were ever in Egypt—at least as described in the *Old Testament*.

[vi] The role of Aaron as a confirmer, augmenter, and helper of the one is often repeated in the stories of those great ones who manufacture change in an oppressor-oppressed paradigm. In fact, in the biblical context, the saying is, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name…" (*Matthew* 18:20, *Holy Bible*).

[vii] See the 1st Chapter of *Exodus*, *Holy Bible*.

[viii] Percival Spear (1972). *India: A Modern History*. University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor. Stanley Wolpert (1982). *A New History of India,* Second Edition. Oxford University Press. New York.

[ix] Details on Iqbal's life are provided at Yes Pakistan.com. Retrieved from the Internet on February 11, 2012; http://www.yespakistan.com/iqbal/.

[x] Barbara Metcalf and Thomas Metcalf (2006). *A Concise History of Modern India.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

[xi] Jan Vansina (2004), *The Antecedents of Modern Rwanda: The Nyiginya Kingdom* . University of Wisconsin Press: Madison.

[xii] Susanne Buckley-Zistel (2009), "Nation, Narration, Unification? The Politics of History Teaching After the Rwanda Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research*: Vol. 11, No. 1; pp. 31-53.

[xiii] Ibid.

[xiv] Brad Joseph (2005). "Teaching about the Former Yugoslavia." *The Social Studies*. May/June; pp. 133-136.

[xv] Ibid.

[xvi] Center for Balkan Development (1996). "History of the War in Bosnia: Historical Background." Retrieved from the Internet on February 18, 2012; http://www.balkandevelopment.org/edu_bos.html.

[xvii] Ibid.

[xviii] United Nations (2003). "General Findings: Historical Background." *International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Former Yugoslavia since 1991* (pp. 5-9). Retrieved from the Internet on February 18, 2012; http://www.icty.org/x/cases/naletilic_martinovic/tjug/en/nal-tj030331-e.pdf.

[xix] Richard Holbrooke (1999). *To End a War*. Random House: New York.

[xx] Op. cit. (Center for Balkan Development)

[xxi] Op. cit. (Center for Balkan Development)

[xxii] Sinnappah Asaratnam (1964). *Ceylon*. Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs.

[xxiii] A.R.M. Imtiyaz and Ben Stavis (2008). "Ethno-Political Conflict in Sri Lanka." *Journal of Third World Studies.* Vol. XXV, No. 2; pp. 135-52.

[xxiv] Ibid.

[xxv] Rohan Gunaratna (1997). *International and Regional Implications o f the Sri Lankan Tamil Insurgency*. AABC for International Studies: Colombo.

[xxvi] Amita Shastri (2009). "Ending Ethnic Civil War: The Peace Process in Sri Lanka." *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*. Vol. 47, No. 1; pp. 76-99.

[xxvii] Ibid.

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[xxxiv] We say "selected history" because we only address selected cases from the 20th century. Other important 20th century cases that come to mind are the German-Jewish Holocaust, the clash between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, and the genocide that occurred in Cambodia.