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“Learn To Hate”

In 1971, the Persuaders blessed us with “It’s a Thin Line Between Love and Hate.” It is appropriate to resurrect this R&B hit in connection with last Saturday’s assassinations in Buffalo.

You probably know that one who lost her life during the shooting had just exited a Saturday morning prayer service. A very important question to ask is: How can Jesus, with “all power in his hands” and who advocates expertly on love, permit one of his faithful to pray fervently only to be murdered moments later in an abhorrent act of hate?

Now we (Black Americans) ponder how to constrain our anger in response to this murderous horror movie from becoming hate? Actually, we have been **conditioned** from the beginning of our sojourn in America to not hate—only to love White America.

Accordingly, we didn’t hate enough to kill as many White “masters” as possible when we had an opportunity during and after the Civil War. We didn’t hate enough to forcefully halt the lynching that peppered the Reconstruction and Jim Crow eras. We didn’t hate enough to hunt down and justifiably erase the KKK members who bombed the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham in

1963—being certain to also send the policemen who supported the KKK to the cemetery as well. We didn’t hate enough to extinguish the White man who walked into the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina in 2015 and assassinated nine Bible studying Black Americans. We didn’t and don’t hate enough to give George Zimmerman a taste of his own medicine for murdering Trevon Martin. And we didn’t and don’t hate enough when neo-Nazi cult police persons all over the country have murdered _____ (you fill in the blank with the names of Black males and females). No! We don’t hate and we don’t respond. Like slaves, we accept.^{1,2}

Yesterday, CNN’s Victor Blackwell reported that he has covered 15 such shooting incidents in America during his career. He said (paraphrasing): “After the shootings, the Democrats say ‘guns’ and the Republicans say ‘mental health.’ But nothing ever changes. Is this how we are supposed to live?”

Clearly, the promise of America is dead for us. Nothing changes (a sign of death)—unless there is harm to the wealthy. Yes, this is how we are supposed to, and will, live until we learn to hate.

¹ In this regard, it may be instructive to read Chapter 2 of [Exodus](#), which is entitled: “Once a Slave, Forever a Slave?”

² Admittedly, we do file lawsuits, collect monetary awards, and then mainly spend the money with those outside our areas of influence.

A Tops Market (the site where the shooting occurred) Black employee, who narrowly escaped death, said while standing near the store on yesterday (paraphrasing): “I am here because I need to heal. I will go back into the store because I will not let the evil shooter control outcomes in our community. We control our community.”³

The sad fact is that we control few, if any, socioeconomic aspects our communities (areas of influence). In fact, Tops is just one of innumerable examples of our lack of control. It is another case where, as Malcom X said, “In the evening, when the sun goes down, {the owner of Tops} takes a basket full of money to the other side of town.”⁴ If we controlled (including policing) our areas of influence, then the murderer would have been considered an outsider and would have very likely been apprehended well before he could commit the assassinations.

If we (Black Americans) wish to alter these horror movies featuring the assassinations of Black Americans, then we must learn to hate.

The most important hate that we can exhibit is to hate our failure to self-determine how our lives unfold and how we die. We must hate enough to take control of every aspect of our areas of influence. We know how to do this, but we simply don’t hate enough to make it happen. We must learn to hate our current conditions so fervently that we are willing to defend violently our areas of influence, and to even die doing so, to ensure that a “Buffalo Massacre” never happens again.⁵ Such an expression of hate will certainly be an expression of love for ourselves. That thin line.

If we do not learn to hate, then expect to see another horror movie featuring the mass murder of more Black Americans coming to our screens in the very near future.

However, we hope to be prophetic in predicting that Black Americans can undo our conditioning to only love. If White Americans disagree, then they should listen very carefully to the conclusion of “It’s a Thin Line.”

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³ This was also reported by CNN on May 16, 2022.

⁴ The content in curly brackets was added by the author.

⁵ To our knowledge, *The Washington Post* coined the term “Buffalo Massacre.”