

Poor People's Campaign - Washington D.C. June 23, 2018
Culminating Event— Global Day of Solidarity and Sending Forth Call to Action Mass Rally
Rally Remarks - Rev. Abhi Janamanchi, final

The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival is the movement for our time. This nonviolent moral fusion coalition is empowering those most affected by systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, and ecological devastation to lead us into a vision of what we can be.

Rally Remarks (As Written):

Fifty-one years ago, the **Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** warned that "a nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

He called the US government "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today."

Dr. King's moral challenge to militarism and the war economy, spoken during the Vietnam War, still applies today. Our nation continues to be deeply invested in militarism and the war economy. The US maintains by far the biggest military in the world, in terms of spending, and is the world's biggest arms dealer.

Militarism subverts democracy, undermines law, promotes tyranny, and fuels fanaticism. It sickens and impoverishes whole populations. It over polices communities and builds more prisons. It ravages nature and devastates the environment.

Militarism creates refugees, criminalizes people for trying to care for their families, and separates children from their parents.

Militarism destroys cities and civilizations, kills children and families, most of them people of color, around the world and in our communities.

Militarism perpetuates racism based on national myths that assert the inherent goodness of "us" and the evil of "them."

It is time for us to turn this around.

It is time to unite together against this systemic, systematized, and state-sanctioned violence.

It is time for us to declare that war is immoral; that war doesn't protect our freedom; that war promotes racism, misogyny, homophobia, and xenophobia; that war causes ecological devastation; that war keeps us poor.

It is time to move away from the sacramental devotions that engender war.

It is time to shut down the war economy and militarism that our nation perpetrates both within and beyond and create a peace economy that is based on justice, equity, and compassion.

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It is time to demand a reallocation of resources from the military budget to education, healthcare, jobs, and a clean environment.

It is time to demand a humane immigration system that unifies families and allows us all to build thriving communities in our country.

It is time to tend to our moral health by changing our nation's priorities.

It is time, as the **Rev. Dr. William Barber** said, "to lead our nation to higher ground where we are more concerned about bread than bombs, more concerned about treaties of peace than war, from the graveyards of warmongering, militarism, to the higher ground of life and peace."

Namaste. Keep Shining!
Together! Always Together!