

Lynn White

## Where Equivalence Goes To Die

We soon found out that Native Americans  
were the bad guys.

We watched the Hollywood portrayals  
of the cowardly braves  
deserving of death  
and the brave, honest settlers  
who rightly prevailed.

If propaganda is successful  
it won't even be recognised.  
And successful it was for a long time.

That is not to say  
that all 'indians' were good people,  
that they never committed atrocities  
or preached hatred and abuse.

But the power was so disproportionate  
that they could be no equivalence.

The scales were already tipping over.  
To pretend balance was possible  
would be a distortion.

Then there were the Nazi's.

No one now thinks that  
their arguments  
of superiority,  
of paranoia and racism  
should find an open ear.

But ears were open then.  
Wide open.

And eyes were closed to  
enslavement,  
starvation  
and death.

That is not to say  
that all Jews, Slavs and gypsies were good people,  
that they never committed atrocities

or preached hatred and abuse.  
But the power was so disproportionate  
that they could be no equivalence.  
The scales were already tipping over.  
To pretend balance was possible  
would be a distortion.

And in South Africa, a new ideology,  
separate development  
for the benefit of each culture.  
So it was justified  
in the propaganda,  
the dominant discourse.  
And it found the open ears  
of the powerful.  
So segregated townships were created  
and Bantustan homelands  
far away.  
Separation, control,  
humiliation, harassment,  
impoverishment, exploitation.  
That is not to say  
that all the black people were good,  
that they never committed atrocities  
or preached hatred and abuse.  
But the power was so disproportionate  
that they could be no equivalence.  
The scales were already tipping over.  
To pretend balance was possible  
would be a distortion.

And now in Israel  
the same game is being played,  
separation, control,  
humiliation, harassment,  
impoverishment,  
destruction, death  
with the same justifications,  
the same ears open  
to the powerful,  
closed to the oppressed  
That is not to say  
that all Palestinians are good people,  
that they never commit atrocities

or preach hatred and abuse.  
But the power is so disproportionate  
that they can be no equivalence.  
The scales are already tipping over.  
To pretend balance is possible  
would be a distortion.

So now we must wait  
for some ears to be closed  
and others to be opened  
as history moves on  
relentlessly.

## **About the Poet**

Lynn White lives in north Wales. Her work is influenced by issues of social justice and events, places and people she has known or imagined. She is especially interested in exploring the boundaries of dream, fantasy and reality. Her poem 'A Rose For Gaza' was shortlisted for the Theatre Cloud 'War Poetry for Today' competition. This and many other poems, have been widely published in anthologies and journals such as Vagabond Press, Apogee, Firewords, Indie Soleil, Light Journal and Snapdragon. Find Lynn <https://lynnwhitepoetry.blogspot.com>.