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Remarks by Jacob Bender at CAIR-Philadelphia's 2017 Annual Banquet

Our sages asked, "What is resistance?"

Resistance is the bravery of the Hebrew slave women of ancient Egypt, hiding their children from the soldiers of Pharaoh's army.

Resistance is the bravery of the young Muslim community at the Battle of the Trench.

Resistance is the civil-disobedience of Gandhi, challenging the entire British Empire.

Resistance is the brilliance of the Muslim, and Jewish, and Christian scholars of Al-Andalus, who created a multifaith culture where others demanded xenophobic isolation.

Resistance is the people of Algeria, who rose up in 1954 against French domination of their nation.

Resistance is Jesus in the Temple, challenging the corruption of his day, reminding all of us that humankind does not live by wealth alone.

Resistance is Harriet Tubman leading slaves to freedom.

Resistance is Malcolm at the Audubon Ballroom.

Resistance is Dr. Martin Luther King in Memphis, looking death in the face, proclaiming "It doesn't matter what happens to me now, for I may not get there with you, but we as a people shall one day be free."

Resistance is the Jewish fighters in the Warsaw Ghetto and their uprising against the Nazi onslaught.

Resistance is every woman in our communities who demands "equal pay for equal work", and an end to marginalization.

Resistance is Black Lives Matter!

Resistance is all those who believe in science and the environmental threat to our planet.

Resistance is all those who have not given up on the promise of this America, despite slave ship, and lash, and internment camps.

Resistance is all those who emigrated to this nation, and it is they — the tired, the poor, the refugees from the four corners of the earth — who made America great.

Resistance is Muhammad Ali [May his memory be a blessing], whose greatest act of courage was not in the ring, but in his willingness to risk years of prison for his refusal to go fight in an unjust war.

And resistance is all of us in this room, uniting in the face of the purveyors of hate and bigotry and fear and ignorance, as we struggle for an America where "all humans are created equal, endowed with the inalienable rights of life and liberty."