

Government Oppression as a Structural Problem

Government oppression is a structural problem when public power is used, withheld, or administered in ways that systematically subordinate a population. It is not limited to a single discriminatory official, isolated policy, or openly hostile law. It arises when multiple parts of government create, preserve, or fail to correct conditions that deny a population equal security, political standing, economic opportunity, or practical enjoyment of its rights.

Government possesses powers that private individuals do not. It writes and enforces laws, collects taxes, controls public institutions, regulates property and commerce, administers schools, commands police and military forces, operates courts and prisons, distributes public benefits, and determines which injuries will receive official protection. Because of this authority, government can either expand a population's capacity or make that population vulnerable across generations.

In the history of African Americans, government repeatedly acted as both an active source of oppression and an unreliable protector against it.

Active oppression occurs when public authority directly creates or administers harmful conditions. This may include discriminatory law, segregation, disenfranchisement, surveillance, selective prosecution, forced displacement, unequal public investment, discriminatory economic policy, and the deliberate disruption of political or community organizations.

Protective abandonment occurs when government formally recognizes rights but refuses, delays, or inadequately performs its duty to enforce them. A right that exists in constitutional language but is not protected in practice does not provide equal citizenship. Government may therefore create second-class status both through direct command and through selective nonperformance.

The structural nature of government oppression is found in the interaction of agencies, jurisdictions, and time periods. Federal, state, and local authorities may use different methods while producing overlapping effects. Courts may recognize rights that local officials resist. Legislatures may enact protections that administrative agencies fail to enforce. Police may tolerate private racial violence while prosecutors decline to act. Schools, housing authorities, transportation systems, and economic regulators may each impose separate burdens that collectively restrict mobility and development.

No single order is required for the system to produce a consistent result.

Government oppression can operate through ordinary administrative processes. Permits may be delayed. District boundaries may be manipulated. benefits may be denied. complaints may be ignored. enforcement may become selective. requirements may be applied differently. records may disappear. responsibility may be divided among offices until no official accepts accountability.

Each decision can be presented as neutral, technical, or unrelated. The cumulative effect may nevertheless be political and economic exclusion.

This creates a central defensive problem: the target is often required to challenge many individually deniable actions while the institution benefits from fragmentation, delay, superior records, legal authority, and control over the complaint process.

Malone Doctrine therefore treats government oppression as a question of power rather than merely prejudice.

The relevant questions are:

- What authority does the government possess?
- How is that authority being used or withheld?
- What population bears the burden?
- What rights exist formally but remain insecure in practice?
- Which agencies create, reproduce, or conceal the harm?
- What dependencies make the population vulnerable?
- What independent capacity is required to reduce exposure?

The objective is not simply to persuade government that oppression occurred. The objective is to prevent government from possessing unchecked ability to cause the same harm again.

This requires organized defensive capacity.

Individuals may need to preserve records, confirm rights, verify official statements, seek independent advice, identify alternative pathways, and avoid unnecessary dependency upon a single office or decision-maker. Communities require stronger systems: legal networks, political organizations, independent media, educational alternatives, emergency support, rights monitoring, rapid response, and institutions capable of identifying patterns across cases.

Government oppression cannot be answered only through individual resilience because the power imbalance is institutional. A single person may resist one decision. An organization can preserve testimony, compare incidents, assign specialists, fund challenges, negotiate collectively, and build alternatives.

Political alignment is also central. A population cannot depend upon political parties or officials merely because they offer symbolic recognition. Government actors must be judged by policy, enforcement, appointments, resource allocation, institutional record, and foreseeable consequences. Loyalty without accountability allows public power to remain insulated from the population it affects.

The required condition is not perfect government. It is a government whose power is constrained by enforceable rights, transparent procedures, accountable administration, independent scrutiny, and organized populations capable of imposing political and institutional consequences for abuse.

Malone Doctrine does not assume that these protections will arise automatically. It directs Malone institutions to develop the knowledge, organization, leadership, and counterpower necessary to reduce dependence upon government goodwill.

The governing principle is:

Public power is legitimate only when it protects equal citizenship, performs its duties impartially, and remains accountable to the people affected by its exercise.

The corresponding strategic rule is:

Where government possesses the power to materially affect African American welfare, the community must maintain independent capacity to monitor, challenge, survive, and counter the misuse or nonperformance of that power.

Government oppression is structural because it can be embedded in law, administration, enforcement, funding, jurisdiction, and official silence. Its correction therefore requires more than moral appeal. It requires disciplined organization capable of limiting governmental leverage, protecting community interests, and converting formal rights into practical security.