I want to do a reading that is only a small sampling of the trauma, pain and suffering the African American community has experienced since coming to the United States and I am going to do it in the form of the reading, Dayenu.  *It would have been enough*.  But instead of a song of gratitude as Dayenu is during the seder, this time think of dayenu, *it would have been enough,* to be validated as true trauma.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if African Americans had been kidnapped and dragged across the Ocean.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if African Americans had been enslaved, families torn apart, forced to work against their will, punished violently if they tried to gain one’s freedom

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if in 1916, 17-year old Jesse Washington in Waco Texas was burned alive in front of a crowd of thousands, almost all Caucasian Americans.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if in Columbia Ohio in 1944, an essay contest question was, “what to do with Hitler after the war.”  A 16-year old African American girl wrote “Put him in a Black skin and let him live the rest of his life in America.”

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if in 1948, an African American tenant farmer in Mississippi was severely beaten by two whites because he asked for a receipt for his water bill.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if in the 1950s, in Cincinnati, Caucasian Americans threw nails and broken glass into the public pools to keep blacks from swimming in them.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if in August of 1970, the FBI directed Philadelphia police to invade the Black Panther Office, arresting 14 of them; six of them were then forced to strip in front of the public as news reporters and media coverage caught every second of it. The following day the photos taken of the bare men were published in the newspaper.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if the last known lynching in the United States was Michael Donald in 1981.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if from 2014 to 2016, 16 million voters were removed from voting rolls.  Most were African American or Naturalized Citizens.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if high school geography text books in Texas in 2015 portrayed slaves as “workers who’d cruised here on ships from their native Africa to toil in Southern agricultural fields.”

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if in 2016 in San Francisco, police officers described African Americans and other minorities as wild animals, cockroaches, savages, barbarians, and monkeys.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if in 2017, at the University of Illinois, 42% of crimes reported on TV are done by African Americans, even though only 10% of crimes are done by African Americans.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if offenders in GA today are 11 times more likely to get the death penalty if the victim was Caucasian American than if the victim is African American.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if in the US African American households were twice as likely to be food insecure than the national average.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if police killed unarmed African Americans five times as many times as unarmed Caucasian Americans.

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, to consider any one of these incidents traumatic.  The cumulative/collective effect is the definition of historical and contemporary trauma.

Someday may we honestly add that:

Dayenu, *it would have been enough*, if all Americans, including all Caucasian Americans, recognized the effects of institutional racism, used their white privilege to elevate African Americans and created a true representative democracy in the United States of America.