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*Zimbabwe*

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## **‘BLACK’ COLONIALISM IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF ZIMBABWE’S COLLAPSE**

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Black colonialism is the neo-oppression of black people by other black elite groups within a certain area according to the researcher. In this instance, some war veterans who fought for the liberation of Zimbabwe and other politicians seem to have fought in order to replace the white oppressive regime. Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980 from the Ian Smith colonial rule and for a while, independence meant enjoying self-black majority rule till the elected politicians began to ignore the needs of their masses. This article serves to explicitly express the effects of black colonialism in Zimbabwe and how the wrath of the elite elevated their divide and rule tactics. However, the researcher urges the youths to challenge the new type of oppression to guarantee a better future for their children and grandchildren.

Poverty, hopelessness and tremendous pain are traits marked on the faces of every person branded Zimbabwean. Questions of what tomorrow will be hover around the stressed skulls of the great Zimbabweans as not enough love is buried deep underneath the little overburdened hearts due to the incorrigible means of survival. Even these incorrigible means of survival have resulted in overnight mushrooming of Christian movements as a guise to poverty deliverance and hope restoration. In our Shona vernacular 'they' is a proverb that says “mudzimu wakupa chironda watinhunzi dzikudye,” that is, the spirits that have wounded one has left them to be fed by lies. Just like the proverb, the researcher thinks that’s what we have become as Zimbabweans, in relation to the very dry rain spell, pathetic politics and economics alas, we have become cursed as each day presents itself. Due to the hardship posed on by Black colonialism, Zimbabweans have entered into both the second and third stage of emotional depression which are anger and bargain respectively according to Kubler-Ross model (2005). This is why they have a lot of fault-finding questions in their minds. Is it God or the Ancestors or both who have placed this curse on us or have we self-inflicted the curse upon ourselves? What is wrong with being Zimbabwean? The questions remain unanswered but a solution to break this bad spell upon our beloved Zimbabwe is needed urgently.

Furthermore, describing Zimbabwe as the “land of Milk and Honey” according to the researcher is unmentionable, especially to the majority of Zimbabweans silently in agony with lat dry chests as well as honeyless bees that prohibit them from making ends meet as described in the previous paragraph. Perhaps the term “milk and honey” is relative to the elite politicians who have, over the years, amassed wealth for themselves by abusing their powers as public office holders, resulting in them having well-pronounced milk blossoms and honey bees to only feed their families. It is now difficult for an educated person to find formal employment that suits their qualification. Instead, the people have resorted to survival means and according to The Standard (February 9, 2014), the streets have developed the phrase ‘degreed vendor’ reflecting how milkless the nation has become in accommodating graduates. Many University graduates have resorted to selling secondhand clothes or airtime to make ends meet since the few job openings

sometimes are filled with the well-connected elites. Most of these 'degreed vendors' occupy the pavements, at the present moment, in Harare and other cities which served as reference in The Herald of May 28, 2015 and Nehanda radio article of April 17, 2016.

In relation to the latter, it seems like yesterday, when our parents encouraged us to be educated in the belief that education holds the key to success. This belief was based on evident examples of family and friends who had made it. But today, here we are, with the highest educational qualification and yet referred to by society as educated loafers or educated vendors. How then does one console such parents whose hopes have dwindled and who have had poverty slammed them in their faces after educating their children for years? How does one motivate the little children whose dreams are as far reaching as their sleep can be, in a jobless society? How does one expect to receive a blessing from the creator where poverty, hopelessness and misery are inherited through the bellows of birth? No one wants to be born in poverty and shame despite how humble they will become later in life, that is if they escape the scourge and snares of being Zimbabwean by birth. Be that as it may, the effects of Black colonialism have destroyed our education sector to an extent that a university degree seems a worthless thing to attain.

We can go on to say that hard work does not pay in Zimbabwe. With the example of the current economic situation, such a statement can seem so valid. Zimbabwean children work so hard in their academics all through the years of acquiring knowledge and at the end, they become jobless in their own country where they are expected to have first preferences to opportunities. Perhaps some might have been caught up in a maze, like Dambudzo Marechera (1979) describes, "... smaller room: numb, dark, and also utterly empty. I could not bring myself to touch the walls to prove that they were there..." Some may finally escape the "House of Hunger" by skipping the borders for greener pastures, but in the end "...you travel to search and you come back home to find yourself there" accentuates Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2002). Zimbabweans are scattered world over, not because they enjoy foreign nations but as a way to escape the depressing effects of Black colonialism. This unfortunate exile exposes Zimbabweans to xenophobia, human trafficking among other evils found in living far from home.

Black colonialism has oppressed the rights of those workers who are trying to serve the nation with their skills. Lest we forget, the civil servants as well as parastatal workers who have tirelessly served our country with services to develop the nation for many years lose their job for no reason and are not given any benefits as evidenced in Reuters of 16 August 2015. Correspondingly, The Herald of April 15, 2016, writes about the 15 months unpaid salaries of railway workers: The abuse of workers' rights in Zimbabwe has rife, thus the Chloe Mitchell (2010) mindset of '... so much of everything how do we leave with nothing?' wrestle the workers' minds resulting in hampered progress. These workers have no choice but to remain working for no salary since finding another job in a jobless Zimbabwe (that has less than 11% employment rate) is equivalent to searching for a needle in a haystack. The elite politicians are suffocating the workers for their own benefit because there is no month that a minister or parliamentarian goes unpaid, therefore, for the reason that their stomachs are full they will not represent the workers even if they are the ones who made them get into those powerful positions.

However, Zimbabwe is proudly and loudly applauded for being a hardworking nation, our weakness is that moment we are pinned to accept substandard rewards for our work and that is when these powerful politicians step on us to reinforce their power. The researcher believes that what we consistently do becomes a habit. Let us break the habit of accepting substandard rewards

for our hardwork. This should also apply to the rest of the continent. We do not need to be firm to stand for the quality that we truly deserve; we only need to be more united in one voice, which is bold and authoritative, to alter the system of things and become valid as we truly are. We need to have the attitude of Dambudzo, "when all else fails, don't take it in silence: scream like hell.... " With the case study of Zimbabwe, Africa has become vulnerable to predators channeling Black colonialism within and outside the land that preys on the masses' weakness as they amass their wealth by abusing mass power.

More so, Zimbabwe as well as Africa at large needs to work towards developing the youths and harnessing their potential in various skills. The youths have so much energy to do a lot, plus they are technologically informed. It is evident that the youths in the 80's managed to change the face of Africa which was under colonial oppression. The likes of Kwame Nkrumah, Haile Selassie, Julius Nyerere, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Sekou Toure amongst other pan-Africanist formed the Organisation of African Union (OAU) now African Union aiming " to promote unity and solidarity of African states, safeguard sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states, coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the people of Africa. "

Nevertheless, as Zimbabwean youths of this generation, we do not only stand and complain but our voices are being thwarted and so are our actions. The playing field of activism is compromised. This is the same reason Zimbabwean youths have decided to be silent but continue gnashing their teeth, being unable to reach their pinnacle for reasons they know but fear to express. Zimbabwe has had a fair share of brave youths that tried to challenge the oppressive system but they were silenced. Itai Dzamara was made as an example to bring fear on the youth for being politically expressive. Ace Lumumba's reputation was destroyed as soon as he turned his back on the power that mentored him which also made sure that young youthful leaders follow and not criticize the system. Pastor Evan Mawarire with his #theflag movement gained mileage as youths found a brave man to rally behind in order to air their views but was criticized and described as displaying childish emotional outburst by Tafadzwa Musarara, a political analyst in a debate interview on the Platform of ZI FM. In the meantime, Pastor Evan Mawarire has been standing against the black to black oppression system in Zimbabwe by organizing citizens meeting with the Reserve bank Governor, Dr Mangudya, to denounce the introduction of bond notes which the elite politicians are trying to introduce to Zimbabweans.

To conclude, Zimbabwean youths, as well as other African youths, need to focus on preparing our future and that of our children. Despite the challenges we face, we need to focus on raising our voices and acting towards our goals by uniting and strengthening our voices together just like the OAU forefathers did in fighting against Black colonialism. Let us begin to write our own stories to develop our countries, continuing with the legacy of the OAU. This is not the time just to ask the question "what is wrong with being Zimbabwean or African ", it is the time to accept, find solutions and the purpose of being Zimbabwean or African. Young African Leaders Forum (YALF) is now bridging the gap aiming to move African nations to the first world status and this begins by putting our voices out through such platforms. The pen is mightier than the sword let us speak out Zimbabweans, let us speak out young Africans! Black colonialism is the new oppression that has affected our education, industries and social setup. The researcher desires the youths to unite themselves to amplify their voices against this oppression, to regain Zimbabwe's status again.

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