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AN AZANIAN IN SOUTH AFRICA

AZAPO has consistently and emphatically made the point that we reject “South Africa” even with the face-lifting adjective “new”. The white settler-colonial South Africa cannot be renewed, because any attempt to do so would merely disguise settler-colonialism with the balaclava of neo-colonialism. As a matter of fact, almost everything in South Africa’s democratic dispensation is arrogantly white and Eurocentric. The economic, educational, legal, governance and business systems are not only white and Eurocentric, but they are also owned, controlled and dominated by whiteness.

For over 400 hundred years, Black people are made to be foreigners in the land of their forebears. They are always trying to fit into an anti-Black system that rejects them. The economy and wealth remain under white ownership and control well into the 28 years of the democratic dispensation in South Africa. Now that we are in a democracy, you would have expected to see a drastic change of the apartheid wealth ownership patterns to progressively include Black people who were excluded by law and tradition. Yet South Africa remains the most unequal country in the world. This wealth and income inequality express themselves in race terms where whites are extremely rich, and Blacks extremely poor.

In its 2021 Global Wealth Report, the global financial group Credit Suisse showed that wealth in South Africa was increasingly becoming concentrated in the hands of the top super-rich 1%. Further, the group’s Wealth Databook showed that this richest 1% grabs about 41% of South Africa’s total wealth. That total wealth was estimated at \$763 billion in 2021. We were told that this was up from the 35% recorded in 2019. In simple terms, about 80% of the total wealth in South Africa is monopolised by 10% of the adult population. The biggest slice of that 80% is locked in the hands of the richest 1%. Please don’t suffer any brain bleeding by overthinking the obvious. The 10% of the adult South African population that owns 10% of the total wealth is lily white! There is no Black in that rainbow of white monopoly capital ownership.

That is how it was in the beginning of land theft, colonialism and racism in South Africa; and it is becoming worse in the “new” South Africa. White richness and Black poverty are now legitimated and perpetuated under democracy. The banks are white owned. And the white banks are not in the business of lending

any seed capital to the Black folks who are structurally incapacitated to demonstrate that they have security for the money they are borrowing. That is institutionalised racism in force. While the apartheid regime aided the establishment of Volksbank and Sanlam with the mandate to advance serviceable loans and insurance for the white tribe to thrive in business, the Black political elite have no appetite to formulate policies, mainstream and support the mass entry of Black people in big business. The apartheid regime did not just grab land and farms from Black people and give them to the white folks, they went further to train and give them subsidies and agricultural implements to be the commercial farmers they are today. They were even helped to establish cooperatives to maximise their ability to distribute, market and sell their products. The democratic government in “new” South Africa flexes no such developmental muscle in favour of Black farmers.

As we speak, the white supremacists are having a field day as they use the Constitution to defend and entrench their ill-begotten property under colonial violence against the indigenous people of Azania. As we have explained above, they have the resources to do so. Black people have had to defend some of their struggle gains in the courts of law. The white racists have an unfair advantage because the legal system and common law are white and Eurocentric. The democratic Constitution was drafted within the settler-colonial constraints of 34 constitutional principles that were adopted by the apartheid parliament and imposed on the Interim Constitution Act 200 of 1993 upon which the 1994 so-called Government of National Unity (GNU) operated. That Interim Constitution was enacted by the apartheid parliament and assented to on 25 January 1994. All the democratic Parliament did was to reconstitute itself into a Constituent Assembly and pretended to draft a new Constitution in 1996, when it was in fact legitimating the apartheid parliament-enacted Interim Constitution.

A common law of a country has to be derived from the culture and history of that country. This is what the nations of the world understand when they talk about their common law. This is not the case with South Africa whose common law is the foreign 17th and 18th century Roman-Dutch Law based on the culture and history of the peoples of those nations. Black people have to fit into the precepts of this foreign common law. No wonder that Black people continue to be on the wrong side and fugitives of these alien laws and its legal system. The other day, AZAPO Secretary for Constitutional and Legal Affairs Jabu Rakwena was showing how the South African legal system was poisoned with racism. He was questioning the imposition of a residential address as a condition to grant a Black accused bail. He convincingly argues that the system did not have Black people in mind when it came with this condition because the living circumstances of the majority of poor Black people are such that they are either homeless, or that their shacks are not amenable to the system of addresses. Yet nothing is done by way of policy to ensure that Black people are protected.

This Azanian in South Africa is wondering why the rightful owners of the land have to be subjected to and be tried in court through foreign languages that have to be interpreted to them. Despite being declared official languages, Afrikan languages are still discriminated against in a manner that excludes them from being the languages of the law and the courts. Afrikan languages are marginalised in the various legislatures like Parliament even by the Black politicians. Why can't President Cyril Ramaphosa deliver the State of the Nation Address in TshiVenda? The first people to complain on behalf of white people would be some whitewashed Blacks. They would bitterly protest that an Afrikan language would not be understood by white people who are about 10% of the population. Yet they would not be able to explain

how would anybody who lives in an Afrikan language environment for more than 400 years still be unable to understand an Afrikan language. It is about time that Afrikans enforce the official utility of the Afrikan languages in Afrika. This should be backed up by a policy to develop or adopt a common Afrikan language of official business in South Africa, our Azania.

Can somebody explain the cultural meaning and political significance of the Mace that is carried by a Sergeant-at-Arms at the beginning of every sitting of Parliament? All I know is that it has everything to do with the British House of Representatives as a cultural and political symbol of English authority. South Africa's settler-colonial House of Assembly adopted the Mace from their masters and used it from 1910 to 1961, when a modified Mace was used from 1961 to 1963. The Chamber of Mines, the plunderers of Azania's minerals, gave the settler-colonial Parliament a gold Mace that was proudly inherited by the democratic government until 2004 when a new Mace with Afrikan themes was designed. Yet that Mace remained the historical symbol of the authority of the colonisers of the Land of Black people. Why wouldn't a liberated Black person think about the use of a symbol of Afrikan Spirituality like the tail of an ox as used by the diviners and indigenous royal leaders?

I am just an Azanian in South Africa.