

THE NEED FOR POLITICAL AWARENESS FOR AFRICA'S YOUNGER GENERATION

PART 2

With reference to discussions in the first part of this write up, it was stated that on the continent, we have two major categories of politicians.

The first being the older generation in their sixties and seventies who still engage in partisan politics, and run for political offices as well as seek appointments. This, they claim is so because the younger generation are inexperienced, nor ready. This category of our older political leaders, were used to forcefully and violently taking power, this they learned during their quest for the independence of our nations in the 1950s - 1960s. And as such, believe this is the only way to take over power, by violence if the need arises, instilling a kind of do or die necessity of fear in the minds of their opposition.

In this regard, take for example, Zimbabwe where the head of government at 86 years old, who fought for her independence, served as Prime Minister from 1980 to 1987, and then head of state from 1987 till date, 32 years on and yet he is to be a candidate in the upcoming elections. Or is it Cameroun, where the head of government at the age of seventy-nine, was Prime minister from 1975 to 1982, then President from 1982 till date,

that is 37 years. How old are we today, why do we let this happen all around us?

In situations where this is not the case, the younger generation who are not capable of excelling well in school as well as who are unemployed, then seek to get in bed with such politicians as their aides, and therefore learn the crude ways of politics, from the older politicians in the crudest manners possible. They get involved in the political process, as a means to an end. As such we then begin to see all sorts of educationally unqualified persons, persons with no standards of morals nor ethics, having to represent us and make laws for us to be governed by. A simple example is the suspended Youth Leader of the African National Congress of South Africa, amongst others. This is the case.

Such persons who then get involved in the political process, do this not as a yearning to govern, not of sincerity of purpose to lead or need to serve their nation, but as a means to get employed and seek some reckoning of sort. Whereas this is the case for this persons, those successful youths who excel in college, finish from the Ivy League schools and their types, get to work for multinational corporations, international organisations etc.

Children of the elite in Africa refuse to get involved in the political process. And why is that, mostly because they hear of such gory stories during the election process. Stories of people been attacked, maimed and killed in some instances.

They are not encouraged by anyone on the need to get politically active and desire for changing the process.

As a result, we then assume that politics is for the gangsters, the dodgy folks, the scum of society, etc. We leave governance to be determined by the same individuals we write off as social miscreants. Same individuals, who are supposedly scum of society, end up being our political leaders. As such, they govern the way we live our lives, and the way the general public and the world perceive us Africans.

But you know what, we still don't care, and why is that? Maybe for the reason that regardless of how bad the situation is in our respective nations, we can still travel the world, enjoy dual citizenships; work abroad for multinational organisations receiving fat pay cheques, enjoy the luxuries of organised societal values. We forget to think, how is this possible here and not back at home? Is it because we cannot see nor sit back to think?

How can we, then say, we have bad governments all over Africa? What right do we have to say Africa is the way it is because of our leaders. And that they lack integrity, are not accountable to anyone but themselves etc. Of course they would be accountable only to themselves. After all, we let them to, because, no one cares, but yet we have the numbers amongst us to alter the ways things are done, business as usual.

We do not show sufficient interest in the electoral process by getting involved. And until we decide to get involved, and by this it is meant running for elected offices, then we can say we are moving in the right direction.

Until this generation of youngsters decide to take over power forcefully, politically, then there would be no hope for change for a very long time. We need people in governance like our selves, accountable to us, to be judged by us, who are afraid of the consequences of negative outcomes. As for the younger generation, we can contribute in more ways than just contesting elections. Much can be done in areas like educating people, raising awareness about various social ills, the implications of knowingly voting the wrong person in due to sentimental attachments, or not voting at all, because there is no hope.

It is hoped that the more we get involved, then, the next time we go to the polls to vote, we definitely will find more names of youngsters who can make our nations better governed according to the rules of law, ethical and moral standards. This is happening in some places. Look at examples of Roosevelt Skeritt of the Dominican Republic, who was elected Member of Parliament at the age of 27, and then at the age of 31, elected Prime Minister in 2004, a position he still serves. Or is it Andry Rajoelina of Madagascar, who was elected Mayor with 63.3% of votes at age 33, and then became President at age 35.

What are the rest of us waiting for? Can you not see it is possible and must happen if we must move along with the rest of the world? Youngsters wake up and take your place. Power is never given, infact, it is taken.

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