

Hypocritical Pan-Africanists

Barbados is supposed to have a Pan-African movement. Pan Africanists, as the label mandates, are the guardians of all things African on the island. In a society and in a culture where Barbados was/is called Little Bristol and Bim(shire), where we still have the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Princess Margaret school among many other vestiges of colonialism, the critical nature of the role of this group is definitely heightened. Despite the fact that so-called Pan-Africanists and persons with deep interests in preserving and encouraging all things African are found within the Cultural Industries landscape of Barbados, from the NCF, to Calypsonians, dance groups, theatre practitioners and artists, we hear very little of the work of the Pan African Commission, except around Emancipation Day. I cannot recall any other material national works of this entity.

On the other hand, when it comes to tolerance for the LGBTQ etc. movement, Transgenderism and other non-African and Eurocentric practices of this nature, our Africa loving brothers and sisters are deafeningly silent, if not outright discriminatory. A specific and rather loudly proclaimed case-in-point is the occurrence in which the NCF disqualified a dramatic and dance piece submitted by Praise Academy of Dance. It was a piece which highlighted a well proven scientific fact - that African humanity comprises two genders – male and female. If Africa is the cradle of humanity, as Pan-Africanists rightly claim, then it is certain that the origin of life as we know it in Africa, did not comprise 54+ different genders. If this therefore is the case, why would a strongly Pro-African NCF ban a piece which upholds strong traditional African values which proclaim that Yahweh created male and female...period?

The term Neo-Colonialism is being bandied about quite frequently these days. It is a term which I have recently come to understand as being *the use of economic, political, cultural, or other pressures by wealthy countries to control or influence less developed countries, especially former colonies*. This sounds exactly like what is happening here in Bim (or as I prefer to say, Lil' Africa) where, for all the millions of dollars that are being placed in our coffers, we seem to be paying with the price of silence. Not even just silence, but as Praise Academy experienced, a downright scolding: "How dare they express the heart-felt traditions and strong, strong beliefs of our very own ancestors?!"

One can imagine the parents and grandparents of those NCF officials and judges, hopping mad, disappointed and rolling over in their graves! How could their own children and grandchildren betray their own ancestry for a few million dollars? Some Pan-Africanists blame the African chiefs for selling their own brothers and sisters into slavery, but today it seems to be happening all over again. We are being sold to the highest bidder for a few million and a high seat at the UN. Pan-Africanism is not a sometimes, feel-like it, public proclamation; it is a life-style that sometimes please and sometimes displeases. Uganda, Zimbabwe and several other African nations made clear but unpleasant statements to some in this regard. Why can't we too...the children of Africa? Bajans watch out.... stand up and be Pan-African...say something.