

Rise and Fall!

Rituals surrounding funeral ceremonial activity can be subversive, and Wednesday, September 14, 2005, the day of my father's burial, was no exception. I was summoned by the secretary (church warden) into the vestry to confer with the Reverend. There were three of us. She pointed me to a seat to her right and the other individual to her left. She proceeded to discuss the order of the program, of which I was the architect, and then her posture changed as she turned her back to me. In response, I made my point by standing in objection to the given body language. She demonstrated a lack of aesthetic refinement. However, after the service I embraced her in order to promote harmony and the continual struggle of fostering human worth in promoting the common good.

The service enhanced by drumming, though lengthy, was well received by the congregation. Lengthy wakes, a symbol of the order of the day (by outsiders), were held at Lot 54, Buxton Village and 244 Forshaw Street, Georgetown. It was reported that food and liquor were in abundance. The village cultural dynamics twisted—no singing and drumming with Nancy stories. I presume the defensive posture in which the villagers find themselves is responsible for the curtailment of these rituals, but my view is that culture “can evolve” amidst chaos. A brief service was also held at Guyana Funeral Parlor, 242 Forshaw Street, Queenstown, Georgetown to accommodate police officials and others who had reservations about “going to Buxton and the members of the police choir, whose timely renditions were well received.

My own experience on Tuesday, September 13, 2005 while entering the village, wherewith I had to line up boards for the safe crossing of the vehicle, spoke for itself. There is a method of organization among the gunmen, who seem to protect residents from an impending doom. I, for one, cannot condone violence at any level, but the state apparatus aids in its perpetuation. Violence begets

violence and poverty breeds contempt. Many have written on this subject, which I classify as the “misery of inherited death” which has bankrupted the human mind. So many limit the definition of violence in death...one should examine a few concepts—fear, conflict, managing conflict, justice, violence against animals, violent forces within oneself (psyche of violence), celebration of violence, justifiable homicide (extra judicially), moral war, summary justice, political assassinations, academic violence, the nature of competition (win at any cost) and monopolization (slavery, conquest and greed).

A formidable weapon

No conscience—no heart

Plant a seed—a new vision

Collective stand...

Those who are well intended sometimes perpetuate a limited perspective on sensitive issues because they stay within their scope of conditioning. Every generation tends to define the struggle for human dignity differently and those of us with given limitations should retrace our steps and grapple with the prevailing realities or what we see as “madness,” “no conscience, no heart.” Its venom is merciless. At the funeral this syndrome was demonstrated by well meaning individuals who lack sensitivity when many approached and requested monetary contributions without offering condolences. The vicious cycle continues—greed or poverty. Specialists in the development of the Third World viewing the village dynamics would wonder what is hidden within the ‘magic’ of misery and violence... Vocabulary is limited and one would have to turn one’s back on the prevailing models with total rejection.

Those of us who are conscious and enlightened with refined perception and spiritual awareness will press on because we understand that the dimension of war is an extension of politics. Many view the consequences of the devastation

imposed on the village climaxing when Shaka was murdered by the so-called
“Black Clothes Unit,” a state apparatus of summary justice—“by death”...Body
Hunters...

Shaka to them became a martyr.
A martyr of the so-called revolution...
And continual occupation of the village...
The state, the phantoms...
The gunmen—“the protectors of the village”
As they preferred to be called...
As the struggle continues—continues—
Against inherited misery...
And contempt for human worth...
Trample the message of “death”...

Enlightenment
Reason, Rastas, reason!
Congo mahn ah come
“I” am, “I” am
“I” am, “I” am
“I” am Fire.
“I” am Water.
“I” am Air.
“I” am within.
“I” am without.
Reason, Rastas, reason!
Teach, Rastas, teach!

The “I” vocalizes against pathetic, genocidal, crude, austerity policies set by
international agencies against humanity which is marginalized and monopolized by

venture capital that creates poverty and perpetuates inherited misery—dispensed mercilessly—translated into a “message of death” using hunger as the formidable weapon...

Teach, Rastas, teach!
Is humanity defined?
Master—slave—
Super human—underling—

How can nations escape destruction and poverty under neo-colonialism?

Teach, Rastas, teach!
Reason, Rastas, reason!
Congo mahn ah come.
The Bongo mahn ah come.
Emancipate minds...
Understand science and technology.
Transform the world(s)—universal liberation.
Foster human worth—self-reliance.
Teach, Rastas, teach!

Attune the masses to the nutritional value of local foods...rice, green banana, breadfruit, cassava root, dasheen root/leaves, plantain, sweet Potato /leaves, pigeon peas, yam, tannia, coconut, cotton seed, pumpkin, eggplant, cherry, custard apple, guava, governor plum, genip, dunks, mango, pawpaw, gooseberry, pomegranate, soursop, sorrel, star apple, watermelon, fish egg, tamarind, oranges, tangerine, cashew...

Teach, Rastas, teach!
Reason, Rastas, reason!
Congo mahn ah come.
The Bongo mahn ah come.

Jah...Rastafari...

Enlightenment...

Venturing into Trinidad 9/20/05 and visiting friends provided a balanced analysis, where indigenous human factors are at work, not stagnant. Thanks to Maurice Ettienne, John Cromwell, and Marlon Assue for their thoughts and support.

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To my brothers and sisters on the ground, thanks for your candor, wisdom, tenacity and forthrightness...

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