

Barotseland self-rule crusade—every Barotse must get involved

by BNFA Publicity Wing

The Barotse National Freedom Alliance (BNFA), the mass movement organization spearheading the implementation of the **March 27, 2012 Barotse National Council resolutions**, has long known that the enemies of Barotseland want to hold its people in permanent captivity and servitude. The poverty and deprivation that the Barotse have endured over the years are a result of systematic and meticulous planning by the enemies of Barotseland.

Since 1964, Zambia has done everything to impoverish and weaken the people of Barotseland. Barotseland has been methodically underdeveloped, deprived and dispossessed. The education, health and other social sectors have collapsed. Most of the schools in Barotseland were built before Zambia's so-called 1964 independence either by the Barotse native government itself or by the missionaries. Barotseland had excellent mission hospitals before the annexation. One can cite the likes of Mwandu, Mangango, Luampa, Sihole, Litambya and Yuka hospitals as well as the indigenous Lewanika hospital. All these hospitals could perform very complicated operations then. What has happened to them today? They are now all skeletons of their past glories out of the oppressive Zambia's regimes deliberate health policies, which lowered their status.

The educational superiority the sons and daughters of Barotseland prided themselves on has long been outshone, never mind the deceitful schemes used—leakages.

Kaunda ensured that WENELA—the Witwatersrand Native Labour recruitment agency—arrangement, which was the lifeline and major source of income for the Barotse young men and ultimately the Barotse nation, was abruptly terminated. The objective was to cripple Barotseland's economic sustenance and forestall any separation ideas. Unemployment levels are now the highest in Barotseland compared to the rest of Zambia. The civil service jobs in Barotseland which were supposed to be a preserve for the Barotse have been taken by our adversaries who covertly impose their languages on our people. In turn this erodes our ethnicity, despite our 38 tribes when the rest of Zambia has only 34. This is injustice and cruelty of the highest order. Discrimination against the Barotse is meticulously but openly executed. We become unsuspecting willing victims.

As if that was not enough, they have been continually decapitating our elaborate governance system, our cultural heritage and our very social fabric. The Litunga is not only held captive but he has also become a tool of the oppressive system against his own people. The so-called educated urbanized Barotse nationals have clearly been brainwashed and blindfolded. They too have joined ranks with our archenemies. They have been trained to despise their own territory and people. Hence they invest all their hard earned resources in other people's land.

What should we, the deprived patriotic Barotse, do to loosen the noose around Barotseland's neck? What must we do to these sworn enemies of Barotseland? Indeed what should we do to free ourselves from these blood-sucking leeches? We have begged to peacefully reconcile with them, but they have ignored our pleas. What more must we do? Why should we remain in captivity? There are only two options; either we lose our inheritance or we fight.

These nemeses of Barotseland know the truth deep down their hearts. They know that they are hurting and harming the Barotse. They are doing it intentionally. They are enjoying every bit of their cruelty and malice. They are enjoying causing us pain. They are callous, cold blooded sadists.

Should we pretend to be happy and befriend them? Every Barotse must ask themselves these questions. What must we do to these cold blooded sadistic killers when they own and control the judiciary system? They willfully ignore their own laws. Every Barotse national ought to feel deeply about their unforgivable deplorable circumstances. The enemy, in collusion with our own kith and kin, has physically and mentally abused us with impunity. We feel helpless. We have nobody and nowhere to turn to. **We only have ourselves.**

BNFA is calling on all the people of Barotseland to feel severely offended about their deprivation, their wretchedness, their desolation and their hopelessness. The Barotse ought to hate their appalling situation.

Che Guevara once wrote that *“Hatred as an element of the struggle; a relentless hatred of the enemy, impelling us over and beyond the natural limitations that man is heir to and transforming himself into an effective, violent, selective and cold killing machine. Our people must be thus; a people without hatred cannot vanquish a brutal enemy.”*

Indeed, if we should win the freedom struggle, we should feel it in our hearts, in our bones and in our blood that we hate our circumstances and the enemy, who is causing our anguish. This hatred should be our driving force and be translated into action. We should love our Barotseland so much that we hate those who deprive us of our heritage, our inheritance, our very existence. How can we free ourselves if we do not detest what our foes are doing to us? To accomplish our freedom we must be prepared to lose everything, even our very lives. What is the point of living a calculated deprived and miserable life?

There is nothing to gain and to fear. Our enemies fear us more than we fear them. We fear the enemy who fears us. We run when we should stand firm and fight back. Independence, freedom, revolution are not like mangoes which fall when they are ripe. We must fight for independence, by force if necessary. It is better to die while standing than on your knees, pleading. We should not be cowards who are cowed into submission and surrender.

When you look into a mirror what do you see? Do you see a proud soul? Do you say to yourself, “I am a Barotse freedom fighter, a Black Bull”? If not then, say to your face, “I see a defeated coward who cannot defend his wife, children, aged parents and country”. You wake up every day straightening your hair, instead of straightening your heart, your conscience. That is hypocrisy. Above all, urge yourself to feel deeply about the injustice committed against your own people and commit yourself to fight to correct it. This should truly make you happy. Happiness lies in doing the right thing. Do not be like those who rejoice in wrong doing.

Betraying your own people, hurting them everyday should be the most depressing feeling to any normal human being. Those who kill their own children and discriminate against them daily because of money and stolen comfort; and furthermore those who persecute and punish the people of Barotseland because they demand their legitimate rights to determine their freedom, should consider themselves traitors, conspirators, collaborators and turncoats.

BNFA believes in democracy, human dignity, human rights and moral leadership. BNFA is composed of men and women of character, ethics and principles. We are men and women who are not burdened with shameful history. Those who oppose BNFA today are the enemies of the Barotse. Those who worship money and turn a blind eye to the injustice being perpetrated against the Barotse will be judged harshly. Anyone complicit in injustice against the Barotse should know that their day of reckoning is coming.

BNFA is fighting to restore Barotse integrity, dignity, honour and pride. We want to restore our stateliness, our sovereignty, our independence. We are calling on all the people of Barotseland, irrespective of their ethnicity to join us in this crusade.

Freedom is coming to Barotseland tomorrow. So join us.