

ZINASU STATEMENT ON NATIONAL HEROES DAY...

ZINASU joins the progressive citizens of Zimbabwe in commemorating the National Heroes Day, which signifies the selfless sacrifices that were and are still being made by the valiant sons and daughters of our motherland. The heroes and heroines fought against colonialism, imperialism, for democracy, betterment of the Zimbabweans livelihood and those who made the nation proud in various disciplines such as academics, sporting, and business amongst many others.

The painful sacrifices that the freedom fighters, chimbwidos and mujibhas made in the liberation war deserve consummate honor from all Zimbabweans. It is regrettable that the values and principles that guided the liberation war troops (ZIPRA and ZANLA forces) are now being negated with unmatched impunity by those in Government today and ZINASU believes that the deceased heroines and heroes are currently turning in their graves as a sign of disapproval. The liberation war was not only aimed at defeating the white colonial regime but centred on ushering in democracy and availing equal opportunities to all.

The surviving liberation fighters' are watching helplessly as the government leaders and politicians abuse the gains of independence as opportunities to loot from parastatals, Chiadzwa Diamond fields, farms and companies through diabolical legislations and works. Zimbabwe is yet to realize egalitarianism despite having attained independence three decades ago. Mismanagement, corruption, dictatorial tendencies, sponsorship of anarchy and deficiency of respect for the rule of law has turned Zimbabwe into a grief-stricken state. The current crop of national leaders who are paradoxically British and American schooled have turned colleges into war zones with student liberties as their number one targets.

The education sector like the other elements of the social delivery sector has not been spared as quality of education has plunged into despondency, accessibility has been made thorny by the exorbitant fees regime, and institutions of higher learning have been turned into torture camps. Over 440 students have been issued with suspensions and 53 with expulsions since 2000 for demonstrating against prohibitive costs of education in the post-independent Zimbabwe whilst many prominent business people and politicians easily accessed education during the colonial era. The absence of clear curricula and national skills development policies has seen colleges and universities graduates' qualifications not matching the demands of the labour market.

ZINASU therefore appeals to all Zimbabweans from various walks of life to respect the values that our heroes and heroines fought for such as the end to racial discrimination, to continuously fight against neo-colonialism, respect of fundamental freedoms and thwarting dictatorial tendencies just to mention but a few. The mandate to confer people with heroes and heroines status must cease to vest in a political party (ZANU-PF) but in the people of Zimbabwe as a whole.

The national heroes' shrines have become a mockery to the nation as we have witnessed tyrants being accorded district, provincial or national heroes' status by this moribund political party. There are numerous people who have contributed immensely to the development of Zimbabwe as a nation but were

not accorded with heroes status because they were not aligned to the 'liberation party' ZANU-PF. ZINASU would be pleased to observe the status being accorded to true heroes and heroines despite their political affiliations and beliefs. The students' movement questions if the likes of Border Gezi, Elliot Manyika and Moven Mahachi amongst others made positive contributions towards nation building when James Chikerema, Ndabaningi Sithole and Rev Canaan Banana who immensely contributed to national development were not conferred national heroes.

Our Heroes message to those in government is explicit and strident. We demand academic freedoms and fundamental rights today. We depict our inspiration from heroes and heroines such as Witness Mangwende, Josiah Tongogara, Learnmore Jongwe, Jason Moyo, Lookout Masuku, Joshua Nkomo, Jairos Jiri, Sally Mugabe and all luminaries of the struggle of emancipating the Zimbabwean family. It is our duty as Zimbabweans to protect the revolutionary gains from the egocentricity of the crocodile liberators and the Swiss bank socialists who hide behind air-conditioned offices.

OBERT MASARAURE

ZINASU PRESIDENT