

# Deepening Black Despair

We Must take  
ourselves seriously



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There is a great feeling of disillusion among the people of African descent right now, this did not enter with the new Government which is predominantly East Indian, but there is evidence that it has deepened. By large we are now forced to come to terms with our predicament, the history of which is a deceptive suffrage and an unrelenting oppression under systems controlled by other races. This is a fact.

Here in Trinidad and Tobago, the problematic results are extremely complex. There is a quantity of defeat - psychological- the worst, which we have come to accept as our lot. It is dawning at last, because of the excesses of self-interest displayed by the present Government, that we are merely accommodation entities at best, serving others promptly and efficiently while denying and neglecting ourselves and our own.

We are now caught in a purely reactive mode, we have become shy, the voice of our protest weak with dribble. A mood of impotence has entered, with it anxiety has increased, frustration prevails and so as tolerance, compassion and understanding grow short in temper, violence becomes more pronounced and assertive.

I have called on my own House, my own

community to take itself seriously. To examine what we have come to perpetuate as our culture; as our entitlement in present practice and projections for the arriving new century.

It was in that context that I drew attention to the results of the scholarship programme for higher education where students of African descent were virtually absent. The truth is in the field of education, the arts and sports Afro-Trinidadians have always excelled, it has been our legacy for many, many years, but in recent years the line in the graph has plunged. This situation is a grave one. It is significant as an element in the description of our encroaching demise. One might be curious as to the whys of this defunct state, when it seems that hitherto and for a long time we appeared to hold sway at the helm of government and so on, but I have always suffered that, that was an illusion.

Yes we were bright to dazzling brilliance, but with borrowed heads in mimicry, our feet, not for the slightest, steeped in our root earth.

Our own dreams deeply felt a nuisance to be denied, made silly and obtrusive before our ambitions to ape other people. The case for an own people with an authentic trust and thrust in the world of peoples had to remain in the most remote imaging in one's or in the minds of others. We are therefore a community of estrangement, caught in the labyrinth of yet, in wait (under the weight of the world).

With no sense of a culture of self-preservation and creation of their own word, word being: with no sense of self-authorship or self-determination, a people, any people is doomed to serfdom, and will have no meaning, no presence in the

discourse. Made lowered there, a people become sheer utility, assets to be fancied by the whims of others.

It is in that light I view mutations of my race, my word, my house, my community vis--vis the specific questions pertaining to the scholarship results and the concerns for the number of Afro-Trinidadian women who are maimed for life or who die during medical operations.

At that function coordinated by Horizon Fraternities where I was the guest speaker, and which honoured the late, distinguished teacher Mr. John Michael Broomes, Baba Emo, I invited my community to trust their instincts for fire where they sensed smoke, but they would need to avoid gossip and rumour, in order to train their alertness to the disadvantages that beset them. They were suspicious of those results, therefore it was their right and self-obligation to investigate the situation, gather information, select and analyse the evidence of this or that. Communities who must now seek redress if it was necessary, from the official authorities.

That I think is the way we must proceed if we are to succeed in becoming an important force in the changes taking place to inform an envisioned society.

We must take ourselves seriously, ready ourselves to participate in the Dawn or perish in the noonlight.

LeRoy Clarke

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