

TIME TO CHOOSE - TIME TO CHANGE

Throughout the country the cry for change is on. We read it in the newspapers. We hear it in the ordinary man's conversation. We hear it in church sermons.....The question that is unanswered is: change from what to what, by whom and by what means?

Nearly everyone will answer - change from a system that is oppressive, dishonest and unjust: from an economy that is run down and stretched to the limit by corruption and self generated inflation; from a society that is materialistic, unpatriotic and lacking in moral character.

Every true patriot would like to see a new society founded on integrity and justice, a society that is loving and caring, a society that gives hope to its youth; free from hunger, insecurity and unemployment.

WHAT IS WRONG?

This is not the first time this cry has been heard. The cry was on 30 years ago during the struggle for the birth of this nation. But when the nation was born, something died. We used shortcuts to justify personal ambition and greed. Instead of aiming for the best we justified our weaknesses by comparing ourselves with the worst.

In the pursuit of power, we trampled upon our fellow men, determined to hold on to it at whatever cost. We deliberately misinterpreted the best of our traditions and tolerated impurity. The consequences were broken homes, sexually transmitted diseases and the ruined lives of young people, to the detriment of building a sound nation.

Every day we read accusations and counter-accusations of lying and stealing, bribery and corruption, and even murder, in high places. It is not our job to judge or condemn, though we share in the common concern about such matters in our country. But we, the ordinary people, have to face our share of responsibility. We fed bribery, we fed nepotism, we condoned evil. The conscience of the nation died, except for a few lone voices whom we chose to persecute.

Kenya will become the nation we want only when its citizens are people of integrity and unquestionable character. Everyone is responsible and has a part to play in bringing about the cure that is required. Change starts when one person makes the decision to start. "As I am so is my nation". This applies to Ministers and wananchi, businessmen and farmers, Christians, Muslims and Hindus, men of faith and men of no faith. All need the change in our inner selves which God alone can give. *Rotten eggs will never make good food. Eggs cannot change. Men can.*

THE CURE:

The decision is ours. One act of restitution is worth a hundred good sermons against corruption. Don't bribe. Don't accept *chai*. Return what has been stolen or what has been taken which rightfully belongs to the nation. Apologise to those I have wronged. Forgive those who have wronged me. Care for others and show courtesy to all whether I am a VIP or driver of a car. As a VIP I am also a servant. As a driver I do not own the road.

Care for my family. Unity of the family depends on the unity of the parents. Families are the building blocks of the nation. Honesty and trust start in the home. Purity is the cement that keeps families together. It gives strength to the nation. It stiffens the backbone and is the best prevention of AIDS.

When homes break up the nation breaks up. Most of us can start there. Sin divides people. Forgiveness unites them. And the Inner Voice is still the unfailing source of wisdom. This is the secret the world is waiting for. It is the forgotten factor.

The choice of our nation is still the same as that spoken by William Penn 300 years ago - "Men must choose to be governed by God or they condemn themselves to be ruled by tyrants". That goes for multi-party as well as single party rule. Not just men. Women too. Each man and woman, young and old, must aim to live by God's absolute standards:

Absolute honesty,
Absolute purity,
Absolute unselfishness,
Absolute love.

Kenya, armed with these absolute standards, will emerge as a new nation poised for leadership on this continent and the world. Kenya under Kenyatta accepted the challenge that different races can work together. We surprised the world. We can do so again and set the pace for peaceful change in Africa.

This is not an unattainable dream. It is the way ahead for our nation.

We the undersigned, like many other across the country are committed to these ideas.

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