

The Political Crime Of Belgium In Congo-Africa



The political crime of Belgium in Africa: Image of victims of king Leopold's brutality in Congo.

In 1914, when the Germans invaded Belgium during the war, they committed many grievous atrocities against the civilian population. It is estimated that nearly 6,000 Belgians were killed and 25,000 homes and 837 communities were also destroyed. This historical fact is considered the greatest crime against humanity in Belgium.

To a country like Belgium in that period, the destruction was tough, thus; calling for justice but comparing to what King Leopold II, did to Congo during the colonial era, one can agree that what the Germans did to the Belgians was just the tip of the iceberg. Nevertheless; crime, whether small or big, should be punished, even though many seem to elude it.

The swift European scramble over African territory took place from the 17th century to the 20th century. The European Kingdoms including France, England, and Belgium, took the advantage of the cordial relationship and trust between them and the tribal chiefs and plundered the continent. Among the greediest, brutal and savage, was King Leopold II of Belgium.

Leopold colonized Congo which officially became his personal property in 1876. Under false pretense of protecting the Congolese, the world witnessed the slaughter of men, women, and children. Dreaming of becoming the world's richest king and to supply the demand of rubber in Europe for the auto and bicycle industries, King Leopold set up a reign of terror in the heart of Congo.

To produce enough wild rubber, those who failed suffered the consequences. Leopold's men held the wives and children of the rubber tappers hostage until they brought him exactly what he wanted. Those unable to supply his demand had their villages burned down, men were hanged, starved to death and others genital organs were tied.

Children's hands were chopped off as punishment for late deliveries. While many were calling Leopold a murderer and seeking justice to be hanged, the Belgians were covering up his crime. There is no doubt that King Leopold II is the moral forebear of Adolf Hitler, responsible for the death of over 10 million people, during his exploitation of the Congo, between 1870 and 1900.

The rebellious rubber tappers who tried to fight Leopold's men were quickly defeated and many fled to hide in the bush. Leopold told his men to go after them in the forest, giving them instructions to bring the right hand of every killed victim as a proof. Instead of King Leopold facing punishment for his crimes, he was hailed as a great humanitarian king with statues, monuments; and streets named after him throughout Belgium.

It is very sad Belgium has such a history, as a country built on exploitation, suffering and the flowing of the blood of massacred children. No matter how hard they try to cover up this heinous crime, this historical crime will remain indelible. What we are witnessing in the Belgium today is unusual. Many are scared and predicting the end of the world. While many are committing suicide, others are fighting for power, yet they don't know the hour.

Innocent blood can't be shed; therefore Belgium shouldn't pretend they have forgotten about this crime. No sacrificial lamb or compensation could heal the wounds and broken spirits of the victims or Congo as a country. King Leopold II of Belgium was nothing more than a criminal, murderer, rapist and a thief.

I think he was worse than Adolf Hitler. All his statues should come down and all streets named after him be denounced. As an African writer, I feel very privileged and happy indeed, to write this article because no Belgian journalist is brave enough to write such articles.