



POLITICAL SCHOOL

TOWARDS A GENERATIONAL MISSION

TOWARDS A PEOPLE'S EDUCATION

**A PERSPECTIVE OF THE EFFSC ON FREE,
DECOLONIZED, QUALITY AND WELL
RESOURCED EDUCATION**

ABSTRACT

This political contribution has been developed by the Economic Freedom Fighters Students Command, to provide a through perspective on our position as it relates to Free, Decolonized, Quality and Well-Resourced Education in South Africa. As the commodification aspects of education have largely been unpacked through various literature which is readily available on many platforms, we have taken a conscious decision to relatively flout that aspect in this text. In line with this decision, the document maintains a stern focus on the colonial aspects of the country and its education system, provides a brief overview of a model for decolonization and ties the call for free and decolonized education into the identity and generational mission of the EFF Students Command. In doing so, we provide a clear perspective to all radical and militant African forces of the left, on the realities and possible solutions in pursuit of an education that will serve the African child.



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INTRODUCTION

The Economic Freedom Fighters Students Command – herein referred to as the EFFSC – as a student organization of the Economic Freedom Fighters – herein referred to as the EFF and is the third largest political party in South Africa; prides itself in being the poster organization for the battle of Free, Decolonized, Quality and Well-Resourced Education. This is a generational mission which we have committed ourselves to, and will attain by any means necessary. Both the EFFSC and the call for the for free education find their genesis in the founding manifesto and constitution of the EFF, cardinal pillar number 4 and section 32 respectively. As such, this document has been designed to unpack the perspectives and positions of EFFSC in relation to the different aspects of Education in South Africa. This will be done through various sections, unpacking various issues to be discussed below.

The first aspect that this document will engage is the historical development of neoliberal and Eurocentric education in the country. This will be done through offering a historical analysis of the colonial conquest, its objectives, projects and achievements. The implications of these on the education system will then be engaged and critiqued through a Marxist-Leninist-Fanonian theoretical lens. The text will then factor in the question of decolonization and unpack its necessity in the education. This will be in an attempt to provide a contextual argument that seeks to provide a blueprint for the pioneering of an education system that responds to the needs of its students, an Afrocentric and Socialist education system.





img: Top 5 officials of 3rd democratically elected EFFSC CSCT STRUCTURE

We will then move to the political identity of the EFFSC, and what it means for the call of free education. This will be done through a chronological analysis of the founding principles of the organization which speak to certain aspects of the call. That means that through this section, the EFFSC's theoretical genesis will be stripped naked, and subsequently married to its generational mission. This in an attempt to ensure that we highlight how these principles bring about the theoretical conditions for us to – as father Fanon challenges – fulfil our generational mission.

Upon achieving this, the document will offer a critical analysis of the fees must fall movement, our role in it, its shortcomings and achievements. This analysis will take a reflective posture, and will be designed to guide all progressive forces of the left in intensifying the call for free education. Multiple lessons are to be drawn from the experiences of South African students in the period of 2015 – 2017, and this document will identify each of these lessons.

We will then, as we move towards concluding, clearly unpack the role of the EFFSC in catalysing the attainment of free education in South Africa. This will be done through a look at 2 different scenarios, an idealist and realist analysis respectively. The idealist analysis will unpack our role in said attainment within the current socio-political conditions, while the realist analysis will speak to our role in attaining this generational mission through the delivery of EFF to the Union Buildings.

In our concluding remarks, we will round up all progressive ideas raised in this document then outline a call to action for all revolutionary left forces in the republic. The reality is that the unity of the left, particularly the youth as the critical motive forces of our revolution, is paramount to attaining our generational mission.



HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

UNDERSTANDING THE COLONIAL LEGACY IN EDUCATION

“COLONIALISM IS UNDERSTOOD AS CONCEPT OF ONE NATION ATTAINING DOMINANCE AND CONTROL OF ANOTHER NATION, THROUGH SEIZING CONTROL OF ITS SYSTEMS, SOCIAL DETERMINATION AND ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION”

In unpacking this particular subsection, we are confronted with the need to adopt one of two theoretical approaches, a historical narration of the development of colonial education or an analysis of said development. Due to a belief that the former has been done, and done to death, we elect to move the direction of the latter. As such, this section will analyse the historical development of colonial education in South Africa through analysing the impact of the arrival of colonial settlers in the Cape during the 1600s, the solidification of the miseducation of the African in the 1800 and 1900s as well as the realities that confront the education system today. In addition, we will also highlight and unpack the different stages of the development, within this chronological analysis. This will be done through highlighting the establishment, solidification, legitimization and maintenance stages of the development of colonial education.

The 6th April 1652 is recognized by most historians, archaeologists and by extension, politicians as the date on which the colonists arrived in South Africa. Although we understand that this position is not fully factual, we will run our analysis from that period. This is primarily due to the fact that it symbolizes the date when the Dutch imperialists declared war on South Africa, through the deployment of Jan van Riebeeck and his squadron of mercenaries. It is as a direct result of this day, that Europeans solidified their war on Africans. This was done with one of the intentions being to segregate the people from their indigenous systems of knowledge generation, acquisition and dissemination. This period represented the first stage in the development of colonial education, which we refer to as the establishment stage. It is characterized by ensuring that through force and whatever



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The second stage can be traced from the 1800s, all the way into the early 1900s. This was the stage of solidifying the gains made through the establishment stage. In other words, it is the stage in the development of colonial education where the colonizers painted the blank native canvas in their own image. This was done primarily through the establishment of colonial systems in line with the British model of governance, which included a government department dealing with education. This stage saw this department pioneer the development of institutions – universities and schools in particular – which were designed to impart European knowledge on Africans. These institutions were developed through and managed by racist policy positions which were designed to instil the hate of the natives in their European students in particular, and in the natives themselves. This instillation of self-hate in the natives was achieved through the establishment of missionary schools, designed to provide a poorer, less developed and extremely marginalized curriculum for the natives. This as means to ensure that the natives remain under-educated and in turn instilling a high level of European worship in them.

This system was to be later solidified by the Apartheid government in the periods from the late 1960s to early 1970s. It was this system known as 'Bantu Education' which was to later compel the learners of SOWETO to rise in rebellion in the year 1976. This system had as its core pillar, the adoption of a foreign language – Afrikaans – as the primary medium of instruction for the native learners. This was done with the understanding by the racist state that language is not just a means for communication, but a carrier of culture. In fear that the native cultures still found expression in South African classrooms due to the use of native languages to teach native learners, the decision to adopt Afrikaans was taken as an attempt to mitigate this reality and impose the perpetuation and normalization of Afrikaner culture in the place of native cultures. This decision was rightfully met with rebellion; rebellion we celebrate to this day as it marks a critical turning point in the development of South Africa's political history.



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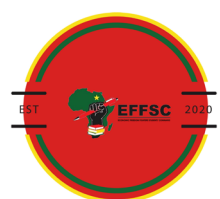


In the periods of the 1980s towards the 1990s, upon realizing their inevitable loss of state power, the colonial establishment unleashed the stage of legitimization. This was done in an attempt to secure the gains of the colonial legacy in destroying native education systems in favour of a colonial education system. This process included the adoption and amendment of laws in such a way that state influence would be minimized. A strategic move, one must applaud, as it was defined by the expectation that even though the colonial powers would lose control of the state, they would maintain complete dominance in the educational institutions that they had developed. A practical example of this is the concept of 'institutional autonomy' enjoyed by tertiary institutions, which has been a thorn in the backside of the ANC government, other political entities and student activists since the dawn of 'democracy'. This autonomy as protected by the Higher Education Act, grants tertiary institutions – their Councils in particular – the autonomous decision making powers in those institutions. This means that the current minister, Blade Nzimande of the Department of Higher Education and Training, for example, can issue out an instruction to institutions and through their Councils, institutions can choose to defy it. This – as we have seen it happen – is completely within their rights as Council and enjoys the full protection of the law.

The maintenance stage represented by the period in which we currently exist, was empowered through the CODESA arrangement which has been referred to above. This arrangement ensured that the definition of South Africa's so-called attainment of freedom would be defined by a lousy exchange of power. It resulted in the reality of no critical law, or critical aspects of such laws, being touched. It guaranteed the colonialist sustained dominance over the education system of the country through perpetual control of its resources. We still see this reality today, as one must approach the courts to compel the ANC government to touch even the most overtly racist and discriminatory laws, and force their amendment. This is the direct result of the maintenance stage, which is characterised by compromising agreements that were made by senior ANC leaders of negotiations with the colonial masters. These so-called leaders, Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Cyril Ramaphosa just to name a few, made these agreements in exchange for administration of the state. In addition to this, they made these agreements in exchange of luxurious houses, cars and even shares in the multinational corporations of the colonizers. This is the value, the extremely low value, they placed on the lives of the native people. And in doing so, compromised the struggle for total liberation of and attainment of dignity for our people. More contextually, compromised the pillar of the Mass Democratic Revolution that spoke to Free, Decolonized and Quality Education and in doing so, ensured the maintenance of the colonial education system that is racially demarcated and organized in a classist manner.



img: Cecil John Rhodes's vision of colonizing Africa from 'Cape to Cairo'



POLITICAL SCHOOL
TOWARDS A GENERATIONAL MISSION

TOWARDS A JUST SOCIETY

THE NECESSITY FOR DECOLONIZATION

“WE APPEAR STILL TRAPPED IN THE ‘COLONIZERS’ VERY CONTROLLED EPISTEMOLOGY. ACTION AGAINST COLONIAL ECONOMIC CONTROL AND DISPOSSESSION REQUIRES RE-CONFIGURATION OF THE CURRICULUM AND EDUCATION RECEIVED BY AFRICANS.”

A just society to us is one which is – as Bantu Biko theorized, one that is egalitarian. The attainment of such a society which is free of all identity-based oppression through being devoid of all segregating identities, should be the logical conclusion of any decolonization program. Within this line of thought, this section will unpack the general meaning of decolonization, its primary aspects, methods of execution and the necessity it bears in South African education.

Decolonization is understood by the layman as a process in which a nation that was previously a colony controlled by another nation, becomes politically independent. A more scientific definition as posited by multiple scholars speaks to more than just the attainment of political independence. It is defined as a process of holistically and violently reversing all gains imposed by the colonial legacy. It speaks to the preciously colonized nation attaining political, economic, social and cultural independence from the bondage of its colonizing nation. The implications of these understanding extremely different, as those of the latter understanding result in a better defined and much more entrenched independence, while those of the former result in a much more superficial ‘independence’ which leaves a lot of room for the colonizer nation to maintain hegemony. Lessons to this effect can be drawn from the realities of the gains Ghanaian and South African liberation movements, respectively. We therefore understand decolonization as a process that must be holistic and defined by the taking back of the control of all aspects of the nation.

The process can be advanced through multiple methods, all ranging from violent to nonviolent. For purposes of this text, we shall grapple with three critical methods, which will be briefly discussed below:





img: Nomzamo Winnie Madikizela Mandela



img: Frantz Fanon

- The first of these methods is epistemological disobedience, which can be used as means to challenge conventional and generally accepted concepts and contents of knowledge. As we understand epistemology to refer to the knowledge systems of a society, it is imperative that decolonization speaks to challenging the epistemic status quo. This means that there must be a deliberate, coordinated and confrontational program by proponents of decolonization, to challenge the, contest and disqualify the production, organization and dissemination of colonial knowledge systems within the colonial dispensation.
- The second method is Civil Disobedience which generally speaks to organizing the society against colonial structures, laws, agents, etc. and is primarily defined through a withdrawal in participation. This method can be implemented through ensuring that all members of the society disinvest from the colonial establishment through the withdrawal of their human, financial, etc. resources from the establishment.
- The final method which we will discuss is Mass Industrial Action which is defined through organizing all members of society in pickets, demonstrations, protests and strikes. This method is at most times effective and escalates to violence due to multiple aspects, central to which is resistance by the colonial legacy.

Decolonization of the education sector then becomes imperative, as it is a critical pillar of the colonial establishment. Education is very dangerous, as it determines the general psychology and consciousness of the society. It is further a serious factor that determines the extent of the entrenchment of colonial ideas. This is primarily due to the fact that it determines and captures the youth at a very early level. This then creates a situation where they are inducted into colonial indoctrination and develop its entrenchment as they grow. Finally, the decolonization is important to instil a sense of self love and confidence in all natives of the land. A foreign education, developed and taught by foreigners, can only impart foreign ideas. Therefore, it is important to decolonize education so that it teaches an African child to appreciate themselves, the continent and the connection that they biologically enjoy with Mother Africa.



POLITICAL IDENTITY OF EFFSC

THE DISCOURSE TO DECOLONIZE AND DECOMMODIFY EDUCATION

"THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION DOES NOT SPEAK TO THE AFRICAN CONTINENT, RATHER AT MORE DOMINATED OLD WESTERN CULTURE, EUROCEN-TRIC COGNITION"

The EFF Students Command inspired by the June 16 moment which in this aspect remains us of a comment made by one of the then student activist of the 1976 generation which went brave and wrote on a world newspaper, he wrote " Our parents are prepared to suffer under the white oppressive rules. They have been living for years under these laws and they have become immune to them. But we strongly refuse to swallow an education that is resigned to make us slaves in the country of our birth". The saddest part of this is that, this time is not the "white oppressive rule" but a " black government oppressive rules". This aspiration lead to the formation of Fees mast fall movement.

The EFF Students Command is identified by it 7 non-negotiable founding principles:

1. Mobilising students behind the struggle for economic freedom, embodied in the EFF Founding Manifesto.
2. Pursuit of radical higher education transformation with the aim towards free, qualityand well-resourced education.
3. Championing the interests of students and all workers in institutions of higher learning.
4. Building a dynamic relationship between students and community struggles andcampaigns.
5. Participating in progressive international campaigns and programmes.
6. Promoting academic and research excellence and progress.
7. Contributing to intellectual and ideological discourse in a manner that seeks to promote the struggle for economic freedom.





img: EFFSC Members in song

These principles are inter-related to its generational mission which is Fee free decolonized and well-resourced education, but in this context, we focus particularly on the decolonization part of it.

Principle number one which speaks of “mobilizing students behind the struggle for economic freedom as embodied in the EFF founding manifesto”. To us economic emancipation means free education as embodied in cardinal pillar number one of the EFF. In the EFFSC principle no two pursuit of radical higher education transformation with the aim towards free, quality and well-resourced education. The South African education does not speak to the African content, rather at more dominated old western culture, Eurocentric cognition. It is primary that we understand the necessity of overcoming this cognition, through a radical and militant pursuit of free, decolonized and quality education.

Promoting academic and research excellence and programmes founding principle is one of the most important pillars in relations to the decolonization concept of the South African and African education. For the black society to well perform academically demands for an education which is structured with African traditions, epistemic for a black society to regain self-realization, dignity, self-exploration and indigenous morality. African children pioneering a decolonial system is the dream of our ancestors, who first fought the first resistance against European invasion and domination. We must fulfil their dream.



CRITICAL DICHOTOMY AND LESSONS FROM FEES MUST FALL

LESSONS TO BE DRAWN

The movement of Fees Must Fall which we saw hit South Africa from 2015 was a defining period in the intensification of the call for de-commodifying education. It resulted in the centring of the cause in the national political discourse as students took charge of the politics of the country during this period.

The reality is that the theorizing of decolonization was a major catalyst in introducing the call for a de-commodified education system, a critical humanizing pedagogy as well as the interrogation of the socio-economic praxis of addressing past injustice and marginalization. This was while simultaneously integrating the challenging of class contradictions and disrupting dominant Euro-centric catalysts of the colonial system.

Fees Must Fall raised eleven critical questions and issues. These are discussed below:

- 1) Decoloniality in the question of violent systems and infrastructure
- 2) The question of access and knowledge production and whose interest the latter serves
- 3) The question of violence and the humanization project as per Fanons writings
- 4) The question of land, and exclusionary commodification of learning happening on stolen land





img: 2015 Feesmustfall protest outside the RSA Parliament, Cape Town

- 5) The question of capital and its institutions reinforcing gender disparities, violence on black bodies, maintaining social economic divide and the malicious disenfranchisement of the; differently abled, the queer and non-gender conforming binaries.
- 6) The question of institutions of higher learning being a microcosm of society and the work required to correct the colonial epistemology
- 7) The question of a fiscal response and intervention to make education a social good.
- 8) The question of the ownership of wealth in occupied South Africa and the use of education to correct apartheid economic exclusion by transferring the burden of the education of the poor on to the beneficiaries of apartheid.
- 9) The question of the emerging black middle class and the missing middle. Those that are too poor to fund their education but to "rich" for NSFAS.
- 10) The question of the academic curriculum and the absence of decolonial literature, African writers, thinkers and the erasure of African epistemology.
- 11) The question of the readiness of the organization to own and champion the plight of free education and the lack of an epistemological framework of an Afrocentric curriculum



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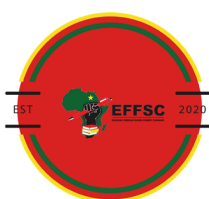
THE ROLE OF EFFSC IN THE ATTAINMENT OF FREE, DECOLONIZED, QUALITY AND WELL-RESOURCED EDUCATION

“A PROGRAM THAT SPEAKS TO THE ATTAINMENT OF AN EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT WILL SERVE OUR PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY YOUNG PEOPLE”

The role of the EFFSC in the quest for free, decolonized, quality and well-resourced education is gigantic and central. The failure to ensure that South African students, in this generation, get to reap the fruits of the revolution. Through accessing an education system that is designed for them, without having to pay a single cent. Failure to achieve this revolutionary mission, would be a failure in our existence.

The attainment of this mission could ideally be achieved through persuading or compelling the African National Congress government, to exercise an uncharacteristic moment of compassion. To take a bold step in acknowledging what is broken and run a genuine project to remedy it. A program that speaks to the attainment of an education system that will serve our people, particularly young people.

A move that would acknowledge the impact of the colonial education on the South African economy, what it means for the economy and well-beings of our people. An appeal to the moral consciousness – if one still exists; of the ANC government to grant its young people, the minimum abilities to fight themselves out of poverty, unemployment and marginalization. To give them the powers to build a better, more just and equal society for our people.



POLITICAL SCHOOL
TOWARDS A GENERATIONAL MISSION



img: EFFSC members, outside Johannesburg Magistrate court showing solidarity towards last #feesmustfall prisoner, Kanya Cekeshe

This mission can also be attained through a realist approach of putting all our behind delivering the Economic Freedom Fighters into Union Buildings. Through the EFF attaining control of the state, its institutions and powers, is the most practical way of attaining Free, Decolonized, Quality and Well-Resourced Education. At a primary level, the students are members of the community before they are students. This bestows upon us the responsibility to ensure that we participate in the delivery of the EFF.

The EFF remains the only hope for the people of South Africa. Through giving the state a socialist and Afrocentric posture, the children of the poor, the children of black people, the children of the dejected masses of our people, get an education that speaks to them. It is central to the modus operandi of the Students Command, as embodied in our primary founding principle, to rally students, and young people in general behind the pursuit of economic freedom in our life time.



CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion, the EFFSC records that:

- Colonialism was a brutal and vile conquest, and its power is still maintained by institutions of higher learning
- That the dehumanisation of an African child that happens through our learning and curriculum is felt most by the masses of our people.
- This character of colonialism cascaded into the education system colonizes young people at an early age.
- Decolonization is necessary for the restoration of the dignity of our people.
- Decolonization of education is central to correcting the historical injustice and the miseducation of our people.
- The EFFSC was from the cradle, born in rebellion of an unchallenged white privilege, white dominance and Eurocentric epistemological violence on black students in higher institutions of learning.
- The plight of free decolonial Afrocentric education must be waged and advanced in South Africa an abandonment of such a struggle is abandonment of Afrocentric epistemology and the call for justice.
- The political and ideological gains of FMF must be defended and advanced further.

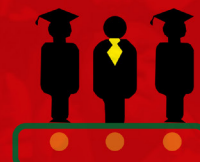




EFFSC
FORWARD THINKING. UNITED. EMPOWERED. CHANGING.

THE PURSUIT OF A GENERATIONAL MISSION

**BUILDING
COMMUNITY
BASED
STUDENT
ACTIVISM**



**PRIMARY & HIGH
SCHOOLS**

**TERTIARY
INSTITUTIONS**

**COMMUNITY &
YOUTH**

**F R E E
DECOLONIZED
EDUCATION**

**UNEMPLOYMENT
GBV
SUBSTANCE ABUSE**



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TOWARDS A GENERATIONAL MISSION

