



Free At Last: Western Hegemony Is Crumbling In Africa w/ Dr. Gerald Horne

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Dimitri Lascaris (DL): Good day, this is Dimitris Lascaris coming to you for a Reason2Resist from Greece on May 31st, 2025. For the past three years or so, the West has been transfixed by the war in Ukraine. That war, which arguably elevated the risk of nuclear conflagration to unprecedented levels, continues unabated despite Donald Trump's purported efforts to end it. Less than two years after Ukraine was plunged into the most destructive war Europe has experienced since World War II, Israel launched its genocidal assault on the Palestinian people. Today the horrors we are witnessing in Gaza and the shocking impunity with which Israel and its western backers commit them are probably worse than they've been at any point during the genocide. While these human catastrophes have unfolded, much less attention has been paid in the West to the momentous developments in the Sahel. The Sahel, meaning the shore in Arabic, is a vast area crossing 6,000 kilometres from East to West Africa. It encompasses twelve countries and is home to some 400 million people. As defined by the United Nations, the political region of the Sahel includes Senegal, Gambia, Mauritania, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Nigeria. Now here to help us understand what is happening there is Dr. Gerald Horne. Dr. Horne is the Moore's Professorship of History in African-American Studies at the University of Houston. His research has addressed issues of racism and a variety of relations involving labour, politics, civil rights, international relations, and war. He's written over 30 books, and he's kind enough to join us today from Victoria, D.C. early in the morning. Thank you very much for joining us today, Dr. Horne.

Gerald Horne (GH): Thank you for inviting me.

DL: So Dr. Horne, I'd like to begin by asking you about an organisation known as ECOWAS, or that's an acronym for the Economic Community of West African States. ECOWAS is a regional political and economic union of twelve countries of West Africa. The official narrative is that ECOWAS exists to promote the collective self-sufficiency for its member states by creating a single large trade bloc and by building a full economic and trading union,

it claims that it seeks to raise living standards and promote economic development. Just to set the context for us, Dr. Horne, could you talk to us about the reality of ECOWAS? Has it in fact promoted development and self-sufficiency for its member states? And if not, in your opinion, whose interest does ECOWAS actually serve?

GH: Well, that organisation is spearheaded by the continental giants, speaking of Nigeria. However, to speak solely of ECOWAS as a purported economic locomotive would be as simplistic as speaking of Jesus as simply a carpenter. It leaves out more than it reveals. You need only be reminded of the fact that a few years ago, when you had a change of regime in Nigeria's northern neighbour, speaking of Niger, which is a penultimate member of the Sahel states that also includes Mali and Burkina Faso, joined by Niger, Nigeria threatened to invade. Press reports suggested that this was at the behest of Washington. Not surprising in that context. Because keep in mind that President Tinubu, who had only recently been inaugurated and installed in office in Nigeria, had a rather, shall we say, scarred presence during his time in the 1970s in Chicago. In fact, press reports from Nigeria indicated that when he left the United States, he left as he was being pursued by law enforcement authorities with regard to various scams and frauds. And it was suggested that if he did not play ball with regard to putting pressure on the Sahel states, particularly Niger, then these particular scandals would be revealed. Unfortunately, a mass revolt by the working class and the masses of Nigeria forestalled the possibility that there would be a Nigerian invasion of Niger, and Mr. Tinubu should thank his lucky stars that that took place, because that could have been devastating. That is to say, an invasion of the northern neighbour could have been devastating for Nigeria.

And perhaps we should back up for a moment and seek to understand this political rift in ECOWAS. A political rift that has on one side the Alliance of Sahel States aforementioned, led by Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso, and then, of course, the rather stand-pat status quo forces led by Nigeria, and I should also say Ivory Coast or Cote d'Ivoire. This alliance of the Sahel States, as you may know, they're led by military forces, but that should not lead to a brush off of these particular regimes because we know that in the past, what has happened when you've had attempts to inaugurate the progressive change in Africa in general, the North Atlantic powers have intervened militarily. And that is rather difficult if the military itself holds power, which it basically does as we speak in the Sahel States. And you should also know that there is a president for progressive change in the Sahel region. Your audience may be familiar with the late Burkina Faso leader Thomas Sankara of the 1980s, who was assassinated sadly and tragically, presumably at the behest of one of his erstwhile comrades speaking of the subsequent president of Blaise Compaoré. Mr. Sankara had outraged France by moving in a progressive direction, including helping to install an agenda of feminism, helping to plant trees to forestall decertification, helping to build roads in order to develop the infrastructure so that the economy could have a takeoff, but that particular agenda and what it pretended did not meet the agreement of the North Atlantic powers and so therefore he had to go.

Now we see a similar agenda, progressive agenda, being forwarded by the Sahel states. We see in Niger, for example, a major supplier of uranium to France, which helps to power the electricity in French homes. That uranium from Niger had been sold at a pittance. The Nigerian authorities have upped the price of that uranium, bringing more revenue into the treasury, allowing for more spending on health care and education, but at the same time, this has not won plaudits in the North Atlantic camp because they see it as a dangerous signal. You see a similar development in Mali. It's very interesting to note that Canada, or Canadian interests, have major investments in gold in Mali. And the Malian authorities have moved to extract more revenue from these Canadian mining superpowers, which is not, once again, one plot. And I think, in a sense, it helps to expose in a corollary way the dilemma of Ottawa, because as your audience knows, Mr. Trump has threatened to annex Canada, make it the 51st state. But at the same time, Canadian imperialism is heavily dependent upon US imperialism, for example, with regard to this dilemma with Mali. And it's going to be interesting to see how Ottawa plays its cards. That is to say, will it acquiesce to the ability of the modelling authorities to extract more revenue from Canadian mining superpowers, or will it acquiesce to the latter as it seeks to twist the arm of the Malian authorities, which of course will then make Canada ultimately more dependent upon US imperialism. And then when you turn to Burkina Faso, which is noted has a tradition to uphold in terms of the legacy of the late Thomas Sankara, the leader of Burkina Faso, Mr. Ibrahim Traoré, has attracted audiences applauding from Moscow, where he has been a frequent visitor, to Ghana, West Africa. Recall that a few months ago, when the current leader of Ghana, John Mahama, was inaugurated, the stadium erupted in stormy applause when Ibrahim Traoré took the rostrum.

Something similar happened in Gabon, another West African state, when a representative of Burkina Faso appeared at the inauguration of the newly installed leader, Mr. Nguema. We should know as well that there are progressive ripples that are being propelled from the Sahel states that are raising grave concern, not only amongst the status quo powers but in the vampire of the regions, speaking of France. Just a few days ago, there were rumours of a change of regime in Cote d'Ivoire, Ivory Coast, which may be France's closest ally on the African continent. There are stories that may be apocryphal, maybe not, that President Ouattara, who is an octogenarian, has in his office a trapdoor that allows him to escape directly to the French embassy in case peasants with pitchforks show up at his door seeking a regime change. In any case, there were rumours rocketing through Abidjan, the commercial capital, just a few days ago that Mr. Ouattara was on his way out because of Sahel's type of military change and regime. That did not prove to be the case, although it does cast new light upon the upcoming election in Cote d'Ivoire, in Ivory Coast, where Mr. Ouattara is being challenged on various fronts.

And then there's Cameroon, which is a neighbour of Nigeria. Actually, I've been hoping that Canada would show its purported progressive face by extending assistance to Cameroon because the issues in Cameroon mirror those of the issues in Canada. What I mean by that is that as we speak in Cameroon, this West African nation, there is a bloody de facto civil war unfolding, ostensibly pitting so-called Anglophones against Francophones. In other words, it's not unlike the dilemma in Canada with regard to Quebec, predominantly French speaking

versus say Ontario and the rest of the country, predominantly English speaking. Alas, Ouattara has not taken my advice and therefore we see this de facto civil war spreading like wildfire throughout Cameroon. Interestingly enough, the leader of Cameroon, who, if I may, could be considered a Francophone, Paul Biya, 90 plus years old, spends most of his time at a palatial estate in Switzerland. Now, one would think that given the kind of pressure that has been placed upon other regimes in Africa where you've had elderly leaders who have resisted term limits, I'm thinking of Zimbabwe a few years ago under President Robert Mugabe, who of course was excoriated in the North Atlantic community, because of his refusal to obey term limits, but of course, the ultimate issue was the fact that Zimbabwe had embarked on a course of land reform, redistributing the land from the European invaders, some of whom had only arrived as recently as 1945 to the masses of Zimbawians, and of course to cronies of Mr. Mugabe as well.

There was so much pressure placed on Zimbabwe that ultimately Mr. Mugabe was shown the door by many of his comrades in the ruling parties on OPF. Alas, there has not been light pressure on Cameroon, on Paul Biya, because quite frankly, he plays ball, to put it mildly, with the North Atlantic countries, and therefore he does not necessarily receive a negative press in the North Atlantic countries and I think that that should be an app check lesson for us all. That is to say if you play ball with the North Atlantic countries you can be a mass violator of human rights like Paul Biya and Cameroon but you will be given a pass but if you have the gumption and audacity to cross the North Atlantic countries to go against their interests perhaps by helping to uproot settlers of European descent, then you will be denounced. And you saw a hint of what I'm talking about in the Oval Office just a few days ago. Now, of course, we're veering southward, away from the Sahel. I'm talking about...

DL: Can we part that I know you're going to talk about Cyril Ramaphosa, I really want to have a more ample discussion about that during the course of our talk today, but I just want to, before we get there, I'd like to stay focused on the Sahel, if I may. You know, ECOWAS, as I'm sure you know, Dr. Horne, suspended the memberships of Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso and Niger in each case purportedly because there had been a coup d'etat in their countries. You know, the underlying premise of this suspension was that the member states that supported the suspension of these states were committed to democratic governance. You know back in the 90s, when I was practising law in New York City, I actually represented a number of nationals from Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Benin, who had applied for political asylum in deportation proceedings in New York City. And a number of them were granted political asylum – back in those days. I don't think this is any longer true, but the immigration court judges in the United States were actually relatively liberal in terms of their application of the laws of political asylum, and the principal piece of evidence we generally relied upon were US State Department reports about the anti-democratic character of these governments and the suppression of, you know, dissent, the violent suppression of dissent.

My question to you is, I want to focus in particular on Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal. I think there's a general assumption in a lot of the corporate media discourse around these countries, to the extent that they talk about them at all, that they're fairly democratic, that the

impresure of electoral success. What is the reality of these countries? These countries that suspended you know, the countries of Niger, Burkina Faso, and so forth, on the basis they were coup d'etats. Do they have any legitimate claim to being democratic, or is this all just a facade to conceal the real reasons for which they suspended these countries from ECOWAS?

GH: Well, as noted, I think that the tell is if the regime plays ball with the North Atlantic countries. And let's turn to Cote d'Ivoire, which is an exemplar of playing ball with the North Atlanta countries up to and including allowing child labour with regard to the major export earner of Côte d'Ivoire, speaking of cocoa, which is then refined and processed to develop chocolate in Belgium and Switzerland, earning the vampires and those nations a pretty penny. You may recall about a decade and a half ago, there was an electoral confrontation in Côte d'Ivoire involving once again, the current president Ouattara and a challenger, Laurent Gbagbo. Interestingly enough, France intervened on behalf of Mr. Ouattara, landing their forces in that West African country, bundling up Laurent Gbagbo and his spouse, by the way, and shuttling them off to The Hague to stand trial. Of course, this raises a subsidiary issue with regard to the so-called International Criminal Court, That is to say, some might call it the International Court of Caucasians, because they tend to have a rather eerie laser-like focus on leaders from Africa. And then of course, sometimes veering into the internal affairs of former socialist countries, for example, the country once known as Yugoslavia, for example. But in any case, Mr. Gbagbo and his spouse were only recently released. And of course, that sends a signal to other challengers to the Paris and Washington-backed status quo that if you are so audacious as to challenge that status quo, you could find yourself standing trial in The Hague.

And certainly, I think that that's the danger that's being faced by the military leaders of the Sahel countries. There was an ominous signal that I'm sure that they processed just a few days ago when the president of the United States visited the Persian Gulf monarchies. Now to cut to the chase, the United Arab Emirates and the other tyrants in that part of the world are major funders of religious zealotry in the Sahel states, not only in the Sahel states but in northern Nigeria as well. And that kind of religious zealotry slowly and steadily is creeping into Cote d'Ivoire, it's creeping into northern Ghana, for example. Obviously, Mr. Trump doesn't give a whit as to whether or not that this religious zealotry proceeds. Certainly the UAE, which fortunately has received negative publicity because of its devastating role in the civil war in Sudan; perhaps the major bleeding sore on the continent today, the African continent today; which of course, Sudan is just not that far distant from Niger, of course it is separated by Chad, and I should also mention that the military regime in Chad is also making noises about joining the alliance of Sahel states, which would be a gigantic step forward. But in any case, of one of the problems that these Sahel states now face is this religious insurgency. Now, we had been led to believe, particularly since 9/11, particularly since the attack on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, that the big dog of the capitalist imperialist power, speaking of the United States of America, was deftly and hotly opposed to so-called Islamic fundamentalism. But alas, that is an overstatement. Because you've had hardly any protests at all about the spreading religious zealotry in the Sahel states because the North Atlantic countries feel that the religious zealots can be wielded like a baton to discipline the regimes of the Sahels and so therefore they're willing to run the risk of these

religious zealots coming to power throughout the Sahel and overthrowing progressive regimes, particularly the regime in Burkina Faso, I should note.

DL: I want to focus on Burkina Faso in particular. You talked a bit about the progressive policies being pursued in these states that have been isolated by ECOWAS and that are the object of Western wrath at the particular moment. And in Burkina Faso, most of the discussion about what's going on in these States is around Ibrahim Traoré. And it's understandable, because he's a rather you know, charismatic figure, he's very young, he seems to be very well spoken, he has a distinctive sartorial style, shall we say. He's, you know, as you mentioned, is developing very favourable relations with the Russian Federation, another target of Western hegemony. But not too much is said in the Western corporate media about the actual policies of his government. Could you talk to us in some detail about the nature of the policies that he's pursuing, whether they're actually designed, in your opinion, to promote the well-being of the people of Burkina Faso? And related to that, do you think we can gauge to what degree the population actually supports Ibrahim Traoré? And if so, what is your sense about the level of popular support that he currently enjoys in his country?

GH: It is very difficult because the regime is noted as being wracked by a bloody religious insurgency. And oftentimes, and the United States is an example, that is to say when you had a civil war in this country in the 1860s, a habeas corpus was suspended. That is to the ability of one who is illicitly confined to be released upon filing a writ. And so, because of this bloody insurgency it's not easy to ascertain the course of the regime in Burkina Faso absent this religious insurgency. But having said that, I think it's fair to say that the regime is trying to build upon the progressive legacy of the aforementioned late Thomas Sankara in terms of women's rights, pregnancy leave, for example, in terms of fighting desertification in terms of building roads, in terms of liaising with our friends in Cuba with regard to provision of medical care and health care, for example. But it's not very easy, given the stones that are being tossed at the regime from the North Atlantic countries and given this religious insurgency.

But the fact that Chad has noted, has been talking about joining the alliance is a signal that this alliance of Sahel states may have legs, may have staying power. And to the extent it does, I think it will be due in no small measure to the charisma and the policies of Mr. Traoré. Because of course, he has been rather bold and adventurous. I was taken by the fact that on his most recent visit to Moscow, which was on May 9th, Victory Day, which of course also featured the presence of President Xi Jinping of China, President Maduro of Venezuela, Diaz Canel of Cuba, and other leaders, including Lula of Brazil, it was Mr. Traoré who in a sense stole the show by actually making remarks in Russian. I don't know if he did a quick study before he arrived or if he actually has fluency in the language, but in any way, it captured the imagination of many in Moscow, and it also was not very pleasing in Washington.

Now, Washington has a real problem right now, because on the one hand, there was this New York Times story just a few days ago that suggested that the United States will be closing up shop fundamentally on the African continent, closing down embassies, closing down consulates. In fact, there's even been talk about closing down AFRICOM, which is the male

fist of the Pentagon on the African continent, led by General Michael Langley, who happens to be of African descent. I don't think that his surname is a reflection of the fact that he changed his name to reflect CIA headquarters, but in the United States, you never know. In any event, he's been making very pointed and poisoned threats, directed personally at Ibrahim Traoré, charging him with corruption of various sorts, and then since he's a comrade of Mr. Trump, he obviously knows a thing or two about corruption. But that reflects the contradiction of US policy. On the one hand, there is grave concern about the example established by Mr. Traoré and his comrades, but on the other hand, there is this companion notion of Mr. Trump that Africa is comprised of so-called S-hole nations that is not worth the time and the resources of US imperialism.

I think what's going to happen ultimately is that the US imperialism will be relying more upon its comrades to do its dirty work in Africa, recall our recent reference to the United Arab Emirates and its funding of religious insurgents, recall the dastardly role that France has played historically in its former colonies, but it would be premature to suggest that US imperialism will be evacuating altogether from Africa, despite the fact that that sort of demagoguery may appeal to a certain segment of Mr. Trump's base, because we know that by the year 2100, that a disproportionate percentage of the people on this planet will be of African descent. We know that Africa is blessed with uranium and gold and diamonds, the kinds of critical minerals that Mr. Trump lusts after. And so we shouldn't take altogether seriously this idea that Mr. Trump will turn his back on the continent, although I dare say that if he were to turn his back on the continent, that would be welcomed in progressive precincts worldwide.

DL: You know, I saw some suggestions in the alternative media months ago that the United States government, this would have been before Trump returned to the White House, was not really hostile, at least not completely towards Ibrahim Traoré and his government because they saw the expulsion of the French colonial power from this region as an opportunity for the United States. Do you think that the Americans and the French are competitors in this region? Or do you think they're more partners in crime?

GH: I think it's a combination. Recall, if I may go back a bit in history, to the Suez crisis of 1956. This piratical attack on Nasser's Egypt, spearheaded by Paris, London and Israel, because of Mr. Nasser and Cairo seeking to regain more control over the Suez Canal. The pirates were forced to back down, not only by Moscow, not by the Soviet Union, but even President Eisenhower spoke ill of that particular event, because of course, US imperialism was in the process of supplanting France and Britain and their erstwhile empires. And so what happens as a result of that particularly earth-shaking confrontation is that Britain draws the conclusion that it should be ever closer to Uncle Sam, where France under Charles de Gaulle takes an opposing conclusion that it should try to develop independently. And of course that particular idea received sustenance when shortly after the Suez crisis you had the young senator from Massachusetts, speaking of John F. Kennedy who spoke in negative terms about the French intervention in Algeria. Now of course this led the naive to think that he was moving in a progressive direction, but actually was part of this longer term scheme of

US imperialism replacing and supplanting the leading European colonial powers in their empires, for example.

And so we now recognise retrospectively that a kind of de facto deal was cut between Paris and Washington. That is to say that Washington would back off of Francophone Africa to the extent that France could keep the lid on with regard to these countries, to the extent that France can guarantee that the US corporate investment in the natural resources of Africa, the iron ore of Guinea Conakry, for example, would be protected by French interests. But alas, what we see of late is that France has not been able to keep the lid on. And so therefore that old bargain is being re-evaluated. And we saw a hint of that with regard to Niger. When you have the train change of regime a few years ago, aforementioned, and the French forced to evacuate, well, the United States thought it could take advantage of that. And in fact, it's just appointed a new ambassador in the army in Niger. Because there is something to this idea that the United States wants to take advantage of France's weaknesses in Africa. Of course, there's no honour amongst thieves. There's no honour amongst imperialists. They thrive on undermining each other and stabbing each other in the back. Of course until they're faced with a stiff challenge from the African nations that they would like to mutually exploit. In that case they oftentimes tend to join hands.

And so I think what your question reveals is that we must study events very carefully because there's no cookie-cutter analysis that we can employ that can provide easy answers and easy approaches to a very complex political scenario. Therefore, we should expect that France and Washington will act as frenemies, to use the current term. They'll be friends in certain instances when there is a challenge to imperialism overall. And then they're antagonists, they're enemies. Insofar as France cannot keep the lid on, it forms a colonial empire, and then tries to elbow aside Washington as it seeks to make sure that that lid remains firmly in place. I think we'll get a hint of this with regard to what we just mentioned concerning Mali and the gold and their challenge to Canadian gold mining interests, whether or not France and the United States and Ottawa can join in a joint enterprise against Mali. That story is still unfolding, and so we'll have to not only monitor the situation, but intervene aggressively against these imperialist pirates.

DL: So I'd like to turn now to that spectacle, I mean, spectacle is too kind of word that the world witnessed in the White House the other day with the South African president, Cyril Ramaphosa. I mean, by all indications, Donald Trump ambushed the South African president with some nonsensical piece of evidence of a genocide against the white people of South Africa. I mean I don't even know where to begin with this farce that we witnessed. I mean first of all, the thing that struck me is this seemed to violate the most basic premises of diplomatic protocol. You invite the president, the head of state of a foreign country, to the White House, and without even giving him – clearly the president of South Africa had no indication, no understanding that he was about to be confronted with this video. You know, we saw him peering up at the screen, tried to make sense of what he was looking at. He had no idea. He was not prepared to respond to this. He had not seen it before. There's no reason to doubt his assertion that that was entirely new to him. I don't recall ever having seen a

United States president pull a stunt like that after having invited a foreign head of state into the White House.

But more broadly, what did you make of all of that, Dr. Horne? I mean, of course, I think we can agree that the idea that the white population of South Africa is being subjected to a genocide is preposterous in the extreme. But why did he do this? What was Donald Trump's goal in all of this? And how do you think this is going to affect relations between South Africa and the United States? I actually thought that the president of South Africa was quite diplomatic in his response, quite restrained, and has remained restrained in his response to this spectacle. But I'm curious as to your thoughts as to what was going on here and how do you think it's going to impact relations between the two countries going forward?

GH: Well, obviously, relations between Pretoria and Washington have reached a rough patch, shall we say. It was reflected in the fact that there have been boycotts by Secretary of State Rubio of the G20 foreign ministers meeting that took place in South Africa a few weeks ago, a few months ago, and then Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent ignored the finance minister's meeting taking place in South Africa quite recently as part of this overall boycott against South Africa. The US authorities are quite upset with South Africa because it had the temerity to drag US allies, speaking of Israel, into the International Court of Justice, making out a plausible case for a genocide given Israel's depredations inflicted on the Palestinian population. The United States is displeased with the fact that South Africa is allied with the BRICS, Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, which, of course, recently has co-opted a number of other nations, including Ethiopia, Egypt, and other nations too numerous to mention. And so the United States has expected or had expected that South African would be a typical today when it comes to tailing after US imperialism. But alas, that has not taken place, alas insofar as Washington's imperial interests are concerned.

What did Mr. Trump think he was accomplishing, you ask? Well, the sad news, the bad news, is that Mr. Trump feels that this resonates with his base. Oftentimes I'm afraid to say that our friends on the left are downplayed or perhaps even worse or unaware of the fact that the United States, its so-called powerful economy, was built upon centuries of unpaid African labour. And that has introduced a fracture into the working class of the United States that still obtains to this very day. And we know that Mr. Trump received 77 million votes in November of 2024, although there are those who would suggest that this was a revolt solely by the 1%. It takes more than new math to ascertain that the 77 million is 1% of a population of 330 million. The numbers just don't add up. Mr. Trump has a substantial base, I'm afraid to say, in the Euro-American settler-descendant working class and middle class. And historically, there have been conflicts within the working class between these various sectors. You need only recall the US Civil War, 1861 to 1865. When the foot soldiers of the so-called Confederate States of America, who sought to overthrow the United States government in order to perpetuate enslavement of Africans forever more, was overwhelmingly and disproportionately comprised of settler descendants who were not wealthy, who in fact many of them were poor, and in fact they were trying to retain and maintain a system whereby their wages and working conditions would be driven down by competition with enslaved African

labour. But they were willing to shed their lives and shed their blood for that ultimate eventuality, which was not in their interest. I guess they felt that down the road, they too could have become a slave holder. Just like I think that there are those in Mr. Trump's base who feel that these attacks on Africans, this disrespect for African leaders, bodes well from their point of view for their future. I don't think that that's going to pan out, just like many of the Venezuelans, Venezuelan Americans and Cuban Americans who voted for Mr. Trump are now disappointed as thousands of Venezuelans are being sent back to Caracas and Cubans are being deported to South Sudan and to Djibouti, for example.

So I think that there has been an ill-fated estimation of the correlation of forces by many Mr. Trump's base. But that did not detain Mr. Trump because he feels that it will resonate with his base when he disrespects a Black leader in the Oval Office because that disrespect of a Black leader in the Oval Office was accompanied by the companion reality that jetting across the Atlantic at US taxpayers' expense were dozens from the European minority of South Africa, supposedly freeing this purported genocide that we have been instructed has been inflicted upon them, and now they're being put up at US taxpayers' expense. And that sort of giveaway resonates with the Trump base because in terms of the so-called race struggle, they see that Mr. Trump is willing to stand tall on behalf of white supremacy. He's willing to stand tall on behalf of whiteness itself. And that is a rather dispiriting reality, which is noted many of our friends do not want to acknowledge or grapple with.

Because we mentioned Zimbabwe just a few moments ago, where you also had an actual redistribution of the land. And South Africa has only been authorised land transfers have been few and far between in South Africa. And in fact, as a lawyer who's practised in New York, I'm sure you're familiar with the power of eminent domain, which allows the US authorities to seize land from private property holders for public purposes. It happens all the time in this country. But when it happens in Southern Africa with Africans at the steering wheel, directing the head, a state seizing land from a European minority, all hell breaks loose. And I know, or I suspect that there are many in our audience who are wondering why this controversy? Because we know that Cyril Ramaphosa, the leader of South Africa, is quite wealthy, to put it mildly. He's faced his own scandals involving thousands of dollars found in a couch in one of his residences, for example, which almost led to his being dislodged, this leader of the African National Congress and South Africa itself. And he was preceded by Jacob Zuma, a president from 2009 to about 2018, who pioneered and state capture this idea of turning state resources over to cronies. This should have been foreseen with regard to Mr. Zuma given the fact that he has many mouths to feed, including numerous children, numerous wives, for example.

And even worse, perhaps, is the fact that after being dislodged from office a few years ago, he stood aside, if not encouraged, a January 6 type insurrection in his homeland of KwaZulu-Natal, that led to the deaths of dozens, for example. And then, to cap it all off, in 2024, while maintaining membership in the ANC, supposedly, he ran an alternative slate against the ANC candidates, which led to the ANC falling below their 50% in the parliament, which then helps to facilitate their shotgun marriage with the neo-apartheid democratic

alliance, which now holds many portfolios in the regime, including Secretary of Agriculture and the DA Secretary of Agriculture happened to be in the Oval Office during that outrageous display by Mr. Trump and did not have much to say about these videos and these so-called newspaper clippings that Mr. Trump was passing out. So I think that what this suggests is what we've already indicated, that Mr. Trump will be pursuing a rather dastardly policy towards the African continent with regard to the Sahel, it will involve using lush funds from the United Arab Emirates to destabilise the Sahel states, whereas with regard to the southern cone of the continent, where regimes are more powerful, have more powerful economies, the confrontations will be more frontal. This will obviously be exemplified when the G20 meeting, the group of 20 meeting, 20 of the most influential nations on planet Earth convene in South Africa at the end of 2025.

DL: You know, Mr. Trump didn't mention, of course, that 70% of the commercial farmland in South Africa is owned by whites, even though they constitute 7% of the population. I went to South Africa once in my life. It was in 2010. At that time I'd moved on from New York and I was practising class actions law in Canada, and we sued a Canadian mining company whose flagship mine was in South Africa outside of Johannesburg. And I had to examine the senior executives under oath at the headquarters, which were at the site of the mine. And so we drove out of Johannesburg and as we were driving out of Johannesburg, we saw these gated communities which were inhabited exclusively by whites with huge walls and not only walls but barbed wire atop the walls. And then when we got out to the site of the mine, as we're entering the mine just across the street from the entrance, there were thousands of Black South Africans living in tin huts. And we were told by people at the mine that those were the workers and their families; living right across the street from the mine in tin huts. And, of course, the executive core of this mining company was entirely white. And the impression I came away from, of course this is all anecdotal and I barely scratched the surface of South Africa in the time that I was there. But I had the sense, Dr. Horne, de facto, South Africa still remained in many ways an apartheid state. Do you think that's an overstatement today? What is the reality of life in South Africa for its Black indigenous population?

GH: Well, you are not far wrong. I mean, certainly there have been significant reforms since 1994, particularly in the provision of water, which had basically been not necessarily allocated to the African majority pre-1994 in the first democratic elections. There has been the building of housing. Certainly education is more available to the African majority, but the fact remains is, your vignette tends to suggest that South Africa remains one of the most unequal nations on planet Earth and that inequality is not pricking the conscience of Washington. In fact, they see that as a policy to be emulated and they're busily seeking to do so as we speak. I should also mention that once again, like the Sahel, where we talked about not only the interests of US imperialism, but the Gulf monarchies, the issues of France, for example, you have a similar kind of complexity in the Southern Cone.

For example, in Namibia, formerly occupied illegally by apartheid South Africa, a nation rich in natural resources, including uranium. Just the other day in Windhoek, the capital, you had a commemoration of the first genocide of the 20th century, perpetrated by the authorities in

Berlin. That is to say, 1904 to 1908 genocide inflicted upon the Nama and Herero people. Many of the leaders of this genocide then go on to perpetrate what is called the Holocaust in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1930s and the 1940s, some of the same individuals, by the way. And of course, if there had been more of an outcry in 1904, perhaps we could have avoided the tragedy of, say, 1944, for example. And Namibia is pressing Berlin for reparations for those depredations. And Berlin is turning a cold shoulder thus far. And of course, Berlin feels that ultimately it may have to rely upon the muscle of US imperialism to resist these just claims concerning Namibia. And of course, Namibia has a solid case because Berlin provided reparations to Israel for the Holocaust early 1930s to 1945, even though Israel didn't exist during the time of these crimes being perpetrated. Indeed, this question of reparations will be high on the agenda at an African Union, the Pan-African transcontinental body headquartered in Ethiopia. They're having a face-to-face summit with the Caribbean community, Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, et cetera. In September, 2025 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where reparations not only to Namibians but to other African states and to of course the Caribbean will be high on the agenda. And of course, we expect a sizable delegation from North America. From the United States because of course the Black population of the United States is also pressing a claim for reparations.

And so we see that there might be periodic conflicts between and amongst the member states of the North Atlantic community. For example, we talked about the occasional conflicts between Paris and Washington, but I dare say they will be united with regard to resisting these claims of reparations that will be pressed in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in September. And of course, turning back to South Africa, we should not forget the fact that the original colonisers, the original invaders of South Africa were not only the Dutch who arrived in 1652, but shortly thereafter there is an arrival of French Protestants, the Huguenots. And of course there is a merger of those two European communities to form what is called the Afrikaner population. Which has noted that still is at the pinnacle of society, still controls the commanding heights of the economy, Mr. Trump's outrageous rhetoric, notwithstanding, and are still digging in their heels to make sure that neo-apartheid follows apartheid. And what you witnessed during your visit to South Africa was an exemplar of that trend. That is to say, despite the significant reforms concerning education and housing and healthcare, by the way, oftentimes provided by Cuban medics, South Africa remains a desperately unequal society. And that is the kind of ill-fated status quo that Mr. Trump and his comrades would like to see continue.

DL: The last question I want to ask you is about South Africa's relation to Israel. Despite its noble efforts to hold Israel accountable before the International Court of Justice for genocide, South Africa remains a major coal exporter to Israel, only I believe Russia and Columbia are bigger exporters of coal. And in fact, South Africa's coal shipments to Israel grew 17% in January 2025 compared with January of the prior year. So they seem to be on an upward trend. The South African government has uncomfortably explained this fact by arguing that if they were to block the shipments of coal to Israel, the coal companies that are shipping this coal would sue the government and would win. And so this would be a cost that the South African people would have to bear and it would be significant. Do you think there's truth to

this or do you think that there's more going on here? What's your take on why South Africa on the one hand is in the legal form doing all it can to hold Israel accountable while at the same time feeding indirectly, I suppose, the Israeli war machine through coal exports?

GH: Well, this is the part of the contradiction that we face and that South Africa faces. For example, as I've pointed out numerous times and as a fact I pointed out in a book entitled *White Supremacy Confronted* that deals with the struggles against apartheid culminating in democratic elections in 1994, that when the apartheid authorities in February, 1990 chose to unban the African National Congress, free Nelson Mandela, and ban the South African Communist Party, this is a response not only to the global protests, not least in their ally in the United States of America, but it's also a response to the fact that one of South Africa's allies, speaking of then socialist East Germany, the German Democratic Republic was then on the ropes – it was to fall into the dustbin of history shortly after the collapse of the Berlin Wall in November, 1989, and then the Soviet Union, which provided arms and rest and recuperation to militants on the battlefield of Southern Africa – they collapsed in December a few years later, December 1991. That handicaps the anti-apartheid forces led by Nelson Mandela when they go into negotiations, they have to make uncomfortable compromises, which are still ricocheting throughout the economy. Not only that, but South Africa has one of the most influential Zionist communities on planet Earth to this very day. Those with as much grey hair as that I now carry, I might recall Abba Eban. He was a frequent presence on US television, particularly after the so-called Six-Day War of June 1967. He was the Israeli foreign minister, high-level Israeli authority. Of course, his roots were in apartheid South Africa, for example. And he is just one token, one aspect, of one exhibit of a larger pro-Zionist community that still wills influence within South Africa. /0

Now, of course, I would be remiss if I did not point out the fact that you had a number of Jewish South Africans who were in the trenches of the anti-apartheid struggle. I'm speaking of Joe Slovo of Lithuanian Jewish descent, one of Nelson Mandela's closest comrades who led the armed wing of the African National Congress, contour a cease-way for years. Denis Goldberg, for example, Ronnie Kasrils, Ruth First, Joe Slovo's spouse, who fell victim to a letter bomb in exile in Mozambique before independence in 1994. But having said that, South Africa during the apartheid years was not only a headquarters for many pro-Zionist forces, recall that the father of the so-called Sha of Iran dies in Johannesburg in the early 1940s. And that was not coincidental. That was not accidental. And of course, interestingly enough, after the Islamic Republic comes to power in the late 1970s, one of their first manoeuvres is to cut off oil from Iran to South Africa, which was a withering blow against the apartheid authorities and put them on the path of terminal decline. So I give all this background to suggest that South Africa, as used to be said about Kenya post-1963 independence, not yet Uhuru, not yet freedom, that is to say that there are still powerful forces backed by the imperialist camp that this coal deal that you've just articulated could be duplicated by other kinds of disreputable deals with imperialist camp. But once again this is a product of the current correlation of forces globally and I think it's incumbent upon those of us in the opposition camp to continue our just struggle and to the extent that we are successful and we

can prevail that in turn will have positive knock on effects in South Africa making this coal deal that you just mentioned virtually impossible.

DL: Well, Dr. Horne, I can't think of a better place to pause this interview and our discussion. Thank you so much. I couldn't agree more. We are never tired of saying on Reason2Resist, and this is in fact why we call this programme Reason2Resist, we have the power to overcome these injustices, but that will take tremendous determination, collective action, and sacrifice, sadly. In any case, it is always a pleasure to talk to you, Sir, and I look forward to our next conversation.

GH: Thank you for inviting me.

DL: And this is Dimitri Lascaris coming to you from Greece on May 31st, 2025.

END

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