

Message envoyé par André de Maere au Guardian

Quote

belgium-addresses-postwar-apartheid-in-colonial-congo

Dear Sirs, Madam,

Your above mentioned article fails to meet your usual high editorial standards. It contains several unacceptable errors for anyone who strives to historical accuracy and honesty. Instead of searching for a straw in Belgium's colonial past, you should better look at the beam in your own country's one. Stop Belgium-bashing ! We don't deserve it. How can you pretend that :

- **Segregation was total**, whereas the color bar, as known in the USA and South Africa, did not exist in the Congo. OK, Whites and Blacks did not socialize as much as they should have done but in non-colonial environments workforce and management did not either.
- **For white people, it was a world of free healthcare**, whereas medical care was dispensed free of charge to Blacks and Whites, even in the most remote parts of the colony. The WHO described the system in 1962 as "a luxury medical care" and considered that the former Belgian Congo was in this respect 20 years ahead of the other African countries. The medical budget of the Belgian Congo surpassed the WHO's one for ... the entire world !
- **Adult black men were referred to as "boy"**, whereas in the Congo the "boy" was a young man employed in domestic services. As to the general relationship, the use of the first name or often nicknames was the rule.
- **Under Leopold's rapacious rule, as many as 10 million people were killed**, whereas no statistics existed at the time concerning the number of natives living in his country. The reference to Hochschild demonstrates the author's bias and/or total ignorance in this respect. As your editorial rules limit readers reactions to a max of 250 words, the whole analysis is easily accessible at the following address:
www.memoiresducongo.be

Unquote

André de Maere