

# African Resources by William Quam

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I came across a reading you included in some of your courses “The Myth of Sisyphus by Albert Camus.” I was struck that what Camus wrote in that piece describes what happens here in Africa, especially in the mining and natural resource development business. The twist is not what it does to the people here who are enslaved to produce the minerals we need to power all the latest technology but we become like Sisyphus and are enslaved in a far greater prison by the very technology that was always supposed to make our lives easier. The exact opposite is the real outcome and the failed promise of technology since the days when I was punching decks of cards.

Quite foolishly I have decided to take on the business world of the 3T minerals supply chain and offer a “creatively dynamic solution” from a business standpoint. We need business...but we need responsible business and in the business of the 3T minerals supply chain that stretches from the places I work in the Great Lakes of Africa to the latest iPhone and other electronic gadget business is dysfunctional. Someone recently told me that “friendship is friendship but business is business.” I say if business is not a friendship what is it? Nothing I want to be a part of.

I will very soon launch a new “3T Green Minerals Traceability and Certification Program” I am calling “The Green Program” that will include real mineral traceability, “fair trade minerals”, miner and mine safety and environmental elements. What I call “The Hope Component – this incorporates a missing people component. There is no hope for Africa if the people who work here to make our technology possible have no hope for a different future for their children just like we hope our latest and greatest technological advances will give our children for their future.”

You can go to our company web site at [www.nordicsw.com](http://www.nordicsw.com) and download the results of a 2 year investigation and research report and public comments I submitted to President Obama, The SEC and the membership of the EICC. I will take the liberty of attaching them to this mail.

## “These Are Not the American Values I Was Taught”

The 7<sup>th</sup> of April marked the start of the 18<sup>th</sup> memorial anniversary week of the genocide in Rwanda. The streets of Kigali fell abnormally silent, even the ever present moto taxis were not on the streets. This is a time of reflection for all Rwandans. I believe we Americans need to engage in our own period of

reflection. It appears from where I sit in the middle of Africa, that we have allowed our American values to be forgotten in our continued rush to secure, for as cheap a price as possible, the raw materials that make it possible for our phones, electronic readers and tablets to work more efficiently. These 3T mineral or Tin, Tantalum and Tungsten are buried in the soil in uniquely rich concentrations around the Great Lakes region in Africa.

Many of us learned how the slave trade flourished in this part of Africa and how Leopold and the other colonial powers plundered the people and mineral wealth of Africa with breathtaking speed in the 1800's. What many of my local friends have observed about the 3T minerals business is nothing less than a new American Business Colonization period. American mining and electronics industry interests have demonstrated by their actions that the people throughout the beginning of the 3T minerals supply chain here in Africa, must continue to toil in slavery like conditions to supply America with their mineral wealth at as cheap a price as possible. Until the consuming American public changes their buying habits and perchance for collective silence and acceptance of this new American Business Colonization reality, the Great Lakes region and especially the DR Congo will continue to be cursed with far too much wealth that has always been transferred out of Africa.

Our American Congress passed the "Congo Conflict Minerals Act of 2009" that is a well intentioned and needed mechanism to help identify the presence of "conflict minerals" from the DR Congo. We consumers however have largely stood on the sidelines and allowed our government officials, minerals traders, smelters and the electronics industry to design and implement our collective response to this law. What they have withheld from public view and quietly implemented is a process whereby their industry support groups have implemented a 3T mineral embargo and levied taxes on the 3T minerals trade of the poorest region of our world in clear violations of World Trade Organization goals of free and open trade among nations.

Our government and the electronics industry are now engaging in well financed media and public relations campaigns to convince the consuming American public that the industry has succeeded in producing "conflict free" components from 3T minerals from the DR Congo. The hidden reality that our government and the electronics industry have withheld from the public is that they have been informed by various UN groups and a very prestigious German research institute that their overly simplistic minerals certification programs will never be able to provide a Congo conflict free minerals supply chain. After a 2 year investigation and research protocol from inside the 3T mining industry in Africa, I discovered that it is possible to combine a more detailed due diligence approach with a tamper-proof, scientifically based American technology solution to address the American problem of identifying the presence of "conflict minerals" in the 3T minerals supply chain. It is my belief, based on working in the 3T mining industry in the Great Lakes region of Africa since 2005, that there are better, less expensive ways to address the problems of the 3T minerals supply chain than simply embargoing and taxing all the 3T minerals from Africa. Perhaps I'm a bit old fashioned but I do feel the American way to approach an overly complex and challenging problem is to develop even more creatively dynamic solutions to address those problems.

The current embargo and tax solution that was developed on our behalf, should lead all Americans to ask our government and business leaders "Why does my latest technologically advanced gadget not include more American values in the components and labor that goes into the production process?" The inclusion of old fashion American values that should flow through all of the products and services that are sold in America has purposefully been designed and outsourced out of the products we buy in our rush to increase the share price of our companies. The most fundamental American value I was taught from an early age was a respect for all people. I don't believe we were taught to outsource our responsibility because the situations in foreign lands were too complex or challenging. Perhaps I missed

a few lessons.

What I do know is that there will be no hope for Africa, if the people who slave away for years to provide us with the minerals and labor that make our technology possible have no hope for a different future for their children. Much the same way that we hope our technological advances will give our children hope for their future.