

Michael Mamusha (Dire Dawa– 3rd prize winner)

Colonel John Robinson played a pivotal role in reawakening the Pan-African movement. He became one of the prominent African-Americans who left an indelible mark on the Pan-African movement by inspiring the rest of the African community, helping Ethiopia during the Ethio-Italian war.

The Pan African movement needed a spark to reawaken and John Robinson led the charge to do just that. Colonel Robinson, born in a time when blacks were not as privileged as the whites, had a dream of flying. Through his efforts, he later became the first African American to graduate from a flying school in Chicago. His unprecedented success inspired other African Americans to get involved in such things that were not even thought possible by the other African Americans and the pan African movement.

Ethiopia, at that time, was seen as an example and a symbol of freedom to the Pan-African movement and Italy's desire to colonize Ethiopia was seen as a major threat by the entire African family. The Pan-African movement and the African family saw the possible loss of Ethiopia as their own loss. Colonel Robinson came to Ethiopia's rescue with his own initiative to help ensure the continuance of the beacon of freedom. Robinson flew with dysfunctional planes and unfamiliar terrains transporting supplies, fighters and the emperor's order to the commanders in the war zone. He also helped by training pilots for Ethiopia.

In order to help the other African-Americans and help the Pan-African movement, Robinson opened a flying school and gathered supporters to raise money for a new airport. Colonel Robinson gave to others that were not given to him, a chance to fight for the entire African family, the Pan African movement.

Colonel John Robinson did an ineffable work for the Pan African movement by helping Ethiopia, by inspiring the people and by opening flying school. His work and accomplishments are testimonies of greatness which are worthy of emulation.