

Ethiopia – Born Again Politicians

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What prompted me to write this article under the title: ‘Ethiopia- Born Again Politicians’? I happen to observe few articles popping-up these days with the news that a paradigm shift and “strategic” power struggle is on the making. Just because such persons abandoned their previous paradigm, and re-created another paradigm the unexpected way, I decided to call them as born again politicians. One such recent article is composed by Neamin Zeleke who in his article titled: “Ethiopia -The imperative for Ethiopians dealing with Eritrea” writes that: “A paradigm shift is taking place, a shift towards the view that in order to liberate Ethiopia from the anti-Ethiopia ruling Tigray mafia, Ethiopians need to make a strategic alliance with the State of Eritrea.” My view on such stand is the following. Our principal motto should be looking at both sides of the coin at the same time and differentiate the tree for the forest. But I sense the likes of Neamin Zeleke Diaspora opposition lack that kind of outlook and heavily geared in the campaign of demonizing anything on their way. In the past, this kind of benign agenda succeeded taking the country down hill as a result of which we are still battling how best to start democratic politics all over again. Yet the same backward stepping is in the cooking at the expense of back stabbing on the Ethiopian people once again.

George Orwell's 1984 is a book that changed our language, giving us such words and phrases as "thought police," "newspeak," "doublethink," and "Big Brother"; not to mention "Orwellian." But what is the relevancy of Orwell's novel today? Is it a warning about future horrors that may come if we fail to guard our freedom? Does it talk about things that are already present in our lives? Orwell, the British journalist and writer, penned his book in 1948 as a commentary on Soviet Union's totalitarianism, a very present danger at the time. The oppressive machine in Orwell's 1984 is a tyrannical state that maintains total control over the lives and even thoughts of its subjects and brutally crushes all dissent. It is unchecked power, "a boot stamping on a human face forever." The closest any political force comes to this nightmare vision today, besides such communist relics as North Korea, is Eritrea and the Taliban-style Islamist radicalism. Yet Orwell's 1984 provide lessons beyond the totalitarian experience. Take the book's definition of "doublethink," the ideal mental state of the citizen of Orwell's dystopia: it is "the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them," the ability "to tell deliberate lies while genuinely believing in them, to forget any fact that has become inconvenient, and then, when it becomes necessary again, to draw it back from oblivion for just so long as it is needed, to deny the existence of objective reality and all the while to take account of the reality which one denies."

Of course "doublethink" is an absolutely essential way of thinking. How else can you hold the contradictory notions of freedom and socialism? In that sense, Orwell's 1984 is still relevant because any sane person knows that a "government that is big enough to provide everything is also big enough to take it all away." And what belongs as a government's or public property is nobody's private property. A case in point is the land reform that made all land government property – be it urban or rural.

These days, the G7 leadership and the likes of Neamin Zeleke are the Ethiopian adept at giving us the “doublethink,” the 2nd thought in doing the Afewarki revelation politics. Recently they have began to campaign for rallying behind Issayas Afeworki's new political approach towards Ethiopia with their political announcement that they are supposedly ‘born again opposition’ through Afewarki, and they are continuing to fool the naive and the loose cannons among the Ethiopian Diaspora with the same mere talk.

It seems to me few political pacifist liberal types who care less what comes may adore the G7 leadership's new political approach that inclines itself to Issayas Afeworki's revelation about fighting the TPLF-Apartheid regime; and see it as almost the Second Coming of Issayas Afeworki

as salvager of Ethiopia from the yoke of TPLF tyranny! Now, we have the G7 ardent supporters copy-cutting the great savior from Asmara and shuffling along with this newly devised own form of 'political rebirth'. Wow it's all a big song and dance among Diaspora liberals or born again liberals!

The central question in Neamin Zeleke's article goes: "if Woyane allied itself with EPLF to promote its strategic interest, why can't the current Ethiopian opposition do the same?" Neamin Zeleke further asserts that Issayas Afewarki "has made it public that his country has no intention of working against Ethiopia's unity." Wow this reminds us of the Amharic proverb "YE CHENEKEW IRGUZ YAGEBAL". It also reminds us of Pixar's movie: "A bug's life", where a million of ants that are tired of being bullied by a handful of grasshoppers sought help from a bunch of clown bugs who can't seriously be taken as saviors.

Let us not forget that any national political system always has its carrot and stick pluralism moving full steam. Indeed that is exactly the role these 'political conversions' play, whether it be Issayas Afewarki-led Bloody G7, OLF and ONLF armed strugglers, the CUD's 'Peaceful' opposition, or the TPLF-power mongers. We must take all these players with a big grain of salt; and not simply at face value. For instance, look into EPLF's and TPLF's final divorce that led the two former allies into the 1998-2000 bloody war caused by betrayal between two scoundrels and kept them in total stalemates to this very day. Let us not take Afewarki's recent sweet words and be lulled into complacency.

Following his flirting remarks the recently carved and crafted 'Born Again' type of political manipulation is usually borrowed from the churches, where the pastors and mullah rabbis are specialized in providing fake emotion to their masses of Believers. The newly crafted G7's born again politicians are trying hard relentlessly to the extent of turning Afewarki's messages to Ethiopians filled with concocted crocodile tears in full display. They want to tell us that there is no permanent enemy; but permanent interest. They want us to close the past episodes and outstanding controversial cases between Eritrea and Ethiopia once and for all; become Issayas Afewarki followers and born again politicians as a result of whom we can readily open-up a new chapter of comradeships from hereon.

It is indeed with a fountain of energy that some born again politicians go literally to plead to the Ethiopian readers and audience as they keep on asking: 'Why are we always so misunderstood for holding meetings with Issayas Afewarki?' For me this was the most comical display imaginable! I observed their expression with instant shock because if I have ever seen glowing desperation in the eyes of anybody, it was in the face of liberal Diaspora Ethiopians who don't have any binding commitment for a sovereign state or for a united Ethiopia; but blindly want us to cross anything that has to do with principled political stand and simply join hands with Afewarki to walk the walk and fight the fight.

So G7 leadership now wants peace with Issayas Afewarki? In what terms and with what formula of settlements do we bargain on? Hide and seek politics put aside, what are the preconditions to fulfill on either side of the bargain? I won't be surprised if the born again politicians battle Hymn and national anthem of the Ethiopian Republic says: "Afewarki's truth is marching on". What a con! Afewarki had the chance to achieve that kind of deal but made no effort at all to concretize a Peace Initiative with Ethiopia. It is worth noting what the previous OLF founder Lencco Letta disclosed not long ago on how Afewarki resisted to come to consensus as regards inclusiveness and mutual co-existence by forging regional and unitary solutions for Ethiopia.

It has become a newly founded political game where Afewarki wants to play the Messiah or the new regional political Guru who preaches on how global and regional politics should be run; and the G7 leadership and sympathizers his saints and apostles in Afewarki's retirement age! What a bunch of throw ups! These politicians always have all the personal character of 'good' used car salesmen, which is to say none. A wrong and a hasty solution is the worst thing Ethiopians should adapt, because it will ultimately result in negative effects. Indeed I would like to say to genuine

Ethiopians: Watch the G7 and their born again revelation political shows but do not be taken in easily.

As a people, as Christians and Muslims, and as people of every political and religious faith and belief, we Ethiopians must denounce this blasphemous use of politics to support -- if not endorse -- not simply war-like policies but war itself. The Messiah chosen for us by G7 as salvager was tossing in Eritrean anniversaries photographs of EPLF soldiers in battle gear, tanks in battle, and bombers overhead where his leadership words in the fight against Ethiopia were quoted reading: "Have I not commanded you earlier? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified. Do not be discouraged. I will be with you wherever you go and crush the enemy force." How senseless do we have to be not to see the proximity in this thinking to the words and images that inflame in exactly the same way the TPLF, OLF and ONLF insurgent forces he initiated against Ethiopians battled across the country to this very day? As Ethiopians we are at our wits' end. Tell us how do we, as a people, retroactively denounce the placing of everything deep and profound in us, everything that makes us human, our individual compacts with our only nation Ethiopia, in the service of such unbridled, ignominious, self-righteous, not to mention looked from civic morale stand point inappropriate behavior? I don't have the answer. Do you?

As far as I see, trying to convince Ethiopians to accept working with their deadly enemy, for another war and destruction, is simply naivety in the least. A person on the verge of drowning will obviously try to cling on to a straw. But the straw will never save him even if it claims to be stronger and larger than a huge sailing ship. Here we have Neamin Zeleke and his likes along within G7 encouraging us to fight for the slogan 'Liberty or death' with the straw as our life-vest; determined to take any chance for the sake of grabbing power.

Most of us may consider Meles Zenawi as a dictator and he is not the patriot we would have liked to see; but Issayas Afewarki is the deadliest enemy Ethiopians should avoid by all means possible. In fact if we can consider Meles Zenawi as the man of the axis of evils, then Issayas Afewarki is the Lucifer of the axis of devils.