



Tedla Asfaw

We learned in school to love our king, King Haile Selassie, "Tsehaui Negusse", the shining king. . When the king was deposed by "Korartu Mere", strongman, Mengistu Hailemariam many of our people kept quiet and in fact when the king was driven away from his palace by old Volkswagen,crowds of Yong people were taunting him "Leba", thief, and nothing has been the same since that time.

Almost four decades, Ethiopia is without elected leaders and under one man dictatorship. For the first time in our history five years ago more than twenty five million people went out and voted for a party to lead them. The Ethiopian people used the window of opportunity to express themselves and influence their leaders by calling "Tebaberu Weyeme Tesebaberu", unite or perish. They got all of them, the unity that defeated TPLF overwhelmingly and later on jailed and "freed" leaders to destroy themselves. That part of our history is now played again in the month of November 2009.

This time our people are voiceless and no one bother to ask them what is good for them. TPLF boss who published "Bonaptism" in the Badme war ten years ago to defeat its opponents is now succeeded in co authoring, "A code of Conduct" to destroy its opponents and remain the supreme leader for the next five years.

The wise leader, "Biltu Mereyachene", Meles Zenawi, is also free to sale our land for foreigners and the man who promised to feed our people three times a day is telling our people that we do not need to farm. Farming is now the business of foreign countries and our people are promised to feed themselves by selling their labor for these big foreign companies or be on food aid from donor countries for years to come.

The question now is when is our poor people to be heard. Not any kind of peaceful political dialogue will empower our people if more than 80 percent of Ethiopians live on rural land controlled and owned by TPLF. If TPLF cadres are making decisions on the land our people kept in their blood and sweat why do we believe this will change by getting whatever number of seats allotted to them in the TPLF parliament.

The next five months promise of "debate" that ignored the masses or left them under TPLF control will not bring any change to our people. The May 15, 2005 victory of our people can not be replicated this time because Meles Zenawi, co author, "Code of Conduct" has already delivered a win for TPLF in 2010 "election".

Politics without popular participation is an exercise to keep tyranny forever. Ethiopians are dying slowly by famine and poverty. Our country death is accelerating by our own political fragmentation too. If our people have their say, they will demand total liberty or death. Of course they will not ask five more years for the regime that destroyed them for two decades to stay in power.

