

Yeagerun Serdo Beageru Berae

(By Sahlu Bekele, Toronto)

If you have money, you have power. If you have power, you have control. And if you have control you can dominate and dictate others. These clichés hold true and reflect the practices and policies of oppressive individuals, organizations and nations. Economists classify the economies of poor countries as dependent economies. For instance, Ethiopia will be forced to produce coffee, Kenya -- tea, Ghana -- Cocoa and so on in order to earn U.S dollars to import machinery, equipment, medical supplies and other consumer goods. It has been difficult or impossible to exit from the cyclic economic dependency because it is further dictated and aggravated by the IMF, the World Bank and other financial institutions who decide what should be produced by poor economies. The west has been hiring and using professional individuals and corporations to suck the resources and wealth out of the poor and the destitute in many countries around the world. A book that one cannot ignore to read is “Confessions of an Economic Hit Man” by John Perkins. Mr. Perkins, an American economist, has been on a mission in South America, the Middle East, Asia and Africa looking for corrupt governments who were willing to prosper themselves at the expense of their people’s misery by succumbing to the rules of the capitalists. He wrote this book because he wanted to repent his economic sin before he passes away. Much could be said about this subject but my focus here is on political dependency.

Ever since the cold war was over, many nations emerging from the socialist block have been looking forward for the blessing of the west to build democracy and transform their societies. This has been seen in Europe, Asia, South America and Africa. Among the self appointed epitomes of democracy, the U.S. especially has messed up the world we live in today by being the superman and the untouchable. To me the first word in the American Dictionary seems to be hypocrisy. The U.S. high officials preach the world about democracy, liberty, human rights, freedom and justice which they have difficulty practicing. In 1991, when the military regime collapsed in Ethiopia, the U.S instructed the Woyanes to enter Ethiopia and take over power. I clearly remember when Mr. Cohen said, “No Democracy, No Cooperation” to the gorilla leaders in London, England. The promised cooperation has been tied with autocracy and dictatorship in Ethiopia until May 2005 when the majority of Ethiopians went to the ballot box to release true democracy from arrest. Common sense would tell us that all peace and democracy loving people should have been happy for Ethiopia, the Ethiopia they know as poor, hungry and chaotic. But this didn’t happen. On the contrary, the major sponsors of the Woyanes, the

Bushmen (Americans) have chosen to foster their ruthless child, Meles in power regardless. It is over a year now since Ethiopians in Washington D.C. have been protesting and having candle vigils in front of the White House, the U.S State Department and the Capitol. Except for a few sensible congressmen and other good Americans, the U.S government has turned a deaf ear against Ethiopians' plea for justice and freedom. It has been believed that through peaceful struggle it is possible to remove dictatorship and establish a democratic system. Well, we have seen how far our peaceful struggle has taken us. We have recreated a fertile ground for the Woyanes to wage another red terror on the people of Ethiopia. We still cry for help looking west and looking north but help refused to come from anywhere.

Looking at what is happening in Iraq and Afghanistan each and everyday, humanity has been insensitive to humanity. Tsunami, Kathrina, the Kashmere and Philippines earth quakes and other natural disasters have killed thousands of people and these phenomena have diluted the western sensation for humanity and that's why the killings and tortures in Ethiopia have not attracted the attention of Uncle Sam. I believe when they hear the report that about 80 people were killed in the post election riots in Ethiopia, they will say, "big deal, our soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan are dying too." Therefore, America has its own problem and could not be a good help unless its help guarantees and protects its own interest. There is an Ethiopian adage that goes, "Yeagerun Serdo Beageru Berae." We should seek Ethiopian solution for Ethiopia's problem. Here is my view if not my vision. We should all try to merge our political agendas and maneuver in one direction. We should all try to merge in to the express lane from the collector lanes. If we look at the political programs of many member parties of Kinijit, UEDF and the OLF and etc, their names are branded by words like liberation, coalition, front, alliance, etc and their objectives encompass almost identical demands for democracy, equality, justice, freedom and so on. The differences in the political programs are so insignificant that they are not worth separating or operating independently. Meanwhile, there was and still exists a lot of political skirmish and lack of tolerance to stand for the same cause as one people.

The struggle of the Ethiopian people for emancipation from the brutal government of the Woyanes has taken a roller coaster ride. All these killings, torture, imprisonment, nightmarish life, suffocation and despair have to pay off at the end. No pain, no gain: we have been on the quest for a free, healthy and beautiful Ethiopia for the past 32 years with no success. We are still running an unfinished business. So the onus again is on us to clear our mess and set the record straight. We have to channel our time, money, energy, our wisdom and preferences in one direction for a tangible result. As professor Mesfin said, "Force can not disprove

truth” and until truth, which is the recognition of the choices and voices of the majority of Ethiopians that said ‘go away’ to the Woyanes is realized, sustainable peace will not prevail over Ethiopia. That is political darkness. Since darkness is not a color by itself, and is merely the absence of light, let the Sun of freedom, justice, equality, and humanity shine all across the beautiful land of ours, Ethiopia. I have no doubt that the majority of Ethiopians in the opposition forces struggle to see a free Ethiopia. Their love to the motherland is unquestionable. If so, why shouldn’t we come to our senses and save Ethiopia by sacrificing our narrow views, political egos, hatred, intolerance, arrogance and so on. Let’s put the country first. There is a lot to learn from the battle of Adwa. Our ancestors from all regions of Ethiopian merged and marched for a common cause and were able to defeat the colonial power of Italy. We should do the same to punish the Woyanes today. It’s a shame that Adwa, the fort, where Ethiopians died to save their nation from foreign occupation had finally produced such a ruthless and renegade fellow like Meles who is practicing the rituals of fascism on the defenseless people of Ethiopia.