

The Battle of Trust and Mistrust

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Introduction

In order to suggest a viable solution to the current situation in Ethiopia, one has to sum up what has happened during the 33 years of overt association and during the 44 years of covert struggle. I am referring to the Army of EPRP also known as the EPRA. The 44 years of clandestine struggle refers to the political party of EPRP.

Very few Ethiopians reach the age of 77 (33+44), but I am the lucky one. So what can I testify about the past Revolutionary Era of struggle? Maybe not much but I have witnessed a change and a revolution throughout my entire life. 56 years of revolutionary change and the remaining years of evolutionary change. I hope my readers understand between a revolution and a reform that has happened in Ethiopia.

The purpose of this article is not to dwell on the past but to go forward from where we are, the current situation in ETE (Eritrea-Tigray-Ethiopia). I have written two articles on ETE and can be found at www.assimba.org. EPRP's history of struggle was intertwined with Ethiopia's physical and political geography of these entities. For EPRP, there was no color, race, religion or gender on ETE's social and cultural issues. For EPRP, it was a class struggle among Landlords vs Tenants in the south of Ethiopia, petite bourgeoisie vs proletariat in cities and towns of Ethiopia and between corporations vs nationalism in the north of Ethiopia. This tripartite class struggle is known as the Eway Ethiopian Revolution.

So what was the core problem of EPRP's failure to cease political power? EPRP's struggle for power is the empowerment of people to understand politics, the concepts of freedom and liberty and not of Independence. Unlike other organizations, EPRP did not and still does not believe the lexicon usage of the word INDEPENDENCE. It was irrelevant in the case of Ethiopia.

But the question of freedom and liberty, separately or together, EPRP has gallantly at times violently fought for these twin concepts. EPRP's major weapon was DEMOCRACIA, an organ and a logo for its members and supporters. These three terms of democracy, freedom and liberty (4-6-11) as proposed by EPRP could not penetrate among the Ethiopian populace. The main reason, of course, was the futile attempt by the military regime i.e. DERG and its allies to capture and annihilate the leadership of EPRP – essentially a nonexistence phenomenon.

Who is and what is the leadership of EPRP?

I remember once, somebody informed Chairman Menghistu H.M. that there was a man by the name of DEBTERAW who was the leader of EPRP and immediately ordered his hit men to bring DEBTERAW to him. They tried but never found him until the present moment. Why is that so difficult to catch and kill the leader of EPRP? The answer is that there is none. EPRP is led by ways and means of DEMOCRACIA. In other words, it has Beliefs, Plans and Goals. For the beliefs and the goals, most Ethiopians do not have illusions but the plans may seem complex to many followers and supporters of EPRP. That unique leadership style of EPRP has perhaps confused and complicated the lives of thousands of people.

For EPRP, the message and the messenger is one and the same. The message is of the people and the messenger is the member of EPRP. The messengers do not carry badges or wear uniforms, instead they carry their guts of passions and trust. Their passion lies in their individuality and their trust resonates with their comrades or colleagues in today's language.

The military regime headed by one man of Menghistu Haile Mariam had no trust in anybody except his brother in law. This is documented in a fictional history written by professor Habtamu Alebatchew in a book titled "YeQeSar Emba" translated from Amharic to mean "Caesar's tears". Menghistu's mistrust of educated military personnel like Shaleka Dawit W. G and civilian writers like Ba'alu Ghirma has created havoc among civilians and educated class. The two books of "Red Tears" written by Shaleka Dawit and "Oromai" written by Ba'alu did struck at the very foundation of Menghistu's revolution. Coupled with our feudal culture of abuse, there was ample reason for president Menghistu to be mistrustful.

In his other book Mr. Habtamu indicated that Menghistu was bent to destroy EPRP. This book according to Habtamu was an attempt to describe the command center of EPRP's leadership. It is titled "Ye'suf Abeba" broadly translated to mean sunflower. It was intended to describe the leadership of EPRP but it failed miserably to depict the real meaning of EPRP collective leadership style. It is not only Habtamu but a lot of people including members of EPRP leadership do not comprehend the concept of EPRP's collective leadership. The concept is intertwined with the Historiography of the country known as Ethiopia.

The presentation of Berhane Meskel Redda as the owner and creator of EPRP as well as Zeru Kihshen as the destroyer of EPRP was totally fabrication. The author's outlook of CC (Command Center) is way off course of the party's usage of CC. However, there is one fundamental truth about the character of EPRP's leaders. And that is their relationship is based on trust. That is why Menghistu want to destroy the leadership of EPRP. It was known as ***the battle of trust versus mistrust***. I admire Mr. Habtamu Alebatchew for describing clearly and succinctly about the nature of these concepts in our communities and societies. I recommend both books of professor Habtamu to be read simultaneously. Both books are invaluable to our debates and dialogues.

Having said this, let us say that the past is a prologue and the future is the epilogue. What is to be done next?

What should be the role of EPRP in the current Ethiopian situation?

The solution

- Humanity and freedom of the press are the hallmarks of EPRP

A perfect solution lies in the way we perceive who we are i.e. our ID. What do we mean by ID? It means to Investigate and Discover. According to my personal investigation and research, I discovered that the names of ZAAAK (ZalaAnbessa-Assab-Karora) represents Eritrea while MAKK (Moyale-Afar-Kurmuk) is the remaining part of Ethiopia. Can anyone tell me the shapes, the sizes, the origin of the names or the number of people who migrated across these borders? Geographical identity as well as genetically go hand in hand in Ethiopia. I call this ABBE i.e. place, people and event.

As Ethiopians we were known as seb-BETeSEB-Mahbereseb. Our association with a partner or community is not barred. It is our right though not on an individual level.

But to call by names and counter names may not be allowed unless the called party has allowed. That is why we are fighting for freedom so that we can call names and counter names, the first amendment of the American constitution. We can learn from them as they have learnt from us. Foreigners have called us by many names such as Habesha, Hamasien, Kushetic, Omotic, Amhara and many others but we did not care as long as we know who we are. We are humans with endowment of Nature and EGZI-AB-B'HER. Otherwise, EPRP's role still is to fight for your freedom whether you are an Eritrean an Amhara or an Oromia whatever you want to be called. Call me by my name is irrelevant for EPRP members.

- Tigray is geographically located between the center and the north and should serve as a bridge not as an aggressor to south and north. The siege mentality of Enver Hoxha of Albania inherited by president Melese Zenawi should be erased permanently by the Tigrian people.

The TPLF leaders should renounce their Colonialism theory and ask for forgiveness. It is that simple. I am sure there is no retribution from Ethiopians though I don't know whether retribution could come from abroad.

- The Eritreans should be prepared to reconsider the value of Referendum without the 2nd amendment. Let them consider the 1st amendment of the American Constitution.

The EPLF has to explain in writing its long history of revolution and promise to rerun the Referendum, if need be. It is also that simple when there is no retribution from Ethiopians.

If the above three elements do not happen concurrently to solve our problems peacefully and amicably, then we may apply for Colonialism, Imperialism and Monarchism to come back.

There are many interested parties all over the world to come to the homeland. We are either make it or break it. I want to repeat what a Roman Emperor by the name of Marcus Aurelius have quoted to say "do not act as if you were going to live ten thousand years. Death hangs over you. While you live, while it is in your power, be good."

We all have responsibilities to curb the impending crisis emanating from Axum, Gondar and Makale (AGM). Our civilization, our government and our materialism is threatened. Let us heed to it. Above all let us restore trust – the basis for our survival. We can learn from EPRP experiences.

TRUTH WILL PREVAIL

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