

How to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. Yilma bekele

Despite all rumors of impending doom I am not worried or afraid Ethiopia will disintegrate into pieces in the immediate future. It has been tried before. Ask Mussolini or Meles, they will tell you. Our ancient homeland is one of the few in the world with over thousand years of continuous history. It took many generations to build that bond and kinship. Anyway the world community will not accept it either. Not because they think the existence of our country is an important issue but no one can stomach the idea of one hundred million refugees roaming the planet. They will do any 'band aid' solution that will keep our ethnic cleansing activity local. Rest assured your little *predilection* to do evil will stay hidden. That is the good news.

The bad news is that the little activity we carried out about a year ago regarding being free seems to be stalling, if not arrested. It looks like some folks are not done with their old vision and are trying hard to stay relevant. Are we back to square one? Not really, we are actually moving on an excellent trajectory. There are hopeful signs the recent brand of hooliganism will fail like the ones before it.

The root of the current problem can be traced to what started to take shape the last five years and reached its conclusion a year ago. The struggle against ethnic dominance that began when Woyane landed was relentless. The regime after the demise of the evil leader was left without an evil replacement worthy of his dark vision. Like what he did with our country he has emasculated those around him to the point of dysfunctional. The Muslim movement sapped the energy of the feeble regime. The Diaspora organized and fought back using all means. Foreign currency was in short supply and the countryside started its final push to choke Woyane. Oromo youth paid a heavy price; left to defend themselves with clubs while their leaders stumbled over each other to take credit.

There was no light at the end of the tunnel for Woyane. They took the safe way out. It was what is called 'soft landing' for Woyane warlords. For a loser on the run they came out winning. They left everything intact in Addis and took first class flight on Ethiopian Airlines to Alula Aba Nega International in Mekele and were accorded hero's welcome. What is today known, as 'Team lemma' became the perfect patsy for criminal Woyane. Our new leaders were 'left holding the bag' meaning they suffer the consequences and get the blame for what Woyane gang did.

Well they deserve it. They and their friends marginalized all other that sacrificed and claimed to be the real liberators. They kept quiet when their friends and supporters were openly rude. Just because they voted in their illegal politburo to win over Woyane they boasted how smart they are and how we were liberated without bloodshed. They slowly started making their role bigger than life and OPDO was renamed ODP and today we are asked to bow down and thank our new liberators while they put out press release setting down the rules of the game.

While we are trying to digest the new reality none other than OLF shows up to demand a bigger share of the pie called Ethiopia. Why they were taken seriously is not clear but they did manage to raise our stress level. How they accomplished such a feat out of nothingness is a fascinating story. The drama started with Obo Lemma's journey to Asmara to invite the OLF Chairman to enter Addis as a hero. The idea was to give legitimacy to an organization that has nothing to show after over forty years of existence. Not a single liberated village, not a single act of inflicting pain on Woyane, not a single manual to make the case for liberation nothing, nada - you get my drift. Well they couldn't even organize a happy victory ride into Addis because it is one of those things they are not organized to do.

OLF and their new friends of 'intellectuals' have been busy showing us that they are not ready to play in the big league. Right of the bat they came up with a proposal no sane person will ever bring to a peace table. They wanted to start with redrawing the map of Ethiopia in general and Addis Ababa in particular and while they are at it they wanted to change the name of the City too. What do you think? I was thinking my hope that the over twenty years of exile would give one a chance to sit and reflect and wreck the old brain to come with solutions that would bring people together and move history forward was left in shambles. That is not the OLF way. Actually OLF does not have any road map. Who needs a road map when you have no idea where you are going? There is no vision there. They really thought robbing a bank was the road to legitimacy or will instil fear in us. Woyane loots the National bank and here comes OLF robbing a small branch in their own town.

Do you think this idea of 'owning' Addis Ababa will fly? Over five million is the estimated population of Addis. It is not easy to change such a large metropolitan areas demographic in a short time. We are sure they do not have an army to enforce their will since that would've been the thing to display when they returned if such thing existed. Right now they are not sure how this is to be accomplished. If not by force then how is a good question. The residents of Addis have the number, the independence and support of all Ethiopians not to be bullied around by some unelected officials. They also have many leaders steeled in the battle for liberation from Woyane - they are not a pushover. I believe that is why they forcefully made their demands known. We are with you Addis Ababan's. I doubt anybody that cannot even liberate a village in Wollega can effectively control the capital.

As we all know the subsidiaries of Woyane TPLF have supposedly broken off ties to the parent organization. Their names have been changed in accordance to the wishes of TPLF. They did not even have the courage to drop their ethnic identity stamped by Meles and Company. The same people trained and placed in position with the blessing of Woyane are still in control. Today's ODP or ADP are led by the same folks that implemented Woyane policies to the village level. Why we are demanding the arrest of criminal Woyane politburo members while we are appointing Oromos or Amharas that were part of the criminal enterprise and now

hold party and government positions is what is confusing some folks at the moment. It is giving ammunition to Woyane criminals while awaiting arrest but that is the Ethiopian way- never close a chapter. .

It is clear now our liberation came with a price. Team Lemma made a deal with the devil and lost. The illegal nature of the government is continuing unabated. The ethnic cleansing is done with the police turning a blind eye, the house demolition is being carried at night in no regard for life and the fanning of ethnic flames is tolerated. In Addis Ababa young people are arrested enmas and taken away-just like the good old days. The poor residents of the capital city are threatened on a daily basis making life uncertain. Is this what liberation is about? The events of Legetafo and Burayu, the dragging in Shashemene the cleansing in Ogaden and today displacement in the South is showing the ineffectiveness of the regime. It is reduced to reacting instead of being proactive. The regimes base of support are the common denominator in all the atrocities mentioned above. They are the cause of its instability. They are taxing the patience of the other actors and they are making a mockery of their own leaders. Why else would they place them in the middle of demolitions, cleansings and unfettered power grab?

The PM has to show courage and confront those that are trying to reverse the change we fought for. His party has to reign in the young and the restless and refocus their aim towards positive activity. The PM is the leader of all of Ethiopia. He has to start acting it. He cannot stay tied down and indebted to one group. That would be like being taken hostage. The failure of one should not affect the health of the country. As a politician he should work to welcome others under his tent if he wants to succeed. This idea of putting all your eggs in one basket did not work for our Tigrai warlords. It wouldn't work for others either.

What was accomplished here both by OLF and Woyane is divert our attention from the job at hand. We have already wasted one whole year with nothing of value accomplished. Those that caused untold misery to our people are sitting in Mekele and taunting us. The organization they built in their image today is still functioning in our land. EFFORT is still the premier Ethiopian business and it was built with stolen capital and run like a state organization with all the benefit and none of the risk. The Television, the Radio and the Newspapers are still run by Woyane trained bosses. All this organizations have a budget from the Federal Govt. and that is not wise use of our limited resource. We demand they cut the tie. We have accomplished nothing of consequence other than the Diaspora coming and going and I do not think that was one of our worries.

Dear OLF and petty supporters, our people rebelled against Woyane and won. We did not fight against individual abusers but against a system. Not part of the system but the whole system. That is what was rejected a year ago. As far as we are concerned the list on the table includes the Constitution, the Map, the Land question to name a few. Feel free to add your grievances. What OLF is trying to do today is enshrine what was done illegally. That is not acceptable. They should be ashamed for carrying Meles's banner of inter ethnic conflict.

The world knows we got rid of Woyane in a very admirable manner because our people are wise and thoughtful. No matter how we were goaded by Woyane we did not go to the dark side. It is our ancient culture, our beliefs and wisdom that saved us. We cried for Iraq, we felt sad for Libya; we are witnessing the happenings in Syria and Yemen. You see we escaped an inferno. Now some are pulling us back towards the fire, no thank you.

But our people are creative and forward-looking. Despair was replaced with hope when I saw our friend Eskinder Nega doing what he does best - fight injustice. The Town Hall meeting with the residents of Addis Ababa is the type of grassroots movement that will empower our people. The assembly registered their concerns and placed the authorities on notice not to trample on their hard won victory. We Ethiopians are going to organize and assert our rights one village at a time. Eskinder and his friends were teaching us by example the smart method to safeguard what is won and chart a better future.

Stabilizing the country is the most important task at hand. The economy is in shambles, people are eating once a day if lucky and the future looks bleak. Today with rampant unemployment, inflation and other ills the country is in dire situation. The young people with no education and no future are ready and willing to listen to voices some not well meaning. They are easy target for those that think chaos is the way to attain their misguided goal.

Here is the statistics about our country. Our population stands at one hundred and eight million (108M) out of which sixty three percent (63%) are under the age of twenty-four. Sixty three percent of the population has not been trained to produce anything of value but has to be housed and fed. That is not a simple task. That is what should keep our leaders awake at night not some arbitrary line inside one country. The sixty three percent born and raised under Woyane is a generation that should be handled carefully. They were raised in a society where the moral compass was amiss. Woyane encouraged lying, stealing, standing false witness and infected the mind with khat and other chemicals at a young age. Life under Woyane was a constant struggle. The sixty three percent there now are what is left of the hundreds of thousands that escaped from all corners of the country. They carry a heavy burden but are not equipped to handle the load we placed on their shoulder.

There is no choice but for the adults to start acting like one. Sixty three million idle youth is a time bomb ready to explode. That is exactly why our political, community and business leaders have to be extra careful of what they say and what they do. Sure it is not difficult to stir up a mob in a place where the grievances are plenty and the young ones are ready to rebel, but what next? The intellectuals leading the charge caused both of the last two debacles we suffered. Both times theory did not pan out in practice. Why everything looks so simple and great on paper but unfortunate for us our highly educated friends and their eighteen-year-old anarchist supporters have not solved why it falls flat in

real life. That is not stopping them from playing their fiddle while Addis burns like Nero did while watching Rome burn.