

Voice from the grave. By Yilma Bekele

Meles Zenawi is dead. Meles Zenawi is alive. I am afraid in our case both statements are true. We saw the tyrant being buried or placed six foot under and the extraordinary sendoff orchestrated by his politburo in living color. The whole country was on stand still for a week or so to bury the warlord who was in the freezer for a month or so. We witnessed the bullying power of the TPLF party that forced every department, every kebele and every household to send a representative and show sorrow for a person hated and reviled by all living Ethiopians.

Well he is not really gone. He is still directing the show from hell or wherever evil resides. It has been said that he vowed to leave us with the seeds of conflict, hate and chaos for a long time after he is gone. It looks like he is right. There is no escaping his presence. I don't mean the life size posters of his ugly face in every corner of our country. I am referring to his toxic and useless ideas including his insane and childish plans that are trying to drive our politics and economy without him.

I am not talking about his ever chameleon Constitution that is still used to whip the opposition. I am not pointing out to the Kilil system that is creating a country of strangers. There is no need to mention the Kebele system that is making every household an extension of the security service. Today I am focused on the use of the king of kings of all rivers, the great nurturer of ancient civilizations the one and only Abay River and its unfortunate use by the evil one to hurt our poor country.

The last week all the talk has been about Abay. We are fortunate to have so many rivers flowing out of our high escarpments that if you look at Google map of Africa you marvel and see how God has favored our ancient country. Our high mountains kept us isolated and free from invaders while nurturing our people when all around us suffered from lack of water. The great Wabishebele, the giving Awash, the beautiful Genalle, the fierce Tekeze and Mereb the homily Gibe are but just a few of our mothers milk flowing to keep us and our neighbors happy and strong.

What can be said about the great Abay? The mighty Abay is not just an Ethiopian phenomena. Good old Abay is the mother of the Pharos and the great Egyptian civilization. The wonder of the world owes its existence to the highlands of Ethiopia that made it possible for such a civilization to flourish. The Pyramids of Giza wouldn't exist without the wealth made possible by the river Nile. Our Abay contributes two thirds of the Nile water supply.

Mount Gishe at 10,000 feet floats on a lake according to the priests that bless the spring that gives birth to the mighty Abay. It is here Abay starts its thousands of miles journey until it empties into the Mediterranean Sea. Abay with its deep gorges numerous waterfalls protected our land from European colonialists, Turkish invaders, Italian fascists and all those that wished ill to our fair land. From mount Gishe to the Sudanese border alone Abay meanders along for over 500 miles (800kM) never in a straight line like most rivers but encircling and hugging our land as if it does not want to leave. Our music and literature is full of praise for the mighty Abay and its force is recognized by all those who come near it and its power felt all over our country.

It is none other than this historic river that today is tossed around like a beach ball by Woyane bastards for their own useless dream and close your eyes lets us fool you story. This what Meles Zenawi planed before his death and this is what he is witnessing from the grave. When Woyane pulled the dam on Abay plan three years ago

their leader knew it was his last goodbye wish to our nation that would seal his legacy of evil. It was never mentioned in the five year transformation blueprint they are so proud of. It was never discussed because the idea is so ridiculous any governing body will laugh it off. Thus Meles and company brought it out the last minute and claimed it was kept a secret. Why and from whom is not clear yet. But they damn well knew it was a crazy idea and no one will take it seriously.

Why do you think it is such an insane idea and not even worth refuting? Very simple, our nation is poor and living on welfare even for the food we eat we rely on alms thus no big and complex project like building a dam is possible without the help of outsiders whether the West or the East. No outside Bank or foreign government will finance such a project without adequate studies. Building a dam on a river that crosses an international border complicates the situation in a very big way.

Thus when the warlord came up with the idea that this humongous project was going to be financed by local resources it was time to appreciate the size of his balls for such bravado and empty jive. The claim is so bizarre there is no need to refute such bold face stupidity other than shaking ones' head and keeping our collective mouth shut. People that survive on a few dollars a day, that look for outsiders to feed them and watch their young and able fleeing their home in droves facing unknown danger are going to save enough to finance a multi-million dollar project is not a good idea to put forward and wait for contributions to pour in. Logic says it ain't going to happen even when hell freezes over.

Why do you think the dictator pulled this crap out of his hat knowing his days are numbered? He was focused on three important aspects of the future of our country after he is gone and both are shaping as he planned. One is harvesting more enemies for our poor land. Alive he has already managed to get our country entangled into two costly wars. The war with Eritrea that should not have happened has already cost us dearly in both money and lives. Over eighty thousand Ethiopians died and over twenty thousand suffered major injuries. Ethiopia emptied all its foreign reserve buying arms with cash since no weapon dealer accepts credit. For all that investment we won a barren piece of territory that today sits in no mans' land.

The incursion into Somalia was a no win situation and it was not even in our national interest at all. The dictator to solidify his standing as a 'terrorist fighter' and use the situation to clobber the opposition at home had no qualms using Ethiopian lives for his selfish means in order to stay in power. Our soldiers committed so many war crimes in Somalia the bad felling between the two peoples will take years to wash away. Neighbors that will live for generations in close proximity do not normally engage in such activity that will create animosity and hate between our two people but our great leader was not concerned about that and he showed it by his callous decision.

The second reason for Abay dam madness is to shop for more enemies for our country. You see the idea of building a dam on Abay is not an original idea. Both the Imperial government and the Military regime have exhaustively studied the subject. There are plenty of documents to show their efforts for the project. They have reason why they did not pursue the matter. Today the Woyane regime propaganda makes it look like Meles came up with an original idea and they even coined a catchy phrase 'Abayen ye defere jegna' to hype the silly project. So what did he do? He came out with a dam project without asking the rest of Ethiopia or our experts to sit down and define what exactly needs to be done in our nation's interest. We did not see Ethiopian engineers,

hydrologist, geologists, economists, and environmental scientists, political and diplomatic experts being consulted before the 'secret' plan was presented in a take it or shut up situation.

Logically a dam on Abay river is a concern to all those upstream countries that rely on the river for survival. Of course the Egyptians did not take the news kindly. Is that a surprise? Put yourself in their shoes would you like it if someone decides to curtail your life line? Our country is not so strong and mighty that it could unilaterally take actions that would negatively affect the lives of so many millions. It was only yesterday in the news that the USA and Mexico signed a negotiated deal on the use of the Colorado river that starts in the rocky mountains of Wyoming and empties into the Baja California in Mexico. It is a shared river and the two governments consult each other on its use. That is what the Egyptians are asking us to do. That is what international treaties require us to do. This political chest thumping and arrogance behavior is not a sign of a great nation that wants to live in peace and harmony with its neighbors far and close. Meles Zenawi planted the seeds of this conflict before his exit.

The third and important reason for this hasty project is all about a Ponzi scheme to gather more money for our Woyane warriors. Where do you think the recently disclosed three billion dollars net worth of the war lord came from? In a nutshell it is all about EFFORT and its continuing quest to amass more money at the expense of our people and country. Mesfin Engineering and the privately held Italian outfit Salini Construction are the two main contractors on the Abay dam project. If you remember Salini is the same no bid winner on the Gibe dam project that had the tunnel collapse exactly one month upon completion. Salini is also the contractor that at the moment is involved building a dam on Tekeze river affecting Waldeba Gedam. Salini does not bode well for Ethiopia.

The current wild talk by the spooked Egyptian regime is creating a stressful and ugly situation to our Ethiopian citizens that are stuck in Egypt. Every ill-conceived idea by the Woyane regime always creates a backlash against our immigrants that are escaping the dire situation in their homeland. It is obvious Woyane cannot stay in power without drama. They always are creating enemy's both at home and outside to deflect our attention away from their failure to build a sustainable economy, a peaceful nation and a just society. It is also a little depressing to see Ethiopians venting their anger at the Egyptians instead of questioning their own dictators why they are always creating havoc both at home and with our neighbors.

Our creator in his/her infinite wisdom has recalled one of his defective product to spare our country from further destruction but we in our feeble ways are refusing to bury his toxic ideas and burn the memory one and forever. We should pray for the strength to say no, leave us alone. I urge you to watch a wonderful conversation on ESAT with Dr. Getachew Bagashaw regarding the Abay dam project. You can also read a beautiful analysis by the relentless Professor Mesfin WoldeMariam on Abay.

http://soilandwater.bee.cornell.edu/research/international/eth_pubs.htm

<http://www.ethiofreedom.com/dr-getachew-begashaw-on-esat-discussing-the-abay-dam-issue/>

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