

Woyane - bringing the war to America. By Yilma Bekele

'*Things come apart so easily when they have been held together with lies.*' Is what comes to mind when we see the behavior of the Ethiopian government and its response to the Ethiopian tragedy taking place in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Lies have been told to cover up previous lies that it has become a Public Relations War instead of unfolding human catastrophe. Catastrophe is a very loaded word but it explains what we know to have happened to our people in that closed kingdom. Thanks to today's technology of Internet and Mobile communications we are witnessing what could happen when cowards take charge. They could strip you of your humanity and throw you into a no man's land between Saudi and Yemen like a piece of garbage.



We Ethiopians are beyond shock. All those that witnessed YouTube videos, digital photographs and interviews with the frightened and lost cannot but feel the agony of these young people. There are plenty of outsiders that are willing to stand with us against injustice. We need all the help we can get. A little part of the deal is that we have to start to do the job ourselves and then they would help us. It always works better that way.

Ethiopians in their hundreds of thousands travel out of the country to work. In the tens of thousands more leave thru the porous borders and travel all over the world without papers. The last week we have been focusing on those in Saudi Arabia that found themselves stranded with no place to go. Refer to the link to read more <http://www.tikuranbesa.com/the-kingdom-from-hell-and-ethiopians/>

The Saudi Kingdom gave a seven month amnesty period for foreigners to get their paper in order or leave. November 3rd was the deadline. It is estimated that '*nearly a million Bangladeshis, Indians, Filipinos, Nepalis, Pakistanis and Yemenis* left before the end of amnesty period.

The Ethiopian Government knew of the Saudi decision to deport undocumented people and it is fully aware of the thousands of its citizens that migrate to the Middle East without paper. It chose to ignore the problem for seven months. The Ministry of Pimping that sends thousands of citizens like any export item and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Dr. Tedros Adhanom and all his Embassy and Conciliates decided to be quiet about it wishing it would go away.

The Saudi regime started rounding up undocumented workers November 4th and they had their first Ethiopian victim on November 5th. It became open season on hunting illegals' by Saudi Security forces and vigilantes. (<http://www.ethiopianreview.net/index/>)

The Diaspora that always keep one eye on Ethiopia started their protest movement right around this time. No Saudi Embassy was safe from our outrage. The Ethiopian people heard the bad news due to

the relentless coverage by ESAT and our independent web sites. Initially the Ethiopian government tried to blame alarmist Diaspora for the bad news. But nothing could stay hidden in this day and age.

First they tried to ignore the impending disaster. Then they tried to find a scapegoat. Unable to deflect the news of the horrible situation they decided to use the good old trick of lying, disinformation and empty bravado to cover their impotence. Here in entirety is a speech given by the foreign Minister in front of some African meeting in Addis Abeba on November 18th three weeks into the tragedy.

“As you know from Saudi Arabia you know although it is not just deporting Ethiopians only but are deporting other citizens they call illegal and from Ethiopian side three were killed during the crackdown and not only that thousands are in camps we are trying to make it as smooth as possible because if Saudi Arabia says they are illegal we don’t mind they have homes to come to (applause) and we have already started the operation. Our command post is working and well and we have already received hundreds we are expecting tens of thousands and I would like to reassure you that we are ready to receive our fellow citizens home (applause) I had the last ten days because in family planning as we had been saying be careful girls and women I had heard straight from camps from women who are crying for help there is nothing moving than that. I am so saddened I am really depressed that is why I was not going to actually come here asking Dr. Keste if he could excuse me because it is almost round the clock crisis management since this issue started but in the name of global solidarity even if we have to deport illegal we can do it smoothly because this is not a war situation it may be accepted when nations are at war to deport like this in a rapid fashion people could understand but not in peaceful situation we could have arranged it together to make the smooth transfer because as I said earlier we are ready to have our citizens so I am sorry to start with this it is something that has been bugging me for some time now “

It is easy to see why things keep going wrong in our country. There is something missing in the picture. We are lacking some major ingredient that our country is made from. How did we survive as a nation state for hundreds of years? How exactly did our country stay free while all around us were colonized by powerful European powers? It is not that we had a formidable military force or a well-developed economy. What we had was ‘that free leave me alone spirit’ and wise leaders surrounded by skilled diplomats. That is what we are missing today.

Emperor Tewodros committed suicide rather than be taken prisoner by the British force thereby denying them the reason to stay. Emperor Minilik played the English, French, Russians even Italians like a Masinko and won at Adwa. Emperor Haile Selassie spoke at the league of nations where he said those fateful words ‘it is us today, it will be you tomorrow.’ Accompanied by PM Aklilu Haptewold and Foreign Minister Ketema Yifru His Majesty played a central role in establishing the Organization of Africa Unity and getting Addis Abeba to be the Headquarter. Those are our accomplishments of the last one hundred fifty years.

Who is filling those shoes today? It is obvious Dr. Tedros is not a diplomat or has not been given the training and skill set to be an effective diplomat. Those disjointed statements cannot be made by a seasoned diplomat or by someone speaking on behalf of eighty million people.

The puppet Prime Minister was not allowed to acknowledge the crisis and was seen standing for a photo opportunity with Gulf Arabs while stretching his hands for alms in the middle of this affront to people and country. Some say the TPLF party was displaying the leadership potential of the Foreign

Minister preparing him for promotion. Based on his performance it looks like they picked a good time to show his short comings. He got his position not due to his ability but solely due his ethnicity.

The Ethiopian government is used to telling all kinds of tall tales to its citizens due to its monopoly of the mass Media including Print, Television, Radio, Phone, Internet and a spy in every neighborhood. But when the crisis attracts international attention this kind of 'deception' or 'evading the truth' does not work. Dr. Tedros was sent out to put lipstick on a pig. He failed miserably.

How is the Diaspora handling this cowardly attack by the Arabs against a people that have not done them any harm except do their most menial and dangerous jobs? We went out in every city that has any number of Ethiopian exiles to protest this atrocity. It was headlined by our relentless media and discussed in every coffee shop.



It is definitely a good thing that thousands of miles from home that we still feel a strong affinity to people and country. The anger was genuine and the pain was deeply felt by all. We are a unique people that the love for our homeland seems to have been engrained in our DNA if that at all is possible. I went out on a protest in San Francisco with about five hundred of my people and felt genuinely invigorated.

I also noticed something unique during this protest which I have not come across before. The protest call was scheduled to happen on Monday and I received a text message with the pic of the post card on Saturday. I have heard that there was a tele conference called to organize a protest and I was surprised by the speed they were working. It was not that group. The Post card does not have a contact number or a web address. 'Ethiopian Community and Cultural center in Oakland' is mentioned as a sponsor but no one seems to know who they are. Some people were confused by the proximity of the name to the real 'Ethiopian Center' they know and are familiar with. I was also surprised by the sameness of all the post cards printed in North America. It is obvious it was designed by the same person or group. The use of shocking images, the color combination and the title are a giveaway.

What was most surprising was the sheer number of post cards and the speed they spread in the community. Every Ethiopian and Eritrean center including Orthodox Churches, Mosques and Evangelical Churches were covered. There is nothing like having frightened and blackmailed cadres to do your menial job.

Someone called for a protest and there was nothing to do but go out and give a hand. I was very curious. Slowly people started to show up. It is as if we were all told to bring the real Ethiopian flag with us. A few ladies were wearing it as a head scarf while some had it around their neck. The men were wearing it on their hats, as a T shirt while a few were carrying the mother of all Ethiopian Flags about twenty feet long. One hour into the event no one that claims responsibility has shown up but our

number was increasing by the minute. Around 12 PM a few young people showed up with megaphone and we started congregating around the loud device.

The speech being given by the still unknown organizers was laying the ground for our slogans. The target was to be Saudi Arabia and our beef with them was regarding the treatment of our people. What was said repeatedly was since this is strictly about *'human rights'* thus no *'politics'* should be allowed to contaminate the atmosphere. Mentioning the role of the Ethiopian government was a cause to boo. At long last things were beginning to make sense. The haste in organizing this fake protest was becoming clearer by the minute.

Why would anyone want to circumvent this noble cause most of us went out to show solidarity with our people is a valid question? The majority that showed up were genuinely concerned about the condition of their people and with good Ethiopian heart they came out to express their deeply felt sadness. Unfortunately it is sad to see a very small number that were used to squander this golden opportunity that could have been used for greater good. Why? What would they benefit?

The answer is intertwined with the nature of the government in power and how they have managed to use greed as a weapon. Up until now Woyane has used its sympathizers to silently infiltrate and create chaos from within. The two favorite recipients of this were the Political Party support groups and our Church. It is sad to see our community being taken over or made a subsidiary of TPLF. This occasion was the crowning moment of all that work. Our people at home are faced with an overwhelming and cruel force that terrorizes their daily life and today some in the Diaspora are economic prisoners to be called upon to serve their master in times like this.

I was in complete awe watching the protest march from the side by the actions of the masterful operators at work. The way they played the crowd reminded me of Jimmy Hendricks on Guitar, Mulatu Astatke on keyboard, Shambel on Masinko, Tilahun, Teddy with Gigi as vocalists - they were that good.

What was achieved is a good question. As a diaspora activist I learnt never to discount the ingenuity of Woyane as an enemy. This fifth column (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifth_column) they unveiled took a long time to build. All the registration for land, the requirement of personal documents including finger print was part of the process. Today every city and town has its own kebele rep just like in mother Ethiopia. For us it was a wake up moment and for Woyane it was a champagne time.

One thing for certain is that their action was a betrayal of our people and country. Our protests are not random noises but a thought of calculated acts to achieve a certain gain. Regarding our current problem in the Middle East our aim was:

- Stop the abuse immediately while we search for lasting solution.
- Organize some kind of entity to research and offer options.
- Work with the UN, Red Cross and other organizations to look for safe locations for the political refugees and resettle those who want to return to Ethiopia.
- Put pressure on the Ethiopian government to allow political freedom.

The interference by the Woyane regime and the Banda like work by our own friends, family and neighbors sabotaged all this important work. The problem is still with us. Despite the lie by the Ethiopian government there are still tens of thousands stranded in Saudi Arabia and dumped in

Yemen. Those that called for this quick response are nowhere to be seen today. Their job is done, after all it was never about stopping the atrocity but it was all about shielding the regime. Check out the protest in your city and notice that there is no follow up work or any attempt to continue the work till the problem is solved. What the regime wanted was for us to go out and vent our displeasure on the Arabs and go home and that was the end of the matter.

Our work is still not done. We should go back and start from scratch and re organize our response. We have learnt a lesson. Woyane has arrived in America in full force. The sleeper agents, the morally deficient characters they have recruited, the economically challenged cheap Hodams they have bought are not going to be a push over. Afraid to be unmasked they would try any means to saw dissent amongst us. It is time to recognize the shifting situation in our movement and act accordingly.

Our people still are not comfortable asking questions, digging deep and researching before making a decision. Our culture does not encourage curiosity and we abhor reading, learning and referring to experts. The last week we saw all our weaknesses when we saw people following like cattle and afraid to even ask who is in charge here and who elected you to that position. We should never follow without asking by whom and for what. Like we shouldn't sign a paper without reading it first we should never follow someone without knowing what the game plan is all about. It is time to fight back intelligently not emotionally.

“Things come apart so easily when they have been held together with lies.”

– *Dorothy Allison, [Bastard Out of Carolina](#)*

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