

Welcome to Ethiopia, let me have your bag. By Yilma Bekele

I hope you are sitting down while reading the story I am about to tell you. Unfortunately it is a true story and it couldn't have happened anywhere but in good old Ethiopia. When it comes to laying down like a doormat and letting everyone walk all over us we Ethiopians wrote the manual. We cannot repeat this story to any outsider because they would look at us in a strange way and walk away not understanding this kind of convoluted humor. In fact most of us will deny it happened. Some of us would have to come up with some kind of explanation to make the story go down smooth to avoid getting choked with our shame.

As you all know the Saudis mostly but all the Middle Eastern Arabs have not been kind to us for quite a while. Three weeks ago the Saudis decided to tighten the collective noose around our neck by a notch. It was not pleasant. I mean due to the Internet and ubiquity of mobile technology the whole world witnessed their barbarity. For those that got killed, raped, beaten and humiliated may the creator have mercy on their soul.

It even angered the so called Diaspora or economic and political refugee from their motherland. The abuse of Ethiopians in the Middle East is common knowledge. The news of some little girl hanging herself, taking household detergent as poison, being driven out of her mind has become an everyday news. Normally we read the news then we shrug, swallow hard make that hissing sound and move on.

This time it was different. Instead of trickled down abuse they decided to do it wholesale style to us. Hunt them down and throw them in the desert was what the King declared. The security force and vigilantes were more than happy to comply.

Now the Ethiopian government was true to its nature of being the fire starter and the fire fighter at the same time. This game has been refined by the late nameless warlord that all the new guys have to do was go on auto pilot and let us do all the heavy lifting. Thus they activated their cadres to take us on a rampage and get the world to notice the crime. We complied beautifully. I am not saying we should not have protested but the heart of the matter lies protest against who and why and to what end. Woyane answered those questions for us.

If you look closely at all the rallying cry since the problem started you will notice all our ire was directed at 'Saudis, Arabs, Muslims' and other phantom enemies. The Ethiopian government unable to take care of its people willingly exports them to the Middle East, turn its face away when they are abused, closes Conciliates to deny them shelter and we curse the 'Arabs' for not being humane to the those with no place to go. One thing our cry did was help Woyane spin a new version of the sad story.

This is where Woyane excels- snatching victory out of defeat. Sure enough the Foreign Minister that seems to be void of diplomatic language using such memorable words such as

'depressed, bugged etc.' to explain tragic events that happened to his people was the lead sent out to calm us down. A blind leading the blind is what comes to mind.

However you sneer at it, it worked. Before you know it the international conscience we were able to wake up and take notice was what Woyane was anticipating. All of a sudden the urgency of the situation was magnified by Woyane. The numbers kept climbing from one day to another. The Foreign Minister on training set up what he called 'command center' to collect money in an orderly manner. The Saudi Government paid for the trip, the Red Cross facilitated the camp, the UN refugee organization poured money into the bucket and good old Woyane opened their pockets.

This is where I am going to tell you more of what happened. I ask you again if you are sitting down. You see the Saudis started flying around the clock bringing the Habesha home. So you would think people will be lined up to welcome the traumatized, abused and weak from being kept in a desert tent back to their mother land. One would hope it would be a joy's day where families embrace their loved ones and thank their Gods for their safe return.

I am afraid none of that happened. The government did not want the people to be involved in this happy moment. Furthermore our dear old government came up with a brilliant scheme to make money of already beaten people. New regulations went into effect. Only two bags, two mobile phones, no electronic items and gold has to be weighed before entering the country. All excess amounts will be confiscated.

Thus the Saudis kicked our people from their country, they killed some, raped a few but in the end allowed them to gather their belongings and transported them home. The Ethiopian government waited with open hands and robbed them of their last shred of dignity as a welcome gesture.

I am glad some of our people were rescued from this hell on earth. I am happy we their brethren did not ignore their plight. No matter what a few tried to use this sad situation to line their pockets, show loyalty to their handlers, secretly betray their people and country most of us with good heart did what we have to do. What I am saying here is that it is not enough. A band aid solution is not the way to go. What we have done is postpone the problem for another day.

Our halfhearted gesture ultimately ends up hurting us. We are present at the start of the problem but we do not wait around to solve it. We raise the issue and someone else comes around and sticks a useless defanged solution that we have to go back and try to solve again. Let us see when the Emirates, or Lebanon or Kuwait gets tired of our people and starts the deportations are we going to go out and scream again? What would those that see us with our banner again think of us? Let alone foreigners even some of us are getting tired of this crap. Please read the attached and see the actions of the illegal minority regime in this time of sadness for our people. Let us pay attention to what Henry David Thoreau said 'There are a

thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root.' Strike at the root, hit Woyane!

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