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## Embracing New Beginnings

By Samuel Estefanous 12-23-17

I plead 'mea culpa'- hands down, that is...yes- in part- I did borrow the title from a doctoral thesis of an academic ace.

The late premier was right; neo liberalism did hit dead ends especially after the embarrassing fiasco of the Washington Consensus and IMF and WB sponsored structural adjustments which had bankrupted a good number of developing countries.

But it did run the course while it lasted for the better part of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup>...until it ran out of steam at the beginning of the 21th. See, what I mean? Politics and Economics are perched on the proverbial shifting sands of uncertainty and they are liable to go boom and bust just like good old Karl M. said as of old.

Change is a captivating catch phrase. It was the winning mantra of Barack Obama though nothing seems to have budged an inch eight years later. EPRDF also speaks of 'change' almost with religious fervor and devotion but...but...at the end of the days it is like "Sergeant Gebru" ...ሲሆንም...ሲሆንም...

### 1-Disciples of Change

Dergue will sure remain an intriguing unique phenomenon in Ethiopian history for the foreseeable future. We are still poring over old documents and controversial memoires to make sense of the military administration that aped Nasser's Young Military Officers. You wouldn't believe the eerie similarity between the two revolutions and how they were fomented and hijacked. You have the Ethiopian King Farouq, the Ethiopian General Najib, the Ethiopian Council of Junior and Non Commissioned Officers. Only Gamal Abdul Nasser seems to have lacked his matching counterpart.

Immediately after the Dergue assumed power it came to the sobering conclusion that running a government isn't as simple as fomenting and hijacking a revolution

at gun point...so it had to deal with the better educated manpower that used to run the bureaucracy. But the hatred and mistrust was such that the Dergue installed “Disciples of Change” at every government institution. They did a despicable job of intimidating, spying on and liquidating fellow Ethiopians whose only fault was being non-Derguish in every sense of the word.

But I am kinda amused by the flamboyant dignified designation of the team- “Disciples of Change”.

EPRDF got a different kind of “Disciples of Change”. Their primary and unquestioned mission is to keep the status quo at any cost; they cleverly employ the fundamental change management skills to stifle any semblance of true change from taking root by nipping any tendency to true change in the very bud. But like the late Premier said you may be able to defer the cycle, postpone the effect but change is inevitable and it never fails to keep the course bidding it’s time to come to surface.

## 2-Sinking to the abyss to seek Redemption

In terms of aspiring to achieve the ideals of democracy, EPRDF hit the dead end in the last parliamentary election which had made our dark hide blush crimson. We were all like-what are we now, huh, DPRK? It was perhaps the first time folks were made to believe EPRDF is here to last till doomsday. That naturally makes any person in his right mind feel uneasy, insecure, intimidated and cowed. What is even worse, adding insult to injury; EPRDFites were busy alienating, marginalizing and pauperizing the rest of Ethiopians. Their superciliousness, the ugly posturing and the bad attitude is enough to drive folks to the true abyss.

It makes us wonder, we are the nation, nationalities and people...why do you demonize us and try to talk to a ghost constituency? Fellas, did you have the chance to read Reporter Amarigna’s editorial relative to the simple fact that this Nation is yet in one peace on account of the wisdom and patience of the larger Ethiopian public? Reporter was speaking for all of us.

EPRDFites got it and like a hermit doing some kind of deep penance to atone for a major transgression, they told us they were descending to the abyss to get to the

bottom of their problem and come out gushing in torrents and shine like fountains in springtime... again it makes us wonder why should we give it endless and countless chances to redeem itself? It isn't like we have sold our souls in perpetual bondage and servitude to EPRDF. Question is what alternative, have we got?

### 3- In the Service of EPRDF- Self exiled Extreme Oppositions

What makes EPRDF look good? The Opposition! They are squarely and conveniently in the good service of EPRDF and make it look like "yekonjowoch konjo"; and looks like to me EPRDF wants to keep them like that- espousing mean spirited hooliganism, petty name calling and tribalism of the worst kind. Remember the warm spirit and benevolence of the Kenejit Coalition around the time of its formation? I mean before it began to slip in to utter decadence and despondence before our own very eyes? EPRDF will never allow that kind of "benevolent warm spirited opposition" to have a field day on Ethiopian soil again.

### 4- Cart Blanche License to EPRDFites?

You are gonna love this anecdote...a good natured if slightly intimidated civil servant was trying to make a point (and he got a viable good point except that it wasn't to the liking of his Excellency) and the latter leans to one of his 'ADCs' and makes some inquiry, you can imagine to what effect...looks like the answer was "negative, Excellency." Suddenly the Chief lost his temper and did everything short of flogging the poor fella, who like Akaky Akakyevitch of old, stood there like an Aksum stele rendered incapable of reason or common sense.

'I will have only to drop a line and you are gonna rot in the gutter, stupid' were the unfortunate words that reduced the poor head of a destitute family to turn in to stonework of some kind.

You see, uncharacteristically, the late Premier had at one time made a slight blunder arguing the indefensible position that for as long as any official maintains the party line he is ten times better than another who is a hundred times more qualified...EPRDFites are hanging tight on this slip of tongue like an article of faith.

## 5-We are the People, We are the Children...

Remember Band Aid and its captioned popular theme song? We are the people indeed. For every one EPRDFite, there are twenty nine EPRDF common folks. EPRDF cannot last alienating, stigmatizing, and intimidating 95 million people and it knows it very well. Day in and day out they stay in their endless meetings and gemgam sessions and with little time left they hang out around their exclusive domains, even their children instinctively keep aloof from the general public. The sad consequence is the eventual burgeoning of a suspicious coin reeking “tiegna medeb” in the words of the latest TPLF communiqué.

I keep reading and rereading every single communiqué being released by EPRDF and the member parties. Guess what? Every time I do, my jaw drops to my feet. Honest to God sometimes they impress me as if they are speaking to their father confessor, I mean like they are taking the Sacrament of Penance or something.

This could only come from a deep sense of service and allegiance, I know, but it kinda freaks one out-on whose hands are the fates of 100+million Ethiopians hanging? It is inevitable that one should want to know.

## 6-The Imminent Specter of Anarchy

Like I always say let us not take this precious peace we have for granted...indeed “wuha siwesid eysasak new...” for now populism might be in vogue and the lure might look irresistible but the price we are gonna pay is inestimable. However much the popular discontent is legitimate; in no way does it justify anarchy. We have seen what the Rose Revolution is doing to the Ukraine. A good number of truly malcontented folks tried to reclaim Ukraine for the Ukrainians, this legitimate peaceful demand was hijacked by a bunch of unruly hedonists high on ecstasy who without a shred of responsibility raised the banner of the notoriously fascistic Banderite cause

## 6-Hence Embracing New Beginnings

EPRDFites speak with dread of the possible breaking in to two of the Front. I wouldn't worry about that. Eventually true redemption is gonna happen that way-

when two stalwart matching parties keep the equilibrium like the donkey and the elephant-like Democrats and Republicans in the US, I meant.