



Excuses of PFDJ Supporters and Neutralists On To The Point

It has been clearly seen and loudly heard that our country is in a desperate state economically, politically, socially, and diplomatically. Yet, the best gesture Isayas can make to the heroic martyrs of Eritrea is to lead a walk in Asmara on the Martyrs' day he declared himself. The walk would have been a positive gesture if he was reversing his disastrous policies and was walking towards the goals for which our martyrs gave their lives. The sad fact remains that he has been walking away further from their goals and aspirations and he is at a stage where he has betrayed both in practice and in spirit their sacrifice in a way it is difficult to imagine.

Many try to tell us that he adopted this dictatorial and intolerant behavior after 1993. However, many who have been kept in the dark holes of his prison system have told eloquently that is not so. A dictator's main signature marks are exclusion and disengagement; adopting a policy of my way or the highway. Dialogue with your opponents and engagement with your competitors is a sign of weakness in his narrow arrogant way of thinking. Let's not open a crack in the core of his wisdom. So, one can safely deduce that the current policies of exclusion and disengagement must have their roots somewhere in the past. It is an open book readily available for every one to read in regard to the state of our country and the destructive policies of PFDJ with the dictator at its steering wheel. But, there are always some who have decided that their fate is closely wrapped with his presence and stay in power; and there are some who get disgruntled from the opposition and who are seamlessly and subtly adopted the "Ms Mengistna" slogan. There are also some who have realized that PFDJ has hopelessly rotten making it rather too difficult to defend it and so they come up with next best excuse they have that they need to support it until the border demarcation standoff is resolved. We will try to look at the different excuses they come up including the weaknesses of the opposition that prevent from endorsing and supporting the opposition.

Let's look at some of the excuses the PFDJ supporters and the so called Neutralists echo:

1. **The Border Demarcation:**

- Some completely forget that Isayas's advocacy that the relationship he was cultivating with the government of Ethiopia, yes the same government that he calls "Woyane" now is what put border demarcation in a state that it is found now. It is not any of the opposition's doing. It is the agenda of political expediency that he adopted in 1981 and pursued until the referendum in 1993 and beyond that has the border predicament in jeopardy. His government was paying entrance fee when its officers traveled to Badme. The border could have been done before or during the referendum.

- He isolated the country in the international political arena so badly to the extent that he does not have any listening ears in the western world to exert any pressure on the border demarcation. That is his own isolationist, arrogant, dictatorial, as well as insulting approach that brought about this isolation.
 - The refusal to receive and talk with UN envoy from Kofi Anan. The so called educated defenders of PFDJ did not have the will and stamina to tell him that it is an international blunder to refuse to see an envoy on that level.
 - The refusal accepting a dignitary, the undersecretary of African Affairs of State Department from the United States of America in same arrogant manner. Where were the so brilliant educated advisors?
 - Banning the UN Peace Keepers from using the main covered roads. Banning air flights and limiting the movements of the peace keepers despite the plea from the international community.
 - Imprisoning local employees of the international NGOs and UN; and expelling most of them out of the country despite the request to the contrary by the international community.

Border demarcation like any other delicate high level international political undertaking can only succeed with high level diplomatic skill and flexibility not by arrogance and rigidity. It takes maximizing the leverage and good standing the country has with every one. Instead PFDJ blames every one in the world but itself. How can one expect diplomatic success by embarrassing, insulting, and refusing to talk to the very high level diplomats of the international organizations and the most influential countries? Who do then they expect will exert the pressure for the demarcation? We know they are quick to blame every one else and send us email after they read this. We are talking about what the government of Eritrea is doing for the good of the country. The other governments will only do what is best for their countries and not for Eritrea.

2. **The sovereignty of our country:** For starters, let us get one fact straight. Sovereignty is not maintained and respected by keeping troops in the trenches 365 days a year and by starting wars with every neighbor and isolating the country from the international community. Sovereignty can be protected by maintaining internal unity of the people, building a strong economy, technological advance, adopting policies supported by the people, maintaining dignified skillful international diplomacy, and resolving disputes by international norms of dialogue. It is high time our educated supporters of PFDJ realize that Isayas is putting the country's sovereignty in jeopardy not defend it. We hope they have learned their lesson that Isayas does not listen to rational reasoning and so join the opposition. One year he told the people that he was working to make the border with Ethiopia meaningless. A year or two later he took the country to a destructive war because of border issues without ever going to the international body first for political and diplomatic resolution or notifying his own hand picked parliament members. Isayas's political mood swings and reckless policies damage the image of the country and chip away its sovereignty instead of defending and strengthening it.

3. **Protecting the country from Islamists and Ethnic Splinters:** One point that has not found its way into the apologists' minds is that Isayas does not care about religion, region or any other social aspect. For him any thing and every thing is a disposable tool to elongate his grip on power. What do those who blame the opposition for working with the Islamists and Ethnicities; and those who tell ELF-RC that we should not work with such forces when they see what he is doing in Somalia? The Nharnet Team has repeatedly told its readers that Isayas does not care about any of the regions or provinces nor does he have any concern about the Christians. It was all a play for his stay in power. A question should be posed to the blind loyalists who see him as pro Christian the reason he moved to Massawa when he felt the threat against him has grown bigger? He does not trust one more than the other except pretending to do so to divide and rule. He lives in paranoia. This is a good point to ponder for some opposition elements that seem to think he represents a specific religion or region. The opposition should avoid falling to the ploy of PFDJ cronies and work together to get rid of the tyranny.

The entire name calling leveled against the opposition organizations and elements is just a way of isolating them by instilling fear and suspicion in the minds of the people. It is surprising the educated fail to see this. Character assassination, demoralization, intimidation, and isolation are the only way he knows how to survive. His political character and persona does not allow him to accept fair competition, and dialogue. He is not protecting the country from any thing or any one except ruling by fear and division. To the contrary, he is exposing the country to hardship and endangering the independence that was attained by unparalleled sacrifice.

4. **Building Houses and Roads:** One propaganda item repeated frequently by the apologists and loyalists is that the dictatorship is building houses and roads. Some boast about how much Asmara and other cities have grown since independence. We invite them to see just one scratch below the surface:
 - a. **Building Houses:** It is true houses are being built. The first question is by whom for whom. The houses that are being built belong to Eritreans in the Diaspora or to the Generals who get them built by the free labor of the defense forces. That would make sense and the loyalists would have a point to make if the housing expansion was from economic growth inside the country, business development of its residents, or the people were building because they earned from investments or business ventures.

All the business related to construction including material supply is owned by PFDJ; how is that the building of houses a sign of the country's economic well being? Are the Eritrean people living in the houses affording better standard of life or are they locked when if the owners travel there once in a while? Are the Eritrean people better off because of the houses? It is rather for the short sighted who live in Diaspora to boast of the size and the number of bedrooms and bath rooms of the houses they own. PFDJ has used these houses to make them speechless and have virtually become prisoners of their property forgetting that they used their

hard earned money to build those houses. On whose land are they building the houses? Have the owners of the land who are mostly martyrs or in the army who are in the trenches been compensated? Is there any piece of land in Eritrea that does not belong to a village other than those taken away during the Italian Colonialists? They need to remember that sooner or later, Isayas will be gone and PFDJ removed from power.

b. **Building Roads:** We want to remind the loyalists that the Italians built most of the transportation and other infrastructure in Eritrea. Does it mean that they were not colonial rulers oppressing the people of Eritrea? In the same logic, does it lessen the fact that Isayas is a ruthless dictator who has turned the country into a prison camp? Dictators use the roads to dictate; democratic governments build roads for development and prosperity. We hope they do not tell us that democracy would hinder the road building like they tell us it hinders the border demarcation. Democracy if and when implemented properly expedites prosperity and development; and assures democratic resolution of internal and external disputes avoiding destruction of human life and property. Roads would be meaningful if they were used to do business freely, travel at will, or for the good of the people.

5. **The Opposition is not Effective and Has Weaknesses:** This is something heard from those who do not want to join the opposition for personal opportunistic reasons and those who are in the opposition but do not want join the organization or groups who do not want join the Alliance. How can the organizations be strong if those who blame them for being weak do not take the action and join? Why do they wait for some one to go through the trouble of making the organizations and EDA effective and strong? Isn't what the struggle is about - making the organizations effective and strong by correcting their weaknesses and get support from the people? They need to ask themselves what their role is and should be. Why do they think the responsibility is of the few who have given up their comfort and life for the struggle? Pointing out weaknesses and problem is one thing and having the courage to do something about it altogether a different matter. It is high time you take the action by joining an organization that meets most of their criteria. The answer from members of the organizations is simple "we are doing the best we can" and "what are you doing"?

Conclusion and A Call to The Defense Forces: It is very well understood the ordinary members of the army are doing their national duty because they are told the country is under threat from the neighboring countries; from the "Islamist Government of Sudan" at one point and the "Woyane" now a days. It is the duty of every decent citizen to answer the national call when there is a national threat. However, you need to look at the circumstances of your country and your stay at the trenches:

- a. The government never tried to resolve the disputes through dialogue. It is easier for him to speak by bullets instead of by appeals and diplomacy. You know the end result with Yemen was international arbitration and the end result of the war with the Ethiopians was by the international court. It is committing every blunder in politics and diplomacy to isolate itself and put the demarcation in suspense.
- b. Ask yourselves as to why you are spending your days and nights building houses for and enriching the generals instead having a normal family life at home.
- c. Look back at the dream of the fallen heroes of your comrades, friends and relatives. Do you see any of that realized? Do you believe that this what they gave their lives for?
- d. Why are most of the youth of our nation leaving the country by any means even though they know the danger they face? Do you think they would do so should they have any hope in the country's direction?

The few at the helm of PFDJ are not concerned about the country but how they stay in power with out any regard what happens to the country and people. The country is with out constitution. The government does not have any working parliament as one member who traveled abroad put it "n shim tirah eyu" meaning it is only for show. It is a noble cause to defend the mother land but right now you are only defending the few in power not your country and certainly not your people. History, your people and your country are calling on you to stand for the cause our heroes fell. Every one inside and outside the nation need to work together to win back the dignity of our people and country.

The People Shall Win!!!!