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Inside this issue:

When Just Knowing Isn't Enough

What has become clear since the border war with Ethiopia is that Eritrean nationalism – at least in its articulation by the PFDJ – has become hopelessly reactionary. In typical Bushite fashion, it has become customary for Isaias to condemn his critics as “Ethiopian collaborators”. The Eritrean president continues to exploit the national pride of our people to discourage opposition, with a smug, “you’re either with Eritrea or against it” attitude. As a result, Isaias has single-handedly succeeded in blurring the lines between loving one’s nation and loving one’s government. To the point where 11 prominent PFDJ members

were jailed and – at least few of them – murdered for their questioning of how the border war was carried out (2001).

When faced with the threat of speaking out against the PFDJ’s gross human rights record and being labelled an enemy sympathizer, many diasporic Eritreans still opt to remain silent, while imploding with feelings of guilt and complacency. As a misguided elder once put it, “those who speak out against the government are speaking in support of *Woyane*”. In my mind, this is the very threat that keeps our people silent amidst worsening conditions back-home. It’s this

fear of ostracism or “social martyrdom” that paralyzes our sense of morality and national obligation. In the end, the only people hurt are the grieving mothers, orphans, political prisoners and street dwellers of Eritrea who lose millions of potential advocates to cowardice.

The sad truth is that for every blind patriot who supports Isaias out of ignorance, there’s somebody who knows enough to act but still doesn’t. This is the person I’m concerned with.

...continued on page 2

When Just Knowing Isn't Enough 1

ሽፍታ ንግግር ከውክል ኣይክእልን? 1

Facts 1

Buried in the Mediterranean Sea 2

2

2

Facts

1993– Only two months after independence, Isaias orders the forced transport of 12,000 disabled freedom fighters to concentration camps outside of Asmara. While marching to Asmara for a face-to-face meeting with Isaias to protest their treatment, five veterans are gunned down and nearly a dozen are injured.

1997– A constitution is created and ratified by both government and the Eritrean People, only to be scrapped by Isaias.

Honour the Martyrs, Speak for those who have no voice

ሽፍታ ንግግር ከውክል ኣይክእልን?

ፈሰቲቫል እንዳተባህለ ዓመት ዓመት ከምዝካየድ ንርእዮ ኣሎና። እዚ ፈሰቲቫል እዚ ውሽጡ ጥልቕ ኢልካ ከይኣቶኻ ብላዕሊ ላዕሊ ጥራሕ እንተርኢኻዮ ንመላለይን መዛናግዕን ጽቡቕ ኮይኑ እዩ ዝስምዓካ። መንየካይዶ ነዚ ፈሰቲቫል እዚ? ዝኣቱ ኣሽሓት ዶላራት ከኒ መን እዩ ዝጥቀሙሉ ዘሎ? ዝብሉ ሕቶታት እንተሓቲትካ ግን ዕሽነት ኣብዚ ፈሰቲቫል

ናይ ዝካፈሉ ኣብሪሁ የርዩካ።  
 ህግደፍ ነዚ በዓል ኮዳሉ እንከሎ ክልተ ነገር ይጥቀም

1. ዘንጸባርቕ ናይ ቪድዮ ስእልታት ብምቕራጽ ኣብታ ናይ ፕሮፖጋንዳ መሳርሒቱ

ዝኾነት ቲቪ ኤሪ እዚ ኹሉ ትርእይዎ ህዝቢ ደጋፊ መንግስቲ ኤሪትራ እዩ እንዳበለ ሓሶቱ ስለዝነገሉ ነቲ ኣብ ኤሪትራ

ናብ ገጽ 2 ይቕጽል

ሓሳብኩም ኣብዚ ዝሰዕብ ልእኹልና <kemzelata@yahoo.ca>

## Dead and Buried in the Mediterranean Sea

It has been a public knowledge that rather than remain a victim of Isaias' perpetual conscription, Eritrean youth have been forced to flee and seek opportunities elsewhere.

One of the busiest routs has been from Libya to Italy via the Mediterranean Sea, using leaky boats. As you know, many have died attempting to do so. Who is speaking for those who died and remain buried in the Mediterranean Sea? Did you lose a relative that way? Do you know that it is the scorched-earth PFDJ

policy which resulted in those deaths?

Recently, the Libyan and Italian governments signed an agreement to block that chance to Eritreans and other Africans. Italian coast guard ships are actively plucking them from the leaky boats and returning them back to Libya. Today in Libya, any Libyan, even children beat up those Eritreans and other fellow Africans in the streets of Tripoli. Would they be in that position had they been given the chance to education and the opportunity to advance their lives? They saw that

while Isaias and his cronies lived a life of luxury their families and they themselves lived in poverty. Do you have a relative in that situation or any refugee anywhere? Who is speaking for them?

In Egypt, Eritrean refugees are taken from the street and put in jail for no reason. Recently, a young Eritrean woman refugee delivered her baby in Jail amid temperature of 45 degree centigrade. No one is advocating for her because the UNHCR is not being listened to. Is there anything we can do?

## Full youth participation is vital in building a democracy

### ... When Just Knowing Isn't Enough ... (continued from page 1)

The person trapped in a psychology of fear and helplessness. The person who spends their money at government fundraising events in cities across North America and Europe (disguised as independence celebrations, soccer festivals etc), ignoring the correlation between their money spent and the funding of PFDJ prisons and other mechanisms of authoritarian control. Every dollar you spend selfishly partying and flag-waving helps facilitate the torture of your brothers and

sisters.

What will it take for you to stand up? Will it take another 18 years of election-free dictatorship? Or maybe 8 more years of indefinite conscription in place of university schooling for the nation's youth? As historically innovative and insightful thinkers, even the Eritrean peoples' freedom of expression has been transplanted with party propaganda. To the point where Reporters Without Borders' 2007 world press freedom index ranked Eritrea

last in journalistic freedom (173<sup>rd</sup>).

I challenge all passive observers of the Eritrean crisis to imagine a just and free Eritrea under the rule of law rather than the whims of one man, and to act tangibly in realizing it; to reconnect themselves with the courage and self-actualization that delivered us independence and made the world take notice; and most of all, to honour the aborted vision of the martyrs before it is too late.

## ብዘይተኻፋልነት ደቂ ኣንስትዮ ለውጢ ኣይርከብን

### ሽፍታ ንሃገር ከውክል ኣይክእልን... (ካብ ገጽ 1 ዝቐጸለ)

ዝበልዎ ስኢኑ ጠምዮን ብህግደፍ ዝግፈፍን ዝእርን ዘሎ ህዝብና መዋረዲ ይጥቀመሉ። በዚ ኣብ መን እቲ ኣብ ዓዲ ዘሎ ህዝብን ኣብ ወጻኢ ዘሎን ጽልእ ከምዝሓድር ይገብር።

2. ካልኣይን ቀንድን መደበም በዚ ፈሰትቫል ኣምሲልካ ገንዘብ ንምድላብ እዩ። ኣዳለውቲ ናይ በዓላት ሽማግሌ ዝገሃሉ ክኣ ኣበወንበርም ወኪል ህግደፍ ኣብ ቶሮንቶ ኮይኑ ዝተረፉ ውን ቀንዲ መጣቻዕቲ ናይ ህግደፍ እዮም። ኣዋሃሃዲት ሽማግሌ በዓላት ብዝበል ስም ባልዓ ዘጠመቑት ብስም ማሕበረሰብ ኤሪትራውያ ኣብ ኦንታሪዮ ትሽቅጥ ካብ ህዝቢ ገንዘብ መንዚዓ ኣበይ ከምዝኣቱ

ዝፍለጥ ነገር ኣይኮነን። ኣብ ዓመት 200 ሽሕ ዶላር ካብዚፈሰቲቫል እቶት ከምዝረኽቡ ብተደጋጋሚ ዝተገልጸ ነገር እዩ።

ዓመታዊ ፈሰቲቫል ህግደፍ እምበኣር ኣብ ቀረባ ጊዜ ከካየድዮ። ገለ ገለ ሰባት ናይ ኤርትራ ፈሰቲቫልዮ ኢሎም ዝካፈልዎ ኣይተሳእኑን። ንሕና ብወገንና ሽፍታ ንሃገርን ንህዝብን ከውክል ስለዘይክእል ህግደፍ ዝገብሮ ኩሉ ናይ ሃገር ኢልካ ምክፋሉ ተቐራኒ እዩ ኢልና ንኣምን።