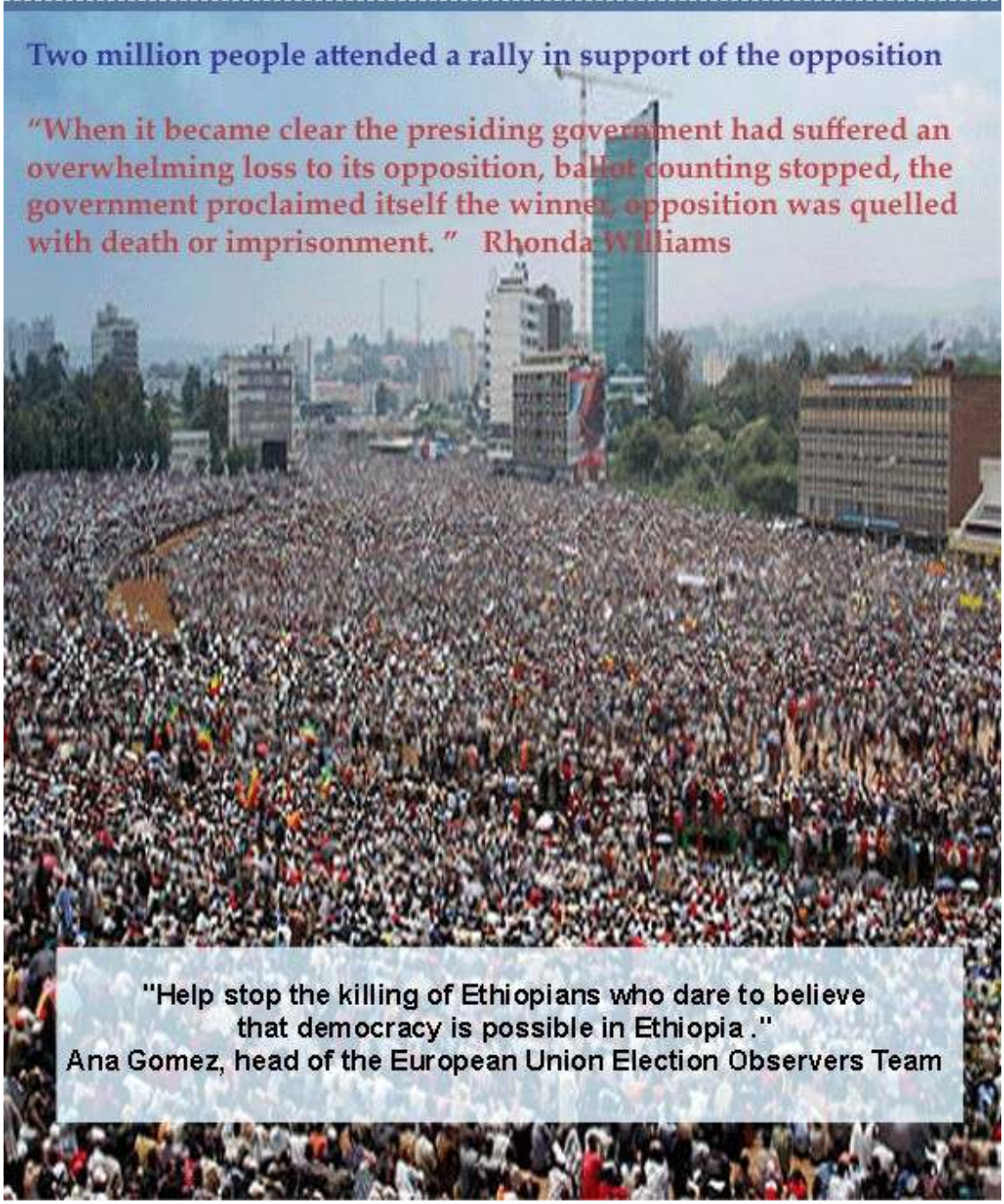
# Crime and Nourishment in Ethiopia

*American Taxpayers' Money at Work*



# Crime and Nourishment in Ethiopia
# American and European Taxpayers' Money at Work*

## I. A plea to American and European taxpayers to stop financing tyranny and repression

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's ethnic-based political party has been controlling the government of Ethiopia with the one hand and running billions of dollars worth of business conglomerates with the other for the last 14 years. Mr. Zenawi is running Ethiopia like a Mafia, holding its people hostage and extorting what economists call economic rent (ransom money) from both the local public and the donor community. Independent reports by the World Bank[1], the U.S. State Department[2], and the Economist Intelligence Unit[3] have long established that Mr. Zenawi's political party runs business conglomerates and its private enterprises get preferential treatment and in most cases do not even pay taxes. The U.S. government's reports confirm that even the country's trade regulations favor businesses run by Prime Minister Zenawi's party.[4] Transparency International Global Corruption Report (2003) notes "Ethiopia's coalition government is generally held together by the ability of the ruling party to keep the pockets of its partners oiled, while it openly suppresses the opposition."[5]

What is more atrocious is the government's use of its monopoly over land rights to extract both economic rent and political support from the destitute peasants. The European Election Observers Mission to Ethiopia has documented cases where peasants were forced to sign a commitment to vote for the government in the May 2005 election, under the "threats of land dispossession or deprivation of free ration" or even dismissal of their children from government run schools.[6] Siegfried Pausewang, Senior Research Fellow at Chr. Michelsen Institutes and the author of "Peasants, Land, and Society: A Social History of Land Reform in Ethiopia", who has worked on Ethiopia since 1967, recently wrote that the states control over land property is used to keep peasants hostage to government authorities.[7] Chris Albin-Lackey, Sandler fellow at Human Rights Watch, has found that "control over fertilizer and

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* *A conservative Public Relations expert prepared this chronicle of the atrocities of Prime Minister Zenawi's regime and the deafening-silence of American and British governments. She is married to an Ethiopian and resides in Nevada. Her name is withheld to protect her husband's family members living under the grip of a terrorist state in Ethiopia. She acknowledges valuable assistance from her beloved husband, Mamo Qilo, and Ato Balderebaw. Both are pen names.*

agricultural inputs in general have given Meles's government a remarkably effective tool for quashing dissent in rural Ethiopia".[8]

Professor John Harbeson, Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace and the author of "The Ethiopian Transformation", notes that Mr. Zenawi's core constituency comes from his Tigrayan ethnic group representing only 10 percent of the population. The professor further asserts that Mr. Zenawi's authoritarian government is dependent on its "superior military muscle with too little regard for reconstructing the Ethiopian polity."[9] This is a view shared by all independent observers who are familiar with Ethiopian current politics. Jonathan Manthorpe, who has followed Mr. Zenawi since his time as a guerrilla fighter in the 1980s and through his 15 year reign as the Prime Minister of Ethiopia recently wrote for Vancouver Sun that Mr. Zenawi "has stayed in power for nearly 15 years by running a political machine that allows the minority Tigrayans to keep control of the eight primary ethnic groups that make up Ethiopia's 77.4 million people."[10]

Obviously, the interest of a 10 percent minority at the expense of a 90 percent majority cannot be peacefully enforced. Amnesty International's 2003 report gives a glimpse of the all too familiar atrocities of the Prime Minister's government to squash those who refuse to submit. "Police shot dead over 230 people and detained several hundred more in Oromia and the southern region in connection with peaceful demonstrations. Many human rights violations including torture, rape and extrajudicial execution were reported.[11] According to the Human Rights Watch the government justifies the use of brutal police force by "asserting that the police had no funds to purchase non-lethal crowd control equipment."[12]

Ethnic-based genocide is in the making in Ethiopia, but the world seems to ignore the cries of the Ethiopian people to avert an inevitable but avoidable humanitarian crisis. What is more scandalous is that unlike in Rwanda where the West played a passive role to avert an inevitable disaster, American and European taxpayers are financing the perpetrator of a looming humanitarian tragedy in Ethiopia, to the tune of U.S.$1.5 billion per annum.

Ana Gomez, a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) and the head of the European Union (EU) Election Observation Mission in Ethiopia, recently wrote an open letter to the EU member governments and Commission to help avert a humanitarian crisis. She opened her appeal by noting "Another bloodbath is

taking place in Ethiopia" and ended it by pleading with them to help "stop the killing of Ethiopians who dare to believe that democracy is possible in Ethiopia."[13] Reporters Without Borders suggests that "mediation by the office of the UN secretary-general" is the only hope "to halt Ethiopia's continuing disintegration in which the press is one of the victims." [14] Save the Children called upon the prime minister of Ethiopia to "save the children" from the current government sponsored violence that has not spared even the children and the young.[15] According to the UN Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) issue of December 28, 2005, one of the people that the government has charged with treason and genocide is 15 years old.[16] The 15 years old is among the 131 Ethiopians including the entire leadership of the main opposition coalition that are charged with "treason, inciting violence and planning to commit genocide."[17] Another defendant, 14, is undergoing a medical test to determine his age before he can be charged for the same offence.[18]

Linda Milani, a freelance writer and a human rights advocate recently wrote: "professors, engineers, journalists, artistes, lawyers, consultants, human rights activists and leaders of civic societies were formally charged Wednesday [December 21, 2005] with high treason, genocide and conspiracy to overthrow the government of Ethiopia. Leaders of the most popular party in Ethiopia, the Coalition for Unity and Democracy, were herded into a packed and tense courtroom. The list of the accused seems a celebrity roll whose crime was challenging Meles Zenawi, who is widely accused of rigging the May national elections and resorting to terrorism against his fellow countrymen."[19] Her statement echoes an earlier assertion by Professor George Ayittey, the author of several books on African political and economic crisis, and president of Free Africa Foundation, who labeled the Prime Minister "a state terrorist."[20]

## II. The May 2005 election and the current crisis

According to the European Election Observation Mission the general atmosphere of the May 2005 election was transparent and fair until the day of the election, despite some irregularities, including threats and intimidation against supporters of opposition parties and isolated cases of murder.[21] Some 90% of the 25 million registered voters participated in the historic election.[22] Masses of voters lined up in a pre-dawn chill at more than 30,000 polling stations before opening time at 6:00 am. Sisay Nega, a high-school teacher and an anxious voter said: "I've been here since 5:30 am and, as you can see, because the line is so huge that (three hours later), I am still far behind others."[23] Some

came from hospital wards on their wheelchairs with their life support hooked to their bodies. Others disrupted their wedding party to vote. "Although it is my wedding day, I don't want to miss the opportunity to vote," said Adane Abdi, quoted by Reuter's news agency.[24] Aljazeera reported that voters in the capital's Gullele sub-district cheered as a bride and groom, resplendent in wedding dress, arrived to vote.[25] "I am desperate to vote. That is why I am standing here. I am desperate to change," said Aregu Tesema, a small businessman patiently standing in a long queue, in an interview with People's Daily of China. [26]

The first sign of systematic and gross infringement of the democratic process started on the evening of May 15, when the government realized that the opposition had won all 23 seats in the capital city, where foreign observers witnessed the counting of the votes. Margrete Auken, Danish Member of the European Parliament and a member of the EU's Election Observation Mission to Ethiopia, said: "The problems started just after information on the poor result of the ruling party at the polls began to emerge. This provoked a massive crackdown by the authorities in an attempt to turn the situation around and keep power at any cost."[27] An American educated Economist and former Professor both in the US and Ethiopia, and the vice chairman of the main opposition, the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD), Berhanu Nega, told reporters that "In many places our poll watchers are being kicked out and we don't know who is counting the vote."[28] Professor Nega, an elected Mayor of Addis Ababa, is currently in prison charged with treason and genocide, and facing the death penalty.[29]

The Carter Center's May 16 post-election statement echoed the expressed concerns of the European Union election observers, regarding the post election vote rigging and the apparent lack of transparency by the National Election Board (NEB), whose head is appointed by Prime Minister Zenawi. The Carter Center that deployed 50 international observers from 17 countries, reported that "In places we have found evidence that ballot boxes have been moved improperly, were improperly secured, or that party agents were barred from polling stations or were not allowed to watch the entire count. Our observers have received, and in some cases have been able to confirm, reports of Election Day and post election intimidation and harassment. In some cases our observers report that NEB personnel have been slow to mobilize in investigating charges of electoral problems. In addition, in some of the areas visited in the post-election period, observers have experienced difficulty accessing information from local NEB officials."[30]

In a statement for the US Senate record, U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell noted that rather than a sentiment of accomplishment of a 90 percent turnout "the mood in Ethiopia remains nihilistically somber."[31] Rhonda Williams's commentary on Washington Times captures the episode quite succinctly. "When it became clear the presiding government had suffered an overwhelming loss to its opposition, the CUD, ballot counting stopped, the government proclaimed itself the winner, opposition was quelled with death or imprisonment. At present, thousands have been imprisoned for the unforgivable crime of wanting democracy."[32]

The opposition accused the government of vote rigging and appealed to the National Election Board. Unfortunately, the appeal process proved to be even more flawed than the vote counting procedure that was marred with irregularities. According to the head of the EU observation team, a climate of threats and intimidation was maintained throughout the complaints investigation process.[33] The EU report chided Ethiopia for flawed handling of complaints and re-runs of elections in some constituencies. Some witnesses to election fraud were unavailable because they were afraid, had been detained or in one case "an important witness was killed."[34]

In the interest of averting bloodshed, Ethiopia's two main opposition parties called on the ruling party to accept the formation of a unity government until new elections can be held. That is a proposal that Prime Minister Zenawi firmly rejected.[35]

## III. It is "all about milking the people," said a local political observer in Ethiopia

The Prime Minister is following in the footsteps of the former president of Congo, Mobutu Sese Seko, in running a Mafia type government holding the people hostage and extorting money from both the local public and the donor community. Sylvie Burnel's article, "The Cost of Corruption: How to Play the Aid Game" published in Le Monde Diplomatique, notes that the prime Minister even uses famine for political gain and economic profit. She recently wrote: "After three years of drought, humanitarian aid organizations have come to the rescue of the famine-stricken Ogaden in southeast Ethiopia. But this disaster has little to do with nature. Rather, the famine has been cynically staged with the aim of attracting maximum international aid and capturing votes."[36]

## IV. Accounts of "Transparent Corruption"

In its 2005 World Report, Transparency International, the international anti-graft watchdog, lists Ethiopia as one of the most corrupt African countries in the same general group as the likes of Nigeria, Somalia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.[37] Some of these are countries with failed states that are run by diamond smuggling warlords. Indian Ocean Newsletter makes clear that the Prime Minister's political party even has an Economic Affairs Department headed by Sebhat Nega, one of his trusted lieutenants and a founding member of the ruling party.[38]

Corruption in Ethiopia, like in the Mafia, is a family affair. The Indian Ocean Newsletter reports that "Other members of the prime minister's inner circle who have the reputation of having enjoyed unwarranted privileges include his brother Nikodimos Zenawi (a former government employee who has struck it rich), the Prime Minister's wife Azeb (known as Lemlem and former head of Mega Net, a firm which has benefited from untaxed imports), and Benyam Mesfin (son of the foreign minister and owner of a fleet of Scania trucks). According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, "Corruption in Ethiopia poses various problems for its business environment, as patronage networks are firmly entrenched and political clout is often used to gain economic prowess."[39]

A World Bank's report confirms that "political parties belonging to the [ruling party] have established companies which include banks and insurance companies."[40] The ruling party also runs other business conglomerates in construction, agriculture, transportation and import and export of key products. The World Bank report referenced above documents that "companies and NGOs with party affiliations receive preferential treatment for licenses and permits." The recommendation of the World Bank, however, is to "consider establishing a modest anti-corruption unit in the Prime Minister's office to deal with corruption." As a cynical African writer once opined, "what the heck, after all this is Africa where anything is possible and everything is permissible!" How else could one understand the recommendation of a leading international development bank advising the very prime minister who is engaged in grand corruption to set up "a modest anti-corruption unit" and place it under his office. It is no small wonder why the level and scope of corruption in the country is increasingly worsening. Transparency International's 2005 Global Report makes clear that corruption in Ethiopia has gotten worse.[41]

## V. Accounts of political repression and gross human rights violation

Professor Christopher Clapham, Editor of the Journal of Modern African Studies, and the author of several books on Africa is one of the experts that have been closely following the political development in Ethiopia for decades. His commentary on the Ethiopian political crisis gives a chilling account of the Awaasa massacre of May 2002. "Government forces opened fire with heavy machine guns on people peacefully demonstrating against a proposed change (pushed through without any consultation) in the status of the municipality of Awaasa. There was no apology or investigation, and local [party] officials who failed to support the government's action were dismissed." [42] Human Rights Watch confirms Professor Clapham's account by noting that police violence in Tepi and Awassa resulted in the deaths of more than one hundred civilians.[43]

On the pages of the Daily Telegraph, David Blair reports a first hand account of the government's brutality. So goes his first hand account: "Police came for Mr. Teshome Legesse, [a member of the opposition party who was voted as a city councilor in the May 2005 election], as he was having lunch with his family on Nov 1. When they beat him with rifle butts, his wife, Etenesh Yimmam, 46, became hysterical. They beat her with sticks, and then one of the police shot her twice. The man who killed Mrs. Etenesh received a shouted order from another officer: 'Just do it.' At that moment, he fired again, apparently aiming at the woman's son, bent over her body. He missed and wounded one of the family's neighbors. Then two officers fired in the air, dispersing the crowd, and the police left in a pick-up taking the dead woman's husband."[44] Mr. Raül Romeva, Member of the European Parliament, confirmed this horrific episode in his compelling plea to the European governments to help stop the carnage in Ethiopia.[45]

The Daily Telegraph of London described repression of the opposition and the media in Ethiopia as exceeding anything in the recent history of the continent of Africa, including that of Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and the apartheid era of South Africa.[46] The Telegraph notes that the best estimate for the total detained is 40,000, including boys of 15. Further more, it notes that Western diplomats have reports of executions at the remote malaria infested Dedesa camp and of a body being hung on the camp's gates. Ambassdor Tim Clark, the Head of the European Union Delegation in Ethiopia said, "We've been hearing from Dedesa camp about atrocities taking place. It is extremely worrying. We have not witnessed anything like this in Ethiopia before." [47]

As horrible as such accounts may be, they are the rule rather than the exception. Micha Odenheimer, a writer and rabbi based in Jerusalem, wrote on the pages of the Washington Post the following: "A French journalist I met on the street had seen army troops firing at the backs of retreating demonstrators."[48] He continued: "In the morning, in one of the thousands of dirt alleyways that form grids between Addis Ababa's broad avenues, I was led into a mud-brick home, where mourners wept and danced in a frenzy of sorrow. A 17-year-old named Tsegahun had been standing with friends in the alleyway at dusk the day before when soldiers arrived. One of the friends said, 'They called him over, told him to kneel down, and shot him twice in the midsection.'"

## VI. Suppression of the Free Press

In its report entitled, "Enemies of the Press," the Committee for Protection of Journalists (CPJ) lists Ethiopia as the fourth worst offender of the free press, surpassed only by China, Cuba, and Eritrea.[49] Many journalists and reporters are languishing in jail accused of treason, an offense punishable by death. Five Voice of America reporters are among the many reporters who face the possibility of execution by a firing squad. One of the accused said "usually our news is written by the VOA news division. We translate it and put it on the air."[50] Even translating a document is a crime punishable by death in Prime Minister Zenawi's Ethiopia.

## VII. Mr. Zenawi tells U.S. and EU governments "stop meddling and mind your business"

IRIN, a UN humanitarian news and information service, reported that Prime Minister Meles Zenawi described as "garbage" and "worse than a farce" an EU election report that raised doubts over the fairness of the country's recently concluded national polls.[51] In response to the EU's threat to cancel or scale back European aid to Ethiopia, the Prime Minister replied that his government will not be "patronized", reports the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. A subsequent futile effort by the major Western donors to end the worst political unrest got a humiliating rejection from the government. Reuters (November 6, 2005) reported that the Ethiopian government told EU and US policymakers "it is high time that they stopped meddling in [Ethiopia's] internal affairs and mind their business."[52]

## VIII. Donors Paradox

Charles Onyango-Obbo's study of donor action in Africa reveals a paradox: "The more dependent a country is on donor money, the less it responds to their pressure."[53] Onyango-Obbo, an Associate Editor of the Daily Nation in Nairobi, rightly notes that "in countries like Ethiopia and Uganda, donors are so entrenched essentially they become the state. It gets difficult to take action against the client regime, because the line between where the donors leave off and the recipient government begins is simply too blurred."

Ethiopia has been collecting on average U.S. $1.5 billion of aid per year for the last 14 years. The aid money is not only earmarked for humanitarian and development projects, but also to cover 33% of the government's annual budget, including cost of running the repressive state machinery.[54] Foreign aid amounts to 20% of Ethiopia's Gross Domestic Product per year, and the best the country has clocked is 5% growth per annum at best over the last 14 years.[55]

Prime Minister Zenawi is Ethiopia's tyrant that former American Presidents Clinton and Carter and the current Prime Minister of Great Britain Tony Blair regularly tout as "African Renaissance Man!" Mr. Zenawi is a member of Tony Blair's Commission for Africa that is supposedly established to chart the future of Africa. The Prime Minister is also the darling of the World Bank and the IMF. Charles Onyango-Obbo's observation provides a partial explanation of the all too often observed dramatic clash between the donor community's professed "dream of a world free of poverty and corruption" and their common practice of nurturing corrupt regimes.

In December 2005 the IMF rewarded Mr. Zenawi's government with yet another aid package in the amount of close to U.S. $1 billion in the form of debt relief, supposedly on the grounds that the country had met the preconditions for debt relief. A country needs to demonstrate a strong record of accomplishment of reform, sound policies and good governance to be eligible for debt relief. Other conditions include tackling corruption, boosting private sector development and eliminating impediments to private investment, both domestic and foreign.[56]

A month before IMF's announcement to forgive Ethiopia of its debt, the head of the World Bank mission in Ethiopia said, "We are in an unsustainable situation. We have to come to a resolution. We are at the heart of the crisis right now."[57] On the corruption front, weeks before the IMF decision, Transparency

International reported that corruption in Ethiopia has gotten worse since 2003.[58] The situation on the political front is even more frightening as documented by many international observers. Despite all the telltale signs of a looming disaster exacted by a corrupt, repressive and reckless government, in a sardonic irony of crime and nourishment, the IMF decided to reward the Ethiopian government.

## IX. Playing with Fire: A Repeat of Rwanda in the Making

All through his political life the Prime Minister has used Ethiopia's ethnic diversity as a political weapon to divide and rule. For students of Ethiopian politics it was no surprise that provoking ethnic discord was a part of the government's campaign rhetoric in the May 2005 election. In a pre-election televised interview that lasted for four hours, the Prime Minister warned voters of Rwanda-style bloodshed if they voted the opposition to office.[59] This was duly noted by the international observers and the head of the EU election observation was concerned enough to launch an official complaint to Ethiopia's National Election Board about what she characterized as unnecessarily provocative campaign rhetoric on the part of the government.[60]

EU's complaint did not sway the prime Minister to abandon ethnic politics. In an interview with Stephen Sackur of Hard Talk on July 4, 2005, the Prime Minister defended his government's crackdown of the public's protest against his government as a necessary action to avert a strife between different nationalities of Ethiopia that might "have made the Rwandan genocide look like child's play."[61] Days before Christmas the government took its ethnic politics to a dangerous level by charging the entire leadership of the main opposition party with "intent to cause physical and mental harm to the people of Tigray region."[62] In a rather sardonic twist of irony, some of the accused include people from Tigray region, the Prime Minister's home base.

## X. "Not in My Name!"

Only a minority of the people from Tigray region, who have fallen victim to the Prime Minister's hate-mongering propaganda campaign, support Prime Minister Meles's policy of ethnic division. Tigrayan Ethiopian critiques of Mr. Zenawi's ethnic politics are dealt with heavy hands. Not even the slightest sign of dissent is tolerated in the Tigray region. More and more Tigrayan Ethiopians are becoming vocal and condemning the atrocities carried out in their names. A Tigrayan Ethiopian wrote recently wrote a compelling article under the title

"Not in My Name!" His piece is posted on Solidaritytigarai.org, a website managed by a solidarity of Tigrayan Ethiopians, with 15 chapters in 15 countries around the world.[63]

The writer, who withheld his name for obvious reasons, wrote: "I am a Tigrean Ethiopian of considerable age and education. I have lived in Addis Ababa for almost 40 years and have passed though the terrible rule of the Dergue. I have seen the horrible Red Terror. But what one witnesses in Ethiopia these days is not different from that. In many instances it is more horrifying. I have never lost a peace of mind in my life as I have now because some of the crime is done in the name of the Tigrai people."

The writer Continues, "The sad part of the story is that [Meles and his few cliques] deliberately want to make it look like the CUD [the main opposition] is protesting against Tigreans. We know this is a lie. The CUD which they portray daily on TV and Radio as criminals are not the criminals they want to make them. I know most of the leaders of CUD who are now in prison. They are not the kind of people Meles wants to make them to be."

He goes on to say: "I have seen an old woman of 65 and her seventy-something-old husband beaten seriously when they were trying to save their grandson from being imprisoned. I have attended a meeting where Meles's cadres were telling that they are fighting for our (the Tigrean's) safety and telling us venomous propaganda. They even gave us complete false information that the opposition parties want to destroy us."

## XI. Mr. Zenawi Overplays the "War against Terror" Card

Prime Minister Meles is counting on the American and British unconditional support as long as Ethiopia is seen as a critical player in the global war against terrorism. Jonathan Manthorpe of the Vancouver Sun notes "The rulers in the [horn of Africa] region have quickly appreciated their new leverage with Washington. Washington is keeping substantial relations with the government of former Marxist Meles Zenawi in Ethiopia, but at a heavy ideological price. Meles's regime has taken a violently autocratic turn and Washington has been left mumbling about the need for moderation."[64]

Obviously, American and British policymakers timid, if any, actions have emboldened the Prime Minister and encouraged him to refuse a negotiated settlement, despite the oppositions call for a joint government until a new

election is organized within two years.[65] To the contrary, he has stepped up his repression and charged 131 political figures, human rights monitors, members of the free press with genocide and treason. Some of the accused and charged for genocide are American and European citizens.

In a letter to Dr. Condoleezza Rice, U.S. Congressman Charles Rangle called upon the Bush Administration to take a firm stand against the government of Ethiopia. The Congressman wrote: "While the United States and British Ambassador each called up on both political parties to desist from further violence, it is quite clear from the [Voice of America] dispatch that the unlawful and violent acts, including use of lethal force, random searches, indiscriminate beating and massive arrests by the government forces security forces are being committed by the government of Ethiopia."[66] The letter stressed that it is unacceptable for a country to engage in gross human rights violations "only because it pledges assistance to the war on terror." A similar letter calling for a firm stand was written by U.S. Congressman Major R. Owens and addressed to Dr. Rice. The Congressman urged Dr. Rice "to clearly state to the Ethiopian government that their abuse of its citizenry is not to be tolerated and that sanctions would be imposed upon them without marked improvement regarding this situation."[67]

In a similar tone, and even with stronger language, Raül Romeva, member of the European Parliament, said it best when he told the Eurpoean Parliament that it is disgraceful that European governments have failed to publicly condemn the atrocities in Ethiopia. Mr. Romeva noted for the record "Instead of isolating the Ethiopian Prime Minister, Europe's leaders are sending counter productive messages. Tony Blair invited him to Gleneagles in July and the German President invited him to Bonn last week. This is tantamount to offering him immunity."[68]

The European Union has since taken a strong action condemning the use of disproportionate means of repression by the armed forces and adopting a resolution for the immediate establishment of an independent international commission of inquiry, optimally under UN responsibility, to investigate the human rights abuses and to identify and bring to justice those responsible. The EU resolution also calls on the Commission and the Council to consider targeted sanctions against members of the Ethiopian Government if the current human rights situation is not significantly improved.[69] The American government, on the other hand, is staying tight-lipped when it comes to criticizing the government and taking action.

## XII. The Moral Fallacy in Mr. Bush's and Mr. Blair's War Against Terrorism

In his second inauguration, President Bush espoused to the world "Today, America speaks anew to the peoples of the world: All who live in tyranny and hopelessness can know: the United States will not ignore your oppression, or excuse your oppressors. When you stand for your liberty, we will stand with you. Democratic reformers facing repression, prison, or exile can know: America sees you for who you are: the future leaders of your free country."[70] These words lifted and inspired in vain the spirits of all people around the world, including Ethiopians, who are living under the terror of their oppressors.

As the leader of the sole Super Power, President Bush, in consultation with Prime Minister Tony Blair, also outlined a vision that had the moral and strategic clarity necessary to win the war on terror. At the core of the strategy to defeat terrorism resided a moral truth that democracy grounded on the rule of law is the pillar of freedom and wining the fight against terrorism requires planting the seeds of freedom through democratic reforms.

The poor of the world were enthralled to see a deeply religious leader of the sole global super power taking the altars of the world's most revered freedom castle and giving his solemn promise that America will carry its responsibilities with a sense of justice and honor, paying with both the sweat and blood of its courageous people. Indeed, Iraq and Kuwait are but only two recent examples of America's resolve to right a wrong.

The question Ethiopians are now asking is the following: Will America apply its moral principles and its doctrines of democracy consistently as it did in Iraq, the Ukraine and Georgia, or should poor countries such as Ethiopia not apply? Ethiopians are asking this question because they believe that President Bush's moral clarity seems unclear when it comes to poor African countries such as Ethiopia. Is it fair that 70 million poor souls in Ethiopia are left to live under the terror of a repressive regime in the interest of advancing the war against global terrorism? Can America win the war on terror when its policy and strategy are

devoid of the very principles upon which the moral basis of the war on terror rests?

## XIII. History Will Judge President Bush and Prime Minister Blair

Ethiopia, with more than 70 million people, has become a prison camp while President Bush's and Prime Minister Blair's Administrations have turned a blind eye. Mike Clough, Africa Advocacy Director for Human Rights Watch and formerly an expert on US Africa policy for over three decade, rang an alarm bell when he drew a parallel between Prime Minister Zenawi and Mobutu Sese Seko. "It would not be the first time Africans died because U.S. policymakers failed to recognize the dangers of backing a ruthless, doomed regime. In the former Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the U.S. supported former President Mobutu Sese Seko's tyrannical rule almost to its bitter end — and more than 2 million people died in the internal wars that followed. In Liberia, the U.S. looked the other way as Samuel Doe, an illiterate thug without popular support, brutalized his population and stole the 1985 election — and tens of thousands subsequently died. Ethiopia is not yet Zaire or Liberia, but the situation is dangerous. If the Bush administration continues to bet on [Prime Minister Meles of Ethiopia], it shouldn't forget that the lives of millions of Africans were lost in the Congo, Liberia and Sudan because of similar misjudgments."[71]

History may judge President Clinton for not intervening sooner to stop the genocide in Rwanda that claimed the lives of 800,000 people in less than a year. History will judge President Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair even harsher for their continued support to Prime Minister Meles who is leading a country of 70 million into a humanitarian disaster. Ethiopia has over eight major Ethnic groups compared to Rwanda's two. Ethiopia's population is nine times more than that of Rwanda. The consequences of ethnic warfare in Ethiopia would make the Rwandan Genocide look like "a child's play," to quote Prime Minister Zenawi, whom his people call the "butcher of Addis."

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