

ETHNIC ADMINISTRATION IN ETHIOPIA WHAT FUTURE DOES IT HOLD?

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PART EIGHT

Before discussing ethnic administration and its consequence it would be useful to define what we mean by ethnicity or ethnic? According to Wikipedia ethnicity is socially defined category of people who identify themselves with each other, based on common ancestral, origin, history, homeland, language, dialect, and sometimes Ideology... manifesting itself through symbolic systems such as religion, mythology, ritual, cousin, dressing, physical appearance etc.

Arend Lijphart who carried out various studies on ethnicity or ethnic rule tells us that if ethnic rule is to prevail peacefully, there must be successful political accommodation of diverse ethnic groups in society.... whereby tangible benefit can be achieved through recognition and devising appropriate institution for accommodation and power sharing within in the boundaries of the nation state. There are others who say that nations should instead enforce political legal equality of all ethnicities and that, resources and political power should be distributed to all ethnic regions equally. if you do allow ethnic divisions to grow there is a strong possibility that it could radicalize people and lead to ethnic problems and at an extreme, ethnic cleansing. This has happen in the past and will keep on happening in the future. Thus if any government adopts the policy of ethnic administration the consequence are therefore, instead of believing in shared values, ethnicity would definitely lead to a secluded community clinging to its own ethnic identity.

Presently Ethiopia is ruled by the Tigreyan ethnic minority but they want us to be believe it is a unity government, governed by all ethnic groups, who administer their regions according to the interest and needs of local population. Of course it is true they have set up multi party system of different ethnic groups in the regions, but it is a facade. Because it is the ruling ethnic party, the Tigreyans who are in complete control of the country and have a population of only 4-5 million people. While the two largest ethnic groups are the Oromos with 30 million and the Amharas with 25 million who dominated Ethiopian politics for decades in the past while the rest of the other smaller ethnic groups are watching Ethiopian politics helplessly and it is obvious the Tigreyan ethnic minority are the once who have the final decision on the destiny of Ethiopia at present. Even the so called ethnic leaders of the multi party system are being used as vehicles to promote the interest of the minority government and nothing else.

It is quite interesting to note that even during the historic period of the autocratic Ethiopian emperor-- ethnic rule was forbidden. However the Emperors legacy ended when Norther Ethiopia was dogged down by a famine in 1973 which exposed the rule of the emperor and he was deposed by a notorious blood thirsty Marxist Leninist military Junta called the Derg in 1974. Again during the reign of the Derg era its ruler Mengistu Hailemariam never allowed ethnic rule Ethiopia. However in order to stay in power he terrorized his opponents not using ethnic rule but using other tactics to cling to power and bring the country into fear and submission using cruel tactics by suppressing the population. To prove his cruelty to his country men and women Mengistu quickly got rid of the previous administration's cabinet ministers by either arresting them putting them in jail with out any trail or having them killed out right. For instance Mengistu shot dead more than 60 members of the emperors ministers by firing squad for fear that they could in turn kill him. The emperor himself was not spared, he was in fact suffocated at Mengistu's orders and his body was buried under his office toilets in Addis Abbeba. His main objective was to wipe out all traces of the emperor and his followers. Mengistu also aimed to wipe out his enemies using the feared policy of

what was then called the Red Terror using arbitrary execution, lynchings and street massacres. He managed to terrorized the people of Ethiopia and Eritrea. Again his rule never introduced ethnic rule as a policy and his main administrative policy has always been Ethiopia Tikdem or Ethiopia first and anything else later. In today's Ethiopia, the ethnic minority government's cynical policy of war of terror which primarily promotes the interest of the United States in maintaining a Drone base inside Ethiopia to kill and maim its opponents like Al Shebab in Somalia or AlQaida in the Arabian peninsula. The minority government is also taking advantage of the War on Terror to its own benefit in black mailing its opponent using terror laws to suppress or weaken them inside or outside the country.

So the previous two administrations, the Emperor and the Derg, never used Ethnic administration during their rule in Ethiopia but they had their shortcoming that some regions were under represented in so many ways. For instance the people of Tigray in Northern Ethiopia were denied economic and educational opportunities, the region was systematically starved of any investment, the region was the most impoverished, frequently affected by famine and drought, power was mainly in the hands of the ruling Amhara elites. To add salt to the wound, the Derg also used to mock the Tigreans in saying that the only thing they own was one Grinding Milling machine. To prove his heartlessness and determination to crush his enemies, he bombed the Tigrean town of Hawzien in January 1988 using Ethiopian Air force fighter Jets targeting and maiming civilian population in an open market killing more than 200 people. The resentment against Mengistu soared that the Tigreans felt humiliated, burdened, maimed, killed with out any justification. Then they rebelled against their central governments by actively pursuing their armed struggle for some kind of self rule against the two regimes for their political and human rights.

As a result they speed up their armed struggle cooperating with the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF). Therefore we, the Eritreans and the Tigrean Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF), cooperated militarily together and brought down the dictatorship of Mengistu Hailemariam in 1991. This happened so quickly that once Eritreans was liberated from any Ethiopian rule, the Eritrean Tank brigade moved swiftly towards Ethiopia to help our then comrades in arms who quickly took control of the Ethiopian capital and deposed the crazy dictator. Immediately afterwards the Tigrean were firmly enthroned to seize power in Addis Abbaba with the help of us.. Eritreans. Once they are firmly in full control of Ethiopia the present minority government of Ethiopia introduced the so called ethnic federalism with aim of reducing conflicts, and giving powers to the regions. However power is firmly embedded in the hands of the Tigrean minority government especially economic, military, financial institutions at least for the moment.

The thinking behind their philosophy of ethnic federalism is to promote the interest of the ethnic groups by providing them significant powers to run their regions by themselves. Ethiopia is now ruled by EPRDF a coalition of liberation movement leaders and other ethnic groups, but evidence show that the TPLF are the most single and important decision making body in Ethiopia. They have veto power on any legislation they want to implement, they can declare war on their enemies and pass legislation at their Parliament. And the hidden agenda is to stay in office as long as possible. After all the ethnic chiefs selected by the central government in Ethiopia to administer the regions will have no choice but to toe the line of the minority leadership or loose power. It should also be noted that the population of Ethiopia is 75-80 million and the Tigreans are between 4-5 million, this simply means the Tigreans represent almost 5-6 % of the Ethiopian population while the rest 94% the majority are governed by that minority.

The biggest ethnic group in Ethiopia are the Oromos, followed by the Amharas and the rest of other ethnic communities. The arithmetic tells us that if the Tigreans represent only 6% of the population, one may ask why would they, the minority Tigreans have control of the whole country? Of course the ruling party would like us to believe that power has been extended to

regions using ethnic policy, but as you can see from the list below, all the names listed in high strategic posts are Tigreyans and have the strangle hold of power in Ethiopia whether the Amhara or the Oromos like it or not. That the Tigreyans are in complete control of the 90% of the top posts in Ethiopia, be it Economic, Military, Foreign office and the entire command and control center of the nations armed forces are all Tigreyans. At times they may put people of different ethnic groups in a good position as a gesture of politics but their deputies are definitely Tigreyan to keep an eye on them and the list below is testimony that power is firmly in the hands of the Tigreyan minority of Northern Ethiopia.

Current Ethiopian Army by Ethnic Tigrean officers

High Ranking Military Officials Principal Defense Departments (Woyane)

No	Job Division	Name & Rank	Ethnic Group
1	Armed Forces Chief-of-Staff	General Smora Yenus	Tigre
2	Armed Forces Head of Training	Lt.General Tadesse Worde	Tigre
3	Head of Logistics	Lt.General Gezae Abera	Tigre
4	Head of Intelligence	Br. General Gebre Dela	Tigre
5	Armed Forces Head of Campaign	Major General Gebreegzher	Tigre
6	Armed Forces Head of Engineering	Lt.General Berhane Negash	Tigre
7	Chief of the Air Force	Chief of the Air Force	Tigre

Heads of the Nation's four Military Commands (Woyane)

No	Job Division	Name & Rank	Ethnic Group
1	Central Command	General Abebaw Tadesse	Agew
2	Northern Command	Lt.General Saere Mekonene	Tigre
3	South Eastern Command	Lt.General Abraha Wolde	Tigre
4	Western Command	Br. General Seyoum Hagos	Tigre

Army Divisional Commanders (Woyane)

Central Command (Woyane)

No	Job Division	Name & Rank	Ethnic Group
1	31st Army Division	Colonel Tsegaye Marx	Tigre
2	33rd Army Division	Colonel Kidane	Tigre
3	35th Army Division	Colonel Misganaw Alemu	Tigre
4	24th Army Division	Colonel Work Aynu	Tigre
5	22nd Army Division	Colonel Dikul	Tigre
6	8th Mechanized Division	Colonel Jamal Mohammed	Tigre

Northern Command (Woyane)

No	Job Division	Name & Rank	Ethnic Group
1	14st Army Division	Colonel Wodi Antiru	Tigre
2	21st Army Division	Colonel Gueshi Gebre	Tigre

3	11th Army Division	Colonel Workidu	Tigre
4	25th Army Division	Colonel Tesfay Sahiel	Tigre
5	22nd Army Division	Colonel Teklay Klashin	Tigre
6	4th Mechanized Division	Colonel Hinsaw Giorgis	Tigre

South Eastern Command (Woyane)

No	Job Division	Name & Rank	Ethnic Group
1	19st Army Division	Colonel Wodi Guaae	Tigre
2	44st Army Division	Colonel Zewdu Tefera	Tigre
3	13th Army Division	Colonel Sherifo	Tigre
4	12th Army Division	Colonel Mulugeta Berhe	Tigre
5	32nd Army Division	Colonel Abraha Tselim	Tigre
6	6th Mechanized Division	Colonel G/Medhin Fekede	Tigre

Western Command (Woyane)

No	Job Division	Name & Rank	Ethnic Group
1	23rd Army Division	Colonel Wolde Belalom	Tigre
2	43rd Army Division	Colonel Wodi Abate	Tigre
3	26th Army Division	Colonel Mebrahtu	Tigre
4	7th Mechanized Division	Colonel Gebre Mariam	Tigre

Commanders in Different Defense Departments (Woyane)

No	Job Division	Name & Rank	Ethnic Group
1	Agazi Commando Division	B.General Mohammed Esha	Tigre
2	Addis Ababa & Surrounding Area Guard	Colonel Zenebe Amare	Tigre
3	Palace Guard	Colonel Gerensay	Tigre
4	Banking Guard	Colonel Hawaz Woldu	Tigre
5	Engineering College	Colonel Halefom Eggigu	Tigre
6	Military Health Science	B.General Tesfay Gidey	Tigre
7	Mulugeta Buli Technical College	Colonel Meleya Amare	Tigre
8	Resource Management College	Colonel Letay	Tigre
9	Siftana Command College	B.General Moges Haile	Tigre
10	Blaten Military Training Center	Colonel Salih Berihu	Tigre
11	Wourso Military Training Center	Colonel Negash Heluf	Tigre
12	Awash Arba Military Training Center	Colonel Muze	Tigre
13	Birr Valley Military Training Center	Colonel Negassie Shikortet	Tigre
14	Defense Administration Department	B.General Mehari Zewde	Tigre
15	Defense Aviation	B.General Kife Dagnev	Tigre
16	Defense Research and Study	B.General Halefom Chento	Tigre
17	Defense Justice Department	Colonel Askale	Tigre

18	Secretary of the Chief-of-Staff	Colonel Tsehay Manjus	Tigre
19	Indoctrination Center	B.General Akale Asaye	Amhara
20	Communications Department	Colonel Sebbhat	Tigre
21	Foreign Relations Department	Colonel Hassene	Tigre
22	Special Forces Coordination Department	B.General Fisseha Manjus	Tigre
23	Operations Department	Colonel Wodi Tewk	Tigre
24	Planning, Readiness and Programming Department	Colonel Teklay Ashebir	Tigre
25	Defense Industries Coordination Department	Colonel Wodi Negash	Tigre
26	Defense Finance Department	Colonel Zewdu	Tigre
27	Defense Purchasing Department	Colonel Gedey	Tigre
28	Defense Budget Department	Ato/Mr. Berhane	Tigre

More over the present rulers of Ethiopia claim to share power with the other ethnic groups, it is a smoke screen to hide their rule as a minority. We all know power is still in the hands of the Tigrean minority, because all the military financial, economic institution are tightly in their hands, they are in the driving seat and they are the ones who are guiding Ethiopia. They select leaders to run ethnic regions the way the Tigreans want it to be managed and as Berhanu Balcha, an Ethiopian academic put it, the main reason for the Minority government of Ethiopia to excessively empower ethnic groups is simply to co opt elites from various ethnic groups who have not made an effective resistance against the dominance of the Tigrean elites in the Ethiopian state. In other words the academic said it very clear that the minority government has not been honest in implementing genuine ethnic federalism because real power is still exercised by them.

Finally, as they say, what goes up must come down, the minority government of Ethiopia has gone up and up and the sky has been the limit. It is quite strange that the minority government seem to be believing its own propaganda that at least for the moment. The fact of the matter is that ethnic rule is divisive and so far they have managed to buy off a lot of people, nevertheless many are not happy and one day there will be ethnic conflict in Ethiopia. Of course it may not be on the scale of other African countries, but there is an ethnic time bomb waiting to explode after their 24th May election so long as the minority government are ruling over the majority. So the view from many people that I have spoken is that the minority government has over stayed its welcome and they say there will be an avalanche of spontaneous revolution starting from the epicenter of Addis spreading to other towns in Ethiopia and it will have significant spill over for the rest of country.

In short Ethiopia may face what Egypt faced that, Mubarak ruled Egypt with a tight grip for almost 30 years and was ousted in February 2011 by a volcano of human eruption. So what future does it hold for the minority government and the rest of Ethiopia. My personal view is that ethnic rule is doomed to fail and the future would definitely looks very bleak, because the minority government in Ethiopia would end up falling from power like its predecessors and the future for Ethiopia and especially for the people of Tigreans after 24th of may election of 2015 remains bleak and it will certainly lead into post electoral violence. In which Minority governments property and business will be at risk.

**PART NINE TO FOLLOW
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