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Guarding our Economy & Sovereignty from Untenable “Democratic Capitalism”

by

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As this world becomes ‘smaller’ by venue of political and economic globalization, the tendency of powerful states to encroach on the sovereignty of weaker states for economic reason will become profoundly apparent. Globalization of the kind that we’re now familiar with is not that new a phenomenon. Instead, it is the same old asymmetric international economic relationship that continues to reign over the world since the nineteenth century. This time though, instead of a brutal colonial force by mighty states, tighter subordination of weaker states to the dictates of capitalist enterprise is done by aptly exploiting diplomacy, trade, and the love that the majority people of the world have for democracy.

This seemingly new yet very familiar international economic relationship has impacted Ethiopia and other sovereign states to become the signatory of new trade agreements, climate accords, a military coalition of some kind, **and most importantly, a democratization process of the kind that the so called Western nations envision for the rest of the entire world.**

The Western notion of democratization has been coupled with the economic ideology of capitalism for sometime, and it’s now called “Democratic Capitalism” by some, including former President George W. Bush of the U.S. This utterly oxymoronic phrase is coined by strong adherents or subscribers of classical capitalism and its ultimate importance if any is to access the resources of many poor nations and their markets without restraint; all of it, in the name of democracy, diplomacy, and trade based on market liberalization. In effect, “Democratic Capitalism” is now the modern tool utilized to coerce weaker states to form a “democratic system of governance” that is primarily amenable to the broad interest of a capitalist nature.

No tangible element in the nature of capitalism is democratic and free. Capitalism is a costly economic ideology that has shown to be untenable as its singular intent to profit becomes greed, consequently creating great mass of poor and propertyless laborers. Even those subscribers of capitalism in its rawest form are now admitting to the fact that, unrestrained and unmodified, capitalism is a system of equity based on unfair, immoral, and unsustainable wealth distribution.

According to World Bank (Economic Outlook 2000), capitalism has created immense global poverty. Since 1980, the number of people living on less than \$2 per day has risen by almost 50% to 2.8 billion---almost half of the world’s population. A report from Christian Aid shows that between 1960 and 1997 the gap

between the poorest and the richest 20% respectively more than doubled. The top 20% rich had 86% the world's wealth, while the lowest twenty percent had just 1%. Not only that, **capitalism has created an utterly shocking fact, that, the world's three wealthiest billionaires have now accumulated more than that of the GNP of all the Least Developed Countries and their 600 million people.**

Countering this protracted trend of unsustainable, unfair, and immoral means of distributing common resources, countries like Ethiopia are willing to experiment with a system of governance a bit eschewed from "Democratic Capitalism." This, it should be noted, without the blessing of some powerful Western nations. As a result, a new kind of conflict has emerged; and normally, the emergence of such a benign conflict in economic and political philosophy would not alarm Western powers to assemble their forces and campaign, for example, to engage the Revolutionary Democrats of Ethiopia with brute force. Instead, unhappy Western powers search for alternative organized political groups endowed with compatible economic and political vision as theirs'. These type of political groups are wanted by Western powers for they're willing adherers to keep the status quo asymmetric international economic relationship as is. It is partly for this reason then that, some powerful Western nations as it relates to Ethiopia are supporting and harboring terrorist organizations (Ginbot 7, OLF, & ONLF), so long as these terrorist organizations have a friendly political and economic vision that caters to their own interest.

The upcoming 2010 Parliamentary Election of Ethiopia will present a choice between candidates who represent two contradictory and yet competing ideas for Ethiopia's future. Ethiopians will vote either for the same old "Democratic Capitalism" that has proven to be untenable or for the new avenue of Revolutionary Democracy that Ethiopia is diligently experimenting with.

The Ethiopian experiment is not based on rejecting the mechanics of capitalism, but rather, on amending its major flaws to make it harmonious with the reality of Ethiopia as it relates to the overall social, economic, and political development. Political and economic development is a social activity with no intermittent historical period. For this reason, the process of democratization and economic development will be continuous, and, prevailing ideas will shape this process as it travels through a historical path. Each and every historical path has its own unique characteristics, and Ethiopia, by virtue of its own unique historical givens, requires a uniquely fitting idea to come out of the dark ages once and for all. For such change to happen, the world-view of the gallant Ethiopian Revolutionary Democrats has become one of the competing ideas, and, it stands to contend that **unrefined** "Democratic Capitalism" is not such a desirable avenue for Ethiopia's political and economic development.

At the heart of "Democratic Capitalism" stands the insanely pronounced "I" that signifies the radical individual as if he/she alone creates what is good for the whole. This false doctrine not only violates the most familiar and common perception that we as human beings have, but also clashes against the deep-seated social understanding of the generation that fought tooth and nail to liberate Ethiopia from a sadistic fascist regime. During the years of struggle, "I" has a place so

insignificant; living it calls for rebuke more often than any other misdeed by a comrade-in-arms.

For the Revolutionary Democrats of Ethiopia who fought tooth and nail to liberate Ethiopia from a sadistic fascist regime, the word “we” comes as natural as it should and it is not rehearsed, created, but it is what they have lived. In fact, “we” is not the creation of a group or a mantra of a specific people, but it is what is lived by us, human-beings, by virtue of our common lives. As Aristotle poignantly puts it some twenty three centuries ago, outside organized society, only beasts or gods can dwell. We humans are not that isolated breathing souls as “Democratic Capitalism” depicts us to be--each of us calculating our own personal gain for the greater good. It’s the other way around, and amending this specific major flaw of “Democratic Capitalism” is essential, since political and economic development is a social activity that is shared commonly.

Exaggerated individualism of the kind portrayed in the false doctrine of “Democratic Capitalism,” leads to inevitable costly errors. The “I” doctrine views ownership of wealth as unrelated to social life, and as if it’s acquirable in some fictional private space behind society’s back. Quite to the contrary, wealth is always produced through human co-operation and no known produced wealth would have been tangible without social interdependence and common efforts.

A faulty doctrine about ownership is what creates the great divide between the haves and the have-nots. To claim sole ownership of a product created by the involvement of many is as absurd as it gets, but to assert a private ownership right on a social asset naturally and commonly held by all, is by far a folly and a costly economic ideology of “Democratic Capitalism” that should be amended. It is for this reason that, the struggle to keep land as socially owned asset common to all Ethiopians, for example, is not just a struggle by mere coincidence but by a desire to amend the major flaw of “Democratic Capitalism;” so that, the future Ethiopians will not wakeup in the mist of a conflict to resolve ownership rights of their own naturally given land. It’s therefore incumbent upon us Ethiopians, to guard our economy and sovereignty from untenable “Democratic Capitalism,” so that, our inevitable economic development should not lead us to the greater divide in wealth.