

Ethnocentric bunches and political opportunism

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The recent news of the remarriage between the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Prosperity Party (OPP) in Ethiopia has sparked both surprise and concern among political observers. This unexpected reunion of former adversaries underscores Ethiopian politics' intricate and often turbulent nature, a labyrinth of alliances formed and dissolved based on shifting interests and perceived threats. This paper will delve into the complexities behind this remarriage, examining the historical context, ideological motivations, and implications for the Ethiopian nation, particularly the Tigray people and the Amhara community.

Historical Context

To better understand the reasons behind the TPLF and OPP reunion, examining the historical context of ethno-nationalist organizations' political philosophies is essential. Over the last five decades, Ethiopian politics has been influenced by ethnic nationalist groups, with the TPLF occupying a pivotal position. The TPLF played a crucial role in toppling the military dictatorship in 1991, which resulted in the formation of the EPRDF coalition government. Nevertheless, there were underlying tensions within the coalition, namely between the TPLF and its previous allies, the ANDM/OPDO elites, who perceived themselves as being marginalized due to the dominant position of the TPLF.

Over the years, these tensions escalated, culminating in the eruption of violent conflicts, including the Ethio-Eritrean War and internal strife between the TPLF-led government and opposition forces. The TPLF's dominance began to wane following the death of Meles Zenawi in 2012, paving the way for the rise of Abiy Ahmed and the formation of the Prosperity Party in 2019. The OPP initially presented itself as a unifying force, promising to transcend ethnic divisions and usher in a new era of prosperity for all Ethiopians. That was a fake move. Abiy Ahmed plans to rally people around him and his newly created organization which is Oromo centric organization.

Remarriage of Convenience:

Despite their bitter history and deep-seated power based political differences, the TPLF and OPP have found common ground in opposing what they perceive as a shared enemy—the Ethiopian nation and the Amhara people. These power mongering differences, rooted in their respective visions for Ethiopia's future, have been a significant source of tension and conflict in the past. Nevertheless, the marriage of convenience reflects the pragmatic nature of Ethiopian politics, where alliances are forged based on perceived threats rather than ideological coherence.

The closed-door negotiations between the TPLF and OPP may have surprised many. Still, for seasoned observers of Ethiopian politics, it was merely a matter of time before these two antagonists realigned their interests. The absence of public justification for the loss of over a million lives during the TPLF-led government's tenure is a testament to the impunity with which political elites operate in Ethiopia. Both the TPLF and OPP have failed to take responsibility for their role in perpetuating violence and instability, further eroding public trust in the political system. Much of the public trust lived in Tigray, where the TPLF held sway as the sole owner of the state and its people. Shamefully, the Tigrian intelligentsia, still adhering to the principles of this technofascist organization established in 1967, propagate hate against the people of Amhara and the Ethiopian state.

The Tigray region has long been considered the stronghold of the TPLF, with its influence permeating all aspects of society, including the intellectual sphere. The Tigrian intelligentsia, often viewed as the custodians of TPLF ideology, have played a crucial role in shaping public discourse and maintaining support for the party's agenda. Despite mounting evidence of human rights abuses and atrocities committed by the TPLF, many Tigrian intellectuals have remained steadfast in their allegiance to the party, refusing to acknowledge its guilt or engage in critical self-reflection.

This unquestioning loyalty to the TPLF has not only perpetuated division and hatred between ethnic groups but has also hindered efforts to foster genuine reconciliation and peace in Ethiopia. By demonizing the Amhara people and vilifying the Ethiopian state, the Tigrian intelligentsia have contributed to the perpetuation of ethnic tensions and conflict, further destabilizing an already fragile political landscape. Instead of promoting dialogue and understanding, they have chosen to

propagate a narrative of victimhood and martyrdom, exacerbating mistrust and resentment among different ethnic communities.

Moreover, the Tigrian intelligentsia's complicity in perpetuating TPLF's authoritarian rule has stifled dissent and marginalized voices of opposition within Tigray. By monopolizing political power and silencing dissenting voices, the TPLF has effectively quashed any semblance of political pluralism and democratic accountability in the region. This suppression of dissent not only undermines the principles of democracy but also perpetuates a culture of fear and repression, where individuals are afraid to speak out against injustice for fear of retaliation.

Given these challenges, the Tigrian intelligentsia must reassess their allegiance to the TPLF and embrace a more inclusive and pluralistic vision for Ethiopia. Instead of perpetuating division and hostility, they should promote dialogue, reconciliation, and mutual understanding among all ethnic groups. By transcending narrow ethnic loyalties and embracing a shared vision of peace and prosperity, the Tigrian intelligentsia can play a pivotal role in charting a new course for Ethiopia characterized by unity, tolerance, and respect for human rights.

Implications for the Tigray People:

The remarriage between the TPLF and OPP has far-reaching implications for the Tigray people, who have been the most affected by the region's recent conflict and humanitarian crisis. The loss of over a million lives, countless displacements, and infrastructure devastation have left the Tigray people in a precarious position, a position of unimaginable suffering. They are caught between two political forces, prioritizing their interests over the populace's well-being.

Moreover, the TPLF leadership's betrayal of Tigray elite highlights the internal fractures within the Tigray community. Forced to embrace the emergence of the TPLF and OPP alliance, Tigray intellectuals find themselves in a precarious position, unable to voice opposition or support for fear of reprisal. The lack of transparency and accountability within the TPLF leadership further undermines trust and cohesion within the Tigray community, leaving many disillusioned and disaffected. The recent developments concerning the reunification and the closed-door negotiations between the (TPLF) and (OPP) came in the wake of a devastating conflict in Ethiopia, which led to a tragic loss of life among the Tigrayan population. These discussions are prompted

by concerns within these ethnic-centric organizations about the rise of armed resistance among the Amhara people, a reaction to what they perceive as acts of aggression.

The backdrop to this situation includes the historical context of the Fano resistance and the Amhara militancy. The current Fano resistance emerged to answer events involving ethnic cleansing and mass genocide of the Amhara people in regions such as Wollega, Shashemene, Woleqait, and even Addis Ababa. These atrocities have left a lasting impact, contributing to the complex web of ethnic tensions and grievances that continue to influence the political landscape of future Ethiopia.

As the TPLF and OPP work towards reunification, their actions are primarily aimed at preserving the system of ethnic divisions they established over three decades ago. This system complicates efforts to achieve peace and unity within Ethiopia. For the country to move forward, other Ethiopian groups must support and align with the Amhara Fano, a key faction advocating national unity. The survival of Ethiopia depends on the solidarity and support for the Fano, underscoring its pivotal role in the nation's future.

Conclusion:

The recent reunification efforts between the TPLF and OPP underscore the volatile and unpredictable nature of Ethiopian politics. While this alliance may meet the immediate needs of these parties, it does so at the expense of broader national cohesion and continues to exacerbate the suffering of the Tigrayan intellectuals, who remain victims of political opportunism and a lack of accountability. Their plight should not be overlooked in the pursuit of political stability.

However, amidst these challenges, there is a beacon of hope. The Ethiopian people must urgently embrace a new approach that includes radical socioeconomic and political change. This would involve establishing a transitional government equipped with transitional justice measures, paving the way for open dialogue, meaningful reconciliation, and substantial reforms.

By addressing the underlying causes of conflict and focusing on creating an inclusive and equitable framework for all, Ethiopia can forge a unified and stable future. This approach promises not only to heal divisions but also to build a resilient society that can thrive, reflecting the diverse and rich tapestry of all its people. Such efforts could indeed pave the way for a brighter and more hopeful future for Ethiopia.