

ETHIOPIA AIN'T TENTH DISTRICT!

The good congressman from New Jersey, Donald M Payne seems to have been obsessed with HR2003. So much so, that the congressman has opted, it looks, for a legacy associated with HR2003.

Ladies and gentlemen, what other sensible explanation could there be when all we hear from Mr. Payne's office is nothing, but a legislation that puts an ally and a sovereign nation, Ethiopia on notice. His crusade begun as soon as the Democratic Party took over the two houses in the mid-term election.

First of all, may I remind the congressman that the Democratic Party won the mid-term election with a clear mandate to tackle the Iraq issue head-on and bring back the troops home. In my opinion, had it not been for the Iraq war, the ascendancy of Mr. Payne to the chairmanship of Africa subcommittee was not possible. Given this fact, I find it difficult to comprehend why the good congressman miserably failed to execute his duty and instead wasted all his time & energy charting how to micro-manage the Ethiopian affairs.

Mr. Congressman, why are you doing this? Do you seriously think this piece of legislation will promote human rights & democracy in Ethiopia? Sir, I'm sure you know that Cuba is only 90 miles off-the coast of Florida. How many more restrictive bills were enacted by the US congress? Did they work? Obviously not! Yes, the Cubans got poorer & poorer, but Castro's grip of power was never affected for almost a half-century, until he got too ill in 2006, at which point in time he delegated his presidential duties to his brother, Generalissimo Raul Castro. So, if history is any lesson, may I respectfully ask what you have learned from the Cuban debacle?

Sir, I also realize that you've been too long in the congress. And it is my sincere belief that you have acquired a lot of wisdom from your long experience. Hence, if this is what you have to show from your long service in the congress, I'm afraid; the citizens of New Jersey will be the first ones to be disappointed.

Sir, to be honest with you, your obsession with HR2003 took its toll several months ago, when the disgraced, Ana Gomez was on your side and a press release was issued from the grounds of Capital Hill. What is puzzling to me now is the fact that you are still focused & determined to push HR2003 at a time, when even some of the released CUD leaders came to the hill and openly & unequivocally stated that a passage of such legislation won't help the cause of democracy & human rights. In this case, isn't it fair to ask why you're still plotting under the disguise of democracy? Whose agenda are you pushing? As the saying goes "In the country of the blind the one eyed man is a king". So, Mr. Chairman, as long as your office relies on the expertise of Ted Dagne & co., I predict there will be more blunder in the good name of congress, especially when it comes to the volatile Horn of Africa.

Having said that, I've to admit that you need to be congratulated for your meticulous timing. Please allow me to explain. Ethiopia is having the mother of all celebrations welcoming the new millennium; it is also celebrating Meskel, to commemorate the finding of the true cross on which Jesus was crucified. The participants of this grand holiday include religious leaders from Russia, Greek, Armenia, Egypt, Syria and South India, among others. Add to that the arrival of the Ethiopian prime minister in New York City—your timing could' get better. A job well done! Should you lead/join a protest in New York City (against Meles); your legacy would have been perfect.

I'm very much at loss as to why your colleagues (that is, minus Chris Smith), failed to envision the consequences of such a reckless endeavor that targets & sanctions a true and tested ally at these challenging days of this great nation, America. In these trying days, America isn't enjoying a surplus but a deficit of friends. Be that as it may, my instinct tells me that a legislation of such blunderous magnitude won't prevail in the full house and the senate. However, if for one reason or another, this legislation escapes the eyes and minds of the great men & women in both chambers and makes it to the president's desk, it better be dead on arrival. The president is not going to sign it. One may agree or disagree with President Bush's vision, but we all know that he stands by his principles. More importantly, the president has the backbone to withstand any kind of legislation that was lobbied by a bunch of extremists, who are hell-bent to bring the old status-quo. No sir! I am not fabricating. Is it not Hailu Shawel, minister under the butcher Mengistu that is the chairman of CUD? It is a fact, is it not? The spokesperson of CUD, Dr. Hailu Araya, who was a high level communist party member led by the notorious Mengistu? Who would forget that professor Mesfin Woldemariam, another top CUD leader was instrumental in the cold blooded massacre of 60 prominent Ethiopian heroes & leaders? I think this is enough to start unveiling the dark face of CUD.

Congressman Payne- Inadvertently or not, please be mindful that you have made it abundantly clear that you have willfully decided to sing with AFD (an alliance of CUD, OLF, and ONLF---) that was impregnated in the Eritrean capital, Asmara and was born in Europe with the surrogate mother, Ana Gomez at a close range for comfort. Sir, I respect your decision. Let the singing continue and let the dance begin. If need be, I hereby present Signora Gomez as a dancing partner. Don't you agree with me that it takes two to tango? However short, enjoy the dance while it lasts. Once this bizarre fanfare ends, it is high time that you do a serious evaluation and get back to the people's business. After all, you were elected to represent the tenth district of the state of New Jersey. Sir, with all due respect, ETHIOPIA AIN'T TENTH DISTRICT!

Last, but not least, I need not to remind you that if the bombs of Benito Mussolini did not shake the collective will of the Ethiopian people, it is naïve to even contemplate that the so-called legislation crafted by Donald M Payne will do the trick.

As a final note, I would like to respectfully remind the good congressman that if there is an interest to gauge the internal feelings of the silent majority in the Ethiopian Diaspora, then accept my disclosure that this writer is neither a supporter nor a friend of the Ethiopian government. In fact, the writer not only is a critique, but a registered opponent

of many of the government policies. That is a good indicator how much the body temperature of the muted majority has surged exponentially. Because opposing government policies does not warrant undermining national sovereignty

Long live to the friendship between Ethiopia and The United States of America

Amare (Ato)

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