

### ***The TPLF Regime's Rampage For Economic Monopoly***

The TPLF clique, scared that “without economic power, there would be no political control”, rampaged the resources of Ethiopia for the benefit of its clique long before it came to power. The clique was observed to go berserk in a blatant manner to secure its economic domination over the Ethiopian masses and the political parties. During the armed struggle, the TPLF regime used satellite political parties that it set up itself such as the EPDM and OPDO, to appear more ‘Ethiopian’ and camouflage its true colors. Hence, they were given marginal sums from the lion’s share. They were never given the right to control, manage and audit the resources. All the economic resources that were secured by the EPRDF were actually controlled by the TPLF clique. And all the tax money collected from the areas that were controlled by the EPRDF filled the coffers of the clique’s leadership.

As an additional income generating scheme, the Tigryan Relief Organization, that begs aid from international organizations, was established by the TPLF in 1978 and had played a crucial role in increasing the economic status of the clique. It was well known that this organization used to overstate the number of people that needed aid, and sell the surplus of the aid that was begotten from donors and used the income to strengthen its economic and military power. For example, towards the end of the 1980s, the TRO claimed that the population of Tigray bordered about 7 million. But a population census that was conducted in 1994 showed that Tigray’s population was about 3.1 million. It is to be recalled that many resources have recently come up showing that the TPLF regime used to beg for resources in the name of its famine stricken population and used the aid for military purposes.

Another factor that made a huge contribution to the current economic status of the clique occurred towards the end of the 1980’s and the beginning of 1990’s. The loot that was acquired when EPRDF was establishing its stronghold was immediately being transferred to Tigray. During that time, members of the EPRDF umbrella organizations were complaining that they did not like the fact that the spoils of war that were begotten through common sacrifice were being transferred to Tigray. However, the leaders of the organizations who were more or less puppets of the clique suppressed those grievances and it failed to get attention.

Hence, the TPLF regime, which is currently pillaging Ethiopian resources in a blatant manner, started this culture of looting back in the days when the Derg was in power. During that time, properties of the Ethiopian masses worth millions of Dollars was looted by the TPLF regime. Money that was stashed in the banks of different cities, means of productions and processed

products that were in governmental and private projects and property that was abandoned by its owners was being transported to the families of the TPLF clique who were living behind the front line.

Therefore, the TPLF clique, during the time it seized power had much of the resources that it pillaged and pilfered from Ethiopia at its disposal. The other collaborating organizations remained with no economic benefit be it in terms of materials or cash money. No one sought to account for all the pickings that were made during the time of war. Because, when the TPLF regime seized power, and because of the fact that the Ethiopian masses did not acknowledge the clique from the onset, the other political organizations that were part of the EPRDF were engaged in a political advocacy campaign on behalf of the regime.

And the TPLF clique, knowing that the political condition of Ethiopia could change at any moment, sought to establish legal grounds that allowed it to exploit as much resources as possible. And as a continuation of its pillaging campaign it initiated in its early days, a charter that war torn and under developed areas should be given a priority to develop. Such a charter, had it been true to its meaning, all the areas in Ethiopia that were in shreds because of war should have developed and this charter would have been accepted as a just resolution. However, the charter only served to ensure the economic dominance of the clique and fashioned out the pillaging of Ethiopian resources by the clique as a legitimate ruse.