

EGYPT TO BUILD DAMS IN ETHIOPIA

By G. E. Gorfu

AL Masry Al Youm, (Egypt of Today) a Cairo newspaper, reported: “At a meeting in Cairo with representatives of Nile Basin countries on Sunday, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation Mohamed Allam announced that Egypt had agreed to build several small dams in Ethiopia with the aim of generating electricity.”*

This indeed, is a very interesting turn of events. Egypt that has invaded Ethiopia twice in the time of Emperor Yohannes in an attempt to capture the source of the Nile, and when it failed to do that, has been doing everything in its power to keep Ethiopia in poverty and misery by masterminding and funding many insurgent groups, liberation forces, enemies in Diaspora, and has even blocked Ethiopia from obtaining World Bank loan to build dams, is now going to build “several small” dams in Ethiopia? This is hard to believe. As we say in Amharic: **ፀሐይ ዛሬ በየት በኩል ወጣች?** Which direction did the sun come up this morning?

Egypt building dams in Ethiopia is welcome news, but what is the purpose behind that kind of gesture, especially after all that has gone before? Is it too little too late for this kind of gesture to make much dent in the relationship? Did the Egyptian leadership suddenly wake up one morning to realize Ethiopia has never had any intentions to cut down or reduce the water of the Nile, and that all their evil efforts for the last hundred or more years were totally based on a false assumption?

As some have said, in political struggles peace is only a way to buy time and prepare for war. So what is Egypt up to? What is there for Egypt to benefit from building the very dams it has been afraid of for so long? Is this a temporary lull to get on the good side of Ethiopians? When evil means fail, is Egypt now trying a new strategy to further its goal? One needs to take this new development with a pinch of salt and watch Egypt make the next move on the Chase Board.

This could be a new tactic to continue the old struggle and control the flow of the River Nile. So, as we welcome this new development, Ethiopia should never let its guard down, but keep a suspicious and jaundiced eye at the new development. We should prepare to negotiate with Egypt but only from a position of strength and not from weakness. And united with the Riparian Nations, we are very strong. We should demand that Egypt cease and desist, aiding and abating Eritrea’s Isaias, the OLF, the ONLF, and any other insurgent groups if they really mean business.

* <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en/news/egypt-build-dams-ethiopia>