

## POLITICAL SATIRE

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Ex-criminals and Derg Cadres  
United States

The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President George W. Bush:

We are writing this letter to thank you and other U.S. Presidents before you for extending a helping hand to us, ex-criminals and human rights abusers, to stay in your beloved country under the all too common method of securing sanctuary—known as asylum. Through asylum, we have become permanent residents and ultimately citizens of this democratic nation. We have brought our family to the U.S. under the pretext of tyranny and human rights abuse back home. We learned these terms after we immigrated to the U.S. to win the hearts and minds of the U.S. immigration judges. To our complete surprise, you allowed us to enjoy all these benefits despite our past troubles and crimes on gross violations of human rights. We acted as true victims of severe brutality when, in fact, we were torturers during the regime of the military junta, Menigistu Hailemariam. Now, we know that we have abused the system that was created to rescue genuine asylum seekers that hail from all over the world.

Nevertheless, deep in our hearts, we realized that our main reason for asking asylum was the economic situation back home; pure and simple. You know, when we were in power, in our hey-day, we were used to leading lavish lifestyles—riding in the latest model cars with private drivers, living in beautiful villas, working in well-decorated offices with private secretaries, and respected by all of our neighbors out of fear of reprisal from our well-fed bodyguards. But, that was way then--before the Woyanes marched into our safe haven—Addis-Ababa. The Woyanes, known for their heavy-handed treatment of anybody who disagrees with their newly founded Federalist system, rebuked our privileges in the name of ‘eradicating corruption’ from Ethiopia within hours of their arrival in Addis. We were stripped of all the things we used to enjoy for free. The Mercedes Benz, the private bodyguard, the unearned respect, the villa homes --all evaporated instantly into thin air.

Truth be told, we were subjected to was nothing compared to what we had been doing to our perceived adversaries. We couldn’t believe what we encountered at the temporary camps in which they put us. In the detention camps, better known as vacation resorts, we were able to socialize with whomever we wanted and our family members were allowed to visit us at anytime they wanted—all of which we denied to our perceived enemies before. Even some of the Woyane ex-comrades such as former Prime Minister Tamrat Layne and others were subjected to harsher interrogations than us, and, still are languishing in prison for corruption and abuse of power. To this day, we don’t understand why the Woyanes treated us the way they did despite our highly negative attitude towards them. However, our biggest surprise was yet to come—when most of us were released from the camp, safe and sound and joined by our families, with one string attached—to never engage ourselves in any conspiracy against the Woyanes.

Keeping that string intact may seem easy, but to us it was the worst of all orders. We abhorred the Woyanes when they were in the Jangle and we equally detested their presence in our midst for they were going against our vested interest—staying in powered for indefinite number of years with our benefits intact at the expense of the poor. Therefore, we didn't waste any time before we launched an insidious attack on the Woyanes—although in secrecy this time. We fiercely opposed anything and everything the Woyanes attempted to implement, giving policies very scary labels in order to get sympathy from the general public. We demonized the Woyanes by disseminating innuendoes and unsubstantiated rumors—all for the purpose of making their lives miserable.

To make things worse on the Woyanes, we even managed to infiltrate into their ranks to create havoc from within. Once again, we held important offices in Immigration (we attempted to gain uncontrolled access to the whole security apparatus but didn't materialize), Civil Aviation, Ministry of Education and City Hall Administration. With the help of these crucial posts, we were back to the business of corruption again—robbing the unsuspecting citizens. We would literally allow forming a long queue in front our offices and enjoy seeing people getting frustrated by the system, hoping they would reject the Woyanes. We radicalized university students to the point of abandoning their school duties for political marches and violent confrontations with the police. High school students were poised to fight the Woyanes for no apparent reason.

Following the aforementioned series of student unrests, the Woyanes began firing university professors who were behind the riots thereby denying the renewal of their teaching contracts. The firing of individuals continued throughout the other sectors for the Woyanes began to notice the damage we had caused on their good reputation—at least the perception was that the Woyanes were there to correct the ills of the past. That happenstance was heartbreaking to us all because it meant that we had no other alternative but leave the country at will—through Bole International Airport—and the rest is history.

Mr. President,

Probably, you are wondering by now that why we are professing our past misdeeds so profoundly. Well, you are not alone in that regard. We expect a lot of condemnation from our supporters on this issue. Nonetheless, we have a reason that compelled us to do so. Since the time an 85-year old man accused of having been a guard at a Nazi death camp has been stripped of his U.S. citizenship and deported to his native Ukraine, we haven't had a single good night's sleep. The removal of Kelbesso Negewo from the U.S., our former comrade-in-arms, was also a case in point. That case hit home and hit hard because we, too, served a military junta that terrorized and mass murdered innocent people. Hence, it is to our advantage to confess before an immigration officer appears at our door steps. We hope that you understand our situation. Besides, your cozy relationship with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has compounded our worries. For reasons we cannot mention in this letter, Meles Zenawi has been and still is our nightmare. He will not leave any stone unturned to expose our past atrocities on the Ethiopian people if you continue to be at good terms with him. From what we could tell, he has earned your trust by becoming a staunch ally in the fighting of global terrorism in general, and in the Horn of Africa in particular. He, among the Woyanes, is a very smart guy, we admit. It took us more than a decade to see his talent because we had been blinded with hatred.

On a different note, since you are a good friend of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, we want you to ask him on behalf of all Ex-criminals and cadres like us if he could give us a second chance (a third chance to most of us) to take advantage of the Ethiopian people back home.

Please let him know that we will be requiring from his administration the following:

1. The reinstatement of all Derg cadres to their respective positions immediately.
2. Access to all governmental services, even though we don't believe there is a functioning government in Ethiopia.
3. Hassle-free life where our freedom of speech is protected, but nothing is expected from us in return---similar to the American lifestyle minus the personal responsibility.
4. Investment options without paying any taxes.
5. The right to character assassination of any government official without any repercussion as a result of our actions.
6. Freedom to spread hatred among the Ethiopian people, if there is such a freedom at all.
7. Full constitutional right, even though we don't plan to honor the constitution of the land.

We could have listed more requests but since we know that you are a busy individual, we made it short. We urge you to intervene in this important matter because we are homesick and some of us are advancing in age. With a dismal chance of passage of the once highly touted HR2003 (also known as the Ethiopian Freedom and Accountability Act of 2007) by the U.S. Congress, you are our last chance. It is not because we didn't try grabbing power by unconstitutional means. Not at all. Every attempt we made to overthrow the Woyane government failed miserably. For instance, during the run up to the 2005 election and in the aftermath, we were ready to launch an Orange Revolution—a Georgian style coup d'etat. But Meles, as astute leader as he is, squashed our efforts and we went back to the drawing board again.

Needless to say, the U.S. presidential Election Day is approaching and with that comes change of administration. We are at loss with what it will bring for us. To be honest with you, we initially supported Senator Barack Obama because he was calling for a change. But we are cautiously re-examining our support to Senator Obama for we are not quite sure what kind of change he is talking about.

As to Senator John McCain, he seems too serious to our taste. We haven't said anything against the Senator in public out of fear he may become the next U.S. president and we respectfully ask you to not share the content of this letter with him.

In closing, we have gone out of our usual way of writing style (long sentences and difficult vocabularies) to accommodate you. We have been unusually nice in the way we addressed Prime Minister Meles Zenawi throughout this letter. But we want you to know that we don't mean it, because we hate to lose.

May God bless both Ethiopia and the United States of America!

Sincerely,