

## **USA USING DEMOCRACY TO RULE AFRICA VIA "PUPPETS" - ERITREAN LEADER**

Voice of the Broad Masses of Eritrea

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Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki has said that the war between his country and Ethiopia was not one between the two countries, but part of a larger regional confrontation masterminded by the USA. Speaking during an interview with local media on 19 August, the president further accused the USA of seeking to divide Africa into four regions that will be run by its "puppets". He also accused Washington of seeking to destabilize Eritrea by calling for more democratic space in the country.

The following is an excerpt of Afewerki's recorded interview broadcast by state-owned Eritrean radio on 21 August; subheading inserted editorially.

[Unidentified interviewer] It was the USA that was pushing behind the scene for the weyane [Ethiopian government] to declare war on Eritrea. Soon after the war started, it was the same USA which undertook the first initiative to reconcile the warring sides. What do you make of this contradictory stance?

[Isayas] Yes the USA made contradictory moves. As I said earlier, it undertook moves to come up with affirmative action [last two words in English] to resolve the conflict. We say, this contradictory policy was an old strategy refurbished during the end of the last century, and was implemented during the war with Ethiopia.

What was the USA's strategy in relation to the Horn of Africa in general, and in particular with Eritrea and Ethiopia? It was not based on a one-to-one strategy as we might think. What US policy makers looked into was the regional impact and not a country by country assessment. Inasmuch as the Horn of Africa region is of high strategic importance [last two words in English], its proximity to the Middle East through the Red Sea and the amount of natural resources it has, means that all policies and moves [on this region] are undertaken based on the above factors. [Passage omitted: more background to US policy regarding the Horn and other African regions]

The aim of the USA's policy is to divide Africa into four regions and then control the entire continent through proxies or representatives. This type of thinking is [words indistinct]. We are not worried about that. We feel that these so created regions should be given the chance to freely and willingly cooperate and resolve their social and economic problems. [Words indistinct]

They [Americans] might boast that the time for the weyane to start a war is over. They might also talk of our firm stand regarding reconciliation with the weyane regime. If they were supporting the weyane regime during the war, then how come they now undertake the role of a mediator?

[Passage omitted: More on reconciliation with Ethiopia]

"Constructive engagement"

[Interviewer] What was America's support [to Ethiopia] and its role in the continuing war with weyane?

[Isayas] There are several issues that we raised during and after the war. It has been made clear to all that the Americans were supporting the weyane regime. The question is why did they support the weyane? This should be looked in relation to the constructive engagement [preceding two words in English] that we have been talking of since the early days of our relationship with Ethiopia. For us, the hope of constructive cooperation that we intended to have [with Ethiopia] was dashed.

This in turn brought about endless confrontation with Ethiopia, and when we assessed the situation, we examined the bigger context of the issue; we found that the problem we now see [between Ethiopia and Eritrea] is not very different from the general picture.

#### CIA plot

[Interviewer] Maybe, the issue of ruling Africa through proxies as a policy seems to be easier and smooth. However, what we see on the ground is different. This situation has created a very dangerous trend since it has not brought about the desired results. As a result, there are rumours that the CIA was involved in carrying out activities to overthrow the Eritrean government during the Eritrea-Ethiopia war. What is your take on that?

[Isayas] We have examined this issue seriously, and as a matter of policy, we have decided not to engage into any trivial rumour mongering or go into conflict with anybody. If you have a strategy, there are some things you should do to realize that strategy. This can be through a general examination of a country or region. It is customary for Americans to defend their political, economic and social interests.

What should you do in order to realize the strategy you have mapped for one country? You should be able to weaken the people or that country. How do you weaken the people? By dividing them through race, religion and other methods such as the pretext of upholding democracy. Democracy as we understand is so much different from their [American] democracy. For them democracy is the ability to divide the society along religious, regional, tribal, racial and any other means, including internal politics. This is evident in many regions such as between the Shi'i, Kurds [in Iraq, rest of words indistinct].

If you look into the individual countries where they [Americans] have been to and presented their democratic gift, you will not see any stable and developing nations, but conflicting and divided ones; and you call this democracy. This is one of their methods.

The other method is you create puppets in a country. You can create your puppets in the name of political participation but at the end of the day these governments only serve the strategy you mapped out and hence, they are just puppets serving your goal.

Either you have to toe the line or if you oppose the strategy, then you are isolated through psychological warfare [words indistinct], through people who sell their soul, who look after their personal interests rather than those of their people, and who sell their dignity after they have been blackmailed as part of your strategy.

Sometimes they use various groups, the so-called charitable organizations, NGOs, as tools for the implementation of their strategies.

The issue of what the CIA has done or has not done against us is a big matter by itself.