The Revolution is televised.

The Oromo Youth Rebellion and Resistance against the TPLF Regime

By Dumessa Diimmaa

In the 1970’s Gil Scott Heron had a song and poem called “The Revolution will not be televised” it was a song that became a popular slogan among the 1970s Black Power movements and Resistance against Jim Crow South and rigid anti African American racism in the United States. It was an allusion to
different times and an analog TV technology of the period, which every act of resistance cannot be recorded and televised by the system who owned the media, it will not be sponsored and brought to you without commercial interruption—it is live “the revolution will be live”.

That is what the Oromo Youth did and are doing now! They did it live and it was televised! By using their smart phones and other contemporary technologies, they televised through the social media and other mass communication devices to document the carnages and bloodbath committed by the monstrous and genocidal TPLF storm troops (the Agazie/Nazi) special forces.

They documented the grotesquely shot and wounded Oromo youth bodies. It is utterly abominable and revolting, such butchery carried-out on an unarmed civilian and above all, rock-throwing youngsters!

The Young and Restless

November 12, 2016 is the anniversary of the heroic confrontation between the Oromo youth and the Wayaanee thugs in a small Oromo town called Gincii. The youngsters confronted a team of regime speculators when they were trying to make a deal to transfer a tract of land that the local youth uses as a soccer field. The confrontation was intense and the local youth were defiant. What was a local rebellion by Oromo youngsters in Gincii soon spread like a prairie fire throughout Oromia! These “Qubee Generations” unlike their parents or grandparents are not subjected to the shameful and dark days of Imperial Ethiopia, where Oromos were taunted and made fun of their culture, their Amharic accent, and even the banning of Oromo language in the Official Proceedings, (courts, schools, churches etc.) They had no fear of Habasha or Oromo (OPDO) authorities. They had what the Americans call “hutzpah”—self-confidence, they were contemptuous of, and undaunted by the heavily armed TPLF Storm troopers who dastardly used live bullets to disperse unarmed children!

It was a cowardly act by the Wayanee Special Forces to gun-down an unarmed crowd of young boys and girls whose only quest were the refusal to stand by and allow some spineless regime officials to expropriate their ancestral lands to sell it to foreign investors. In the midst of these macabre, there were poignant pictures of youngsters tending to their injured and fallen comrades/schoolmates. Even though they were overwhelmed by the regime’s heavily armed and extremely violent Agazi troops, the Oromo young men and women were very assertive and bold in confronting the barbarians who came to seize their sacred-lands! They used their smart phones to record and televised the vile acts of diabolical thugs!

The unflinching and continuing resistance in Gincii, soon unfolded throughout Oromia with similar amplification in the distant villages and hamlets! Gincii was an Oromo Masada, a fortress where the young and fearless Oromo youth defended the ancestral lands with immense pride and courageous rebellion, and overcame the siege of their town!

The continuing resistance of Oromo youth constitutes the essential characteristics of contemporary phase of the resistances and insurrections in the Empire by the youths in Oromia, Amhara, Gambella, etc... The struggle of all subject peoples of the Empire will augment the efforts and sacrifices of the Oromo Youngsters who are striking back at the regressive TPLF regime!
Rarely, a generation of elementary and high school kids engage the oppressive apparatus of a tyrannical state machinery as those students in Giincii, Ambo, Dambbii Dollo, Shashamannee, Cirro etc. did. These cities have become an Oromo citadel of courage when Wayannee speculators tried to breach the ancestral lands and inheritance! Oromo youths throughout Oromia raised hell in solidarity with their comrades in every city and villages in the land, they defied the tyrannical regime, in doing so, fell in the battle for freedom and dignity. They rose above their limitation of youth and adolescence, to give themselves-up in these glorious struggles for Oromo Lands! The essence of their sacrifices transcends Oromo cause! It was an act of gallantry in service to a prudent mission of resistance in the name of justice and dignity! They understood the cruelty of TPLF regime and its morass of lies and connivance.

For their unaltering determination and tenacity confronting the TPLF regime land grabbers, we are grateful and burdened by their youthful courage and sacrifices. From the lessons of their noble and indomitable valor, there will emerge a new Qubee generation of Oromo youth supremely confident of their mission. Undoubtedly, they will be endowed with rich experiences and the conviction of the righteousness of their struggle for Oromo nation.

Profile in courage
The marathon is a grueling race of 26.2 miles! Anyone who has run it will tell you that, it’s unremitting and one has to be tenacious and poised to finish those 26.2 miles! The Greek legend narrates that, it was the distance Pheidippides, the Greek messenger/solider ran to announce the victory at the Battle of Marathon over the Persians. It is said that he ran the entire distance without stopping from Marathon to Athens. At the end, he collapsed and died after exclaiming Greek victory over the Persians!

At the 2016 Rio Olympics, Feyisa Lilesa won the silver medal; he did neither collapse or died! In doing so, as he was crossing the finish-line, he crossed-X- his arms as symbol of defiance and solidarity with the Oromo Youth who are confronting the TPLF regime against the uprooting of Oromo farmers from their ancestral lands. His act of courage will become an Oromo legend for generations to come! The modern Olympic marathon is the last event of the athletics of the final day of the Olympics. Feyisa’s unparalleled courage and bravery had a far-reaching repercussion. The global audience of about 2 billion people viewing a young athlete with crossed-arms gesture protesting knowingly that his family’s life, perhaps his own life as well, will be endangered was a profoundly amazing and notable act!

The Olympics, they say is a sacred event, “the essential thing is not to have conquered but played well” Feyisa Lilesa was a triumphant participant in the “sacred event” for proclaiming to the global audience the struggle of Oromo nation! He, alongside Tommie Smith and John Carlos, in 1968 Mexico City Olympics who did raise their fist in a Black Power salute to protest the racial, political, economic and
cultural oppression of African Americans in the United States, showed a profound gesture of revolutionary, triumphant and vigilant struggle of international significance, and equally a glorious affirmation of heroism and courage. We salute and honor these heroes for their valiant acts!

Fyisa demonstrated a rich cultural heritage of athleticism of Oromo athletes who have scored brilliant victories in the Olympics and other amateur competition of international repute! He is in a good company, with the likes of Wamie Biratuu, Abebe Biqila, Mamo Wolde, Derartu Tullu, Qananissa Bekel, Trunesh Dibaba, and many others whose world-class athleticism displayed in every competition they have participated!

Post-Olympic Games, Feyisa had eventful weeks and months. The United States, at the urging of Congressman Smith and other Americans of goodwill, granted him a temporary visa to come to the Washington, DC metro area. As someone who have chronicled the story and achievements of Oromo Athletes, (See my articles in Runners World November 1984, The Oromo Commentary Volume II No.1, 1992) I wanted to meet the heroic figure, to thank him for his gallant act, and perhaps to chat about long distance racing etc. It was very hard to meet him, understandably, a whirlwind of media and community engagements have overwhelmed him and at the end, it seems that he is back to what he can do best, train and compete internationally.

The Irrechaa Massacre and the Days of Rage

Wanton massacres tend to change the trajectory of a conflict or social resistance. The My Lai massacre of the of Vietnamese peasant in 1968 by Charlie Company of United States Infantry Brigade, commanded by Lt. William Callely, prompted a global outrage. In the States, the resistance to the war became intensified. At the end, the massacre was the undoing of Mr. Nixon’s war in Indochina and the unceremonious defeat of the United States army in its history.
The Sharpeville massacre of unarmed anti-pass protesters in South Africa in 1960 was a turning point in the history of resistance against racial discrimination in Apartheid South Africa! News of the massacre drew immediate global condemnation. The struggle against Apartheid became front and center for black South Africans, and after a long and arduous struggle, Apartheid was crushed and defeated—a new and multiracial South Africa emerged.

The massacre at Horra Arsaadii in Bushofttu town will surely be the impetus for all citizens of the Empire in general, to the Oromo nation particular to intensify the resistance against the terrorist Wayanne State. The Terror State immediately declared a “State of Emergency’ and banned all sort of activities essential for ordinary populace! At the end, declaration of any category will not save this terror regime, just as the history of resistance by people against all odds affirms, the Oromo resistance will prevail.

The carnage and impacts of the Irrechaa massacre have been witnessed by global audience! It shocked and provoked not only the Oromo nation, but all citizens of goodwill in the Empire and global community! We are encumbered with the images of the butchery and bloodbath. History will catalogue and unmask the genocidal scope of TPLF’s regime against the innocent revelers who came to celebrate the sacred annual Oromo Thanksgiving Festival! Each time the TPLF regime declares war against Oromo Youth, the confrontation and revolutionary commitment to expose the enemy and appropriate response of the their struggle is recorded and televised!

Following the Bushoftuu, massacre, the Oromo Qeerro/Youth called for Days of Rage! – A series of direct action targeting the regime’s infrastructures, businesses that were established on confiscated Oromo farmers lands! The Revolutionary Oromo Youth (Qeerro) movement has broken the myth of Wayanne sense of invulnerability to any opposition!
They were/are fearless, undaunted by the regime’s vaunted security apparatus! With audacity and act of gallantry, they rose to specific tests and encounters with the regime’s thugs by drawing on their Oromuumaa which gave them a reserve of moral strength and righteousness to their struggle! They recorded and televised on social and other Medias their bold and daring qualities of bravery and courage!

The subtext and the essential lessons to be drawn from the insurrectional phases of the Oromo Youth in today’s Ethiopian empire is that they directed and focused their energy toward altering the conditions of Oromo nation, redefining the history of the Empire, relationships between subject communities and other citizens of the Empire. They have emerged supremely confident of their abilities so shape the politics of the Empire. Endowed with rich and accumulated experiences, historic contents of the struggle, the Qeerro Bilisummaa constitute a towering spirit of continuing resistance against the Wayanee tyrants.

Hence, the struggle for Oromia will continue by a new generation of Oromo Youth that is willing to pay all sacrifices, confront any foe, and engage friends and allies from the Amhara, Gambella, Somali and other citizens of the Empire until the political, social and cultural conditions of the Oromo and other peoples of the Empire is emancipated from the quagmires of TPLF’s regime!

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