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The Border Saga

By Hayward Allen (Harar 62–64)

*Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down . . .
[My neighbor] will not go beyond his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors."
— from "Mending Wall" by Robert Frost*

The Hague Commission's Decision

On Saturday, April 13, the Independent Boundary Commission in The Hague issued its ruling on border delimitation for Ethiopia and Eritrea. The long-awaited decision has been fraught with violent confrontations, alleged violations, and many assertions following the peace agreement signed in December 2000. Following the announcement, both Ethiopia and Eritrea claimed victory for their point of view and resolution.

"This is a victory of law and order over anarchy, chaos and violence," said Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin as reported by the UN Integrated Regional Information Networks. "This is

a victory over aggression and violence. This is a victory for the rule of law over the rule of the jungle."

"The government and people of Eritrea have consistently maintained that the border dispute could only be resolved by peaceful and legal means, and not through war and the logic of force," the official statement of the Eritrean government stated as reported by IRIN (Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org)). "In the final analysis, the end of the war on the basis of a legal determination is a victory for both the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples. It is a victory for the people of Ethiopia, but it is the Eritrean people who have emerged victorious."

"The outcome was sufficiently obscure to leave both countries in a position to claim victory," noted the BBC's Martin Plaut. The Hague commission released a 125-page document, which Plaut says "legal experts make clear that they reject the Ethiopian claim and draw the border in such a way that Eritrea wins title to the town — if not the area that bears its name."

The name is Badme. Both Ethiopia and Eritrea claim Badme, which is a village and a district and was

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THE OUTCOME was sufficiently obscure to leave both countries in a position to claim victory," noted the BBC's Martin Plaut.

considered the heart of the initial armed conflict between the two countries that continued for two years. According to the agreement, Badme remains an Ethiopian village on the 620-mile disputed border, as are areas of Zalemessa, Alitena, and Bada. According to Plaut, "Eritrea appears to have made some gains in the west."

In May 1998, Eritrean soldiers began an entry into Badme, which was little more than a few buildings and a barracks flagpole flying the Ethiopian flag. Ethiopian soldiers told the Eritreans to lay down their arms. Gunfire was the answer

and it continued there and along the regional boundary abutting each nation until June 2000.

US Contributes Funds for Border Demarcation

Calling the Boundary Commission's ruling a "major achievement," the US State Department has pledged its support of future peaceful actions. "By accepting the decision, Eritrean President Isayas and Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles have taken another courageous step to forge a comprehensive and lasting peace between the two countries," an official statement said.

"The United States remains committed to facilitate the peace process to its conclusion. To this end," the statement said, "we have donated funds to a United Nations Trust Fund established to help defray the cost of the delimitation and demarcation of the border, and we intend to make an additional contribution shortly."

There was no indication as to the amount of money the US has donated to the trust fund.

Norway Will Provide Funds for Demarcation

Norwegian Foreign Minister Jan Petersen announced that his government would contribute US\$1 million to assist in the resolution of the border settlement. "Norway will support Ethiopia and Eritrea as well as the United Nations in the physical demarcation of the border," Petersen said in a release issued by the Norwegian embassy in Addis.

"I have commended [Prime Minister Meles Zenawi] and the Ethiopian government for having so firmly stated that Ethiopia will stand by the decision of the Boundary Commission," he said. He also reiterated that his government would continue the long-term bilateral development aid with Ethiopia, "based on support of peace, stability, democratic development, human rights, and good governance."

International Demonstrations

A worldwide campaign by Ethiopians to oppose the Hague ruling was initiated on March 29, more than two weeks before the release of the ruling. Following demonstrations in Stockholm, London, and New York, the DC-based Ethiopians Unite planned to hold more rallies in Washington, London, and elsewhere to "demand that Meles Zenawi's regime and the parliament not approve the Border Commission's decisions, which is intended to make Ethiopia permanently landlocked, weak and poor," according to the Ethiopians Unite press release.

Red Sea Ports

In February, some 3,000 supporters of the Ethiopian Democratic Party held a rally in Addis demanding access to the Red Sea as part of the pending UN boundary commission in the Hague. An IRIN report noted that rally spokespeople insisted that "the country would never have lasting peace without access to the Red Sea."

The Ethiopian government's stance opposed such position, according to a representative. "Nurturing the idea of waging war with Eritrea in search of a sea outlet would not serve any purpose other than creating another 30 years of war."

An editorial in the *Addis Tribune* had a more historical point of view: "It is all too easy to stick to the age-old argument that Ethiopia cannot survive without a port or should not be landlocked. Ethiopia has survived for over 3,000 years without much use of its sea access. While the modern world developed through trade by taking advantage of its sea access, we spent much of our 3,000 years barricading ourselves from invaders

POPULATION DATA:

Eritrea has an estimated 3.5 million living with its borders between Ethiopia, the Red Sea, and Sudan.

Ethiopia has 65 million people living within the area bordered by Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, and Kenya.

but also from trade and progress. Remember Assab was not created by our desire to take to the seas and trade with the outside world. Assab came to existence because of an Italian trading company wishing to set up a trading base along the Red Sea. They bought a 20 sq km piece of desert land by the sea for 3,100 Maria Teresa (about 80,000 lire) in 1861 from local land owners — hence, the creation of Assab and then Eritrea and the start of our 130 years of trouble that came with it.”

A Potpourri of Opinions

“The Hague Blues”

An ode was composed by one M. Filli A., “lyrics by an Eritrean, no music provided,” plus an attribution to Bob Marley’s “No Woman No Cry . . .” from an unattributed internet source, via Schlomo Bachrach’s exceptional news service. One verse canted:

“Working together through bilateral diplomacy
Can bring to the Horn peace and normalcy
Accepting sovereignty barriers
Respecting territorial borders
We can make good neighbors
And they can use our harbors
Old privileges permanently damaged
New contracts could be easily managed...”

“Mareb River Journal”

NY Times reporter Marc Lacey visited a place in the Ethiopia/Eritrea region and wrote a piece called “Bridge Over a Troubled Border in the Horn of Africa.” His article (www.nytimes.com/2002/02/11/international/africa/11BORD.html) describes his experience at the Mareb River bridge, which is not unlike the bridge between the US and Canada at Niagara Falls. “The bridge, once a major transit point between the two neighbors, ended up heavily damaged when Ethiopia and Eritrea took up arms against each other In recent months it was refurbished and has become a symbol of the two countries search for reconciliation — and all the challenges that remain,” he writes.

United Nations’ aid has rebuilt the span that connects Rama, Ethiopia, with Adi Quala, Eritrea.

**A Chronology from *Le Monde*:
Conflict in the Horn of Africa**

1889-1941: Eritrea is an Italian colony.

1941-1952: Eritrea under British administration.

September 15, 1952: UN decides to set up a federation between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

September 1961: The Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) takes up arms.

November 14, 1962: Annexation of Eritrea, which becomes the 14th province of Ethiopia.

1970: The ELF splits into two branches: the original ELF and the People’s Liberation Forces (ELF-PLF). This Marxist breakaway group of the ELF becomes the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF).

1972-1974: Civil war between the two groups.

1974: Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie overthrown.

January 1975: Resumption of the joint campaign against the Ethiopian army.

1977: Mengistu Haile Mariam seizes power in Ethiopia. The USSR provides massive aid. The EPLF makes a strategic withdrawal.

May 1991: Asmara is taken by the EPLF and Mengistu’s military-Communist regime collapses.

April 25, 1993: A referendum ratifies independence for Eritrea within frontiers of the former Italian colony.

May 6, 1998: Outbreak of war between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

May 12, 2000: After a year’s respite, the peace negotiations are broken off and hostilities resume.

June 18, 2000: Signing of a peace agreement in Algiers, under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity.

"Today the bridge is most often used by prisoners of war sent back home by one government or another," writes Lacey.

UN peacekeepers watch over the bridge and the boundary. At the Mareb River it is soldiers from India who guard the crossing.

"There is little traffic across the border these days, except for the cattle that stray across, fueling clashes among the herdsmen," Lacey notes, "or the porcupine, python, or wild boar," as reported by the Indian commander. "It's a critical location," nonetheless, the soldier asserts.

There have been diplomatic encounters at the bridge. An Italian soldier, for example, stopped an Ethiopian car filled with ranking officers and insisted on a search. As a result, Ethiopia refused to have meetings on the bridge in the future. The soldier was quickly sent home, according to Lacey.

Legwaila Interview

Legwaila Joseph Legwaila is the UN Secretary-General's special representative heading the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. He was interviewed in February by the UN Integrated Regional Networks:

"It is often suggested that this is an easy mission, because we are dealing with two countries and we are dealing with two disciplined armies — and we came here when the two sides had already signed a cease-fire . . . [Nonetheless] the fact remains that after any war there is a lot of bitterness between the regions, and Ethiopia and Eritrea are not an exception."

Both nations agreed to accept the Border Commission's rulings as being final and binding. "They have so bound themselves to accept its decision that they even deny themselves the opportunity to go to arbitration. They have decided they have no appeal to any other mechanism," Legwaila said.

"We don't think we can know exactly how the security situation is going to evolve after the decision. . . . But we are ready for any eventuality.

Whenever you have a peacekeeping operation, you must always have contingency plans...

"This is the critical phase. This is what my job is all about," he said. "The day we hear the decision has been made and the countries have welcomed the decision, we will know we have achieved a very important milestone."

In March the UN Security Council unanimously agreed to extend UNMEE's mandate for another six months. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan had endorsed the extension in order to support the Border Commission's decision.

"Making and Unmaking and Remaking of Boundaries"

RPCVs may recall Negussay Ayele as one of the Amharic instructors in their training programs in the 1960s. In February he wrote an article for the on-line newsletter *Deki-Alula* [www.geocities.com/malula86/]. Among Prof. Negussay's comments were the following:

"It is somewhat paradoxical that Ethiopia — the oldest African nation — should repeatedly be the turf for experimenting modalities for boundary formations in a the continent where the overwhelming majority of the colonialist-generated boundaries remain either undelimited or undemarcated

"What is even more astounding is that Ethiopia — the indomitable country that had successfully fought so many anti-colonial wars to acquit its independent existence — now stands to be victimized by defunct and invalid colonial 'treaties,' that were in the first instance designed to contain Ethiopia as a landlocked, truncated, weak and circumscribed country during the colonial era

"The real problem in Ethiopia-Eritrea is that the guerillas (EPLF and TPLF) that fought to overthrow the government in power, which they did in 1991, have gone beyond that and are on a mission to overthrow Ethiopia as a state. In other words, their ultimate objective is the politicide of Ethiopia. Wittingly or unwittingly, outside elements,

A GOOD MAP of the border area can be viewed as a PDF file using Adobe

Acrobat at:

www.dehai.org/images/unmee.pdf.

There is an excellent story,

"Border, a Geographer's

Nightmare" at [http://](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special_report/1999/07/99/battle_in_the_horn/newsid_396000/396571.stm)

[news.bbc.co.uk/hi/](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special_report/1999/07/99/battle_in_the_horn/newsid_396000/396571.stm)

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[newsid_396000/396571.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special_report/1999/07/99/battle_in_the_horn/newsid_396000/396571.stm).

Also, check out

www.EthiopiaEritreaRPCVs.org

and click on "Ethiopia" and

"Eritrea" in the lefthand

column for links to sites

that carry current news

from these countries.

including the United Nations, that support this cabal against the Ethiopian people are aiding and abetting in the politicide of Ethiopia."

Editor's note: Prof. Negussay Ayele continues his critical analysis of the conflicts for fifteen pages. For those interested in continuing the reading, go to www.tisjd.net/unmaking.htm.

An Eritrean Point of View

Bereket Habte Selassie is a law professor at the University of North Carolina; he chaired the Eritrean Constitution Commission that authored the national constitution. In December 2001, he expressed his thoughts to the Border Commission in The Hague. Here are several excerpts.

"One of the momentous decisions of the Organization of African Unity made at the second meeting of the African heads of state and government in Cairo in 1964 is the resolution accepting the colonially-fixed boundaries to define the post-colonial African state system and its concomitant legal order"

Prof. Bereket describes the abolition of the Eritrean-Ethiopian confederation by Haile Selassie to create "a united Ethiopia. One of the intended legal consequences of the abolition of the federation was the destruction of Eritrea's international legal personality, which UN Resolution 390(A)(V) recognized and which was a stumbling block to the Emperor's expansionist ambitions."

"A central part of the diplomatic strategy in the Eritrea liberation struggle was, therefore, constantly reminding the world community of Ethiopia's illegal act in destroying the integrity of Eritrea's international legal status . . . [and for Ethiopia] to accept the Eritrean struggle for independence as a legitimate claim for national self-determination from colonial rule, not different from the claims of other African struggles against European colonial rule."

The debate continued until 1993, when the United Nations accepted Eritrea as a member state. "Let no one forget, however, that Eritrean indepen-

dence was achieved by military victory, which was later confirmed by a referendum Regrettably, demarcation of borders between the two countries was an issue that was left unresolved upon independence . . . thus becoming the flash point of the 1998-2000 war."

According to Bereket, the armed conflict was far more than a quarrel over the definition of the border. "Eritrea's sovereignty has been one of the sources of discord between the [Ethiopian] government and some die-hard groups, adamantly opposed to Eritrea's independence. During the recent, so-called 'Badme Border War' some spokespersons of these groups sloganeered, 'Ethiopia's border is not Badme, it is the Red Sea.'"

"Despite some of our internal differences with the [Eritrean] government, this is one issue on which we stand united. Let no one mistake our current squabbles, which is an internal affair, as a sign of division where the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Eritrea is concerned."

Maps and Mines

One of the first priorities following The Hague commission's ruling will be the creation of maps that will aid in the removal of tens of thousands of buried landmines. The United Nations Security Council has ruled that de-mining, through mapping, aerial photographs, and ground observation, "should move forward without delay."

The buried weapons are limiting the extent to which families may relocate, nearly two years after the end of the war. A study carried out by the UN Emergencies Unit representatives in the border zone point specifically to the inactivity by Ethiopia to remove the mines.

A primary concern is the need to plant crops and the avoidance of fatalities and injuries. In a commercial chain of influence, small businesses associated with farming are affected. "Hence, once more, part of the land will remain fallow," the UN report notes, "and all those people who are unable to return home due to mine danger will have to be

assisted through an emergency program instead of receiving development and recovery support.”

The report specifically singled out people refusing to return to the eastern region of Tigray, near Gerahu Sirnay and Zala Ambesa. “Furthermore, their houses have been destroyed and the danger represented by the presence of mines remains. All the areas infested with mines have been identified, but the mine-clearing activities have only just begun.”

Merged Bosnian Force Joins UNEMEE

The Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation and the Bosnian Serb Republic were sending forces to join the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Unfortunately, there were a number of diplomatic problems that emerged during the groups’ training in Greece. For one thing, soldiers were not wearing the Bosnia-Herzegovina army patch on their uniforms, plus what was considered “unacceptable . . . — a UN proposal on the deployment of the unit which says that the soldiers are members of the two armies” by the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation. A request that the two platoons [a platoon is usually 27 soldiers], be merged into a single unit of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, under single command, was the chief objection by the Serbs. (From a news release from the Bosnian Serb news agency, SRNA.)

A Tale of Two Countries

Fireweni Hailu is a waitress in a run-down hotel in Adigrat, 30 miles from the Eritrean border. “She looks tired and much older than her 23 years. She says the pain and agony that she has endured over the past two years have made her weary and despondent,” writes BBC reporter Nita Bhalla from Addis.

Fireweni had lived in Asmara and worked — as she was in Adigrat — serving coffee. But with the 1998 war, the Ethiopian woman’s work visa was discovered and denied. She spent two weeks in a detention camp and was deported to Ethiopia. Bhalla

reports that Fireweni left behind not just a job but a family.

“I have a two-year-old son,” she said, “but they said I couldn’t take him because his father is Eritrean and the child was born in Eritrea.” Since she was deported, she knows very little about her son. Nor does she know when she will see him again.

According to Bhalla, it is estimated that at least 50,000 Ethiopians who lived in Eritrea and 75,000 Eritreans who lived in Ethiopia were deported during the war. The two governments declared them *persona non grata* due to their potential security threat. Thousands were from families built from both sides of the border.

“This separation has caused enormous suffering because in some cases, they were born in the country that they were forced to leave,” said UNMEE Human Rights Officer Elio Tamburi. “They have all their friends and family there. It is a very traumatic experience to have to leave their loved ones behind.”

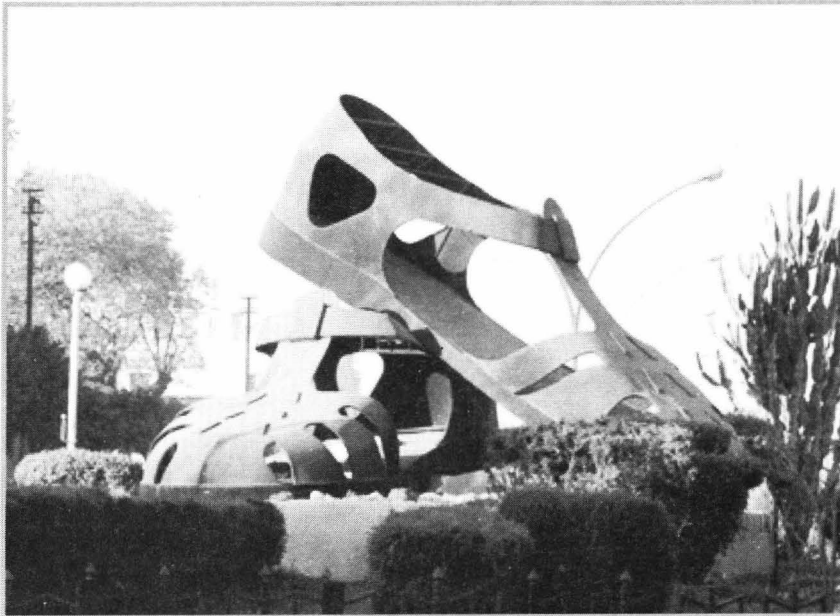
Sadly, the reunions are not a priority in the resolution of the border crisis, at least according to one Ethiopian official, Kinfu Abraham, president of the Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development. “It depends on how quickly normalization between the two countries can take place. The resumption of normal services such as trade, telecommunications and transport first have to be reinstated, and this will assist the process of family reunification.”

“If eventually people are cleared of security and they don’t have suspicious backgrounds, maybe they will be allowed to come back, but this could take a very long time,” he concluded.

Fireweni Hailu may be only a few miles from her family, but she is a long time from being with them again, it seems.

Other Eritrea News

Compiled by Hayward Allen (Harar 62-64)



Martyrs' Square

Photo by Wayne Kessler

Shida Square

There is an unusual monument in Asmara to the Eritrean nationalists who fought for independence. It is a pair of sandals — *shida* in Arabic. "We didn't have uniforms. That was our uniform and it became a symbol of our independence," Girma Asmeron, Eritrean Ambassador to the U.S. is quoted as saying in a May 2 article about the monument in the *NY Times*. The 20-foot long, sheet metal monument was designed by Eritros Abraham. It is located in Martyrs' Square in what was once Queen Elizabeth II Avenue.

The National Assembly Convenes

In late January, the Eritrean National Assembly opened its 14th session with an agenda that included "peace and sovereignty," "defense against Ethiopian aggression," a draft of bills about political parties and organizations, another

bill on elections, the national budget, and regulating the news media.

In his opening remarks, Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki condemned the actions of Ethiopia and the activities within the UN's Temporary Security Zone. He said that Eritrea, on the other hand was to be complimented "because of the goodwill shown . . . and the correct path it followed and the year 2001 witnessed relative peace."

Among the first issues discussed was "internal political challenges," according to the UN Integrated Regional Information Network. President Isayas accused several members of the ruling People's Front for Democracy and Justice party of "treason by abandoning the very values and principles the Eritrean people fought for."



Eritrean radio broadcasted the National Assembly's decision to make the treasonous accusations public. An international rights organization, Human Rights Watch, judged Isayas as "governing by proclamation, unrestrained by a transitional national assembly that meets infrequently . . . [without an] effective mechanism for questioning, much less challenging, government policy and operations."

National Assembly spokesmen denied the allegations and noted that there were several relevant bills being present in draft, including those on the budget and freedom of the press.

There was an official, statistical presentation of the National Assembly business discussions: 1584 "forums of discussion and debate" were held in 298 locations; 5075 hours were spent in those meetings; 1706 "opinions, recommendations and questions" were given, for example, about election laws, while 1832 comments were about the creation of political parties.

As a result, the National Assembly decided that forming of political parties was not needed or wanted in practice, albeit perhaps in principle. A special committee was formed to discuss freedom of the press. A budget of US\$700 million was approved.

A date for public elections was not set. However, it was determined that whenever they were held, 30 percent of the assembly seats would be for women. Those declared "traitors" would not be allowed to be run for election.

It was decided that 100 percent of any Eritrean news organization capital should be financed in Eritrea, for the legislators declared the private media were being used by dissidents, "capitulationists," and outsiders.

Amnesty International was critical of the results of the National Assembly meeting, specifically the arrest and detention of the eleven dissidents and actions taken against freedom of the news media. In an official statement Amnesty International

declared, "[The government] must take immediate action to ensure that the detainees are brought promptly before a judicial authority and released unless charged with a recognizable criminal offense. Any judicial proceedings against them should be before a competent, independent and impartial tribunal offering all applicable judicial guarantees for fair trial, and without recourse to the death penalty."

Aid vs. Self-sufficiency

"Eritrea has always believed and remains convinced that aid cannot be the main engine for economic recovery and growth," according to a commentator on the Eritrean ruling party's Shaebia website (www.shaebia.com). The Peoples Front for Democracy and Justice party (PFDJ) does admit that some short-term humanitarian and development assistance is needed in these difficult times after the ending of the war with Ethiopia.

"The re-integration of displaced people, returning refugees and the 200,000 soldiers, who will be demobilized and return to civilian life, will require external financial support . . . in the form of grants and soft loans."

The PFDJ notes that there has been a diminishing of international aid for the past fifteen years. In addition, there have been development funds "wasted on winning political influence, instead of being directed towards eradicating poverty . . . being redirected from the poorest countries and towards middle income countries in the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe."

The party is certain that "no nation can depend for its survival and development on outsiders' generosity or lack thereof. From the outset, Eritrea has worked to avoid the trap of dependency and has pursued policies aimed at the maximum mobilization of Eritrean resources."

Eritrean Gold

Phelps Dodge, the giant international mining magnate, has "revealed a highly anomalous gold prospect called Adi Lamza 8km south of Asmara,

where previously unreported rock-chip/channel samples collected . . . in 1999 returned excellent gold results with a coincident arsenic anomaly." Working on what Phelps Dodge calls the Asmara Project, according to the company's CEO, M.R. Griffiths, "drilling . . . will commence on completion of preparation activities."

Assab Opens

For the first time since May 1998, a large ship docked in Assab in December. The Pontocratis carried 15,000 tons of relief food donated by the US through the UN World Food Program (WFP).

Assab had served as the main seaport for Ethiopia prior to the Eritrea-Ethiopia war. During the armed conflict, Massawa became Eritrea's primary port. WFP's Eritrea Country Director Patrick Buckley was encouraged by the Assab

docking, "Our ability to use it will greatly benefit relief operations. The use of Assab will also create employment opportunities for local people."

Eritreans Attend OAU Meeting in Addis

A delegation led by Eritrean Foreign Minister Ali Sayyid Abdallah attended the 75th Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Addis last March. He was accompanied by Ambassador Tewolde Woldemikael, director general of the Africa, Asia, and Pacific department within the ministry; Dr. Amare Tekle, ministry diplomatic advisor; and Yohanes Debas, who is involved in consular affairs.

Prior to the OAU meetings, at least two stories emerged about top-secret meetings at the Hilton Hotel between Eritreans and Ethiopians in Addis, including Tewolde and Amare. It was reported by Hilton "night staff" that there was an exchange of a "black briefcase" between Amare and a top aide of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to whom Amare gave "large envelopes." Even the Eritrean's room was noted, on the executive floor, 1122.

"Amare [is] an anti-Ethiopian campaigner who over-shadowed other Eritrean contenders who were

in the business of bedeviling Ethiopia," wrote Abiy Araya of the newspaper *Wogahta*.

In another story filed by Abiy, five Eritreans met with Meles at the Grand Palace after checking into the Hilton. The meeting lasted well after midnight. In this article, Abiy lists the passport numbers of the attendees: Amare Tekle, Fesseha Gebrehiwot, Tewolde Woldemikael, Asemeron Legesse, and Kibreab Andemichael. The reporter also notes that in the meeting with Meles was his chief of staff, Yemane Kidane, "a full-blooded Eritrean."

European Parliament vs. Eritrean government

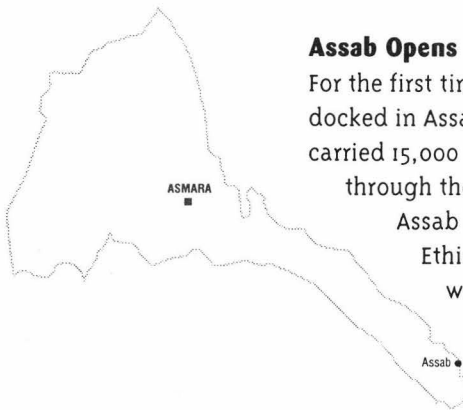
In February, one-third of the European Parliament lashed out at Eritrean President Issayas Afewerki's government. Led by the Christian Democrats and the European Democrats, the resolution endorsed the creation of additional political parties in Eritrea, especially the Eritrean People's Liberation Front-Democratic Party. In support of the resolution, the parliamentary groups catalogued the "regime's transgressions," according to the *Indian Ocean Newsletter*.

These offences included cancellation of elections for the legislature, the closing of the private news media, expulsion of the Italian ambassador, and arrests of dissidents. Also cited were human rights violations, holding of political prisoners, the denial of fundamental freedoms of expression, association — formation of political parties, trade unions, and citizen groups — and an independent judiciary.

Eritrean Response to the European Parliament

Eritrea's Foreign Ministry countered the resolution with a denial of the parliament's assertions, saying the country's leaders were "dismayed by unfair and unjustified" actions. Calling the supporting materials as being "replete with gross misrepresentation of facts."

In the strongly worded response, the Eritrean government denied that it has a one-party national assembly, stating that only 60 members



are from the ruling PFDJ party, while 75 others are elected by the general public. As for the addition of other political parties, the statement notes that the assembly "did not prohibit the formation of political parties, which is enshrined in the Eritrean constitution," only tabled the draft law about their creation, taking "stock of the views of the population canvassed in extensive discussions" at home and abroad.

The assertion that the assembly elections were stopped in December for security reasons, "The facts are again the opposite . . . The National Assembly further mandated the independent commission to fix the date for the elections on the basis of the time required to make the necessary technical preparations." No mention was made of any security concerns.

Eritrea terms the accusations of imprisonment of prominent citizens who advocated democratic reform as "patently false," as are the assertions of charges of treason against the arrestees. "The grave crimes committed by them," the ministry states, "include . . . conspiracy to oust the president illegally; unlawful liaison to establish, through third parties, with the Ethiopian government in the midst of its war of invasion . . . with the view of compromising the country's sovereignty . . . continuous acts of sedition . . . through clandestine cells."

The official statement concludes, "The resolution of the European Parliament contains many more unwarranted statements against the government of Eritrea, including offensive remarks against the person of the president."

Potential food shortage

In January, the *Ghanaian Chronicle of Accra* posted an editorial that indicates Eritrea faces a "grim food situation" following the end of the Ethiopian-Eritrean war. "Worryingly, some 50,000 displaced

farmers are still unable to return to their lands despite the creation of a . . . demilitarized zone."

The *Chronicle* estimates that 13 percent of Eritrea's land is cultivable and that only a quarter of that area is farmed. Continuing with the data: Eritrea's population is growing at a three percent rate, with 65 percent living in the four highland provinces of Asmara, Hamasien, Akele Gusai, and Seraye. These account for only 16 percent of Eritrean land.

"This shortage of cultivable land, along with often low and erratic rainfall, means that in the best of times food self-reliance is a hard fought matter in Eritrea," wrote Donica Tesfamarian in an op-ed piece.

She continued her analysis with comments on the one million people displaced during the most recent chapter of the Eritrean-Ethiopian war: "Many of the displaced people came from the Gash Barka and Debub regions in the south, the breadbasket of Eritrea. And of those displaced from the border areas, most were farmers who also owned livestock."

Difficulties continue for several reasons: bad weather, landmines, inability of farmers to resettle, and the decimation of crops and livestock during the war. In addition, the Eritrean ministry of agriculture notes the drain of younger manpower during the war. "A majority of the work force of the younger generation joined the army," said one ministry official. The war also left many widows. The ministry has launched a number of aid programs, including one that provides livestock, as well as land, to single women.

Food aid is decreasing as farmers return home, but life is still difficult in Eritrea's once-prolific agricultural provinces.

Humanitarian activity to support

School for the Blind

The Abrama Bahta School for the Blind in Asmara has expressed a need for computers and software, as well as other devices used by the sight impaired, that may be used by its students. Tezare Salomon is the director of the school and has asked for assistance. **Ellen Shively** (Asmara 68–70) is serving as a contact person for the project. She suggests that a special bank account be established that research should be done to determine what would be applicable in Eritrea, how much money is needed, how taxes and tariffs will be paid, and how the promotion of the needs will be coordinated. It has already been announced that an Eritrean-American will pay for the shipments.

For more information, contact Ellen at olenska@pacbell.net.

New film

“Bricks of Peace”

In March, the documentary “Bricks of Peace” had its American debut in Oakland, CA. It is a “brilliant portrayal of the Eritrean experience and history,” according to a publicist. It reflects “the united, self-reliant, resilient, hard-working and peace-loving people of Eritrea . . . they are the masters of their destiny. ‘Bricks of Peace’ is an Eritrean heart beat, a reminder of our journey, the people’s journey that brought Eritrea and Eritreans to where they want to be against all odds...”

Cleaning up the country

by Laurie Kessler

Sunday [April 7] was national clean-up day [in Eritrea]. It was announced via radio, TV, and newspaper for a week ahead of time. There were no taxis or buses available, and restaurants and shops were closed until 1:00 p.m. Everyone was to stay home and clean up, including the sidewalk and gutter in front of each compound. We were finished by 9:00.

But that isn’t the news. This is: Plastic bags have been banned in the central *zoba* (province)! Shopkeepers can no longer give away the flimsy plastic bags that everyone carried home their tomatoes, sugar, and such. People are encouraged to use their own existing plastic bags, a basket or cloth bag (we always carry a canvas bag for shopping). This policy closes down two factories that were producing the bags and, as a result, the bags won’t be available throughout the country.

Why? Because they muck up the landscape. They are thrown out on the edge of villages and in Asmara, blowing in the wind and looking ugly. Instead of fields of flowers, Eritrea has fields of pastel-colored plastic! They also were killing sheep and goats, who ate them! Although bottles, cans, and all sorts of things are recycled into use for other things, these bags can’t be recycled unless they are used again and again.

Aid and Comfort

Compiled by Hayward Allen (Harar 62-64)

One of the first US government's acts of 2002 was the granting of "preferential tariff rates" for American imports for 35 sub-Saharan nations. Ethiopia and Eritrea were among the chosen countries given a one-year continuation under the African Growth and Opportunity Act. According to the BBC, the "preferential rate [is given] in light of continued progress towards a market-based economy in the region."

In another January economic development issue, Ethiopia announced that it would not participate in the trade negotiations of the World Trade Organization. According to Ottawa journalist Barry Wilson, the official statement came from Girma Bekele, general manager of the Ethiopian Grain Trade Enterprise.

"Even if barriers to trade are lifted, our capacity to compete in developed country markets or with developed country markets is limited by price, technology, and products," Girma said. "We are not developed to a level to compete with...developed countries. A boy cannot compete with a man."

The reasoning is based on the projected import losses that would occur. "If we allowed zero or low tariffs on maize or wheat," Girma said, "our markets would be overrun with cheaper products from South Africa or other countries."

Wilson noted that Ethiopian farmers are already facing competition from another quarter: food aid. (See "But is it too much food?" in "More Ethiopia News"). It is argued that while food assistance is helpful in drought times, there is a negative economic factor when production levels are high. In the end, according to Girma, it is the farmer who suffers most.

In mid-January, the president of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, spent three days in Ethiopia signing loan papers that would bring US\$500 million to the nation. The loan agreements are for the development of roads, energy production, education, and health programs. Over the next two years, according to the BBC World Service, another half-billion dollars will be provided to Ethiopia. It marks the largest loan made by the World Bank to a sub-Saharan country.

As January ended, the Ethiopian government's Disaster Preparation and Preparedness Commission met with UN officials to discuss the national projected relief needs. According to the commission's head, Simon Mechale, 5.2 million people will be affected by the lack of food in their area. Representatives of the World Food Program noted that the number marks a twenty percent decrease. "The humanitarian situation in Ethiopia has improved since the most recent crisis years of 1999 and 2000," according to Georgia Shaver of the WFP. Her remarks were made in a conference devoted to "Assistance Requirements and Implementation Strategy 2002."

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and a top-level delegation traveled to Germany in February to discuss economic assistance to alleviate national poverty levels. According to Radio Ethiopia, in his meetings with the German minister for Economic Development and Cooperation, the prime minister was assured of the willingness of the German government to continue its efforts to strengthen Ethiopian economic development.

Following the delegation's visit to Germany, the party moved to Ireland to discuss similar matters. There Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern said that his country will continue to provide aid to Ethiopia.

Afterwards, the Ethiopian delegation flew to Paris for a meeting of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

February also marked the announcement that Denmark would cease its development efforts in Eritrea due to "its assaults on democratic principles and human rights," according to IRIN, the UN Integrated Regional Information Network.

"The government wishes to break with the habitual thinking of years which dictates that if only assistance increases, everything will be good," a Danish report stated. "Together with its EU partners, Denmark will make demands regarding good governance and the willingness to increase respect for human rights and democracy in development cooperation."

Over the years, according to IRIN sources, Denmark has been contributing significant aid to Eritrean agricultural and educational programs. In response, Eritrea's deputy ambassador to Kenya, Temedhin Temariam, said that the Danish decision is counter-productive, "Empty stomachs and empty minds cannot harbor democracy... The biggest human right is the right to life, which is the right to food. And education is a major source of democracy." He also noted that Eritrean democratic progress would be at the country's own speed.

The Netherlands has signed an US\$70 million aid agreement with Ethiopia that will help in the areas of education, "food security," and health. The funding will continue through 2004. In addition, the Ethiopian government signed an assistance agreement with the United Kingdom for "food security, education and capacity building."

Ethiopia is the recipient of a five-year US\$480 million grant from the 15-member European Union for the purpose of building roads and transport. The grant papers were signed by Ethiopian Minister of Finance and Economic Development Sufyan Ahmad and EU Deputy Director General for Development Athanassios Theodorakis. In an Addis Ababa press conference, Theodorakis said the

grant "is a sign of the long and healthy relations between the EU and Ethiopia."

The Africa Development Bank has signed a US\$46 million loan agreement with Ethiopia for the development of rural electrification. Seven regions will be involved: Tigray, Benshangul Gumuz, Somali, Afar, Oromiya, Amhara, and Southern Nations and Nationalities. In all, 36 districts will be reached.

The International Monetary Fund will provide access to US\$30 million to "help mitigate the impact on the balance of payments of a continued deterioration of the terms of trade," according to an IMF spokesperson. Ethiopia has now borrowed US\$44 million from the IMF. The IMF representative noted that Ethiopia had done well with "the performance criteria and benchmarks, as well as experiencing a higher than estimated Gross Domestic Product at 7.9 percent. In addition lower inflation, high harvests and the infusion of humanitarian aid have lowered the national debt.

At a recent Organization of the Islamic Conference, one of the topics discussed is a plan to organize the seven nations of the Horn of Africa into a model of the European Union. Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia and Uganda are considering ways "to turn the region from an area of political conflicts and instability into a zone of peace, development, and prosperity," according to Sudanese Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman. "We are looking into the possibility of a confederation of the Horn of Africa nations."

At the Kuala Lumpur convention, Dr. Osman noted that cooperative projects are already in place, as in the case of a road between Khartoum and Addis Ababa due to open soon and the railway link with Sudan and Ethiopia.

The Quest for a Free Press, Cont'd

Compiled by Hayward Allen (Harar 62-64)

Eritrean Journalists

In February, four journalists were arrested by the Eritrean authorities; no charges were cited. According to the anti-government web reporters at Awate.com, three of those arrested had been assigned to the Arabic section of the state media. Hamid Mohamed Said is a news and sports writer who had worked for ERI-TV for a decade. The youngest TV reporter, "Saida," was also jailed. Saleh Aljezaeri, who worked as a reporter for the government's radio station, "Voice of the Masses," and the Eritrean state newspaper, *Hadas Ertra*, was also named in the report of arrests.

Aaron Berhane, who worked for the now-banned, privately-owned newspaper, *Setit*, was jailed by the police. Berhane, who joined the Fitewrari liberation movement in 1978, served as a teacher in Tekombia, from whence he fled with his family during the Red Terror. He and three other liberation veterans founded the newspaper. During the recent Eritrean-Ethiopian conflict, Berhane served as a military spokesman in the Aidi Qeyih region. Following the end of that war, he returned to write and publish *Setit*.

Editor's note: At Awate.com, it is noted that Suleiman Musa Haj in Keren was told by the government to denounce the anti-government "G-15." In the process of denying the request, Suleiman Musa asked about the fates of several teachers from the Bejuk School arrested in 1994.

On April 1, ten Eritrean journalists began a prison hunger strike; last September, they had been arrested and detained without being publicly charged. According to a BBC report, they have demanded appearances before an impartial and independent court. According to the Eritrean government, a special commission has been established to re-establish a "new, responsible

private press." According to government spokesman Yemani Gebremeskel, delays in the journalists' trials are a matter for Eritrea's legal system.

In a message smuggled out of prison, the newsmen asserted they had been interrogated once in a half-year. The focus was on their connection with eleven ranking government officials who were also arrested. The men had advocated democratic reform, and the government denounced them as traitors and "defeatists."

The BBC notes that the journalists were employees of the private press and were involved in publishing interviews with the dissidents and writing editorials concerning the government/antigovernment debate.

Paris-based Reporters sans Frontiers (Reporters Without Borders) posted a story regarding the organization's concern about the hunger strike. "They are being held in very bad conditions and we are worried about their health," said RSF spokesman Robert Menard. "All they have done is to express their opinions and nothing justifies their lengthy imprisonment."

Eritrea, according to RSF, is the only African nation without private, independently-owned news media.

Reporters sans Frontiers names the ten strikers: Yusuf Mohamed Ali, Mattewos Habteab, Dawit Habtemichael, Medhanie Haile, Temesgen Gegreyesus, Emanuel Asrat, Dawit Isaac, Fessehaye Yohannes, Said Abdulkader, and Seyum Tsehaye. They worked for the publications *Mequaleh*, *Keste Debona*, *Zemen*, *Setit*, and *Admas*. RSF notes that there is no news of *Setit* editor Simret Seyum who was caught in January, as he tried to flee to Sudan, as many other journalists have done in recent years.

Meanwhile, in Ethiopia

In March Reporters sans Frontiers announced that the last imprisoned Ethiopian journalist, Tamrat Zuma, had been released. An editor of the weekly newspaper, *Atkurof*, Tamrat has been jailed in Addis Ababa. RSF chief Robert Menard wrote, "It is the first time since 1993 that a journalist is not in prison in Ethiopia. It is very good news, but one must not forget that over 30 professionals working in the press are currently being taken to court and risk being imprisoned."

Charges against Tamrat Zuma included: quoting opposition opinions from an overseas radio broadcast, "inciting violence" and slander through an interview with a dissident ex-general. Among his accusers were the managers of a state-owned tannery.

In the past decade, RSF and the BBC report that more than 175 journalists have been arrested and imprisoned. Many more have fled the country.

In early April, the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists and the Ethiopian Free Press Journalists (EFJA) issued a news release regarding two newsmen presently jailed. Lubaba Said, the former editor-in-chief of the Amharic weekly *Tarik* and Melese Shine, editor of the Amharic weekly, *Ethiop* were arrested for various charges.

Lubaba Said was challenged for two 1996 articles that were asserted to have a negative psychological effect on soldiers at the front and people at home. She is the first woman journalist jailed for her writing. Melese Shine was charged with "defaming the head of state" and "publishing an illegal article in collaboration with an outlaw." Melese had interviewed opposition party leader Emiru Wonde, who criticized Prime Minister Zenawi and the Tigray People's Liberation Front.

According to the EFJA, there are at least 30 journalists facing criminal charges. Among those charged with various crimes: Kebebew Gebyehu Filate (*Tobia*), Arega Wolde Kirkos Ayele (*Tobia*), Wondwossen Gebre Kidan (*Ethiop*), Shimelis Asfaw (*Ethio-Time*), Tsega Moges (*Zare New*), Berhanu Mamo (*Abyssinia*), and Kifle Mulat (*Ethio-Time*).

Newly found on the Web and may be of interest

web.syr.edu/~rebeal/EriPage2.html

Site of Richard Beal (Assab 97-98) "A Preliminary Simulation of the Potential for Sustainability in Eritrea" studies population and agricultural production of Eritrea.

www.ethiopians.com/Engineering/Addis_Historical_Buildings.htm

Samuel Kinde Kassegne presents a photo essay "Ethiopia's Historical Buildings."

www.ethiopians.com

Site of MediaEthiopia.com

www.CyberEthiopia.com

The site states it was "... created as a non-profit service to the Internet Community. With the greatest selection of Ethiopians links in a variety of categories, CyberEthiopia aims to be the best starting point for research, entertainment, business pursuits and promotion of Information Technology development in Ethiopia."

www.bridgestoprosperity.org

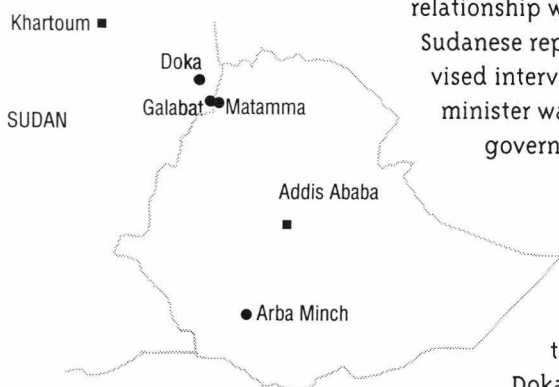
The mission statement of Bridges to Prosperity reads in part: "By combining western ingenuity, indigenous manpower, and the generosity of its contributors, we build bridges worldwide in areas lacking the resources to do so." Read about their first project: repairing the 2nd Portuguese Bridge (also called the Broken Bridge) over the Blue Nile on a trade route between Debre Tabor and Debre Marcos that had been damaged in the 1930s. Project #5 will also be in Ethiopia: repairing Castiano's Bridge over the Blue Nile River, that connects Gojjam, Wolega and Shewa Provinces.

More Ethiopia news

Compiled by Hayward Allen (Harar 62–64)

Ethiopian-Sudanese relations

In January, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi praised the nation's solidifying and expanding relationship with Sudan. According to Sudanese reports, an extended televised interview with the prime minister was full of praise for its government's role in increasing economic ties with Ethiopia. This includes Ethiopia's use of Port Sudan, the creation of a free trade zone, and the inauguration of the Doka-Al-Galabat-Al-Matamma Road between the two countries.



Referring to an upcoming meeting of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Khartoum, Meles said that the IGAD is playing a significant role in the solution to African problems and disputes.

Professor Mesfin Wolde-Mariam returns

Seventy-one-year-old Mesfin Wolde-Mariam voluntarily flew to Ethiopia in late January to face charges and possible imprisonment. His cause: free speech and the University of Addis Ababa.

It is alleged that, following an April 2001 university lecture on "What Is a University?" student riots began on three of the campuses of the U of AA, resulting in many deaths, imprisonment of countless students and citizens, and the arrest of Professor Mesfin and his colleague, Dr. Berhanu Nega. Mesfin was professor of geography and also was the head of the Ethiopian Human Rights Council. Released on bail after a month and allowed to travel to France to attend a conference, he traveled on to England.

He was interviewed by *Guardian* reporter Donald MacLeod. "He has always liked visiting Britain," MacLeod wrote. "He is a keen follower of both Manchester United and Liverpool [soccer teams] and has always been fascinated by Hyde Park Corner."

Mesfin told the newsman that he had to go back to Ethiopia. "I can't run away at this age; it would be ridiculous." MacLeod described Mesfin's lifelong pursuit of free speech. "The mild-mannered geographer has been in trouble with all three regimes he has lived under. Things were subtler in the days of Emperor Haile Selassie, who was offended by a talk he gave and offered him the governorship of a province to get him out of the university. When he refused, he was imprisoned."

Under the regime of the Red Terror, he chose not to teach geography along the lines of Marxist doctrine but rather to work on famine research. During the current government's rule, Mesfin saw the dismissal of many of his academic colleagues and the division of the student body into ethnic groups. "In the last statement I made to the university students, I told them: if you want to prove you are human beings, to prove you are university students, when you go out of this hall, the first person you meet who you have not been talking to because he is of a different ethnic origin — have the courage to go to him and stretch out your hand and say sorry. Say, 'You are as good a human being as I am — forgive the past, I will be your friend for the future.'"

Moslem-Christian clash

Late in 2001, there was a violent conflict in Addis between Muslims and Christians following the demand that a mosque's construction on a football field be stopped. More than 1,000 Muslims were

WEB-PUBLISHED articles on Ethiopia and the ongoing struggle against Islamic-based terrorism.

"Why US Should Not Align with Ethiopia Against Somalia on the War Against Terrorism," by Asgede Hagos — www.usafricaonline.com/hagos.ethiosomalia.html

"A New Scrutiny of Somalia as the Old Anarchy Reigns" by Donald C. McNeil Jr. — <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/02/10/international/africa/10SOMA.html>

Articles in PDF format at the web site of the Center for Strategic and International Studies — <http://www.csis.org/africa/ANotes/>. For February 2002, "Ethiopia: Coping with Islamic Fundamentalism" by David Shinn, a former ambassador to Ethiopia. For January 2002 "Somalia: Next Up in the War on Terrorism" by Ken Menkhaus.

involved, half of whom were arrested after one person was killed and two policemen wounded by gunfire.

Some good news on food supplies

Substantial food reserves and bumper harvests highlight the Ethiopian agricultural picture. In February, the Ethiopian Emergency Food Security Reserve announced that more than 3.5 million quintals (one quintal is 100 kilograms) of grain were in the government's storage facilities, plus more than a half-million quintals in humanitarian agency loans. Manager of Administration Sirak Hailu said that the amount would feed as many as 4.5 million people for six months. The primary function of the Ethiopian administrative office is to loan grain to humanitarian agencies, which would then distribute grain to those in need.

But is it too much food?

According to a report in the *Addis Tribune*, in January, there was so much grain in Ethiopia that prices fell significantly from Gojjam to Bale. Not that it was all bountiful harvests, for in the Somali region, there was still a need for assistance.

"This is the irony," the *Tribune* editorial writer noted. "Some people require food assistance while others are forced to sell their crops at cut-rate prices, probably less than it cost to grow them. In economist's terms this is a lack of 'effective demand'; those who need the food have too little money to buy it. Those who produced a surplus can't make money in a good year; there aren't enough people who can afford their grain."

What happens is a kind of legitimate humanitarian shell game. For example, the Dutch government gave 10,000 metric tons of food through Save the Children Holland to Save the Children UK. The UK STC "borrowed" the foodstuffs from the Ethiopian agency and delivered it to North and South Wollo, where it was needed. Also, STC UK is repurchasing those tons from local farmers and then returning them to the Emergency Food Security Reserve.

In March, BBC News reported that the bumper Ethiopian harvests are wreaking havoc with the

national economy. Food prices have fallen by more than twenty percent, national central bank interest dropped to three percent, and coffee prices spiraled downwards.

In a nation wherein an estimated 85% of the population is involved in agriculture, the drops in prices have hit the economy where it hurts most.

In March, when interest rates were cut, Teklewold Atnafu of the National Bank, noted, "Given the current negative 7.3% inflation, depositors will still be profitable even after the revision of the interest rate down to three percent."

Cheap *bunna*

A USAID report indicates that world coffee prices have reached a three-decade low, having declined more than seventy percent in the past four years. The disastrous slide has cost Ethiopia more than US\$167 million, according to the report. "It is an amount equivalent to almost half the country's annual export earnings," it is reported.

The picture is so negative, the Ethiopian government is considering a 6.5 percent surtax on coffee exports. Coffee has accounted for as much as sixty percent of foreign currency earnings and has fallen forty-four percent. More than 15 million Ethiopians earn their living from the coffee market.

The drop in coffee markets and futures has "severely dented Ethiopia's precious foreign exchange reserves," according to the National Bank of Ethiopia in February. According to a bank spokesman, the foreign exchange reserves rose by 28 percent in the past six months, creating a balance of US\$923 million.

According to the bank, an upward swing of reserves comes through the resumption of international grants and loans since the Eritrean-Ethiopian war's end. "From the export side, we have had a bad time because coffee prices have been declining so much." The majority of loans have come back to Ethiopia from the World Bank, the IMF, and the European Union.

"ETHIOPIA COULD have no natural forests left by 2020," according to a UN report. "Forty years ago, 40 percent of Ethiopia was covered by forests."

Yes — the same 40 years ago when the first PCVs went to Ethiopia.

Ethiopian flora and fauna face total destruction

"Ethiopia could have no natural forests left by 2020, according to the author of a new UN report on forest fires in Ethiopia," reported BBC's Nita Bhalla.

Dechassa Lemessa, of the UN Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia, wrote that ongoing fires have reduced the country's forests to less than three percent of the countryside. "Forty years ago," he noted, "40 percent of Ethiopia was covered by forests. The decrease of Ethiopia's natural forests is happening at an alarming and furious rate."

He estimates that 200,000 hectares (one hectare is about 2,500 acres) are being lost annually. "If something is not done soon, we estimate that there will be no forest land in 15–20 years."

Lemessa blames the continuing losses on subsistence farmers who use fire as a production tool for farming, setting fires as the rainy season begins. As elsewhere in the world, many of these pre-set fires go out of control. In January 2000, for example the southwestern forests of Bale and Borena were caught in a three-month conflagration. Fifteen thousand firefighters tried to put the fires out. An estimated 300,000 hectares were consumed by flame. Foodstocks, coffee plantations, and grazing land were destroyed.

Another concern is the ecological harm that visits the land after the fires leave. Soil is changed. Erosion occurs. Crops will not return. Only charcoal is harvested. The total cost of the Bale-Borena fires is estimated at almost \$40 million.

Note: Use Google search for "Ethiopia reforestation" to find projects that are trying to address this terrible situation.

Bank Fraud and Reform

When the International Monetary Fund agreed to make a US\$30 million loan to Ethiopia, one of the benchmark expectations was bank reform. The state-owned Commercial Bank was recently stunned by the arrest of "dozens of senior executives" charged with corruption, according to the

UN Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN).

The BBC has reported that an opposition radio network reporter, Radio Freedom's Qamaan Hirsi, did a story about Ephrem Negash, a Commercial Bank vice-president, who has refused to return to Ethiopia from the United States, where he was attending a conference with the World Bank and the IMF. Words such as "defect" and "political asylum" were used in Qamaan's report to describe Ephrem's departure from the Ethiopian delegation.

Medical news

HIV/AIDS News

"A senior UN official said . . . that the HIV/AIDS epidemic was worsening in Ethiopia and urged authorities to take preventative measures," according to a story sent out by Reuters. "Ethiopia has crossed the five percent threshold prevalent rate of HIV/AIDS. We have got up to three million or more Ethiopians infected with the disease," said UN Special Envoy Stephan Lewis.

"This is a crisis of cosmic proportion . . . Unless urgent and dramatic responses are taken, you could get an explosion of a pandemic of the kind that has occurred in east and southern Africa," he said after making a seven-day tour of Ethiopia. "We saw, as we traveled, households virtually abandoned because of HIV/AIDS related deaths. Little girls of ten-years-old look after other siblings, and they live in appalling conditions. That should not be allowed to continue."

Three Ethiopian opposition parties have criticized the government for not declaring a state of emergency and taking necessary steps to curb the alarming rates of contamination and death. The leader of the Council of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy in Ethiopia, Beyene Petros, stated that the government had not introduced anti-retroviral therapy, closed sex-trade businesses, and made examinations compulsory for prostitutes.

The government has established a National AIDS Council, but it is criticized for being only a public information outlet. The council itself states that as many as 5,000 people are infected weekly; by 2004 nearly 500 people between 15-years-old and 49-years-old will die every day.

Meningitis Outbreak

The Ethiopian Ministry of Health projects a tragic future for victims of meningitis. "We think this will be an epidemic year and all the signs are there," said Dr. Solomon Worku, who is in charge of "tackling epidemics in Ethiopia." That figure represents nearly half of the national population.

"In high density areas, the bacteria spreads very easily and quickly," Dr. Solomon said in a UN IRIN interview. "In areas where there is a dense population it transmits very fast through droplets." He noted that the dry season, from January through March, is especially dangerous.

"The length of the epidemic depends on the intervention taken and the resources that are mobilized for the fight against the epidemic," he said. He also commented that the current meningitis is one of the less intensive bacterial infections.

However, according to Dr. Solomon, since September 2001, 1,308 cases of meningitis have been reported, with 79 fatalities.

The currently affected areas are Sidame, Gamo Gofa, Oromiya, and Benishshangul, most of which are part of the "traditional meningitis belt." Authorities define an epidemic as when ten people per 100,000 are infected. In Sidame, for example, that ratio is about four times that figure. Individuals at risk range from two-years-old to 30-years-old. Often fatalities occur due to a combination of meningitis and malaria.

In 1989, which is considered the last significant epidemic, more than 45,000 cases and 1,686 deaths were reported.

An Ethiopian News Miscellany

"Stop the 50-Storey Monster"

"I hope city officials and citizens of Addis would stop this 50-storey monster from being erected."

In a letter to the *Addis Tribune*, Getachew wrote from Canada that plans for a 50-story building in Addis should consider the ramifications of September 11, 2001, in New York City. Getachew applauded a *Tribune* analysis by Sereke Berhan of the concept proposed by Sheik Alamuddin and Company to erect a skyscraper in Addis. Sereke suggested that the building be constructed in four shorter elements.

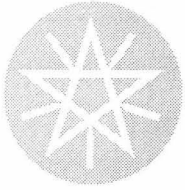
Getachew raised several questions: "If Sheik Alamuddin's businesses go bankrupt (look, nobody thought Enron's empire . . . would go belly-up), who is going to get stuck with a building way too big for a city that is among the poorest in the world?"

Drawing upon the WTC collapse, Getachew wrote, "May God forbid, but if a similar disaster occurs in Addis, are there fire fighting capacity, rapid disaster relief, and other emergency services in the city to respond to such calamity? You do not necessarily need planes hitting buildings to create a major disaster; a major fire on the top floors may do it for you."

Getachew also cites his fears that the East African Rift may create earthquakes that will topple a high-rise building. He also writes, "It is easy to see why tall buildings are required in some southeast Asian cities because of severe limitations of space. I do not believe Addis is there yet."

Gang Warfare

Two youth gangs in Adigrat have declared war upon each other, and reports from the BBC Monitoring Service state that five young men have been killed in a recent clash. A story on an opposition radio station, Voice of Ethiopian Salvation, described how Adigrat youths were fighting with young people "expelled from Asmara and Assab."



The BBC also noted that the Adigrat police were involved in the gunfight while trying to quell the battle.

More Paleoanthropology

In February, there was a 25th anniversary celebration of the discovery of the Bodo Skull in the Middle Awash of the Afar State. The remnant of the nearly half-million-year-old Ethiopian was saluted at the opening of a scientific conference in Addis Ababa. The Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture, Teshome Toga, endorsed the work of various research and human resource institutions. He was quick to acknowledge the controversies surfacing in the past two decades regarding the methodology and disposition of anthropological discoveries.

"In order to institutionalize the research work," he said, "we have formulated the national cultural policy and established authority responsible for research, conservation, and protection of irreplaceable cultural heritages."

Teshome noted that the various hominoids discovered in Ethiopia — Lucy, Garhi, and Ramidus — indicate that the birthplace of humanity is in Ethiopia. Thirty paleoanthropological teams are currently working along the Ethiopian Rift Valley, from southern Omo to northern Hadar, he said.

US Prof. Glenn C. Conroy told the conference that the discovery of the Bodo Skull was "the most important discovery ever made in Africa" and elsewhere because "it played the most important role in defining human origin."

Addis Ababa University Prof. Assefa Mebrate stressed the importance of establishing sustainable and capable institutions of higher learning to identify Ethiopian historical and anthropological connections.

Artists and writers recognized

On March 30 — Prize Trust Award Day — the Ethiopian Fine Arts and Mass Media Prize Trust awarded prizes to national writers, musicians and

artists for their contributions to Ethiopian culture. The various awards included "Life-time Achievement" and "Long-time Professional Merit" awards. Prizes included medals, money, and certificates.

Prizes and certificates were presented by Ethiopian President Girma Wolde-Giorgis. Receiving awards were composer Tesfaye Lema, Aster Awoke, Fekadu Mele-Mariam, Tadesse Muluneh (music), Sahelesilasse Berhanemiriam, Getaschew Deblake, Woru Mamo, and Negas Gebremariam (theater, painting, journalism).

Prize Trust Day is dedicated to the late Paulos Gnogno, a journalist, and sponsored by the Amhara, Tigray, Oromia, and SNNPS development associations.

Record Maker

Ejigayehu Shibabaw, aka Gigi, has won a coveted *NY Times* "underdog award" for her record, "Gigi" — which was featured in *Herald* #24. Noted by Jon Pareles, she is "a songwriter from Ethiopia; her producer, Bill Lasell, is an old hand at international fusions. In songs about love and the country she left behind, Gigi's modal melodies and urgently questioning voice rise out of grooves that swirl jazz and funk into the complexities of Ethiopian pop, broadening the music without Americanizing it."

Editor's note: Am I the only person who knows not what the hell he means? And does he like injera or wat?

No Flights to Paris

For those who have built travel plans on flights from Paris to Addis, forget it. In April, Ethiopian Airlines stated that there would be no flights to Paris due to the less-than-adequate DeGaulle International Airport docking assignment. Notwithstanding France, Ethiopian Airlines flies 47 international routes and 40 domestic ones, according to an EA representative.

Soccer Joy

As the year turned, Ethiopian sports fans had cause to celebrate. The national soccer team

returned from a 2-1 victory over Kenya in the final match of the Cecafta Cup. "Thousands of people lined up the streets, singing and dancing in celebration of Ethiopia's first international triumph away from home," according to an ebullient *Addis Tribune* reporter.

In 1987, the Ethiopian team won the cup in Addis, where they had won the Africa Cup a quarter-century earlier.

The cup battle against Kenya, played in Kigali, Rwanda, was a frustrating fight. Ethiopia scored two goals in the first half and then struggled to keep Kenya at one goal. "The quality of Ethiopia's game deteriorated in the second half as the team from the Horn of Africa concentrated exclusively on defense," the reporter wrote.

"From now on we should try and reorganize ourselves better to reach our previous glory days," said Ethiopian Coach Asrat Haile. "More friendlies [local matches] should be arranged to expose the players and only then can we make our way back to the top."

Relics, a Matter of Time

The Tabot of St. Michael

In Ethiopian orthodoxy, tabots, replicas of the Ark of the Covenant, were created as many as four centuries ago. One was called the Tabot of St. Michael. Tabots are a traditional holy object found in Ethiopian Orthodox churches, signifying the power of the Ark. So sacred were they that only Coptic priests could and can still view them.

In 1868 the Tabot of St. Michael became just another piece of loot among the multitude of artifacts taken by a British "expeditionary force" and was carried away from Emperor Téwodros' Maqdala castle.* The British soldiers had come to avenge the emperor's imprisoning of several of

* For more about this event, see "Reading about Téwodros on page 39.

Queen Victoria's subjects. According to an American journalist on the scene, the emperor chose to commit suicide rather than become a captive. The plunder was hauled away on 200 mules and 15 elephants, the American reported.

Eventually St. Michael's tabot found a home in the St. John the Evangelist Scottish Episcopal Church on Princes Street in Edinburgh. Last year, Rev. John MacLuckie was looking for a communion set, according to the *Edinburgh Observer*, and found "a battered leather box [containing] a carved piece of wood that he recognized as being a representation of the Ark of the Covenant, which the Israelites used to carry the Ten Commandments as they traveled to the Promised Land."

On February 9, 2002, the tabot was returned to its country of origin and religious history. According to a BBC report, a crowd gathered at the airport to welcome the artifact home. "Adorned in resplendent vestments made of bright velvet and gold and carrying silver and gold processional crosses, thousands of priests and religious elders from Addis Ababa's 106 Orthodox churches led a procession to Addis Ababa's Trinity Cathedral, where the wooden relic will be stored."

The seven-mile journey took four hours, as religious leaders and church members chanted, sang and danced along the way. "Beating drums, they chanted in the ancient language of Ge'ez, welcoming the tabot home," BBC's Nita Bhalla reported.

It should be noted that the British plunder included ten other tabots, at least 500 ancient manuscripts, gold crowns, crosses and chalices, as well as countless icons and vestments, armour, and a miscellany of sacred and historic objects from the 14th through the 19th centuries. At present, many of the "Maqdala Treasures" still reside in England's Victoria and Albert Museum, the National Library, and the British Museum.

The Continuing Story of the Stolen Stele

Seventy-four-year-old Prof. Richard Pankhurst continues to champion the cause of returning the

ancient Axum Obelisk from Italy to Ethiopia. As previously noted, Il Duce personally ordered the theft of the huge 82-foot stele in 1937 and its subsequent triumphant entry into Rome to symbolize Italy's victories over the savages of Africa and Benito's 15th year in power. It stands in the Piazza de Porta Capena near the Coliseum and actually stands in front of the offices of the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).

Pankhurst reports in the *Addis Tribune* that his campaign has inspired numerous international responses. Italians urged the government to return the monument to its proper place, while others demanded it stay in Rome. Some correspondents refer to actions taken by the government as WWII drew to a close, among them returning the Axum Obelisk. Promised by treaties but not done.

Pankhurst also was admittedly stunned by one response by a certain Signor Luigi Tomasino: "Why do you want to see the return of the obelisk to the Niggers? Do you not understand that it stands in Rome as a symbol of our Civilizing Mission in Africa! Yes, a Civilizing Mission, not only in Ethiopia, but also in Libya, Eritrea, and Somalia!... If Italy had civilized Afghanistan...there would be no terrorism in the world today." Tomasino also tells Pankhurst that the use of poison gas in Ethiopia was a means of civilizing the Ethiopians who opposed Italian forces.

Pankhurst wants to remind Tomasino of the countless acts of violence against the Ethiopian people during that terrible time. "It should be pointed out to dear Tomasino that the Obelisk issue today is really nothing to do with what he chooses to term 'civilization' or 'terrorism.' It is a question of what we would have called honoring agreements—if they had not been dishonoured for so long."

In January the Ethiopian government petitioned the United Nations to intervene. UNESCO, it is believed, can act on Ethiopia's behalf, perhaps because of the FAO's proximity to the stolen stele.

While there have been several official Italian promises of intent to return the monument, none have come to pass. Various excuses have been given, ranging from the fact that it has been in Italy long enough to qualify as being a naturalized Italian to that of Vittorio Sgarbi, deputy minister for cultural heritages, who believes that Italy should not send a well-preserved and cleanly restored icon into a war zone, where it might be destroyed. Deputy Minister Sgarbi threatened to resign if the Axum object left Italy.

According to an Associated Press story in January, a deep hole has been dug in which to re-plant the stele when it returns to Axum. "The Italians have been here, they've seen our preparations," said Fisseha Zibelo, a representative of the Ethiopian cultural ministry. "It is an insult for them not to sent it here. The obelisk does not have any connection with Italy; it is part of our heritage."

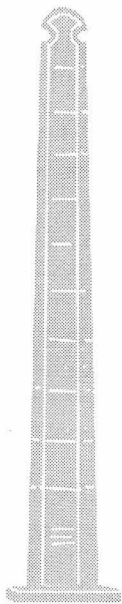
The Axum Obelisk, somewhat misnamed due to its non-pyramidal shape, will stand one day, it is hoped, in a field of lesser steles. Most are blank-faced, but some are like the one in Rome, stacked and etched levels, complete with doors and windows. How the single-cut structures were ferried from a quarry two miles away is still a mystery seventeen hundred years later.

In March, the European Union tabled a question posed at the ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly in Cape Town, South Africa, regarding the return of the stele and other items taken by Fascist invaders. Richard Balfe, the British member of the EU, raised the question and asked for a statement that was not forthcoming.

Note: Pankhurst, who was heartened by the return of the St. Michael's tabot, is also asking that the remainder of the "Maqdala Treasures" be returned by the British.

Ethiopia's First Airplane Still Grounded in Italy

In 1935, according to a Reuters report, German pilot Ludwig Weber first flew the first aeroplane built in Ethiopia. Weber called it Aethiopian I, but Haile



Selassie named it after his daughter Tsehai. Others called the vehicle the Aeroplane of the Negus.

Today, it flies on wires in the Aviation Museum of Italy, part of the plunder taken from Ethiopia by Mussolini's army.

Ethiopians want to display the plane in the new terminal at Addis' Bole International Airport.

The Italian government has issued no response to the request.

Items we E&E RPCVs might find interesting, amusing or sad

Those weird pancakes, as-you-wait

"Take the mingled aroma of molasses and yeast. Add the nutty essence of an exotic grain. Mix well." The recipe opens an article written by *Washington Post* writer Walter Nicholls. He is, of course, discovering the sacred bread of Ethiopia, Eritrea, and thousands of E&E RPCVs: injera, which he describes as the "centerpiece for Ethiopian cuisine." It comes in three basic colors, as only a Starbucks devotee might write, "light latte to dark mocha."

Nicholls notes that there are more than a dozen injera bakeries in the Washington DC area, "each with its own recipe for this specialty bread . . . to appease the varied tastes of the approximately 65,000 people of Ethiopian descent who live" in the area.

The reporter chose to drop by Addisu Gebeya, "an Ethiopian market in Adams Morgan," to sample the injera. "Some like it salty. Some don't. Others think it should be very sour or not so sour at all," said Daniel Tererra, owner of Addisu Gebeya. "It depends on what you like." Daniel gets his injera from six bakeries and on a usual Saturday will sell about 1500 injera, by the bag.

Nicholls' article is a basic lesson in teff and injera. He notes that teff is a "tiny cereal grain" grown in

northern Africa and now America. "It is high in protein and fiber as well as a good source of iron and calcium," he notes. Preparation includes fermentation of the batter until it creates bubbles. Baking then takes place on an electric griddle, but traditionally would be made on a great clay plate over an open fire. "The injera produced is nut-brown in color . . . spongy in consistency, with a pronounced but pleasant sour flavor, reminiscent of San Francisco-style sourdough bread," he describes.

Nicholls also visited bakers and restaurants in Silver Spring, Arlington, and Skyline. At Woder Ethiopia in Silver Spring, owner Fikru Teka uses 16 teflon-coated griddles and takes about one minute to cook one injera. It is not a complex project, according to Fikru, "There's no secret to it. It's just our tradition from home. In my culture men do not make injera, only women."

Azib Tekle and her brother run the Azieb Market. Her injera is nearly white in color and not easy to make. She keeps her baking methods secret. "It's a skill that takes accuracy in measuring the ingredients. It takes timing . . . I will say that good injera must have lots of eyes."

Henry Reuss Dies

In 1957, US Rep. Henry Reuss (D-Wis) traveled to southeast Asia on a Congressional Joint Economic delegation. While there, he met a group of young UNESCO teachers from America and other nations who were working in villages. For the next three years, whenever he spoke at a student convocation, he brought forward his idea for a "Point Four Youth Corps." [Editor's Note: Named so, I assume after President Truman's Point Four Program of Technical Assistance to Developing Nations] Reuss also wrote numerous articles about his idea. In January 1960, Rep. Reuss introduced legislation to study the concept of a youth corps to travel abroad.

Henry Reuss died earlier this year. He was 89-years-old.

NOTE: In June 1960, Sen.

Hubert H. Humphrey, who served on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, introduced a bill that would find and send young people overseas to help "peoples of the underdeveloped areas of the world to combat poverty, disease, illiteracy and hunger." In this bill, Senate S 3675, was the first use of the words "Peace Corps."

Harari Artist Dies

Nuria Ahmed Shami Kalid was a vocalist and composer from Harar and died in January. An obituary appeared in the *Addis Zemen* on January 30; it has been translated from Amharic by Alemu Aga and sent to *The Herald* by Cynthia Tse Kimberlin (Adi Ugri, Asmara 62-64).

"Mrs. Nuria Ahmed who sang and taught songs of the Harari for the past forty-five years died a few days ago after undergoing medical treatments, as reported yesterday by the public relations officer of the region.

"Born in 1942 in the town of Harar in the locality known as 'Bedrei,' Mrs Nuria, who had glaucoma at the age of seven that caused the loss of eyesight, started singing at the age of 15 to become a celebrated singer of the Harari people.

"She disseminated Harari culture to the young and also when she traveled abroad to London, Germany and other countries. She contributed much in spreading the culture. She is regarded as a cultural heritage among the Harari people and gained fame as "Shamitu," a name given to respected individuals by the Harari.

"Mrs. Nuria died at the age of 60 and is survived by four children. She was buried in the cemetery of Abdal in Harar in the presence of relatives, high-ranking dignitaries, and fans on January 25, 2002."

Cynthia Tse Kimberlin knew Nuria Ahmed personally, having recorded her songs in 1972 and 1996. In April Ms. Kimberlin presented a paper at Cambridge University titled "They Are Gifts from Allah: The Songs of Nuria Ahmed Shami Kalid."

Addis Taxis

In an article titled, "Driven to Despair in Addis Ababa," by BBC reporter Russell Smith, "Taxi drivers have had better times . . ."

The estimated 17,000 ubiquitous blue cars are, however, being driven into the ground by a shortage of riders. "Money is tight, and for a lot of residents, taxis are now a luxury they cannot afford," Smith writes.

One driver interviewed, Alemayhu, was sitting in his 1967 blue Toyota, the taxi he has driven for nearly two decades. He told Smith that he has often had no fares during his 12-hour workday. "Each week he makes about US\$30, but after vehicle maintenance, petrol and license fees, it does not leave him much. But he is grateful that his car, though old, is a reliable Japanese make. He also owns his own vehicle; many rent theirs and have that extra expense."

There are still many Fiats on Addis streets, however, some even going back to WWII. "Old taxis never die here," said Alemayhu.

That was until the Eastern European Lada was introduced during Mengistu's Red Terror. It was only after the dictator was deposed that the Ladas left and better cars came into the country, mostly from Japan.

Another cabbie, Getachew, has driven his Lada for almost 20 years, according to Smith. "He remembers the Mengistu era as one where there were tight controls on where you could drive . . . you could not drive outside your designated district. He said there were probably half the number of taxis [then than] there are now, and it was easy to make enough money to live on."

Alemayhu was not a happy taxi driver, as he served five years in prison for "political activity" and refused to talk about the government or have his picture taken. Getachew, on the other hand, was not afraid to complain about the present situation. "Tell them to take the freedom and give us back our bread," he told Smith.

It's not just a croc

Ethiopia has one commercial crocodile farm, and, according to the UN Integrated Regional Information network, thousands of the big-mouthed animals are killed each year by floods.

The Crocodile Ranch is built on the edge of Lake Abaya in Arba Minch, in the southern Rift Valley. The herders corral about 4,000 crusty critters on

site. Last year, though, almost

half the pod was drowned or killed by pneumonia.

"This is a serious problem we are

facing," said Assegid Gebre, who

manages the ranch. "We do not have the resources at this moment to move the farm away from the edge of the lake, which means if it floods then the crocodiles will die. If it carries on we won't be able to cope."

One crocodile sells for about US\$80. The ranch hopes to eventually sell 20,000 annually. Established in 1986, the total round-up has yielded 5,658 led to slaughter. Most of the product goes to Asia, where shoes and luggage are made. According to Assegid, the skin exports are second only to coffee exports.

At present, the ranch is looking to Zimbabwe as a "supply crocodiles" market. Fed on "talapia fish offal," the beasts are "killed humanely; when they get to the age of between three and five, they are shot and skinned before being sold."

Other benefits: "Without the farm, poaching would occur on the lake," according to Assegid, and "the farm also attracts tourists who like to come and look around."

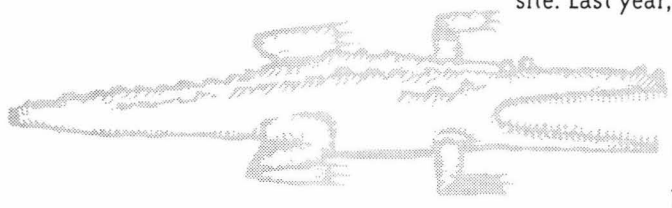
Hollywood's Take on the Famine of 1984

"Beyond Borders" is the story of a wealthy world-traveler who falls in love with a globetrotting doctor ministering to humanitarian needs in Cambodia, Chechnya, and Ethiopia. The movie stars Angelina Jolie. In real life, Jolie has served as a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees; she has said that this is a story she has wanted to tell since 1999.

The actress spent a month in Namibia filming the Ethiopian part of the movie. "We are extremely sensitive to the subject matter and hope to raise awareness of what these people are going through and their suffering," she said as she arrived.

"The portrayal of negative images about Ethiopia does not help the whole of Africa," said Tegenaw Goshu, of the Ethiopian embassy in South Africa. "The media should strive to include positive images of our continent. . . . It is not that we don't want to acknowledge that part of our history or would wish it away," Tegenaw said. "It is just that a lot of positive changes have taken place in Ethiopia since then and those will not be portrayed in that film."

Namibia was chosen as a location due to its topological similarities with parts of Ethiopia. No completion or release date has been given by "Beyond Borders." Its director is Oliver Stone (*JFK*, *Nixon*, *Salvador*, *Platoon*, etc.).





At the Peace Corps

A call to action

by Colin G. Gallagher (El Salvador 98-00)

MANY RPCVs ARE AWARE of a "New Mandate" for the Peace Corps being proposed in Washington. Nigeria RPCVs Roger Landrum and Dave Hibbard had made contact with Senator Christopher Dodd's (D-CT; Dominican Republic 66-68) staff and pursued the process of getting legislation drafted that would include more grassroots-style activities and nonprofit organizations, including the NPCA, under the aegis of implementation of Peace Corps goals. Their efforts were key to initiating a serious discussion on the need to address the Peace Corps legislatively.

Many are not aware, however, of new developments that could threaten the fundamental purpose of Peace Corps, which is to promote peace and friendship around the world.

While Peace Corps has had a general prohibition on hiring of individuals who have had a known involvement in intelligence activities, the Peace Corps Act does not specifically preclude "intelligence information" from being routed from one agency to the next. With the implementation of the PATRIOT [Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism] Act and the USA Freedom Corps, a mechanism exists to do exactly that. While this argument has been rejected by

Ellen Field, the Peace Corps Director of Communications, legislators are beginning to see the threat to Peace Corps independence.

In an exclusive interview with Congressman Sam Farr (D-CA; Colombia 64-66) on May 14, 2002, Hugh Pickens of Peace Corps Online asked Farr about the PATRIOT Act and its potential impact on Peace Corps. Congressman Farr replied that this is a concern and that is what has triggered the need to address the independence of the Peace Corps from the intelligence-gathering community. He said that when this bill gets to the floor, it will be debated and a decision will be made as to how to build the best firewall.

Wait, you ask. Did you say a bill? That's right — a bill to amend the Peace Corps Act, and if all goes well, it will protect the agency from other legislation (such as the PATRIOT Act) and from presidential executive orders (such as the recent creation of the USA Freedom Corps). However, these protections will only be granted if you — that's right, you — choose to "make it so." As RPCVs, you are being given the unique opportunity to view an advance copy of the bill in its draft form, and comment on it.

MANY ARE NOT aware of new developments that could threaten the fundamental purpose of Peace Corps.

TAKE ACTION NOW in
what is possibly the most
important moment in the
last 20 years of Peace
Corps history!

By the time this newsletter goes to print, the details will be up on Peace Corps Online at www.peacecorpsonline.org. Link to the "Draft Peace Corps Legislation Available for Comment." Once on that page, you'll find links to the draft legislation itself, discussion history, and a brief explanation of what RPCVs can do to help. For best effect (and due to time constraints), individual or group comments on language of the bill should be sent to Senator Chris Dodd's office, attention to Janice O'Connell, before the end of May if possible. (<http://www.senate.gov/~dodd/webmail/index.html>; SR-448 Russell Building, United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510, Tel. 202/224-2823, Fax. 202/228-1683)

The NPCA is scheduling an Advocacy Day on June 20th as part of the 40 + 1 Conference where RPCVs will "lobby" their Congresspersons and Senators for support. (For details on this and how to participate, contact Ed Crane, NPCA Advocacy Coordinator, at advocacy@rpcv.org).

For even better effect, your efforts should also include distributing a press release that congratulates Congressmen Farr and Tom Udall (D-NM) and Senator Dodd for helping the Peace Corps, and

encourages your respective Congresspersons and Senators to cosponsor the legislation (if they haven't already). Pass the word to your RPCV pals (and sympathetic family members). Most importantly: Take action now in what is possibly the most important moment in the last 20 years of Peace Corps history!

Colin can be contacted at 973 Heather Circle #48E Salinas CA 93906-3950 E-mail: pcvcolin@yahoo.com

Vasquez making the rounds

Since his swearing in, new Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez has travelled to Peru with President Bush and to California where he met with several RPCV groups. Go to www.PeaceCorpsOnline.org for reports on the trips including an interview with Vasquez conducted in Peru.

40 + 1 Party

NPCA Conference 2002 – the basics

Thursday, June 20 to Sunday, June 23
Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert Street NW,
Washington (at Connecticut Ave.) near the Wood-
land Park-Zoo Metro stop of the Red Line, phone:
(202) 234-0700

For details on registration, hotels, schedule, listing
of those registered, tickets for the Saturday
evening fundraising dinner and more, go to
www.rpcv.org

For the latest on special activities for E&E RPCVs, go
to www.EthiopiaEritreaRPCVs.org.

Those volunteering for our group

These people are working to give E&E RPCVs a
special celebration at the 40+1: Courtney Arnold,
Marian Haley Beil, Leo Cecchini, John Coyne, Doris
Mueller Goldstein, Dave Gurr, Wayne Kessler,
Frances Fisher LaCroix, Russ Mischeloff, Jack Prebis,
John Rude, Sarah Samuel, LaDena Schnapper, Neal
Sobania, Clare Shea and Judy Smith, and they all
deserve our special thanks.

Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs special group events

Thursday, June 20, 8:00 pm

Ethiopia 1 Mini-reunion

Omni Shoreham
Snacks + cash bar
\$10 per person to cover the cost of snacks, room
rental and required staff.
Friends of those in Ethiopia 1 are invited to attend.

Please RSVP to Frances Fisher LaCroix at
lacroix@fidalgo.net or call Fran at 360/387-4089 in
Camano Island, Washington by June 10th.

Payment: Send a check for this event, made out to
"E&E RPCVs," to Marian Haley Beil, 4 Lodge Pole
Road, Pittsford NY 14534 and please note on the
check "For Ethiopia 1 reunion" (Please do not
combine payment for this event on the same check
with your payment for the Friday night dinner.)

Friday, June 21 11:45 am

Tour the Smithsonian exhibition "From Monastery to Marketplace: Tradition Inspires Modern Ethiopian Painting"

The tour will be lead by co-curator Neal Sobania
(Addis Ababa 68-72).

Focus Gallery, African Voices Hall
Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History
Constitution Avenue between 12th St. and 9th St.
There is no admission charge for the museum.

Friday, June 21 7:30 pm

Dinner at the Embassy of Ethiopia

3506 International Drive, NW

We are grateful to Ambassador Kassahun Ayele for
offering to allow us to use the Embassy to do honor
to our service to the country and people of Ethio-
pia as well as Eritrea. We look forward to an
enjoyable evening of celebration, fond remem-
brance and joyous reunion.

The dinner will feature a buffet of Ethiopian foods
and drinks catered by the Addis Ababa Restaurant
\$35 per person (This covers the meal, service,
gratuity, plus rental of tables, chairs, linens and
dishware.) It will be followed by a demonstration
of the Ethiopian coffee ceremony by LaDena
Robichaud Schnapper (Dessie, Awassa 63-66)

There will be a limit of 150 attendees for this event.
You must RSVP to Gloria Gieseke Curtis at
Don_Curtis@msn.com or call 303/422-3742 in
Arvada, Colorado by June 10th.

Priority for reservations will be given to those registered for the conference (plus their spouses or guests) through June 5th. Reservations for non-registrants will be received on a first-come-first-served basis beginning immediately, and will be confirmed beginning June 6th.

Payment: Send a check for this event, made out to "E&E RPCVs" to Marian Haley Beil, 4 Lodge Pole Road, Pittsford NY 14534. please note on the check "For E&E Dinner."

Saturday, June 22 7:30 am – 9:00 am

Meeting of the Steering Committee of E&E RPCVs
Omni Shoreham

Saturday, June 22 3:00 pm–5:00 pm

Ethiopia and Eritrea Country Updates

Omni Shoreham Hotel

This program is open only to Peace Corps Volunteers who served in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The moderator: Leo Cecchini (Asmara 62–64). The speakers include: Imre Zelleke, Dr. Ted Vestal (Peace Corps/Ethiopia Staff 63–65), Wayne Kessler (Adi Teclesan 64–66), John Rude (Tessenie, Adi Ugri 62–64), David Gurr (Addis Ababa 62–64), Neal Sobania (Addis Ababa 68–72), Richard Haas (Dembidolo, Addis Ababa 67–69), and Marian Haley Beil.

Saturday, June 22 6:30 pm – 10 pm

"Salute to Peace Corps Giants" Fund-raising Dinner

Omni Shoreham Hotel

Tickets are \$150.00 and \$250.00 Funds raised will support NPCA programs.

If you plan to attend and want to be seated with our group, please send your name (and the name of any guests) to Marian Beil at mhbeil@rochester.rr.com. We will try our best to make sure that all of our members who would like to be seated together are able to do so.

Sunday, June 23

Procession of Flags & Closing Ceremony

Plan to walk behind the flag of Ethiopia or Eritrea across the Memorial Bridge from the Lincoln

Memorial, past the grave of John F. Kennedy, and onto the closing ceremony at the Arlington National Cemetery Amphitheater. Anyone who would like to take a turn carrying his/her country flag may do so — be sure to bring your camera so that the moment can be recorded for history!

Many RPCVs and friends are featured in Conference programs

At the Business Symposium on Thursday, Sandra Jaffee (Addis Ababa 66–68), Executive Vice President of Citibank, will be the luncheon speaker; and Susan Heck (Addis Ababa 67–69), Senior Vice President of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter will participate in a panel.

Ghebre Selassie Mehreteab from Eritrea is among Host Country Nationals to be recognized by the NPCA as people whose lives have crossed paths with Peace Corps and who are now working to contribute to the development or well-being of their countries.

Among those participating in workshops presented by PeaceCorpsWriters.org that will feature published Peace Corps writers discussing many aspects of writing and publishing will be: Hayward Allen (Harar 62–64), David Arnold (Asbe Tefari 64–66), Marian Haley Beil, John Coyne (Addis Ababa 62–64), Karen DeWitt, Richard Lipez (Debre Marcos, Addis Ababa 62–64), Margaret Szumowski (Addis Ababa 74–75), and John Woods (Jimma 65–68).

Among those participating in other workshops will be: Sue Hoyt Aiken (Addis Ababa 62–64), Leo Cecchini, David Gurr and Ellie Putnam (Addis Ababa 66–68).

Among Peace Corps writers reading from their works will be Karen DeWitt, Karen Dawn Speicher (Wokro; Bonga 73–75) and Margaret Szumowski.

The Silent Auction which will happen during the fund-raising dinner Saturday evening is being chaired by Judy Smith. (If you have items valued at \$25 or more to donate to support NPCA programs, contact Judy at smarmayor@aol.com.)

E&E RPCVs — all things new



At our website
www.EthiopiaEritreaRPCVs.org

Our Other Hometown — now up at site

New at our site is a map that shows the nearly 200 communities in Ethiopia and Eritrea where we have served. You can click on each name to go to a page that tells about the community and lists the PCVs who served there.

Now it is your chance to make a contribution to this feature. We would like to receive your descriptions and recollections of your “other hometown” as well as photos of the community, the people and the Volunteers. This is your opportunity to “bring the world back home” by sharing your community with people from around the world. There are instructions on the main map page telling you how you can make submissions to “Our Other Hometown.”

A special “thank you” to Michael Santarelli (Gura 70–73) who will handle scanning of slides that are submitted.

We now have an Advocacy Coordinator

Ray Donaldson (Ambo, Debre Berhan 62–64) will review advocacy issues the NPCA is focusing upon, determine which he feels might be of special interest to our members, summarize the selected material and then share that information with members either at our web site, or through email announcements for time-sensitive, extremely important issues. If there are advocacy issues that you feel our members should be made aware of, or would like to work with Ray, you should contact him. (See contact info on page 46.)

In the E&E RPCVs library

Members can borrow at no cost. Contact librarian Joe Ciuffini, 188 Cabot St, Newton MA 02158; 617/244-0463; jmciuffini@aol.com. Check our web site for full contents: www.geocities.com/~eerpcv TRUST is the library card.

Books

Lion by the Tail by Thomas M Coffee — the story of Mussolini’s 1935–36 invasion of Ethiopia. (See p. 37 for more about this book.)

The Blue Nile by Alan Moorehead — a history from 1798 onward. (See p. 39 for more about this book.)

Spectrum Guide to Ethiopia, compiled and edited by Camerapix — a travel guide. Has beautiful photos.

> We would love to have someone review this book for *The Herald*. Contact the editor.

Ethiopia, Eritrea & Djibouti, Lonely Planet.

> We would love to have someone review this book for *The Herald*. Contact the editor.

Videos

“Redefine Your World,” Peace Corps, 16 min.

“The Great Dessie Marching Band and Other Stories” — a recruiting film produced by the Peace Corps that features a marching band organized by Ron Bell (Dessie 62–64) among other PCV projects. Available in black & white, or faded color (borrow them both).

Article

“All Roads Lead to Asmara,” by Gareth Harding, www.time.com/time/europe, 1/3/02

“The Keepers of the Faith: The Living Legacy of Adsum” National Geographic 7/01, by Candice S. Millard, with beautiful photos by George Steinmetz.

Thanks to . . .

Barbara Fontaine (Addis Ababa 62–64) for her gift to Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs. *Bet’am tru no*.

Looking for . . .

Please send contact information for the following people who are being sought to E&E RPCVs so that we may facilitate their reconnecting. Send to:

Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs
c/o Marian Haley Beil
4 Lodge Pole Road
Pittsford NY 14534
or email: mhbeil@rochester.rr.com

Lis Doane (PC/Ethiopia Director 95–98)

Linda Jordan wrote: "I am an RPCV (Lesotho 96–98) who is now living and working in Ethiopia. I have an acquaintance — Nardos Kebeal — who used to work for the country director and her husband- I believe their names are Lis (Elisabeth?) and Robert Doane. Nardos has fallen out of contact with them and would like to get back in touch."

John Lawson and Henry Olson

Bob Mullane would like to reconnect with John Lawson and Henry Olson — all Ethi XIs.

Mr. Bob and Joan Fretter in Harar

Abudayan Ahmed (Dayan) wrote that he is looking for a teacher named Mr. Bob who taught at Medhanialem Secondary School in Harar, and with whom he shared a compound along with his mother Kadija Mohamed and her sister Ashut. Dayan is also looking for a Joan Fretter.

Seeking memories of Bruce Handwerker

E&E RPCVs received the following message:

"My name is Jennifer Handwerker Carlin, and I was doing an internet search on my father's name, Bruce Handwerker, to see if he was listed anywhere interesting. I found him on the Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCVs page. I knew he was in the Peace Corps, but don't have much info on his time in Ethiopia, just in Vietnam.

"Anyway, I wanted to update my father's status. He passed away on June 30, 1982 from cancer. He was 44 years old and was

survived by his wife and two daughters, myself and Sharon. Please add my email address if someone wants to contact me they can. Thank you."

Jenn Carlin
jenncar@microsoft.com

Another Wofford for Congress Campaign

Dan Wofford, son of former Sen. Harris Wofford (Staff: PC/Ethiopia CD 62–64), has announced that he is running for Congress in Pennsylvania. "He is in a district that did not exist before the new Congressional district lines were drawn," according to John Coyne (Addis Ababa 62–64). "The district was carved out by the Republicans in Harrisburg specifically so that State Sen. Jim Gerlach could get a promotion to Congress."

Coyne reports that the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has indicated that the district is one of several targeted in the strategy to return a Democratic majority to the House. The committee has been "supportive of Dan's decision to run and believe that he has what it takes to win," according to Coyne.

Harris Wofford was the first Peace Corps country director in Ethiopia. Years later, he would win a surprise victory in the Pennsylvania Senate race and make significant contributions during his tenure.

The Garamendis back in California

John Garamendi (Metu 66–68), former deputy secretary of Interior and California insurance commissioner, has won the Democratic primary in his re-election campaign to return to the insurance post. Patti is now Assistant Secretary of International Trade and Investment for the Technology, Trade and Commerce Agency for the State.

To Build a Tukul

by Hayward Allen (Harar 62-64)



Michael's tukel, 1999

HOW MANY OF US many of us E&E RPCVs recall fondly those wonderful round, conical-roofed dwellings we saw while we served in Ethiopia or Eritrea? Only the most myopic RPCVs don't have the image forever engraved in their memories, or in our slides and photographs. How many of us, however, are aware of the exceptional craftsmanship, tradition, and teamwork that created those seemingly simple dwellings?

Michael Santarelli (Gura 70-73) was so fascinated that he took a ton of slides of a tukul being built in 1970-1971. The fact that it would be his own home in the Gurage region obviously was his initial inspiration to take the photographs, but I'm certain that the more he witnessed, the more fascinated he was by the remarkable construction process.

And now, three decades later, Michael has produced a 30-minute, annotated CD-slide program, "Making an Ethiopian Tukul," documenting the 10-month erection of his humble home. Not exactly too humble, for it measured 34 feet in diameter and 110 feet in circumference, and the peak stood 30 feet above the earthen floor, with nine-foot-tall interior walls. Those who taught math in Ethiopia or Eritrea can tell us the πr^2 thing . . .

"Making an Ethiopian Tukul" is now available for anyone interested in showing how the traditional building is erected. It is a program that would be ideal for people interested in Third World heritage and how complex things have been built without nails.

Santarelli's program begins with the cutting down of the eucalyptus trees that will become the walls of the tukul. Step-by-step, the photographer guides us easily through the cutting and shaping of the pieces of what will become a structure truly as intricate as any American home. As I viewed the CD, at many points I was reminded of the questions anthropologists and archeologists ask about Native American places like Mesa Verde and Chaco Canyon and Central American ruins.

His photography is exceptional in that it is both professional and personal, and significantly instructive, reflecting what he recognized as traditional craftwork and what he himself was fascinated by. In the compilation of "Making an Ethiopian Tukul," Santarelli must have gone

through hundreds and hundreds of his slides to decide which would best tell this uniquely Ethiopian, yet universal, story.

Recognizing the complexity of building the tukul, and noting that Santarelli told me that the Gurage people "built the best tukuls," I looked for evidence of excellence. Like: missing toes and fingers, since all the cutting and shaping of the beams and planks is done with axes, hatchets, adzes, chisels—and nobody wore shoes . . . all the correct numbered digits are pictured there. I also noted that after a while I recognized the faces and clothes of the primary workers. Then, when it came time to raise the central pole, I saw how many of the Gurage village's people were involved, and answers about mysteries of Axum steles were less difficult to imagine.

In 1999 RPCV Santarelli returned to "his" tukul, and photos from that visit are included in the CD as well. He shows how his home hasn't changed much on the outside, and how it has changed lots inside. Perhaps the most significant alteration is that what was once his home is now a barn. Oh well . . . there's a lesson in that revelation, too.

If there are any flaws to the program, to my mind, it is that there is no script to the presentation, and it would help if there were an option to hear Santarelli do a voice-under, with an anecdote or two within the half-hour program. I realize that he is trying to keep expenses down, but the educational value of this program goes beyond our own Ethiopian and Eritrean experiences. There is a broader market.

Santarelli assures members that whatever profits may come with the sales of this wonderfully illuminating CD-slide program will go to "development projects benefiting the Gurage and Ethiopia."

To order a copy of the CD, contact Michael for more information at: michaelsanta@hotmail.com or P.O. Box 988, Lakeport, CA, 95453



Still available:

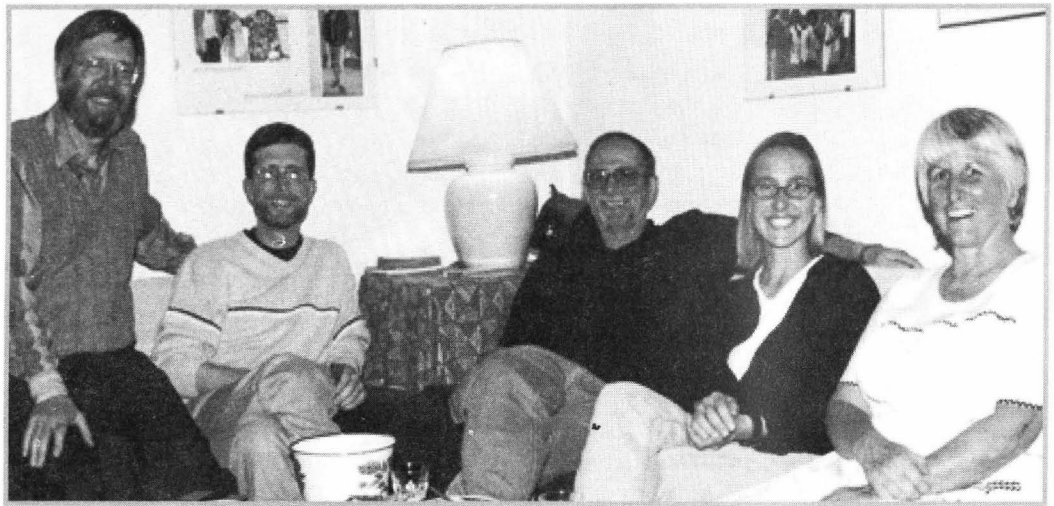
Baseball hats embroidered in full color with the flags of Ethiopia and Eritrea on a cotton, khaki-colored hat.

To order, send a check made out to EEE RPCVs for \$14 (includes postage) to:

Marian Haley Beil
4 Lodge Pole Road
Pittsford NY 14534

How could we have know?

by Laurie Kessler (Adi Teclesan 64-66)



Wayne Kessler, Jeff Shannon, two unidentified RPCVs, Laurie Kessler all in the Kessler's home in Asmara, February 2002

This is the Kessler's closing article from Eritrea written for The Herald.

WHEN WE CAME TO ERITREA in 1995, how could we have known that —

We would stay for seven years?

War would break out between Eritrea and Ethiopia and that we would witness four attempts (three in 1998, one in 2000) by Ethiopia to bomb the Asmara airport and that, after the third, we'd be evacuated to Jordan on

a U.S. military troop plane with a skull-and-cross-bones flag in it AND that I'd be out of the country for seven months?

We would become inveterate jaywalkers like everybody else, among cars, diesel-belching trucks, horse carts, bicycles and an occasional cow?

We would find or be found by at least 40 former students and colleagues from our Peace Corps time in Adi Teclesan, 1964-66? (After seven years, we are still meeting them and they all ask, "Do you remember me?")

Unfortunately, we remember only about a quarter of them.)

We would find a perfect-sized house with a layout we like and good windows in every room, as well as garden space both front and back with dearly loved bougainvillea and a jacaranda tree — and live in it the whole time?

I would be DIRECTOR of the Asmara International Community School for a year and a half?

We'd meet Eritrea's President Isaias Afwerki, Kofi Annan and Hillary Clinton and attend a speech by Julius Nyerere here? AND socialize with various Ministers of the government and ambassadors from many countries, a former US Congressman, the president of Riverside Community Colleges, Dan Connell (journalist and author of books on Eritrea), Gloria Steinem, Betty LaDuke (Oregon artist who exhibits paintings based on sketches of Eritrea)?

Wayne's initial work in project development would be affected by the NGOs being asked to leave in 1997 and his work in enterprise development by the war and investment drying up, and that he'd work in humanitarian relief instead?

I'd have a key to a room in the Ministry of Trade and Industry where I teach a class? (though I never had a key to the English Department staff toilet at the University of Asmara during the four years I taught there)

Wayne's 2001 resident permit would classify him as MY dependant? (This as a result of a squabble between two different offices, ah bureaucracy!)

Five sets of good friends from California — the McLeans, the Wezelmans, the Elliotts, Greg Luft, and Tomiko Yabumoto — would visit us?

(and would leave understanding why we enjoy living here)

Wayne would establish — by default — a reputation as an expert on raising poultry?

I would be one of very few foreign women to have an Eritrean business license?

Four Eritrean acquaintances would be jailed as dissidents in 2001 and three others would be unable to return to Eritrea — because they are progressive and open?

Among my colleagues in the English Department at the University of Asmara would be Kiflemariam Zerom, our student in Peace Corps time, and Mohamed Osman Chiloway, son of a colleague also during Peace Corps time?

We'd get to know Jeff Shannon, a Peace Corps Volunteer who served after Liberation in Adi Teclesan where we had served, and who would claim us as parents when convenient?

We'd figure out how to cope with lack of water for five weeks? (during the rainy season, we could collect rain water)

As a member of the Baha'i National Bulletin Committee, I would be involved in religious journalism, the career I had aspired to in 1959?

New by Ethiopia and Eritrea Peace Corps writers

Homer's Whip

by Don Christians (PC staff: Ethiopia 67–70, Dominican Republic 70–72)
Creative Arts Book Co., \$14.95
November, 2001

The Land

by Mildred Taylor (Yirgalem 65–67)
(Children 9–12)
Phyllis Fogelman Books, \$17.99
373 pages
September, 2001

New of interest

Ethiopian Icons:

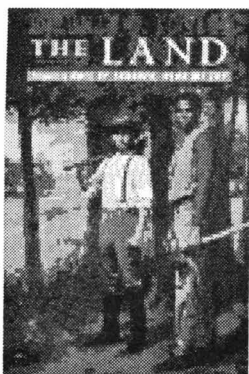
*Catalogue of the Collection of the
Institute of Ethiopian Studies Addis
Ababa University*
by Stanislaw Chojnacki
Skira, \$84.00 at Amazon.com
517 pages

Millie Taylor wins major award

*This from the January 2002 edition of
PeaceCorpsWriters.org:*

THE LAND BY MILDRED D. TAYLOR (Ethiopia 1965–67) was awarded the 2002 Coretta Scott King Award on January 21, 2002 at the American Library Association's midwinter meeting. This award for African-American authors, commemorates the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and honors his widow, Coretta Scott King, for her courage and determination in continuing the work for peace and world brotherhood.

The Land chronicles the triumphs and struggles of Paul-Edward Logan, son of a white owner and an enslaved African-Indian women. Set in Mississippi during the 1800s, the book introduces readers to the grandfather of Cassie Logan, the hero of Taylor's 1976 Newbery Award winner, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*.



Millie, as she was known as a PCV, started to write while a Volunteer. She taught English and history in the town of Yirgalem in southern Ethiopia. It was in Ethiopia, she has written, where she observed black pride and independence, and this reminded her of stories her father had told her — which she has turned into award winning fiction. Millie has received critical acclaim for her original interpretation of the black experience. In 1997, Millie was the recipient of the ALAN Award which honors those who have made outstanding contributions to the field of adolescent literature. It is presented by The Assembly on Literature for Adolescents, a special interest group of the National Council of Teachers of English.

More recognition for *The Land*

The *Washington Post* has announced that the feature book for July — "Children's Month" — for its book club will be Millie's *The Land*. It will be reviewed in early in the month by Elizabeth Ward and then the *Post's* email opens up for questions, comments and live chat. Check in July at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/style/books/bookclub/>.

Neither Ethiopian nor Eritrean Books on the Big List

At the suggestion of Professor Ali Mazrui, the Zimbabwe International Book Fair compiled a list of "Africa's 100 Best Books." Books were chosen in three categories: literature for children, creative writing and scholarship/non-fiction. Sad to say, however, the list does not contain any writers in any category from Ethiopia or Eritrea. The vast majority of writers hail from western or southern African nations. The Horn is remarkably underrepresented. Keeping count: Sudan, 1; Uganda 1; Tanzania, 1; Kenya, 4; Somalia, 1. Elsewhere, Egypt had 7, Nigeria 10, and South Africa, 17.

To see the full list, go to: www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/africa/cuwl/Afbks.html#list

Cry Wolf

By Wilbur Smith
St. Martin's Paperbacks
471 pages, \$6.99

Reviewed by Hayward Allen (Harar 62-64)

I discovered *Cry Wolf* accidentally. While browsing through the new paperback section at Borders, I picked up a copy, mistakenly thinking it was another novel by Martin Cruz Smith (*Gorky Park*, *Red Star*, etc.). I've done that before, only this time as I read the blurb on the back cover I saw it was about Ethiopia and the early days of the war with Italy.

I bought the book. Another mistake. The paperback novel is a reprint of a 1976 publication. I read the book, nonetheless. In this case less is not more, unless one counts 471 pages. And they are about 450 pages too many. Why finish it? Partly because I spent seven bucks on the damned thing, partly because it was useful daily in a 40-minute workout on the gym's treadmill and exercycle, and partly so I could warn off others who are interested in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

This will not be a long and pithy review.

The storyline: two adventurers, one American and the other British, are among a quartet driving armored cars into Ethiopia in 1935 just as the brutal war with Italy begins to escalate. The other two drivers are a young Ethiopian prince and a gorgeous American newspaper correspondent.

You can see where the story is going? Two dashing and different warriors and a beautiful reporter? Forget the war. Concentrate on the number of times Vicky Camberwell either gets her underwear wet or is caught wearing none at all. And the macho competitive banter between American Jake Barton and English Gareth Swales is cliché-ridden. Well, Daniele Steele couldn't do much more.

Oh yes, the combat between the Italians and the Ethiopians: most of Smith's "action" seems to be between — on the Italian side — commanding general Emilio De Bono and a Count Aldo Belli, and

— on the Ethiopian side — Ras Golam and Ras Kullah. De Bono is a real, historic figure, who commanded the 360,000 Italian troops that invaded Ethiopia. As far as I can figure, the count and the two Ethiopians are figments of the author's vivid and lazy imagination.

I think that's what pissed me off most. I hate stereotypes in fiction. Forget Jake and Gareth and Vicky; they were and have long been common literary, ink-laden vehicles many readers dote upon. However, Ras Golam is a tej-drinking, toothless eccentric, whose only English is "How do you do?" Albeit a hero, he's also a fool. Ras Kullah, a leader of the treacherous Gallas, is, as Smith describes him, a "fat pervert." The other three Ethiopian characters are dashing, cute, wise, and determined to save their country; too bad they are overshadowed by the other adventurous players.

Count Belli provides comic relief, I guess. He mows down any and all animals near him and has his driver shoot photographs of the victorious hunter and his trophies, including one of the armored cars. Connected to Mussolini, he also fabricates his military experiences to impress Il Duce and thus advances in his self-propelled prowess.

Lest I forget, the four 6.5 litre Bentley-powered, five-ton armored vehicles that bring our two mercenary vagabonds, the prince and the voluptuous journalist to Ethiopia are as alive as most of the humans. Jake gave them names: Miss Wobbly, Priscilla the Pig, Henrietta the Hump, and "Tenastelin." Their fates are possibly the best described of all the characters.

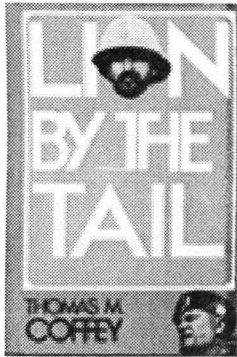
Don't read this book!

If you are seeking something that actually deals with the valiant struggle the Ethiopians continued against the Italian invaders, read Thomas M. Coffey's *Lion by the Tail* .*

I find it interesting that *Lion by the Tail*, with all of its vivid details of the Italo-Ethiopian war was

.....
* This book can be borrowed from the E&E RPCVs library.

WOULD YOU LIKE to review a book for **The Herald**? Contact Editor Hayward Allen. We currently have a couple of travel books available for review. We are also interested in hearing your suggestions of titles that would be of interest to our members — either for you or others to review.



published in 1974, and that *Cry Wolf* emerged just two years later in 1976. After re-reading *Lion* 27 years later, I can understand how a novelist might be inspired by books like this one by Coffey, who lists about seven pages of books in his bibliography, the vast majority of which were published in the late 1930s. While I might seem to be insinuating something that didn't exist, it would have been useful for Smith to include his sources, too, so we who are interested in Ethiopian and Eritrean history might expand our own scope of understanding. Alas, Smith was interested in undressing a beautiful woman, proving that war can be an adventure, and that Italians and Ethiopians were like a violent version of the Keystone Kops at war.



The Storyteller's Beads

By Jane Kurtz
Gulliver Books: Harcourt Brace & Company 1998
128 pages; \$15.00

Reviewed by Mary Gratiot Schultz (Adi Uгри 65-67)

The Storyteller's Beads by Jane Kurtz is a novel that tells the story of two Ethiopian girls who walked from the Gondar area to a refugee camp in the Sudan during the 1980s.

Each girl comes from a difference ethnic area. Sahay begins the journey with her uncle, leaving their Kemant village because of famine and the Red Terror. Rahel, who is blind, leaves her grandmother behind in her Felasha village and travels with her brother. Eventually, the two girls and others they travel with meet. Soon, the uncle and brother are commanded to return to Ethiopia, but the girls continue to the refugee camp. The two girls overcome their differences and become friends. In the camp, Rahel lives with others from Felasha villages, but Sahay can find none of her Kenmant people, and eventually finds Rahel. Sahay helped Rahel find the way to the camp, and Rahel helps Sahay find a future.

The storyteller beads referred to in the title are a necklace that Rahel's grandmother gave to her

before she left her village. Each bead represented a story, many from the Old Testament.

This is a short novel of 150 small pages. The book jacket says "ages 10-14." It is an easy, enjoyable read for an evening or a weekend. A map and a glossary of Ethiopian terms are included. The book lists at \$15 and is available at bn.com and amazon.com for \$12 or less.

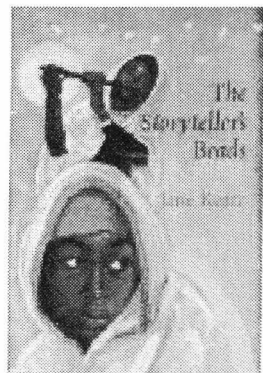
Nancy Farmer, another author of children's books about other cultures, writes:

Too often tragedies, such as the Ethiopian famine of the 1980s, are lost in numbers. How can anyone comprehend a million deaths? Jane Kurtz has made the tragedy devastatingly real with her superb adventure of two courageous girls who overcome prejudices taught to them from birth.

In an interview with amazon.com, the author says

I spent almost all of my childhood in Ethiopia, where my parents worked for the Presbyterian Church for 26 years. Then I spent a good part of my adult life not talking about Ethiopia — because I thought there was no way to talk about the country of my childhood in ways that people in the U.S. could really understand. Finally, just before I turned 40, I began to be really homesick for Ethiopia. That's when I realized I could make a real connection with the land of my childhood — through my writing.

Other Jane Kurtz children's books with Ethiopian and Eritrean themes include: *Grandfather's Journey*, *Pulling the Lion's Tail*, *Fire On the Mountain*, *Trouble*, *Ethiopia: The Roof of Africa*, and *Only a Pigeon*.



Reading about Téwodros

by John Coyne (Addis Ababa 62–64)

WHenever one starts to read about Ethiopia, very soon he or she discovers Téwodros II, the infamous emperor of the Empire in the mid-nineteenth-century. Téwodros was a great, romantic visionary, and a mad figure of Ethiopian history who rose to power in the 1850s by overthrowing the principal feudal leadership in the north.

His objective, as his British admirer Consul Plowden reported at the time to the Home Office in London, was to integrate the country by placing “the soldiers of the different provinces under the command of his own trusty followers.” In this way Téwodros started “organizing a new nobility, a legion of honor dependent on himself, and chosen specially for their daring and fidelity.” And thus began the “arduous task of breaking the power of the great feudal chiefs — a task achieved in Europe only during the reign of many consecutive Kings.”

Among other achievements, Téwodros was responsible for important improvements in the country. He had built, for example, the first road in Ethiopia, from Debra Tabor to his mountain citadel Magdala. He attempted to establish a fleet of boats on Lake Tana. He started a foundry at Gafat and manufactured Ethiopia’s first cannon. He also attempted to stop the slave trade, reform the land tenure system, and introduce Ethiopian dress. He took steps to replace verbal messages with letters, wipe away concubines and promote marriage.

Yet much of what he achieved was rendered futile by the debacle at Magdala, and thereby hangs the tale, the source of much literary prose, and why Téwodros is so well remembered by the world.

All of them: Ethiopian scholars, African historians, romance novelists, adventure travel writers, tourists and travelers have been caught up in the history of this tortured man. Many have written about him, searching for some understanding of the man as well as wanting to tell his tale.

I first read about Téwodros in Alan Moorehead’s *The Blue Nile* (if you haven’t read *The Blue Nile**, put this article down and go read that book

immediately) when I was teaching at the Commercial School in Addis Ababa in 1962. Between classes, sitting in the backroom of the Teacher’s Lounge, or across Smuts Street at a small café where I’d go for *cappuccino* early in the morning, I’d read chapter after chapter of Moorehead’s fascinating account of the Blue Nile and of the Empire under Téwodros.

Téwodros claimed that he was of royal blood and in the direct line of kings descending from Solomon and Alexander the Great, but none of that was true. He was the son of a small local chieftain, born in 1818 close to the source of the Blue Nile.

He reign was from 1855 to 1868, and during it he was constantly involved in war. He fought successfully against Tigre and conquered Shewa, taking the boy Menelik, who represented the Shewa dynasty there, to live at his court. He waged war against the Gallas. And all the while, he attempted to modernize the Empire.

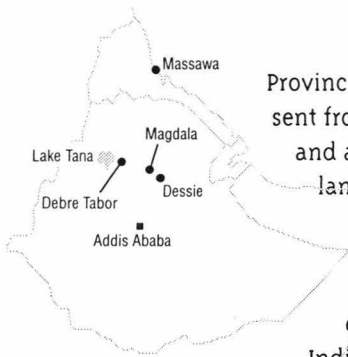
While being portrayed as a model of politeness even towards the meanest peasants, he also was the victim of ungovernable rages. His humanity was such, it was recorded, that he would buy slaves from the Muslim traders in order to emancipate and Christianize them, yet at the same time he burned deserting soldiers alive and threw prisoners from precipices.

It was during this period that a number of Europeans found their way into Ethiopia: German and English missionaries, German artisans and zoologists, a French painter and a more than a few travel adventures.

But then in 1864, after the British Foreign Office did not — for two years — answer a letter he had written to Queen Victoria, Téwodros threw the Consul, Cameron, and the other British citizens into prison. The British government sent a man named Rassam to protest and he, plus sixty more Europeans, were seized and chained.

At the time, Téwodros was moving towards Magdala, a natural fortress overlooking Wallo

SEE “The Tabot of St. Michael”
on page 21 for an update on the
looted artifacts of Magdala



Province. Here is where he met Sir Robert Napier, sent from India by the Queen to free her subjects and all the other imprisoned Europeans. Napier landed near Massawa and using an impressive assortment of transport animals including elephants, bullocks, and camels, advanced overland at a mile a day to Magdala. Of the 3,400 British and Indian troops who took part in the assault on Magdala, not one was lost. Téwodros, who had at first boasted to his chiefs — “Oh! That we may meet those white donkeys. We shall show them what the sword and lance of Ethiopia can do.” — killed himself when he saw that defeat was certain. He was buried in the Magdala church, though suicide, as we know, is a rare and grave crime among Ethiopian Christians. (The story is told of Workneh Gebeyehu, one of the leaders of the failed 1960 *coup d’etat*, when cornered by soldier shouted to his assailants, “Téwodros has taught me something.” Putting a pistol into his mouth, and he killed himself, and, therefore, ensured that he would be forever linked to the Emperor Téwodros.)

After reading about Téwodros in Moorehead’s book, I, too, thought he would make the subject of a great novel, but never did any research on the Emperor. A few years later, when I was on PC/Ethiopia staff as an Associate Director, and had the Dessie Road as part of my responsibility, I ran into a group of British students in Dessie. At the time they were “crashing” at John Hoover’s small house and setting off the next day to climb up to the old fortress at Magdala in honor of the 1867 Napier Expedition. I wanted to tag along but was due in Waldia the next day and never made it to Magdala.

For years, however, Téwodros’s story has stayed with me. Once, in Edinburgh, Scotland, where I had gone for the Shakespeare Festival, I spend an afternoon in the Edinburgh library reading *Field Marshal Lord Napier of Magdala*, a memoir by his son, published in 1927.

Back in London I wandered into the Maggs Bros. Ltd. Antiquarian Booksellers on Berkeley Square

and bought for 48 pounds *Reconnoitering in Abyssinia* by Colonel H. St. Clair Wilkins that was published in 1870. It was the royal engineer’s account of the reconnoitering party that went to Ethiopia prior to the arrival of the expeditionary field force from India.

The opening goes: “In August 1867, the British Government resolved upon the invasion of Abyssinia. It was decided to dispatch a military expedition to that remote county, for the purpose of releasing from the hands of the Christian King Theodorus, a British Consul and an Envoy and suite confined in irons in the fortress of Magdala without just cause, and contrary to the laws of nations; and to obtain full satisfaction for the dishonour thus cast upon the British nation.”

At the time in his Magdala fortress, Téwodros had thirty European artillery pieces, 3,000 soldiers armed with percussion guns and several thousand spear armed foot soldiers. While he was safe within a impregnable fortress, Téwodros decided to attack and the British soldiers (mostly Indians) of the 4th King’s Own had the very latest breech loading rifle — the Snider — which was being used for the first time in battle. The firepower and discipline of the British units completely overwhelmed the musket and spears of the Ethiopians. Over 500 Ethiopians were killed and thousands more were wounded in a battle that lasted an hour and a half.

A ripe source for novelists

From such historical documents, several novels have been written. Alan Scholefield’s *The Hammer of God*, published by William Morrow & Company in 1973; Ann Schlee’s *The Guns of Darkness*, Atheneum, 1974; and *When The Emperor Dies* by Mason McCann Smith, Random House, 1981.

There are other historical accounts, besides Alan Moorehead, but these are the only novels that I have been able to locate

In *The Guns of Darkness*, Ann Schlee tells the story of Téwodros from the point-of-view of fourteen year old, Louisa Bell, daughter of John Bell and the

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books about Ethiopia and Eritrea

— try www.bibliofind.com

Princess Worknesh Asfa Yilma. Schelee is a fine writer, mostly of young adult novels set in exotic countries. This novel focuses on the human side of the history, the small details of everyday life that surround the historical events. Schlee touches, for example, on the torture that the ordinary people, Ethiopians and Europeans, suffered under Téwodros. She had based her novel on the alleged fact that John Bell had four children by an Ethiopian woman. The fourth child was called Louisa and was on a list of the released prisoners as recorded by the Royal Geographical Society's observer, C.R. Markham.

Californian Mason McCann Smith, too, blends fact and fiction in his novel *When The Emperor Dies* using characters, both real and imaginary. Of the two books, Smith has the more details of the march and attack on Magdala, and the most research. However, the novel is overwritten and is centered mostly on Napier and his men.

Alan Scholefield is a well known South African writer, author of *Great Elephant, Wild Dog Running, The Young Masters*, etc. In *The Hammer of God*, he has an arrogant Victorian sportsman in search of the rare ibex, his new, young wife, Catherine, an ex-Army officer guide, and a scheming secretary, all in the highlands together when they are captured by the Emperor. Scholefield creates several new characters and uses Téwodros and the events of Magdala as the historical backdrop. Being an experienced novelist, he moves the story at a faster, more telling pace. Nevertheless, both novels pale when compared to Alan Moorehead's prose and narrative skill in *The Blue Nile*,* first published in 1962.

Moorehead's incomparable *The Blue Nile*

Moorehead spends roughly 70 pages of his 330-page book on Emperor Téwodros, the British expedition, the battle on the Arogi plateau, and seizure of Magdala, and it is a fascinating tale.

"There has never been in modern times a colonial campaign quite like the British expedition to

.....

* Available in the E&E RPCVs library.

Ethiopia in 1868," Moorehead writes. "It proceeds from first to last with the decorum and heavy inevitability of a Victorian state banquet, complete with ponderous speeches at the end. And yet it was a fearsome undertaking; for hundreds of years the country had never been invaded, and the savage nature of the terrain alone was enough to promise failure."

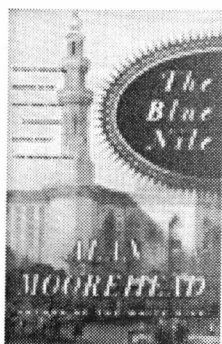
Other histories

There are a few other useful histories about Téwodros. Walter Plowden's *Travels in Abyssinia*, published in 1868; H.A. Stern's *The Captive Missionary* in 1868; H. Rassam's *Narrative of the British Mission to Téwodros King of Abyssinia*, 2 vols, published in 1869. In 1870, T.J. Holland and H.M. Hozier, wrote the official *Record of the Expedition to Abyssinia*, 2 vols, with maps and plans. There is also *Correspondence Respecting Abyssinia 1846-68* that was presented to the House of Commons in 1869. This 700-page report gives much information not only about the imprisonment of the captives but about Téwodros and Ethiopia in general. H.M. Stanley published in 1874 *Coomassie and Magdala; the Story of Two British Campaigns in Africa*.

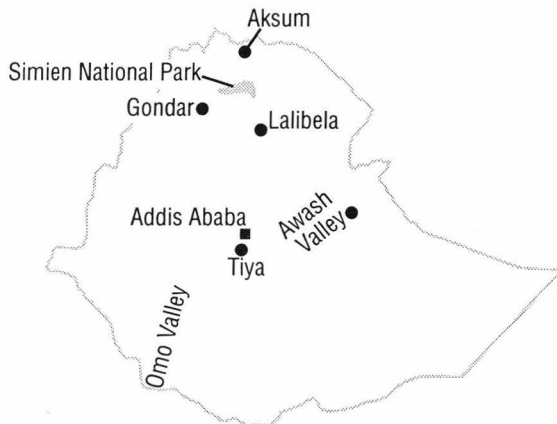
Some recent publications are S. Rubenson's *King of Kings: Téwodros of Ethiopia*, published in Addis Ababa in 1966. *The March to Magdala* by Myatt, Frederick, published in 1970 by Leo Cooper. And in 1973 R.J. Pankhurst's essay "The Library of Emperor Téwodros II at Magdala" appeared in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, XXXVI, 15-42. And more recently, Oxford Press published in 1979, *The Abyssinian Difficulty: The Emperor Theodorus and the Magdala Campaign, 1867-68* by Sir Darrell Bates.

I am sure I have missed other accounts, but for anyone interested in this historical moment in Ethiopia, the books I've mentioned are a good start. And it is a great story.

*John Coyne is the editor of the www.PeaceCorpsWriters.org and editor of **Living On The Edge: Fiction by Peace Corps Writers** published by Curbstone Press in 2000. He has written or edited over twenty books.*



Seeing the Sights



Tourism in Ethiopia

IN JANUARY, the government of Ethiopia began issuing tourist visas at arrival points within the country. According to the Ethiopian Security and Immigration Affairs Authority (SIAA), travelers from “thirty-three tourist-generating countries” — including the United States — will be able to get their Ethiopian visas as they enter the country at Bole International Airport. An SIAA official called upon tour operators to take advantage of the easier entry process.

According to the Ethiopian Tourism Commission (ETC), visitors accounted for an income of more than US\$77 million in Ethiopia in 2001, marking a thirty-percent increase over the previous year. An estimated 146,600 tourists entered Ethiopia in 2001. “The income from tourism plays a very important part in the development of the country,” said an ETC spokesperson. “We need foreign currency.” According to official projections, the ETC has set a goal of 320,000 tourists to come to Ethiopia, travel, and leave behind appreciable foreign exchanges. The Ethiopian-Eritrean war caused severe decreases in tourists coming to Ethiopia. In 2000, it is estimated that only \$US 16 million came to the national coffers from tourism.

Among the favored sites for visitors are Aksum, Lalibela, Gondar, and the Simien Mountains.

UNESCO has designated seven “World Heritage” locations of special importance in Ethiopia — “sites

whose outstanding values should be preserved for all humanity”:

- Rock-hewn Churches, Lalibela — “The 11 medieval monolithic cave churches of this 13th-century ‘New Jerusalem’ are situated in a mountainous region in the heart of Ethiopia near a traditional village with circular-shaped dwellings. Lalibela is a high place of Ethiopian Christianity, still today a place of pilgrimage and devotion.”
- Simien National Park — “Massive erosion over the years on the Ethiopian plateau has created one of the most spectacular landscapes in the world, with jagged mountain peaks, deep valleys and sharp precipices dropping some 4,500 feet. The park is home to some extremely rare animals such as the Gelada baboon, the Simen fox and the Walia ibex, a goat found nowhere else in the world.” (This site is designated as “in Danger” by the World Heritage Committee.)
- Fasil Ghebbi, Gondar Region — “In the 16th and 17th centuries, the fortress-city of Fasil Ghebbi was the residence of the Ethiopian emperor Fasilides and his successors. Surrounded by a 900-m-long wall, the city contains palaces, churches, monasteries and unique public and private buildings marked by Hindu and Arab influences, subsequently

transformed by the Baroque style brought to Gondar by the Jesuit missionaries.”

- Aksum — “The ruins of the ancient city of Aksum are found close to Ethiopia’s northern border. They mark the location of the heart of ancient Ethiopia, when the Kingdom of Aksum was the most powerful state between the Eastern Roman Empire and Persia. The massive ruins, dating from between the 1st and the 13th century A.D., include monolithic obelisks, giant stelae, royal tombs and the ruins of ancient castles. Long after its political decline in the 10th century, Ethiopian emperors continued to be crowned in Aksum.”
- Lower Valley of the Awash
- Lower Valley of the Omo — A prehistoric site near Lake Turkana, the lower valley of the Omo is renowned the world over. The discovery of many fossils there, especially *Homo gracilis*, has been of fundamental importance in the study of human evolution.
- Tiya — Tiya is among the most important of the roughly 160 archaeological sites discovered so far in the Soddo region, south of Addis Ababa. The site contains 36 monuments, including 32 carved stelae covered with symbols, most of which are difficult to decipher. They are the remains of an ancient Ethiopian culture whose age has not yet been precisely determined.

Go to <http://whc.unesco.org/> for more about World Heritage and the designated sites.

Shiftas at work

The BBC monitoring service reports that *shiftas* killed a South African tourist on the road from Bahir Dar to Gondar in February. Drawing upon reports from the Ethiopian News Agency: bandits shot the man, who was traveling with his family in the area of Teklehaimanot, near Gondar. The victim was shot as he tried to escape a barricade of stones placed on the road. The *shiftas* were robbing other

vehicles at the time as well. Four suspects have been detained following the tourist’s death.

Enjoying the Simiens

In March, Colin Barraclough of the *London Financial Times* filed a story, “Following in the Footsteps of Menelik.” Writing from a location in the Simien Mountains, Barraclough told of the safety and beauty of his adventure —

“It is safe enough in the Simiens . . . We climb sometimes on horseback, sometimes walking through heather-carpeted moors and rolling savannah that gives way to a jungly undergrowth of a lushness that surprises me. The higher slopes are carpeted by occasional forests of giant lobelia, a spiky, yucca-type plant endemic to Ethiopia.”

Barraclough described his encounters with baboons and his search for the rare fox of the mountains, of which there are an estimated 100 surviving. He saw no foxes. He and his guide also looked for the rare Walia ibex, the mountain sheep living among the ledges and slopes of the Simiens. A half-dozen years ago an estimated 250 were left alive. He actually spotted a family of six through his binoculars skipping along about a quarter-mile away: “I lie entranced, captivated by the delicate movements and fine balance of this rarest of creatures.”

He also wrote a few words about Ethiopian roads —

“I decide, an hour outside Debarq, that Ethiopia could do with a little more asphalt. On the map, only 120km separates Debarq from Axum, but it is a hellish ten hours in a bus that rarely gets above second gear. A serpent of a route, it winds up and down the volcanic cones of northern Ethiopia, past dark green eucalyptus and flat-topped acacia. Behind, the Simien cliffs guard the horizon.”

Indulge Me

Not Necessarily an Editorial

AS THE PEACE CORPS CONFERENCE and reunion opening ceremonies commence in Washington in June, there will be a number of us who were there four decades ago, in a different part of town, at Georgetown University. We are the old farts of the Peace Corps, but if you look at the Steering Committee that drives E&E RPCVs you'll find an ungodly number of us '62-'64 PCVs on the list: Marian Haley Beil, Leo Cecchini, John Coyne, Dave Gurr, and myself. And add one year to include '63-'65 PCVs and there we find Gloria Gieske Curtis, Gerry Hoffman, Judy Smith, and Jim Solomon. Add to this list another Steering Committee member C.J. Smith Castagnaro, librarian Joe Ciuffini and Laurie and Wayne Kessler long-time Asmara correspondents, and the exceptional editorial networking of Shlomo Bachrach and Robert Crepeau, all 1960s PCVs. So many of our generation have done stuff as E&E RPCVs.

It is easy to say that because we're all in our 60s or so, caught in the net of retirement, etc., we have the time so we can do this thing, keeping the interest alive, feeding on the fascination and love for the places we served and lived long ago in Ethiopia and Eritrea. But that's not exactly true.

JFK Old Farts, maybe. Could be that we were also kids of New Dealers. Maybe just young idealists caught between civil rights and the Marshall Plan and the atomic bomb. Maybe we just hit the time with skinny neckties and bouffant hair-dos and were just discovering that if we had or hadn't ridden a bus in the Deep South, we might do something else that could be morally significant.

Then a poetic political invitation held us enthralled: "Ask not what . . ."

The Peace Corps may be saluting its 40+1 anniversary, but there are a bunch of us E&E RPCVs who are lighting two score candles on top of a cake we baked ourselves. We mixed the ingredients in Georgetown forty years ago, and we're still eating and enjoying that cake.

I think that's why we're on the Steering Committee. Not just because we "have the time," for the fact is that most of us are as busy as if we were slogging through 8-to-5 days & 40-hour weeks still. Maybe we are just like concerned grandparents striving to perpetuate idealism in our progeny, to continue something in which we believed deeply a long time ago, and still find meaningful.

If there were ever an appropriate metaphor, it is Michael Santarelli's "Making an Ethiopian Tukul," reviewed in this issue of *The Herald*. I dare anyone with our experiences at heart to fail to miss the significance of his loving slide show begun three decades ago when he watched the building of his home Gurage-style.

I certainly appreciated the 10-month visual documentation, for it illuminated the craft and tradition of house-building. I could only marvel at the parallels between our own American barn-raising, that classic community-driven effort. Santarelli moved into the tukul and lived there until his time of service ended.

But what I really liked was the fact that he returned almost three decades later to see what had happened to his home. It had evolved into a stable filled with animals, with several improvements added over the years. But it was still a place where there was life, where he lived.

In a sense, we are like Santarelli's tukul. We, as very young people, did build upon an American tradition when we answered the call of the Peace Corps to do something. Together, just as the Gurage tukul-builders did, we cut wood, shaped walls, raised roofs, and opened doors and windows.

It wasn't just the Old Farts in Ethiopia and Eritrea, either. We just opened a couple of gates others could go through. Years later, and going through rougher times politically and personally, you E&E RPCVs who followed had to deal with some problems we quite likely created.

The anniversary conference of the Peace Corps will no doubt be fascinating in its spectrum and its scope. E&E RPCVs will be there, again, in impressive numbers. While there might not be superiority in numbers, I reckon that Ethiopian and Eritrean RPCVs have a touch of the exceptional in their veins and memories.

Blame it on Harris Wofford . . . but I'll miss Beulah and Blythe.

—Hayward Allen

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Sources for other articles include: the Peace Corps, the National Peace Corps Association; PeaceCorpsWriters.org.

If you would like to submit an article to be considered for publication, it would be appreciated if it is submitted digitally — via email or on disk (labeled as to software and computer used and with a hard copy).

Photo submissions are **enthusiastically** welcomed. They should be clear, with images large enough to be easily discerned. All photos will be returned.

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