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**Next Week**

A further look at The Hypenhated Ethiopian: A harbinger of the national way of life.

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The emblem of the ECA Small-Scale Industry Exhibition currently under way at the National Lottery Hall.
The View from Arat Kilo

Influence Peddlers

The information office of the Municipality and an irate resident of Addis, Ato Shiferaw Woreda, have been having a running battle in the columns of Ye Ethiopia Dimtse and Addis Zemen. Ato Shiferaw complained in a letter-to-the-editor that he has been trying for the last five years to transfer a title deed to his name. He also said that an "influence peddler," (a "breaker") offered to fix the "job" for him within three days for a sum of $200.

Hog Gone Mad

The hesitant press campaign to discourage exaggerated and theatrical aspects in Ethiopian mourning practices may have received some help from an unexpected source — a hog gone mad.

A resident of Nekemt, Ato Bayene Kasil, had died. Relatives, friends and the usual hangover went unheeded. Here for public mourning.

Now, it is not known whether the wailing and crying actually drove the hog crazy but what did take place is that the hog came charging from the forest and ploughed into the mourners. Panopplion broke loose. The hog decided to chase an unfortunate mourner, Ato Senbeto Bejiga. It attacked him and bit his left calf. The impact broke his leg. The berserk hog was finally stoned and started to be devoured by the mourners.

Mourners are advised not to good nature dogs in extremis by exaggerated wailings.

Dear Editor,

I have read the three issues of "Addis Reporter" and it has, I would say, opened a new chapter in Ethiopian journalism vacuum. I hope your editorial saying "Ethiopian newspapers are void of content and the main news from the poor world - empty because we had no alternatives to that with one big disadvantage - is almost succeeded to make us figure our issues! - Addis Reporter" has quenched or thirst for domestic issues and even.

Bekle Geletou

Readers' Corner

Dear Editor,

I am writing to you from Addis Ababa. I have been reading Addis Reporter for a few weeks now and I have found it to be very informative. I am writing to you because I have a question about the editorial in the last issue.

The editorial stated that the current economic situation in Ethiopia is very difficult and that the government is doing everything it can to improve the situation. I would like to know if you have any information on this topic.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your letter. I am glad to hear that you have been reading Addis Reporter. The editorial you mentioned was written by a journalist who covers economic issues in Ethiopia. While the government is making efforts to improve the economy, there are still many challenges.

Please feel free to write to me with any questions you may have. I will do my best to provide you with information.

Sincerely,

[Editor]
Queen goes Home

Prince Presents Emperor with 8 page Report

Ethio-Dutch relations hit a high water mark during the visit of the Dutch Royal Family to Ethiopia. Queen Juliana and members of her entourage left Ethiopia Wednesday.

The Queen was seen off by His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I, H.R.H. Prince Bernhard, and members of the Ethiopian Government.

Prince Bernhard left a few minutes later aboard his Friendship F-27 for Cairo. He spent about a week in Ethiopia's game reserves in the Awash and Omo Valleys where the Queen joined him Sunday through Tuesday.

The Prince, who is President of the World Wildlife Fund, has been studying wildlife in Ethiopia. Before his departure he presented the Emperor with an eight page report on his findings and observations.

The official tour of the Royal visitors included a tour of Lalibela, a visit to Jimma and a visit to Expo 69 in Asmara. The Queen donated $000,444 to help finance the building of the All Africa Leper Centenary Rehabilitation Training Centre.

Earlier H.R.H. Princess Beatrix accompanied her husband Prince Claus for a private visit to Tanzania where Prince Claus has his early education.

Asmara Expo 69

Queen Juliana of the Netherlands and His Imperial Majesty, Haile Selassie I inaugurated the Asmara Expo 69 last Saturday, February 1. Expo 69, which will be open to the public for 28 days, is the biggest exhibition held in this country since the Addis Ababa exhibition of 1955, commemorating the Jubilee Coronation anniversary.

Speaking at the inauguration of Expo 69, the Emperor, expressing the general theme of Expo, said: "Although what we will see today displayed in this exhibition is the result of the labour and concerted efforts of our people in this government-general and our government, yet in a very modest way we can say that this exhibition can show our honoured guest what our country is in its march for progress is doing for its people in the field of economic and social development."

The Queen and the Emperor toured Government Hall and the 21 private pavilions. Expo 69 is proving to be a success. Over 15,000 people have already visited the exhibition.

Aiming at City Hall

It's getting so difficult to drive around Addis these days that you need a map. Or perhaps a policeman except that, alas, it seems that the cops can't keep up with Addis' fast-changing streets either.

Despite the confusion for drivers on Churchill Avenue there is evidence that the Municipality is getting straightened out. After all, Churchill Avenue may well be able to lay claim to the title of the widest road south of the Sahara and it is certainly the straightest in Addis, a city not normally known for following the geometric principle that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line.

The only trouble is that for the first few days of the new part of Churchill was being used the policemen didn't seem to know exactly which way to direct traffic. This resulted in numerous circuits around the Piazza for some unfortunate drivers.

But it should be consoling to know that our temporary suffering is all in the spirit of progress. Some day, perhaps even this year, Addis' freeway will be completed and speed demons will be able to aim their sports cars right at the heart of the Municipality.

And, better yet, we are told that for the first time in Addis' storied history the road has been planned so that all the cables and lines normally laid by IBTE, the water department and others have already been put in.

Theoretically, this means that Churchill will not be subjected to the usual digging projects undertaken on other streets in the capital. Theoretically.

Arab Concessions

Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser insisted in a question-and-answer session with Newsmen that the Arab states are willing to offer five concessions if Israel evacuates the occupied territories. The concessions are: "declaration of non-belligerence; the recognition of the right of each country to live in peace; the territorial integrity of all countries in the Middle East, including Israel, in recognized and secure borders; freedom of navigation on international waterways; a just solution to the refugee problem."

Asked if he would be ready to discuss other matters with Israel if the Israelis show a willingness to pull back the Egyptian president said that he would not talk with them before they pull back.

At press time Addis Reporter had not been able to determine how well Newsmen was selling in Israel.
Ed Sullivan Show Presents...

Orchestra Ethiopia is scheduled to leave for the United States for a one month tour of college campuses and for an appearance on the famous Ed Sullivan Show.

Orchestra Ethiopia goes shopping in the States under a new name — the Blue Nile Group. It is not known whether the Blue Nile Group is insured by the Blue Nile Insurance Corporation.

The purpose of the tour is to introduce Americans to Ethiopian traditional folk music and to attract Peace Corps Volunteers to Ethiopia who, we expect, will turn out to be Masenko players like the administrator of the Blue Nile Group, Mr. Charles Sutton.

Sponsoring the tour at the American end is the firm Sheldon, Soffer, Management Inc. In turn, the U.S. Peace Corps is contracting with Mr. Soffer for the services of the Orchestra in its recruiting campaign.

Here at home, the Darmar Shoe firm has contributed shoes free of charge for all the 14 members of the Orchestra—a nice way to get free advertising on the Sullivan Show.

The Addis Ababa Rotary Club also made a cash contribution of $515 in purchasing new costumes while Ethiopian Air Lines is arranging their trip free of charge.

There is no doubt that the Ed Sullivan show will make them famous in the States. One hopes Harry Belafonte won't invite Alonzo, the famous Wollamo singer and dancer, to remain in the States.

Orchestra Ethiopia, a folkloric group, is scheduled to go to the United States under a new name — The Blue Nile Group.

Quotemanship

"Hotel d'afrique holds the first miss (sic) 'Soul' competition in Addis Ababa... The competition is open to all." (Ato Endelchew, interviewed after winning the miss Soul contest, said...)
- Printed handbill advertising the Miss "Soul" competition.

"Too Many Thieves" starring Peter F. and Britt E.
- Poster advertising movie at Haile Selassie I T.

"It's said the difference among presidential candidates was that Wallace would run over you with his car; Nixon would have his chauffeur do it, and when it happened Humphrey would cry a lot."
- American comedian Mort Sahl.

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ECA After Ten Years

By Staff Reporter

Telegram has been pouring into Addis Ababa this week from world leaders and heads of U.N. specialized agencies congratulating the Economic Commission for Africa on its tenth anniversary. All have praise for the work the ECA has done so far under the able guidance of Mr. Robert Gardiner and his predecessor Mr. Miuki Akihisa.

Well, such laurels on such an auspicious occasion could normally be dismissed as a formality. In the case of the ECA, which has justifiably earned its esteemed and trusted position as the major coordinating agency for socio-economic development of Africa, words of tribute are but a humble reward for the arduous task it has been embarking to accomplish.

In April 1958, only nine African states, including South Africa, qualified for full membership in the commission and eight more countries were admitted as associate members. Between 1966 and 1968, the membership of the ECA grew to 41, excluding South Africa which has been expelled. This phenomenal growth in membership was a decisive element in the commission's work. It may be easy to coordinate the actions of nine members; it is difficult to do the same for 41. Yet, the commission's performance is a record the secretariat staff should be proud of.

Africa's economic problems are so varied that there can be no panacea for them. Systematic survey of the economic and social conditions which the ECA undertook during the past 10 years has revealed, beyond doubt, the enormous economic potential of this rich and vast continent. Exploitation of this potential is largely dependent on building of the necessary infrastructure which has also preoccupied the ECA. The past has been a decade of studies and the future can be an era of dynamic activity provided the ECA members can usefully avail themselves of the services of the commission.

The facilities offered by the ECA have not come out of the blue. The
difficulties encountered and the sacrifices made are still fresh in the minds of all Africans. For Ethiopia, the sacrifice was worth the cause, the Emperor always expounded.

In building Africa Hall, which houses the headquarters of the ECA, the financial contribution of the ECO, an independent African state was indeed interpreted in his address at the inauguration of the ECA in 1958 by these words: "Only a few years ago, meetings to consider African problems were held outside of Africa, and the fate of its peoples were decided by Berlin and Algiers. It is not repeated, and it is thanks to the contributions of Accra and now of Addis Ababa that the peoples of Africa can at long last, deliberate their own policies and futures.

The Emperor's words were echoed after 10 years by many speakers at the opening session of the ECA, including U Thant, United Nations Secretary general, who had flown to Addis Ababa to participate in the 10th anniversary of the commission.

The catalogue of ECA achievements has been praised by the executive secretary, Mr. Gardiner, in his special report entitled: "Ten Years of Progress: A Venture in Self-Reliance." The Emperor in his speech condensed these achievements in these words: "Africa has made giant strides toward achieving the measure of self-reliance to which we all look forward. Independent African governments have become increasingly more efficient at organizing themselves, both internally and in sub-regional groupings to fulfill their major task of raising the standard of living of the African peoples and bringing them to quickly as possible into the orbit of 20th century technology. The Economic Commission for Africa has rendered invaluable assistance toward achieving this goal."

U Thant also felt that the groundbreaking work done by the ECA should stand the commission in good stead when it enters into a new phase with greater emphasis on operational activities which would directly assist member governments in their efforts to eradicate poverty, ignorance and disease.

In U Thant's words: "Africa may be the youngest of the developing continents, and ECA the youngest of the United Nations regional economic commissions, but as recent events throughout the world have shown, the African youth is characterized by vitality and an eagerness for progress. The economic commission is one of the ingredients that will help to launch the developing world into a higher orbit of economic and social development.

U.S. President Richard Nixon, who had the opportunity of seeing at first hand the remarkable potential of Africa, said in his message to the opening session that the ECA has certainly brought this potential nearer to reality.

How much the African countries can reap the harvest of ECA's work will depend on the African countries themselves. The commission's role had been admirably defined by the late U.N. Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjold.

He had said: "It is important that we think of this commission not as an isolated venture or self-contained entity, but rather as focal point where the economic needs of the African people will be expressed and the action to meet those needs will be initiated and stimulated."

Operating under this guideline, the ECA has been more than would have been thought possible, considering the political changes and economic circumstances under which it has been functioning during the past 10 years. While the ECA has been emphasizing self-reliance in an independent world, there has been an apparent tendency for most African countries to resolve to foreign patronage. When such assistance does come forth, it must be utilized wisely to the benefit of the African people and the satisfaction of the donors.

Africans will definitely need this assistance in the years to come as they seek the industrial development of the continent. It is easy to say that Africa is entitled to this assistance but this language is seldom understood by the major powers who in the past systematically exploited Africa's riches for their own good. While at the same time taking a great deal about the meager help they had given.

In this respect, a new guidance is being given to African governments during the 10th anniversary celebrations of ECA. This guidance is prominently demonstrated at the Small-Scale Industries Exhibition at the National Lottery Hall. There are many items exhibited that the African countries can easily and immediately produce themselves without outside help or large financial investments. These items include the list of imported consumer goods.

"Only a few years ago, meetings to consider African problems were held outside of Africa, and the fate of its peoples were decided by non-Africans. Today, the tradition of Berlin and Algiers has been reactivated and it is thanks to the conferences of Accra and now of Addis Ababa that the peoples of Africa can, at long last, deliberate their own problems and future."

The exhibition, in which 17 countries are participating, is intended to attract attention on the importance of economic and social development, especially in the small-scale industries and the economies of African countries, to show examples of what individual African and other countries, with low investment costs, have achieved in the development and promotion of small-scale industrial enterprises; and thereby, to encourage African entrepreneurship.

The brochure on small-scale industries in Africa, produced with the help of the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce, has this message from H.E. Ato Abebe Retta, Minister of Commerce and Industry: "Small-scale manufacturing enterprises can certainly help in being training grounds for entrepreneurial skill which is one of the bottlenecks to the accelerated growth of industry in the developing countries in general. What is more, the development of small and medium scale industry will help alleviate many social problems by creating employment opportunities or reducing the immense exodus of rural dwellers to urban centers."

Here again initiative of African countries is essential.

Is this initiative lacking is what Kenya's President Jomo Kenyatta has been pondering. Kenya feels that if there has been any weakness in the ECA, this might be identified as the inability of all governments concerned to associate themselves completely with the objectives and increasingly with the inspiration of the ECA. Kenya's president said in his message:
The Emperor receiving U Thant at the Jubilee Palace.

George, the ECA conference that this has in some degree led to failure in to exploit the fullest potential of ECA. Well, in this case the blame cannot be put at ECA doors. The ECA has so far acted on the principle that avoidance is a vital step to self-reliance. The studies of ECA are becoming standard reference sources for students of African problems. Government and agrarian programs and agencies are creating using the secretariat in activities in Africa. This is as it should be, because problems through non-African eyes. ECA and the United Nations window for African economic and social problems through African eyes as well as for seeing them in relationship to the overall international campaign for the development of the continent.

In this context, the Africa of today, is it to be the continent for future? The struggle for emancipation is far from over, as indicated by the foundation of the African Union and the continued struggle for freedom and the rights of all people. The struggle must continue to be effective to affect the progress of Africa's economic development and the continent's development.

The greatest obstacle has been the adamant attitude of racist South Africa, which is far more developed than any other African country in Africa, towards the continent's problems. By pursuing their racist policies, South Africa has globally deprived itself of the privilege of participating in ECA activities. The pace of Portugal is similar. ECA activities would be much more effective in these countries, as well as Rhodesia, were they to realize the potential of the road they are taking by sticking to obstinate ideas based on skin color.

Many African countries would argue that most of the ECA activities in the past have involved too much paperwork, which has been cumbersome for planners and their executors. There is no denying the fact that during the past 10 years the ECA has produced too many reports on surveys and studies. Some papers have been unreadable and of little value. This is not the case with the ECA's activities and a different approach is needed. The most African economists understand this and are apparent from the level of participation at the current ECA meetings.

The days are gone for Africa to be interpreted by the ECA specialists as seen African in the United Nations windows. ECA is seen through African eyes and social problems through African eyes as well as for seeing them in relationship to the overall international campaign for the development of the continent.

An educated man worried about the pace of advancement that the community is receiving whether the suggestions are offered first and the arguments then presented or when the arguments are marred and then conclusion drawn.

An official presented with decisions based on the investigation after having paid due compliments to such an impressive study brought to a successful finish, added the following:

"You see, the real problem is not where the conclusion should come, but how to deliver newspapers and magazines to the hinterland during the rainy season when the feeder roads are impassable. Does the position of the contribution matter in an article that never reaches the reader?"

Leonard Doh, a Yale sociologist, tells a story to this effect in his Communication in Africa for an altogether different reason. But the point is well taken.

Not so long ago Addis Reporter asked Shalihow be educated or shall she be ignored? Perhaps we should ask "Are we educated or are we ignorant?" Leaving definitions of such dubious words as "edified" to those who earned their living defining and answering, we'll make a simple division that will lead into statements of questions that are really questions.

Coming from small communities we have passed into the mobility of life in Diri Dawa, with its multi-dimensional, be it pastoral culture, Asmara, with its undertow of Mediterranean gesticulations; and Addis Ababa, uneasily hovering on the verge of metropolitan internationalism. In short, the educated Ethiopian is Ethiopia in transition. The implications are obvious.

Passing from the annual harvest to the monthly salary and from the homestead to the apartment, we have exchanged commensurate security for individual destinies. Our physical mobility has tossed along a social mobility that has dashed traditional class differences to smithereens. Our prospects are becoming more and more dependent on levels of individual achievement rather than lineage.

Another way of putting all this is that the period of the hyphenated Ethiopian is a period of tension. An uneducated reaction to any situation is immediate whereas the hyphenated person is one of moral relapse or reflex.
by the whole society. Is he showing any indications of attempting to structure reality into a coherent vision? One thing seems clear. The Ethiopian age of the intelligence is still asking the question of the traditional man. Whenever faced with anything new he asks "Is it according to the spiritual tradition?" Are the newspapers in which he prints these questions according to his national tradition? His question is a noble gesture, but hardly a luxury that the era of research admits. The day's query should be: "Is such-and-such of practical value and workable?" After all, a highly organized but static way of life is perceptibly being replaced by what seems like a disorganized but dynamic way of life in Ethiopia.

Daneil Dener in "The Passing of Traditional Society" uses the phrase 'mobile sensitivity' to describe the prerequisite for the individual's spiritual survival in a period of drastic changes as deviations from what was. By this he means a sensitivity and sensitivity that takes all workable change in its stride because the self has a built-in system for rearranging its inner resources according to need. It would seem as if our mobile sensitivity should, instead of bemusing the mainling of our spiritual values, turn us to the French academy, which has not succeeded even in consolidating the French academy. It has already gone, let alone changing the thread to future development of the language. Witness that the French dictionary par excellence is the "The bourgeoisie of an underdeveloped country is a bourgeoisie in spirit only. It is not its economic strength, nor the dynamism of its leaders, nor breadth of its ideas that ensures it peculiar quality of bourgeoisie. Consequently it remains at the beginning and for a long time afterwards a bourgeoisie of the civil service."

FRANZ FANON

Lottez and not the academy, which, naughty tongues wag, is stuck to the word "cocktail". The Hebrew we are told, a language many centuries old, we are thinking of Amharic two centuries from now, the word "amharic" seems to have come into extreme business culture of the non-dance orchestra, and the bookshop. Isn't it amusing crystal and silver ware imported from France that help in understanding the cultural indices that gave them their lines and curves and shapes, the way we regard our spiritual life as new entities, and had its own uniqueness? Analytic comprehension, not the only way, but certainly sure that what is secular will not be taken as sacrosanct! "The bourgeoisie, five times times as worried."

"The bourgeoisie of an underdeveloped country is a bourgeoisie in spirit only. It is not its economic strength, nor the dynamism of its leaders, nor breadth of its ideas that ensures its peculiar quality of bourgeoisie. Consequently it remains at the beginning and for a long time afterwards a bourgeoisie of the civil service."

"The bourgeoisie of an underdeveloped country is a bourgeoisie in spirit only. It is not its economic strength, nor the dynamism of its leaders, nor breadth of its ideas that ensures its peculiar quality of bourgeoisie. Consequently it remains at the beginning and for a long time afterwards a bourgeoisie of the civil service."

The hyphenated Ethiopian is also a girl in transit form unadulterated nature to brass-made in Paris.
the breakdown of the European-centred universe and the rise of the American Empire, the attendant effect of this on knowledge—all these have nurtured a rich literature on the transitional societies of the world: transitional much in the same way a box of cigars is said to be “in transit” from departure point to destination.

The question of the point of departure: the issue of the point of arrival (was it two or three stages?) And how many takes? The questions of this “transit” passage will be left to the gods and their temporal representatives or to the planners—let us build our heaven here and now!—the exact percentage in the growth of GNP and GDP—these are issues which are better left to the quaintest technicians of the field.

As we see it (and leaving aside the rate of speed of the transit passage and the qualitative and quantitative nature of the transition) when the son of a peasant (one generation removed from his plot of land) becomes a pilot of an international jet or a seafarer, a journalist or an art critic, a top-drawer politician or a paragon of a society, a professional MD or a structural engineer, then we must of necessity accept that there has been a change—be it in their skin-deep or thorough-going. A change which un-leashes, perhaps, un-impulselive, such queries as shall we define them ignorant? or earnest and unwavering statements: ‘You know, he is a Ph.D.—in marketing.’

General Eisenhower, who was the favourite butt of intellectuals, liked to recur to his friends a definition of an intellectual (which, he claimed, he had overheard at a cocktail party): “A man who takes more words than are necessary to sell more than he knows.”

We do not know whether he intellectualized it or whether it was quite appropriate that such a clumsy definition should come from the old warrior. But there is no denying that the intellectual is actually a talker. A talker who classifies.

The late C. Wright Mills, an intellectual gadfly, an irritant of the bourgeois intellectuals of his country, came to the conclusion that they should be defined with a single social unit, but rather with a collective set of criteria. They must be defined in terms of their function and their subjective disposition—and not in terms of their social position...”

But resorting to classic formulations or even to those writings of the handful of uncaptured social scientists has its limitations. And this being simply because the ROAC pilot would not ordinarily be taken in his country as a member of the intellectual or educated class.

Whereas here in Ethiopia, it is not only that an EAL pilot is taken or accepted as such but he must be for it. The sociological concepts of “cultural shock,” “social disorganization,” “breakdown of traditional values,” etc. have been allowed to sterility through which one can still use them as points of orientation when, as in our case not long ago, a “professional” economist complained that the Ethiopian government is not responsive to the needs of the middle class.

“Coming from immobile life in small communities we have passed into the mobility of life in Dire Dawa, with its multi-dimensional, be it parochial culture: Asmara, with its underdog of Mediterranean gestures: and Addis Ababa, uneasily hovering on the edge of metropolitan internationalism. In short, the educated Ethiopian is Ethiopia in transition.”

We are not as such interested in finding out whether the college-educated Ethiopian is an intellectual or not. His field—be it a merchandizing or political theory, literature, medical education, microbiology or public health administration.

Hopefully, Ethiopia has now reached the stage where one could chuckle over such lurid terms as “localism,” and combative and political awareness are the characteristics of the ISU who dismiss forties and fifties as “traditional” of the society.

Ethiopia has now reached the point where graduates of the University of Addis Ababa, its vice presidents, at the university, where Ethiopians are training to replace expatriate teachers in the secondary and specialized schools...”

In the July-August 1974 issue of The New Elites of Tropical Africa agreed on a working definition of “elite.” The savages decided that the term “elite” could be appropriately used to define those who were western-educated and wealthy (to a high degree relative to the masses of the population), a lower limit of $500,000 (1970, C.A. 150,000) as an annual income being suggested.

The advantage (some will say disadvantage) of such a working definition lies in its restricted nature: substantial western education and relative wealth are the defining criteria. The rich but semi-literate or illiterate traders and landowners, the marginal and marginal but poor enough literate primary-school teachers, clerks, etc., are conveniently excluded.

That one has to resort to elaborate and ingenuous formulations does not and should not question the very existence or the degree of theCatchword of either the elite or the bourgeoisie. It merely emphasizes that the attendant qualities of the age of research have not kept pace with the metamorphosis of the social structure and the changing scene of the social life. To wit: five year plans need not only economists and statisticians but an acceptance of disciple, rationality and praiseworthiness as a way of life. Massive apartment buildings—the symbols of the age of sanitation—need proper plumbing and electrical engineers and elevator technicians.

To what degree is the working definition of the savages of the 1970’s applicable to our home scene? The ‘elite’ imagined by the scholars is our hypotenuse Ethiopian. But being less academically minded (and given the weight and volume of the data) truth is perhaps best captured in qualities rather than quantifications (or words) Addis Ababa would have...”

And those who get the most of what there is to get are those who have substantial western education and who, consequently, have relatively well-paying salaried jobs in the civil service, autonomous organisations and private enterprises. In effect, the members of what the Russians call “the creative and technical intelligentsia,” i.e. philologist and veterinarian, barmine and metallurgist (those who are not recognized under the Russian definition—entrepreneurs—form of course, an enterprise part of our hypotenuse educated).
The Plight of the Pensioner

By Baalu Girma

"A moderate pension," said Byron, "is not worth a lot, but when a
shakeshafy is sick, a pension man has to work full-time, or
to work overtime, at collecting more
pension. But, as we have come to
moderate pension, he believes that those who pay him have
concluded with Samuel Johnson's
declaration that a pension is "an allowance" or "an
ideal income" and it is understood to
which is England is understood to
mean paid give to a state hirinig
reference to his country.

Over 7,000 military pensioners flank the Shoa Province Treasury near the
Ministry of Information each month in an attempt to collect their pensions.
Before the last of them gets his pension another month is already gone and the
pensioners move to the back of the line and start all over again.

Some pensioners interviewed at random revealed that they are happy
with what they get, when they get it, but expressed concern about their
"liking" a cause of them had to
stand in a queue for several days before getting their allowance. Active service
is not yet over for them.

Most of these pensioners take as long
is five days and travel a distance of
Kilometres to collect their pensions. And it is quite a scene to see more than
3,000 pensioners assembled in a compound as
big as a large hall (about 200 square
metres) all waiting to enter, one at
a time, a dingy cellar where a bespectacled
old man (probably forgotten by
the Ministry of Pensions) is best on
taking a lifetime to pay one pensioner.

One gets the impression that this seemingly inefficient way of handling pensions is deliberately done to slow
down cash payments. In the past, seven
cashiers used to handle payments in
a matter of a day and a half.

The reason why all of these figures are cut down from seven to one is not known. An
ttempt to prove it proved futile as the
Belairon's office is in a queue.

The Minister of Pensions insisted that it was not a question of cut-off.

"Then what is it?"

"Your guess is as good as mine."

"It is a shortage of cash."

"We have plenty of cashiers."

Whatever the reason, pensioners
settle down to pay half a day has
already elapsed. The afternoon comes
and goes in the same manner. A couple
of hundred people may have collected their allowances. The first
- Eda Nepeye

But the Belairon's office has innumerable problems to contend with,
too. One great problem - pensioners
simply refuse to stand in queues
Treasury does not know how many
paychecks it is going to handle each
month as there is little or no coordination between the Treasury and the
Ministry of Pensions and knowledge of
the latter's domicile and move
ments is lacking.

The Ministry of Pensions used to
distribute pension schemes as well as
Treasury checks in towns and villages.
Some of those who wait and wait and wait outside the Shoa Treasury office.

payments in the past, but the payment aspect in Addis Awha was transferred to the Central Treasury and the Shoa Province Treasury two years ago. The Central Treasury was required to handle payments for 1,800 civil pensioners, while the Shoa Province Treasury found itself handling payments for 2,800 military pensioners.

In less than two years the number of military pensioners has grown from 2,800 to 7,600.

The Shoa Province Treasury claims that it is not prepared to handle a growing army of pensioners as effective service requires exact knowledge of each pensioner’s domicile and movement, and definite planning regarding the number of people who will be pensioned each year.

The Ministry of Pensions has not been of much help. Nobody knows which pensioner lives where or even if he is still alive. Because of lack of knowledge of domicile and movement, it has not been possible to make payments at Awaaja and district levels. The procedure now is that pensioners are given pay-books (12 leaflets) and they can thus collect their pensions wherever they may happen to be.

Pensioners in debt have learned that roaming about helps to dodge creditors. As a result many pensioners have become virtual nomads. At times the local treasury in the district in which they happen to be has no cash in hand to pay them since they did not expect them. So they come galloping to Addis only to find out that they are unexpected guests here also.

Sometimes, a pensioner living in one of the remote provinces keeps his book and demands ready payment for the entire year. There is nothing ready thing is arranged.

One pensioner who was weary of this waiting game (he was trying to get one year’s pension money) was asked why he had waited one year to come to Addis to collect his pension. He pointed out that he lives somewhere in Gamu Gofa and that a return ticket would cost him $104 if he had to come every month. “I’m only getting $40. So, you see why I can’t come to Addis every month to collect my pension,” he said with a cynical smile.

He has a problem. No one would expect him to lose a fantastic sum of money in the process of collecting a “moderate pension” and there are many more like him. The problem cries for solution. With more Government employees going on pension each year, the streets of Addis will be full of people chasing after their pensions, and the present chaos taking place near the Ministry of Information will be a small problem compared to the one coming in the future.

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