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Was Farmaajo a Fraud All Along?

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“The Ideas of economists and political philosophers both when they are right, and when they are wrong are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed, the world is ruled by little else.” John Maynard Keynes, a renowned British economist.

It might have been that way in the days of Keynes, but today the media and those who run it are more powerful than economists and political philosophers combined. The media shapes people’s opinions, emotions and attitudes. In addition, those who run the media are the one group that can force the leaders of the world to spring into action into whatever direction they like. This is so because, whatever cause those who run the media deem important is so. What they say is the truth. Whoever they blame is guilty.



The media can also build political careers, and destroy them just as easily. It can turn the most able, intelligent, and patriotic leaders *Unelectable*, and turn the most mediocre leaders into *conquering heroes*.

I do not know who was behind Farmaajo’s media campaign, but boy were they effective! Somalis everywhere fell in love with Farmaajo, and entrusted him with the hopes and dreams of the devastated nation. The loyalty and the blind support that the Somali people extended to Farmaajo was so overwhelming that people put aside their critical thinking faculty. Not only they believed Farmaajo would perform miracles, but even raising a mere question about him, or who might be behind his media campaign has become a hazardous affair.

I once asked three different friends about who they think might have been behind Farmaajo's extraordinary marketing campaign. The reaction of my friends was telling: One of them demurred, and then changed the whole subject. He didn't like my question. Another one looked me in the eyes and just grinned, with a look that says, "What is wrong with this guy? Does he have to be a doomsayer even when the country is heading to the promised land." The third friend refused to respond to my question. Perhaps he found it offensive.

Unfortunately, Farmaajo revealed his true nature in just six months, when he willingly, without anybody holding a gun to his head, handed Abdikarim Sheikh Muse Qalbi-dhagax over to Ethiopia. Then the Somali people everywhere simply lost it. People were so shocked and outraged, because they genuinely believed Farmaajo was a true patriot. And they expected so much of him. And when the man they trusted and held with such esteem sunk so low, so quickly, people were simply heart-broken! They could not believe Farmaajo was capable of such a treasonous act. That is why people started spreading conspiracy theories such as "Farmaajo was trapped. Farmaajo was tricked. [Khayre](#) and Sanbalooche conspired against Farmaajo to ruin his name, etc."

All of those conspiracy theories have one constant theme: People couldn't wrap their head around that the man they believed in, and admired so much was capable of such a treacherous act. They didn't want to believe the news. They hoped against hope. Then, on Sept. 6, 2017, everything fell apart!

On that day, Farmaajo's government led by his Prime Minister Khayre, held a news conference and declared to the Somali people everywhere that "Yes, we handed Qalbi-dhagax to Ethiopia, and it was a correct action!" And as if that wasn't bad enough, the government's second declaration was even far more devastating: "The ONLF is a terrorist Organization!"

Handing Qalbi dhagax over to Ethiopia is a crime. However, branding the ONLF as a terrorist organization is a double crime, and an unforgiveable one at that. It is so because when you denounce the ONLF as a terrorist organization, you are delegitimizing the organization's struggle and goals. You are doing this because you started looking at the ONLF and Somali-galbeed through the lenses of Ethiopia. And by doing that, you are saying fighting for *Liberation of Somali-galbeed* is a crime! And hence, by your action and declared policy, you are relinquishing Somali-galbeed and openly treating it as a part of Ethiopia.

This is a repudiation of the meaning of Somaliness! It is contrary to everything the Somali people stood for in their entire modern history. No Somali leader in the past, no matter how corrupt or incompetent, ever sunk so low as to willingly relinquish Somali-galbeed to Ethiopia, and smeared those who are fighting for its liberation as terrorists!

Somali-galbeed is part and parcel of Somali territory. And it is a territory that the Somali nation had sacrificed so much, both in blood and treasure. Tens-of-thousands of Somali nation's best and brightest soldiers perished in the liberation of Somali galbeed. There is no Somali family anywhere in the entire Somali territories be it in NFD, Somali-galbeed, Djibouti, on in the Somali Republic that had not sacrificed either a son, or a brother, or a father, or an uncle, or a close relative to the liberation of Somali galbeed. Somali galbeed was liberated, but, as we all know, we were overpowered by outside powers.

Now the uninformed would think that since the liberation of Somali-galbeed was reversed, and Somalia itself descended into a black hole of civil war and lawlessness, the war to liberate Somaligalbeed, with its monumental sacrifices both in blood and treasure, had been completely pointless. Nothing is farther from the truth. As I noted in a letter that we wrote to the Africa Oil Corp., Every drop of blood shed for the liberation of Somali-galbeed either by the Somali National Army, or by the fighters of Western Somali Liberation Front is an enduring deposit that would forever re-energize the determination of our people. No cause is ever lost, unless its owners give it up.

Silver-lining

Before I go any further, I would like to make a quick comment about the Narrow-politicking of some Somalis. And it is that when a high-ranking official, who happens to belong to any particular clan, makes a wrong decision, and, is therefore, justifiably criticized and attacked, some of his clansmen feel the necessity to defend him, because they confuse the attack on the leader as an attack on the clan. So, they end up defending their clansman right or wrong. It is time we Somalis move beyond narrow thinking. Farmaajo and Khayre committed a treason, but their clans have nothing to do with it.

Another point that is a bit digression, but, I would like to make nevertheless, is on the government's position on the conflict between Arab states in the Gulf. In that conflict, the government's neutral position is the correct one. Had Somalia been stronger than it is, perhaps the government could have taken a more robust action, and would have fully sided with justice. But as it is, neutrality suits the Somali situation the best.

Now the silver-lining in the government's open admission of handing Qalbi dhagax to Ethiopia are several, and they are:

- 1—Farmaajo was trapped.....No more.
- 2—Farmaajo was trickedNo more.
- 3—Khayre is undermining FarmaajoNo more.
- 4—Qalbi dhagax willingly surrendered to Ethiopia...No more.

The importance of all those points is that they were all excuses, and alibis for Farmaajo. But it is very clear now there are no excuses for Farmaajo or alibis. And the Somali people now know who he is, and what he did. The Sept. 6, news conference put to rest to all the fake alibis and excuses for Farmaajo.

Some people still don't get it. They insist that Farmaajo should come clean. I don't really understand what do they want the man to do. I mean, didn't he come clean already? Who does the Prime Minister represent? Who does the minister of information work for? They both represent and work for the president. And they both made it clear in a news conference that it was the Farmaajo and Khayre's government that handed over Qalbi dhagax, and the decision was correct. What else could Farmaajo say other than just repeating what his Prime Minister and information minister already said. Well, nothing else. And for those who still prefer to put their heads in the sand, the decision to handover Qalbi dhagax was Farmaajo's first and foremost. The notion that some obscure or even important intelligence officers made this decision, without Farmaajo's knowledge is ridiculous. Those intelligence officers and even the Prime Minister would have been fired if this decision was made without the president's approval. All the indications suggest none will be fired because it is the president himself who made the decision. And the others simply carried out his directives.

The Debacle-Debate About Qalbi-Dhagax

If you really want to get a sense of the kind of leadership Farmaajo and Khayree are giving the Somali people, all you need to do is to observe their reaction to the controversy surrounding the abduction and the handing of Qalbi dhagax to Ethiopia. The Farmaajo's and Khayre's government handed over Qalbi dhagax to Ethiopia on August 28, 2017. Then the government was silent for almost 9 days. Then on Sept. 6, 2017, the ministers started debating the issue. You see, there is a big problem here. *Shouldn't the government and its ministers start debating when the man was in their hands and he was in Mogadishu?* Of course, that was the time for the debate.

But they didn't debate at that time. Instead, they started debating almost nine days after they handed the man over to Ethiopia. Therefore, this wasn't a debate about Qalbi dhagax's fate, it was about something else. But what was it?

It was an attempt by Farmaajo and Khayre to Shift the blame, and pin their own crimes on the previous government. To say it was ridiculous is a clear understatement. On the one hand, Farmaajo and Khayre displayed uncharacteristic bravado, and openly said, "Yes, we handed Qalbi dhagax over to Ethiopia, and it was a correct decision." But, on the other hand, they said "The hand over was done because of a previous agreement signed between Ethiopia and the previous Somali government, and clearly implied that it was Hassan Sheikh Mahamoud and his ministers that are responsible for Qalbi Dhagax's plight!"

This attempt to shift the blame would not work, because all the available evidence disproves it at every turn. For instance, Qalbi dhagax lived in Mogadishu almost all the time that Hassan Sheikh Mahamoud served as the nation's

president. And neither the president, nor his ministers, nor his security forces ever bothered Qalbi dhagax in any way. It is Farmaajo's and khayre's government that abducted Qalbi dhagax. It was their security services that humiliated him and psychologically abused him. As you could see from [this short video](#) published by Dalsoor media. I do not



understand why Farmaajo's and khayre's security forces were behaving in such disgraceful fashion towards a Somali officer under their mercy. They put him in chains, and threw him in dark cell, forced him to sit on the cement floor, not even afforded him a chair, and repeatedly trained their flash lights on him, just to compound his plight and humiliation. Was all that humiliation intended to get extra kudos from Ethiopia, I wonder? Farmaajo and Khayre can try to shift the blame as much as they like. But the buck stops with them. As Somalis say, "Fallaadhi gilgilasho kaagama hadho!"

When societies go through long period of paralysis, as is the case in Somalia today, achievements come in slow pace. And when there aren't much of achievement to go around, avoiding disasters are justifiably counted as accomplishments. And such are accomplishments that Hassan Sheikh Mahamoud, the former president, with all his limitations, could clearly identify with.

As he watches the treasonous scandal that engulfed Farmaajo's and Kharyre's government, Hassan Sheikh Mahamoud could only thank his creator, and count his blessings, for not being the traitor who sold a Somali officer to the enemy!

Hindsight is 20/20, and it is very clear now that Ethiopia played a crucial role in president Farmaajo's election victory. But this role wasn't because Ethiopia gave him money, or commended him for having important leadership qualities. No, Ethiopia didn't do that because the Ethiopians know that doing so would have immediately dashed Farmaajo's hopes and dreams, and for that matter the hopes of any Somali leader commended by Ethiopia. The Ethiopians view Somalia and its people as eternal enemies. That feeling is mutual, for we view them just the same. Therefore, to ensure the man they wanted, Farmaajo, win the election, the Ethiopians played the opposite of supporting him, or reverse psychology on us, by doing two things:

- 1—They painted Farmaajo as anti-Ethiopia.
- 2—They said he could not win.

Those two steps, both by Ethiopia were essentially the magic formula that decided Farmaajo's victory, and carried him in to the Villa Somalia. The first description of him being anti-Ethiopia elevated Farmaajo as a true Somali patriot. The second statement posed as a challenge to the Somali parliamentarians and to the Somali people as a whole. The Challenge was that Ethiopia clearly said 'You cannot elect someone who is anti-Ethiopia that Ethiopia opposes his leadership.'

That challenge and the patriotism implied in Farmaajo's supposed anti-Ethiopian sentiments galvanized the Somali people everywhere to come together, and show Ethiopia what we Somalis are made of, and overwhelmingly supported Mr. Farmaajo's leadership. And our parliamentarians rose to the challenge, stood with the Somali people, and gave their votes to Farmaajo, the anti-Ethiopian Somali patriot. The only problem was that, it appears, the votes were delivered to the very man that Ethiopia overtly opposed, but was rooting in secret.

There is no way on earth that a patriot could willingly turn into a traitor in just six short months. That cannot happen because patriotism is not a shirt that you don when convenient, and take it off when it isn't. Rather it is conviction, it is a moral principal, it is focusing on the big picture, and above all, it is putting your people and your nation's interests above your own personal interests. And most certainly, it is putting your people and your nation's interests above those of their enemy's. Willingly doing the dirty work of a colonial government and patriotism cannot coexist in one person. It is impossible. Farmaajo was fraud all along!

The ONLF and the Future of Somalia

Somali commentators nowadays dismiss the ONLF as has been, and quickly write its obituary. Those commentators can be forgiven for they obviously are not Many familiar with the history, or with the ups and downs of liberation movements.

In reminding the hazardous life that awaits them, the late poet Dhoodaan said to the fighters of Western Somali Liberation Front:

Kii hoyasho guri moodayoow waa cidla u hoyo e
Kii hadaf xarrago maaganoow haaruf-taad bixine
Kii hadimo diidaayayoow waa naftaa huride!

What is true of individual freedom fighter is true of the liberation movements. Betrayal, temporary defeat, setbacks, defections, bouts of depressing incidents, and infighting are all the stuff of liberation movements.

Liberation movements do not gain independence for their people by winning in a battle field. In fact, there is no liberation movement anywhere in the world that won a decisive battle and chased the colonialists out and liberated its people that way. The closest one to that would be the war of Vietnam. However, as everyone knows or should know, the war of Vietnam wasn't between Viet Kong and the American forces. The Viet kong were proxy for the Soviet Union and China. It is those two big powers that ensured the defeat of the united states in Vietnam. However, the Viet kong were more than happy to be proxy, so long they were helped to liberate their country from the Americans.

Almost all liberation movements that liberated their countries achieved their independence by following two basic formulas: Hanging on to their cause, and keeping the resistance alive in whichever way they could. That is it! This simple two step formula succeeds because there is inherent failure associated with colonialism. This inherent failure stems from the fact that colonialists or colonial governments have a choice. If the colonized people keep resisting the oppression or keep fighting back, colonialists would eventually get tired, and they always do. Then colonialists will do cost-benefit analysis of their colonial enterprise in that country. And if and when they deem colonizing that country is too costly, colonialists pack their bags and leave. Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique all got their independence not because Britain and Portugal were defeated in battle field, but because colonialists got tired, did cost/benefit analysis, and left. In fact, over 95% of the countries of the world that were colonized got their independence because colonialists found the colonialization to be too costly and decided to leave.

A small minority of Colonized regions and peoples gain their independence when, due to internal and external factors, the center of colonial government falls apart. And hence, the situation that prevails in the center of the colonial government makes it impossible to send sufficient forces to the colonized regions to maintain the colonial system. Eritrea, for instance, got its independence when the center of Ethiopia fell apart. The Tigrean group that assumed power in Ethiopia were not a position to continue the control over Eritrea. That is why they agreed to allow Eritrea to gain its independence. Given the history between Somalis and Ethiopians, and given the landlocked status of Ethiopia, Somaligalbeed will gain its independence when the center of the colonial government in Addis Ababa once again falls apart. And you bet, it will.

Now, given the incredibly hostile environment that the ONLF found itself, where not only it lost the support of the generous Somali government, but also its leaders and members were/are hunted in all Somali regions such as Somaliland, Puntland, Galmudug, and now Mogadishu, the organization has been quite resilient. True, its military strength is not as it once was. And that is one of the phases that most liberation movements go through. However, in terms of its grassroots dynamism, its ability to protect the rich resources of Somaligalbeed, and deny and prevent Ethiopia from exploiting our gas and oil resources, the organization is as effective as ever.

The future of Somalia as an independent country is now tightly connected with the success and the survival of the ONLF. This is not a typo. Nor was this always the case in the past. However, the increased importance of the ONLF for the future of the Somali Republic stems from the discovery of huge oil and gas fields in Somaligalbeed. Some of the Gas fields in Somaligalbeed are estimated to contain more than 4 trillion cubic meters. The oil fields of somaligalbeed, on the other hand, according to some Arab and western sources are thought to be as vast as the oil fields of the Arabian gulf that made Saudi Arabia and those other small states so wealthy.

Now, if Ethiopia is allowed to exploit such enormous oil and gas resources in Somaligalbeed, it will invite energy hungry world powers such as China, and money hungry big oil corporations. Thus, the bonanza and the windfall from these oil and gas resources will, in no time, make Ethiopia ten 10 times more powerful economically, politically, and militarily. And If poor and barely surviving Ethiopia has been terrorizing Somalia in the past 25 years, and no one in the world came to protect us from Ethiopia's meddling and constant abuse, who is going to protect Somalia and its people from Ethiopia that is 10 times more powerful economically, politically, and militarily? Well, no one!

When Ethiopia, because of its exploitation of the Oil and gas riches of Somali galbeed, becomes that powerful, to mitigate its crippling land-locked status, Ethiopia will gobble up and absorb Somalia and all of its ports, just as it did to Eritrea back in 1961.

Now, the question is, who is preventing Ethiopia from exploiting such huge oil and gas resources of Somali-galbeed, and thereby making herself a regional economic and military power? Well, who else. It is the ONLF and its grassroots organizations.

Every oil company invited by Ethiopia to drill oil and gas in Somaligalbeed such as Malaysia's Petronas, to Canada's Africa Oil Corp, to China's Zhongyuan Petroleum has been chased by the ONLF and its grassroots. The case of the Chinese oil company has been the most spectacular: On April 24, 2007, at the height of the war of Mogadishu of 2007, the ONLF staged perhaps its best military operation and killed 65 Ethiopian soldiers and 9 Chinese Zhongyan oil workers. The ONLF staged the attack to kill two birds in one stone: It was a clear sign of solidarity with the people of Mogadishu that the Ethiopian forces were slaughtering those days. It was also to prevent Ethiopia from exploiting our resources. After the attack, the Chinese company evacuated what is left of its workers and left.

Now, when Farmaajo and Khayre handed over Qalbi dhagax to Ethiopia, they weakened the ONLF. And when they labeled the organization as a "terrorist organization", they are paving the way for the elimination of the ONLF, and thereby removing the most critical obstacle that has been preventing Ethiopia, from enriching itself with the huge Somaligalbeed resources, both gas and oil, and then take control all of Somalia and its ports. The dots are clearly connected here. The universal outrage by Somalis everywhere about the handover of Qalbi dhagax was instinctive understanding that those leaders, who today sold a Somali officer to the enemy, would not hesitate to sell the whole country, and its people for their own selfish ends.

There are great and glorious events just around the corner for Somalia and its people, being taken over by Ethiopia is certainly not one of them.

In the powerful article that he wrote about this subject, ['Who Failed the Farmaajo Presidency'](#), Faisal Roble urged Mr. Farmaajo to seek and secure the release of Qalbi dhagax from the Ethiopian prison. It is a call that is both wise and timely. And it is perhaps the only thing that could dampen the anger of Somali masses, and at the same time somewhat rehabilitate Farmaajo's ruined credibility. What would make this easy for Farmaajo, if he wants to act upon it, is that it is not unprecedented. It happened before. And it could happen again. For instance, Ahmed Madoobe, the current president of Jubaland, who was a prominent figure of the Union of Islamic Courts, and the head of the Kismaayo zone, was wounded and captured by Ethiopia.

Then when Sheikh Sharif joined the new group that was running the show in Mogadishu, he demanded and secured the release of Ahmed Madoobe from the Ethiopian prison. The Ethiopians released Ahmed Madoobe because they knew they needed Sheikh Sharif's cooperation on various issues. And they reasoned that if they helped him today on his wish, he could help them tomorrow on some other issues. Now, if he secures the release of Qalbi Dhagax from the Ethiopian prison, Farmaajo's demoralized masses would be rejuvenated. "He made a disastrous blunder" they would argue, "but he rectified it!" That would be a powerful argument, provided Farmaajo delivers it!

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