

## How President Salva was betrayed

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October 28, 2012 - When the word honesty is mentioned, its antonym dishonesty easily comes to mind. A combination of such reference and rampant betrayal makes politics such a dirty game indeed. This is because those who make politics dirty are the few and greedy elites who cling to the strings of epicentre of power in order to advance their selfish and vested interest. It simply boils down to dishonesty of few.

Frankly speaking, President Salva Kiir Mayardit is such a humble, patient and patriotic leader, and South Sudan is blessed to have him at the apex of leadership. Unfortunately, he has one major weakness: he trusts even his arch enemies and this is not good for the nation although his intention may be perceived as necessary for the sake of unifying a tribalised country.

A mind boggling question is: who are the arch enemies of President Salva Kiir Mayardit? In case you don't know, President Salva's enemies are some of his Cabinet who chose not to tell him the truth in time of need. Two cases in point are current financial crisis and 14 miles saga.

To begin with, prior to shut down of oil production, I am pretty sure that President Kiir had consulted with his economic team who included Minister of Finance and Economic Planning and Minister of Trade, Industry and Investment on economic implication over shut down of oil production and I am certain that the President was guaranteed that the nation could "economically survive for more than five years without oil revenues." We were made to believe that the country has enough reserve and that the locally generated revenues will be empowered. Few months later after the shutdown of oil production, the nation was plunged in worst economic crisis in history of the two Sudans. As I write this line, I mourn the hollowness of my pocket and that of my fellow citizens' simply because the dime for my next meal is unpredictable. Furthermore, the economic team around President Kiir went as far as forgetting that our revenue system is in limbo. If that ill and dishonest advice to President isn't betrayal, then what's betrayal?

Secondly, in regards to "14 Miles" saga, those who should be held responsible to have betrayed the President, citizens of South Sudan particularly Aweil Community, are two members of his cabinet; namely, Hon. Garang Diing Akuong, Minister of Commerce, Trade, Industry and Investment; and Hon. Madut Biar Yel, Minister of Telecommunication and Postal Service. In order to underscore this charge, the two Honourables cited above are first and foremost National Assembly Members entrusted to safeguard the interests of Aweil Community in National August House.

The two Honourables are among the eyes and ears of Greater Aweil Community in National Legislative Assembly. Secondly, by chance or otherwise the two honourables happened to be appointed to National Cabinet which automatically oblige them as representatives of Northern Bahr El Ghazal State and immediate advisors on State Affairs to the President. In their wilful attempt to collide Greater Aweil Community and our President, the two chose to withhold the facts about Addis Ababa negotiation to the community and wilfully decided to withhold the reaction of Aweil Community to Addis Ababa outcome. The two Honourables, dishonestly decided not to alert the President and National Council of Ministers over dire consequences of presenting a proposed map to Africa Union High Implementation Panel ( AUHIP) where the villages of Northern Bahr el Ghazal are excluded within the precinct of the so called "mile 14" and north of River Kiir. This huge sell-out gives Khartoum an incentive for bargain and claim of "mile 14" being a disputed area.

Therefore, the point of contention from the people of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State is never over the protocols of Addis Ababa Agreement but rather to make the land within mile 14 radius a claimed and disputed land. When the natives of Rezeigat in South Darfur heard about the inclusion of "mile 14" as a disputed area in Addis Ababa, they came and put an epitaph over a bogus and unmarked grave North of River Kiir Adem in Aweil North County. When the natives of Aweil inquire about their activities, they claimed that their forefather died in the area in 1948 and that they are there to revive the symbolic epitome of his grave. This in itself is an attestation that members of Rezeigat community are already claiming areas within "mile 14" as part and parcel of their ancestral land. Funny enough, the supposed tombs were dug up by the villagers of Aweil North and not even a bone of chicken was found.

Had Hon. Garang Diing And Hon. Madut Biar paid attention and pointed out the unmarked areas in the map, am sure the President and negotiating team would have been saved from the current salvos and discontent from the masses of South Sudan. Rather than being in slumber land in the middle of the Council of Ministers' Proceedings and worrying about maintaining their positions, they would not have found themselves on the wrong side of History. It was also their sole responsibility as citizens of Northern Bahr El Ghazal State in national cabinet to suggest to the President the importance of involving people of Aweil, particularly chiefs, in negotiation. Instead they chose to pursue their personal interests leaving the issue of "14 miles" to its own fate.

Their frantic effort to convince the President that majority of Aweil community are contented with the inclusion of the disputed piece of territory in the agreement has come a little too late. A serious and a gapping damage has been done. Rather than dishing out Hundreds of Thousands of Foreign Currency Bonds and Letter of Credits through Bank of South Sudan to petty traders, Hon. Garang Diing should be worried that his constituents are having hard time trying to look for ways to salvaged their land which is about to slip through their fingers. Its beats the logics and pains me to the marrow of my bones to think that somebody representing me in the National Assembly and the National Cabinet is not telling the president the truth. This is a betrayal of first order.

In the final analysis, situation such as these are taken by the self seekers out of context. It has been reported to the president that his picture was torn and burned up in Aweil, a school bearing his name has been defaced and signpost change. This is one level that cannot take place in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State. Our grievances are always channel objectively and maturely and that's what makes Aweil the most peaceful State in South Sudan. The recordings of the peaceful demonstration was even denied the chance to be aired by South Sudan TV...a media Station entirely funded by public money. This is one big blunder and betrayal the Minister of Information, Dr. Marial Benjiman, has done. That video tape gives a clear picture on how the demonstration was handled with hundreds of placards praising President Salva for his wise leadership. If the tape was allowed to run, it would not have given traitors the chance to spread wrong information around. The withholding of the tape from being aired raise many chilly questions as to whether or not the Ministers around President are working for his downfall or success. Withholding tape was adding an insult into injury and Dr. Marial along with others such as, Makuei Lueth and Salva Mathok are surely doing a huge disservice to the President through their actions and loose words. You don't protect the President by instigating public anger in the name of President. These actions, in my opinion, are a subtle way of trying to undermine the President in the eyes of public.

A brotherly advice to the two ministers from Northern Bahr el Ghazal is for them to come to Aweil and reinvent themselves in the eye of the public. The more they try to be good boys to the President by betraying the community, the more they only tarnish the reputation and standing of President in the eye of the community. I know it will be a daunting task for the two ministers to reinvent their reputation and credibility within Aweil community. Last but not least, history will judge the duo so unfavourably.

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