



ኣርኅቲ

LIBERATION

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY ERITREANS FOR LIBERATION IN NORTH AMERICA



፫ይ ኣታዎ ቀ.፭

Volume III No. 2

ግንቦት ፲፱፻፸፩

May 1974

C O N T E N T S

EDITORIAL
The African Revolutionary Struggle: AN EVER-RISING TIDE! 1.

ERITREAN REVOLUTION ADVANCES IN BIG STRIDES:
Ethiopian Occupationists Call for "Peaceful Solution" 3.

ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE'S HEROIC UPRISING SHAKES FEUDAL REGIME 7.

NEWS
Famine Continues to Spread in Ethiopia 12.
E.P.L.F. Guerillas Destroy the Debarwa Copper Mine 13.
Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO)
Expresses Solidarity with Eritrean Revolution 13.
Eritrean Youth Participate in the Fourth Conference
of the Pan-African Youth Movement 14.
Iran Gives 15 Phantoms to Ethiopia 14.
Eritrean Refugees Reject Sudanisation & Settlement
Policy 14.
Workers' Strikes Paralyze All Important Institutions
in Eritrea 15.

E.F.L.N.A. ACTIVITIES
E.F.L.N.A. Holds a Conference 16.
New York 16.
Boston Chapter 17.

For Your Reference:
ERITREAN PEOPLE'S MILITANT HISTORY OF ANTI-COLONIAL
STRUGGLE 19.

"ሰላማዊ ፍቅርን ግንዛቤ ንግድ" - ዘመን ዓቅኪ ያበቻ 27.

For comments, criticisms, or more information, please
contact E.F.L. at Box 1247, N.Y., N.Y. 10027 or Box 101,
Boston, Mass. 02125

E D I T O R I A L

THE AFRICAN REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE: AN EVER-RISING TIDE!

The African peoples' struggle against colonialism, neocolonialism, racism and imperialism is celebrated on May 25th each year throughout the world. May 25th, African Liberation Day, is an occasion when we, the African people, sum up the experience of our struggles, consolidate our victories and rededicate ourselves to resolutely continue the struggle for the genuine liberation of our people from colonial oppression and imperialist domination. It is also an occasion for us to pay homage to the thousands of martyred sons and daughters of Africa who have sacrificed their lives in the battle against colonialism and imperialism, and hail those who are carrying forward the banner until final victory. Above all it is an occasion when all progressive people express their internationalist solidarity with the African revolution, which is an integral part of the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle.

Today, Africa has become one of the storm centers of revolution in the world. The heroic struggle of the people of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau has dealt deadly blows to NATO-backed portuguese colonialism whose archaic colonial empire is crumbling like a house of cards. Last year the people of Guinea Bissau, having liberated over 90% of their country, proclaimed their independence. The great victories scored by the people of Mozambique and Angola caused the recent downfall of the fascist Caetano regime in Portugal which only two years ago confidently declared that "...Africa is more than an area which must be exploited. Africa is for us a morally just cause, our raison d'etre as a state." The armed struggle waged by the people of Azania, Namibia and Zimbabwe for national liberation and the mass upheavals and strikes in the cities are striking terror into the hearts of the racist minority regimes and their imperialist masters.

The liberation struggle is also raging against neocolonialism in countries that have attained their formal independence. As Cabral pointed out correctly, the liberation struggle is a revolution that does not end at the moment when the national flag is raised and the national anthem played, and only the use of liberating violence can answer the criminal violence of the agents of imperialism. Such struggles against imperialist agents like Mobutu, Ahijo, and Tombalbaye have been raging in Congo (Kinshasa), the Cameroon and Chad for many years. The people of Congo (Kinshasa) under the leadership of the Marxist Revolutionary Party of the Congo (Kinshasa) are waging the struggle fiercely to "abolish the bourgeois regime established by old and new colonialism and to organize a new regime of proletarian dictatorship." Popular upheavals against neocolonial regimes are spreading too. In Ethiopia the imperialist-backed feudal-fascist regime of Haile Selassie is faced

with a major crisis as a result of the popular uprising of the famine-stricken and over-exploited masses and by the democratic forces in the country.

The anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist and democratic sentiment of the laboring masses and progressive forces has created an irreversible anti-neocolonial trend in Africa. Many African countries are taking a progressive stand, notably Guinea, Tanzania, Brazzaville, Zambia and Somalia.

The revolutionary tide is indeed engulfing the entire continent. The Eritrean people's armed struggle against Ethiopian occupation and imperialist and Zionist domination is an integral part of this revolutionary tide. Upholding their tradition of gallant resistance against foreign invaders and colonizers, the Eritrean people have for over twelve years battled and dealt heavy blows to the Ethiopian aggressor troops who are armed to the teeth by U.S. imperialism and trained and advised by the Israeli Zionists. The Eritrean revolution, under the leadership of the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Forces, is determined to liberate Eritrea, liquidate the imperialist and Zionist military bases and economic interests in the country and thus contribute its share in turning that part of Africa into a graveyard of imperialism. The EPLF has openly declared that the "Eritrean Revolution, through its PLF Vanguard is ready for this historic mission; ready to persistently carry its own revolution forward; ready to share what is at its disposal with the revolutions in the region: to strengthen the already and partially successful revolutions and ready to help in the launching of new ones."

It is with this revolutionary optimism that we express our solidarity with the peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau in their bitter struggle against Portuguese colonialism; with the people of Azania, Zimbabwe, and Namibia in their struggle against white-minority racist regimes and their imperialist masters; with the peasants, workers and students of Ethiopia who have risen up against the oppressive feudal regime of Haile Selassie and finally with all the struggling people of Africa.

VICTORY TO THE AFRICAN PEOPLE!
DEATH TO IMPERIALISM!

ERITREAN REVOLUTION ADVANCES IN BIG STRIDES

Ethiopian Occupationists Call for "Peaceful Solution"

Over the past 6 months, the Eritrean national liberation struggle has dealt heavy blows on the Ethiopian aggressor troops in Eritrea. The Eritrean People's Liberation Forces has launched an offensive in the countryside and escalated its military activity in the urban areas, particularly in the capital, Asmara. This has made life extremely difficult and demoralized the aggressor troops and was one of the factors that led to the revolt of the Ethiopian armed forces against the feudal regime. In the wake of the army rebellion and the uprising of the Ethiopian masses, the Eritrean struggle has made further headway, scored major military victories and raised the confidence and enthusiasm of the people. From the enemy side, shrill cries for "negotiations" and a "peaceful solution" to the Eritrean case are being sounded.

The year 1973 ended with the Ethiopian occupationists declaring a state of emergency in all the Eritrean cities and towns, for the purpose of eliminating the "increased acts of subversion." Shops and markets were to be closed at 7:00 p.m. and all movement was to cease at 11:00 p.m. in Asmara and at 7:00 p.m. in all other towns. It is to be noted that almost the entire countryside has been under Martial Law since December of 1970. But just as the Martial Law could not check the advance of the E.P.L.F. in the countryside, the new state of emergency is just another futile act of despair.

On December 10, 1973, the E.P.L.F. engaged the Ethiopian occupation troops in a ferocious and pitched battle in a place called Mai Awli only 20 kilometers from Asmara and inflicted heavy casualties on them. 30 enemy troops were killed, 42 wounded and large quantities of weapons were seized.

Starting from December 24, 1973 until January 8, 1974 the E.P.L.F. engaged the occupation army in fierce battles that lasted for 14 days. The Ethiopian aggressors had moved 4,000 of their soldiers and numerous tanks supported by the air force which made at least 35 flights for an overall attack on the liberated zones in northern Eritrea. The E.P.L.F., which knew of the attack beforehand, destroyed 7 trucks full of aggressor troops in a carefully planned ambush. On the morning of January 6, the E.P.L.F. rained gunfire on the Karora camp and destroyed it. The aggressors suffered heavy casualties - 300 killed and injured, including the death of their commander, a colonel in rank, as announced by Asmara radio.

The defeat they suffered at Karora had a profound demoralizing effect on the aggressor troops of the Second Division of the Ethiopian

army. A little more than a month later, they mutinied against their top officers, seized Asmara and forwarded a list of economic and political demands. This triggered the revolt of all divisions of the Ethiopian armed forces which was followed by a powerful mass uprising of almost all sections of the oppressed masses of Ethiopia. While the primary cause of the uprising was the inhuman oppression and suffering that the feudal regime perpetrated on the Ethiopian people, it is clear that the advancement of the Eritrean national liberation struggle played a significant role in creating conditions for the revolt of the Ethiopian armed forces and the uprising of the masses.



While the Ethiopian uprising was underway, the E.P.L.F. kept up its offensive. Between the 12th and 14th of March, it engaged the Ethiopian occupation troops several times in Sahel province in northern Eritrea. It set up an elaborate ambush on 13 Ethiopian military vehicles and succeeded in destroying three of them, killing or wounding all the occupants.

On March 23, 1974, guerillas of the E.P.L.F. destroyed the Japanese copper mine in Debarwa locality by blowing up the generators, compressors and fuel tanks. The attack on the copper mine is significant because the exploitation of Eritrea's extensive copper deposits is one of the major imperialist interests in our country.

On March 27, the Eritrean freedom fighters hit at another imperialist interest. They destroyed an American helicopter which had flown from the American military base (Kagnew) in Asmara on a surveying operation for the Ethiopian occupation army in Eritrea. The freedom fighters

set the copter on fire and captured its crew of four Americans and a Canadian. The fighters are now studying the possibility of exchanging these captives with Eritrean political prisoners.

The continuous development of the Eritrean struggle, the severe casualties and ignominious defeats it is inflicting on the Ethiopian occupationists and their imperialist masters, and the vigorous development of the revolutionary movement in Ethiopia is bringing doom and gloom to the Ethiopian ruling classes and causing sharp differences among them on how to deal with the Eritrean question. One thing has become clear, even to a section of the ruling classes: the Ethiopian feudal regime even with all the support it gets from imperialism and Zionism cannot crush the Eritrean revolution by the force of arms. Instead the Eritrean revolution is bound to develop further - ideologically, politically and militarily - and provide an excellent example to the toiling masses and oppressed nationalities of Ethiopia.

All this makes the Ethiopian ruling classes mortally afraid. They want to kill the Eritrean struggle, extinguish the flames of the national democratic revolution and do away with this "dangerous example". If it cannot be done by force of arms, it seems that at least a section of the ruling classes is now prepared to do it through deception, by granting some reforms and making token changes.

It is in this light that we must see the statement of the new Prime Minister, Endalkatchew Makonnen, who announced over Radio Addis Ababa that he is looking into the problem of Eritrea with "care and concern". It is also in this light that we see the front page article in the widely read Ethiopian weekly "Police na Ermijaw" (Police and its Progress) which appeared on the April 22, 1974 issue of the paper under the heading, "What does the Administration think of the Eritrean case?"

The article discredits the reactionary regime's years long propaganda that the Eritrean struggle is a "bandit" movement, that it is opposed to the oppressed Ethiopian peoples and aims at turning Eritrea into a "moslem Arab" state. It points out that, "the Eritrean people are not bandits, they do not hate any nationality in Ethiopia; they are not fighting to spread Islam or Christianity or to become Arabs." It continues: "the cause of the problem is something else: the Eritrean people are hardworking and justice loving, and this is well known. It is for these reasons that the problems arose and have not been resolved yet."

While the article is forced to admit that the Eritrean people are struggling against oppression, it falsifies historical truth, claims that Eritrea is an inseparable part of Ethiopia, that the Eritreans regard "Haile Selassie as their father and Ethiopia as their mother" and

unequivocally opposes the Eritrean people's right to national independence. Instead, it proposes that the Eritrean people submit to the forcible occupation of their country and carry out "negotiations to bring peace" in turn for some minor reforms.

These deceptive sophistry and tactics of the Ethiopian reactionaries cannot fool the Eritrean people, who for years had waged a peaceful struggle to safeguard their national and democratic rights. It was precisely out of this experience and because of the arrogance of the Ethiopian expansionists who forcibly annexed Eritrea in 1962 that they picked up arms for the liberation of their country. Now that the armed revolution is advancing irresistibly, the Ethiopian reactionaries are preparing public opinion for a sham "peaceful solution".

Away with the Ethiopian occupationists! Our people cannot be fooled and are determined to persist in armed struggle until the birth of a truly independent and democratic Eritrea.



ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE'S HEROIC UPRISING

SHAKES FEUDAL REGIME

A deep-going revolutionary upsurge of the oppressed masses is underway in Ethiopia. The first 5 months of 1974 have witnessed waves of demonstrations, strikes, peasant uprisings, prison rebellions, and the rebellion of the armed forces. Virtually every oppressed section of the society from the workers to the priests has risen up against the feudal autocracy; each class putting forth its demands and slogans.

This mighty upsurge of the Ethiopian people has shaken Haile Selassie's feudal regime to its very foundations and has stricken terror into the hearts of the ruling classes. The nobility, the landlords and the bureaucrats are crying, "It is terrible! It is terrible!" The Ethiopian masses who have lived in hell and darkness for centuries are shouting "It is fine! It is fine!" Their allies the world over and in particular the Eritrean people rejoice at this great uprising of the Ethiopian masses.

Underlying Causes

The underlying cause of the recent uprisings is the long era of undisturbed feudal exploitation and imperialist plunder of the Ethiopian masses, coupled with the oppression of militarism and bureaucracy that has caused an intensive and deep social, economic and political crisis in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian feudal regime is composed of the nobility, its allies the big landlords, and the Coptic church who together own 90% of the arable land. The peasants who make up about 95% of the population are virtually landless and farm as tenants of the landowners. By law, these peasants are required to give as much as 75% of their produce to their landlord. This unbridled feudal exploitation has created a perpetually semi-starved peasantry victimized by acute malaria, syphilis, cholera and other fatal diseases. Lack of schools has left the literacy rate at about 5%, one of the lowest in the world. The lot of the peasantry does not end here. Recent introduction of modern farming by big merchants and foreign agro-industrial firms is uprooting the peasants, who are herded like animals to the cities in search of jobs, thus greatly enhancing the supply of cheap labor.

The uprooting of peasants has generated a deep crisis in the cities greatly affecting workers. The Ethiopian worker is one of the most exploited workers in the world. No minimum wage exists, and a worker can be paid as low as 40¢ a day. The employer, the absolute master, can fire an employee at will and with no compensation. Lack of any kind of benefits, inability to organize free unions, extremely danger-

ous working conditions, often resulting in tuberculosis, unlimited working hours, and the soaring prices of necessary commodities make the lives of the workers extremely miserable.

Haile Selassie's regime is a dictatorial autocracy that leaves no room for even minimal democratic rights. The emperor was the absolute ruler, the constitution itself declaring "the body of the emperor is sacred" and "his dignity is inviolable and his power is indisputable." There are no political parties, no free elections, no freedom of speech, no rights to form unions, no freedom of assembly and no freedom of press.

Like Czarist Russia the Ethiopian empire state is a prison of nations. The Amhara ruling class has stolen the land, suppressed the culture and languages of the oppressed nationalities which comprise the great majority of the population of Ethiopia. It has promoted chauvinism and practices discrimination in employment, in the building of schools, etc., in its attempt to divide and rule the oppressed masses. Side by side with national oppression goes religious persecution. The Ethiopian Coptic church (the state church) systematically oppresses the other religious groups and especially the moslem majority. In addition Ethiopia has since 1942 maintained its colonial domination over Eritrea and follows an expansionist and aggressive policy towards Somalia and "French" Somaliland.

The feudal government of Haile Selassie financed and advised by U.S. imperialists and Israeli Zionists maintains one of the most elaborate machineries in the world. It maintains a 50,000 man army, a 100,000 man territorial army, a large police and spy apparatus, a strong air force and a naval force. All in all these forces are about 250,000 men strong. A significant portion of this force is deployed in Eritrea in the regime's attempt to crush the national liberation struggle of the Eritrean people. The remaining forces are scattered in Ethiopia to suppress any uprising by the masses. The cost of keeping up the army and the police is one of the heaviest burdens the Ethiopian masses have to bear.

Any opposition to the regime is met with stiff reprisal. Prisons in Ethiopia by far out number educational institutions and health centers. Tens of thousands of political prisoners languish in tiny dark cells under inhuman conditions. Many peasants, workers, intellectuals and students suffer in this torturous concentration camps. The cost of food per prisoner per day is one U.S. dime.

Feudal exploitation, national oppression, militarist expansion, fascist repression - these were the characteristics of Haile Selassie's regime and the underlying causes of the uprising in Ethiopia. What immediately aroused the Ethiopian masses into an open fight against the regime was the terrible famine that has swept Ethiopia over the last two years and the skyrocketing prices that it has brought about.

Immediate Causes

The backward feudal relations of production in Ethiopia have given rise to an unprecedented famine that has already caused the death of 250,000 and is threatening 25 million with imminent death. As a result of the famine, 90% of the country's cattle have been wiped out. Peasants have been forced to sell their lands to speculators as low as \$3 per acre. The Ethiopian peasant in the drought stricken areas is now virtually with no means of production. While starvation, disease and unemployment of the peasants were rampant, big landlords and merchants were hoarding grain and exporting it to foreign lands. (1973 registered Ethiopia's largest grain export.) By hoarding grain, the landlords and merchants have effectively controlled food prices. Prices of food and other necessities have skyrocketed, the price of staple food doubling in one month (January 1974), the price of gasoline rising from 20¢ per liter to 45¢ per liter.

This in a nutshell was the situation in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian masses could no longer bear this brutal exploitation and repression. True to their glorious and militant tradition of resistance, they rose up with a mighty force against the feudal regime. The metaphysical view of some who had maintained that the Ethiopian peoples will never rise up has now been shattered beyond redemption.

The Uprising

Students, taxi drivers and teachers went to the streets. They showed their opposition to skyrocketing prices, discriminatory educational systems and neglect of the starving peasants. They forwarded their demands for price controls, educational opportunity for all and effective aid to the famine stricken peasantry. The regime responded brutally, shot many students, arrested the leaders of the other groups, and threw them in one of its concentration camps.

Ethiopian soldiers, who are underpaid and greatly exploited in an army with feudal characteristics and who have to fight unpopular wars against the Eritrean and Somali people staged an armed rebellion. It was the second division of the army stationed in occupied Eritrea who rose up first. Junior officers and privates imprisoned their superior, took over Asmara and demanded better pay, pensions and various political reforms, specifically the removal of the former cabinet of Aklilu Habtewold. Soon they were joined by all divisions of the armed forces, who took over the capital Addis Ababa and all major provincial towns.

Workers also joined their upsurge and forwarded their demands for economic and political reforms. 100,000 organized workers staged a general strike which paralyzed the country for four days. The Ethiopian working class demonstrated that it was a force to be reckoned with. The

workers have militantly threatened to strike again if all their demands are not met within six months.



100,000 strong, Ethiopian workers strike against the feudal regime of Haile Selassie. The placard in the picture reads "Workers are not slaves."

Students in Ethiopia who have long been at the forefront of the popular opposition to the feudal regime, have and continue to militantly put forward appropriate political demands and slogans, such as "Land to the Tiller," "Popular Democratic Government," "Right to form Political Parties," etc. The autocratic regime's response has always been barbarous and brutal, consequently many students have shed their blood, sacrificing themselves for the just cause of the oppressed masses. The priests threatened to continue their strike with a force of 200,000 unless they get better pay and until some people from the higher echelon of the church hierarchy are removed.

Virtually every section oppressed by the system joined the popular uprising. A factor to be noted is that the backbone of the uprising was the lower strata of the populace. It was a clear cut, antagonistic class struggle, the workers, peasants, soldiers, revolutionary intellectuals on one side, the landlords, the nobility and the bureaucrat capitalists on the other.

Faced with such a popular opposition, the regime had no choice but to concede to every demand. Haile Selassie's regime was shaken. The Lion of Judah no more roars. The power of the people and the weakness of the "Elect of God" were vividly demonstrated. The former cabinet was removed and its members are to be brought to trial for corruption. A constitutional committee to study reforms has been set up.

Pay raises, price controls and land reform have been promised. The Emperor has appointed a new prime minister, Endalkachew Makonnen, who was a notorious member of the ousted cabinet. Opposition to his appointment vehemently continues. University teachers, students and other groups obstinately demanded that he be removed and brought to trial with his former colleagues.

The appointment of a new prime minister - a notorious aristocrat - and the gradual consolidation of his government show one thing. The Ethiopian people have won the promise of some important reforms, but there has been no fundamental change in Ethiopia. The class relations are still the same. Feudal exploitation and imperialist plunder still continue. Why? Why couldn't the uprising bring about revolutionary change? The masses did not want to be ruled in the old way; the regime could not rule in the old way, either. The state machinery had broken down. For days, it was not clear who held the political power in the country. And yet, the oppressed masses could not seize political power, nor could they attempt to do so. The reason: the Ethiopian masses were not organized. There was no force to unite the masses and lead their uprising. The lesson is clear. Without a revolutionary organization to lead the masses, there can be no revolution. Nonetheless, the Ethiopian masses have gained valuable experience. They have flexed their muscles and felt their strength, and the vanguard elements are bound to sum up their experience.

The uprising in Ethiopia has demonstrated one more thing, and that is that the revolutionary struggles in Eritrea and Ethiopia are closely linked. The enemy of the Ethiopian masses is not the Eritrean people, as Haile Selassie had claimed for years, but the feudal regime which is also the hated enemy of the Eritrean people. The 12 year old armed struggle of the Eritrean people against Ethiopian occupation and imperialist domination has contributed in creating conditions for the uprising on the one hand; it is providing the Ethiopian masses with an example of a heroic and successful resistance to the brutal regime. On the other hand, the powerful blows of the Eritrean People's Liberation Forces are daily weakening the feudal regime and demoralizing its armed forces. It is perhaps not surprising that it was the Ethiopian occupation troops stationed in Eritrea who mutinied first and sparked the revolt of all divisions of the armed forces. The uprising in Ethiopia in turn has had its positive effects in Eritrea and has contributed to the Eritrean struggle. The strike movement of the Ethiopian workers has given vast sections of the Eritrean working class the change to stage strikes, after many years of brute suppression. Whatever democratic reforms the Ethiopian masses win will benefit the Eritrean people to some extent. The Ethiopian people's anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggle and the Eritrean people's struggle for national liberation closely support each other.

Reflecting the sentiment of the Eritrean masses, Eritreans for Liberation in North America (EFLNA) greets the Ethiopian people's heroic uprising with enthusiasm and warmly salutes their militant and revolutionary spirit. The Ethiopian people are bound to sweep the reactionary feudal regime into the garbage heap of history and build a genuinely liberated and democratic Ethiopia. Victory to the Ethiopian people!

* * * * *

NEWS

Famine Continues to Spread in Ethiopia

Famine in Ethiopia which has already caused indescribable human suffering in Wollo and Tigre provinces has spread and engulfed large areas of southern Ethiopia. It is reported that close to half a million people have died from the famine. According to the Ethiopian government statistics 250,000 have died in Wollo province alone and another 150,000 in southern Ethiopia. The backward feudal relations of production and the criminal negligence of the despotic regime which had been warned by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (F.A.O.) of an impending famine as far back as seven years ago, is directly responsible for this suffering of the Ethiopian people.



E.P.L.F. Guerillas Destroy the Debarwa Copper Mine

On March 23, 1974, E.P.L.F. guerillas caused heavy damage on the Ethio-Japanese copper mine in Debarwa. Ten freedom fighters entered the generator and compressor houses and exploded both houses by installing three bombs, two into the generator house and one in the compressor room. Then they machine gunned the fuel tanks and made more than thirty holes in them. Finally, they trench gunned the shaft frame and left the mine site. On their way back, they distributed pamphlets at Adi-Ugri and Debarwa. The attack on the mine took place after the Japanese firm failed to comply with the E.P.L.F.'s demand that it cease the exploitation of Eritrean copper.

The destruction of the copper mine is a major victory for the E.P.L.F. because the exploitation of Eritrea's extensive copper deposits, whose reserve value is estimated at \$37 billion, is one of the major imperialist interests in our country. 6,000 tons of copper were extracted in January 1974, 1,900 tons of which were exported for total proceeds of \$700,000. Emperor Haile Selassie paid a visit to the mine in February 1974 to underline its importance to the greedy Ethiopian occupationists.

A.A.P.S.O. Expresses Solidarity with Eritrean Revolution

The 11th session of the Afro-Asian People's Organization (AAPSO) was held in Bagdad from March 24-27, 1974. In an address to the session, the head of the Eritrean delegation representing the Eritrean Liberation Front - People's Liberation Forces, condemned "the wave of suppression and terror practiced by the Ethiopian colonialist authorities" and expressed the determination of the Eritrean people to "do away with the Ethiopian feudalism domination." The head of the Eritrean delegation appealed to "the patriotic and progressive forces the world over... to intensify their backing of the Eritrean revolution and redouble their support."

In response to the call, the AAPSO conference passed a decision to celebrate the 1st of September of each year as a day of "solidarity with the Eritrean People" (in commemoration of September 1, 1961, when armed struggle broke out in Eritrea). The AAPSO also sent a cable to the African Liberation committee of the Organization of African Unity expressing its solidarity with the "aspiration of the Eritrean people for their right to self-determination" and drew attention to the "tragic situation that ensued in Eritrea as a result of Ethiopia's annulment of the U.N. resolution (N390)" and finally, called upon the Liberation committee to "study and look into the current situation in Eritrea in light of the present events and in accordance with the principle of the right to self-determination."

Eritrean Youth Participate in the Fourth Conference of the Pan-African Youth Movement

A delegation of Eritrean youth representing E.P.L.F. participated in the 4th conference of Pan-African Youth movement which was held in Benghazi in the Libyan Arab Republic from March 23-27, 1974. Youth delegations from all parts of Africa, delegations from the African national liberations, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the League of Arab States, and delegates representing the liberation fronts of Vietnam, Cambodia, and the Youth of Chile attended the conference. Students, youth, and worker delegates from Europe attended as observers. The conference expressed its positions and relations with the African, Arab and world liberation movement. On the Eritrean question, the conference passed a resolution which states: "The conference greets the just struggle of the Eritrean people and demands that their basic rights be respected."

Iran Gives 15 Phantoms to Ethiopia

The Eritrean Liberation Front had come to know that Iran has given 15 phantoms to Ethiopia. Iran is also training Ethiopian pilots to fly the phantoms in future. Thus the number of military planes given by Iran to Ethiopia with American approval reaches 35 of which 15 are phantoms and the remaining 20 are F5 type.

This is a graphic proof that the puppet regime of Iran has become an overt participant in the war raging in Eritrea to help Ethiopia against the Eritrean revolution.

The shaky regime of Haile Selassie has already begun to use these planes against the Eritrean revolution in a vain bid to suppress it.

Let the puppet regimes in Ethiopia and Iran know that they shall never be able to subdue the Eritrean people who are fighting for their national independence and freedom no matter what kind of sinister methods are employed against them.

- Eritrean Review, No.11 , April, 1974

Eritrean Refugees Reject Sudanisation & Settlement Policy

The more than 80,000 Eritrean refugees who since 1967 have been residing in (Simsim) area in eastern Sudan have protested against the decision of the Sudanese Government issued on 1/1/1974 which rules that the Eritrean refugees be settled in the afore-mentioned place and be considered as Sudanese nationals and therefore should "pay taxes" from the cultivable lands given to them by the government.

In their memorandum to the Sudanese Government, the Eritrean refugees have spelled out their rejection of the Sudanisation scheme and confirmed the retention of their Eritrean nationality. They said that the measures of the Sudanese Government contradict with the international laws laid for (refugees) and firmly reiterated that "no one on earth can force us to change our national identity. Our sons are fighting in the mountains in order to liberate our land. So we shall never accept a substitute to our homeland".

Ethiopia seeks to dissolve the national identity of the Eritrean refugees or else return them by force so that they may not remain a glaring proof and a speaking witness against her brutality and the massacres perpetrated by the brutal Ethiopian army of occupation against the inhabitants of peaceful villages in Eritrea.

The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration has of late stopped its symbolic aid of 10,000 per month from the Eritrean refugees possibly as introduction to the Sudanisation complot.

The External Mission of the Eritrean Liberation Front has sent protestations to the UNRRA and other humanitarian organisations against the Sudanisation and settlement stratagem and asked them to send aid to the Eritrean refugees. Furthermore, it requested the friendly Arab states to study the condition of the refugees and build schools and clinics for them.

- Eritrean Review, No. 11, April, 1974

Workers Strikes Paralyze all Important Institutions in Eritrea

Civil servants and workers strikes have paralyzed all movements in Eritrea. A demonstration in which more than 10,000 people took part and in which the masses demanded their national political rights and reduction of prices has triggered off in Adi Wegri town. Similarly, the municipal workers in Adi Quala town went on strike and the workers in Keren town took to the streets and carried placards demanding liberty and independence and response to their labor demands to be met within a period not exceeding April 9, 1974. The Governor (Ambaye Germai) has failed to pacify the situation. In massawa and Assab ports, the loading and unloading have been at a standstill for a month due to the strike of the Eritrean workers. The judges went on strike also. The enemy radio in Asmara has broadcasted these strikes and demonstrations.

In a bid to tranquilize the seething situation in Eritrea, the new Ethiopian Premier, Endalkatchew Makonnen, announced over radio Addis Ababa that he will try to tackle the Eritrean problem with care and concern. But these benumbing promises did not have an impact on the ever-

ascending revolutionary tidal wave in Eritrea. The Popular Liberation Forces has got down to the task of escalating the fight against the Ethiopian army of occupation.

- Eritrean Review, No. 12, May, 1974

E.F.L.N.A. ACTIVITIES

E.F.L.N.A. Holds a Conference

On April 14-15, 1974, EFLNA held a seminar and convened its Second Quarterly Meeting in Philadelphia. Over 80 Eritreans from seven chapters, including several individual members resident in the eastern region of the U.S. participated in the Conference.

The various chapters and the Executive Committee submitted quarterly reports, discussed the problems confronted as well as the means used in solving them and, summing up their experiences together, reached greater understanding of the major organizational difficulties involved and the appropriate methods for alleviating them.

Three working papers dealing with 1) EFLNA's political outlook, 2) EFLNA's relations with ESUNA, and 3) the analysis of classes in Eritrean society were prepared and distributed. The Conference's four workshops discussed and summed up the experiences of the various chapters and drew significant lessons that emphasize the necessity of a clear and correct political line as an essential precondition for further organizational development (as well as a clear and correct appraisal of the Eritrean revolution).

Over all, the Conference was successful and very enlightening. It generated great enthusiasm and determination on the part of the participants to advance forward and to carry out our organizational tasks with greater commitment and dedication.

New York

On April 27, 1974, the African Youth Movement for Liberation and Unity sponsored a conference in commemoration of the great African patriot, Kwame Nkrumah. The theme of the conference was "Which Way Africa: the Struggle against Imperialism." Nearly ten African, Arab and Caribbean organizations and over 200 people participated in this spirited

conference. The main line of the conference was: "Africa is a class society. The genuine liberation of Africa can be achieved only when the oppressed classes in African countries, led by the working class and guided by its revolutionary theory, seize political power and take the socialist road. Only scientific socialism can liberate and unite Africa."

The New York Chapter of EFLNA participated in the conference and presented a detailed analysis of the Eritrean struggle in the context of the African revolution. Particular emphasis was laid on the ideological, political and military development of the Eritrean People's Liberation Forces (E.P.L.F.). All the funds raised at the conference were donated to the E.P.L.F. in an expression of internationalist solidarity with the Eritrean revolution.

Boston Chapter

1. The Boston Chapter of EFLNA held a joint seminar with the Boston Branch of the Central Organization of U.S. Marxist-Leninists (COUSM-L) on February 17, 1974. An overview of the present world situation, a historical survey of the struggle of the U.S. working class for proletarian revolution and a detailed analysis of the Eritrean struggle for national liberation were presented and extensively discussed. The discussions and deliberations led to a clear recognition of the dialectical relationship between the workers' struggle for proletarian revolution in the capitalist countries and the popular struggle for national liberation in the colonial and semi-colonial countries: that in the present era the national liberation movement is the principal focus of the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle and the storm center of the world revolutionary movement.

2. The Eritrean Liberation Support Committee (ELSC) organized International Solidarity evenings on March 8 and 9 in support of the just struggle of the Eritrean people for national liberation. Over 150 people from the Greater Boston area and from several U.S. and Third World anti-imperialist organizations attended the programs. Three revolutionary films were shown and a detailed analysis of the struggles of the Eritrean and Palestinian peoples for national liberation presented. The solidarity evenings provided a valuable forum for developing an understanding of the Eritrean national liberation struggle.

3. A conference on "Oil, Imperialism, and National Liberation" was held on March 17, 1974, in which several U.S. and Third World anti-imperialist organizations participated. The Afro-American struggle and the African, Eritrean and Palestinian national liberation movements were discussed in one of the workshops and their relationship to the world revolution analyzed. At the end, the conference passed

resolutions supporting national liberation struggles in general and the Eritrean and Palestinian struggles in particular.

4. On March 22, 1974, the Socialist Workers' Party sponsored a forum with the theme "ETHIOPIA/ERITREA: THE UNFOLDING REVOLUTION." A historical analysis of the Eritrean struggle for national liberation, the vanguard position of the Eritrean revolution in the anti-imperialist struggle in the strategic Horn of Africa, and the root causes of the recent explosion of the social contradictions and the popular mass uprising of the Ethiopian people were analyzed and discussed. The role of the Eritrean revolution in the feudal neocolonial regime's crisis and its shining example to the toiling masses of Ethiopia were recognized.

5. The Afro-Asian-Latin American Peoples' Solidarity Forum (AALAPSF) held a public meeting on May 10 and conducted discussions on the National Liberation struggles of Eritrea, India and the Philippines and their relationship to the world proletarian socialist revolution. The AALAPSF was established early this year by EFLNA (Boston Chapter), the Indian Progressive Study Group (Boston) and the Central Organization of U.S. Marxist-Leninists (Boston Branch) and other progressive individuals. The objectives of the AALAPSF are to unite the Afro-Asian-Latin American peoples resident in the area and the oppressed national minorities with the U.S. working class, to support the national liberation struggles of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the proletarian revolution in the U.S. and other capitalist countries, and to defend the right of the Afro-Asian-Latin American peoples here to organize in opposition to U.S. imperialism.

For Your Reference:

ERITREAN PEOPLE'S MILITANT HISTORY OF ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLE

Eritrea, a small country of three million people, strategically located at the mouth of the Red Sea in Northeastern Africa, has been the object of imperialist plunder and aggression for centuries. Starting from the late 19th century until the present, it has been ruled by one colonial power after the other.

The Eritrean people have a fine tradition of meeting imperialist plunder with fierce and stiff resistance. They have fought and driven out Egyptian, Turkish, Italian and British aggressors and are now battling the Ethiopian colonial regime and its masters U.S. imperialism and Israeli Zionism. The Eritrean people's militant and heroic struggle against modern colonialism started 90 years ago and has gone through various stages.

A. 1885-1941: Struggle Against Italian Colonial Rule

1885-89

The Italian colonialists with the encouragement of British imperialism seized the Eritrean coast and stepped up their campaign to colonize the whole country. The Eritrean people waged fierce resistance to repulse the aggressors and inflicted heavy defeats on them. In 1889, they wiped out a 500-man Italian garrison at Dogalli. In this brilliant victory, the masses of the people participated by cutting enemy supplies from the rear. However, the four year resistance of the people was brutally crushed and Eritrea became an Italian colony in June 1889.

1894

The Eritrean people, who were indignant at the expropriation of their land (most of the land in the western and eastern lowlands as well as 70,000 of the most fertile land in the highlands) staged an armed uprising which was mercilessly crushed by the Italian colonialists.

1941

During the world peoples' struggle against fascism, the Eritrean people rose up once again to drive the Italian fascists out and liberate their country. The fruits of this uprising were seized by the British colonialists who, using the old imperialist trick that they had come to "liberate" Eritrea from Italian fascism, occupied the country. The "United Nations" legalized British occupation with a ten-year "trusteeship".

B. 1941-1952: Struggle Against British Colonial Rule

In order to permanently establish themselves in Eritrea, the British colonialists schemed to partition the country, incorporating half of it with their colony of the Sudan and giving the other half to their Ethiopian neo-colony. To achieve this sinister aim, they tried to create and foster religious and regional animosity among the people. For its part, the Ethiopian feudal regime mobilized the reactionary authorities of the Coptic church and organized terrorist groups to force the Eritrean people to accept "union" with Ethiopia. With wild ambitions for an access to the sea, Ethiopia was ready to settle for half of Eritrea if it could not get the whole country. By putting up a united resistance, the Eritrean people smashed the attempt of the Anglo-Ethiopian colonialists to divide their country.

The 12 years of British colonial rule in Eritrea are marked by a tremendous rise in the national consciousness of the Eritrean people and the vigorous upsurge in their mass struggles.

1941-44

Under the pretext that the European population in Eritrea "needed fruits and vegetables", the British colonialists expropriated 10,000 acres of the most choice land from the peasantry and gave it to the Italian capitalist farmers. At the same time, they sharply increased the taxes levied on the peasantry and other working people. The peasants of the Eritrean highlands expressed their militant indignation by burning many Italian farms to the ground and by hacking the necks of many Italian capitalists who had taken over their land.

1943-46

The peasants of the Eritrean lowlands (90% of whom were landless serfs, oppressed and exploited by the 10% land-owning aristocracy) waged a long and bitter struggle against feudalism. In village after village, the serfs refused to till the land or pay taxes and tributes and demanded land and independence. Afraid that the situation could get "completely out of hand", the British colonialists were forced to give some concessions to the landless peasantry.

1946-47

Following a great upsurge in the mass movement of the Eritrean peasants, workers, and intellectuals, two nationalist political parties -- the Liberal Progressive Party ("Eritrea for Eritreans") and the Moslem League -- were formed. Reflecting the sentiment of the Eritrean masses, the two parties declared that they "do not accept nor adhere to any decision aiming to partition Eritrea" and demanded that "the independence of Eritrea be recognized." This marks the beginning of the Eritrean people's organized political struggle for national independence.

In a frenzy, the British colonialists and the Ethiopian feudalists quickly propped up a party of national traitors -- The Unionist Party -- made up of big landlords, bureaucrat capitalists and reactionary religious authorities. The British colonialists stepped up their campaign of divide and rule and encouraged terrorist groups, directed and financed by the Ethiopian feudalists, to commit all sorts of crimes -- shooting, burning, looting, etc. -- against the leaders of the independence movement and the broad masses. At the sites of their crimes, the terrorists left letters declaring "their loyalty to Emperor Haile Selassie and threatening his enemies with death".

1949

The Eritrean Bloc for Independence (a united front of all political parties fighting for immediate independence) was formed, testifying to the strong national unity of the people and the bankruptcy of the colonialist tactic of divide and rule. In desperation the Anglo-Ethiopian backed terrorists stepped up their activities, in one instance beheading 5 activists of the independence movement in front of their children and wives. The Coptic church threatened all Christian supporters of the Independence Bloc with excommunication.

1950

Failing to force or dupe the Eritrean people into accepting their colonialist plans, the imperialists and their Ethiopian lackeys tried to get at the U.N. what they could not get in Eritrea. The United States, which after World War II had emerged as the overlord of the imperialist camp, took over Britain's role in Eritrea and Ethiopia.

The U.S. imperialists and the Ethiopian feudalists hatched a plot to federate Eritrea with Ethiopia as the first step in colonizing the country. In this way, the U.S. imperialists could gain control of strategic Eritrea and exploit its rich oil, potash, and other mineral deposits, while their Ethiopian neocolony would gain an access to the sea. On December 2, 1950, the U.S. imperialists used the United Nations which at that time was firmly in their hands to pass their draft resolution federating Eritrea with Ethiopia. In 1952, the resolution was implemented and the sham federation formally proclaimed.

Barely 8 months after the federation was established, the U.S. imperialists built the Kagnev Military base in Eritrea, which laid the basis for the signing of a "Mutual Defence Pact" between the U.S. and Ethiopia. The \$70 million base, "the largest high-frequency station for the United States outside of American domestic facilities is used to spy on African liberation movements and against the Arab people.

As the federal resolution was only the first step in the colonization of Eritrea, the Ethiopian feudal regime immediately proceeded to subvert the federation by violating the autonomy of the Eritrean

government, usurping its rights and by suppressing the democratic rights of the people. The Eritrean people clearly saw through the sham federation and waged fierce resistance for the independence of their country and for their democratic rights. It was the Eritrean working class that took the lead in this resistance.

C. 1952-1962: Struggle Against the Sham Eritrean-Ethiopian Federation

1953

The modern Eritrean working class, conscious of its role and strength formed its own organization -- the General Union of Labor Syndicates -- one of the earliest trade union organizations in Africa. Two days after the union was officially proclaimed, Ethiopian government agents shot and seriously wounded its president, banished him from the country, and banned the union. In protest, Eritrean workers in the major cities went on strike and militantly fought with the police who were sent to suppress them.

1957

Starting from 1957, Eritrean students staged militant demonstrations every year to denounce such acts of the Ethiopian government as suppression of the official languages of Eritrea, removal of the Eritrean flag and the seal of the Eritrean government.

1958

Eritrean workers staged the biggest demonstration ever seen in Eritrea in protest of the Ethiopian government's economic and political oppression. The capital city, Asmara, and all the major cities were completely paralyzed for four days. The Ethiopian government ordered the suppression of the demonstration by force of arms and according to official reports 543 workers were either killed or wounded. Following this event and the virtual imposition of a police state, Eritrean revolutionaries formed the Eritrean Liberation Movement, an underground, urban movement, which carried out massive political agitation and made preparations to launch armed struggle in the countryside.

1961 September

The Eritrean Liberation Front fired the first shot of armed struggle for national liberation. This aroused the deepest enthusiasm of the workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals who through their own bitter experience had firmly grasped the truth: "Political power grows out of the barrel of the gun!"

1962 November

The Ethiopian government made its last attempt to dissolve the federation and annex Eritrea by deception and intimidation. It ordered the members of the Eritrean assembly to meet and dissolve the federation.

The assembly met four days and rejected the proposal four times. Failing to get a rubber stamp for its annexation, the Ethiopian feudal regime with the full backing of the U.S. imperialists decided to annex Eritrea by brute force. On November 14, with jets flying low over the major towns and Ethiopian aggressor troops running armed through the streets challenging the people in the most offensive manner, shouting "Let our bullets deal with those who do not comply with our wishes", the Ethiopian government declared that the federation had become "null and void" and Eritrea had become the 14th province of their empire. By this time, the flames of people's war had been raging for a whole year. The Eritrean people became determined to persist until the U.S.-Ethiopian colonial rule was totally liquidated.

D. 1961 to Date: Struggle Against U.S.-Ethiopian Colonial Rule

1961-64

The armed struggle which had started with 13 men and a few rifles quickly spread throughout the country. By 1964, the Eritrean Liberation Front had a guerilla army of 400 men, 90% of whom were armed with weapons seized from the Ethiopian aggressor troops.

To prop up Ethiopia's tottering rule, U.S. imperialism sharply stepped up its military and economic "aid" to Ethiopia. In 1964 a squadron of F-5 fighter jets and a 55 man counter-insurgency team were sent to Ethiopia. Over the years, U.S. imperialism has given more sophisticated weapons to Ethiopia, provided it with \$12 million in economic aid every year (two-thirds of all economic aid to Africa) and sent more counter-insurgency experts.

The Israeli Zionists, tools of the U.S. imperialists, started training the 5,000 man Ethiopian "commandos". In return, Haile Selassie has given the Zionists the use of Eritrea's territory for "emergency military operations" and has ceded two entire Eritrean islands -- Haleb and Fatma -- where the Zionists have built their naval bases.

1964-68

The armed struggle suffered severe setbacks because the reactionary bourgeoisie and feudalists had usurped the leadership. The reactionary "leaders" of the Eritrean Liberation Front split the fighters and the people along religious and tribal lines so each "leader" could have a fiefdom over his tribe, declared that the Eritrean revolution was a religious war between the Eritrean "Arabs" and "Christian" Ethiopians, stole cattle from the peasants, sold them in Sudanese markets and invested the money in construction and transportation industries in the Sudan and murdered hundreds of fighters who opposed their reactionary lines and policies.

The U.S.-Ethiopian colonialists exploited this situation to the maximum and launched an all out violent suppression campaign and vicious propaganda campaign slandering the Eritrean national struggle as a "moslem secessionist movement" and declared that it had been "completely wiped out."

1968-70

In 1968, Eritrean revolutionary fighters succeeded in uniting three of the five military regions of the E.L.F. against the reactionary leaders. Faced with the masses' demand for national unity and for solidarity with the "Unity of the Three" (Semeret), the reactionary leaders agreed at the military conference of Adobaha (August 1969) to form a united front with the new group. A temporary leadership, the General Command, was set up with members from both groups. Barely two months after the conference, the reactionary leaders arrested six leaders of the "Unity of the Three", began the systematic and cold-blooded murder of 300 progressive fighters and imposed fascist terror on the fighters and the broad masses.

The revolutionary fighters denounced and fought against these crimes. One group started armed struggle in southern Eritrea, while another group opened up a new front in eastern Eritrea. In April 1970, these two groups joined to form the People's Liberation Forces. Another group of revolutionary fighters, the Eritrean People's Forces

(Obel) joined the swelling ranks of the P.L.F.

The reactionary bourgeois leaders, who had attempted to "lead" the revolution from foreign capitals were overthrown! The armed struggle which had suffered severe setbacks advanced vigorously!

1970

In an ambush on the Asmara-Keren road, Eritrean freedom fighters killed General Teshome Irgetu, the fascist commander of the Ethiopian aggressor troops in Eritrea. In reprisal, the U.S.-Ethiopian colonialists frantically declared Martial Law in December, imposed a dawn to dusk curfew in various cities, established free fire zones in the countryside and escalated the savage bombing of the country. In one afternoon in the city of Keren, U.S.-supplied planes napalmed 1000 men, women and children to death. As a result of this barbarous bombing campaign, hundreds of thousands fled to the Sudan, bringing the number of Eritrean refugees to 100,000.

1971 December

The overthrown reactionary leaders of the General Command, who still paraded themselves as the leaders of the struggle, held a so-called "National Congress", changed their name into the "Revolutionary Council", decided to "wipe out" the P.L.F. and provoked a civil war.

After ten months of civil war, the backbone of the reactionary forces was completely crushed.

1972 October

On the basis of this victory, the P.L.F. held a military conference in the liberated area. The Eritrean Liberation Front-People's Liberation Forces (E.L.F.-P.L.F.) or the Eritrean People's Liberation Forces (E.P.L.F.), with a central committee permanently based inside the country, sharing weal and woe with the masses was born. The E.P.L.F. came out with a clear and progressive anti-colonial anti-feudal and anti-imperialist political line and programme for the national democratic stage of the revolution.

1972 December

Seven Eritrean and Ethiopian revolutionaries were murdered and one wounded by Haile Selassie's fascist thugs aboard an Ethiopian Airlines plane in Addis Ababa. This incident showed the warm solidarity that existed between Eritrean and Ethiopian revolutionaries and the close ties between the struggles in the two countries. The E.P.L.F. has expressed its unswerving internationalist support for the Ethiopian people's struggle against feudalism and imperialism. For their part, Ethiopian revolutionaries have shown revolutionary daring and internationalist spirit by raising the slogan "Self-determination for the Eritrean People", as early as 1969. This was one of the reasons that led to the December 1969 massacre of 25 students in Addis Ababa. Since that time, Ethiopian revolutionaries have persisted in their support of the Eritrean revolution and some have joined the E.P.L.F. and are fighting side by side with their Eritrean comrades.

1973

With the reactionaries overthrown, the revolution made tremendous progress under the leadership of the E.P.L.F. Fresh victories were won in the military field and the armed struggle spread to within a few kilometers of the capital, Asmara. The E.P.L.F. carried out limited military activity in the urban areas, including the assassination of the Deputy Commander of the Ethiopian army's Second Division, Colonel Yilma Elma. The E.P.L.F. started publishing revolutionary papers inside the field ("Vanguard" and "Tihisha") and launched a vigorous campaign to wipe out illiteracy among the fighters and the people and to arm them with revolutionary theory.

These victories inspired the masses and thousands of workers, peasants and intellectuals -- including many women -- joined the E.P.L.F. The mass struggles in the urban areas were at a new high. Throughout the 1972-73 school year, students refused to attend classes and for the first time in many years openly denounced the Ethiopian government.

