

TEN YEARS

OF THE ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION



Progress Publishers

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Progress Publishers
Moscow

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ДЕСЯТЬ ЛЕТ ЭФИОПСКОЙ РЕВОЛЮЦИИ

На английском языке

© Издательство "Прогресс", 1986

English translation © Progress Publishers 1986
Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Д $\frac{0803000000-282}{014(01)-86}$ без объявл.

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INTRODUCTION

This book provides an analysis of the 1974 national-democratic revolution in Ethiopia and the country's current stage of development.

Ethiopia boasts a millennia-old culture, one of the oldest written languages and unique architectural monuments.

Having safeguarded their independence in the years of the colonial division of the world and having regained freedom after their country's occupation by fascist Italy (1935—1942), the Ethiopian people are now advancing along the road of social progress.

The 1974 revolution did away with the thousand-year-old feudal monarchy and, repudiating the capitalist way of development, opened up for the nation the vistas of socialist-oriented development.

The rupture of another major link in the system of imperialism's neo-colonial rule has been ensured by the revolutionary upsurge of the popular masses in Ethiopia and by the victories scored by the world progressive forces. The activity of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia, a vanguard revolutionary-democrat-

ic party, will further consolidate the course of social and political development the Ethiopian people have opted for.

The Soviet Union closely follows revolutionary developments and socio-political processes unfolding in Ethiopia and is willing to expand mutually beneficial Soviet-Ethiopian co-operation.

Friendly relations have existed between the peoples of Russia and Ethiopia for many centuries now.

The fact that the peoples of both countries are guided by ideas of scientific socialism plays a special role in strengthening the bonds of friendship between the USSR and Ethiopia. The Programme of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia says that the Party sets itself the task of completing the national-democratic revolution, proclaiming a People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and creating the basis for socialist construction in accordance with the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. [16, p. 7].

Speaking at the 27th CPSU Congress, the General Secretary of the WPE CC, Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council of Ethiopia Mengistu Haile Mariam expressed his profound gratitude to the CPSU, the Soviet Government and the people of the USSR and other socialist community countries for their assistance in the matter of overcoming the drought's consequences. "With every day passing," he said, "the broad contacts between revolutionary Ethiopia and the Soviet Union are increasingly growing.

Our co-operation has reached new impressive heights in various spheres." [1, March 1, 1986].

The articles collected in this book deal with a wide range of problems, such as Ethiopia's socio-economic, political and cultural development, state and party building, foreign policy, defence of the revolutionary gains, and relations with the Soviet Union.

The book has been prepared by the researchers from the Africa Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences and other Soviet institutions who participated in the scientific conference devoted to the 10th anniversary of the Ethiopian revolution and held in Moscow on October 10, 1984. The materials of the conference have provided the basis of this study.

The authors hope that the book will be of use to the students of Ethiopia's past and present and thus contribute to the further development of Ethiopian studies and promote Soviet-Ethiopian friendship and mutually beneficial co-operation.

Y. Sherr

HIGHLIGHTS AND FEATURES OF THE
NATIONAL-DEMOCRATIC
REVOLUTION IN ETHIOPIA

The Founding Congress of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) held on September 6-10, 1984, on the eve of the 10th anniversary of the Ethiopian revolution, was attended by 1,742 democratically-elected delegates, more than 70 delegations of Communist, Workers' and revolutionary-democratic parties and national liberation movements from all over the world, and by representatives of international organisations.

In his report to the Congress, Mengistu Haile Mariam, Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) and of the Commission to Organise the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE)* provided a detailed analysis of COPWE's nearly five-year-long effort towards setting up the Party and laying the stage for the foundation of a new society.

The Congress elected the newly-constituted party's governing bodies—its Central Committee, Political Bureau, Central Auditing

* Today, Mengistu Haile Mariam is General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia and Chairman of the PMAC.

Commission and Central Control Committee. It adopted the WPE Programme and Rules, as well as the Main Guidelines on Ethiopia's Socio-Economic Development in 1984-1993. The Congress issued a declaration and passed a number of resolutions.

Henceforth the WPE is the political vanguard and nucleus of Ethiopia's political system. The WPE is a vanguard revolutionary-democratic party. Guided by the ideas of scientific socialism, the party has set itself the task of completing the national-democratic revolution and laying the foundation for the people's democratic system for subsequent transition to socialist construction.

In the official Decree issued by the PMAC on September 10, 1984, the Workers' Party of Ethiopia was proclaimed the leading force of Ethiopia's state and society and charged with the attainment of the revolution's ultimate goal of building socialism [4, September 11, 1984].

In a special statement made public on the same day, the PMAC declared that it would go on performing its governmental functions under the WPE leadership until appropriate bodies of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia were set up. It was pointed out that as soon as these bodies started operating the PMAC would hand over its mandate to the Popular Assembly [4, September 11, 1984].

The documents adopted by the WPE Founding Congress give an assessment to the present stage of the revolution, specify con-

ditions essential to the creation of a People's Democratic Republic, carefully define the role played by the WPE, the government and mass non-government organisations in the political system of Ethiopia's society, indicate the ways of fostering democracy, and explain, in a well substantiated manner, the importance of building up the country's defence capability and adhering to a progressive foreign-policy course.

An analysis of the processes of state and party building that have been unfolding in Ethiopia over the past 10 years and a close study of the documents of the Congress show that today's Ethiopia ranks with the vanguard socialist-oriented countries and that its leaders belong to contemporary revolutionary democracy. Guided by the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, they have explained to the Ethiopian working people the need for setting up a vanguard revolutionary democratic party, and have made every effort to constitute it and to ensure the country's transition to a qualitatively new stage of the national-democratic revolution.

What motivated the Ethiopian leaders to call their country "socialist"* as early as 1975, at the initial stage of the revolution? What was the reason for calling their party a workers' party, though from the point of view of its social composition, political experience, maturity and ideological development it ranks

* *Khybretesebavit* comes from Amharic *khybreteseb*, which means "society" or "collective".

among the vanguard revolutionary-democratic parties? One may ask these questions because, to judge from its name, as well as from the PMAC's Decree of December 18, 1979, and other documents, the COPWE's task was to lay the foundation for setting up a vanguard party of the working people rather than of the working class.

The Ethiopian ideologists must have described their country as socialist and the party to be set up as workers' in order to stress the socialist orientation of the Ethiopian revolution* and the emergent party's task of coming to constitute, eventually, the working class' vanguard. It was along these lines that the revolutionary process in Ethiopia has been unfolding. The Ethiopian revolutionaries share the idea—which, once propounded by Marx and Lenin, is now supported by all their followers—that a party's character and orientation is determined by the stance it takes at important turning points in history, by its actual domestic and foreign policies, and by its tactics and strategy. Correspondingly, the change of its name does not imply a change in its character, ideology and policy.

That socialism has been proclaimed the guiding principle of Ethiopian revolution has created favourable conditions for the study and propagation of scientific socialism in

* The new name for the country outlined in WPE documents—the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia—will not be a departure from its socialist ideals. It will correspond more exactly to its real development along socialist orientation.

Ethiopia. At the same time, the Ethiopian revolutionaries realise that "the process of forming a vanguard party capable of providing a firm leadership to the new, people's political system was unfolding in a society still dominated by the feudal way of thinking, a society to which even bourgeois political views were alien" [2, No. 13, 1984, p. 91].

The COPWE set itself the task of creating a vanguard party of the working people. For this reason, in its policy towards the cadres "it devoted unflinching attention to the representatives of the working class and the peasantry as the main motive forces of the revolution, thereby expanding and strengthening the reliable social base of the future party" [2, No. 13, 1984, p. 93].

In order to involve ever broader strata of the masses in the revolution, to consolidate its social base, heighten the ideological level of the activists and all the working people, the Ethiopian leaders effected, over the 10 years of the revolution, a number of radical reforms in all areas of Ethiopian society's life, carried out anti-monarchic and anti-feudal measures and extended anti-capitalist transformations, improved the working people's living standards, propagated Marxism-Leninism, made considerable efforts towards organising a vanguard party and setting up a system of mass organisations. The agrarian reform carried out in Ethiopia ranks with the most far-reaching and progressive transformations ever effected in the developing countries: the land was nationalised and handed

over to the peasants without redemption or compensation; the aristocracy, the feudal lords and the church forfeited their property; a maximum land allotment was established, hired labour was banned, the farm labourer's system was abolished and other similar measures were taken. The cultural reforms carried out in Ethiopia and especially the successful literacy campaign were highly assessed by UNESCO and other international organisations.*

Ethiopia is the first country in Africa to erect monuments to Karl Marx and Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and to publish Marx's *Capital* (first volume) in Amharic, one of the local languages.

The COPWE devoted special efforts to propagate the works by the classics of Marxism-Leninism. Their books, just as other Marxist literature, were circulated throughout the country in thousands of copies.

In the period under consideration, the PMAC and the COPWE gave special heed to the economy and its development on the lines of centralised planning.

Commenting on economic problems, Mengistu Haile Mariam said: "There have already emerged conducive conditions for socialist production relations to prevail in the country on the basis of the public and co-operative sectors in the economy. Nonetheless, mindful that these favourable conditions of them-

* For more details, see the article on this subject by O. Nikolaeva.

selves are not sufficient, we have laid special emphasis on the further development of productive forces which have a decisive role to play... In order to ensure economic management a scientifically substantiated structure of central planning bodies have been set up... At present, we are making every effort to strengthen the socialist system of economic management through supervising the activity of the private sector, and by developing the public sector in the economy [2, No. 13, 1984, pp. 95-96].

Having carried out this vast work and analysed the socio-political and ideological situation that had taken shape in the country over the 10 years of revolution, the Ethiopian revolutionaries decided to call the party they were about to set up a workers' party. In so doing, they proceeded from the conviction that, as the party matured and grew stronger, its character would increasingly match its name and that eventually it would be even possible to define it as a Marxist-Leninist party [3, Introduction, p. 6]. At the same time, they must have borne in mind that while the WPE was a workers' party in its name and intentions, it retained a revolutionary-democratic character.

The party's practical work is largely aimed at heightening the role of the working class both in the WPE and Ethiopian society at large. This is testified to by the party's programmatic documents and its Rules which specify that admittance to the party is based on the socio-class approach giving priority to

the representatives of the working class for whom, to mention just one of the advantages, the shortest probation term has been established, by the measures towards promoting trade union participation in the management of production, by fostering socialist emulation, by providing health services to the working people, etc.

That the Ethiopian revolutionaries give earnest heed to the experience of Marxist-Leninist parties can be seen from those articles in the WPE Rules which deal with admittance to the party. Thus, Article 4 specifies that the party admits to its ranks "any Ethiopian worker, peasant and handicraftsman ... member of the revolutionary armed forces, office worker and revolutionary intelligentsia, who accepts the Programme and Rules of the WPE, who is willing to actively participate in one of the Party organs and pays his monthly membership due, who has been actively participating in the process of laying down the material and technical base for socialist construction ..., who is ready to unwaveringly carry out decisions and directives of the WPE and who at the minimum attained the age of 18." [3, pp. 14-15].

Revolutionary experience shows that a country cannot be truly orientated towards socialism in its socio-economic and political development unless it pursues a progressive foreign-policy course and maintains close co-operation with the Soviet Union and the other socialist community countries. Ethiopia is no exception to the rule. Pursuing a

principled and vigorous foreign-policy course highlighted by adherence to anti-imperialism, anti-neo-colonialism, anti-racism, it ranks with the vanguard group of socialist-oriented countries, including Angola, Mozambique, Afghanistan, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and some other countries (see [16]).

To quote from the WPE Rules, the Workers' Party of Ethiopia "firmly stands alongside the forces that struggle for national independence, peace, democracy and socialism" [3, Introduction, pp. 10-11].

Mengistu Haile Mariam stresses that "revolutionary Ethiopia's foreign policy is founded on the principles of proletarian internationalism and peaceful co-existence, on respect for the UN and the OAU Charters and for principles of the non-aligned movement. Proceeding from this, our country, together with the peace-loving forces the world over, will continue contributing to the common struggle to disrupt the schemes of international imperialism, in particular, US imperialism, which seeks to push the world towards nuclear disaster. Today, Ethiopia continues to participate in the struggle waged by the world's peoples to preserve peace on earth, the struggle headed by the Soviet Union" [2, No. 13, 1984, p. 98].

Over the years since the beginning of the national-democratic revolution, the Ethiopian people has traversed a long path of struggle and victories. Achieved under the difficult social, economic and political conditions prevailing in the 1970s and the early 1980s,

these victories were possible thanks to a number of internal and external factors.

Among the internal factors mention should be made, above all, of the popular character of the revolution, the refusal of the popular masses to live as they had lived, the outdated, obsolete character of the feudal-monarchic system which crumbled under the very first attack of the revolution; the weakness of the local capitalist class which proved unable to impede the revolutionary onslaught of the masses in the context of semi-feudal and semi-bourgeois production relations; the army's unwillingness to serve as a support of the obsolete system; the emergence of the PMAC as a strong nucleus of the left-wing forces; the support given by the people to the radical measures taken by the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC), the Commission to Organise the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE), and the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE), and aimed at destroying the mainstays of the former system and laying the foundation for a new one; and the equipment of the left-wing forces with and the implementation of the programmatic principles of scientific socialism.

Among the external factors one should mention the existence of the powerful world socialist system; the firm support which is rendered to the Ethiopian revolution by the progressive peace-loving forces and which proved to be of great importance for checking foreign intervention in that country; the so-

cialist countries' material, financial and moral assistance in restoring and reconstructing Ethiopia's economy, effecting cultural reforms and training national personnel; the victories gained by ever new contingents of the national and social liberation movements in the world in general and on the African continent in particular.

The 1974 Ethiopian revolution faced a comprehensive task of overthrowing absolutism, abolishing the monarchic system, eradicating the survivals of the feudal and pre-feudal past, and, subsequently, gaining a victory over capitalists.

The Ethiopian revolution, which started in February 1974 as an anti-monarchic and anti-feudal revolution, passed through a stage of diarchy. By the end of 1974, it had transformed into a national-democratic revolution in the course of which general democratic and certain anti-capitalist tasks were being solved. Although the revolutionary democrats, who came to power in the country, referred to it as Socialist Ethiopia, there is still a long way to go before the socialist stage of the revolution is reached. The Ethiopian leaders are fully aware of this. It is no accident that in 1979, in an effort to avoid the spread of ultra-left sentiments, the government issued a poster bearing the inscription "Our march is long, our aim is far away". It was reproduced in a large number of copies and circulated all over the country. This called not only for courage, but also for a firm belief in the imminent victory.

Not all national-democratic revolutions have gone through a stage marked by the confrontation of two antagonistic forces, a stage when everything relied on the victory of one of them.

In Ethiopia, the Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces and the Police, set up in April 1974 and headed by the advocates of the bourgeois-reformist orientation, tried to mediate between the Emperor and the government. However, in June 1974, it was replaced by the Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces, Police and Territorial Army (CCAFPTA) which first established its control over the government and then, in September 1974, disbanded the government and parliament and overthrew the Emperor. That paved the way to socialist orientation.

The CCAFPTA sought to assume power and govern the country in such a way as to avoid bloodshed. However, the armed resistance and conspiracies organised by the monarchists, aristocrats and feudal lords led in fact to a civil war in the country. On the one side of the barricades there were the working people headed by revolutionary democrats and on the other side there was a broad coalition of former feudal lords and monarchists (associated in the Ethiopian Democratic Union) and the ultra-leftists and anarchists (associated in the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party).

In response to the spread of the counter-revolutionary terror, the revolutionary author-

ities were forced to resort to the armed suppression of the counter-revolution. In 1977-1978, a foreign intervention in Ethiopia was launched. The interventionists enjoyed military, financial, moral and political support both from a number of imperialist states and from the reactionary regimes of certain Arab countries in the Middle East and North-East Africa. In both cases, the revolutionary determination and selflessness of the working masses played a decisive role in rebuffing the counter-revolution.

One should also mention another important factor which enabled Ethiopia to hold out in the face of the interventionists' onslaught. We have in mind the support rendered to the Ethiopian revolution by the Soviet Union, Cuba, the GDR, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and other socialist countries and progressive regimes. While analysing the peculiarities of the Ethiopian revolution one should also bear in mind that before the revolution Ethiopia was a predominantly agrarian country with the peasants making up the overwhelming majority of the population. The village commune had a great social and political role to play in the countryside [13, pp. 179-185]. The country's social system was characterised by socio-economic and cultural backwardness especially vivid against the background of global and continental processes. That is why after the revolution the country faced the task of overcoming its backwardness within the shortest time possible.

Another important feature of the revolution is the motley national and religious composition of the population.

Concealing their true intentions behind the slogan of self-determination, the Eritrean nationalists, who are clearly under the thumb of the imperialists and the reactionary Arab sheikhs willing to use a considerable amount of their petrodollars to support the separatist bands, are prepared to divide revolutionary Ethiopia, deprive it of an outlet to the sea and thereby impair its economy in the name of their own mercenary interests.

The rapid development of the revolution was and still is impeded by various nationalist, separatist movements and groupings seeking to obtain not only the secession of Eritrea but also other administrative regions (among them Tigre, Harer, Sidamo and Bale) from Ethiopia.

In 1977-1978, a grave danger for the revolution was created by the actions of Somalian nationalist groupings instigated by the chauvinistic Somalian leaders.

Ethiopia's revolutionary government understood that their country's fate largely depended on the correct solution of the national question. The equal right of Ethiopia's peoples to regional autonomy and self-government was first proclaimed in the Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution (PNDR) and then in the Programme of the WPE. The implementation of this right has been hampered through the fault of separatist and other counter-revolutionary forces which

actually started a war on the revolutionary government.

As the revolutionary forces grew stronger, the country's leaders took practical steps towards ensuring the nationalities' right to self-determination. The Nationalities Department and the Nationalities Institute set up under the WPE Central Committee were invited to make a detailed study of relevant problems and put forward appropriate proposals so as to help to formulate a correct solution to the national question in the constitution of the prospective People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia which is now being elaborated.

The plans and programmes for socio-economic and cultural development take into account the need for a uniform and harmonious development of the country's backward outlying districts and central regions inhabited by different tribes and nationalities speaking different languages and having different customs and traditions.

Formerly, the Ethiopian church was part of the state machinery. The alliance of the church, autocracy and the feudal-bourgeois state was founded on a solid economic basis.

The orthodox church served as a means of strengthening absolute monarchy. In 1974, Ethiopia had nearly 14,000 churches, more than 800 monasteries and almost 200,000 clergymen [7, p. 50]. The imperial regime allocated considerable funds from the state resources for the maintenance of the church. The church was exempt from the land tax

and it easily fattened its purse [11, No. 2, 1967, p. 22]. That the church played a class-oriented role became especially obvious in December 1960, when a revolutionary coup was attempted. In his speech on the radio Patriarch Basilios anathemised the rebels and called on the people to remain loyal to the Emperor. This certainly had a demobilising effect on the insurgents [10, p. 211]. When the 1974 revolution broke out, the top clergy resorted to all sorts of means to counteract it.

In their attitude to the church the present Ethiopian leadership is able to put to use the vast experience of the CPSU which, having proclaimed and guaranteed complete freedom of religion, separated the church from the state and the school from the church, and nipped in the bud religious strife, succeeded in urging the clergy to accept the principles on which the church was to function within the Soviet state, the principles proclaimed by the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Both the PNDR and the WPE Programme officially proclaim equality of all religions and freedom of conscience for all the citizens of the country. In fact, the church has been separated from the state (in particular, state religion has been abolished) and the school from the church. At all the state schools (which account for the overwhelming majority of schools), curricula have been secularised.

National and religious discrimination is prohibited by the law; the main Muslim holidays

have been elevated to the rank of official ones, on an equal footing with Christian holidays. Ethiopian Christians and Muslims enjoy the opportunity to maintain ties with religious organisations in other countries.

At the same time, the influence of the church, just as its possibility to spread reactionary ideology, has been limited.

The Ethiopian revolution is highlighted by the determination of the Ethiopian leaders to defend its gains with reliance on the broad working masses. For instance, in 1977 and 1978 300,000 peasants were mobilised to be trained in the people's militia camp TATEK and sent to the front. This was a forced, temporary measure, taken at a time when the situation on the front questioned the survival of a united revolutionary Ethiopian state. Many of the peasants voluntarily joined the people's militia. The entire people sought to contribute to the success of the struggle against the interventionists.

Self-defence detachments were set up throughout the country. There was an upsurge in the labour activity of the population. Both town-dwellers and members of peasant associations (which involve almost all the rural population of the country) were drawn to work on state farms. This temporary measure was necessitated by the abrupt drop in agricultural production, caused by such factors as the lack of sufficient labour force in the countryside (many peasants fought on the fronts), the need to restructure agriculture, and the nationalisation and transfer

of land to the peasants at a time when agricultural production structures were still weak and the state was in no position—due to the emergency situation—give an adequate financial support to state farms and co-operatives.

Among other forced measures taken by the revolutionary government was the establishment of fixed prices of basic necessities and arresting those who sold goods at black market prices and spread false rumours.

At the same time, determined to pursue a flexible policy, the Ethiopian authorities decided not to nationalise middle- and small-scale industrial enterprises, domestic wholesale and retail trade and part of foreign trade. This approach was determined by the specific situation obtaining in the country.

The Ethiopian revolution quickly developed from the lower to the higher stage; within less than a year it passed from the anti-monarchic, anti-feudal stage to the stage of socialist orientation.

In the absence of political parties and in view of the weakness and insufficient organisation of the working class, the PMAC, made up of the progressively-minded servicemen, assumed military-political leadership of the revolution. The left wing of the PMAC, constituting its nucleus and headed by Mengistu Haile Mariam succeeded in making the revolution take the right course not only in the struggle against the right-wing and leftist forces throughout the country, but also in the struggle against the right- and left-wing

deviationists within the PMAC itself [8, pp. 25-28].

Cognizant of the fact that only a vanguard party could lead the broad masses of the working people and guarantee the irreversibility of the revolution, the revolutionary democrats focused their efforts on creating such a party.*

The national-democratic revolution is the initial stage of the effort to impart a socialist orientation to the country's development. Bypassing capitalism and creating prerequisites for a socialist revolution are essential to it.

It is with this understanding that in April 1976 the PMAC adopted the Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution. The Programme stresses that the solution of the problem of antagonistic class contradictions only begins with the national-democratic revolution and that their complete elimination is possible only in the course of a "subsequent socialist revolution" [14, p. 4].

The existence of a powerful socialist system, friendly relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, their political, moral, material, financial, and technical support granted on the basis of a number of legal instruments, including, for instance, the Soviet-Ethiopian Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation of November 20, 1978, constitute the most important external factor that conduces to the successful development of the Ethiopian revolution.

* For more details, see the article of O. Dolgova in this collection—*Ed.*

Speaking about other peculiarities of the Ethiopian national-democratic revolution, one should emphasise its popular, democratic nature. Before the revolution, there had been many social estates in the country; those inferior in their social status suffered from the brutal oppression on the part of the superior ones. Political parties and strikes were banned and strict censorship was practiced. Keeping and circulating Marxist-Leninist literature as well as propagating scientific socialism were punishable. The few social organisations and creative workers' unions functioning under the Emperor's control were of elite or caste nature. The very form of government in Ethiopia—absolute monarchy—testified to its being completely incapable of any democracy. It is no accident that most of the enlightened Ethiopian intellectuals, educated in the spirit of the bourgeois-democratic ideals, cultivated in the West, were inclined to limit themselves to working towards a constitutional monarchy. Many of the bourgeois analysts who tried to predict the country's development after the death of the Emperor, who had oppressed the people for 44 years, tended to believe that the most conservative, archaic system obtaining in Ethiopia could not collapse overnight; what would happen would be, at best, a "facelift" effected by reorganising Parliament and setting up a number of other state institutions, which, in the Ethiopian conditions, would only be an ugly and distorted imitation of Western democracy.

The reason for the weakness of many social revolutions in developing countries lies in the fact that, generated by the upsurge of the people's struggle, they "eventually petered out" under the influence exerted on them by the moderate, reformist forces. If the right-wingers or the moderates had succeeded in seizing control over the PMAC, the Ethiopian revolution would have most likely degenerated into that kind of a coup that was effected by the upper crust in many developing countries. This did not happen in Ethiopia because the revolutionary democrats in the army, who were led by Mengistu Haile Mariam and supported by revolutionary-democratic intellectuals and the broad masses of the working people, seized key positions in the PMAC and directed the powerful stream of the revolution into the right channel. The revolution thus received a strong impetus and its popular democratic basis was consolidated.

No matter what the bourgeois sociologists may say, the 1974 revolution was not a military coup, but an outburst of the working people's indignation and rebelliousness accumulated throughout the centuries of cruel exploitation. The February 1974 demonstrations of Addis Ababa taxi-drivers, students, pupils and teachers generated a chain-reaction of strikes and rallies that swept the entire country. They culminated in the unprecedented general strike of factory and office workers called in March 1974. Peasant masses all over the country rose in uprising in the

countryside. Revolutionary sentiment spread to the army.

While describing the Ethiopian revolution as a spontaneous one, many authors tend to forget what Lenin said about the spontaneity of the movements being "proof that it is deeply rooted in the masses, that its roots are firm and that it is inevitable." [5, p. 31].

In the absence of political organisations it seemed that the only alternative to the revolutionary movement being suppressed by the imperial regime was its escaping control and leading to anarchy, the division of the country and a long period of social stagnation. The course of events justified Lenin's prediction about the ever more vivid "distinctions of the revolutionary process in the East" [6, p. 480]. In Ethiopia, the way out of the crisis was found by creating a military revolutionary centre, the PMAC, which showed its political maturity by gradually directing the revolutionary outburst of the masses into the channel of socialist-oriented development.

The home and foreign policy pursued by the PMAC over the ten years of Ethiopia's socialist-oriented development testifies to the popular, democratic nature of its revolution. Most of the Council's decrees and practical steps were aimed at gradually liberating the working masses from exploitation, breaking down the mainstays of the obsolete social system and creating every possibility for the country's transition to the building of socialism.

The Statement issued by the PMAC upon the publication of the Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution in April 1976 stresses that the revolution in Ethiopia should be regarded as a national revolution because it is aimed at liberating the popular masses from the yoke of imperialism and neo-colonialism and, at the same time, as a democratic revolution because it is spearheaded at feudalism and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. The statement also emphasises that the aim of the revolution is to hand the land and other essential means of production to the working masses and to secure for them democratic rights, including the freedom of the press, speech, assembly, association, etc. [9, pp. 21-22].

The truly popular nature of the national-democratic revolution manifests itself in the fact that instead of being confined to anti-monarchic and anti-feudal struggle, it continued to develop and reached the stage of the struggle against capitalists, against the bureaucratic compradore bourgeoisie. The foundation was laid for the public, non-capitalist sector and for rural co-operation of a transitional type, making a step forward towards socialist co-operation.

The profoundly democratic character of the revolution manifested itself in the fact that the most numerous class of the Ethiopian social pyramid, the peasantry, came into possession of the basic means of production without having to pay any redemption fee. The peasants were exempt from requisitions,

arrears and other debts, and were given the opportunity to set up, in a democratic manner, various organisations (peasant associations and local government bodies) and co-operative societies, attend reading-and-writing courses, improve their skills at the multi-purpose vocational training centres and receive government aid in the form of loans, high-grade seeds, fertilizers and machines.

Ethiopian workers have received the opportunity to be employed on nationalised enterprises. Delivered from the oppression on the part of big (in Ethiopian terms) capital, workers set up their own trade unions and enjoy the benefits of progressive labour legislation. They take part in the activity of workers' committees set up at enterprises, in the work of the governing bodies of town-dwellers' associations (known as *kebele*) which, just like peasant associations, play the role of working people's self-government and local government bodies. Workers enlisted in self-defence detachments received arms from the government. They attend reading-and-writing courses and obtain political education by attending the so-called discussion forums.

Ethiopian youth and women, too, are entitled to set up their own associations and elect the latter's governing bodies in a democratic manner. The revolution has secured for them every opportunity to obtain general and political education and improve their skills.

The town-dwellers benefit from such gains

of the revolution as the nationalisation of urban land and extra housing, lower rents, the literacy campaign, the establishment of *kebeles* with their network of low-price shops, etc.

As for professional workers, free from feudal-monarchic and capitalist oppression, they enjoy democratic freedoms, among them the freedom of speech, the press and of association in trade and creative unions. They have broader opportunities to obtain education and apply their knowledge while working in various spheres of the national economy, science and education.

In the army, the revolutionary-democratic movement predominantly involved soldiers and junior officers. This, too, conduced to the revolution's acquiring a national-democratic character. The efforts to set up revolutionary Ethiopia's supreme legislative body, the PMAC, started with electing committees in all army and police units. These committees elected their delegates to the Coordinating Committee which was subsequently transformed into the Provisional Military Administrative Council. The aristocratic-feudal barriers within the army were removed; the servicemen were in a position to become actively involved in the country's socio-political life. The possibility for the officers to exploit the soldiers was ruled out. The army is no longer a means of suppressing the working people. The army's function has radically changed; today, it is called upon to defend the gains of the revolution.

Apart from the peasants' associations and the *kebeles*, there are other mass organisations which have been set up or reorganised on a democratic basis in order to work, under the WPE leadership, among the masses. The trade unions, women's and youth associations, working people's control committees and creative unions, set up and functioning on the principle of democratic centralism, translate into life the policies charted by the Workers' Party of Ethiopia.

The democratic, popular nature of the revolution manifests itself in the fact that the propagation of scientific socialism among the masses is one of the top-priority tasks of the PMAC and all the mass organisations active in Ethiopia today.

The ten-year long history of the Ethiopian revolution is also the history of the formation of the WPE. It took the Ethiopian revolutionary democrats ten years to create the Ethiopian working people's vanguard party, a party that guides itself by the principles of scientific socialism. The adoption, in April 1976, of the Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution, in which the principles of Ethiopia's socialist orientation are laid down, paved the way for the foundation of a vanguard party. The Programme states, among other things, that it has been adopted "in order to enable all anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces to organise freely, and in order to establish a united front under the leadership of the working-class party which can establish a people's democratic state" [14, p. 8].

Moreover, the truly popular nature of the revolution was manifest in the efforts to develop and democratise the education and health systems.

The fact that 1,300,000 activists of mass organisations were elected to the latter's governing bodies is the proof of the growing social activity of the masses which before the revolution either were not associated in such organisations at all, or had no say in them [13, p. 32].

The popular, democratic character of the revolution determines the social composition of the COPWE and the ruling party. According to the COPWE Central Committee's report to the Second COPWE Congress as of October 1982, workers accounted for 21.7 and peasants for 3.3 per cent of the COPWE membership [15, January 4, 1983]. According to the Credentials Committee of the WPE Foundation Congress (September 1984), workers and peasants accounted for 31 per cent of the Congress delegates [15, September 9, 1984].

The democratic character of the revolution is vividly manifested in the country's progressive foreign policy: Ethiopia takes an active part in the struggle for peace, for resuming the process of detente, stopping the arms race, and averting the nuclear war threat, and displays its international solidarity with the socialist and other progressive countries, and national liberation movements.

The truly popular character of the revolution is manifested in Ethiopia's efforts to pro-

mote peaceful co-existence among the countries with different social systems, foster good-neighbourliness and urge non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations and respect for state sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is manifested in Ethiopia's struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and racism, in its support to the principles advocated by the United Nations, the OAU, and the non-aligned movement and in its efforts towards social progress.

According to a well-known Marxist principle, none of the peoples oppressing other peoples can ensure its own freedom. Similarly, none of the peoples abstaining from the struggle to ensure democracy the world over can aspire to democracy in its own country. The Ethiopian people's and government's solidarity with the people of Zimbabwe (before it gained independence), Namibia and South Africa, as well as their moral and material support to the national liberation movements in Southern Africa should be highly appreciated.

Some of the Western statesmen, bourgeois sociologists and journalists are libellous to the point of accusing Ethiopia's revolutionary leaders of taking dictatorial and totalitarian attitudes, provoking bloodshed and suppressing the will of Ethiopia's peoples. Such critics either cannot or are unwilling to understand the meaning of social revolution. The Ethiopian revolution, just as any genuine national-democratic revolution, has established the revolutionary-democratic dictator-

ship of the *majority* of the people over the exploitative minority. This is what signals democracy for the oppressed.

The popular, democratic character of the Ethiopian revolution is also manifested in the fact that the country's ruling party relies on the Marxist-Leninist scientific theory which has been tested in practice by the CPSU and other Communist parties. The WPE reliance on Marxism-Leninism is reflected in its Programme and Rules [15, September 9, 1984]. The WPE has put high on the agenda the problems of creating of a new kind of statehood for Ethiopia, ensuring further democratisation of its social system and greater involvement of the working masses in the administration of the entire country, including its economy and cultural life. In this, a tremendous role is assigned to the WPE primary units, people's control committees and mass organisations [15, September 11, 1984].

What makes one confident that this goals will be achieved? Above all, it is the fact that the country's leaders meet their obligations and keep the promises they have given to the working people.

For instance, in its practical activity the PMAC is invariably guided by the Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution. The Programme envisages the elimination of the feudal-monarchic regime, liberation from feudal and imperialist oppression, establishment of true democracy for the oppressed, and the setting up of a broad national front of anti-

imperialist forces. The Programme also provides for the creation of a democratic political and social system; the organisation, politisation and arming of the people; institution of centralised economic planning; cultural revival; eradication of the discrimination of the country's nationalities and securing for them the right to self-determination; a progressive foreign policy; organisation of a joint front of the working people, the petty-bourgeoisie and the revolutionary intelligentsia under the leadership of the workers' party with a view to creating a people's democratic state [14, pp. 9-11, 14-20].

It would be wrong to say that in the period under consideration all these tasks were completed.* But in principle the programmatic directives were strictly observed. Therefore, addressing the WPE Founding Congress (September 6-10, 1984) Mengistu Haile Mariam had every right to say that the tasks formulated in the Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution had in the main been fulfilled [12, September 8, 1984]. The country would continue developing, he said, on the basis of the WPE Programme adopted by the Congress.

The Ethiopian leaders were equally persistent in their efforts to form a vanguard ruling party. Over the years of its activity (1979-1984), the Commission to Organise the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia,

* Among the outstanding problems is the self-determination of Ethiopia's nationalities.

whose establishment was decreed by the PMAC, carried on preparatory work on a vast scale and the COPWE units provided a structural basis for setting up the primary organizations of the WPE.

Owing to the consistent domestic and foreign policy pursued by the PMAC and the WPE the Ethiopian revolution has been steadily moving forward. This distinguishes it from many other revolutions in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, which, under the pressure from the moderate reformist forces supported by international imperialism, gave up their positions.

What makes one confident of the further successes of the Ethiopian revolution? It is the fact that the PMAC and WPE leaders are in close contact with the country's working people whom they consult on the ways of solving outstanding problems. In this, they are frank and do not seek to conceal difficulties.

The aforesaid can be illustrated by the WPE's approach to the problem of the disastrous drought of 1984 which is followed by famine that has caused suffering to more than 7,000,000 Ethiopians. The former regime closed its eyes to the people's suffering and concealed the data illustrating the scope of drought and famine that ravaged the country in the early 1970s, when hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians died of starvation. By contrast, the revolutionary regime openly called on the Ethiopian people and the world community for help. Among the measures

taken by the government was the setting up of a national emergency committee headed by Mengistu Haile Mariam, drawing up short- and long-term programmes for solving the food problem, making appropriate changes in the current economic and social development plans, and mastering considerable internal and external resources. Under the WPE leadership, local government bodies, mass organisations and the army have been involved in the effort to help the population in the famine-stricken districts. Nearly 500,000 people from these districts have been resettled in Western and South Western regions where land is fertile. In 1985, another 1,250,000 people are to be resettled.* [12, February 11, 1985]. In his March 1985 interview, Mengistu Haile Mariam said that the measures that had been taken by that time led to a gradual improvement in the situation obtaining in the drought-stricken regions [12, March 3, 1985].

The experience accumulated by Communist, Workers' and revolutionary-democratic parties shows that support from and close link to the people are essential to the effective implementation of their policy.

The WPE's consistency in pursuing its general policy in the interests of the masses will ensure further advancement of the Ethiopian national-democratic revolution. The

* The Soviet Union's emergency and long-term assistance to Ethiopia in solving the food problem is discussed in the Article by A. Gromyko further in this book.

mass support to the party's policy is an essential prerequisite for its successful implementation.

Notes

- ¹ *Pravda*, Moscow.
- ² *Kommunist*, Moscow.
- ³ The Workers' Party of Ethiopia. Rules, Addis Ababa, 1984.
- ⁴ *The Ethiopian Herald*, Addis Ababa.
- ⁵ V. I. Lenin, "The Russian Revolution and Civil War", *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977.
- ⁶ V. I. Lenin, "Our Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 33.
- ⁷ Georgi Galperin, *Ethiopia: Population, Resources, Economy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1981.
- ⁸ *Contemporary Problems and Ethiopia's Foreign Policy*, Moscow, 1982 (in Russian).
- ⁹ V. I. Sharayev, *Ethiopia Strides into the Future*, Moscow, 1984 (in Russian).
- ¹⁰ V. S. Yagya, *Ethiopia in Recent Times*, Moscow, 1978 (in Russian).
- ¹¹ *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, Moscow.
- ¹² *Pravda*, Moscow.
- ¹³ *Ethiopia. A Decade of Revolutionary Transformation, 1974-1984*, Addis Ababa, 1984.
- ¹⁴ *Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution of Ethiopia*, Addis Ababa, 1976.
- ¹⁵ *The Ethiopian Herald*, Addis Ababa.
- ¹⁶ *The Workers' Party of Ethiopia. Programme*, Addis Ababa, 1984.

SOVIET-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS TODAY.
ETHIOPIAN STUDIES IN THE USSR

Having celebrated the 10th anniversary of its revolution and formed a vanguard workers' party, Ethiopia embarked on a new stage of its development.

Speaking of the history of Russian-Ethiopian relations, one should point out that nothing has ever clouded them. The Russian and the Soviet people have always been friendly towards Ethiopia. For their part, the Ethiopians speak of the "Moscobs" (the word is derived from "Moskva" and means "Russian", "Soviet") with invariable respect. In the memory of the people the word is associated with the Russian doctors (known as "Hakims"), who in the last century came to their country to tend to the sick and the wounded Ethiopians, with Russia, the country that rendered humanitarian help to Ethiopia, with the Soviet Union, the country that raised its voice against the fascist occupation of Ethiopia, with the Soviet people who are unflinching in their solidarity with the Ethiopian revolution, the solidarity which is manifested in their all-round moral, political and economic support to Ethiopia.

**Relations Between the Peoples
of the Soviet Union and Ethiopia.
Ethiopian Studies in the USSR
before the 1974 Revolution**

Relations between the peoples of the Soviet Union and Ethiopia have a long history. As the main stages in the development of these relations have been discussed in detail both in Soviet and foreign literature, we shall concentrate on the most important of them, giving priority to the topics of Soviet-Ethiopian relations in our day and to the Ethiopian studies which have been carried on in the Soviet Union for quite a long time.

The peoples of the Soviet multinational state have long shown interest in Ethiopia, its age-old culture, complicated and original history, languages, literature, art and religion. This interest has been shared by the Russians, Ukrainians, Armenians, Georgians, Estonians, Azerbaijanians and many other peoples of the Soviet Union. Many of the manuscripts, documents and books containing a wealth of data concerning the history of political, scientific and cultural contacts between Ethiopia and Russia are kept in the archives and museums of Moscow, Leningrad, Yerevan, Tbilisi, Tartu, Kiev, Uzhgorod, Odessa, Krasnodar, Sverdlovsk and many other Soviet cities, as well as in the libraries of many European, African and Asian countries. These materials are largely unknown or little known to the world scientific community. Some of them have become the subject

of research only recently.

The earliest information about Ethiopia found its way to Russia more than 700 years ago; the early attempts at establishing official political relations between Ethiopia and Russia date back to the late 17th century. Russia's interest in Ethiopia was largely promoted by the activity of Hiob Ludolf, the leading specialist in Ethiopian history and language of his time, who suggested that a joint Russian-Saxon expedition should be sent to Ethiopia (for a number of reasons his plan was never realised).

Some of the documents found in the archives show that the Russian Emperor Peter the Great tried to establish ties between Russia and Ethiopia [8. p. 92]. His plan to send a Russian expedition to Ethiopia, although never fulfilled, is of indisputable historical interest. It is on his orders that Abram Gannibal,* an Ethiopian by birth and the future great-grandfather of the famous Russian poet Alexander Pushkin, was sent to obtain his education at a military engineering college.

As time went by, the Russian scientific public showed a growing interest in Ethiopia. There are indications that the Ethiopian languages and written texts were studied in Russia as early as the middle of the 18th century.

* As a boy, Abram Gannibal, son of an Ethiopian prince, was taken captive by the Turks. He was subsequently brought to Russia, educated and made the valet and secretary of Peter the Great. He grew to be a prominent military engineer in the rank of a general; he taught mathematics and engineering, and wrote a book on the art of military engineering.

Significantly, the earliest Ethiopian studies in Russia were associated with the name of the outstanding Russian scientist Mikhail Lomonosov. This is testified to by an excerpt from the November 1755 Minutes published by the Academy Office. It mentions the decision to study "Abyssinia, or Ethiopia, syllables" so that they could be subsequently included in Lomonosov's *Russian Grammar*. This document is kept in the Archives of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

In the 1820s, one of the Ethiopian languages, Geez, was included in the curricula of Russian Universities. The Oriental Languages Department of the Kharkov University was the first to offer a course of Geez. The language was taught by the eminent orientalist, Academician B. A. Dorn who was subsequently to devote much of his time to the study of the collection of manuscripts of the Public Library and the Asia Museum of the Academy of Sciences. Thus, he launched the effort to describe Ethiopian manuscripts which had started to accumulate at Russian libraries.

In the last thirty years of the 19th century, the peoples of Ethiopia were faced with severe trials. Ethiopia turned out to be the only country in Africa which succeeded in safeguarding its independence in the bitter armed struggle against the colonialists. In its effort to defend the country's sovereignty, the Ethiopian government sought to rely on Russia, whose stand objectively promoted Ethiopia's struggle to preserve independence. When the Italian-Ethiopian war of

1895-1896 was at its height, the Ethiopian government dispatched an extraordinary embassy to Russia.

At this hour of trial, the sympathies of the progressive Russian public were on the side of the Ethiopian people fighting for their just cause. In an article, wrote in those days, the great Russian writer Leo Tolstoy indignantly condemned the policy of the Italian government which had unleashed a war against Ethiopia [7, pp. 193-198]. In 1896, Russia was swept by a campaign to raise funds for the purposes of providing medical aid to the sick and wounded Ethiopian soldiers. The doctors of the medical detachment dispatched to Ethiopia by the Russian Red Cross Society rendered medical aid not only to soldiers, but also to civilians. Moreover, they organised medical training for Ethiopians. In token of recognition of their services, the Ethiopian government conferred decorations on many Russian doctors.

In the 19th and the early 20th centuries, many travellers, doctors and diplomats from Russia (who represented various nationalities of the Russian Empire) visited Ethiopia. Many of them, for instance, Y. P. Kovalevsky, V. F. Mashkov, A. V. Yeliseyev, N. S. Leontyev, K. S. Zvyagin, A. K. Bulatovich, N. P. Brovtsyn, P. V. Shchusev, L. K. Artamonov, A. I. Kokhanovsky and others, collected and brought to Russia extremely interesting ethnographic materials and valuable information on the socio-economic structure of the Ethiopian society of those

days. All this was of great value for scientific research. Russian expeditions that visited Ethiopia in the period under consideration helped to establish diplomatic relations between Russia and Ethiopia (1898) and promoted the development of cultural ties between the two countries. Young men from Ethiopia, who came to Russia together with the members of Russian expeditions returning home after their mission had been completed, studied at Russian educational establishments. The Russian doctors, medical attendants and orderlies, over their ten years of work at the Russian hospital set up by the Russian Mission at Addis Ababa, gave all the help and care they could to the local Ethiopian population.

The research done in the late 19th century, the period marked by a growing interest in Ethiopian history, philology and ethnography, by the prominent Russian orientalists V. V. Bolotov and B. A. Turayev, contributed to the development of Ethiopian studies the world over. In recognition of his scientific achievement, V. V. Bolotov was granted the title of the Corresponding Member of the Petersburg* Academy of Sciences.

The teaching of the Ethiopian language at the university level was undertaken, for the first time after B. A. Dorn, by B. A. Turayev. In 1902, Turayev published his *Studies into the Hagiological Sources Related to Ethiopian History*. This was followed by the pub-

* At that time St. Petersburg was the capital of Russia.

lication of a number of Ethiopian literary texts. In the wake of Dorn, Kokovtsev and Bolotov, he described Ethiopian manuscripts from the Petersburg archives and libraries. In 1906, he published their full catalogue. Turayev's untimely death prevented him from completing his work aimed at preparing the publication of Ethiopian historical chronicles dating from the 14th to 16th centuries. This undertaking was completed by I. Y. Krachkovsky, a prominent Soviet orientalist. In short, Academician Turayev laid the foundation for Ethiopian studies in Russia and his effort has been carried on by a galaxy of Soviet scholars.

Since the Great October Socialist Revolution in 1917 the Soviet Government and the Soviet people have invariably supported the Ethiopian people.

In the troubled years of the revolution in Russia, the Soviet Government made efforts to establish friendly relations with Ethiopia. As became known from the documents recently discovered in the archives, in June 1921 the Soviet Government sent its envoy to Ethiopia. I. A. Zalkind, an official from the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Republic*, reached far-away Addis Ababa. His mission was to contact the Ethiopian high-ranking government officials, suggest the restoration of official relations between the two countries and discuss the

* Subsequently transformed into the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

possibility for sending Soviet Russia's diplomatic mission to Ethiopia. The talks showed that the Ethiopian leaders, despite their positive attitude to the matter, were apprehensive of the Western powers' prospective disapproval of Ethiopia's relations with the Soviet Republic. Official relations between Russia and Ethiopia were not restored. In 1922, I. A. Zalkind returned to the USSR.

On his return from Ethiopia I. A. Zalkind published (under the pseudonym of I. Vanin) an article describing his impressions of the trip in the magazine *Novy Vostok* (the New East). The article (entitled "Abyssinia") is remarkable for its conclusion. Zalkind wrote that the country was facing a choice between two possible paths. The latter, he stressed, "now largely depends on the country itself, rather than on Europe's influence and pressure. One of the paths presupposes passing through the crucible of capitalism ..., through all the stages ... of covert or overt colonisation; the choice of the other path implies embarking on a historical stage necessitating a growth in productive forces under the aegis of the working people's power, minimum sacrifice, and maximum help from the countries where "new forms of the social system have become firmly established." [2, p. 541].

In the subsequent period, many of the Ethiopian progressive public figures urged to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. However, the efforts towards that end were counteracted by Ethiopian feudal lords and opposed by imperialist powers.

However, for all the opposition from the West European powers and Ethiopian reaction, the ties between the public in the two countries were preserved and expanded. For instance, the Addis Ababa newspaper *Ethiopia commerciale* covered developments in the Soviet Union [see 6.]. In 1927, a Soviet agro-botanical expedition, headed by the prominent Soviet scientist Academician N. I. Vavilov, started its work in Ethiopia. The expedition described and made known to world science an original focus of cultivated plants [see 1]. Trade relations between the USSR and Ethiopia were also developed.

In 1935, the Italian fascist government unleashed a war against Ethiopia. Since the stand taken by the Soviet Union in that period is well known, we shall confine ourselves to outlining only some of its aspects.

Even before the Italian fascists attacked Ethiopia, the Soviet Union had come out in defence of that country. The Soviet representative at the League of Nations declared that his country proceeded from recognising Ethiopia's equality and independence. This reflected the Soviet diplomacy's consistent stand on the Ethiopian people's struggle against the fascist aggressors. The Soviet Union urged to apply effective sanctions to Italy, exposed the colonial and aggressive nature of the war, unleashed by the fascists, and strongly criticised the Western powers' policy of "appeasing" the aggressor as tantamount to encouraging the fascist invasion. The Soviet people's sympathies were on the side of the Ethiopians

fighting against the Italian invaders [see 5].

The Soviet Union was among those states which refused to recognise Ethiopia's annexation by fascist Italy. After the occupation of Ethiopian territory, the Soviet Union continued to defend the interests of the Ethiopian people. For instance, addressing the plenary session of the League of Nations on July 1, 1936, the head of the Soviet delegation emphasised that only effective action against the aggressor could save its victim. Speaking at the May 1938 session of the League of Nations Council, the Soviet representative emphasised that the recognition of the results of violence, especially in the context when the attacked nation continued to fight for independence, was tantamount to direct assistance to the aggressor. It meant, he said, stabbing the victim of aggression in the back [3, p. 352].

By pursuing its consistently anti-imperialist policy, the Soviet Union rendered moral and political support to the fighting people of Ethiopia.

In the years of the fascist aggression against Ethiopia and its occupation, Soviet scholars undertook several publications devoted to various problems of Ethiopian studies. The collection of articles under the general title *Ethiopia* was published in 1936 by the Institute of Anthropology, Archeology and Ethnography of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Edited by D. A. Olderogge, the book is known as one of the most important scientific publications on Ethiopia's history, ethno-

graphy and economy undertaken in the 1930s. The book, just as many other books on Ethiopia published in that period, exposed the true nature of the fascist aggression and of the policy of connivance pursued by some countries in the West.

In the mid-1930s, the Soviet lecturer N. V. Yushmanov started to teach the Amharic language to the students of the Leningrad University. In that period he published his work *The System of the Amharic Language* and several articles dealing with the languages of Ethiopia's nationalities. The articles were printed in the magazine *Soviet Ethnography* (Issue 1, 1936) and in the collection *Ethiopia*, mentioned above.

Diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and the USSR were established on April 21, 1943, after Ethiopia's liberation from the fascist invaders.

The Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany gave a powerful impetus to the development of the worldwide revolutionary process. Africa was gradually liberating itself from the colonialist yoke. There emerged the possibility for the expansion of Soviet-Ethiopian relations.

In 1956, the governments of the Soviet Union and Ethiopia came to an agreement on transforming their diplomatic missions—in Addis Ababa and in Moscow—into embassies, and exchanged ambassadors. Since then, economic and cultural relations between the two countries have been successfully developing. The July 1959 Soviet-Ethiopian trade and

economic agreement envisaged, among other things, the Soviet Union's granting Ethiopia a long-term loan of 90,000,000 rubles for the purposes of developing Ethiopia's industry and agriculture. The Aseb oil refinery, designed and built by the Soviet Union under a contract signed in the summer of 1962, was put into operation in the spring of 1967 and is regarded by the Ethiopian public as one of the initial mainstays of their country's heavy industry.

The 1961 agreement on cultural co-operation was the first to be signed by the USSR and Ethiopia in this sphere. Since that time protocols on cultural exchanges were signed by the two countries on a regular basis. They envisaged exchanges of art exhibitions, dance and song groups. Books by Ethiopian writers were translated into Russian and works by classical Russian and Soviet writers were published in Amharic. However, before the 1974 revolution imperial censorship did not allow to import from the Soviet Union anything but books of fiction. The circulation of political literature and works by the classics of Marxism-Leninism was strictly forbidden.

Since the late 1950s, Ethiopian studies have been substantially contributed to by a new generation of Soviet experts on Ethiopia. Their research features a broader scope and, at the same time, a higher degree of specialisation. Special mention should be made of the scientific endeavour continued in the period under consideration by the scholars of the older generation, e.g. I. Y. Krachkovsky,

who, in 1955, published his unique *Introduction to Ethiopian philology* which provides a careful analysis of Soviet and foreign research into Ethiopian languages and literature, and the prominent linguist V. P. Starinin known for his works on the Geez language.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Soviet scholars systematically studied Russian, Armenian, Georgian, Arab, Syrian, Greek, Roman, and other sources related to Ethiopia and its neighbouring countries. Mention should be made of the study of the materials collected by the Russian travellers to Ethiopia in the mid-19th and the early 20th centuries, the archives of the Russian diplomatic mission which functioned in Ethiopia in the late 19th century, as well as Georgian, Armenian, Arab and other sources.

Considerable attention was devoted to studying Ethiopian history and economy. Much space was given to Ethiopia in such large-scale publications undertaken by large teams of scholars as *The History of Africa in the 19th and the Early 20th Centuries* or *The Recent History of Africa*. Research was also carried on in the areas of ethnography, linguistics and the ethnic history of the peoples of Ethiopia.

Soviet-Ethiopian Relations and Ethiopian Studies in the USSR after the Revolution of 1974

The Ethiopian national-democratic revolution of 1974 has given a powerful impetus

to the expansion of Soviet-Ethiopian relations. After the victory of the revolution these relations acquired a new dimension, stimulating, among other things, the development of Ethiopian studies in the Soviet Union, with priority given to the examination of the causes and motive forces of the Ethiopian revolution, the dynamics and tendencies of revolutionary developments and to the various problems of state, party and national building.

The 1970s and the early 1980s saw the publication of a number of studies devoted to Ethiopia. The publication of *The Ethiopian Chronicles of the 16th-17th Centuries* (translated into Russian by S. B. Chernetsov) by the Nauka Publishers in 1984 crowned the endeavour launched by Academician B. A. Turayev and testified to the continuous interest shown by the Soviet scholars in the problems of Ethiopian culture, ethnical problems and the history of the development of the united Ethiopian state.

The research undertaken by the Soviet scholars in the years under consideration reveals their interest in the main concepts of and dominant tendencies in, the development of the revolutionary process in Ethiopia, as well as in the general and particular features displayed by the Ethiopian revolution, specific experience accumulated by the Ethiopians in setting up new government bodies, forming a vanguard party and mass organisations and democratising political life in the country.

Soviet scholars engaged in Ethiopian studies and, more specifically, the researchers of the Africa Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences, deem it their task to analyse the processes unfolding in Ethiopia, make truthful information on these processes known to the public in the USSR and elsewhere, sum up and propagate the experience of progressive reforms, thereby rendering their assistance to the Ethiopian scientists and all working people in their effort to restructure life along socialist lines.

Some of the bourgeois authors in the West go out of their way to prove that Ethiopian people's choice of a progressive socio-economic system, their socialist aspirations and ideals, as well as the goals and ideas of the revolutionary democrats who have opted for their country's socialist orientation and proclaimed their allegiance to Marxism-Leninism are unwarranted and hopeless.

Their allegations are disproved by the successes scored by Ethiopia in its capacity of one of the most progressive developing countries.

The 1974 national-democratic revolution stimulated the development of political relations between the Soviet Union and Socialist Ethiopia. Two government delegations of Ethiopia visited the USSR in January-February and July 1976. The communique issued following the second visit of the Ethiopian government delegation to the Soviet Union in July 1976 outlined the prospects for expanding ties between the two countries.

Of special importance for their bilateral relations are contacts maintained on a regular basis—in the form of exchanges of visits and personal messages—between the PMAC and COPWE (now WPE), on the one hand, and the leaders of the CPSU and the Soviet government, on the other.

Mengistu Haile Mariam, General Secretary of the WPE Central Committee and Chairman of the PMAC, has been to the Soviet Union on many official and working visits. High-ranking Soviet Party and Government delegations took part in the regular celebrations of the Ethiopian revolution and in the work of the WPE Founding Congress in Addis Ababa.

The foreign ministries of the two countries regularly exchange information. Friendly Soviet-Ethiopian relations have a firm legal basis. On May 4, 1977, the USSR and Socialist Ethiopia signed a Declaration on the Principles of Friendly Relations and Co-operation. On November 20, 1978, they signed the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation, which has provided a sound foundation for the development of all-round relations between the two countries in different areas.

Of great importance for the expansion of Soviet-Ethiopian co-operation are inter-party ties based on the community of ideological principles. Since the foundation of the WPE, the CPSU has invariably shown respect for and confidence in it.

The Soviet Union helps Ethiopia in training political organisers and activists. Soviet

teachers of social sciences work side by side with their Ethiopian colleagues at the Addis Ababa political school, Yekatit'66.* On many occasions the CPSU had made the WPE gifts of large collections of Marxist-Leninist literature. Among those Soviet and Ethiopian mass organisations which maintain close relations are the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions and the All-Ethiopian Trade Union, the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League and the Revolutionary Ethiopia Youth Association, the Soviet Women's Committee and the Revolutionary Ethiopia Women's Association.

The community of ideological principles, based on the adherence to Marxist-Leninist theory, is manifested in the close diplomatic and political co-operation of the two countries. At various international forums Ethiopian and Soviet representatives make common cause, exposing imperialism, neocolonialism, racism, apartheid, Zionism and urge to preserve peace, ease international tensions, establish a new international economic order and a new international information order, proclaim the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, settle international disputes between neighbouring states by peaceful means, adhere to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and to maintain

* "Yekatit" is the Amharic for "February", the month when the revolutionary uprising of 1974 started; the year 1966 of the Ethiopian calendar corresponds to the year 1974 of the European calendar.

normal relations among countries with different social systems on the basis of peaceful co-existence (see, for instance [12]).

The policy of peace pursued by the CPSU and the Soviet Government and their struggle against imperialism are vigorously supported by the Workers' Party and Government of Ethiopia. Today, Soviet-Ethiopian co-operation has acquired a new dimension; friendship between the two countries furthers the unity of the anti-imperialist forces fighting for social progress and promotes peace and international security.

Soviet-Ethiopian Economic Co-operation

In pursuit of its internationalist principles, the Soviet Union assists Socialist Ethiopia in reconstructing and developing its national economy, consolidating the public sector in industry, power engineering and agriculture, training national personnel, improving national economic planning, expanding health and education systems. Meeting in Moscow on December 17, 1984, the leaders of the two countries "expressed their profound satisfaction with the successful development of the all-round relations envisaged by the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between the Soviet Union and Socialist Ethiopia" [10, December 18, 1984].

The Soviet Union seeks to render its financial, economic and technical assistance to

friendly Ethiopia on easy terms so as to help it to attain economic self-sufficiency, increase social labour productivity and satisfy the growing material and spiritual needs of the Ethiopian working people who have opted for socialist orientation.

The Soviet-Ethiopian economic co-operation is based on a number of agreements and protocols signed in accordance with the principles laid down in the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation. In order to improve the mechanism of co-operation, an inter-governmental Soviet-Ethiopian commission for economic, scientific and technological co-operation and trade has been set up. Co-operation between the two countries is based on equality, respect for the partner's national sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs.

The choice of specific directions and projects of economic and technical co-operation is determined by Ethiopia's economic priorities.

The Ethiopian leaders believe that at the present stage priority should be given to the development of agriculture. That is accounted for by the objective conditions prevailing in the country. Accordingly, the Soviet Union assists Ethiopia in setting up an irrigation system covering 10,000 hectares of land in the Baro-Akobo District (Gambela) and in constructing six industrial freezers with a total capacity of 4,000 tons, 50 granaries with a total capacity of 306,000 tons (18 of the granaries have already been commissioned),

six farm machine repair and maintenance shops (each capable of carrying out 500 repair orders a year), several machine-rent stations, grain-processing facilities and agricultural machine-operator training courses. Moreover, the Soviet Union assisted Ethiopia in building the Nazret tractor plant which was put into operation in the summer of 1984.

Under one of the agreements, the Soviet Union is to help Ethiopia to gradually develop 60,000 hectares of land (to be sown primarily with cotton), expand the plantation of oil-producing crops, build oil-seed processing facilities, organise a model live-stock farm and build a meat-packing factory [9, p. 62].

A country seeking to build socialism cannot do without a well-developed industry. Cognizant of this, the Ethiopian leaders give priority to power engineering and the production of building materials. Adequate development of these industries will subsequently provide for the rapid development of the machine-building, metallurgical and chemical industries. The Soviet Union, together with the GDR and Czechoslovakia, is helping Ethiopia to build one of its major hydro-electric power stations with a capacity of 152,000 kilowatts (in the Melka Wakana District) and a high-voltage transmission line. The Soviet Union is also helping to build a cement plant with a capacity of 600,000 tons in the town of Dire-Dawa. Moreover, the Soviet Union is helping to strengthen the Ethiopian public construction organisation by

supplying it with building machines and transport vehicles and reinforcing its staff with Soviet specialists.

The prospecting for and development of mineral resources is of great importance for the future of the Ethiopian economy. Soviet organisations are helping their Ethiopian counterparts to prospect for, explore and extract minerals, in particular, gold and oil. The Soviet Union is helping to reconstruct the oil refinery in the town of Aseb and to build, in addition, ten oil reservoirs with a total capacity of 66,000 cubic metres.

The local personnel training project occupies an important place in Soviet-Ethiopian co-operation. Large numbers of Soviet teachers and lecturers are sent to Ethiopia on a regular basis. The Soviet Union has provided facilities for various Ethiopian vocational training centres. It has built a polytechnical in Bahr Dar as a gift to the Ethiopian people.

Moreover, Soviet organisations undertake to train workers and engineering personnel for all enterprises built with Soviet assistance. There are several hundreds of Soviet specialists employed on Soviet-Ethiopian projects.

The Soviet Union and Ethiopia are co-operating in the area of planning. The proper organisation and constant improvement of the planning system are essential to the socialist management of the economy. Under the agreement signed by the USSR State Planning Committee and the Supreme Central Planning Council of Ethiopia on October 1981, a Soviet-Ethiopian Working Group responsi-

ble for co-operation in this area has been set up.

The Founding Congress of the WPE endorsed the Guidelines of the Social and Economic Development of Ethiopia for 1984-1993. Following this, on September 8, 1984, a long-term programme of economic co-operation between the Soviet Union and Socialist Ethiopia was signed in Addis Ababa. Thus, the development of economic relations between the two countries has been placed on a planned basis.

A true friend of Ethiopia, the Soviet Union has extended a helping hand to its population in the areas affected by the disastrous drought of 1984 by supplying foodstuffs, aircraft, helicopters and road transport to bring food and other cargo to the starving people and to evacuate many of them to the areas with more favourable climatic conditions and fertile land. A field hospital manned with Soviet medical personnel and supplied with all the necessary medicines and equipment is functioning in the drought-stricken area. The Soviet Union has also supplied water well drilling rigs, water tanks, etc. This aid is highly valued by the WPE, government and all the people of Ethiopia.

Soviet-Ethiopian Co-operation in Culture and Science

Cultural and scientific co-operation between the USSR and Ethiopia is today based on the Agreement of May 6, 1977. As a follow-up, a great number of documents regulat-

ing the development of Soviet-Ethiopian bilateral ties have been signed. Among them there is the Agreement on Friendship and Co-operation between the Municipal Council of Kishinev (the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic) and the Municipal Council of Addis Ababa, signed by the twin towns on April 29, 1977; the Agreement on Cultural Co-operation between the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and the Committee for Ethiopian-Soviet Friendship, signed on May 3, 1978; the Agreement on Information Exchanges between the Telegraphic Agency of the Soviet Union and the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), signed on February 5, 1976; the Agreement on Co-operation in the areas of Television and Radio Broadcasting, signed by the USSR Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting and the Ethiopian Radio and Television on June 10, 1977; the Protocol on the Recognition of the Equivalence of Education Certificates, Academic Degrees and Ranks signed on May 24, 1978; the Protocol on Training Ethiopian Personnel at Soviet Higher and Secondary Specialised Educational Establishments, signed on February 15, 1980; the Agreements on Exchanges and Co-operation between Addis Ababa University, Kiev University and Vilnius University signed in August 1982.

Protocols on co-operation in culture and sports are signed once in two years.

Agreements on co-operation have also been signed by the writers' and journalists' orga-

nisations of the two countries. The Russian and the Ethiopian Orthodox Churches maintain their traditional friendly relations. In January 1974, the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church visited Ethiopia. Over the last few years, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has sent a number of delegations to the Soviet Union. Contacts between the Muslim organisations of the two countries have also become closer and more regular.

The Committee for Ethiopian-Soviet Friendship and Solidarity has been functioning in Ethiopia since 1977. Its Soviet counterpart, the Society of Soviet-Ethiopian Friendship has been active since 1978. The two countries exchange delegations of cultural workers, scientists, medical workers, writers, journalists, and artists. Creative groups and exhibitions are exchanged on a regular basis, too.

The Soviet Permanent Exhibition (the cultural centre and the mission of the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries) has been functioning in Addis Ababa since 1945. Its cinema hall seats 330 people and its library contains 15,000 volumes. The cultural centre offers a course in the Russian language to 400 Ethiopian students every year.

The Progress Publishers put out several works of Russian classical and Soviet fiction in Amharic (gift editions of Pushkin's works in two volumes, works by Lermontov, Turgenyev, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Gorky, Sholokhov, Aitmatov, and so on), which attracted

the attention of the Ethiopian public. At the same time other Soviet publishing houses acquaint Soviet people with the best works of Ethiopian literature.

The hospital of the Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent Society, known in Ethiopia as the Balcha Hospital, carries on the noble traditions established by the Russian medical workers who first came to Ethiopia in the late 19th century. On February 23, 1978, the Soviet Government awarded the hospital the Order of Friendship of Peoples.

Every year, the Soviet Union offers more than 500 grants to Ethiopian undergraduate and post-graduate students. Currently, there are more than 3,000 Ethiopian students obtaining their education in the Soviet Union [9, p. 63].

Scientific and technological ties between the USSR and Ethiopia are regulated by the Programme for Scientific and Technological Co-operation signed on December 13, 1980 and covering such areas as power engineering, agriculture, and meteorology.

The areas of scientific co-operation between the two countries are constantly expanding. Under the agreement signed on May 3, 1972, the Soviet side has built a phyto-pathological laboratory in the town of Ambo. Its staff made up of Soviet and Ethiopian agronomists and technicians, is engaged in studying methods of combating plant diseases.

The Agreement on Co-operation signed in August 1982 by Addis Ababa University and the Africa Institute of the USSR Academy of

Sciences envisages exchanges of scientists, research materials, etc. The two institutions have already exchanged delegations. Scholars from the Africa Institute have been to Ethiopia on scientific missions and the researchers from the Institute of Ethiopian Studies of Addis Ababa University have made several scientific trips to the USSR.

Special mention should be made of the Soviet-African Scientific and Political Conference held in Moscow in 1981 and attended by a delegation of Ethiopian scientists who actively contributed to the deliberations. The All-Union Conference on Ethiopian Studies held in Moscow in June 1979 and attended by guests from Ethiopia, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary, was also a success [see 4 and 11].

Soviet scholars regularly participate in the international conferences of students of Ethiopia. The latter's decision to hold their 9th conference, scheduled for June 1986, in Moscow testifies to the international recognition of the achievements of Soviet students of Ethiopia.

The Institute of Ethiopian studies of Addis Ababa University has an important role to play in organising such conferences and maintaining contacts and co-operation between the Soviet students of Africa and Ethiopian scholars.

Speaking at the Founding Congress of the WPE, held in September 1984, Mengistu Haile Mariam commented on Ethiopia's present-day relations with the socialist countries: "The

Soviet Union and other socialist countries ... sided with the Ethiopian revolution and rendered it a firm support at a time when international imperialism unleashed a war against us on all fronts, seeking to check, with the support of the reactionary forces, the development of the revolution and to violate Ethiopia's territorial integrity. We have reached the present stage, the stage at which we are in a position to set up a vanguard party, as a result of the heroic struggle waged by the Ethiopian revolutionaries and popular masses and owing to the boundless support from our brothers, loyal to the principle of proletarian internationalism" [10, September 8, 1984].

The present level of Soviet-Ethiopian relations shows that the national-democratic revolution of 1974 has given a powerful impetus to co-operation between the Soviet Union, the world's first socialist country, and Ethiopia. Steadily developing, it has good prospects for the future.

Notes

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THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF SOCIAL
TRANSFORMATIONS IN ETHIOPIA

The ten years of Ethiopia's development testify both to the successes and difficulties inherent in the socialist orientation of African countries and to the importance of reliance on international solidarity in defending this orientation. The creation of the country's own economic base corresponding to its new social system is essential to state independence. It is an earnest of subsequent progressive transformations.

Ethiopia's option for socialist orientation and its firm adherence to this line of development have placed the country in the vanguard of African states. The Ethiopian leaders' ability to creatively apply the Marxist-Leninist theory of social development imparts an all-African and even universal importance to the revolutionary experience accumulated by the Ethiopian peoples in their effort to create a new, progressive system. This includes above all experience in involving broad popular masses, associated in various organizations according to their social status or place of residence, in the revolution; in elaborating and applying democratic methods

of setting up a vanguard party through the ideological training and selection of its members on an individual basis; and in providing, in a planned manner, an economic base for social transformations.

Progress has been made possible by the reliance on the broad popular masses, the clear-cut orientation of the foreign policy pursued by the PMAC, and by the support rendered to Ethiopia by the socialist countries on the principle of international solidarity. Without all this, the Ethiopian revolution would find it hard to overcome the growing contradiction between the country's progressive socio-economic policy and its being incorporated in the capitalist world economic system. This means that monopoly capital still retains control of many economic levers by applying which it can put pressure to bear on Ethiopia and thus promote its own mercenary interests in that country. This kind of dependence is generally used to defend the interests of the local bourgeoisie. The opposition of international monopoly capital to Ethiopia's socialist orientation is inevitable. Enjoying the above-mentioned advantages, it makes every effort to impede the country's development.

In this context, Ethiopia's steadily expanding relations with the world socialist system are especially important for its independent development.

Only a strong government can check the expansion of the private capitalist sector. Only centralised economic planning and the strengthening of planned principles of devel-

opment can guarantee the creation of a new economic base corresponding to the emerging socialist relations. To implement all that is envisaged by development plans, it is necessary to mobilise internal resources, utilise the creative potential of all the working classes and strata and to completely liberate the people from feudal and, partially, capitalist exploitation. The country's ruling revolutionary democracy seeks to minimise the effect of the capitalist patterns of economic development, relying in this on an active influence of politics on the economy. This has been made possible by creating, in 1984, a vanguard political party capable of directing economic development in such a way as to curb the old, private-capitalist relations and develop new, socialist relations.

As early as 1975, the Economic Policy Declaration of Socialist Ethiopia pointed out that state control over basic natural resources and key branches of the economy and the state's coming into possession of the means of production would help to protect the country against the ups and downs of the capitalist economic cycle, eliminate exploitation of man by man, and ensure the working people's participation in the management of production. At the same time, in order to increase the production of goods needed to satisfy the peoples' basic requirements, it would be necessary to allow and even encourage the private sector's participation in cottage industries, handicrafts and some other economic activities, to grant foreign capital vast pos-

sibilities in those many branches of the economy which call for large-scale investment and to secure for it a "just profit" [13, February 8, 1975].

These principles lay in the basis of subsequent transformations in Ethiopia's socio-economic life during the national revolutionary development campaign. Concrete measures towards development were specified in the six annual plans outlining the tasks to be fulfilled in order to create the material and technical base without which the future transition to the building of socialism will be impossible.

Over the last ten years, Ethiopia's revolutionary government has scored major successes in the area of social reforms by carrying out a literacy campaign, improving medical services, normalising women's position in society, and making some changes in the social structure. The progress in the economic area was less impressive. The latest crisis in the world capitalist system greatly affected Ethiopia's economy. Among the causes of the latter's abrupt deterioration was the stagnation of foreign trade, difficulties in supplying industrial enterprises with imported and local raw materials and fuel and the decrease in the production of foodstuffs. In this situation, between 1979 and 1984 the state was in a position to allow budget allocations for the purposes of capital investment to the amount of only 6 million birr, i.e. a mere 11 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP). Such an insignificant rate of accumulation provided for only a 3 per cent annual growth

in the GDP, which is only slightly more than the natural population growth.

Of late, the country's situation in terms of the provision of foodstuffs has been dramatically worsened by a series of droughts the severest of which occurred in 1984.

In a drive to radically improve the working peoples' living standards and to raise their cultural level, the revolutionary government of Ethiopia elaborated the Guidelines of the Social and Economic Development of Ethiopia for 1984/85-1993/94. The Guidelines were approved by the Founding Congress of the WPE. The objective of the Ten-Year Plan is to create a firm socio-economic base for the country's subsequent transition to the building of a socialist society. The Plan envisages overcoming economic dependence on the West through stronger reliance on the national resources, expanding agricultural production, creating an adequate infrastructure (power engineering, transport, construction facilities) and dramatically increasing the share of industry in the gross domestic product. This calls for improvements in planning and for mobilising all strata of the population to fulfill the Plan. This is to be achieved through large-scale propaganda work among the masses. In the context of a multinational country where socio-economic conditions vary from province to province, the regional planning centres (Eastern, Central, Southern, Western, North-Western and North-Eastern), set up in 1983, are expected to play a crucial role. The economic expediency of the pro-

spective administrative division of the country will be the main factor taken into account in delimiting the boundaries. Among other important factors will be the Soviet experience in this matter studied by the Ethiopian planners within the framework of the Permanent Soviet-Ethiopian Working Group on Co-operation in Planning.

All this will further the implementation of the Ten-Year Plan. The Long-Term Programme for Economic Co-operation Between the USSR and Socialist Ethiopia, signed in September 1984, is expected to play an equally important role. The implementation of the Programme will secure for Ethiopia a continuous supply of major components required for industrial construction, the participation of Soviet organisations in industrial construction projects and their financing on easy terms. At a time when currency reserves continue to shrink and foreign debt continues to grow, that will certainly help Ethiopia to make a more efficient use of its present currency revenue.

The following fact shows that Socialist Ethiopia's achievements in creating the base for the planned regulation of the national economy have gained recognition. In 1981, the UNECA Secretariat undertook to assess the prospects for the development of African countries in the 1980s. To this end, various macroeconomic projection models were used. The model of economic growth chosen for Kenya, for instance, was based on market-dependent investment allocation, i.e. invest-

ment allocation determined by industry demand. With respect to Ethiopia, where, as is pointed out in the document issued by the UNECA [10], a centralised planning system has been introduced, the prospective growth of the gross domestic product has been estimated with due regard to the planned distribution of investments between the two main economic sectors, responsible for the production of equipment and consumer goods. This means, the UNECA stresses, that the growth of individual industries in Ethiopia depends not on the market demand for the output of each industry, but on centralised decisions. In other words, it is determined by the state's investment policy.

Ethiopia is an agrarian country and the possibility to accelerate its development depends on the state of agriculture, which accounts, just as was the case prior to the revolution, for roughly 50 per cent of the GDP. In the early 1980s, because of the low labour productivity on individual peasant farms, the average rate of growth in agricultural production did not exceed 2.5 per cent. Although in the early 1980s, the state allocated nearly one fourth of total capital investment to agriculture, it failed to overcome its backwardness and effect a rise in production. It is only on the state farms that the level of yield rose to 1500 kg per hectare (as against the national average of 1000 kg per hectare). Moreover, with the state farms accounting for nearly 60 per cent of centralised purchases the effort towards strengthening them has

enabled the government to build up the stocks of marketable grain on a large scale. According to the UNECA, the state farms account for 90 kg, the imports for 60 kg, and the individual peasant farms for only 50 kg of Ethiopia's per capita grain consumption of 200 kg [11]. At the same time, with only 5 per cent of the crop area at its disposal, the socialised sector in agriculture accounts for not more than 6 per cent of the gross yield. The state farms account for 4 per cent of the crop area and 5 per cent of the yield and the peasant co-operatives, for roughly 1 per cent of the crop area and 1 per cent of the yield [13, January 3, 1984; June 28, 1984].

The rise in agricultural production and the solution of the food programme depend both on the social reforms carried out on a national scale and on the material supplies to the rural workers associated in co-operatives. It is obvious enough that socialist construction in Ethiopia cannot be based on small-scale peasant production, whatever the degree of its marketability. A cardinal solution of this problem will call for a long time and considerable capital investment.

As for the former task, its solution has been facilitated by the abolition of feudal ownership of land. The ongoing co-operation campaign conducted within the framework of peasant's associations helps the government to exercise stricter control over the entire agricultural cycle and to further its gradual modernisation. Under the Ten-Year

Plan more than 50 per cent of the rural population will have been drawn in the co-operatives by the year 1993 [6, September 8, 1984].

In order to reach this goal, the state will have to raise nearly 7 billion birr to be used for the purposes of agricultural development [8, p. 28]. These funds are to be spent on creating a material base for a large-scale co-operative economy indispensable for rural producers co-operation in Ethiopia. Any attempt to draw the owners of individual peasant holdings in co-operative organisations without the state undertaking to supply them with agricultural machinery, fertilizers, and selected seeds and build warehouses and repair shops, in other words, without modernising and mechanising agricultural production, can only prejudice the idea of peasant collectivisation.

Providing state aid to individual farmers is one of the possible methods of tackling these problems. It will help to utilise the available reserves of small producers liberated from the yoke of feudal taxation and exploitation by merchants and middlemen.

The historical experience of the USSR, other socialist states and progressive developing countries shows that a proletarian and revolutionary-democratic state holding key positions in the economy can take advantage of the state-controlled revival of money-commodity relations in the countryside on a private basis. The expansion of trade in manufactured goods needed by the country

folk may provide an incentive to broader commodity production in rural areas and, consequently, build up the material security of the population. At the same time, the freedom of trade that tallies with the economic position of the small producer will inevitably promote capitalist relations. Lenin stressed this on many occasions. Therefore, the state should regulate these relations and control their growth [1, p. 57-58].

Today, the industry's contribution to the gross domestic product is growing in all developing countries. In Ethiopia, where it accounts for approximately 15 per cent of the GDP, it has remained on the 1972 level. This can largely be explained by the extremely low development level of the mining industry, which in the case of many other developing countries, especially the oil-producing ones, accounted for a considerable rise in industrial production observed in the 1970s. Another reason lies in the decline in the influx of foreign capital to Ethiopia in the early 1980s, caused by the Western countries' doubts about the country's political prospects. Yet, the main obstacle to industrial growth lies in the insufficient level of national accumulation and personnel shortages.

In the past ten years, the annual growth rate of industrial production amounted to approximately 6 per cent with considerable fluctuation from year to year, for instance, the industrial growth rate dropped from 9 per cent in 1980 to 3 per cent in 1982, primarily

due to the difficulties experienced in supplying active enterprises with raw materials and fuel (calculated from [7, p. 134; 9, Table 2]).

The public sector in Ethiopian industry has a far greater role to play than in agriculture. Today, more than 50 per cent of the GDP produced in industry is contributed by the state-owned enterprises (according to our estimates, they account for 65 per cent of the output in the modern branches of Ethiopian industry) and by artisans' co-operatives which account for about 13 per cent of the output produced by the craft industry. In this context, the state could play a more active role in determining the direction and the rate of industrial development. However, the lack of resources (i.e. foreign currency needed to cover the import of plant, technological raw materials, and budget allocations for the purchase of agricultural raw materials from individual farmers) forces it to make compromises with private business operators.

Ethiopia has a peculiar production pattern: although the state owns a number of enterprises in the processing industries, construction and power engineering, up to 30 per cent of the industrial output is still produced by craftsmen, i.e. by small-scale private enterprises. Some modern enterprises are in the joint possession of the state and foreign capital. Since the activity of the latter category of industrial enterprises is not entirely controlled by the state administrative bodies, it can promote the interests of the private sector. Prior to the revolution, foreign

capital accounted for approximately 43.5 per cent of the joint stock of modern enterprises and for 50 per cent of the joint stock in the food, textile, leather and foot-wear, and wood-working industries. The state's share amounted to 20-30 per cent of capital. [2, Table 11].

The 1975 nationalisation of nearly 200 firms engaged in trade and industry and the creation of new, state-owned industrial enterprises increased the state's share of industrial production. However, there are still some 60 foreign companies controlling many big industrial enterprises.

As for the national private-capitalist structure represented by small entrepreneurs and small owners of repair shops, transport facilities, go-between trading firms, it can be regulated by the state through controlling the provision of raw materials, credits and imported licenses, awarding contracts, and the issue of licenses to purchase agricultural produce.

The question of the attitude to foreign capital is still a controversial one. Soviet authors are generally of the opinion that the objective laws underlying extended reproduction in Africa call for an effective use of private foreign capital and that the refusal to rely on external private resources would result in an unjustifiable deceleration of economic development [3, pp. 167, 248, 276, 303-304]. This is believed to be true of African socialist-oriented countries, including Ethiopia, too. At the same time, Soviet scholars stress

that for these countries it would be an irreparable mistake to slacken state control over the activity of monopoly capital and that the "open-door policy" would lead to the monopolies resuming their diktat, as was the case in Egypt [4, p. 115].

While dealing with the role of foreign capital in expanding industrial production in Ethiopia, it should be noted that the PMAC has taken a positive stand on the influx of direct investment from abroad in the case it helps to solve the tasks formulated in the new long-term plan for the country's development. This can be seen, for instance, from the 1983 law on joint ventures. Joint participation of the state and foreign capital in industrial production would be an effective means of accelerating industrial growth. The influx of direct foreign investment makes it possible to broaden the scale of capital investment and bring down the country's balance-of-payment deficit. At the same time, it provides an access to modern technology and a possibility to expand and diversify the exports. At the same time, the renewed monopoly capital penetration of Ethiopia is fraught with the danger of subordinating the tasks of national industrial development to the narrow interests of private foreign corporations. Another danger lies in the possible outflow of dividends abroad consequent to the growth of the share of foreign investment in the country and in the corresponding decrease in the accumulated percentage of the GDP.

The UN and the IBRD statistics on the

country's balance of payment testifies to the difficulties faced by the revolutionary government of Ethiopia in its effort to tackle economic problems and to its lack of the freedom of manoeuvring and implementing an independent economic policy. With the balance-of-payment deficits growing in the last few years, the opportunity for an uninterrupted import of productive facilities essential to the national economy, as well as the import of foodstuffs, have been determined by the influx of foreign capital (subsidies or loans). Such a general economic indicator as the excess of the inflow of goods and services resulting from the settlements with foreign countries over their outflow, rose from 2 per cent of the GDP in the 1970s to 6 per cent of the GDP in the early 1980s [10]. This means that a growing part of capital investment can be covered only by an additional inflow of external resources. This explains why the share of the latter in total capital investment has grown to approximately 40 per cent.

Dependence on the state of foreign economic relations bedevils the planned effort to create a modern economic base matching the country's political orientation. Ethiopia's involvement in international economic relations is determined by the following factors: its broad ties with capitalist countries (the socialist community countries account for only 20 per cent of Ethiopia's foreign economic ties), its participation in the economic activity of the United Nations where it

sides with other developing countries (the Group of 77), for instance, in launching an international effort to assist the least developed countries (Ethiopia is one of 26 African countries the United Nations has classed as such).

An analysis of Ethiopia's ties with industrially advanced capitalist countries reveals dramatic fluctuations in Ethiopian exports (caused, among other things, by the Western countries' protectionism) from a 35 per cent rise in the fiscal year of 1978/79, as against the previous year, to a 12 per cent drop in 1980/81, and a constant decrease, by about 15 per cent annually, in the purchasing power of Ethiopian export commodities, especially, coffee. The West's real per capita aid to Ethiopia dropped from \$9 in 1970 to \$ 8 in the early 1980s (as against the annual average \$25 of per capita aid received by the other least developed countries over the same period [5, Tables 9, 18]).

Of late, the sub-Saharan African states have been experiencing strong pressure from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which, playing on the disastrous situation in Africa, make tough demands on each country that turns to them for another loan or with a request to reschedule payments on the current debt. The IBRD and the IMF usually demand that the recipient devalue its currency and scale back its development projects. This is accompanied by recommendations to limit capital invest-

ment, give up social programmes and encourage private enterprise.

Socialist Ethiopia is less dependent on foreign loans and credits than many other African states. It is in a position to pursue an independent economic policy of its own and, at the same time, to defend the interests of other young states. For instance, during the preparations for the UN Conference on the least developed countries (held in Paris in 1981), the Ethiopian representatives headed two of the three missions dispatched to Africa to negotiate a common approach to the problem of international aid to the least developed countries. Moreover, the report, submitted to the session of the Association of African Central Banks (held in the summer of 1983 in Dakar) by its Chairman Tadesse Gebre Kidane of Ethiopia, pointed out that the IMF's recommendations on "improving" African economies raised serious doubts as they did not seem to have been dictated solely by economic considerations and their realisation would not result in the strengthening of national economies. On the Tadesse Gebre Kidane's initiative, the African Centre for Monetary Studies was invited to submit its proposals concerning the possibility of formulating a common African countries' policy vis-à-vis the IMF, a policy tailored to promote their own national interests.

Ethiopia's economic involvement in the world capitalist system, as well as its tolerance of private economic structures, leads to a spontaneous growth of capitalism. It

would be impossible to limit this growth without forging a national development strategy envisaging the creation of prerequisites for self-supported development and self-sufficiency, without the political super-structure's strong influence on the productive forces and social forms of labour organisation exerted with a view of bringing them into line with the requirements of non-capitalist development, without controlling private economic structures and without encouraging the public sector in the economy.

Relying on the objective prerequisites that have already been created to regulate the economy and paying due regard to the specific conditions obtaining in the country, the Ethiopian government exercises ever stricter control over small-scale agricultural and craft-industrial production and over private-capitalist enterprise. The task is to bolster the emergent process of progressive socio-economic transformation by introducing co-operation in agriculture, developing state-owned industries and effecting gradual monopolisation by the state of the entire sphere of commodity circulation.

Notes

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¹⁰ *Sectoral Projections: Some Basic Approaches*, UNECA, ST /ECA/PSD. 2/10, Addis Ababa, 8-17 March 1982.

¹¹ *Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa, 1982-1983*. E/ECA/CM, 10/4. Addis Ababa, 16 March 1984.

¹² *World Development Report. The World Bank. 1978-1983*, Washington, 1984.

¹³ *The Ethiopian Herald*, Addis Ababa.

**THE STATE AND TENDENCIES
OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

The creation of the material and technical base for the future effort to lay the foundation for a socialist society is the most important of all tasks facing the Ethiopian people [6, p. 1]. The Ethiopian leaders regard the creation of a developed industrial base as an essential condition for the country's future transition to socialist construction [6, pp. 2, 39].

As Lenin pointed out, "the victory of socialism over capitalism and the consolidation of socialism may be regarded as ensured only when the proletarian state power, having completely suppressed all resistance by the exploiters and assured itself complete subordination and stability, has reorganised the whole of industry on the lines of large-scale collective production and on a modern technical basis" [1, p. 161].

Ethiopia has not yet reached the stage of development marked by the complete suppression of all resistance on the part of the exploiters and the absolute stability of state power, which is so far revolutionary-democratic, rather than proletarian. Nonethe-

less, Ethiopia is yet to tackle the task of re-organising its entire industry on the lines of large-scale collective production and on a modern technical base.

The task of industrial development is something that is relatively new to Ethiopia. Before the revolution, the needs of the majority of the population were covered for the most part by the supply of products manufactured at small-scale industrial enterprises or by craftsmen. The industrial base inherited by revolutionary Ethiopia from the old regime does not provide for the solution of the tasks facing the country today. Industrial development in prerevolutionary Ethiopia was hampered by its economic backwardness, insufficient development of social structures and by the low cultural level of the population. The nascent national bourgeoisie did not manifest itself as an active force in industrial development, and national capital was primarily concentrated in trade and housing construction. For that reason, industrial growth depended, above all, on private foreign investment. Active in Ethiopia were small foreign firms. Big monopolies did not see any suitable ground for their operations there. The most important industries, which could have promoted Ethiopia's economic independence, were neglected. In 1983/84, industry accounted for a mere 16 per cent of the GDP [6, p. 28].

The output of the heavy industry is known to be an important criterion of any country's industrial development. From the point of

view of this criterion, Ethiopia is lagging behind almost all other countries in the world as it has only one or two enterprises which can be described as pertaining to the heavy industry. Most Ethiopian industrial enterprises are engaged in processing agricultural produce. Food and textile industries account for 60 per cent of industrial output. Industrial enterprises are distributed over the country's territory in an extremely irregular manner, being concentrated in two or three provinces. All this has a negative effect on the development of the country's productive forces and hampers the solution of such social problems as unemployment, low cultural level of the peasants, lack of ties between the town and the countryside, etc.

As the Ethiopian leaders see it, industrial development will solve the problem of socio-economic backwardness and, consequently, change the sectoral structure of the economy, accelerate economic growth rates, ensure the modernisation of the economy, increase the employment rate, etc. [6, pp. 3, 97, 107-108]. However, in the Ethiopian context, successful industrialisation is only possible within the framework of the public sector. The stage for its development in industry was set by the nationalisation of foreign companies in January and February 1975.

Consequent to the nationalisation the public sector's contribution to the gross industrial product grew from 25 per cent to 90 per cent [3, p. 65]. This weakened the neo-colonialists' control over Ethiopia's economy and

undermined the positions of the local bourgeoisie. Late in 1974 and in the early months of 1975, new state economic management bodies, the Ministry of National Resources Development and the Ministry of Industry, were set up. The latter exercises control over more than 180 fully or partially nationalised industrial enterprises united in 14 state corporations and 9 joint companies and employing 60,000 workers. The public sector is being enlarged by extending old and building new enterprises.

The difficulties experienced in the effort to create a modern industrial potential in developing countries like Ethiopia are largely rooted in the lack of capital. The imperial government tried to solve the problem by attracting foreign capital. This, however, made country dependent on developed capitalist countries. Ethiopia's revolutionary leaders, aware of this danger, look for other sources of accumulation, without repudiating, however, the reliance on state foreign capital within certain limits and under strict control. Great importance is attached to mobilising labour, technical and material resources available in the country, that is, to make a wider use of the internal sources of accumulation, tax revenue and the revenue from nationalised agricultural, industrial and commercial enterprises, banks, insurance companies, foreign trade organisations, etc.

Moreover, industrial development holds the promise of bringing down the unemployment rate. Between 1979 and 1984, state-owned

industrial enterprises provided jobs for 26,000 workers [7, August 24, 1984]. However, despite the measures taken by the revolutionary government, unemployment is still among the country's gravest problems. As of September 1984, the number of the urban unemployed amounted to 500,000 [6, p. 108].

The development of the public sector in Ethiopia's industry is of great socio-political importance, because it is here that the country's working class is being formed and its endurance is tested. Managerial red tape is often the cause of drawbacks in the work of the state-owned enterprises (below capacity operation, equipment standstill, unprofitability). Democratising the management of the public sector is one of the principal means of ensuring its effectiveness and, consequently, good development prospects [4, p. 274]. Measures are taken to democratise the management of state-owned enterprises. The government decree of February 3, 1975, introduced workers' control over the means of production [2, p. 105]. Elected workers' committees, made up of 5 to 9 workers and headed by an appointed chairman, are responsible for the work of nationalised enterprises. They take an active part in tackling social and production problems. The progress in industrial production will largely depend on the workers' understanding of and support to the revolutionary regime's economic policy and their participation in the activity of state-owned enterprises.

Of great importance is the cultivation in

workers and peasants of the sense of duty and responsibility for their work. This as well as encouraging a new, responsible attitude to work, is the aim of the campaign known as the movement of "star workers". The movement was launched in 1978, when the National Revolutionary Development Campaign was proclaimed. The title of a "star worker" is awarded once a year to those who have shown good results in work, observe labour discipline and enjoy authority among their mates. Participation in the activity of town-dwellers' associations and self-defence detachments is also taken into account. Candidates are nominated by special nomination councils made up of the representatives of the workers, trade union organisations and the management. In essence, the star workers' movement is an early manifestation of the Ethiopian working class' awareness of its role in the building of a new society.

Altogether, the country has some 420 industrial enterprises employing 10 or more workers. The public sector, accounting for more than one third of them, employs nearly 80 per cent of industrial workers and produces 90 per cent of the gross industrial output [5, p. 2]. The rest of the enterprises are privately-owned.

The sectoral structure is dominated by the enterprises processing agricultural raw materials. The food, beverage, tobacco, textile, leather and foot-wear industries are the more developed ones. They account for nearly 81 per cent of all industrial output, whereas

the chemical, metal-working and construction materials industries contribute a mere 19 per cent [6, p. 39]. Among the major enterprises in the public sector are the oil refinery in Aseb, the tractor assembly plant in Nazret, the cement plants in Addis Ababa, Massawa, Dire-Dawa, and Muger, a few sugar mills, two glass-works in Asmara and Addis Ababa, a scrap-metal rendering factory and a tyre factory in Addis Ababa, 20 textile mills and a brewery in Harar.

In order to satisfy the growing demand of the population and the economy for manufactured goods, the state makes every effort to expand the existing factories and to build new ones. Under construction are several textile mills, a cement plant, a sugar-mill and a number of other enterprises. This strengthens the positions of the public sector. Between 1978/79 and 1983/84, the output of the state-owned enterprises in the manufacturing industry grew by an average of 10.3 per cent annually. [6, p. 9]. However, industrial production growth rates do not yet permit to provide jobs for all and to supply the rapidly growing population with basic necessities and agriculture with machinery. The low development rates are accounted for by the insufficient scale of production capacities introduced in some industries (producing textiles, sugar and building materials), and by below capacity operation in the others (meat packing factories, oil-mills, tanneries, etc.). On the whole, between 1974 and 1981, Ethiopian industrial production grew by

71 per cent [8, September, 1982].

As it develops, Ethiopia's industry faces various difficulties, for instance, fuel shortages. Oil import taxes the budget. In 1981/82, the country's expenses involved in the import of fuel oil ran to 435,300,000 birr, i.e. grew by 26.7 per cent over a year.

In these conditions, electricity generated by the state-owned electric power-stations can offer an alternative source of energy for industry. At present, efforts are made towards replacing fuel oil engines by electric motors. However, this source is not used to a sufficient degree. In terms of per capita electric power production Ethiopia is among the world's most backward countries. The overall installed capacity of the hydro-electric power-stations amounts to only 206.2 megawatt, i.e. to a mere 2 per cent of the country's total water-power potential [3, p. 80]. The country's development opportunities will largely depend on electric power engineering.

Ethiopia's industry is not yet in a position to bring down the rate of urban unemployment. After the Second World War the country's industry started to grow on a relatively sound—in the African context—technical basis. This led to a decrease in its possibility to provide additional jobs. The solution of the employment problem is also hampered by the uneven distribution of industrial enterprises over the country's territory. They are mainly concentrated in two provinces: Shoa accounts for 57 per cent of the country's industrial enterprises and 60 per cent of the

workers employed in industry (predominantly in Addis Ababa and its environs) and Eritrea, for 26 per cent of the industrial enterprises and 21 per cent of the labour force employed in industry. A few enterprises are located among Addis Ababa-Dire-Dawa railway line and in some southern districts (for instance, in the administrative district of Sidamo). In this context, it is essential to make efforts towards territorial decentralisation and to implement the programmes for the economic development of the most backward regions. At present, Ethiopian planners are engaged in elaborating short- and long-term programmes for Ethiopia's seven industrial zones within the framework of the current Ten-Year Plan.

Small commodity production continues to play a significant role in Ethiopia's economy.

The goods produced by small enterprises (nearly 85 per cent of which are engaged in working wood and metal, baking bread, milling grain, making oil, manufacturing agricultural implements and various utensils) and artisans (75 per cent of whom are engaged in weaving, spinning and jewelry making) are of great importance for the country's economy, especially at a time when it suffers from a shortage of various kinds of essential goods. There are more than 350,000 artisans in Ethiopia [8, July 5, 1984]. In August 1977, the Ministry of Industry set up a special Handicrafts and Small Industry Development Agency (HASIDA) charged, among other things, with assisting the handicrafts-

men in the effort to organise co-operatives. The Agency provides the artisans' co-operatives with raw materials, gives them credits on favourable terms, and assists them in marketing.

By 1979, 780 handicraftsmen's co-operative associations (253 producer and 527 consumer ones) had been organised [8, November 28, 1979]. However, producer co-operatives failed to meet progressive economic management requirements as they inherited backward forms of relationship between the employer and the artisans. That is why, in July 1979, the government issued special directives on organising artisans' producer co-operatives on a new basis. These directives provided for a higher organisational level and a greater role of the workers in running the craft industry. As of mid-1982, 832 consumer and 58 producer co-operatives involved 44,450 workers [6, p. 9].

The government attaches great importance to setting up artisans' co-operatives, improving their members' skills and introducing progressive managerial methods. This conduces to a gradual increase in production and helps to build a new society. However, just as in the case with peasants' co-operative associations, the government refrains from artificially accelerating the process of artisans' co-operation. The idea is that the activity of each co-operative should serve to popularise, rather than discredit, the principle of co-operation.

The Ten-Year Plan for Ethiopia's econom-

ic and social development envisages the construction of new and modernisation of existing enterprises, as well as other measures aimed at strengthening the industry. During the current decade, its share in national production is expected to grow from 16 to 23.9 per cent [6, p. 28]. The annual rates of its growth are expected to reach 12 per cent in the public sector and 8 per cent in the co-operative sector* [6, p. 40].

At the initial stage of realising the plan, the attention is to be focused on creating new enterprises in the light industry and various small-scale enterprises, which will help to meet the growing needs of the popular masses, on the one hand, and to create more jobs, on the other. Special importance is attached to the better organisation and higher productivity of artisans' producer co-operatives. To this end, the government undertakes to help them with credits, with raw materials and marketing their products. The measures envisaged by the plan will in the long run lay the foundation for heavy industry [6, p. 25].

Among the principal long-term goals of industrial development are boosting the amount and improving the quality of basic consumer goods with a view to raising the living standards of the working people; creating and expanding new, modern industries in order to manufacture means of

* These figures are likely to be modified to allow for the consequences of the drought.

production for agriculture and other branches of the economy and for the purposes of the further development of heavy industry; setting up and strengthening artisans' co-operatives and developing export-oriented branches of the economy.

Meeting the industrial production targets envisaged by the Ten-Year Plan will enable the country to create the basis for further progress.

Notes

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Preliminary Draft Theses on the Agrarian Question", *Collected Works*, Vol. 31.

² *National-Democratic Revolution in Ethiopia*. Moscow, 1979 (in Russian).

³ *Present-Day Problems and Ethiopia's Foreign Policy*, Moscow, 1982 (in Russian).

⁴ S. I. Tyulpanov, *Essays on Political Economy. Developing Countries*, Moscow, 1969 (in Russian).

⁵ *Country Review Meetings. Country Presentation. Ethiopia*, U.N., N.Y., 1981.

⁶ Guidelines on the Economic and Social Development of Ethiopia (1984/85-1933/94), Addis Ababa, 1984.

⁷ *Sertoader* (in Amharic), Addis Ababa.

⁸ *The Ethiopian Herald*, Addis Ababa.

THE REVOLUTION AND PEASANTS'
ASSOCIATIONS*

Although the Ethiopian peasants became involved in the revolutionary events later than the country's urban population, the radical solution of the agrarian problem has been one of the most important tasks of the Ethiopian national-democratic revolution since its very beginning. It is no accident that the population's attitude to the new, revolutionary regime has been predominantly determined by the latter's agrarian policy.

The changes that have occurred in the countryside make it possible to speak about the agrarian revolution as part and parcel of the national-democratic revolution. Consonant with the country's socialist orientation, it is aimed at creating prerequisites for the victory of socialism, in the countryside.

By the early 1980s, the first stage of the Ethiopian agrarian revolution had been completed. It was marked by the abolition of feudal ownership and passing the nationalised land into the peasants' possession. Today,

* For greater detail, see the book by the same author, *Ethiopia: Revolution and the Countryside*, Moscow, 1985 (in Russian).

the country has embarked upon the second stage of this revolution. Its main goal is to develop social forms of production (state and co-operative production). Historical experience shows that the measures to be taken at the second stage will call for a greater effort and a longer time than was the case at the first stage. This fact was acknowledged by the Founding Congress of the WPE, specifically in the Guidelines on the Socio-Economic Development of Ethiopia (see, for instance [9, September 6-13, 1984] or [15]).

The agrarian revolution in Ethiopia is inconceivable without peasant associations (*egbereuoch mahber*)*, a revolutionary form of uniting peasant masses according to their social status and place of residence. This is a radically new—in terms of the theory and practice of socialist orientation—revolutionary-democratic system of organising the economic and political activity of the rural population. The peasant associations, born of the revolution, have developed into an important means of furthering the revolution in the countryside. The comprehensive nature of the future activity of peasant associations was determined by the PMAC Decree on agrarian reform of March 4, 1975 (No. 31). Decree No. 71, issued on December 14, 1975, granted the peasant associations an official legal status and expanded their functions. They have a dual purpose: they serve

* The Amharic for a peasant community or association.—
Ed.

as peasants' economic and social self-administration units and, at the same time, as the rural bodies of revolutionary-democratic power.

More often than not peasant associations are organised on the basis of the territorial unit known as *kebele* (the Amharic for "district", "locality"). In northern regions they inherited communal land (*debr* or *got*). The minimum size of an association's territory is 800 hectares. According to our estimates, the average peasant association's areas is 1500 to 1550 hectares. The early accounts of peasant associations came in April 1975 from the provinces of Sidamo and Shoa. Most of them were organised in the course of the national patriotic campaign launched in those days — "Development through Co-operation" (*Zemetcha*)*, but some emerged spontaneously.

Peasant associations are founded on a broad democratic basis. The general gathering is their supreme body and they are run by the elected executive committee with the number of members varying from 5 to 15, depending on the size of the given association's membership. The committee is made up of its chairman, vice-chairman, treasurer, secretary and the commander of the local self-defence detachment (the rural militia). Rural associations have their own courts of law.

* In keeping with the goals of the campaign, some 60,000 town-dwellers, predominantly young people, were sent to the countryside in order to explain to the peasants the idea behind revolutionary transformations, help them to carry out the agrarian reform, combat illiteracy, etc.

Under the 1975 Decrees, apart from the grass-roots associations, there are also district and provincial peasant associations. The latter are charged with guiding and co-ordinating the activity of local associations and supervising legal proceedings in their courts. They settle disputes arising between associations and may, for instance, change their boundaries. District associations are made up of the representatives of grass-roots associations, and provincial associations consist of the representatives of district associations. It would be logical to top this pyramid with a national organisation whose political and economic importance for the multinational and predominantly peasant country can hardly be overestimated. However, because of the complicated internal and external political situation the setting up of such an organisation was repeatedly postponed. The Founding Congress of the All-Ethiopia Peasant Association (AEPA) was finally held from April 24 to May 5, 1978, shortly after the defeat of the Somalian interventionist forces. The Second Congress of the AEPA, convened in May 1979, adopted the association's Rules and Programme of Action.

Peasant associations, having emerged in a country which for centuries suffered from the age-long feudal and monarchical oppression, featured a rapid growth in their membership. In September 1975, the country already had 18,000 peasant associations comprising 4,500,000 farms. In the south, where class antagonisms between the landlords and the

peasant tenants were especially acute, the campaign to set up peasant associations acquired a particularly broad scale. According to our estimates, as early as September 1975, the peasant associations comprised nearly 89 per cent of the rural population (excluding Eritrea). The percentage varied from almost 100 per cent in the south to approximately 50 per cent in the north. By the time of the WPE Founding Congress, the number of associations had grown to 19,800 and the number of farms registered with them, to 5,300,000. Thus, the peasant associations involved practically all the rural population, with the exception of a few districts in the provinces of Eritrea and Tigre.*

The setting up of peasant associations on a nationwide scale can evidently be accounted for by the fact that the distribution of land, or legalising the peasant's ownership of land, was preceded by registering individual farms with peasant associations (today, each association has a list of the heads of families it involves). In other words, the rapid growth of peasant associations is largely explained by the peasants' desire to have their right to the use of land legalised as soon as possible. Another important incentive was the possibility for establishing peasant self-administration and deciding economic and every-day

* In these provinces, the normal course of life is still disturbed by the secessionists. In 1984, the 130 associations set up in Tigre comprised 56,000 farms; the 301 associations in Eritrea involved 58,400 farms [3, p. 24].

matters without interference on the part of landlords, usurers and imperial government officials. Membership of a peasant association also implies priority in obtaining government loans, fertilizers and other advantages. Moreover, the peasants regard their associations not only as a collective guarantor of their right to land use and self-administration, but also as a mediator between the peasantry and the state.

The organisational structure of the peasant associations is based on such democratic principles as publicity and electivity. Initially, the associations' top-priority task was the distribution of land. However, they have been endowed with other powers which, in their totality, ensure peasant self-administration and turn them into a kind of school where peasants learn how to tackle economic and other problems collectively.

The tasks of peasant associations as self-administration bodies and "regulator" of the life in the countryside are many and varied. Initially, some of the associations were set up to deal with the matters of obtaining credits or marketing. Their functions only slightly differed from those of service co-operatives as described in Decree No. 71. In mid-1984, 3,815 supply and marketing (service) co-operatives provided their services to 16,800 associations [3, p. 24]. In many cases they replaced, as it were, the creditor landlords. Although the 1975 reform granted land to the peasants, it did not practically change their position vis-à-vis other means of produc-

tion and implements of labour. Their liberation from the yoke of feudal requisitions helped, to a certain extent, to solve the problem of seed stocks. At some places, peasants got hold of the simplest agricultural implements. The lack of draught animals remained the most acute problem. With the loans obtained through their associations (which, as a rule, act as mediators and guarantors, rather than creditors) the peasants rented draught oxen or, sometimes, bought seeds and, still less often, fertilizers. In those regions where peasant associations acted resolutely and vigorously enough some of the landlords' livestock of draught animals was preserved. They could be rented or, in some cases, obtained gratuitously by the former tenants and farm-labourers who had little or no land. The shortage of draught animals explains why all the matters related to renting, buying and selling oxen by the members of peasant associations were controlled by associations' executive committees even in those cases where the deal was made beyond the boundaries of the given association, for instance, on the district market. This evidently gave rise to the idea of peasant associations' control over all trading operations in the given district. For their part, the associations' "market functions" determine their organisational and economic opportunities. At any rate, the following pattern has emerged: the nearer the association is to an urban centre or highway, the stronger it is economically and the greater is its progress in vari-

ous areas. However, the peasant associations' purchasing power is still very limited. Thus, the total cost of goods they purchased through service co-operatives in 1983 was estimated at 111,500,000 birr [6, p. 42], which means that each farm spent an average of 21 birr.

In solving their social problems, associations rely on the mechanism of democratic self-administration. Among their tasks is organising marketing, credit and, since 1979, producer co-operatives and various mutual assistance societies; building, in co-operation with the government, schools, first aid posts and similar facilities; implementing rural settlement improvement projects; protecting natural resources and making a rational use of them. Since 1976, the peasant associations have been charged with collecting state taxes from the peasants, developing primary education and conducting—with the active support of the state—the campaign to eradicate illiteracy among the adults. Since then, almost everywhere in the country peasant associations have been responsible for public projects to improve rural settlements, plant forests and carry out various similar tasks. The most labour- and capital-intensive projects (such as laying roads and building irrigation systems) are often undertaken with the participation of the state.

Peasant associations co-exist with small, privately-owned peasant holdings. Since the late 1970s, apart from encouraging co-operation, some of the associations have been try-

ing to control, at least to some extent, the utilisation of labour resources, which is especially important in the context of seasonal fluctuations in the demand for labour force. The Ethiopian press has reported cases of excess labour force being hired, in an organised manner, through peasant associations, to work on state farms.

In some regions, especially in the south, some associations used to prohibit their members to engage solely in trade; some other associations allowed their members to go in for trade on condition they did not farm land. Such practices were subsequently officially denounced by the government.

The peasant associations' functions of ensuring self-administration and self-aid depend on their financial status. They supervise the use of local natural resources, above all land, and the use of all installations they built. Their money come primarily from the following sources: commission they receive for collecting state taxes (2 per cent of the sum collected); interest on the loans granted to the peasants through their associations' mediation; fees for grinding grain at flour-mills belonging to the associations; dues accruing from the organised marketing of the peasants' produce; fines imposed by associations' courts; peasants' voluntary donations for various public projects. Yet, the funds thus accumulated are so far limited.

Moreover, the associations also play, as has already been mentioned, the role of grass-roots bodies of revolutionary-democratic pow-

er in the countryside, mediating between the peasantry and the state. In this capacity, they serve as an extension of the official system of administrative-territorial administration, without being officially incorporated in it. That the peasant associations were assigned this function can be accounted for by the strained situation that attained in the country in 1975 due, among other things, to the difficulties caused by the struggle against the counter-revolution.

The carefully elaborated system of rural legal proceedings is profoundly democratic by nature. With the setting up of peasant associations' courts of law, the system of legal proceedings in the countryside has been unified. Initially, most of the cases had to do with land property disputes. However, the nature of lawsuits was now radically different as the parties involved were no longer bound by the exploiter-exploited relationship: they were socially and juridically equal.*

A few words should be said about the rural militia. The first self-defence detachments were set up in 1976. In many areas such detachments emerged spontaneously. Decree No. 71 provided a legal basis for their functioning. They were charged with ensuring

* Of late, the number of land disputes has sharply decreased, while the number of proceedings instituted against persons accused of negligence, embezzlement and similar wrongdoing has risen. Many of such cases are considered by the working people's control committees and special courts set up for this purpose in 1982-1983.

law and order, protecting buildings of public importance, and implementing decisions taken by peasant associations or their courts. On their part, the associations rendered assistance to the families of self-defence detachment members and to those drafted to the army. According to the Ethiopian press, the total membership of rural militia detachments amounted to 300,000. At the early stage they were poorly trained and armed. Subsequently, especially after the defeat of the Somalian intervention, efforts were made to improve their armament and training. By 1983, practically all members of the rural militia had been covered by training or refresher courses.

The rural militia is a unique phenomenon in the African socialist-oriented countries, both from the standpoint of the place it occupies in the system of peasant self-administration and in the state-political structures, and from the standpoint of its nationwide character. The emergence of self-defence detachments in Ethiopia can primarily be accounted for by the particularly acute class struggle in the countryside, especially after the proclamation of the land reform, when the counter-revolutionaries adopted terrorist methods of struggle. Another reason for setting up rural militia detachments lies in the need to create a reserve for the country's armed forces organised on a radically new basis.* In 1975-1977, as the internal coun-

* For more details, see the article by Y. Sumbatyan further in this book.

ter-revolutionaries and separatists became more active and the threat of foreign intervention grew, the Ethiopian ideologists concentrated on studying those tenets of the Marxist-Leninist theory which treat of the possibility of and need for arming the masses. By its political nature, the campaign to set up rural militia detachments is a direct consequence of the emancipation of the peasantry. The Second Congress of the COPWE, held in January 1983, approved the idea of creating a nationwide "territorial militia service", which incorporated rural detachments. The law on the universal military service, passed in May 1983, is expected to play a great role in the military-patriotic education of the rural masses. For the first time in revolutionary Ethiopia's history, men of the 18 to 30 age category liable for call-up were registered—some of them through peasant associations—in January 1984. The army will serve as a good school for hundreds of thousands of peasants, broadening their range of interests, teaching them the fundamentals of technical knowledge, etc. There can be no doubt that this measure could only be taken by a revolutionary regime closely linked to the people and assured of its own strength and authority.

That peasant organisations should function as local bodies of revolutionary-democratic power can be accounted for by the fact that peasant self-administration is consonant with the tasks of local bodies of state power in rural areas. As was pointed out by the Swed-

ish researcher Michael Stahl, "It is undisputable fact that peasant associations have emerged as the new local institutions in the countryside. And they have replaced the feudal institutions ... as links between individual farmers and the administration" [13, pp. 29-30]. As the peasant associations become stronger (the impetus for this was created by setting up the AEP), and the state and party machinery on the regional and provincial level is improved, they grew in their importance as local bodies of state power. Starting with the regional (*woreda*) level, the associations are directly involved in the system of state institutions, without forfeiting their democratic, elective and peasant character. To a certain extent, the system of mass (youth and women's) organisations, which are so far much weaker than their counterparts in the urban areas, also serves as a link between the peasant masses and the state.

Drawing nomadic people into associations proved to be a difficult task, especially in the strained situation obtaining in some of Ethiopia's outlying regions. The setting up of associations for nomads was envisaged by Decree No. 31. Their main function was to "induce the nomads to co-operate in the use of grazing and water rights" [7, pp. 17-28]. The nomads' associations were granted the same rights as other rural associations. This accounts for their rather formal character: the adoption of the settled way of life by this or that nomadic group was to be followed by setting up a peasant association.

Initially, especially in the period of controversy about the agrarian reform, the PMAC did not have a very clear idea of the social and organisational structure of the modern countryside. The proposed projects varied from grass-roots associations of the Chinese commune type and a nationwide system of state farms to "a free system" of private farms. All these projects were based on the natural, but unrealisable, desire to immediately provide the urban population and industry with food and raw materials. There was little opposition to the opinion of those who renounced the idea of allowing the peasants, who had for ages suffered from economic, political and spiritual enslavement, to run their own affairs. In 1974, and 1975, much was written in the country about the "passivity" and "political indifference" of the Ethiopian peasant, about his "obedient" adoption of his subjugated position. Indeed, it would be a grave mistake to close one's eyes to the "psychological conservatism", ignorance and downtroddenness of the peasants in a feudal country. This was testified to be the turbulent process of implementing the agrarian reform, temporary successes scored by the counter-revolution in individual regions, especially in the north of the country, and the difficulties experienced by the peasant associations at the outset.

However, the revolutionary forces should regard conservative attitudes prevailing in the countryside as nothing more than an objective factor to be reckoned with. In this con-

nection, one should note that the attempts by some Western students of Ethiopia to describe the Ethiopian peasants' conservative outlook as their eternal extra-historical attribute [5, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1979] were disproved, for instance, by the peasant unrest that swept Ethiopia in the 1960s and especially in the early 1970s, including the early months of the revolution, and by the peasants' hunger for the news from Addis Ababa. Marxist scholars describe the peasantry in the developing countries as the socio-political basis of the national-democratic revolution, as a stratum of the population endowed with great potentialities which, under the influence of the revolutionary-democratic state and the progressive urban forces, can be used in the interests of the revolution. It is indisputable that the victory of the agrarian revolution is impossible without its involving those in whose interests it is being effected.*

Most peasants were largely prepared to adopt the idea of peasant associations. The Ethiopian scholar Aster Akalu, who made a special study of the peasants' attitude to the associations in various regions of the country, wrote: "The Ethiopian people who were described by Western writers as illiterate, ignorant and unwilling to follow any type of

* In his article "Land Reform in Revolutionary Ethiopia", the West German author P. Brietzke writes that the reform will be doomed to failure unless peasants are granted independence on a large-scale. He comments that granting broad rights to associations is especially striking in the context of such a conservative country as Ethiopia [8, p. 657].

innovation demonstrated to the whole world that this description was completely wrong" [6, p. 197].

Characteristically, shortly after the proclamation of Decree No. 31, the Ethiopian press started to publish materials on the experience of organising the peasant masses in socialist countries; special effort was made to popularise Lenin's writings and pronouncements on this matter.

Mindful of the great importance of peasant associations, the Workers' Party of Ethiopia, which is carrying on the policy of its predecessor, the COPWE, and the Ethiopian leaders show concern for their organisational strengthening on all levels. In so doing they seek to ensure that the principle of democratic centralism is strictly observed in all peasant associations. In keeping with the PMAC decree of March 10, 1982, in April and May 1982 all associations held elections and re-elections of their leadership; the creation of the national system of peasant associations based on the territorial-administrative principle was completed. The upper echelons of this system were reinforced with specialists in agrarian problems, economists, etc. Significantly, this was undertaken within the framework of the national campaign to reorganise and strengthen other mass (trade union, women's and youth) organisations and town-dwellers' associations. The election campaign was accompanied by more vigorous efforts towards setting up co-operative associations, amalgamating settlements and getting ready

for setting up the primary cells of the vanguard party.

As a result of the work done before the Third Congress of the AEPA, held in July 1982, there were, apart from the grass-roots associations, 493 district, 94 regional and 14 provincial associations. Effort was made to strengthen the composition and broaden the functions of the peasant associations' supreme body. It was decided to hold AEPA congresses once in two years. It was envisaged to establish closer ties with other government and non-government organisations of all levels and to promote international contacts, especially with peasants' organisations in socialist countries. Over the AEPA's years in existence its effectiveness and authority have certainly grown. It has turned into the largest organisation of the Ethiopian working people. This was stressed at the WPE Founding Congress. At the time of the Congress, the executive committees, judicial tribunals and control committees established by peasant associations involved 459,000 people [10, p. 33]. This is certainly one of the most impressive revolutionary gains of the Ethiopian people.

According to the Regulations on the Peasant Producer Co-operatives, an association is gradually reorganised into a co-operative if the overwhelming majority of its members join the co-operative. It is also pointed out that as the co-operative grows stronger, the key posts in the association should be taken by the members of the co-operative (among these posts are those of the chairman of the

executive committee, the chairman of the court and the commander of the militia detachment). Several ways of transforming associations into producer co-operatives are envisaged. From time to time, the Ethiopian press publishes reports on such transformations.

The grass-roots peasant associations provide a convenient organisational basis for setting up any type of co-operative. However, the expediency of replacing associations by co-operatives is far from universally recognised. As the recent experience of the Ethiopian countryside shows, the political and organisational role of peasant associations in their capacity of local government bodies and their functions in the administrative-territorial system are not shrinking but, on the contrary, growing in their importance, especially after the measures taken in 1982 towards their consolidation. As was stressed in the Documents of the Second Congress of COPWE (January 1983), there was a tendency to believe that the system of peasant associations was of social and economic importance only. This approach was denounced by the Congress which emphasised that mass organisations should be recognised as "the basis of the political system" [9, January 4, 1983]. The Congress stressed the class character of the system of peasant associations which represent the most numerous stratum of Ethiopian society.

The possibility of and the need for relying on the historical experience of the revolution-

ary transformation of the Russian village and, especially, the experience of organising the peasant masses, is widely recognised in Ethiopia. The Bolsheviks' programme provided for transferring the land and the right to use it to the peasants not on a spontaneous, but on an organised basis, via the Soviets of Peasant Deputies "or ... other organs of local self-government elected in a really democratic way and entirely independent of the landowners and officials..." [1, p. 291]. A similar process is taking place in the Ethiopian village. *Meskerem*, the theoretical journal of the Ethiopian revolutionaries, wrote: "As Lenin has pointed out, the transfer of land to the peasantry is to fulfill the fundamental question of democracy. In order to enable the Ethiopian peasantry, who are now the owners of the land and the sole proprietors of their produce, to defend the victories they have secured through the revolution, to practice self-administration, to consolidate the gains and defend the revolution ... peasant associations have been established ... ensuring the democratic rights of the peasantry." [11, Vol. 2, No. 7, 1981, p. 60]. As Lenin pointed out, "the idea of Soviet organisation is a simple one, and is applicable not only to proletarian, but also to peasant feudal and semi-feudal relations" [2, p. 243]. In Ethiopia, this was to a certain degree reflected in setting up peasant associations whose functions are largely similar to those of the local Soviets.

The creation of peasant associations and

other systems of democratic self-government was made possible by two basic factors—breaking down the most important institutions of power of the reactionary feudal regime, on the one hand, and increasing the contribution of mass organisations to the political system and accumulating experience of self-administration, on the other [4, No. 13, 1984, p. 95].

The consolidation of revolutionary gains in Ethiopia largely depends on the strengthening of the ruling vanguard party. The party will exert an increasing influence on the village both through the district party bodies and, predominantly, through rural primary party organisations. By the time the WPE Founding Congress was held, such organisations had already been functioning in a number of co-operatives and state farms. As can be seen from the WPE Rules, primary units may be set up in mass organisations, too. And peasant associations boast the widest involvement of the masses. It should be emphasised that according to the Rules peasants applying for party membership must prove to be active supporters of producer co-operation and advocate the idea of collectivisation [12, p. 14].

Peasant associations are facing considerable difficulties. The growth in their number was far ahead of the rise in their quality [14, p. 85]. For instance, the leftist excesses which plagued some associations led, among other things, to the unwarranted confiscation of the small property belonging to individual

persons, to the prohibition of trade and other similar steps. Manifestations of regionalism, i.e. the tendency to give priority to local interests, as well as national and religious prejudice are still observed. The aid given by the state is not always sufficient, even though there may be enough funds and personnel. All this was taken note of at the Founding Congress of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia.

Notes

¹ V. I. Lenin, "The Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. (B.)", *Collected Works*, Vol. 24.

² V. I. Lenin, "The Second Congress of the Communist International", *Collected Work*, Vol. 3.

³ "All-Ethiopia Peasant Association." *Bright Hope*, the AEPA Organ. Special Issue Dedicated to the WPE Founding Congress, Addis Abba, September 1984 (in Amharic).

⁴ Mengistu Haile Mariam, "Important Stage of the Ethiopian Revolution", *Kommunist*, Moscow.

⁵ *African Studies Review*, Boston.

⁶ Aster Akalu, *The Process of Land Nationalisation in Ethiopia*, Land, 1982.

⁷ *Basic Documents of the Ethiopian Revolution*, Addis Ababa, 1977.

⁸ P. H. Brietzke, "Land Reform in Revolutionary Ethiopia", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, London, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1976.

⁹ *The Ethiopian Herald*, Addis Ababa.

¹⁰ *Ethiopia. A Decade of Revolutionary Transformations, 1974-1984*, Addis Ababa, 1984.

¹¹ *Meskerem*, Addis Ababa.

¹² *The Workers' Party of Ethiopia, Rules*, Addis Ababa, 1984.

¹³ M. Stahl, "New Seeds in Old Soil: A Study of the Land Reform Process in Western Wollega, Ethiopia", *Research Report*, Uppsala, No. 40, 1977.

¹⁴ Tesfai Tecele, *The Evolution of Alternative Rural Development Strategies in Ethiopia: Implications for Employment and Income Distribution*, Addis Ababa—East Lansing (Mich.), 1975.

¹⁵ *Guidelines on the Economic and Social Development of Ethiopia (1984/85-1993/94)*, Addis Ababa, 1984.

WAYS AND METHODS OF PROPAGATING
SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

On their way from the airport to the centre of the city, the visitors to Addis Ababa, the capital of Socialist Ethiopia, will notice numerous slogans decorating the façades of buildings stretching along Bole Road. They read: "Socialist Ethiopia shall be an Industrial Country! ", "Long Live Proletarian Internationalism! "

A ten-minute drive from the airport will take the visitor to Revolution Square and then to the bronze monument to Lenin. It is the first monument to Lenin in Africa. The site chosen for the monument and called Lenin Square is remarkable: on the right, there rises the famous Africa Hall where in 1963 the foundation of the Organisation of African Unity was proclaimed; on the left, there are the gates to the former Emperor's Jubilee Palace. The trees behind the monument were planted by the heads of state and government who founded the OAU.

A little further, in a public garden between the Yekatit'66 Political School and Addis Ababa University, one will see a monument to Marx.

All these are signs of the spread of Marxist-Leninist ideology in Ethiopia, a country in the heart of Africa. This has been made possible by the Ethiopian national-democratic revolution of 1974.

Under the feudal-monarchic regime, any attempts to advocate Marxist-Leninist ideas and socialist ideology were nipped in the bud. It would be wrong to conclude that because of the extreme socio-economic backwardness and the low level of class awareness there was no ground for the proliferation of the ideas of scientific socialism in the Ethiopian empire. On the contrary, in the context of backward production relations and a combination of different social structures ranging from the most primitive ones to nascent capitalism, the exploitation of the working people in both urban and rural areas reached such a high level and was so obsolete and ugly against the background of modern African and global processes and tendencies, that the ideas of social liberation, some of them most progressive, found a suitable ground in Ethiopia.

Just as in any other agrarian country, the question of land was crucial for Ethiopia. The tenants and farm labourers in the South of the country and community members in the north suffered from requisitions, violence and arbitrary rule on the part of the monarchy, aristocrats, landlords, clergymen, tribal chiefs, bureaucrats and elders. A sparkle could trigger off the collapse of the entire system of relations in the countryside.

The medieval socio-economic structure was preserved in Ethiopia until the last quarter of the twentieth century when one third of mankind had already passed over to the building of socialism and a whole number of countries, having liberated themselves from colonialism, opted for a socialist orientation.

Ethiopian workers, who were not very numerous, as well as urban and rural semi-proletarians, who were far more numerous, suffered from the oppression by the local and foreign exploiters. The oppression was especially heavy in the context of insufficient development of socio-class relations, a low level of the working people's class consciousness and the prohibition of political parties and strikes.

No better was the position of numerous national minorities oppressed by the ruling Amhara and Tigrean nobility, and of the adherents to denominations other than Christianity, Ethiopia's official religion.

All this provided the breeding ground for unrest, class and national conflicts and facilitated the penetration of socialist ideas. These ideas were propagated by certain representatives of the progressive democratic intelligentsia, who noticeably grew in their number after the Second World War.

Ethiopia had no higher educational establishments until the mid-1950s. Therefore, well-educated, skilled Ethiopian specialists were all graduates of foreign educational establishments. According to the data published by *Meskerem* magazine, only 200

Ethiopians had obtained their education abroad between 1918 and 1935, before Ethiopia was occupied by the Italian fascists [15, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1981, p. 98]. Most of them were educated in Western Europe. During the Italian invasion, which lasted from 1935 to 1941, the country was in no position to send its young people to study abroad. Between the 1941 and 1952, in the years of the British military administration, Ethiopian nationals could not leave their country and obtain education abroad. After the period of all those hardships, young Ethiopians obtained a possibility to enter higher educational establishments in the West. In the 1950s and the 1960s, several Ethiopians studied in socialist countries. However, in that period most young Ethiopians wishing to study abroad went to the United States. After the war, seeking to heighten its influence in Africa so as to be able to promote its mercenary interests there, the United States escalated its presence in Ethiopia.

Although the majority of the young people studying abroad came from the most privileged groups of the Ethiopian nobility, some of them did not escape the influence of bourgeois-democratic and even socialist ideas.

Before the 1974 revolution any attempt to address socialist countries with a request to help Ethiopia was regarded, both in the West and in the ruling Ethiopian circles, as a threat of communist penetration into the territory which had previously been considered as the West's exclusive preserve in Africa.

In its drive to protect the country against the penetration of Marxist-Leninist ideas, the Ethiopian feudal-monarchic regime did not allow any information on the October Revolution, its ideals and achievements, or on socialist construction in the USSR and in other countries to reach the population. In his article "Ethiopia and the Bolshevik Revolution: 1917-1935", written before the 1974 revolution, the prominent Ethiopian historian Alemu Eshete pointed out that the people, the government, the aristocracy and the church learned about the Bolshevik revolution either from Western diplomats, among whom anti-Soviet sentiment prevailed, or from Western conservative publications which reached Ethiopia and were permeated with the anti-Marxist, anti-Bolshevik spirit. He concluded that it was natural for the Ethiopian government and the church to be hostile to the party which had guided the October Revolution. The party that urged to eliminate the feudal-monarchic rule, advocated the hegemony of the working class and called to abolish private ownership could not count on the sympathy of the old Ethiopian regime. [3, p. 5].

The attitude taken by the Ethiopian ruling classes to communist ideology in those days can be illustrated by the article "Religion and Communism", published in the Ethiopian newspaper *Aimro* on March 12, 1927. The author of the article maintained that communism was a movement, which having originated in Russia, expanded to Europe,

America and China, and that its aim was to overthrow those governments which upheld order, discipline and religion. Therefore, the author concluded, all Christians must unite and keep the dangerous Communists at bay. Communism, in his view, was dangerous because it negated everything [3, p. 13].

It is in a similarly distorted way that the Ethiopian press covered, very seldom at that, events in the Soviet Union.

Western states did everything possible not to allow Ethiopia to come into contact with the seditious Bolshevik ideas and supported the Ethiopian ruling circles in their struggle against the "red danger". For instance, the British representative in Ethiopia, Dunbar, in his report to foreign ministry dated August 22, 1929, rejoiced at being able to cite the opinion that Bolshevism would never gain root in Ethiopia. He stressed that the Ethiopian government showed great prudence by keeping an eye on propaganda and taking resolute measures against the propagandists it managed to discover [3, p. 18].

These measures, however, were not sufficient to do away with the ferment and the discontent of the masses with whom socialist ideas became increasingly popular.

In those years, one could already find democratically-minded intellectuals in the Ethiopian army, mainly among the junior officers. This first became clear during the attempted coup of 1960 and especially during the revolution of 1974. For instance, in March 1974, at a time when the democratic move-

ment was sweeping the country, the imperial authorities exposed a conspiracy organised by a group of air-force officers and men who sought to combine the economic demands advanced by the servicemen with the demands put forward by the civilians in such a way as to launch a nationwide campaign for political reforms. The leaflets the air-force pilots scattered from their helicopters over the crowds of demonstrators contained demands for economic and political reforms [10, p. 14]. The spread of democratic sentiments was reflected in the dynamic evolution of the ideology of the revolutionary officers who in June 1974 headed the Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces, Police and Territorial Army which was later to be transformed into the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) and become the headquarters of the national-democratic revolution. With the support of the broad masses it ensured the country's transition to the socialist-oriented course.

It stands to reason that the level of political awareness of the overwhelming majority of revolutionary democrats both among the civilians and the officers was still low. For this reason, and also because the popular masses were not prepared for abrupt political changes, for a sudden leap from extremely backward production relations to those characteristic of a socialist-oriented society, the advanced groups of officers who came to power in the country first tried to avoid advancing progressive slogans and acce-

lating social transformation. The Coordinating Committee was the seat of bitter controversy between the left-wing and the bourgeois nationalist elements. This, in our view, accounts for the advancement, in July 1974, of the slogan "Ethiopia First" which looked vague both to the foreigners and the Ethiopians. The advancement of this slogan signalled a compromise on the part of the left-wingers in the Coordinating Committee. The political declaration issued by the PMAC on December 20, 1974, explained that this slogan was tantamount to the commitment to build "national Ethiopian socialism", ensuring equality, self-government, respect for work, the prevailance of public interests and the indivisibility of Ethiopian unity [6, p. 2]. Subsequently, some Ethiopians interpreted this slogan as an attempt to place national interests and goals above the narrow nationalist, individualist and group-oriented ones. Today, however, there is a tendency to advance more clear-cut, progressive, readily acceptable and easily understandable slogans, such as "Long Live the Unity of the Working People the World Over!", "Socialism Is Our Aim!", "The Workers' Party of Ethiopia Pledges to Fulfill Its Mission!"

The direct influence of truly socialist, Marxist-Leninist tenets on the ideology of Ethiopian revolutionary democrats made itself felt somewhat later, starting with 1975, when the military authorities began to pursue an increasingly stable and firm socialist-oriented economic and political policy, relying

in this on the broad mass of the working people. This involved a series of general democratic reforms and a number of broader government measures aimed at limiting the sphere of action of foreign and national capital both in the town and in the countryside. A campaign against the kulaks was launched and a programme for forming a vanguard of the working people, a party guided by the principles of scientific socialism, was initiated [see 8].

While applying the Marxist-Leninist concept of socialist orientation to the specific conditions obtaining in Ethiopia, the Ethiopian leaders encountered a host of problems. Many of them were created by the counter-revolutionary forces which overtly opposed the radical orientation of the Ethiopian revolution and tried to direct it into the channel of constitutional monarchy or bourgeois democracy. Equally dangerous was the ultra-left opposition offered by the petty-bourgeoisie, students, high school pupils, nationalists and separatists who used the ideals of Marxism-Leninism they allegedly adhered to as a screen to conceal their narrow, class-oriented, selfish goals [1, pp. 25-26, 52-56].

All this made it imperative to specify the ideological tasks and objectives of the revolution. The publication of the Programme of National-Democratic Revolution (PNDR) on April 20, 1976, showed that Ethiopian leaders were able to cope with the problems they faced. The PNDR was the first official government document to emphasise that the PMAC

was determined to adhere to the principles of scientific socialism and that the final goal of the current stage in the implementation of the PNDR was the creation of a vanguard party of the working people and the transformation of the country into a people's democratic state.

A close analysis of the PNDR confirms that it was elaborated by revolutionaries capable of applying the basic principles of scientific socialism to concrete Ethiopian and African realities.

In the context when the masses launched a spontaneous revolution*, which was headed by progressive servicemen, the absence of a vanguard political organisation could lead to the revolution's degeneration into one of the military coups, which there is a plenty in the modern history of developing countries in Africa and elsewhere. The most progressive groups within the PMAC were fully aware of that danger. That is why, in keeping with the PNDR, the Provisional Office for Mass Organisational Affairs (POMOA), set up in the summer of the 1976, was charged with mobilising the working people to the revolutionary struggle, popularising Marxist-Leninist ideology, preparing for founding the working people's vanguard party and paving the way for the effort to build a people's democratic republic [12, pp. 9-10, 13]. The PMAC

* For more details on the spread of revolutionary sentiment in Ethiopia and the outbreak of the revolution, see [1].

Decree on forming the COPWE, proclaimed in December 1979, gave a strong impetus to this effort.

Western observers noted that the shift leftwards was so rapid that after two years it was already hard to remember how conservative the country and even its "progressive" elements were when the entire process started [10. pp. 10-11]. As the spread of Marxism-Leninism was suppressed by the exploiter regime, the overwhelming majority of the Ethiopian people, with the exception of a few students and intellectuals, first heard about Marxism-Leninism only when it was officially proclaimed that the revolution would be guided by Marxist-Leninist principles. As for Marxist-Leninist organisations, there were only a few groups and circles that studied the Marxist-Leninist theory [15, 1983, Vol. 3, No. 13, p. 40].

The revolution resulted in abolishing the imperial-feudal system of government, in nationalising land and large urban and rural private property and in bringing the working people into the political arena in the course of creating and strengthening of the COPWE, the WPE, and the new type of mass organisations. The involvement of ever broader groups of the working people in the revolution called for a broader scale of ideological and educational work among the masses. Since the time the PMAC officially proclaimed scientific socialism its ideological basis, there emerged an urgent problem of training professional political workers and

popularising the principles of Marxist-Leninist ideology. That meant that the leaders of the revolution themselves had to study. It was only natural for them to turn to the experience of the world's first socialist country and of other countries of the socialist community. That Ethiopia should firmly adhere to its socialist orientation is largely due to the vast and selfless moral, political and military assistance rendered to it by the Soviet Union, Cuba and other socialist countries with the object of helping it to safeguard its territorial integrity and sovereignty and to rebuff the aggression launched by Somalia in 1977-1978.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Ethiopia signed treaties of friendship and co-operation with the Soviet Union and a number of other socialist countries. That inaugurated Soviet-Ethiopian co-operation in economic, political, cultural, scientific and technical areas.

The signing of the agreement on co-operation between the CPSU and the COPWE and between the CPSU and the WPE in October 1982 and December 1984, respectively [2, October 13, 1982; 2, December 19, 1984], has largely helped to propagate Marxist-Leninist ideology among the Ethiopian working people.

Since 1976, all the Ethiopian government and non-government organisations have carried on the practice of organising so-called discussion forums for factory and office workers and peasants. In essence, they are noth-

ing else but weekly or twice-weekly political seminars at which the participants discuss various problems of ideology, politics and revolutionary practice. As of January 1983, the country had 13,000 such seminars [14, January 4, 1983]. Their importance can hardly be overestimated: in a context when the level of social consciousness was low and when the peoples' mentality was largely affected by the ideas of bourgeois democracy introduced from the West and by the petty-bourgeois concepts and slogans advanced, since the early years of the revolution, by the nationalist and leftist groups. For instance, debated in the Ethiopian student communities abroad were such questions as whether it was possible for a society to pass from feudalism directly to socialism or whether a transitional stage of capitalist development in the conditions of liberal democracy was required; whether advancement towards socialism was possible under military rule or whether full power should be immediately passed to the people; whether it was warranted, from the point of view of the Leninist conception of the right of nations to self-determination, to counter the Eritrean and other nationalities effort towards secession.

When COPWE was set up, study groups to train future party members were organised at all mass organisations.

The mid-1970s saw the emergence of numerous political movements and trends. Each of them tried to assume the role of the revo-

lution's ideologist and leader. Most of them declared that they acted from the positions of Marxism-Leninism. In point of fact, none of them had any experience of social or political struggle. As Mengistu Haile Mariam put it in his report to the WPE Founding Congress, "the Ethiopian revolution is taking place in a society which cannot boast rich political traditions" [2, September 8, 1984].

Even the more or less progressive leaders suffered from the lack of political experience. Many leaders and members of the above mentioned trends gave no heed to the political immaturity of the country's working people and bewildered them with terminology they borrowed from the writings of the classics of Marxism-Leninism despite the fact that it could hardly be understood by the masses [see, for instance, 10, pp. 119-120].

The Ethiopian revolution had to face a host of trials, including the counter-revolutionary acts of terrorism, foreign aggression, economic and political pressure on the part of the imperialists who, unwilling to put up with the loss of the strategically important Ethiopian "bastion" in the Horn of Africa, systematically spread slanderous conjectures about life in Ethiopia and give all-round support to the counter-revolutionaries and especially the secessionists. This accentuates the importance of organising study groups for future party members and seminars for working people. The COPWE leaders were fully aware of that. The subject-matter and the topics to be discussed at the seminars were sug-

gested by the Ideological Department of the COPWE Central Committee. In 1980-83, the topics to be discussed at the seminars included various problems of the political economy of capitalism, the tendencies of the present-day anti-imperialist struggle, the role of US imperialism in pre-revolutionary Ethiopia, the historical experience of the CPSU, the outcome of the Second Congress of the COPWE. In discussing these matters, the participants in the seminars relied on the materials published by the party press.

The mass media are tremendously important for the popularisation of Marxism-Leninism in Ethiopia. A great role is assigned to radio, television, and the press. Important work is done by the radio station "Voice of Revolutionary Ethiopia" and by newspapers and magazines which focus on covering various aspects of the Marxist-Leninist theory and the everyday practice of the Communist, Workers' and revolutionary-democratic parties. In the last few years, the country's national papers, *The Ethiopian Herald*, *Addis Zemen* and some others have given much space to the articles by local and foreign authors published under the general headline "Opinions and Views on the Theoretical Problems of Marxism-Leninism". Indicative are the titles of such articles: "The World Revolutionary Process: Outcome and Prospects", "Philosophic Conception of the Essence of Proletarian Internationalism", "Prognostic Power of Marxism-Leninism", "The Leading Part of the Communist Party in So-

ciety", "Leninist Principles of Selection, Placement and Teaching Cadres", "Socialist Orientation and the Status of the Working People".

Newspaper editorials and other publications systematically deal with various aspects of the Marxist-Leninist theory and practice, assess the revolutionary gains of the Ethiopian workers, the role of the vanguard party and mass organisations, and explain the urgency of waging a vigorous campaign for peace.

An important part in propagating Marxism-Leninism is played by the weekly *Sertoader* (Worker) and by the theoretical magazine *Meskerem* (September). The newspaper *Sertoader*, started in June 1980, is now circulated in 100,000 copies. Initially, it came out once in two weeks; then, as the demand for it grew, it was transformed into a weekly. The newspaper is distributed widely among the government and non-government organisations and has a leading role to play in making known to the public the principles and aims of socialist orientation, and in elucidating the party's directives. It mobilises the people to the large-scale work effort. The newspaper is published in Amharic; the review of its materials is available in English.

The theoretical quarterly *Meskerem*, started in September 1980, has a circulation of 113,000 copies. It is available both in Amharic and English.

Members of editorial boards of these publications regularly familiarise themselves with the work of the party press in socialist coun-

tries and participate in the forums periodically held by the editorial board of the journal *World Marxist Review*.

The Kuraz Publishing Agency, which belongs to the party, is assigned an important role in promoting political education of the Ethiopian working people. The Kuraz Publishing Agency ("Kuraz" is the Amharic for "luminary"), launched in 1979, today has a network of nearly 30 bookshops in different towns of the country.

The demand for political literature is constantly growing. Early in 1976, when books were in short supply, Addis Ababa's first bookstore to sell books by the classics of Marxism-Leninism was literally "swamped by students, and each new shipment of books was immediately sold out" [10, p. 116].

In 1982, the USSR State Committee for Publishing, Printing and Book Selling and the Kuraz Publishing Agency signed an agreement on co-operation in publishing, translating, editing and circulating in Ethiopia socio-political literature in Amharic and English. The Progress Publishers put out in Amharic and turned over to the Kuraz Agency *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* by Marx and Engels, selected works by Lenin and thematic collections of his works, including *On the Peasant Question*, *On the Emancipation of Women*, *On Peaceful Coexistence*, etc. (each with a circulation of 40,000 to 60,000 copies), textbooks on Marxist-Leninist philosophy, books from a popular library of political knowledge, books about the USSR and

about Lenin's individual works (with a circulation of 5,000 to 10,000 copies). Every year the Kuraz Publishing Agency puts out from 10 to 20 titles of books [14, August 18 and September 21, 1982], with an average circulation of 15,000 copies. In 1983, the Agency published its first books in Tigrinya.

Between 1980 and 1984 alone, the Kuraz Publishing Agency published the Amharic versions of Karl Marx's and Frederick Engels' *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Frederick Engels' *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*, V. I. Lenin's "Left-Wing" *Communism—an Infantile Disorder, What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats*, *The State and Revolution*, *A Great Beginning*, and other Marxist-Leninist literature translated into Amharic including, for instance, *The Fundamentals of Scientific Communism*, *The History of the CPSU*, *Historical Materialism*, *What It Means to Be a Communist*. The publication of the first volume of Marx's *Capital* in Amharic was dedicated to the WPE Founding Congress.

Informing its readers of the publication of Engels' *The Condition of the Working Class in England* in Amharic, *The Ethiopian Herald* wrote that this book, founded on the author's personal observations and original sources, would largely contribute to the spread of Marxism-Leninism in Ethiopia, make it easy to the readers to understand *Capital* and to gain an insight into the nature of capitalism

[14, August 10, 1983].

The Kuraz Publishing Agency, in co-operation with the publishing agencies in the USSR and other socialist countries, regularly arranges book fairs in various administrative districts and participates in book exhibitions abroad. Since 1979, the representatives of the Kuraz have several times participated in the Moscow International Book Fairs, held once in two years. Moreover, the Agency's managers take an active part in regular conferences held by the leading book agencies in socialist countries. The study of the experience accumulated in the USSR and other socialist countries as regards publishing and distributing socio-political literature helps Ethiopian agencies to improve their work in the area of the political education of the masses.

Ethiopia receives large shipments of Marxist-Leninist literature in Amharic and English from the Soviet Union. Part of them is granted to Ethiopia gratuitously. For instance, in December 1982 and July 1983, the CPSU granted the COPWE a gift of 600,000 copies of books dealing with Marxism-Leninism [14, December 16, 1982; 14, July 7, 1983].

The Soviet publishing houses Progress and Novosti Press Agency make a weighty contribution to publishing and circulating in Ethiopia Amharic and English versions of books on social and political matters. Since 1967, the Addis Ababa Bureau of the Novosti Press Agency has been publishing its socio-political monthly *Keste Demena* (Rainbow) in Amha-

ric*. The fact that over the last few years the monthly's circulation has grown from 5,000 to 10,000 testifies to its popularity.

The Addis Ababa Bureau of the Novosti Press Agency sponsored a number of publications of special importance for a country undergoing revolution, among them the Reports of the CPSU Central Committee to the 25th and the 26th CPSU Congress, collections of Congress resolutions and documents, and booklets on various aspects of the Marxist-Leninist theory and revolutionary practice. Mention should be made of such publications as *Marx, Engels and Lenin on Scientific Socialism* (1978), *Marx, Engels, Lenin on the Way to Socialism By-Passing Capitalism* (1980), *Lenin and Social Progress* (1981), *Lenin. Students. Revolution* (1982), *Lenin on the Revolutionary Party's Strategy and Tactics*, *Leninism and Cultural Revolution* (1976), *Lenin on the Proletarian Party of a New Type* (1979), *Lenin Against Trotskyism* (1980). A number of publications has been devoted to the Party building in the Soviet Union and on the CPSU activity, among them *How the CPSU Was Created* (1976), *The Bolshevik Party in a Democratic Revolution* (1978), *The Bolshevik Party in a Socialist Revolution* (1979). Many publications are intended to acquaint the Ethiopian readers with socialist construction, offer them an analysis of Soviet-Ethiopian relations and similar matters. These publications had a

* Until 1979 the monthly was published in English.

circulation of 10,000 to 15,000 copies each and are known to enjoy popularity with the reading public.

Since 1980, the journal *World Marxist Review* has been published in Addis Ababa in Amharic, the journal's editor-in-chief being the prominent Ethiopian writer Berhanu Zerihun.

Some mass organisations and state agencies (the Ministry of Culture, the Commission for Tourism, the All-Ethiopia Peasant Association [AEPA], The All-Ethiopian Trade Union [AETU], Revolutionary Ethiopia Women's Association [REWA] and others) have their own press organs.

Although the Ethiopian government bodies, the WPE Central Committee and its grass-roots organisations make a great effort to circulate political information, there are factors that still prevent the overall success in this work. Among them are transport difficulties, insufficient number of books published, limited radio and television facilities, and, most importantly, the low general level of Ethiopia's socio-economic development and the still insufficient level of literacy. All that is an obstacle on the way to a broader circulation of revolutionary literature among the working people, especially in the countryside. Mindful of these difficulties, the Ethiopian leaders take measures to overcome them.

An important role in the ideological and political education of the Ethiopian working people and, above all, of top and middle eche-

lons of civil servants, is played by the Yekait'66 Political School, set up in accordance with the PMAC Decree issued in April 1976.

Over the eight years of its existence, the school provided education to 10,000 students. In 1981 and 1982 alone, the refresher course offered by the school was taken by 2,845 COPWE functionaries and activists from various agencies and mass organisations [14, January, 4, 1983].

In his report to the Second Congress of the COPWE, held on January 3-6, 1983, Mengistu Haile Mariam gave a high assessment to the work done by the Political School and expressed his appreciation of the contribution made by the CPSU and other fraternal parties from socialist countries to the ideological training of the Ethiopian cadres. He pointed out that the aim of this effort was to ensure the ideological unity of the future party's members educated in a communist spirit, and to provide for the efficiency of the future party's organisational activity [14, January 4, 1983].

One of the principal tasks of the party is the spread of Marxist-Leninist ideology among the masses. The foundation of the COPWE signalled the beginning of a vigorous effort to form and consolidate, under the COPWE leadership, mass organisations. According to the policy documents adopted by the Women's and Youth associations, the main goal of their activity, apart from the usual goals pursued by the organisations of this kind in accordance with their specific nature,

is to work towards implementing the Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution, to study the fundamentals of Marxist-Leninist ideology, take an active part in the building of a new society and supporting the revolutionary government in its effort to pursue a socialist-oriented course.

The COPWE did important political work in such national mass organisations as the All-Ethiopia Trade Union and the All-Ethiopia Peasant Association.

The educational system is assigned a major role in heightening the level of ideological work done under the WPE leadership. The PMAC and the WPE have made every effort to restructure the educational system in accordance with the country's socialist orientation.

Accordingly, changes were made in the curricula of higher educational establishments. They now provide a course in the fundamentals of Marxist-Leninist philosophy and political economy. In 1977, Addis Ababa University opened Philosophy Department graduating specialists in Marxist-Leninist philosophy. It is from their members that teachers of the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism are recruited for the country's higher educational establishments.

The lecturers of the Philosophy Department hold regular scientific conferences. In 1983, for instance, they discussed the following topics: "Progressive Ethiopian Philosophers of the 17th Century", "What Is Philosophy", "From Hegel to Marx", "Transition-

al Period as a Problem of Historical Materialism", "Marx and Peasant Societies".

The effort is under way to change the structure and content of textbooks on social sciences. In 1979 and 1980, the Ministry of Education published new history textbooks for senior pupils. They include sections on utopian socialism, classical German philosophy, the origination of scientific communism and on the life and activity of the founders of Marxism-Leninism [4; 9].

A special radio broadcasting programme for students, pupils and the students of literacy courses has been established. As of summer of 1982, apart from the main radio broadcasting stations in Addis Ababa, Asmara and Harar, the country had eleven radio stations broadcasting programmes for secondary school pupils and the students of higher educational establishments and literacy courses, including a programme on social science. Nearly 20,000 radio sets were distributed among schools and literacy courses so that students could benefit from the educational programmes. The programmes are broadcast in Amharic, Oromo, Wolayta, Tigrinya and English for 10 hours every day. Their authors receive thousands of letters from the listeners, which shows that the programmes are interesting enough [14, May 19, 1982].

In July 1983, the Ministry of Education announced that in accordance with the decisions of the Second Congress of the COPWE a course in social science would be introduced, since the beginning of the coming

school year, in the secondary school curricula [14, July 26, 1983].

Refresher courses and seminars in social sciences for teachers and lecturers are intended to raise the level of political education in the country.

Similar seminars are arranged for the workers of various offices and mass organisations. Their aim is to explain to the public the essence of the socialist-oriented socio-economic policy pursued by country's revolutionary leaders.

The WPE and the PMAC make every effort towards instilling the principles of new, revolutionary culture among the working people. To this end, great political importance is attached to the national campaign to eradicate illiteracy launched in July 1979.

As they set up the COPWE in December 1979, the leaders of the Ethiopian revolution realised that the popularisation of the Marxist-Leninist teaching among the working people was to become one of the principal functions of the Commission [11].

The decisions taken by the plenary sessions of the COPWE Central Committee and especially by the Second Congress of the COPWE held in January 1983 gave a new dimension to the effort towards propagating Marxist-Leninist ideology. The Second Congress adopted a resolution on the transition to the final stage of forming the vanguard Marxist-Leninist party [5, p. 10]. The reorganisation and strengthening of mass organisations in the period between the Second Congress of the

COPWE and the Founding Congress of the WPE strengthened the Commission's ties with the masses, made it possible to raise the level of the people's political awareness and to broaden their involvement in the revolutionary process.

Within a short period the COPWE set up grass-roots, primary organisations throughout the country. Special heed was given to the rules of admittance to the COPWE which provided for the priority admittance of those who had the great experience in revolutionary activity and met political and moral requirements.

The Congress of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia, held from the 6th to 10th September, 1984, adopted the WPE Rules, Programme and other documents and endorsed the Report and the Guidelines on the Economic and Social Development of Ethiopia for 1984-1993. The Congress also approved of the party's name and emblem (a yellow five-pointed star against a red background with a red hammer and sickle in the middle), which were proposed by the 7th Plenary Session of the COPWE Central Committee.

The documents adopted by the Founding Congress point out that the WPE is guided by the Marxist-Leninist theory, is structured on the basis of democratic centralism and in accordance with the territorial-and-production principle and adheres to proletarian internationalism [13], [16]. The content of the WPE policy documents shows that the party's ideologists have carefully studied the

experience of Party building in socialist countries and used it with due regard to the specific conditions obtaining in Ethiopia. The WPE, a truly vanguard revolutionary-democratic party, regards itself as an inseparable part of the international revolutionary movement; it strives for close unity with the CPSU and the fraternal parties in the socialist countries. Proceeding from the interests of the Ethiopian working people, the party pursues progressive domestic and foreign policies.

In keeping with the PNDR (and, after the foundation of the WPE, with its Programme), the Ethiopian leaders take measures to solve the national question. In this respect, of major importance are such measures as the setting up of the Nationalities Department at the COPWE Central Committee (now the WPE Central Committee) and of the Institute for the Studies of Nationalities at the COPWE (WPE) Central Committee. A new administrative and national-territorial division is being mapped out and conditions for genuine self-determination of all the nationalities established. The future Constitution will record all this.

The PMAC and the WPE take a similar, truly scientific approach to the problem of relationship between the state and the church.

Ethiopia's constantly expanding all-round co-operation with socialist countries, economic, cultural and scientific ties and exchanges promote the Ethiopian working people's higher political awareness [see, for example, 7].

The domestic and foreign policies pursued by the WPE and the PMAC testify to their adherence to the concept of socialist orientation, the main principles of which, elaborated by Marxists-Leninists, have been verified by practice in a number of developing countries since the late 1950s.

The world's progressive forces will judge about the Ethiopian leaders' and working people's correct understanding of and adherence to the Marxist-Leninist outlook from such an important criterion as their revolutionary practice, the scope and scientific substantiation of socio-economic reforms effected in the country and their consonance with the basic interests of the working masses and with the tasks of the world-wide revolutionary process.

Notes

¹ *Present-Day Problems and Ethiopia's Foreign Policy*, Moscow, 1982 (in Russian).

² *Pravda*, Moscow.

³ Alemse Eshete, "Ethiopia and the Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1935", *African History Conference*, Dar-es-Salaam, Dec. 1973.

⁴ A. Z. Manfred, *A Short History of the World*, Moscow, 1974 (in Russian).

⁵ *Documents and Resolutions of the 2nd COPWE Congress*, Addis Ababa, 1983.

⁶ *Ethiopia Tikdem: The Origins and Future Direction of the Movement*, Addis Ababa, 1974 (Mimeo).

⁷ *For Peace and Social Progress. Materials of the Soviet-African Scientific and Political Conference. Moscow, 13-16 October, 1981*, Moscow, 1983.

⁸ *Guidelines on the Economic and Social Development of Ethiopia (1984/85-1993/94)*, Addis Ababa, 1984.

⁹ *History*, 10th grade, Addis Ababa, 1980.

¹⁰ M. and D. Ottaway, *Ethiopia: Empire in Revolution*, New York-London, 1978.

¹¹ *Proclamation No. 174 to Provide for the Establishment of COPWE*. Chapt. 1, Art. 6(8), Addis Ababa, December 18, 1979.

¹² *The Roles of POMOA and the Yekatit'66 Political School in the Ethiopian Revolution*, Addis Ababa, 1978.

¹³ *The Workers' Party of Ethiopia, Rules*, Addis Ababa, 1978.

¹⁴ *The Ethiopian Herald*, Addis Ababa.

¹⁵ *Meskerem*, Addis Ababa.

¹⁶ *Eityopya Cerratenyoch Party Program* Addis Ababa, September 1984 (Programme of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia in Amharic).

CULTURAL REFORMS IN ETHIOPIA

Before the revolution of 1974, only the elite enjoyed access to the cultural values that had been created in Ethiopia throughout centuries. The popular masses were deprived of any opportunity to go to the theatre, visit museums, attend school and read books. Suffice it to say that in the early 1970s 93 per cent of the population of Ethiopia, a country where first literary texts appeared many centuries ago, were illiterate [13, p. 35], only 10 per cent of the primary school-age children could attend primary school and 5 per cent of all the children could go to secondary school [12, pp. 84-85]. The situation in the countryside was even worse: only 4 per cent of the children in rural areas attended primary school [14, p. 31]. A mere 1.5 per cent of the girls went to primary school and there was not a single woman over 25 who could read and write [10, p. 16].

The 1974 revolution radically changed the character and rate of the country's cultural development. It gave people hope not only for deliverance from poverty and starvation,

but also from ignorance. The revolutionary leaders faced the tasks of democratising, within the shortest time possible, all areas of the cultural life of the people and secure access to knowledge for all the working people.

Intensive work towards fulfilling this task was launched immediately after the abolition of monarchy. In 1975, all private educational establishments (except religious schools) were nationalised and the construction of school buildings was launched on a large scale (820 private primary and secondary schools were nationalised; 329 new schools and 2 teachers' training colleges were built) [19, July 8, 1978]; school curricula were revised to include physical and labour training.

The early months of 1975 saw the beginning of the nationwide campaign Zemetcha (Development through Co-operation) whose participants helped the Ethiopian leaders to popularise the ideas of the revolution and to combat ignorance.

The Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution, adopted in 1976, formulated a number of tasks to be resolved in the area of culture as well. The Programme became an important factor in cultural construction, envisaging the involvement of the broad masses in the process of cultural reforms, taking all measures necessary to eliminate illiteracy and encouraging the development of science, engineering, literature, and art [15, pp. 14-15]. The Programme secured for all citizens

the right to obtain education without discrimination against sex, nationality, religion, social and material status. In July 1979, the literacy campaign was launched. It covered not only the adults, but also the school-age children who had no opportunity to attend school.

In tackling these tasks, the PMAC and the WPE draw on the experience accumulated in socialist countries, above all, in the Soviet Union, and rely on mass organisations, local government bodies, on intellectuals, students, office workers and the army. The participation of these groups of the population in the literacy campaign is regarded as a patriotic duty.

Over the early five years of the revolution, 1,140,000 people were taught to read and write. The setting up of a National Coordinating Committee to Eradicate Illiteracy signalled the beginning of a nationwide literacy campaign. In the course of the campaign the following tasks were to be solved: to ensure, within historically short period (by 1987), universal literacy; to guarantee that the Ethiopian citizens use the knowledge they obtain during the campaign in their everyday work towards improving their living conditions; to help the working people to improve their skills [8, pp. 124-125].

The masses responded to the campaign with enthusiasm. Their drive for knowledge was so great that in its early months the campaign already covered 5,000,000 people instead of the expected 1,300,000. Within a short period 18,000 literacy centres were es-

tablished at enterprises, offices, town-dwellers' and peasants' associations. Teaching was provided by 184,000 students, high school pupils, teachers, office and factory workers [20, September 19, 1979]. The campaign covered a large percentage of the population in the age group ranging between 8 and 80. During the 11 stages of the campaign completed by the autumn of 1984, more than 14,000,000 people learned to read and write [17, April 17, 1984; 20, September 8, 1984].

However, the Ethiopian revolutionary government realises that in order to solve the task of restructuring society it is not enough to teach the people to read and write; it is also essential to explain to them the meaning of the reforms carried out in the country and to raise the level of their political awareness. Therefore, curricula have been drawn up in such a way as to teach people to read and understand popaganda literature, write, if need be, a question or a request addressed to a government office, calculate the size of the tax to be paid, etc. The curricula also envisaged the study of the fundamentals of the Marxist-Leninist theory, familiarisation with the government's programmatic documents and policies, as well as with the history of the Ethiopian revolution and of the national liberation movement in Africa. Follow-up measures envisage expanding the network of public libraries and reading-rooms by setting them up at many institutions, industrial enterprises, town-dwellers' and peasants' associations.

The entire educational system is developing at a fast rate. Currently, effort is under way to create a network of pre-school establishments. More than 600 crèches and kindergartens have already been commissioned. The primary school enrollment has grown by a factor of 3.5, rising from 1,000,000 in 1974 to 3,500,000 in 1983 [18, No. 6, 1983, p. 126]. In 1980, the government resolved to gradually introduce—within 14 years—universal compulsory 8-year schooling.

Measures to render material aid to the students are taken with a view to translating into life the principle of democratising education. In 1976, control over the work of primary and secondary schools was entrusted to peasants' and town-dwellers' associations and school committees made up of the representatives of the teaching staff, the pupils and the above-mentioned associations.

Steps are also taken to decentralise the educational system, i.e. to evenly distribute educational establishments all over the country. Over the first six years of the revolution, the number of intermediate secondary schools almost doubled, growing from 500 in 1974 to 900 in 1980 [9, p. 207]. In admitting students to higher educational establishments priority is given to those coming from workers' and peasants' families, i.e. a class-oriented approach is taken to the training of higher-skill personnel. Great importance is attached to providing education to women. Women account for nearly 70 per cent of those covered by the literacy campaign.

The government seeks to ensure a close link between education and the actual requirements of the country's social and economic development. That is why, as early as 1975, a labour education course was included in the curricula. In the school year of 1980/81, the effort was launched to introduce a new, unified vocational training programme, which gives priority to teaching labour skills and applied disciplines. This reform is expected to solve, to a certain degree, the problem of training skilled personnel badly needed by the country. The same goal is served by expanding the network of specialised vocational training establishments and by the professional orientation of the adults at the vocational training centres and qualification improvement courses.

Great importance is attached to the political education of the population in the spirit of the revolution. The teaching of the fundamentals of scientific socialism is included in the curricula.

However, the country is still facing many difficulties stemming, above all, from the shortage of funds, material resources and teaching staff. Ethiopian people pull their efforts in a drive to overcome these difficulties: they take an active part in the construction of school buildings and collect voluntary donations to the literacy fund. To solve the personnel problem, a network of teachers' training institutes is being expanded. In 1983 alone, they graduated 6,000 primary school teachers, i.e. twice the 1974 number [16,

September 18, 1983]. The Pedagogical Academy in Bahr-Dar graduates lecturers for teachers' training institutes. Great is the help rendered to Ethiopia in this area by the fraternal socialist countries and especially, the Soviet Union. Over the 10 years of the country's revolutionary development, more than 14,000,000 people learned to read and write and the illiteracy rate was brought down from 93 to 38 per cent. In major towns, the problem of eradicating illiteracy has almost been solved [20, September 6, 1984]. This has put Ethiopia in the front rank of the African countries in terms of the rate of progress in combating illiteracy.

The international community gives a high assessment to Ethiopia's achievement in eradicating illiteracy: in 1980, UNESCO conferred on Ethiopia the International Reading Association Prize, and in 1982, the Krupskaya Honorary Diploma. The Western bourgeois press could not but pay tribute to the reforms effected in Ethiopia's cultural life [21, No. 324, 1981, pp. 16-17].

The success in the effort towards universal literacy should be largely attributed to the revolutionary government's correct choice of policy with respect to the national languages of Ethiopia. Among the new regime's first steps was the official recognition of the right of each of the country's nationalities to use and develop their mother tongues. The Academy of the Amharic Language set up back in 1971 was renamed the National Academy of Ethiopian Languages and set the task of

preserving the culture of Ethiopia's numerous nationalities and creating for them written languages on the basis of their mother tongues. The National Academy and the Committee for the Development of the Languages and Cultures of the People of Eritrea contribute to the effort to eradicate illiteracy and develop the primary and secondary educational system. At primary schools and literacy courses teaching is provided in 15 national languages.

The press organs of the WPE Central Committee and those of the mass organisations, as well as other mass media are an important means of educating the masses and forming a new kind of social consciousness. The government seeks to give as much heed as possible to their work. At present, agitation-and-propaganda programmes account for 59 per cent of the radio time and the news, for 27 per cent [9, p. 222]. The Kuraz Publishing Agency, sponsored by the WPE Central Committee, imports and circulates more than 1,000,000 books every year [11, p. 33].

Much attention is given to the development of art—literature, theatre, painting, music and dancing.

Socialist orientation ensures good prospects for the development of literature in the languages of all nationalities inhabiting the country. Well-known are the names of such major poets as Tsegaye Gebre Medhin, Ayalneh Mulat and Assefa Gebre Mariam. Among the major works by Ethiopian prose-writers published after the revolution are the trilogy

Storm by Berhanu Zerihun and the novel *The Call of the Red Star* by Baalu Girma. In 1977, Ethiopian writers were associated in the Ethiopia Writers' Union.

Effort is made to encourage the development of the theatre, which is acquiring an increasingly democratic and popular character. The repertoire has changed and is now dominated by the plays with a revolutionary subject-matter and by the works of classical playwrights—Shakespeare, Gogol, and Brecht, which replaced plays on religious subjects or on themes from the life of the imperial family. Increasingly popular are amateur theatricals.

Before the revolution, Ethiopian painting was an art for the elite. The artists did not seem to be aware of the social significance of their creative endeavour. Today, the revolutionary theme prevails in painting. The artists seek to bring their art closer to the common people. This effort is promoted by the rapid development of such new genres as the poster and the slogan which today can be seen everywhere in the country. The Ethiopian Artists' Union, set up in 1976, has a major role to play in encouraging the development of the art of painting.

Great attention is devoted to creative effort in music. Bands and song-and-dance groups which perform and popularise modern and traditional music are organised at the theatres, mass organisations, secondary and higher schools, and in the *kebeles*. The Ethiopians love songs. Especially popular

are revolutionary marches. Western and national songs that lack message have been ousted by the songs about peoples' work and struggle. In the mid-1970s alone, more than 1,000 revolutionary songs in Amharic and other national languages were written and broadcast on the radio. Among them were such songs as "Marx and Lenin", "Class Struggle", etc. [11, p. 16].

Ethiopian cinematography started to develop after the revolution. The film import and release firms, as well as major cinemas have been nationalised. The National Cine Centre has been set up. The first Ethiopian full-length feature films, "Guma" (The Bloody Ransom) and "The Harvest of Three Thousand Years", tell about the plight of the Ethiopian peasants before the revolution. Efforts are focused on encouraging the making of documentaries covering the events all over the country. The documentaries so far made have been devoted to such topics as the overthrow of the imperial regime ("3002 Years", "Struggle-Victory-Struggle") and the country's new life ("The Motherland's Call").

Ethiopia's successes in developing the arts of theatre and cinema have been recognised at international forums. In 1983, for instance, Ethiopia's oldest theatre Hager Fikir (Patriotic) was awarded the International Prize for Peace and Co-operation, Gold Mercury, and the documentary "Struggle-Victory-Struggle" gained the honorary diploma of the 11th International Film Festival in Moscow.

Despite the grave economic difficulties

still faced by the country, the WPE takes measures to develop national culture, and to preserve and restore historical monuments [22].

Ethiopia has carried out major cultural reforms within a short time. The WPE and the government draw on the experience of cultural construction in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. In its effort, the government proceeds from the main principles of the Lenin's doctrine of cultural revolution. According to Lenin, one of the major tasks of a cultural revolution is to effect general democratic reforms in the cultural area (eliminating illiteracy, separating the school from the church, promoting the development of art, science and engineering); securing for the working masses an access to spiritual and cultural values; assimilation of the national and the world cultural heritage; forming a new social stratum consisting of intellectuals with workers' or peasants' family backgrounds and, at the same time, involving professionals in the effort to establish a new way of life; ensuring an inseparable link between culture and the country's economic and political development; providing ideological education to the masses. Lenin emphasised that cultural revolution should not be reduced to educational activities, agitation and propaganda among the masses; every effort should be made to encourage the working people to take an active part in cultural revolution. Lenin contended that the main goal of cultural revolution consisted in effecting a

change in people's mentality and molding a new kind of free and harmoniously developed personality [see 1, p. 487; 2, 214; 3, p. 180; 4, pp. 285-288; 5, pp. 72-74; 6, pp. 132-133; 7, pp. 247-248].

The theory of cultural revolution was elaborated by Lenin as applied to the conditions that obtained in Russia after the Great October Revolution. However, the importance of this theory goes beyond the national boundaries. Ethiopian experience provides ample evidence of the universal character and applicability of Lenin's doctrine of cultural construction. The nature and scope of transformation sweeping Ethiopia today testify to the fact that the country is undergoing a cultural revolution.

Notes

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Better Fewer, but Better", *Collected Works*, Vol. 33.

² V. I. Lenin, "Original Version of the Article 'The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government'", *Collected Works*, Vol. 27.

³ V. I. Lenin, "Ninth All-Russia Congress of Soviets", *Collected Works*, Vol. 33.

⁴ V. Lenin, "The Tasks of the Youth Leagues", *Collected Works*, Vol. 31.

⁵ V. I. Lenin, "The New Economic Policy and the Tasks of the Political Education Departments", *Collected Works*, Vol. 33.

⁶ V. I. Lenin, "Draft Programme of the RSDLP (B)", *Collected Works*, Vol. 29.

⁷ V. I. Lenin, "Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets", *Collected Works*, Vol. 30.

⁸ *Africa: Culture and Social Development*, Moscow, 1984 (in Russian).

⁹ *Africa: Socialist-Oriented Countries in the Revolutionary Process*, Moscow, 1984 (in Russian).

¹⁰ "Ethiopia", in: *Educational Systems in Foreign Countries*, Moscow, 1985 (in Russian).

¹¹ Aleme Eshete, *The Cultural Situation in Socialist Ethiopia*, Paris, 1982.

¹² *Education in Africa. A Comparative Survey*, London, 1982.

¹³ *Ethiopian Revolution. Fifth Anniversary*, Addis Ababa, 1979.

¹⁴ B. Holmes, *Guide international des systèmes d'éducation*, Paris, 1979.

¹⁵ *Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution*, Addis Ababa, 1976.

¹⁶ *Izvestia*, Moscow.

¹⁷ *Pravda*, Moscow.

¹⁸ *Sovietskaya pedagogika*, Moscow.

¹⁹ *Uchitelskaya gazeta*, Moscow.

²⁰ *The Ethiopian Herald*, Addis Ababa.

²¹ *Le Monde diplomatique*, Paris.

**STANDING GUARD OVER THE GAINS OF THE
REVOLUTION: ETHIOPIA'S ARMED FORCES**

The Ethiopian armed forces have a special role to play in the country's advancement along the road of social progress. Relying on the support from the broad popular masses the Ethiopian Army overthrew the feudal-monarchic regime. This radically changed the country's entire political and social set-up. The radical, anti-monarchist, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolution has brought about far-reaching social consequences. The Ethiopian Army has turned into an instrument for defending and spreading revolution in accordance with the will expressed by the working masses both in urban and rural areas.

The WPE Programme says: "Appropriate defence capability is a guarantee of the country both in the process of creating a People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and following it" [9, Part 8, p. 117].

The Ethiopian Armed Forces consist of the land, sea, air, and air defence forces. The land forces include motorised infantry, mountain troops and light divisions, detached landing brigades, field artillery, anti-aircraft artillery and anti-aircraft and anti-missile divisions, landing and engineer battalions. The army

and navy are equipped with anti-missile and artillery systems, tanks, modern aircraft, warships and other hardware [1, pp. 65, 70; 5, No 18, 1982, p. 88].

The Ethiopian Army is brought up to strength according to the PMAC Decree of May 4, 1983, on introducing universal military service, and the PMAC Decree of May 10, 1983, on setting up military commissariats and territorial people's militia detachments [7, June 27, 1983].

Under the former decree, each Ethiopian in the 18 to 50 age group is liable to active service. The conscripts take a six-month-long training course, on completing which they do active service for two years. The servicemen who successfully cope with their duties have their former jobs reserved for them. On completing their service, they are entitled to priority admittance to national and foreign educational establishments and to job placement advantages [2, p. 30].

Under the decree on military commissariats and the territorial people's militia, the military commissariats set up throughout the country are responsible for forming, training and arming militia detachments. The people's militia is formed on a voluntary basis by way of individual selection of the future militiamen from among workers, peasants, office and professional workers. The principal task of this mass military-patriotic organisation is to ensure law and order throughout the country and, if need be, to help the regular Army to rebuff external aggression and com-

bat internal counter-revolution. The people's militia is the national Army's reliable reserve, on which the Army can safely rely in defending the revolutionary gains [10, June 28, 1984].

Officers are trained at the Military Academy, military colleges, training courses for various arms of the service, general military courses, etc. These educational establishments devote great attention to raising the officers' political and ideological level. The Military Academy in Harar offers apart from other courses, a special political course.

The WPE and the PMAC provide effective leadership to the Ethiopian Army. Mengistu Haile Mariam, General Secretary of the WPE and the Chairman of the PMAC, is at the same time the Supreme Commander of the Ethiopian Revolutionary Army and Chairman of the Defence Council. He gives guidance to the armed forces and directs the effort to bring them up to strength via the Defence Ministry. The Main Political Board of the Armed Forces at the Defence Ministry has the status of a department of the WPE Central Committee. The political bodies and political workers functioning in units and subunits are responsible for political education of the personnel and encouraging the servicemen to selflessly perform their task of defending the gains of the revolution [7, September 18, 1983; 6, September 11, 1982]. During the solemn ceremony of taking the oath, each soldier of the regular Army and the people's militia says the following: "I, the son of the working

people, citizen of Socialist Ethiopia, accept the honour of becoming a soldier of the revolutionary Army and swear allegiance to my people, Socialist Motherland and the cause of the revolution to my last breath" [6, October 18, 1978].

Before the revolution, the Ethiopian Army was a well-organised and well-armed force. While enjoying a privileged position in the state, it was not, however, entirely divorced from the society. It reacted to the sentiment prevailing among people from different walks of life and, for its part, exerted a noticeable influence on public life.

The public unrest observed in the 1960s and the early 1970s had its effect on the Army: December 1960 saw an attempted military coup, the protest actions in 1961, 1964, 1966 and 1969 involved soldiers and officers. As the armed forces started to play an increasingly active political role in the country, there appeared clandestine organisations and groups of junior officers and men, most of them coming from the families of poor peasants, low-ranking officials and professional workers. This most numerous group in the armed forces, deprived of any rights, was exploited by senior officers (often referred to as "feudal lords in uniform") who, among other things, ordered the men under their command to carry on repression and suppress public protest. From decade to decade, antagonisms were fermenting between the army top brass, i.e. senior officers and generals who had ties with the royal family, feudal

lords and high-ranking officials, on the one hand, and the junior officers and men, on the other. The antagonisms became especially acute late in 1973 and early in 1974. In some garrisons men and petty officers arrested senior officers and demanded to improve service conditions. Although some of the demands were satisfied, the unrest in the army did not subside. In a context when the crisis ravaging the system was aggravated by poor harvests, growing prices and inflation, poverty and starvation increasingly afflicted the peasantry and the urban poor, protest actions organised by servicemen were supported by the population. Public action led by democratic army groups culminated in the revolution of September 1974. A new Ethiopia, emerging on the ruins of the obsolete feudal system, embarked on the road of radical transformation in all areas of society's life.

The revolution unfolded under the leadership of the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC), which, in April 1976, issued the Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution of Ethiopia. The Programme provides for country's socialist-oriented development.

That the Army entered the political scene in the context of an armed struggle against internal counter-revolution and external enemies, in the absence of a vanguard party, resulted in the inevitable concentration of state power in the hands of the military revolutionary democrats. In their activity they came to rely on the committies for the de-

fence of the revolution, town-dwellers' and peasants' associations and self-defence detachments. Close ties between the Army and the people, further consolidated in the course of the revolution, made it possible for the PMAC to form a new army and to organise the country's defences.

The revolution in Ethiopia brought about vehement counteraction on the part of the imperialist circles. Relying on internal and external reaction, imperialists made every effort to divide the country and hamper its socialist-oriented development. The years 1977 and 1978 saw a general offensive against the revolutionary gains of the Ethiopian people. The Somalian troops invaded the province of Ogaden and the secessionists intensified their subversive activity in Eritrea.

In this complicated military situation, the PMAC launched a large-scale effort to form a new regular Army and the people's militia. The Ethiopian Army, whose nucleus was made up of progressive regular officers and men, as well as the paramilitary workers' and peasants' detachments, turned into a major revolutionary force capable of safeguarding the country's independence and ensuring its social progress. The Soviet Union, Cuba and other socialist countries rendered considerable aid to the Ethiopian people in their heroic struggle. The heroism of the Ethiopian patriots and the international support to the Ethiopian revolution granted, above all, by the forces of socialism, enabled the Ethiopian people and the Army to win the battle against

imperialism and reaction and defend their revolutionary gains.

Along with its primary function of defending the country's progressive gains against the internal counter-revolutionaries and external enemies, the Ethiopian national Army has taken active part in civilian construction projects launched since the early days of the revolution: soldiers lay roads in remote parts of the country, especially difficult of access, and help the population in the drought-stricken areas by delivering and distributing food. Together with students, teachers and office workers, men and officers participate in the literacy campaign and in the effort to control diseases, effect the agrarian reform and implement government decrees on the nationalisation of land, the banks, industrial and trading enterprises that belonged to foreign and big local capital.

Having liberated Ogaden and most of Eritrea, the Ethiopian Army helped the local population to restore the war-ravaged economy. Men and officers carried on political-educational work among the masses, explaining to them the goals and tasks of the Ethiopian revolution and the government's policy vis-à-vis the nationalities. All this encouraged the formerly oppressed masses in the liberated districts to join the nationwide effort towards building a new society.

The Ethiopian national-democratic revolution occurred in the absence of a political party capable of leading the Ethiopian masses in their struggle for social progress. The

democratic circles of the Army, which set up the PMAC upon the overthrow of the feudal-monarchic regime, assumed the role of the organising and leading force of the popular uprising. It is under the leadership of this military-revolutionary body that the national-democratic revolution effected a series of social, economic and political reforms which enabled the country to proceed along the road of socialist-oriented development.

However, the task of injecting the national-democratic revolution with profound social meaning and ensuring the country's socialist orientation necessitated the establishment of a vanguard party of the working people. Mindful of the situation in the country aggravated by the exacerbating class struggle and having suffered repeated setbacks in the attempt to unite the existing political groups, the leaders of the PMAC decided to set up the Commission to Organise the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia and thus make the first step towards creating a vanguard party of the working people. The decision was made on the basis of a profound analysis of the situation obtaining in the country.

The COPWE Rules adopted by its First Congress in June 1980 emphasised the special role assigned to the Army in the political life of the country and in the process of forming a vanguard party of the working people. According to the Rules, any representative of the working people and revolutionary Army who has attained the age of 16, recognises

the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism, approves of the Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution, has made an appreciable contribution to the revolution, takes an active part in the work of the Commission, possesses high moral qualities and pays membership fee is entitled to become a member of the COPWE [3, No. 11, 1980, p. 13]. At the Second Congress of the COPWE, held in January 1983, workers accounted for 25, peasants—for 14.5 and officers and professional workers, most of whom represented democratic circles of the Army, for 60.5 per cent of the delegates. Covering the deliberations of the Congress, *The Ethiopian Herald* pointed out that the Ethiopian revolutionary Army joined the people in supporting the COPWE and its effort to create a vanguard party of the working people and was determined to take an active part in that effort [10, January 5, 1983].

Over more than four years of its existence, the COPWE set the stage for founding a vanguard party. One of its major tasks was to instill Marxist-Leninist ideology among the working people and servicemen. The COPWE exerted its influence on the Army through the political workers entrusted with educating men and officers in the spirit of allegiance to the revolution.

With a view to training skilled political personnel for the armed forces, an army political school was set up. The school's graduates were to propagate Marxism-Leninism and elucidate the tasks of the Ethiopian revolu-

tion to the army personnel. The military political journal *TATEK* ("Arm Yourself!") is regarded as an important means of political education of the personnel.

The large-scale ideological work among the servicemen made it possible for the democratic circles of the Army to become involved in the effort to consolidate the country's socialist-oriented course, and enabled it to defeat the Somalian aggressors and foil the secessionists' conspiracies in Eritrea and other provinces. As the revolution progressed, the army strengthened in battle and acquired the character of a truly people's force [9]

The Army played a major role in setting up the Workers' Party of Ethiopia. In his speech at the closing session of the WPE Founding Congress, Mengistu Haile Mariam said: "We have fulfilled our revolutionary duty by setting up the party. We owe this victory to the unflinching support of the people and the revolutionary Army" [6, September 11, 1984]. The Army and, more specifically, its democratic circles, servicemen coming from working people's families, became the mainstays of the broad popular uprising, acted as one of the main "grave-diggers" of the feudal-monarchic system and a major force ensuring the transfer to the anti-capitalist transformation of society. This has reserved for the revolutionary Army of Ethiopia a historic role in the process of the country's transition to socialist-oriented development, in the effort to consolidate its socialist orientation and set up a vanguard party.

The foundation of the WPE signalled a new stage in the development of Ethiopia's national Army and of the entire state and social structure. As is stated in the WPE Rules adopted by the WPE Founding Congress (see the Section on the Work of Party Organisations in the Army), one of the party's main tasks is to educate members of the revolutionary armed forces "in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, make them loyal and obedient to the Party, educate them in the spirit of socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism, to defend the boundaries of revolutionary Ethiopia, to guarantee her independence and to guard the victories of the revolution" [8, p. 93].

As the Ethiopian political system is improved, the WPE's main task will consist in forming a people's democratic system. As the Ethiopian leaders see it, this will play a decisive role in ensuring the working masses' direct participation in running state affairs [4, No. 13, 1984, p. 98]. The development of the democratic republic will be accompanied by the transformation of Ethiopia's revolutionary Army into a truly popular army. This will be promoted by the enforcement of the law on universal military service and by manning the Army with servicemen recruited from among the working class, the peasantry and the progressive intelligentsia.

As the revolutionary process unfolds, the country will continue to face the tasks of building up its security and defending its

revolutionary-democratic state. The armed forces, led by the WPE, will serve as an effective means of solving these tasks.

Notes

- ¹ Z. Sh. Gafurov, *The National-Democratic Revolutions and the Army*, Moscow, 1983 (in Russian).
- ² V. I. Sharayev, *Ethiopia Strides into the Future*, Moscow, 1984 (in Russian).
- ³ *Asia and Africa Today*, Moscow.
- ⁴ *Kommunist*, Moscow.
- ⁵ *Kommunist vooruzhonnykh sil*, Moscow.
- ⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, Moscow.
- ⁷ *Pravda*, Moscow.
- ⁸ *The Workers' Party of Ethiopia. Rules*, Addis Ababa, 1984.
- ⁹ *The Workers' Party of Ethiopia. Programme*, Addis Ababa, 1984.
- ¹⁰ The Ethiopian Herald, Addis Ababa.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORKERS' PARTY
OF ETHIOPIA AND ITS GROWING ROLE IN
THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

On coming to power, the Ethiopian revolutionary-democratic leaders set themselves the following tasks, proceeding from the theory of Marxism-Leninism: "To completely abolish feudalism, imperialism and bureaucratic capitalism from Ethiopia and with the united effort of all anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces build a new Ethiopia and lay a strong foundation for the transition to socialism"[8, p. 11]. These tasks were formulated in the Programme of the national-democratic revolution, issued in April 1976.

While pursuing a consistent policy aimed at abolishing the feudal-monarchic regime and preventing the country from embarking on the road of bourgeois-oriented development, the Ethiopian leaders realised the need for creating essential political prerequisites for revolutionary-democratic statehood and for forming a vanguard party of working people.

By the spring of 1976, the revolutionary leaders of Ethiopia had become fully aware of the urgency of creating a political party capable of basing its activity on the prin-

ciples of scientific socialism [8, pp. 16-17]. It was not an easy task for Ethiopia with its underdeveloped social structure, economic backwardness, small working class and almost universal illiteracy. The country had no political organisations capable of leading the people's struggle for social emancipation and advancement along the socialist-oriented road.

The situation called for specific, original forms and methods of party building. Before 1979, active in the country were isolated, semi-legal political groups. The attempt to integrate them in the Union of Marxist-Leninist Organisations (UMLO) failed.*

Analysing the UMLO's activity, Mengistu Haile Mariam commented that "the Union failed to avoid negative tendencies ... which emerged within its framework... Its member-organisations' contention for leadership ... generated controversy... It was increasingly obvious that the tactics of forming a party by merely associating the existing organisations would not bring about a success" [4, p. 92]. The revolutionary-democratic leaders came to the conclusion that it was necessary to devote a certain period of time to preparatory work. This work was entrusted to the COPWE, set up in December 1979. As Mengistu Haile Mariam put it, "the founding of the Commission marked a decisive step forward towards uniting the Ethiopian revolutionaries in a single organisation and there

* This problem has been discussed in great detail elsewhere. See, for instance [2, pp. 33-35].

by putting an end to the fragmentation that prevailed in the past." [6, September 4, 1984].

An analysis of the work done by the COPWE is of major importance not only for Ethiopia, but also for other developing countries facing the problem of forming a political vanguard. The setting up of the COPWE is the proof of the Ethiopian leaders' creative approach to the task of forming a party without artificially accelerating the process. The Commission focused on propagating Marxism-Leninism among the masses, laying the organisational foundation for the party and determining the government's domestic and foreign policies.

The outcome of the COPWE's activity shows that it successfully coped with its tasks. In the four years of its existence the Commission held two Congresses, eight regular and one extraordinary plenary sessions of the Central Committee to discuss various problems of domestic and foreign policies and of its ideological and organisational effort.

The COPWE did large-scale theoretical, propaganda and agitation work in order to propagate the ideology of Marxism-Leninism by relying on the Central Committee's press organs and other mass media, by training cadres at various political schools in Ethiopia and abroad and making a wide use of the COPWE primary organisations.

The Ethiopian leaders have scored major successes in solving the problem of maintain-

ing ties with the masses. As Lenin put it, a vanguard would not be a vanguard without close links with the people. He pointed out that leadership should be won by initiative and selflessness in the struggle to promote the interests of the masses. He wrote: "...it is not enough to call ourselves the vanguard, the advanced contingent; we must act in such a way that *all* the other contingents recognise and are obliged to admit that we are marching in the vanguard" [1, p. 426].

The COPWE made consistent effort to translate Lenin's ideas into life. In making known its policy to the masses, the COPWE relied on mass organisations—national women's and youth associations, trade unions, peasants' and town-dwellers' associations and working people's control committees. Addressing the Second Congress of the COPWE, Mengistu Haile Mariam said that the popular masses' involvement in the work of mass organisations testified to the higher level of their political awareness and culture. Commenting on the role of mass organisations in the revolutionary transformation of Ethiopia, he described them as the basis of society's political system.

As of the early months of 1984, 1,300,000 people—revolutionary activists—were involved in the elective bodies of mass organisations [5, No. 10, 1984, p. 35].

The COPWE's ideological work among the masses and its effort to maintain close ties with mass organisations gave a new dimension to the Ethiopian working people's strug-

gle to achieve the goals of the revolution and neutralise the effect of counter-revolutionary propaganda [9].

The organisational foundation for the party was laid by way of selecting, training, and placing party cadres in the capital and in the regions and by strengthening party discipline.

By the beginning of 1984, COPWE committees had been set up in all the 14 administrative provinces and in 84 out of the country's 102 regions. The number of primary organisations ran to 900.

The structure of the COPWE mirrored the prospective structure of the party. The COPWE formed the central party machinery, set up grass-roots committees throughout the country, created political organs in the armed forces, set up primary organisations at enterprises, institutions, educational establishments, on the state farms and in the army. The COPWE devoted special attention to increasing the percentage of workers and peasants among its membership.

Of crucial importance for the COPWE's organisational effort was its Second Congress, convened in January 1983. The Congress ushered in the final stage in the formation of the party.

In June and July 1984, a campaign to elect delegates to the Founding Congress was carried out.

An important stage in the process of creating the vanguard party was marked by the transformation of the COPWE cells into pri-

mary party organisations which, as Mengistu Haile Mariam put it, formed the party's backbone, advocated its policy and propagated Marxism-Leninism [3, No. 9, 1984, p. 140].

The Founding Congress of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia was held from the 6th to 10th of September 1984. As is stressed in the Message of the CPSU Central Committee to the Congress, "the foundation of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia, the major victory of the Ethiopian working class and all working people, is the natural outcome of the consistent effort to translate into life the ideals of the Ethiopian revolution" [6, September 7, 1984].

Although the party has been set up in an agrarian country where the working class is so far small in size, its name is indicative of the goals and the course of the new political vanguard and of its class orientation. The WPE Rules, adopted by the Congress, read: "The WPE is a core from which the workers of Ethiopia and the working people in general, derive political leadership in their struggle to build a socialist society in which equality, prosperity and freedom shall abound and exploitation of man by man shall be abolished" [10, p. 1].

The leaders of the workers' Party of Ethiopia are quite right in pointing out that transition to socialism involved overcoming considerable difficulties. "To be successful in the task of the construction of the new political system," they say, "the newly formed Workers' Party of Ethiopia has to be strength-

ened in its vanguard role and give all-round leadership to society in accordance with its Programme and Rules." [7, No. 11, 1984, p. 69].

Raising the level of political training and Marxist-Leninist education of the party members is one of the ways of enhancing the WPE vanguard role. With this understanding, it is envisaged to set up several party schools of different levels and to open zonal and, subsequently, provincial political schools. It is also planned to transform the Yekatit'66 political school into an Institute of Social Sciences. Raising the educational, cultural and ideological level of the working people, cultivating in them love for the revolutionary motherland and encouraging a conscientious attitude to work and discipline will also facilitate the attainment of the revolutionary goals.

As the tasks of economic development grow more complex, the party's vanguard role becomes more obvious. The party proves successful in mobilising the masses to the national development effort and its authority grows. Today, implementing the Ten-Year Plan for economic and social development and solving the food problem constitute the party's top-priority task [11].

Another important problem facing the country's political vanguard is promoting the effort to create a new political system. As the party and state leaders see it now, this effort should be directed at "creating the Ethiopian People's Democratic Republic,

which is crucial for building socialism and ensuring the working masses' direct participation in deciding the affairs of the state" [4, No. 13, 1984, p. 98].

Currently, work is under way to elaborate a new constitution and draft laws ensuring justice and equality. Mass organisations are expected to play an important role in the new political system. In its effort to create material prerequisites for socialism, the party is determined to secure for the working class its leading role in society and ensure the trade unions' broad participation in managing production, promoting socialist emulation, and guaranteeing health care, and recreational opportunities for the working people. The association of the working people in mass organisations provides a reliable social basis for the attainment of revolutionary goals, and, at the same time, enriches their members' experience in self-administration and running local government bodies [12].

The Ethiopian revolutionary democrats' experience in setting up a vanguard party is of great international importance and should, therefore, be studied by all countries advancing, or preparing to advance, along the road of socialist-oriented development.

In their search for the ways to solve complicated political, social and economic tasks, the Ethiopian revolutionary democrats rely on the vast experience accumulated by the world revolutionary movement and the proletarian parties. At the same time, they give earnest heed to the peculiarities of Ethiopia's

historical development. Ample evidence of this is provided by the content of the WPE's policy documents and by the nature of reforms it carries out.

This dialectical combination of party's tasks is an earnest of the country's successful advance.

Notes

¹ V. I. Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5.

² *Present-Day Problems and Ethiopia's Foreign Policy*, Moscow, 1982 (in Russian).

³ *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, Moscow.

⁴ *Kommunist*, Moscow.

⁵ *International Affairs*, Moscow.

⁶ *Pravda*, Moscow.

⁷ *World Marxist Review*, Prague.

⁸ *Basic Documents of the Ethiopian Revolution*, Addis Ababa, 1977.

⁹ *Documents and Resolutions of the 2nd COPWE Congress*, Addis Ababa, 1983.

¹⁰ *Rules of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia*. Draft, Addis Ababa, 1984.

¹⁰ *Guidelines on the Economic and Social Development of Ethiopia (1984/85-1993/94)*, Addis Ababa, 1984.

¹¹ *The Workers' Party of Ethiopia. Programme*, Addis Ababa, 1984.

¹² *The Workers' Party of Ethiopia. Rules*, Addis Ababa, 1984.

ETHIOPIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

The principles underlying Socialist Ethiopia's foreign policy took shape in the course of the Ethiopian revolution. One of the early political documents of the revolutionary government, namely the one issued on December 20, 1974, under the title "Ethiopia First: The Origin and Future Development of the Movement" [2, pp. 83-96] and also known as the Political Declaration of the Provisional Military Government, contained a section formulating the country's foreign-policy principles. According to this document:

— Ethiopia's foreign policy is based on fraternal, peaceful relations which it is prepared to maintain with the neighbouring countries [2, p. 96];

— Ethiopia is prepared to establish close and stable relations both with its next-door neighbours and with other countries situated close to it;

— Ethiopia is determined to make common cause with fraternal African countries in defending the unity and independence of the countries on the continent;

— on the international scene, Ethiopia's

policy will be aimed at ensuring universal peace and progress and, in particular, at promoting rapid economic and social progress of the developing countries;

— Ethiopia comes out against any interference in the internal affairs of independent states;

— Ethiopia is determined to pursue a policy of non-alignment [2, p. 96].

The Declaration "Ethiopia First" adopted in the early days of the Revolution along with certain general conceptions [4, p. 21] outlined the main principles of the country's progressive foreign policy. Clearly defined in the Programme of the National-Democratic Revolution of Ethiopia issued in April 1974, these principles envisage the following:

— respect for peace, justice, equality, non-alignment, national independence, national unity and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries [6, p. 20];

— close and active co-operation with the African, Asian and Latin American countries, national liberation movements and progressive organisations dedicated to the struggle against imperialism, neo-colonialism and racism [Ibidem];

— respect for the UN and the OAU Charters;

— close relations with the neighbouring countries and efforts towards promoting the spirit of good-neighbourliness and mutual respect in international relations [Ibidem].

In the course of the revolution, these foreign-policy principles have been supple-

mented with the principles of peaceful co-existence and proletarian internationalism (see [7]).

In the post-revolutionary decade the country had to work hard to translate these principles into life. Above all, this concerns the effort to establish normal relations with the neighbouring African countries.

It is not without difficulties that good-neighbourly relations were established with Kenya, which opted for capitalist-oriented development. When in 1974 Ethiopia was swept by the revolution, the Kenyan government temporarily suspended relations with Ethiopia which had previously been quite fruitful. These relations were resumed in 1975 and have been successfully developing ever since.

Established in 1975, the joint Ethio-Kenyan border commission has been successful in solving various problems related to joint projects undertaken to improve the living conditions of the population in the frontier areas. When, in July 1977, Ethiopia was attacked by Somalia (more details will be found below), Kenya did a great favour to Ethiopia by allowing it to use the port of Mombasa. At a time when Ethiopia's only railway line Addis Ababa-Djibouti was put out of operation by saboteurs this was a highly welcome step. Moreover, the Kenyan government detained on its territory the Egyptian aircraft loaded with the weapons for Somalia [3, p. 115]. Ethiopia and Kenya signed the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation.

In March 1981, a similar treaty was signed by Ethiopia and its another neighbour, the Republic of Djibouti.

At times, there appeared signs of better relations with Ethiopia's western neighbour, Sudan. However, as the Somalian aggression continued, Sudan chose to mar its relations with Ethiopia by concentrating, in mid-1977, a large number of its troops close to the Ethiopian border. Sudan has rendered appreciable aid to the Eritrean secessionists and other counter-revolutionary forces in Ethiopia. For all that, at the end of 1977, Ethiopia managed to somewhat ease the tension in its relations with Sudan.

In 1981, the Foreign Ministers of Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia met in Addis Ababa to discuss the ways of developing co-operation among the three countries. The question of involving Djibouti in such conferences was also raised. However, in 1983-1984, in defiance of Ethiopia's peace initiatives, the Nimeiri regime made other steps to strain its relations with Ethiopia.

Ethiopia seeks a lasting peace in the Horn of Africa. However, its efforts are opposed by the Siad Barre regime in Somalia. In July 1977, expansionist ideas prevailed among the Somalian leaders. Encouraged by the West, and above all by the policy pursued by the United States and certain reactionary Arab regimes, Somalia launched an aggression against its neighbour. Ethiopia, supported by the socialist community countries, made every effort to eliminate the dangerous seat

of war in the Horn of Africa. However, unwilling to listen to the voice of reason, the Somalian government ordered its troops to invade Ethiopia. Part of Ethiopian territory, ranging in its width from 300 to 700 km, was occupied. Ethiopia succeeded in driving away the invaders and preserving its integrity and independence. This was achieved thanks to the resolute action of its revolutionary government, supported by the broad popular masses, and owing to the friendly assistance from the Soviet Union, Cuba, the GDR and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Since then Ethiopia has repeatedly proposed to restore peace and stability in the Horn of Africa in keeping with the UN and the OAU Charters and Resolutions. However, success in this area is prevented by the stand taken by the Somalian government. The Siad Barre regime refuses to recognise the existing borders, supports separatists' groups in Ethiopia and thus impedes the establishment of good-neighbourly relations.

Despite the difficulties in its relations with Somalia and Sudan over the last ten years, Ethiopia has gained authority in Africa and on the international scene. Its relations with many African countries are successfully expanding. It has established especially close ties with the socialist-oriented African countries—Angola, Mosambique, Kongo and Algeria.

Ethiopia is one of the countries that inspired the setting up of a continental organisation, the OAU. Since the inauguration of

the Organisation of African Unity, Ethiopia has taken active part in its work. The OAU headquarters are located in Addis Ababa. However, it was not until after the 1974 revolution that Ethiopia became a truly progressive member of the OAU, an advocate of African unity and a fighter against the vestiges of colonialism and racism on the continent.

Ethiopia gives its firm support to the national liberation struggle waged by the people of Namibia and the African majority in South Africa.

In his message to the Ethiopian people on the occasion of the May Day celebrations in 1984, Mengistu Haile Mariam emphasised the importance of strictly observing the UN Security Council's Resolution No. 435 on Namibia.

Ethiopia supports the peoples of Arab countries in their struggle against the Israeli aggression. Mengistu Haile Mariam's election to the post of the OAU Chairmanship in 1983 symbolised the recognition of Ethiopia's role in the anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist struggle waged by the peoples of Africa.

The General Secretary of the WPE CC and the Chairman of the PMAC, Mengistu Haile Mariam, gives great heed to the problem of overcoming the economic and social backwardness of African countries. In his message to the 7th Session of the OAU Labour Commission, held in April 1984, he stressed that the economic depression in the West, the continuous exploitation of African countries by

transnational corporations and the arms race on which capitalist countries squander billions of dollars annually had an adverse effect on the development of the African continent. The economic growth rates in African countries are steadily increasing while, the problem of unemployment and the problem of providing social security for the masses remain unsolved. In his message, Mengistu Haile Mariam called on the OAU member-countries to work persistently towards reaching the goals formulated in the Lagos Action Plan* and to expand economic co-operation they had launched with the object of gradually overcoming Africa's economic dependence. The message stressed the need for collective action aimed at the effective mobilisation of labour resources, training skilled personnel and improving the social security system.

Ethiopia vigorously works towards turning the African continent into a nuclear-free zone.

The 1970s saw the beginning of a new stage in the activity of the non-aligned movement. While the movement's contribution to the solution of major international problems in the 1970s noticeably grew, its heterogeneity became more obvious and a number of negative tendencies emerged: attempts were taken

* In April 1980, Lagos hosted the Special Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU Member-Countries. The Session adopted a plan of actions directed at expanding pan-African economic co-operation.

to spread the principle of non-alignment from the military sphere to all other relationship with the rest of the world, to make the movement adopt the concept of "equidistance" from the two "superpowers" as its ideological basis, to drive a wedge between the non-aligned countries and the socialist community, to discredit the policy pursued by the Soviet Union, Cuba and other socialist countries and socialist-oriented states involved in the movement.

The situation objectively called for enhancing the progressive forces' contribution to strengthening the anti-imperialist unity of the non-aligned movement.

It is important to note at this point that after the revolution the principle of non-alignment, to which Ethiopia had traditionally adhered, has been filled with a new meaning. The restructuring of the country's internal political, social and economic life and its socialist-oriented development have induced radical changes in Ethiopia's foreign-policy tasks, its former system of alliances and its position in Africa, among other developing countries and on the world scene.

Ethiopia takes a clear-cut, principled position, similar to, or identical with, the stand taken by socialist states and other progressive forces on all the international problems of concern to the non-aligned movement. Anti-imperialist in its content, the policy of non-alignment pursued by Ethiopia highlights the effort to expand ties with the non-aligned socialist-oriented countries in Africa and else-

where and with the socialist countries involved in the movement (among them Cuba and Vietnam).

Ethiopia was in the front rank of those countries which on the eve and in the course of the summit conference of non-aligned movement in Havana (September 1979) rebuffed the attempts of certain circles both within the movement and outside it to denigrate the policy pursued by the socialist states, including Cuba, and to distort the facts about the latter's role in the non-aligned movement and its diplomatic efforts in Africa.

The Ethiopian leaders declared in no uncertain terms that Cuba has rendered its military aid to Ethiopia (as well as to Angola), on request from its legitimate government, in order to help the country to repulse the aggression from without which threatened its territorial integrity and to counter internal reaction which sought to destabilise the situation in the country.

In order to consolidate the anti-imperialist solidarity of the non-aligned countries the world over and to neutralise the attempts to hold Cuba responsible for the controversy within the non-aligned movement and to accuse it of "knocking up a pro-Soviet bloc", the Ethiopian leaders held a number of meetings with statesmen from Cuba, Yugoslavia, Angola, Kampuchea and India on the eve of the 7th summit conference of the heads of state and government of the non-aligned countries (Delhi, March 1983). The participants in these meetings gave a high assess-

ment to Cuba's internationalist aid to African countries, as well as to its role of the co-ordinating member of the non-aligned movement determined to invigorate and make more effective the movement's activity on the international scene.

Ethiopia's current anti-imperialist initiatives within the non-aligned movement have acquired an especially concrete and effective character.

This can be exemplified by the country's stand on the US invasion of Grenada. In his message to Indira Gandhi, Mengistu Haile Mariam the then Chairman of the non-aligned movement, pointed out that the US intervention in Grenada posed a grave threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of most non-aligned countries which are in no position to effectively counter the superpower's military effort. Therefore, it was essential for all the members of non-aligned movement, the message stressed, to co-ordinate their actions in the context of US intervention in Grenada.

One of the important goals of Ethiopia's foreign policy is to maintain the unity of non-aligned countries [5, p. 248].

In the early 1980, the internal controversy in the movement was aggravated by the signs of crisis in the OAU caused, as was repeatedly stressed by African leaders, by imperialist intervention.

Ethiopia is displaying political maturity and flexibility. This is confirmed by the steps it took during the summit conference of the

OAU, held in Addis Ababa in June 1984 in order to find a way out of the impasse in which the OAU has found itself.

Ethiopia strongly condemns the manoeuvres undertaken by the imperialists in order to weaken the OAU and resolutely opposes their attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of African countries.

Thus, Ethiopia's policy has a noticeable positive effect on the character and orientation of both the OAU and the non-aligned movement and promotes concerted action of the progressive forces.

Ethiopia plays an increasingly active part in the worldwide struggle for peace and international security, for averting nuclear disaster. It strongly condemns US imperialism's current policy of escalating aggression against Nicaragua, building up tensions in Central America as a whole, striving to deploy first-strike missiles in Western Europe and to militarise outer space.

In his Report to the Founding Congress of the WPE on September 6, 1984, Mengistu Haile Mariam reiterated that the Soviet Union played a prominent role in the struggle for peace [1, September 6, 1984]. He pointed out that Ethiopia fully supported the constructive proposals which had repeatedly been advanced by the Soviet Union in the United Nations and other forums and which, as Ethiopia saw it, were consonant with the aspiration of the world's peoples. He called to strengthen the unity of all forces fighting for peace and voiced the WPE's solidarity

with all parties, peoples and states working towards a stronger peace throughout the world [Ibidem].

At all UNESCO-sponsored forums Ethiopia supports the initiatives put forward by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, which are making common cause with the developing countries by urging a new international information order.

Ethiopia's foreign policy highlights a drive for expanding all-round co-operation with socialist countries. As was pointed out in the Report to the Founding Congress, Ethiopia's treaties of friendship and co-operation with socialist countries yielded increasingly appreciable results in all areas of economic, social and cultural development [Ibidem]. A great number of major instruments form the legal foundation for Ethiopia's versatile co-operation with socialist countries. Among them are the treaties of friendship and co-operation with the USSR, the GDR, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, North Korea and the declarations on co-operation and solidarity with Cuba, Poland and Romania. The signing of the Soviet-Ethiopian Treaty of Co-operation and Solidarity on November 20, 1978, in Moscow was an important landmark in the history of constantly expanding Soviet-Ethiopian relations. The joint Communique stressed that as a result of the working visit paid by Mengistu Haile Mariam to the USSR (Oct.31-Nov.9, 1985) the two countries' positions on the key issues of today fully coincided [8, November 12, 1985].

Ethiopia expands its trade and economic relations with Western countries both on the multilateral basis, through the European Economic Community, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund, and on a bilateral basis. This especially concerns Ethiopia's relations with Italy, West Germany, Canada, France and Sweden. It should be emphasised that those principles and peculiarities of foreign economic relations which emerged in the past, in the context of Ethiopia's dependence on the capitalist world, are today being modified in line with the country's socialist-oriented development and the expansion of its economic relations with socialist countries on a long-term basis. This enables Ethiopia to reject those terms which the West seeks to impose on it and which can impair its self-sufficiency.

In the face of many difficulties Ethiopia firmly adheres to a policy aimed at promoting peace, security and co-operation.

Notes

¹ *Kommunist*, Moscow, 1984, No. 13.

² *The National-Democratic Revolution in Ethiopia*, Moscow, 1982 (in Russian).

³ *Present-Day Problems and Ethiopia's Foreign Policy*, Moscow, 1982 (in Russian).

⁴ V. I. Sharayev. *Ethiopia Strides into the Future*, Moscow, 1984 (in Russian).

⁵ *Discours prononcés à la sixième conférence des chefs d'Etats et de gouvernements des pays nonalignés*. La Havana, 1980.

- 6 *Basic Documents of the Ethiopian Revolution*, Addis Ababa, 1977.
- 7 *The Workers' Party of Ethiopia. Programme*, Addis Ababa, 1984.
- 8 *Pravda*, Moscow.

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