

ERITREA:

**REVOLUTION
OR
CAPITULATION**

**Eritreans for Liberation in North America (EFLNA)
Association of Eritrean Women in North America (AEWNA)
October 1978**

*Against the Capitulationist Line
of the
“Leaders” of the Eritrean Revolution*

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Introduction

In light of the critical situation facing the Eritrean revolution, the Eritreans for Liberation in North America (EFLNA) in its 9th General Congress held between 14-18 August 1978 and the Association of Eritrean Women in North America (AEWNA) in its 2nd Congress held between 19-20 August 1978 in Washington, D C unanimously resolved to condemn the capitulationist leadership of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and cut off all relations with it. Until making this decision, EFLNA had since its inception supported the EPLF and was its mass organization for the past two years. Since its birth a year ago, AEWNA had also been a mass organization of the EPLF. The stand taken at our congresses is a culmination of a year and a half internal struggle with the EPLF leadership on major questions of strategy and tactics of the Eritrean revolution. The principal differences between us and the EPLF leadership lie on whether to regard Soviet-led revisionism as our enemy or friend especially when it is directly confronting our revolution, on the question of peaceful solution and on how to characterize the Ethiopian military junta.

On these fundamental questions, the EPLF leadership has made serious errors and has departed from the correct line and along with the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) leadership it has capitulated to Soviet led revisionism. At a time when the Soviet revisionists have openly declared and are conducting a counter-revolutionary war against our people's just and revolutionary struggle, at a time when they are committing the grossest crimes against our people, at a time when thousands of Cuban and South Yemeni mercenary troops and Soviet advisors have invaded our country and at a time when the fascist junta with the full backing of Soviet led revisionism is waging the largest war campaign ever to crush our revolution, the leaderships of the two fronts (EPLF and ELF) have embraced Soviet-led revisionism as the 'strategic ally' of the Eritrean revolution and the Ethiopian fascist junta as an 'anti-imperialist force'. Instead of defending the homeland and fight for the basic aspirations of our people for independence and liberation, they have in the most shameless manner betrayed the national struggle and have proclaimed themselves as apologists for Soviet led revisionist aggression. Under the guidance of Soviet revisionism they have renounced the banner of self reliant protracted people's war and are waving the white flag of 'peaceful solution'. Thus, the leaderships of the two fronts have become fifth columnists in the service of Soviet-led revisionism in Eritrea.

Our decision to break off relations with the EPLF leadership and condemn the leaderships of the two fronts is, therefore, based on these irreconcilable differences. Before reaching this decision, our organizations made

every effort to struggle for the correct line within the EPLF. However, in the face of the growing arrogance and demagoguery of the EPLF leaders, our effort was in vain. The EPLF leadership completely violated our democratic rights and on many occasions attempted to impose its capitulationist line on us.

It is therefore under such a circumstance that we have stood up bold to defend our people's revolutionary struggle from the act of treachery. In unison with our heroic people, we have declared that "we will not capitulate, we will struggle through to the end in defense of our revolution.

The capitulationist line being followed by the EPLF and ELF leaderships is a big setback but temporary. Despite this shameless betrayal, we have full confidence in our people to continue the struggle through to the end. Our people are a heroic people who have been tempered in 17 years of armed struggle and will never give up their demand for nothing short of total independence. At present despite the treacherous course taken by the leaderships of the two fronts, our heroic people and fighters continue the struggle and are dealing death blows to the Ethiopian aggressors and their masters. Since the EPLF has failed to lead the Eritrean revolution, what is lacking in Eritrea today is a revolutionary vanguard that can successfully lead the revolution to victory. Nonetheless, we have no doubt that this vanguard will be born in the flames of our people's revolutionary struggle. On our part, we have set forth to expose and put up a tough struggle against the capitulationist line of the leaderships of EPLF and ELF in front of our people as well as in front of the whole world.

When in its 7th Congress EFLNA decided to become a mass organization of the EPLF it was in accepting the EPLF as its leader. It was also in view of this that it reorganized itself into the Association of Eritrean Students in North America (AESNA) and the Association of Eritrean Women in North America (AEWNA). Under the present condition, however, our task is to organize all patriotic Eritreans in North America into one patriotic mass organization and link up our struggle with our people's armed national liberation struggle. AESNA has thus changed its name into Eritreans for Liberation in North America and AEWNA has resolved to wage its struggle under the guidance of EFLNA.

Determined to continue the struggle, EFLNA and AEWNA have taken a firm stand on the side of our heroic people. It is therefore to clarify our position and shed some light on the grave situation facing our revolution that we have prepared this document. The aim of the pamphlet is to bring to the open the line of demarcation between ourselves and the EPLF leadership and to expose the capitulationist line being pursued by the EPLF and ELF leaderships. As a major part of our document are included the series of letters which we wrote to the Political Bureau of EPLF and the EPLF's leadership's official statements on the questions of our differences as printed in its official organ *Vanguard* as well as parts of the message it sent to our recent congresses.

The treachery of the EPLF and EFL leaderships is not a new phenomenon in our people's struggle. In the past also our people were betrayed many times. As a way of relating the present situation in our struggle with the past experiences of our people's struggle and our movement here in North America, we have also included short sections on the history of resistance of our people and the history of EFLNA. In the future we will provide broad analysis on the experiences of our revolution and its present situation, and from time to time we will endeavor to scientifically sum up our experiences and the lessons of our people's struggle.

The Struggle of the Eritrean People

The Eritrean people have a long and glorious history of resistance against foreign invasion and domination. Ever since the first foreign invaders, Ottoman Turks, set foot on Eritrean soil in 1557, the Eritrean masses have put up heroic resistance. Successive colonial invaders—Anglo-Egyptian expansionists (1865-1876) Italian colonialists (1885-1941) British colonialists (1941-1952) and the imperialist backed Ethiopian occupationists were met with stiff resistance from the Eritrean people whose indomitable love for independence, developed and nurtured in the struggle against external aggression and plunder, rallied them to fight and cement their national unity with the blood of the heroic martyrs.

The heroic people of Eritrea have traversed through many twists and turns to achieve their age-old aspiration for national independence and democracy. The anti-colonial struggle of the Eritrean people, however, has suffered repeated setbacks throughout its history due to the numerous imperialist intrigues primarily from a lack of correct revolutionary leadership.

Eritrea was forged into a multi-national country under the brutal and fascistic rule of Italian colonialism. During Italian rule, the Eritrean peasantry, the emergent multi-national working class and other patriotic elements waged sporadic uprisings, which reached intense proportions during the second world-war. However, due to the spontaneous and uncoordinated nature of the resistance, the Eritrean people became victim of yet another imperialist power—the British colonialists who occupied Eritrea in 1941.

The period of British occupation in Eritrea was marked by the growth of the patriotic movements and the development of organized resistance around the banner of national liberation. Several political organizations were formed in the 40's—which engulfed wide sectors of the broad masses of workers, peasants and other patriotic elements. Though most of the political parties raised the demand for national independence—the reflection of the genuine aspiration of the Eritrean masses—the leadership of the patriotic movement was in the hands of the petty bourgeoisie and even certain feudal elements who at critical moments in the independence struggle wavered and conciliated with imperialism. The British imperialists concocted an insidious plan of partitioning Eritrea between Ethiopia and the Sudan in order to perpetuate their imperialist interests and to this end they incited and fanned religious antagonisms amongst the people. The Eritrean people vehemently opposed this imperialist plan and put up a united demand for national independence. However, the British imperialists and the expansionist Ethiopian feudal regime made concerted efforts to subvert the independence movement from within by utilizing the landed aristocracy, the

high echelons of the coptic church and the upper petty bourgeoisie whose interests were intertwined with those of imperialism and formed the unionist party. The unionist party, subverting the unity of the patriotic movement, betrayed the national interests and became a tool of imperialist-backed Ethiopian expansionism in Eritrea.

The U.S. imperialists, who had become the dominant imperialist power after the Second World War, backed the Ethiopian expansionists in imposing a 'federation' between Eritrea and Ethiopia through the United Nations resolution 390/V which was implemented in 1952. The imperialist-instigated Eritrean-Ethiopian 'federation' was a thinly disguised annexation of Eritrea by Ethiopia which was formally declared in 1962. The Eritrean people, who never reconciled with foreign occupation, persisted in their struggle for national independence. During the so-called federation period—the mass movement of workers, students and other patriotic elements intensified, militant demonstrations, strikes and protests marked this period which were repeatedly crushed by the Ethiopian occupationists. With the formation of an underground movement the Eritrean Liberation Movement of the workers and the urban petty bourgeoisie the patriotic movement developed. However, this movement was liquidated by the petty bourgeoisie adventurist and terrorist tendencies that became dominant in the movement and fell victim to the fascistic repressions of the Ethiopian occupationists.

September 1961, (the year preceding Ethiopia's declared annexation of Eritrea) witnessed the outbreak of armed struggle. This marked the end of the period of peaceful struggle—which had previously dominated the Eritrean people's national liberation movement. The Eritrean masses, who learnt through bitter experience that only armed struggle can lead them to victory wholeheartedly embraced the armed struggle which rapidly spread throughout the countryside. The leadership of the armed struggle, however, was seized by a group of right-wing petty bourgeois and feudal elements residing abroad who formed the Eritrean Liberation Front. The ELF leadership which represented the reactionary line of the right-wing petty bourgeoisie and feudal class had the aim only of using the armed struggle as a means of pressuring the United Nations to intervene and bring negotiated 'independence' to Eritrea where the Ethiopian exploiters would only be replaced by Eritrean exploiting classes. With this in mind the ELF leaders did not politically mobilize and unite the Eritrean masses—instead, in order to ensure their bourgeois, feudal class interests, the ELF leaders resorted to crude feudal tactics of dividing the people on backward, religious, regional and tribal ground. The bourgeois and feudal politics of the ELF leadership caused great harm to the unity and development of the armed national liberation movement.

In the late 60's the outright reactionary line of the ELF leadership came under attack with the development of a democratic and progressive rectification movement among the fighters. The internal struggle developed with, on the one hand the democratic forces demanding change and

strengthening their forces and on the other hand the reactionary leadership resorting to more and more repressive and fascist measures to crush the democratic movement. This culminated in the split within the ELF and the democratic forces forming the EPLF in 1970.

The EPLF set out to rectify the damage caused by the outright reactionary leadership of ELF and charting a revolutionary program, mobilized and organized the masses to wage a protracted people's war against the imperialist-zionist backed Ethiopian occupationists. Within a matter of a few years, the EPLF developed from a weak, divided and small force into a strong, united and large people's front with deep roots among the masses. The First Congress of EPLF held in January 1977 adopted the National Democratic Program and crystalized the revolutionary path forward. Guided by the revolutionary line of its national democratic program the EPLF mobilized, organized and armed the masses, built a strong people's army which has scored stunning victories over the colossal forces of the imperialist backed Ethiopian occupationists, and liberated a large part of the country in a short period. Mobilizing the initiative of the masses, the EPLF carried out land distribution and economic reconstruction in the liberated areas. The EPLF waged militant struggle against the arch reactionary line in the national liberation movement, mobilizing the masses for national unity and against the reactionary civil war launched by the ELF leaders and against the opportunist pro-U S. imperialist Sabbe clique which was isolated and ousted from the EPLF in 1976. With the revolutionary line strengthened in EPLF tremendous achievements were scored. These achievements struck terror in the heart of the external enemies of the Eritrean revolution as well as internal opportunists who see nothing but their own destruction in the growing militancy and consciousness of the Eritrean masses.

The Eritrean people's armed struggle, one of the major factors leading to the crumbling of Haile Selassie's puppet regime, threatened even more the fate of the imperialist-groomed fascist military junta which seized power in Ethiopia in September 1974. The U S. imperialists, whose dominance in the region was being threatened by the Soviet revisionists, while providing massive military and economic support to the Ethiopian military junta, began to also prop up the feudal monarchist gang of 'Ethiopian Democratic Union' as a possible alternative. They also began to prop up the opportunist Sabbe clique as a "third force" in the Eritrean national liberation movement to prepare for a possible neo-colonial solution to Eritrea.

The fascist Ethiopian military junta, who was kneeling under the mighty blows of the Eritrean people's armed struggle and the democratic movement of the Ethiopian masses, began soliciting the aid of the Soviet-led revisionists to save itself from its imminent doom. The Soviet-led revisionists began to massively arm the fascist junta and provide it with an all-out political, diplomatic and economic support. The Eritrean people's national liberation movement thus came under the powerful onslaught of the counter-revolutionary alliance of both the U.S. led imperialists and the

Soviet-led revisionists, the fascist Ethiopian junta and all reaction. Internally within the Eritrean national liberation movement signs of vacillation, conciliation and capitulation became evident in the reactionary ELF leadership and the EPLF leadership. While the entire masses and the heroic fighters of the EPLF were mercilessly dealing death blows to the fascist occupationist troops backed by Soviet advisors and Cuban mercenaries. The ELF leadership was openly claiming the Soviet Union as the 'strategic ally' of the Eritrean revolution and the EPLF leadership who were skillfully masking their opportunism, vacillated on the question of identifying and combating the Soviet-led revisionists as the enemy of the Eritrean revolution. As revealed in subsequent developments both the leaderships of ELF and EPLF consolidating their opportunist line in the movement openly capitulated to Soviet-led revisionism by declaring it their strategic ally denying the very existence of the Soviet, Cuban and South Yemeni aggression in Eritrea and calling for peaceful negotiation with the fascist military junta which they now identify as an anti-imperialist regime.

Thus, the Eritrean people's national liberation movement is experiencing yet another critical moment in its history where a powerful external attack and internal sabotage is at work to hamper the heroic struggle of our people from achieving genuine national independence and people's democracy

History of EFLNA

The history of our organization, the Eritreans for Liberation of North America (EFLNA) is inseparably linked with the history and development of our people's revolutionary struggle in general and the EPLF in particular. Ever since its formation in 1971 EFLNA's role in the Eritrean people's armed national liberation struggle has been that of active participation, consistently aligning with the interests and aspirations of the Eritrean people for national independence and liberation and all along standing for the correct revolutionary line. In defence of the Eritrean revolution and in support of the EPLF EFLNA has waged long and merciless struggle against all the external and internal enemies of our people's struggle. EFLNA has waged an uncompromising struggle against the Ethiopian aggressors, U.S. imperialism, zionism and the Soviet revisionists, against the reactionary ELF leaders, the opportunist line they represented, the counter-revolutionary civil war they instigated and their concerted efforts to divide the patriotic struggle; against the counter-revolutionary Sabbe clique, the traitorous course it followed and its attempts to impose its reactionary line on the EPLF. It is the record of history that our stand on the civil war, national unity and other major questions has been consistently clear and revolutionary. EFLNA's organizational effort has been geared towards providing maximum support for the revolution by every possible means it has had at its disposal, in publicizing our people's just cause and mobilizing international support, raising modest amounts of funds in order to contribute to the self-reliant efforts of the revolution and working to forge and strengthen the principled unity of patriotic and revolutionary Eritreans abroad around the EPLF so as to isolate the internal reactionaries and consolidate and guarantee the hegemony of the revolutionary forces in the struggle.

Patriotic Eritreans residing in North America have always sympathized and identified themselves with the just struggle of their people. When in December 1970 the autocratic regime of Haile Selassie savagely massacred peasants and workers in Keren, Eritreans residing in the United States were deeply enraged and began to organize themselves in order to play their part in the armed national liberation struggle of the Eritrean people. In February 1971, the 'Eritrean Youth for Liberation in North America' was founded. Five months later, in June 1971 the organization held its first congress and took the name 'Eritreans for Liberation in North America.' At this initial congress, EFLNA took a firm position with regards to the situation then prevailing in Eritrea, that was full support for the EPLF and condemnation of the reactionary ELF leadership and its backward, divisive and anti-people practices.

Taking a firm position on the side of the progressive forces, EFLNA set out to play an active role in our people's struggle. As a necessary precondition to the realization of this objective the task of building a strong mass organization of patriotic Eritreans in North America was taken up as the primary one.

EFLNA charted its concrete tasks to be:

1. The mobilization of Eritreans residing in North America and create the necessary conditions for their proper participation in their people's liberation struggle.

2. Politicizing its members in revolutionary political education.

3. Widely publicize the Eritrean people's just struggle.

4. Raise funds for the armed struggle.

5. Struggle for the principled unity of Patriotic Eritean organizations abroad.

6. Prepare able comrades to join the armed struggle.

In its effort to implement these tasks EFLNA has struggled to deepen its theoretical orientation and to develop its practical experiences. Through investigation EFLNA studied and took clear position on the questions that were raised in the Eritrean liberation movement. From time to time by summing up its work it struggle to correct its shortcomings, and by learning more it made every effort to develop itself in every aspect. From a weak and small organization at the beginning EFLNA has through struggle grown and consolidated itself into a politically mature mass organization. Considerable effort has been made to mobilize a large number of Eritreans, arm the members with revolutionary theory and consolidate the organization. EFLNA has considered its active revolutionary work and, in particular the adoption of a correct political line as the prime condition for creating an organic link with the revolution at home and uniting the revolutionary forces. As our 4th congress resolved, EFLNA always recognized the need for "the continued elaboration, in all publications and resolutions, of our total commitment to the correct revolutionary line of the Eritrean People's Liberation Forces" and providing maximum support to the progressive forces in the Eritrean struggle.

It was in light of this that we threw all our support behind the EPLF. EFLNA supported the EPLF convinced that after ten years of ELF's reactionary practice the EPLF represented the historical trend—the revolutionary force in Eritrea. Our position was based on a sound analysis of the situation at home. It was proven that the EPLF was a revolutionary organization—a culmination of the bitter fight between the reactionary and revolutionary lines waged during the course of the preceding ten years since the armed struggle began in 1961. The EPLF proved in practice that it was the vanguard of the Eritrean revolution. We stated then.

unquestionably the EPLF has emerged as the vanguard of the Eritrean revolution, victoriously rallying and leading the Eritrean masses in the national democratic task of destroying the oppressive forces of reaction, colonialism and imperialism. (EFLNA, Liberation, March 1973)

The program of the Eritrean People's Liberation Forces calls for a broad-based national united front and seeks to rally and lead the Eritrean masses in the national democratic task of destroying the oppressive forces of reaction, colonialism, collaborationism, zionism and imperialism. The insistence on the peaceful resolution of secondary contradictions, the realization of national unity against colonial aggression, and the emphasis on mass mobilization are the most persistent national democratic demands and principal features of its overall strategy (EFLNA, *Liberation*, April-May 1973)

EPLF'S role as the vanguard of the Eritrean revolution was witnessed by the unprecedented victories won. Guided by the national democratic program, which was formalized in its First Congress held in January 1977, the EPLF built a formidable people's army the EPLA, liberated most of the country following the correct principle of self reliance in all its revolutionary work organized, politicized and armed the masses, led the peasants in land reform movement, made tireless efforts to transform the liberated areas and enable the masses to take political power and provided the masses with social services Hence, until the leadership capitulated to Soviet revisionism and endangered the fate of the revolution, the EPLF was a true defender and leader of the Eritrean people's aspirations for independence and democracy

It was this correct line that EFLNA wholeheartedly supported and worked, with all its might towards its implementation EFLNA always hailed the EPLF as the vanguard of the Eritrean revolution. We praised and expressed our joys over each and every victory the EPLF scored its correct positions on all the problems facing the Eritrean revolution Our resolutions in all our past congresses, our statements, publications and our practical struggle attest to this fact Thus, EFLNA's staunch support for the EPLF was based on our commonality of outlook conviction on both of us upholding the revolutionary line, on both of us standing and fighting for the true independence and liberation of our country and people. This was our common denominator That is to say we supported and worked with the EPLF as long as it followed the correct revolutionary line, fought for the complete liberation of the homeland, waged an uncompromising struggle against all the enemies of our revolution and struggled for the interests and aspirations of our people. EFLNA's support for EPLF emanated from our free will, for the sake of the correct line and the demands of our people for independence and liberation This we made clear long ago in our fifth congress when we stated that EFLNA.

as part of our people's struggle has not only the right but also the responsibility to express its views, commend or criticize, support or condemn, accept or reject in regard to any issue pertaining to the Eritrean revolution Exercizing this right we must strongly brace up ourselves so that we don't become passive followers or an instrument of opportunists. (EFLNA, *Tasks of EFLNA*, September 1974)

It is therefore basing ourselves on this right and responsibility of ours to support and defend the Eritrean revolution that we supported the EPLF when it upheld the revolutionary line and have now condemned the EPLF

leadership and severed all relations with it as it has departed from the correct line and committed an act of treachery against our beloved homeland and our heroic people

Throughout its history EFLNA, in championing the correct line in the Eritrean struggle, actively fought to defend and consolidate it. On every issue of the revolution manifesting the life and death struggle between the two contending lines—the revolutionary and the reactionary—the new bourgeois democratic and the old bourgeois democratic—EFLNA has always stood firmly in defense of the correct one and forcefully fought against the reactionary one. To elaborate on some of the important questions which we waged fierce struggle in defence of the correct line, we will discuss them in some detail below.

1. At the time of its formation, EFLNA was presented with the most critical problem of the revolution, the civil war—to take a firm stand on. The criminal civil war that ravaged the Eritrean struggle for two and a half years was declared by the reactionary ELF leaders to liquidate the EPLF. The reactionary ELF leaders declared the civil war in their so-called First National Congress held in December 1971 and actually sparked it in February 1972. The EPLF condemned this dangerous and counter-revolutionary act as detrimental to the revolution and raised the correct slogan: All our guns against the primary enemy, democratic dialogue for secondary contradiction. EFLNA, on its part, fully supported this revolutionary stand of the EPLF and condemned the civil war and indicted the ELF leaders holding them fully responsible for this anti-rational, anti-people and counter-revolutionary activity. Our stand was clear:

We hail the EPLF for this correct stand and fully support its constant efforts to find a democratic and just solution to the burning question of national and organizational unity that has plagued the Eritrean revolution since its inception in 1961. Eritreans for Liberation in North America reiterates its unequivocal and resolute condemnation of all those who resort to violence against genuine freedom fighters in order to settle differences or resolve contradictions that are necessarily non-antagonistic. At the same time, it firmly supports and strongly identifies with all genuine Eritrean freedom fighters who are striving hard to bring about the unity of all patriotic fighters.

EFLNA made an extensive propaganda campaign among Eritreans as well as the world public exposing the counter-revolutionary nature of the civil war and its instigators—the ELF leaders—and made constant calls for its cessation. By opposing the civil war EFLNA helped in the exposure of the reactionary ELF leaders and in mobilizing support for the EPLF and in affirming the correctness of its line.

(2) In defence of the democratic and revolutionary forces as well as the democratic rights of the Eritrean people, EFLNA has gained experience in exposing and isolating the reactionary forces within the Eritrean liberation movement. Our struggle against the ELF leaders, the reactionary line they represent and all their reactionary practices has been consistent. We exposed the ELF leaders for the counter-revolutionary civil

war they declared, their anti-people practices, their anti-national propaganda in representing the Eritrean people as Arabs and Eritrea as an Arab country and their reactionary approach to national unity. At the same time we praised the rank and file ELF fighters for the stiff resistance they put up against the Ethiopian aggressors and incessantly called upon them to oppose the reactionary line and practices of their leaders so as to close ranks with their EPLF fighter comrades and deal the enemy a combined blow. Every publication we have put out is witness to this fact. The ELF leaders themselves fully know what a thorn or in their own words what a 'cancer' we have been to them.

The struggle we have been waging against the Sabbe clique has also been equally thorough and persistent. At the time when EPLF and the ex-Foreign Mission the Sabbe clique had formed a tactical alliance, EFLNA, aware of the delicate relationship while working for its careful handling, never kept quiet whenever the clique distorted the nature of the Eritrean revolution and the EPLF. EFLNA opposed the clique's manipulative and swindling activities to assert itself as the leader of the revolution and impose its grip on Eritrean patriots residing abroad. As the clique attempted to impose its reactionary line on the EPLF, EFLNA consistently sided with the EPLF. We condemned the Sabbe clique for signing the infamous 'Khartoum Agreement' with the ELF leaders. EFLNA enthusiastically hailed the expulsion of the Sabbe clique from the EPLF in March 1976. In a special statement we said.

It is a political victory for the EPLF and the Eritrean revolution. It is a reflection of the consolidation of the revolutionary line and will definitely accelerate the advance of the revolution. It proves that the revolutionary line, the line that represents the toiling masses has been consolidated, making it uncomfortable for reactionaries and opportunists to remain in the ranks of the people, and forcing them to jump out. It means that the reactionary clique that had obstructed the EPLF from developing close relations with revolutionary governments and movements that has been swept away (EFLNA's *View on the "Khartoum Agreement,"* November 1975).

Since then EFLNA has been carrying out a continuous propaganda campaign in exposing the Sabbe clique as a counter-revolutionary force serving the interests of U.S. imperialism. Our opposition to the clique's attempts to create a so-called 'third-force' and to obstruct the national unity process has been firm and without slackening.

(3) Recognizing principled national unity as a principal condition for guaranteeing the full victory of the Eritrean revolution, EFLNA has always worked towards its realization. Like the EPLF, EFLNA maintained that the correct road to national unity is through the formation of the national united front. EFLNA's opposition to the civil war was based on our sincere desire for genuine national unity and hence that is why while we opposed the civil war we simultaneously made continuous calls for national unity. In early 1975 when the civil war was brought to cessation and the fighters of the two fronts (EPLF and ELF) joined hands against the enemy we called for the immediate formation of a united front. EFLNA struggled in support of

the EPLF's effort to form the national united front with the ELF. At the same time we expressed our strong opposition and condemnation of the ELF's leaders and the Sabbe clique's concerted efforts to sabotage the revolution and impose their reactionary line in regards to national unity on the people and the fighters. When the two reactionary groups signed the 'Khartoum Agreement' in September 1975 our stand was clear. We condemned it and reiterated that "It is only the formation of a united front that can create the conditions for fostering unity of will and action of the fighters and the broad masses. We believe that the united front is the first step towards the formation of a single national democratic front in Eritrea." (EFLNA's *View on the Khartoum Agreement*, November 1975)

Throughout the years 1975, 1976 and 1977, a bitter struggle ensued on the question of national unity. While the EPLF struggled for the correct approach—the united front, the ELF pushed for a quick merger. Our position was not only support but also systematic agitation for the formation of the united front. Our sixth, seventh and eighth congresses resolved on this position. EFLNA not only wholeheartedly supported the minimum program on the formation of the national united front which the EPLF's First Congress adopted but also made every effort towards its implementation. Consistent with its principled stand, EFLNA hailed the unity agreements reached between the two fronts (EPLF and ELF) in October 1977 and March 1978. However, since we have now come to the conclusion that the leaderships of the two fronts have capitulated to Soviet revisionist pressure we cannot but regard the unity agreement holding between them as an instrument for further capitulation to Soviet revisionism.

In order to promote the national democratic line, EFLNA geared its entire organizational effort towards mobilizing the maximum possible support for the Eritrean revolution. Our effort in producing and distributing revolutionary literature to be used for raising the level of consciousness not only of our members but also patriotic Eritreans abroad and the fighters and the broad masses at home has been modest. Convinced that our struggle can achieve true victory only if it follows the self-reliant road and primarily depends on the potential of its own people and resources, EFLNA made special efforts to raise as much funds as possible. Thus, over the years our contribution to our revolution in terms of funds has greatly increased. This has been the result of the conscious self-sacrificing effort made by our members. It is a reflection of the heightened political consciousness of EFLNA which has been achieved through years of protracted struggle in politicizing its members.

Ever since its formation, EFLNA has considered publicizing the Eritrean struggle as one of its chief tasks. During the early 70's when the Sabbe clique was the Foreign Mission of the EPLF, EFLNA struggled hard to break the wall of isolation and to combat the slanderous propaganda campaign of our enemies as well as the distorted reportage of the ELF leaders and the Sabbe clique. EFLNA spared no effort in publicizing the just, popular and

revolutionary nature of the Eritrean struggle and expose the nature of our enemies as well as their counter-revolutionary policies to crush the Eritrean revolution EFLNA waged strong propaganda campaigns against the Ethiopian aggressors, Eritrean traitors, Ethiopian chauvinists, the U S imperialists, the Israeli zionists and the Soviet revisionist aggression in our country In all our literature we defended the just and revolutionary nature of our people's struggle against the ferocious attacks of opportunists and demagogues. We exposed the fascistic nature of the military junta in Ethiopia. At the same time we widely publicized the EPLF and the revolutionary deeds it practiced—the shining military victories scored, its self-reliant efforts, the struggle it waged to organize and arm the masses and solve their democratic questions. Today our people's heroic struggle has become a well known issue throughout the world and enjoys warm support among a large number of progressive and revolutionary forces in the world.

Another chief task which EFLNA has given special attention to is the unity of all patriotic and revolutionary Eritreans around a correct political line. From the outset we struggled for the unity of patriotic organizations abroad under EPLF leadership With this in mind EFLNA struggled to forge good relations with the Eritreans for Liberation in Europe (EFLE) and the Eritrean student movement in the Middle East. It was in realization of the necessity of uniting patriotic Eritreans that EFLNA took the initiative and played an active part in signing the Pavia Declaration in 1973 with EFLE and GUES Cairo Our sincere desire and active struggle for the unity of the democratic forces of the Eritrean liberation movement was based on our firm belief that the granite like unity of all patriotic and revolutionary forces around the EPLF was an indispensable condition for the victory of our revolution. In this spirit EFLNA decided in its seventh congress to become EPLF's mass organization. To us this step was historic for it 'strengthened the unity of the progressive forces and accelerates the fall of the reactionaries and opportunists in Eritrea. We assessed the significance of our becoming a mass organization of the EPLF in that the unity of all progressive and patriotic forces under the leadership of the EPLF is absolutely necessary to isolate and smash the reactionaries within the liberation movement, defeat the Ethiopian aggressors and build a genuinely independent and democratic Eritrea. By uniting with the EPLF EFLNA was able to play an even more active role in the revolution. We participated fully in the First Congress of the EPLF by sending delegates. Once EFLNA resolutely asserted that it followed the political leadership of the EPLF and linked itself organizationally with the EPLF it struggled in strict observance of the principle of democratic centralism It channeled its views and criticisms through the proper channels. It maintained close and direct connection with the field by continuously sending representatives. In its eighth congress, EFLNA, in order to strengthen its unity with the other mass organizations of EPLF and bring its organizational structure into correspondence with the other mass organizations, reorganized itself into AESNA and AEWNA. On the basis of the change brought, AESNA fully

participated in forming the Association of Eritrean Students in its first congress held in Keren in early May 1978

History thus testifies that EFLNA attached great importance to the unity of the democratic and revolutionary forces of the Eritrean revolution under the leadership of EPLF. In defence of the correct line, in support of the EPLF and for the consolidation of the principled unity of the patriotic and revolutionary forces EFLNA waged stern struggle against divisive, anarchist and other reactionary tendencies within its ranks. Those who opposed our support for the EPLF were roundly exposed and ejected out of our organization. In spite of all these efforts on the part of EFLNA to unite the revolutionary forces and consolidate the national democratic line, the EPLF leadership has acted otherwise and has hampered the unity of the patriotic forces. As we warned in our letter of April 1 1978 to EPLF Political Bureau, the EPLF leadership by giving in to the enemy has become the greatest splitter of the unity of the democratic forces of the Eritrean revolution. EFLNA, continuing its firm stand on the principled unity of the democratic forces, has now disassociated itself from the national treachery being committed by the EPLF leadership and has now decided to remain on the correct road rather than capitulate. The capitulationist EPLF leadership even went as far as trampling underfoot our democratic right to express our views by banning our literature from distribution and attempting to impose its reactionary line on us by force.

From the foregoing, it therefore becomes evident what EFLNA throughout its history stood, and today stands, for. The EPLF leadership knows fully well the positive role played by EFLNA in the Eritrean struggle. This is for instance what it said about EFLNA in its political report to its first congress held in January 1977

In the beginning of 1970 a few who sympathised with their people's struggle began their movement by forming an association called the Eritreans for Liberation. When at that time the contradictions within the Eritrean revolution sharpened and the EPLF separated (split) this association condemned the reactionary line and practice of the Revolutionary Command (ELF Leadership Ed.) and supported the EPLF. In waging its struggle not only has it (EFLNA Ed.) been mobilizing all Eritreans in North America but also is one of the few highly conscious and highly organized mass associations. In all political questions its stand has been clearly revolutionary and has been struggling by strongly siding with the EPLF. When the ex-foreign mission severed its relations with the EPLF it (EFLNA Ed.) declared its stand with the field (EPLF Ed.) and in the congress it held after a few months it has officially declared itself a mass organization of the EPLF. Since its inception EFLNA has played a big role in organizing Eritreans in North America and cultivating them in revolutionary theory exposing the reactionary line in the Eritrean struggle, publicizing EPLF raising material support for the EPLF and participating in the armed struggle and other different task.

Thus our history clearly tells that we have consistently stood for the correct line, for the independence of our country and for the liberation of our

people. It is therefore to keep this tradition of revolutionary struggle that we have disassociated ourselves from the EPLF leadership and have decided to expose its capitulationist line.

Differences We Hold With EPLF Leadership

The questions that separate us with the EPLF leadership are questions of principle and strategy. In this section we will deal with our differences—on the question of friends and enemies, on revisionism, on the fascist Dergue and on peaceful solution—but before we go into this a brief assessment of the present situation in Eritrea and in particular the alignment and balance of forces in the past two years is in order.

The past two years have been the years in which the balance of forces decisively tipped in favor of the Eritrean revolution. All along, the Eritrean revolution held the strategic initiative while the Ethiopian occupation forces were on retreat. It was during the past two years that the Eritrean revolution scored unprecedented victories. The Eritrean Peoples Liberation Army (EPLA) took the revolutionary war from the countryside into the heart of cities, and in the most spectacular manner liberated several medium and large size cities such as Nacfa, Ghinda, Keren, Dekemhare etc. All the strategic highways were brought under the full control of the EPLA. By the beginning of 1978 the enemy forces were under complete siege in the five cities they still held. For all practical purposes Ethiopian colonial occupation was completely defeated. In the liberated areas the work of reconstruction and the task of organizing and arming the masses was in full swing. In the liberated villages and cities the masses set up democratic people's assemblies and took political power. Abroad the Eritrean revolution gained broad internationalist support. Thus by the beginning of 1978 the Eritrean people's struggle was on the verge of complete victory.

On the other hand, the enemy was in the most desperate situation. The fascist junta's repeated attempts to hold on to its colonial grip failed miserably. It became clearly evident that without intensified outside support Ethiopian colonial occupation would completely collapse. It is therefore at this critical stage that Soviet revisionism came to the rescue of the junta. Starting from the beginning of 1977 Soviet-led revisionism replacing U.S. imperialism as the junta's main backer has been providing the fascist Ethiopian regime with all-round military, political and diplomatic support. The Soviet revisionists have poured into Ethiopia more than one billion dollars worth of arms including MIG fighters, tanks, artillery, sophisticated rocket launchers and ground to air missiles. 17,000 Cuban mercenary troops and thousands of Soviet advisors have been deployed to help the junta in suppressing the Ethiopian people's struggle and to "crush" the Eritrean national liberation struggle. In the propaganda front the revisionists have been

praising the junta as an "anti-imperialist" force and its fascism as "revolution" This is for instance what mercenary Chief Fidel Castro said of fascist Menghistu when the latter visited Cuba in early May 1978 "We have great confidence in Comrade Menghistu because of his revolutionary foresight, character audacity and courage. Menghistu is, above all, an honest and revolutionary man Menghistu is a staunch advocate of Marxism-Leninism." *Granma*, May 7, 1978) While praising the junta the revisionists have been at the same time viciously attacking and slandering the just and revolutionary struggle of the Eritrean people as "reaction inspired, imperialist instigated, secessionist movement. On March 15, 1978 a *Pravda* editorial attacked the Eritrean struggle as 'objectively helping the realization of imperialist designs' and reiterated the Kremlin's "ideological and political prerogative to fully support the fascist junta.

The Soviet-led revisionists' intervention against the Eritrean revolution is unparalleled in scale. The millions of dollars worth of arms they have supplied to the fascist junta is being used in the destruction of Eritrean factories, schools, mosques, hospitals and in the killing and displacing of tens of thousands of innocent civilians. Their advisors plan and direct the junta's war efforts, thousands of Cuban mercenary troops have been and are taking active part in battle engagements.

While chiefly engaged in trying to militarily crush the Eritrean revolution the Soviet led revisionists have posed themselves as proponents of "a peaceful solution to the Eritrean question." This, however, has been and is to disguise their true intentions, confuse world public opinion and dupe the Eritrean liberation struggle. Its aim is to disarm the Eritrean people and have them capitulate to the Ethiopian fascist occupationists. Their so-called 'peaceful solution' is under the condition of maintaining "the territorial integrity of Ethiopia" As Castro put it, what the revisionists mean by 'peaceful solution' is that 'Cuba supports a peaceful and just solution. to the national question, within the framework of an Ethiopian revolutionary state that would safeguard as an inalienable right its unity, integrity and sovereignty' *Granma* May 7, 1978)

Clearly enough the scope and magnitude of Soviet revisionist counter-revolutionary collaboration with the fascist junta is enormous. Thus Soviet revisionism has openly and directly become a declared enemy of our revolution.

U.S. imperialism though ousted by its chief rival Soviet revisionism from the dominant position it had held in Ethiopia, it has been and is making concerted efforts to sabotage and subvert the Eritrean revolution. Under the signboard of "concern" for the Eritrean people the United States and British imperialist chiefs have been calling for a "peaceful solution" and "federation" as a solution to the Eritrean question. At the same time like Soviet-led revisionism they have also made their commitment to "the territorial integrity of Ethiopia" absolutely clear. The arch-revisionist Tito eloquently echoed his U.S. imperialist masters' position in regards to the Eritrean question when he stated "In the Horn of Africa it is necessary to

stop armed conflicts completely and peacefully reach a solution of disputed questions, including Eritrea, on the basis of the principles of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity with respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states in this region, without foreign intervention or interference. So far we have acted in line with this, and we shall continue to do so." (Tito's speech to the 11th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, June 20-23, 1978) In an attempt to undermine the Eritrean liberation movement from within, the U.S. imperialists have also been grooming the counter-revolutionary Sabbe clique.

It is therefore, in the face of these overwhelming odds that the Eritrean revolution has made a rapid advance and registered victories unparalleled in its whole history. Unperturbed by the multiplicity and powerfulness of their enemies the Eritrean people have stood firm and determined to take the struggle to its logical conclusion and deal the enemy the final blow. The Eritrean people have shown the unshakable will to fight against all their enemies. They have proven in practice that man not weapon is the decisive factor in a war and that all reactionaries are paper tigers.

While this is the objective condition in our country—a situation extremely favorable for revolution, when the entire Eritrean people have offered their readiness to put up stiff resistance against their enemies the EPLF leadership tailed behind and retreated to passiveness. When Soviet revisionism has in the most aggressive manner displayed its ugly face in front of our people the EPLF leaders instead of waging an uncompromising struggle against it bowed to its dictates. They couldn't even utter a word against the Soviet Union and its mercenaries when that revisionist monster is butchering our people, destroying our homeland and taking the lives of our finest fighters.

This goes to show that the opportunist EPLF leadership instead of mobilizing the entire people and the country's resources on the basis of the correct line of self reliance for a bitter fight against all the enemies of our revolution is entertaining the counter-revolutionary view that one cannot wage struggle without the 'support' of one or the other of the two reactionary blocks constituting the counter-revolutionary camp—Soviet-led modern revisionism or U.S. led imperialism.

At a time when the Eritrean struggle is on the eve of its complete victory the EPLF and ELF leaders preferring to promote their bourgeois class interest have by capitulating to Soviet revisionist pressure betrayed our people and relegated themselves into cowards. In doing so—by submitting to Soviet revisionism and embracing it as the strategic ally of the Eritrean revolution without whose 'support' 'victory' is unthinkable, the EPLF and ELF leadership have completely reversed the enemies and friends of the Eritrean revolution. Consequently they have made basic changes in the characterization of the Ethiopian military regime and have made a serious strategic error on how to resolve the Eritrean question.

a. On Friends and Enemies

The world is divided into two irreconcilable camps—that of revolution on one hand and counter-revolution on the other. The socialist countries, the struggle of the oppressed people for independence and liberation, the proletariat of the capitalist countries fighting for socialist revolution all support each other in the fight against their common enemies—imperialism, revisionism, colonialism, zionism and all reaction. In their turn imperialism, revisionism, colonialism, zionism and all reaction have their guns directed against the socialist countries, national liberation movements and the international proletarian movement to crush the revolutionary camp.

US-led imperialism although faced with humiliating defeats at the hands of the oppressed peoples in all corners of the world is still subjugating the people with the use of violence and deception. The Soviet-led modern revisionism is also a worldwide phenomenon working against the Socialist countries, the national liberation movements and the working class in the capitalist countries to undermine the camp of revolution and to strengthen the camp of counter-revolution. In a fierce competition with US-led imperialism to expand its spheres of influence, the USSR is under the guise of 'socialism,' 'proletarian internationalism' etc. allied with reactionary and fascist regimes to crush the democratic struggle of the oppressed and exploited people. U.S. imperialism and Soviet-led modern revisionism contend as well as collude in their fierce struggle to control the world. As such they are deadly enemies of the peoples of the world.

Although U.S. imperialism has taken a low profile in Ethiopia after the penetration by Soviet-led modern revisionism, it together with Israeli zionism still remains to be a staunch supporter of the Fascist Junta and its colonial war in Eritrea. Since they are against the aspiration of our people for independence, they remain to be the primary enemies of our revolution.

In Eritrea, the USSR has long made its position very clear. It has condemned the independence struggle as a "reactionary war in the service of imperialism." To this end it has supplied the blood-thirsty Mengistu with war machinery costing over a billion dollars.

In an attempt to crush the struggle of our heroic masses, the Soviet revisionists have sent thousands of Cuban and South Yemeni mercenaries to Eritrea who use the sophisticated heavy artillery, tanks and Migs to kill our people and destroy villages. The Cuban mercenaries plan, direct and participate in battles, operate all the air control system at the Asmara Airport and manage the supply and reinforcement operation.

The PDRY is fully behind the Fascist Junta and against the independence struggle of our people. To help the Fascist Junta drown the Eritrean people in blood, the South Yemeni mercenaries took part in battles by operating

the new Soviet tanks, armoured cars, BM-21 launchers and heavy artilleries on many occasions. The battle for Massawa witnessed a high participation of South Yemeni troops.

The East German revisionists, while feverishly working to consolidate the Fascist Junta by supplying it with arms and taking over the running of the notorious 'security department,' are at the same time conspiring with the opportunist EPLF and ELF leaderships to force our people into capitulating to the enemy under the guise of 'peaceful solution.'

From this we can sum up that without the all out military and political support by U.S. led imperialism, zionism and Soviet-led revisionism, the fascist Junta cannot maintain its colonial grip on Eritrea. The objective condition in Eritrea shows a life and death struggle between the people of Eritrea on one hand and the Fascist Junta, its masters and internal reaction on the other.

This being the reality in Eritrea, we will now examine the position of the opportunist leaderships of the EPLF and ELF on this strategic question of identifying the real enemies and real friends of our revolution.

The Soviet-led revisionist countries while fully absorbed in a military campaign to crush our revolution in the battlefield they are at the same time using deception and blackmail in the diplomatic field. While they fully support the Fascist Junta's war of aggression, they demagogically claim their non-involvement in the war and their desire for a 'peaceful solution.' Despite these counter-revolutionary activities the EPLF opportunists have this to say

'We have never for any reason considered the Soviet Union as our enemy as an imperialist force, as a capitalist system and as a counter-revolutionary force. By the same token, we have never considered the parties and liberation movements, whose wrong political positions we criticize as forces of counter-revolution. (EPLF's message to EFLNA's 9th Congress and AEWNA's 2nd Congress)

By fighting U.S.-led imperialism, USSR-led modern revisionism the heroic Eritrean people weaken the camp of counter-revolution and contribute to the consolidation of the revolutionary camp. The opportunist leadership of the EPLF claims the contrary:

'The contradiction between us and those socialist and democratic systems and organizations [read revisionist camp Ed.] that have taken a wrong stand on the Eritrean question and have sided with the Dergue is a contradiction within the world revolutionary force. For this reason, it occupies a secondary position. Hence, to make them understand the situation of the Eritrean revolution and to correct their wrong stand through opposition, we shall continue our struggle within the world revolutionary force. To see this struggle as identical and on the same level as the struggle waged against imperialism, colonialism and reaction is wrong. it will not enable the masses to recognize their strategic friends from enemies and will lead to failure and disaster: it means to fall into the trap of imperialism and reaction.' (Vanguard, Vol.3 No.5 June, 1978) (Our emphasis)

The Soviet Union, instead of supporting the just revolutionary struggle, is working hard to crush it. Instead of siding with the militant democratic struggle of the Ethiopian people, is arming the bloody fascists who have made it their duty to liquidate any democratic opposition. These anti-people and counter-revolutionary activities in Eritrea, Ethiopia and other parts of the world cannot allow the Soviet Union the honor of belonging to the camp of revolution.

‘With their entire policy and practice, the Khrushchevite revisionists have placed themselves outside the anti-imperialist front. To include the revisionists in this front means to introduce the fifth column, the ‘Trojan Horse’ and to undermine it from within. (Enver Hoxha, Report to 5th Congress of PLA Pg. 137)

By presenting the unprecedented aggression by the Soviet-led revisionists in our country and their ‘holy alliance’ with the blood stained fascists in the campaign of terror in Ethiopia as the work of a socialist country, the opportunist EPLF leadership is trying to portray Socialism as an order that thrives on aggression and exploitation as opposed to what it really is—a system where there is no exploitation and is against all aggression and reaction. The dissemination of such anti-Marxist-Leninist analysis would create among the masses a wrong impression of socialism, hurt their desire and high resolve towards building socialism.

The opportunist EPLF and ELF leaderships deliberately cover the crimes being committed by the Soviet-led revisionists against the revolution either by underplaying their involvement or attributing their involvement to lack of information on the nature of our revolution or even completely denying their participation. The EPLF says.

‘Since the recent stand of all socialist countries is to seek a peaceful solution to the Eritrean case, it has been officially stated that Cuban troops will not take part in Eritrea. *At this time they do not have any participation inside Eritrea* (Vanguard Vol.3 No.7 1978) (our emphasis)

The out and out reactionary ELF leadership after two years of counter-revolutionary activities of the USSR and its Cuban mercenaries in Eritrea said,

‘We believe that since these countries are progressive, they cannot possibly be against self-determination. . .and *the fact remains that we don't see them intervening against our armed forces.* (ELF Eritrean Newsletter No.26 August 1978) (emphasis ours)

We like to ask the opportunist leaderships of EPLF and ELF to explain the meaning of the Russian war ships devastating the whole port city of Massawa, the Cuban pilots dropping of cluster bombs and napalm by Mig fighters in heavily populated liberated areas, the levelling of villages by T-54 tanks, the bombarding of positions of the fighters by series of BM-21 launchers, if it has any other meaning than savage aggression by foreign forces.

As for the attempt of the EPLF leadership to deny the participation in

battles and talk about 'official statements' of promises from Cuba while our people are being massacred by the hands of these same mercenaries in Asmara and the surrounding region, it can be nothing else but open betrayal. Lenin said, "the substitution of the abstract for the concrete is one of the greatest and most dangerous sins in the revolution." (V.I. Lenin, "On Slogans" *Selected Works*, Int. Pub. N Y 1967 Vol.2 p.9)

Although the pretentious EPLF leadership has shamelessly defended the Soviet Union and its mercenaries as "socialists" and "revolutionaries" the openly reactionary ELF leadership has unconsciously exposed the bankruptcy of the theory that calls for the Soviet-led revisionists "to understand" the Eritrean revolution, "to correct their stand."

"We made many attempts for the countries of the socialist bloc (read. revisionist bloc Ed. to comprehend our struggle. However it seems that *all our calls are met up to now with no response* In fact, our struggle has been treated in a *rather strange way* by the Soviet Union and we are described as separatists and reactionaries when we were fighting against Emperor Haile Selassie, and separatists and reactionaries when we fought against the Dergue. " (Our emphasis) (ELF *Eritrean Revolution* Vol.2 No.2 Aug-Sept 1977)

By stubbornly claiming that these declared enemies of our people are real friends, the EPLF and ELF opportunists have put their own bourgeois class interest first and preferred to give in to the enemy Their demagogy notwithstanding they are objectively reinforcing imperialism and colonialism while undermining and sabotaging revolution and socialism.

Basing themselves on the unscientific thesis that the Soviet Union is still a great socialist country the two opportunist leaderships have made chains of strategic and tactical blunders endangering the victory of our revolution. They have without shame called all the mercenaries of Soviet Union, the reactionaries that have their hands stained with the blood of our heroic people, strategic allies of the revolution.

In trying to avoid the antagonistic contradiction that exists between our people and the PDRY aggressors, the EPLF says. 'because of some mistakes by PDRY it is wrong to have a continuing stand of condemnation or opposition.' *Vanguard* July 1978) It has become so understanding that it came up with excuses for their aggression by saying 'we feel that the incorrect reports that were furnished to them from different corners can be reasons for their confusion.'" *Vanguard*, July 1978) This is not all, the capitulationist EPLF leadership has gone as far as confusing the masses by claiming that measures to correct their mistakes have already been made on the part of PDRY that the relationship between PDRY and us is improving. It even goes as far as to claim that 'due to either the struggle waged in the Eritrean revolution or due to the studies they made concerning the conditions in Ethiopia their stand on the Eritrean revolution is back in line with what it used to be.'" *Vanguard*, July 1978)

But all this remains a wishful thinking. No matter how the EPLF apologists of Soviet-led revisionism try to make revolutionaries out of

counter-revolutionaries they will never succeed. The PDRY as puppets of USSR cannot have a different stand on Eritrea from that of the Soviet Union and other revisionists. The *Ethiopian Herald* July 29 1978) reported a solidarity statement to the hangman Mengistu by the PDRY leaders that expressed "the joy of the government and the people of PDRY at the victory achieved by the Ethiopian revolutionary army against invading forces in the South and the East of the country and also at the victory now being repeated against secessionist enemy in North of the country" (Our emphasis)

At a time when the people of the world, disgusted with the unprecedented counter-revolutionary conspiracy of the Soviet-led revisionist countries to crush the burning flame of revolution in Eritrea, are calling for an uncompromising struggle against it, to show an attitude of conciliation and compromise towards the blood thirsty enemies of our people is naked betrayal on the part of the leaders of the revolution. Here is how the apologists of Soviet revisionism, the treacherous ELF leadership argues in full support of counter-revolution in Eritrea, Ethiopia and the world at large. We staunchly believe the support of the socialist camp [read. revisionist camp Ed.] and that of the world democratic and progressive forces to the democratic and revolutionary forces in Ethiopia is not against the people of Eritrea and their democratic and revolutionary forces, but in our opinion is a support to the national liberation movement in the Horn of Africa, the revolution in Africa, and the Middle East in general. This support which might seem at first glance as being purely in favor of Ethiopia, if taken from the angle of Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, constitutes, both in the near and far future, decisive factor in defeating and blocking the way of the return of imperialist domination to the area as it also implies the activity of the agents of imperialist domination to the area as it cripples the activity of the agents of imperialist in the region. (*ELF Eritrean Revolution* Vol.2 No.6 Feb-Mar 1978) (Our emphasis)

The EPLF leaders also sing the same tune as ELF leaders,

"The present regime in Ethiopia has undertaken some reforms. These reforms although obtained as a result of the pressure of Ethiopian masses as far as the socialist and democratic forces are concerned it is seen as its (the political force in power) own achievement. Besides, it has also cut-off its relations with imperialism, zionism and reactionary forces. Also in general anti-imperialist struggle the Dergue struggles to form an anti-imperialist front that includes even non-progressive forces. Basing themselves on this questions, many socialist countries and democratic forces commenced offering political support to the Dergue." (*Vanguard* Vol.3 No.7 July 1978)

Our differences are therefore clear The leaders of the Eritrean revolution say that the act of genocide and extermination in Eritrea and reign of terror in Ethiopia are in the interest of the peoples and their revolution. We say that to the same extent the counter-revolutionary alliance of U S imperialism and Israeli zionism with the fascist junta hampers the right of the Eritrean people to their independence and crush the democratic forces in Ethiopia, so also does the Soviet-led revisionist strengthen colonialism in

Eritrea and fascism in Ethiopia for their own interest.

A 1976 study of the Institute of World Economics of the Hungarian academy of science set out the economic advantages to be gained by the Soviet Union and East European countries from the domination of Ethiopia.

Ethiopian agriculture has inexhaustable potentials. The country is extremely rich in livestock. Over its vast territory products of both tropical and temperate zones can be grown. By establishing agro-industrial combines, it would be possible to *insure the supply of our country with animal feed proteins. We could also procure coffee, cotton and other products in the Ethiopian market. The quality of raw leather goods is good. Ethiopia may be an important market for our industry.* Talks concerning the supply of vehicles have already started, Ethiopia could stock its park of buses *by buying from Hungary* Ethiopian development may be an important *outlet for certain sectors of our machine building industry.* The Ethiopian textile industry is an excellent opportunity for the textile-mill machinery manufactured in Hungary Cooperation with the emerging pharmaceutical industry is a challenge and *an opportunity to our well developed pharmaceutical center.* ”

This, we are being told by the EPLF and ELF opportunist leaderships is the foreign policy of a ‘ Marxist-Leninist’ party of a ‘socialist’ country its ‘ proletarian internationalism, indeed its ‘anti-imperialism.’ The oppressed Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples see no difference between a Soviet-led revisionist theory of ‘non-capitalist road of development now being practiced in Ethiopia and the region on the one hand and the neo-colonial domination of the countries by the U S imperialists on the other

I is not high sounding words like ‘anti-imperialist,’ ‘socialist’ ‘ supporters of liberation movements’ etc. that determine whether or not Soviet Union and its puppets are friends of the people. On the contrary it s their actual practice in real life. As an individual must be judged “not by his professions, but by his actions, not by what he pretends to be but what he does, and what he really is” (Frederick Engels, *Germany, Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, Eng. Ed. International Publishers, N Y 1933 Pg. 93) so must all political parties and states.

Another excuse the opportunist EPLF and ELF leaderships give to the masses to cover up for the crimes of our enemies is their lack of knowledge on the nature of our revolution. Although this is yet another lame theory that doesn’t go far we would like to comment on it. It is a public record that under the correct leadership of Stalin the Bolshevik party in 1950 was among the revolutionary forces that stood on the side of the heroic Eritrean people and defended them from the intrigues being committed by the U S imperialism against their independence. However bitter a pill for all apologists to swallow the fact is that today a similar conspiracy is underway by the Soviet-led revisionists against our people. The rabid counter-revolutionary activities of the USSR and its puppets is not out of innocence or lack of knowledge about the justness of our cause but on the contrary out of their zeal to extinguish the flame of revolutionary war that has threatened their interest in the Horn of Africa. It is a criminal onslaught through the

force of arms by the ruling classes of USSR, Cuba and other revisionist countries to force their revisionist road of non-capitalist development in Ethiopia, Eritrea and throughout the region

It is very decisive for our revolution to identify its friends and enemies as it is based on this, that it can chart out correct strategy and tactics. However, the leaders of our revolution, for the sake of their own bourgeois class interest have made a grave strategic error. They have allied with our hated enemies and have condemned our real friends. As such they have turned kind and considerate to the enemy but ruthless to the masses. The EPLF leadership has shamelessly objected to 'the use of our propaganda machinery against Soviet Union' (EPLF's message to AESNA's 9th Congress and AEWNA's 2nd Congress)

It is only when we identify our real enemies from real friends that our revolution can succeed. It is only when we face the reality that we can assess the strength and weakness of our enemies from a strategic and tactical point of view and accordingly prepare ourselves for an all round protracted struggle in the military, political, ideological and diplomatic fields. All attempts by the apologists of counter-revolution to present as friends the enemies of the people leads the revolution to disaster. It prevents the masses from developing deep class hatred over their enemies, dampens their vigilance and fighting spirit. It allows one to shoot but not to kill.

As the final victory of our revolution approaches, the opportunist leaderships of the EPLF and ELF have chosen the road of capitulation to the USSR. (Nevertheless this is not new in the history of our revolution. The treacherous Sabbe clique has offered itself as a counter-revolutionary puppet to U.S. imperialism when it invited the U.S. to fight Soviet aggression in Eritrea. (see *Eritrea in Struggle* Vol.3 No.6 March 1978)

Thus today the opportunist leaderships of the EPLF and ELF are no better than the Sabbe opportunist clique in selling out our revolution to the enemy by relying on the 'socialist' Soviet Union to "fight" against U.S. imperialism

To prevent the broad masses and fighters from identifying their enemies and to clear the ground for their capitulationist line the opportunist leaders of the EPLF and ELF divert and avoid burning issues; or when forced to admit the counter-revolutionary activities of the USSR in Eritrea and the region they give very opportunist analysis.

It is really difficult to understand the intricate political situation in this region. (EPLF *Vanguard* Vol 3 No.7 July 1978)

'The situation in our region is very complicated and it is difficult to give the exact political interpretation of any phenomenon. (ELF *Eritrean Newsletter* No.26 Aug. 1978)

We believe that the world is not as dark as these opportunists and apologists of counter-revolution attempt to make it appear. We certainly see a bright future for our revolution but only if we choose to stand up and fight all enemies of our people regardless of their strength and by relying on the strength and capability of our heroic masses and the support of the ge-

nuine revolutionary forces.

b. On Revisionism

Modern revisionism, headed by the Soviet Union constitutes a great danger to the revolutionary movement of the international proletariat and the national liberation struggles of the oppressed peoples. Krushchevite revisionism, the main of the various revisionist trends, has as its primary aim the liquidation of the struggle for national liberation and socialism, strengthening the capitalist system and restoring it where it was overthrown. Spearheading their main struggle against Marxism-Leninism, the only ideology that can guide the masses to liberation, the modern revisionists headed by the Soviet Union, demagogically promote social democratic politics in the service of the bourgeoisie and imperialism. The Krushchevite revisionists have and are still committing counter-revolutionary sabotage against workers' movements, the international communist movement and the national liberation movement.

Therefore, the struggle against Soviet-led modern revisionism is a major question of principle upon which hinges the fate of the revolutionary movement and the achievement of genuine independence and liberation. As part of the world revolutionary movement, the struggle of the Eritrean people against imperialism, colonialism and internal reaction has of necessity to combat modern revisionism as a dangerous and counter-revolutionary trend that can corrode and crush the people's revolution from within. As Lenin pointed out, 'The fight against imperialism is a sham and humbug unless it is inseparably bound up with the fight against opportunism.'

Aware of the importance of the struggle against revisionism, our organizations have in the past year and a half pointed out to the EPLF leadership the danger that ensues from not taking a clear stand on revisionism and from not combatting it as a counter-revolutionary trend. Instead of positively responding to our views, the EPLF leadership has been (itself) spreading illusion among the fighting masses on this question. In fact, the EPLF leadership, denying the counter-revolutionary role of the modern revisionists headed by the Soviet Union defends them as socialist among the masses. The EPLF leadership, especially as of late, has begun labelling anyone who exposes modern revisionism as 'anarchist' and 'adventurist.' While they hinder the Eritrean revolutionaries who stand-up to expose the danger of modern revisionism, they reserve for themselves the unlimited right to propagate revisionist ideas through their internal theoretical organ *Spark*.

When confronted, they try to cover their treachery by claiming, 'As we have said time and again, since we are a Front and not a party it is wrong to give priority to, and to set the focus of our struggle by indulging ourselves in

political questions on which we have a clear stand, leave alone on other controversial ideological questions. (EPLF's message to EFLNA's 9th congress and AESNA's 2nd congress.

Despite the EPLF leadership's effort to create an illusion that it can stand aloof from the struggle between Marxism-Leninism and revisionism, in real life there is no middle road. In practice—the EPLF leadership has exposed itself as a proponent of revisionism within the ranks of the Eritrean national liberation movement. Through its sophisticated demagoguery the EPLF leadership is attempting to impose revisionist theories on the masses in the name of Marxism-Leninism.

The EPLF leadership, through its internal theoretical organ, *Spark* has been disseminating revisionist ideas of the Soviet Union on fundamental questions such as class struggle, dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the proletarian party, the role of trade unions and other mass organizations etc. (In the future we will expose the revisionist ideas on these and other subjects which the EPLF leadership has been and is spreading

The EPLF leadership promotes the Soviet-led revisionist countries as socialist countries, the revisionist parties as Marxist-Leninist parties and denigrates the genuine socialist countries and Marxist-Leninist parties.

Recognizing this dangerous trend in our revolution, we have fought against it. While within the EPLF we criticized and opposed these revisionist ideas, EFLNA, through its Tigrigna theoretical organ *Nekhat* struggled to disseminate Marxism-Leninism and expose modern revisionism in front of the masses. However the opportunist EPLF leadership, who are terrorized by the growth in the revolutionary consciousness of the heroic Eritrean masses and afraid that further deepening of the masses' ideological and political level, would enable them to clearly identify their real enemies and real friends attempted to put a lid over the erupting struggle against revisionism amongst Eritrean revolutionaries. A clear example of this is the banning of EFLNA's publications from distribution inside Eritrea and through EPLF offices abroad.

Our people's struggle against modern revisionism cannot be seen in isolation from their heroic resistance against the holy alliance of the U.S. led imperialists, Soviet-led revisionists and the Fascist Ethiopian junta. The brilliant victories achieved by our fighting masses is objectively against and is weakening imperialism and revisionism. However unless the stubborn resistance of our heroic masses to imperialist and revisionist aggression is backed by a conscious ideological and political struggle, it cannot triumph over its enemies.

At a time when the Eritrean revolution is under the onslaught of both external and internal enemies and is in the midst of a life and death struggle against U.S. led imperialism and Soviet-led revisionism—the opportunist leaderships of EPLF and ELF have shamelessly capitulated and have become tools of Soviet-led revisionism. Therefore, all Eritrean revolutionaries are duty bound to fight and expose revisionism and opportunism in their ranks in order to advance the Eritrean people's revolution forward.

Failure to do so would be tantamount to becoming accomplices in the treachery of the EPLF and ELF leaders to modern revisionism.

EFLNA and AEWNA as part of the revolutionary movement of the Eritrean people will struggle to contribute their share in exposing the demagogy and treachery of the Soviet-led revisionists and the opportunist EPLF and ELF leaderships.

c. On the Ethiopian Military Junta

Regarding our difference with the EPLF and ELF leadership on the nature of the military junta in Ethiopia, we will only briefly show here how they see the question while our position is presented in detail in the Appendix part entitled Against the Ethiopian Military Junta and In Defence of the Eritrean Revolution.

We have discussed that the cornerstone for any revolution is the correct identification of real enemies from real friends at its different stages of development. As the revolution is based on this strategic question, a scientific study should be made to identify friends and enemies.

The EPLF and ELF leadership firmly believe that Soviet revisionism is the friend of the people of the world, the liberation movements and progressive organizations and parties. In Soviet revisionism they see a great world of "socialism" and a base area of the world-wide "anti-imperialist" struggle. Often times they have made it clear that there are two camps but that these are the camp of "revolution" led by "socialist" Soviet Union and the camp of counter-revolution led by U.S. imperialism.

As our revolution is an integral part of the world-wide revolutionary forces, all socialist and democratic systems and liberation forces are our strategic allies. Therefore, the contradiction between us and those socialist and democratic systems and organizations that have taken a wrong stand on the Eritrean question and have sided with the Dergue is a contradiction within the world wide revolutionary force.' (*Vanguard* V.3 No.5 June 1978)

From the above we note that our revolution has already been condemned to the camp of Soviet revisionism. Worse still we are expected to fight all forces opposing Soviet revisionist aggression in our region. The EPLF leadership has hopelessly capitulated to the Soviet revisionists and whatever struggle it is waging against the fascist junta is half-hearted, because of its belief in resolving contradictions within the 'camp of revolution' through dialogue and criticism.

'Our policy of struggle is to oppose and correct mistakes manifested in the world revolutionary forces, correct our own mistakes and wage a resolute struggle against world counter-revolutionary forces.' (EPLF message to EFLNA's 9th Congress and AEWNA's 2nd Congress)

This unscientific belief on Soviet "socialism" has made itself felt in all

issues of substance raised by the revolution, among which is the question of the fascist junta.

Until recently the EPLF leadership held that what is reigning in Ethiopia is fascism, that despite its high sounding slogans of "socialism" the military junta is not anti-imperialist. In its monthly theoretical organ *Spark* (Vol.3 No.7 Feb. 1978) it put out an indepth analysis on the fascist junta its historical background, its barbaric atrocities and its dependence on imperialism etc.

Recent developments, however reveal a change in EPLF's characterization of the junta. In two of its recent but most important publications that exclusively deal with this and similar topics *Vanguard* Vol.3 No.7 July 1978 *Memorandum* to Progressive Forces, April 1978) and interviews with foreign journalists the EPLF leadership has dropped the word fascist from its vocabulary to characterize the nature of the junta. It claims the regime "can be said neither progressive nor democratic" but it is not sure of it is a fascist. We think this change of attitude cannot be seen in isolation from the overall degeneration of EPLF's political line and its fast capitulation to the Soviet revisionism. It is very difficult for a leadership that vigorously defends the USSR, lauds it to the sky as the savior of mankind, at the same time to openly expose its reactionary alliance with a fascist regime. This is the crux of the matter

The masses ask 'how come a socialist revisionist USSR Ed. country ally with a number one fascist regime like Mengistu's?' The EPLF leadership however chose to reconcile fascism with anti-imperialism for the sake of its own bourgeois class interest.

'On one side was the pressure exerted by the Ethiopian masses to cut off relations with imperialism, zionism and other reactionary forces, and on the opposite side was the Dergue's common class interest with imperialism and zionism. After oscillating between the two forces for quite a while, finally the Dergue cut off its alliance with imperialism because the storm of the masses was the stronger force. *Vanguard* Vol.3 No.7 July 1978)

The opportunist EPLF leadership has not yet come up and explicitly called the junta anti-imperialist. However all its characterization do not mean anything else.

In our surrounding, those regimes who, by severing their ties with imperialism and strengthening their relations with socialist countries, are struggling against imperialism are quite a few. However this does not mean that the systems they have established are democratic systems of the masses—representing the workers, peasants and other oppressed classes, safeguarding the economic, social or cultural interests of the same, and abolishing exploitation. The nature of the Dergue so far is also the same. *Vanguard* V.3 No.7 July 1978)

Of course, it is no surprise if the EPLF leadership follows the footsteps of its mentor, the Soviet revisionists in praising the 'changes made by the fascist junta who is supposed to have:

'cut off its relations with imperialism, zionism and reactionary forces. Also in the general anti-imperialist struggle, the Dergue struggles to form an anti-

imperialist front that includes even non-progressive forces. (*Vanguard* Vol. 3 No.7)

By telling us that the junta's "break with imperialism has "brought about big political changes in the Horn of Africa ' the EPLF leadership recognizes the fascist junta as an anti-imperialist leader that puts to practice all demands of the people—the cutting of relationship with U S imperialism, zionism etc.

The decision by the opportunist EPLF leadership to revise its once correct stand on the fascist junta can best be understood from the following quotation.

At a time when the political stand of the strategic friends of the Eritrean revolution are on the side of the Ethiopian regime *the contradiction between Ethiopian colonialism and the Eritrean question is in a complicated situation.* (*Vanguard* Vol. 3 No. 7)

The capitulationist EPLF and ELF leaderships in their attempt to justify Soviet revisionist' shameless marriage with a blood-soaked fascist regime, they have come up with a series of strange characterization of the junta. The ELF for instance, talks of the two wings forming the junta. "the democratic wing" and the dominating rightist, fanatical, chauvinistic wing.' It talks of the imaginary democratic wing with great passion. Actually the ELF leadership has left the destiny of our revolution to this "democratic force' within the Dergue.

'There have been some changes. And there now is a revolutionary group inside the ruling junta which strongly believes in the right of the Eritrean people for self-determination and national independence. (*Eritrean Newsletter* Issue No. 23 May 1978)

The overall understanding of the treacherous ELF leadership on the fascist junta is that it calls it chauvinistic for its aggressive war in Eritrea while presenting it as champion of real social changes in Ethiopia, thanks to the help of the ' socialist" countries.

all the positive steps accomplished by the help of the socialist countries in their efforts to consolidate and deepen the course of the democratic revolution in Ethiopia after the fall of Haile Salassie. (*Eritrean Revolution* Vol. 2 No. 6)

It is therefore vividly evident from the foregoing that because the 'leaders ' of the Eritrean revolution have sold out to Soviet revisionism they are forced to prettify and praise the enemy Because they want to strike deals with the fascists through secret peace negotiations they begin to talk about political, social and economic changes" and even ' revolution" in Ethiopia under the leadership of hangman Mengistu!

These and other similar attempts to make a revolutionary out of a fascist will never succeed. It will only expose how spineless and opportunist they are.

As for the fascist junta, its counter-revolutionary nature is revealed in its daily whipping up of chauvinist hysteria among the downtrodden peasants under the false claim of Arab invasion to use them as cannon-fodder in its unjust expansionist war in Eritrea. Its fake socialism is nothing else but the perpetuation of hunger disease and degradation by forcibly snatching away of the hard-earned bread from the mouth of the oppressed Ethiopian masses under the slogan of everything for the war front. In full collaboration with Soviet-led revisionism it has in the most Hitlerite manner massacred the best fighting sons and daughters of Ethiopia.

The so-called anti-imperialism of the fascist junta is a hoax. It is a deliberate but most criminal line of conciliation with modern revisionism. Although the U S imperialists and Israeli zionists have taken a low profile after the penetration by the Soviet-led revisionists in Ethiopia it is absolutely erroneous to claim as do the opportunist leadership of EPLF and ELF that the fascist junta has cut off relationships with U S imperialism and Israeli zionism. Despite the anti-imperialist demagoguery of the fascist junta the U S imperialists maintain their economic ties with Ethiopia though mainly through West European imperialist countries. Politically, too, U S imperialism recognizes the territorial integrity of Ethiopia and supports its war of aggression in Eritrea.

Israeli zionists value their relationship with the fascist junta very much. "We want to retain the good relationship we have with Ethiopia," said Moshe Dayan (Feb 6, 1978 press conference in Zurich)

To conclude, we have shown that the opportunist EPLF and ELF leadership as agents of Soviet-led modern revisionism in Eritrea have decided to follow the rules within the counter-revolutionary camp. As such they have shamelessly closed their eyes to fascism in Ethiopia and Eritrea, condemned the anti-fascist struggle of the Ethiopian masses as reactionary and against the interest of change and progress in the region. This is a glaring experience of the savage and criminal nature of modern revisionism. It reverses the enemies and friends of the people and sabotage their revolution. The two capitulationist leaderships by covering up for fascism are together with their masters and the fascist Dergue held responsible for all the crimes it commits on our people.

d. On Peaceful Solution

In the course of the long independence struggle, the Eritrean struggle has traversed through many twists and turns defeating and exposing all pressures and encirclements by its enemies. The enemies of our revolution, while making every effort to militarily crush it, have at the same time called for "peaceful solution" especially at a time when they have been severally punished, in an attempt to disguise their real intentions. Such being the case any call by the fascist Dergue and its imperialist, revisionist masters for a "negotiated settlement to the Eritrean problem" should never be taken seriously. What has been proven in Eritrea in particular in the course of the 17 years of the armed struggle is that only by persisting on the road of armed revolution can our people win complete victory and that the Ethiopian colonialists will never abandon their aggressive policy voluntarily. To harbor the illusion that the Ethiopian aggressors can solve the Eritrean question peacefully has very dangerous consequences for the fate of our revolution. The view that the only road to victory is through armed struggle and that only when they are completely defeated will the Ethiopian colonialists be driven out of Eritrea is a principle of cardinal importance which must be maintained at all times.

Any consideration of peace negotiations with the Ethiopian aggressors must be based on the correct and scientific interpretation of the concepts of war and peace. To pursue peaceful negotiations as the main form of struggle is tantamount to pinning one's fate on the enemy which inevitably leads to disaster. We should not be opposed to peace negotiations in principle. But to maintain that only through peaceful negotiations can we achieve a correct solution is erroneous. Peaceful negotiations can be used as a form of struggle only when it facilitates the main form of struggle—armed struggle—and not to undermine or substitute it. When entering into peace negotiations with Ethiopian colonialism, our revolution must firmly uphold its principles. Fully aware that the Ethiopian colonialists cannot by their very nature solve the Eritrean question peacefully and democratically our revolution in any negotiation with the Ethiopian aggressors must present its pre-conditions in the clearest terms and should not under any circumstance accept peace negotiations without pre-conditions.

The situation in Eritrea today is that the enemy armed with such war machinery never seen in the history of its colonial war is daily massacring our people in an indiscriminate manner for no other 'crime' than their unflinching demand for independence and freedom. The fascist junta, while putting all its military weight and capability for the sole purpose of crushing our revolution in the battlefield, is also waging an equally intensive cam-

paign in the diplomatic front to isolate the Eritrean revolution. With the full diplomatic, political and ideological backing of the Soviet-led revisionists the junta has pretended to be the champion of peace. On the other hand, the Eritrean people, fully resolved that only by resisting counter-revolutionary war with revolutionary war, are dealing the enemy heavy blows. The enemy by escalating the war of aggression and insisting on resolving the Eritrean question by the force of arms has exposed its bankrupt peace proposals. This policy of the enemy has also reaffirmed that only through revolutionary violence can the contradiction between the Eritrean people and Ethiopian colonialism be resolved.

This being the objective condition in Eritrea, the EPLF and ELF leaderships instead of intensifying the armed struggle and prepare the people for protracted peoples war are spreading the illusion that a negotiated settlement can be reached with the Ethiopian fascists. In a joint press statement on June 21, 1978 in Beirut, Lebanon the two leaderships publicly declared their readiness for negotiations with the fascist Dergue without pre-conditions and that the war between the Eritrean people and Ethiopian colonialism is not in the interest of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples the full text of the statement is in Appendix VIII)

Below we will expose the reactionary essence of this declaration.

1 In their press release the two leaderships said, "the continuation and intensification of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia does not serve the interests of the two peoples and their victories. It brings much suffering and destruction for the Eritrean people and the peoples of Ethiopia. "

This statement negates the justness of the cause our people have been and are still fighting for with such heroism and heavy sacrifice. The people of Eritrea have up to now paid great sacrifices and shed their blood to achieve the sacred goal of freedom and independence; they are resolved to continue paying the necessary sacrifices until their aspiration is fulfilled. The road to safeguard their interest being through armed struggle, its continuation is certainly in the interest of our people. It is only by persisting in armed struggle that our people can crush imperialism, revisionism, colonialism, zionism and all reaction in Eritrea, ascertain their independence and democracy while simultaneously struggling for the interest of the oppressed peoples of the world in general and that of Ethiopia in particular. Therefore *the continuation of the just struggle of the Eritrean people is in the interest of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples.*

On the other hand, the war being waged by the Ethiopian government against the Eritrean people is unjust. It arouses the oppressed Ethiopian masses against their Eritrean class brothers and uses them as cannon-fodder. By turning the country's economy into a war-economy, it perpetuates poverty, hunger, disease and humiliation in Ethiopia. The colonial war in Eritrea has never been and will never be in the interest of the oppressed people of Ethiopia. Thus until the fascist junta is smashed in the hands of our heroic masses, the war of aggression would only remain to be in the interest of the Ethiopian ruling classes and their imperialist, and revi-

sionist sustainers.

This is the only scientific concept of war and peace and was maintained by the EPLF leadership until very recently

We would like to ask the EPLF and ELF leaders why was this question of principle negated in their Beirut press release to the whole world? We can only say that they have turned into faithful propagators of the revisionist thesis that the struggle for national and social liberation is 'the destruction of mankind' instead of being the means to destroy all oppression and bring salvation of mankind.

2. The press release further states "its readiness to negotiate with the Ethiopian government for a just peaceful solution of the Eritrean case based on the right to self-determination and on just and democratic principles without pre-conditions"

This statement completely negates the aim of the Eritrean revolution. Ethiopia has forcefully occupied Eritrea, therefore before any peace negotiations the Ethiopian aggressors must accept that they have forcibly occupied a land that is not theirs and must recognize the independence of the Eritrean people. It is then and only then that peace negotiations can take place. The talk with the Ethiopian occupationists must never be for the purpose of discussing the legitimacy of Eritrean independence but other issues related with the ceasing of the war the withdrawal of enemy troops, the payment of war damages etc.

In short, we consider peace negotiation with the Ethiopian aggressors only when they fulfill the pre-condition of recognizing Eritrea's full independence. This being a question of principle it cannot be presented as a tactic. It was because it recognized this as the cornerstone for any possible peace negotiations with the Ethiopian government that the historic First Congress of EPLF put it in clear terms in its resolutions. "The EPLF is prepared to enter into discussion for a peaceful solution when colonialist Ethiopia.

- 1 Recognizes the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination and independence.
2. Recognizes the two fronts, the EPLF and ELF as the only legitimate representatives of the Eritrean people, and
- 3 Agrees that the dialogue be conducted on the international forum of the United Nations"

It is erroneous to run after the fascist junta under the white banner of "peaceful settlement without pre-condition" like the EPLF and ELF leaderships are doing.

"The peace slogan can be advanced either in connection with definite peace terms, or without any conditions at all, as a struggle, not for a definite kind of peace but for peace in general. In the latter case, we obviously have a slogan that is not only socialist but entirely devoid of meaning and content' (Lenin *Against Imperialist War* Progress Publishers, Moscow 1966. p. 122)

When sitting with the Ethiopian government for negotiation we should

make our position as clear as possible. Especially at a time when the fascist junta through the use of 'Marxist-Leninist' rhetoric is claiming to have recognized the right of Eritrean people for self-determination, at a time when the Soviet revisionists and its mercenaries are engaged full-time in a diplomatic offensive advocating that the fascist junta has a 'scientific' solution to the Eritrean question while actually the position of the junta, its 'scientific' solution, has long been exposed in its nine point program of the so-called national democratic program as meaning regional autonomy within the context of 'Greater Ethiopia,' at a time when the fascist junta's seminars to solve the Eritrean problem have come up with the same chauvinistic solution as the only correct one and with no other substitution, we strongly believe that we should leave no ambiguity, no room for misinterpretation and must boldly state our pre-conditions namely the recognition by the Ethiopian aggressors the independence of Eritrea.

Therefore, the attempt made by the EPLF and ELF leaders to sit with the fascist junta without preconditions is wrong and unprincipled. Furthermore, it threatens the much needed unity of the Eritrean people.

Just a little over two years ago, Osman Saleh Sabbe, the then official spokesman of the joint ELF Ex Foreign Mission that was formed after the infamous Khartoum agreement in a briefing with an Egyptian paper *Akbar Aliom* of 26 May 1976 in regard to the peace proposal by the Ethiopian government said that:

"Neither the Ethiopian military government nor us should present any precondition before we meet. Though our goal is for independence, we will not insist that independence be the starting point to our negotiation with Ethiopia.

To this treacherous and opportunist sellout by the counter-revolutionary Sabbe, the EPLF angrily replied in *Vanguard* Vol.1 No.20, Sept. '76:

"The statement given by the official spokesman that the Eritrean revolution should not insist on a pre-condition in negotiating with Ethiopia, *is an attempt to obliterate the 15 year struggle of the Eritrean people. We consider tailing after conditions presented by the enemy and retreat from the principled stand as a betrayal.*" (underlining ours)

That was how the then correct EPLF leadership defended the Eritrean people and their revolution from a sellout by the agents of imperialism. In fact, the EPLF went further into exposing all the lame excuses the traitors were using to capitulate to the enemy. In the above occasion the EPLF ruthlessly exposed the deals made under the pretext of changing situations.

"As for the reasons with regards to the world situations, shifting of balance of forces and pressure of the big powers on our struggle, we want to assure them that the song they are harping on, as an old broken record would, was totally discredited in Palestine and Vietnam. This is because they want to subordinate the movement to the external factors. In any struggle the internal factors

play the decisive role. Therefore, in order to be an influencing force, we must be thoroughly resolute and not be receptive to all sorts of influences. (EPLF *Vanguard* Vol. 1 No. 20 Sep '76)

The EPLF was so serious on this important issue of principle that it dealt with it in greater detail in its special pamphlet No. 3 of October 1974, and *Vanguard* No. 22 of November 1976. Finally the First Congress of the EPLF gave a legal weight to the subject by stating it in clear terms.

We would like to ask the opportunist EPLF leadership what the changes "with regards to the world situation" are that forced them to sit with the fascist junta without pre-conditions. We do not see the slightest change in the fascist junta's position vis-a-vis the Eritrean question. The Eritrean independence struggle is still just and revolutionary. Only the capitulationist leaders of the EPLF have changed their principle—falling in line with the counter-revolutionary and traitor Sabbe.

Following is one of the series of propaganda campaigns the capitulationist leaders are waging to confuse the people on the nature of their unprincipled and illegal talks with the fascist junta and to belittle the crime they have committed.

"Although these pre-conditions are just and reflect the objective conditions in Eritrea, the Eritrean liberation movement has taken a new peace initiative and has expressed its readiness to negotiate with the Ethiopian regime for a just peaceful solution based on the right to self-determination without pre-conditions. (EPLF *Vanguard* Vol.3 No.7 July '78)

The opportunist EPLF leadership has said it all. It believes the "objective condition in Eritrea" calls for a pre-condition on our part, to consider negotiations with the fascist junta. However because it is an opportunist leadership that would like to live in "peace" with revisionists and killers of our people it took "a new peace initiative" that is against the objective condition in Eritrea.

3 The press statement continues ' The joint Supreme Political leadership underscores the necessity of a peaceful solution and expresses its readiness to negotiate with the Ethiopian government for a *just peaceful solution of the Eritrean case based on the right to self-determination and on just and democratic principles without pre-conditions.*'

This statement 'forgets' the position of the fascist junta on the interpretation of the term 'self-determination for the Eritrean people.' Worse still it carries an illusion on the nature of the fascist junta as it expects it to solve the Eritrean question on just and democratic principles. Finally, it fails to realize that no colonial power solves the colonial question democratically. As Lenin said,

It is ridiculous to cherish illusions that people who do *not* fight for 'the right to self-determination' of the oppressed nations, while they themselves belong to the oppressor nations, are capable of practicing socialist policies. (Lenin, *Against Imperialist War* Progress Publishers, Moscow 1966, Pg. 126)

At a time when all internal and external situation is in favor of our revolution, that is, at a time when except for a few cities that are still held by the enemy all the country is under the control of the revolution signalling the final demise of Ethiopian colonialism, at a time when the entire Eritrean people with high morale and fighting spirit are more than ever resolved to sweep beyond trace the last remaining colonial army at a time when our just and revolutionary struggle is gaining more admiration and support from the oppressed and freedom-loving peoples of the world, for our revolution to offer peace negotiations without pre-conditions, to say the continuation of the war is not in the interest of both the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples, to believe that the fascist junta can bring a just and democratic solution based on the right of nations to self-determination is outright betrayal.

The opportunist EPLF leadership might say 'after all, such action was taken only for tactical reasons and has nothing to do with betraying the revolution.' They could even say that the EPLF took this peace initiative because they wanted to prove to the "friends and allies" of our revolution that we are not war-mongers, that we want peace, that we have to listen to our friends lest we get isolated etc.

Outwardly these arguments seem convincing and we are sure the EPLF leaders would confuse the people with such high-sounding arguments. As we have already pointed out the opportunist and capitulationist line of the EPLF leadership having not yet been exposed to the masses, the EPLF leaders will exploit the genuine confidence the people have on them for quite a while.

Going back to the question of strategy and tactics, the EPLF leadership cannot say the question of sitting with pre-conditions is only a tactic that you can change any time you feel like doing so. It is a principle that must firmly be adhered to. In the following quotation the EPLF leadership tries to deceive the people by pretending to adhere to principles while already it has said the peace proposal is only a tactic and not a principle.

'Under no circumstances has the EPLF so far deviated and will ever deviate from its principled line on either the question of negotiation or peaceful solution. EPLF has declared that the EPLF and ELF are the legitimate representatives of the Eritrean people, and believes in this declaration. *This is not a tactic.*' *Vanguard* Vol. 3 No. 7 July 1978 our emphasis)

Before we conclude we want to again trace the EPLF leadership's betrayal, on one of the most important issues concerning our revolution to the EPLF and ELF leadership's reverse identification of enemies and friends. The out and out reactionary leadership of the ELF from whom the Eritrean people expect nothing else but betrayal, true to its bourgeois class nature has long ago left the destiny of our revolution in the hands of the enemy

'The necessity of the progressive forces headed by the Soviet Union of taking the initiative in overcoming the difficulties retarding to putting an end to the war in Eritrea and enabling the Eritrean people to practice their right to self-

determination and to build their future by their free will, and in a manner that safeguards the joint interest of the Ethiopian and Eritrean peoples and consolidates the foundation of friendship and solidarity between the Eritrean and Ethiopian revolution. (ELF Eritrean Revolution Vol. 2 No. 6, 1978)

We can safely conclude that the propaganda by the capitulationist leaderships of the EPLF and ELF about their new peace initiative is nothing but a peace initiative designed and imposed by Soviet-led revisionism. This is glaringly evident from the overdose of out and out revisionist concepts incorporated in that short press release by the two leaderships in the name of our revolution.

Recent developments show that the two leaderships having already betrayed the revolution by their peace proposal without pre-conditions are making a big noise on having successfully exposed the Dergue in front of the friends of our revolution. But the fact is that what the EPLF and ELF leaderships call 'friends and strategic allies of our revolution, that are supposedly concerned about peace in Eritrea are the conglomerate of counter-revolutionary revisionist countries that have vowed to exterminate the Eritrean people by allying with the fascist junta. Hence any action on the part of our revolution that is directed with the specific purpose of satisfying the wishes and dictates of these forces can lead nowhere but capitulation and defeat.

Already the reactionary ELF leadership has given up the necessity of the armed struggle as the main form of struggle for independence and liberation, and is preaching peace with the fascists.

'We strongly believe that only peaceful and democratic solution can serve the best interests of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples. This will inevitably triumph when the democratic and revolutionary forces in Ethiopia secure the state power (ELF *Eritrean Newsletter* No. 27 Sept 1, 1978)

It must be stressed here that our people are waging armed national liberation struggle for independence and are convinced that it is the only road to victory not because they do not desire peace but because they have learned from bitter experience that 'political power grows out of the barrel of a gun,' that only by defeating the counter-revolutionary war of the colonialists through revolutionary war can they achieve freedom and peace. Thus our people's revolutionary war is just and legitimate whose ultimate aim is to bring peace.

The Eritrean people want peace and are always prepared to enter into negotiations but also have their principles which they'll never compromise. And it is this principle that the capitulationist EPLF and ELF leaders criminally compromised in their peace talks with the fascist junta. And that is why we condemned this act of treachery by the two leaders on the heroic Eritrean people.

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In this section we have tried to lay down the most fundamental differences on questions of principles, strategy and tactics of the revolution we hold with the opportunist EPLF leadership. These differences of principle

determine the continuity and destiny of our revolution and cannot by any means be equated to minor squabbles on secondary issues

Our split from EPLF is the culmination of a long struggle waged between our organizations and the leadership of EPLF over these questions of principle. While the struggle on the questions of differences was underway our organizations were translating into practice the guidelines of the EPLF program with great vigor in strict observance of the principles of democratic centralism.

In the following section we will deal in brief how our organizations persisted on an uncompromising struggle against the capitulationist line being pushed by EPLF leadership while at the same time worked for unity against the enemies of our revolution.

The Struggle EFLNA and AEWNA Waged Inside EPLF

‘Without the freedom of discussion and criticism, the proletariat does not recognize unity of action. For that reason, intelligent workers must never forget that sometimes serious violations of principle occur which make the break-off or organizational relations absolutely necessary ’ (V I Lenin, *On Organization*, Proletarian Publishers, p.20)

This profound teaching of Lenin has great relevance to the experience of our organizational relationship with the EPLF during the past two years and the correct step we have taken in breaking off relations with the EPLF leadership. Throughout the years we had been EPLF’s mass organizations, EFLNA and AEWNA worked in accordance with the principle of democratic centralism. By accepting the political leadership of the EPLF, we strictly followed and implemented the EPLF’s guidelines and directives. Regarding the EPLF as our leader we were loyal to it and faithfully carried out its directives. At the same time, we presented our views and criticisms in the proper manner. We never refrained from presenting our views and struggled for the correct-line. In our relationship with the EPLF, EFLNA and AEWNA always believed in correcting errors through criticism and self-criticism. In spite of our correct approach, however the EPLF’s practice has been to the contrary. The EPLF leadership gradually began to antagonize the harmonious relationship that had existed between our mass organizations and itself. Disregarding our views, the leadership applied centralism without democracy and tried to impose its erroneous views on us. Our democratic rights to criticize and that of the entire membership of the front to criticize and discuss has been violated. The organization that was once democratic was being transformed into one dictated by a clique of opportunists. Thus, the EPLF leadership has violated one of the most important tenets of revolutionary organizational principles, bringing about a split in our revolutionary movement. In the following, we will show how the EPLF leadership violated our democratic rights. But before we go into the facts, we will cite an important lesson from the experience of the Communist Party of China.

“Practice has shown that only in implementing democratic centralism, letting everyone speak and give his opinion, and fully bringing into play everyone’s intelligence and everyone’s initiative on the one hand and on the other hand, practicing a correct centralization on the basis of democracy establishing a rigorous discipline and unifying everyone’s thought and ac-

tion, it is possible to lead the broad masses of the people to win new victories in revolution and construction. (*A Basic Understanding of the CPC*, Norman Bethune Institute p 85)

The EPLF leadership has forfeited the leadership of the Eritrean revolution for among other things, it has breached this fundamental principle of revolutionary struggle. How did it breach it? Here is our experience.

As was stated above (in Part II) EFLNA, in the first place, supported the EPLF not out of sentiment but out of the strong conviction that the EPLF was leading the Eritrean revolution. That is to say EFLNA entered a relationship with the EPLF in order to struggle for the correct line and strengthen it and at the same time wage fierce struggle against the reactionary line and weaken it. On this basis, EFLNA always regarded it its sacred right and responsibility to express its views on the Eritrean revolution. While supporting the correct policies, it strongly opposed and struggled against the erroneous ones.

Being part and parcel of our people's national liberation struggle, it has been the tradition of EFLNA to thoroughly discuss and critically review every issue of the revolution. Before EFLNA became a mass organization of the EPLF it expressed its support to the EPLF not only through endorsing the correct policies but also by criticizing any error that arose. The EPLF appreciated our views as constructive and useful and encouraged us to keep up this correct method of struggle. For instance, the 13th issue (May 1976) of the theoretical organ *Spark* singularly commended EFLNA for its constructive criticism and called on others to do the same.

2. In August 1976, in its 7th Congress, EFLNA resolved to become a mass organization of the EPLF. The new structure enabled EFLNA to take full part in the historic congress of the EPLF. Since we saw the holding of the congress as having crucial impact on the revolution and its future we regarded our role in the deliberations of the congress, adopting the national democratic program, the front's constitution and passing correct resolution as important, thus EFLNA actively participated by sending a delegation.

3. But at that time also a grave situation was unfolding in the Horn of Africa. This was manifested by the coming of the Soviet Union into the scene. In December 1976, the Soviet Union and the fascist junta signed a secret military agreement whereby the Soviet Union would take the role of supplying an enormous amount of sophisticated weaponry and provide mercenary troops and advisors. Shortly afterwards in February and March 1977 Soviet and Cuban military advisors began to arrive in Ethiopia in large numbers, and in March 1977 Fidel Castro went on a tour of the Horn of Africa to establish a so-called 'Confederation of progressive forces' in the area. Fidel Castro's trip was a clear indication of the Soviet Union's designs in the region and in particular it was a prelude to its subsequent all-out support to the fascist junta. In early May 1977 Menghistu visited the Soviet Union and the relationship that was growing between the two took its clearest shape. At the same time, the Soviet Union and Cuba were waging concerted propaganda campaigns hailing the unta-led Ethiopian Revolution and viciously attacking the national liberation struggle of the Eritrean

people and the democratic movement of the Ethiopian people to overthrow the fascist junta (see *Granma*, May 8 and 22, 1977 and *New Times*, No. 19 20 and 32, August 1977) EFLNA closely followed the new development and was well aware that it would have an adverse effect on the Eritrean revolution. We saw the Soviet revisionist move was intended to defend counter-revolution in the region—in particular, the fascist junta, and mercilessly crush the liberation movements of which our revolution was the main target. We took up this issue for discussion in the second quarterly meeting of the Central Committee of EFLNA, the standing committees and chapter representatives held in early May. At that meeting, it was resolved that the Soviet Union is revisionist and was directly posed against our revolution. Out of this deep concern we had earlier on May 19 1977 sent a letter to the EPLF Political Bureau pointing out to them about the increased Soviet involvement and their schemes as well as on the need to oppose this force and study its nature among ourselves (see Appendix I). The EPLF's reply to our letter was not serious enough, it was just simply: "Are you telling us to take a stand on the nature of the Soviet Union?"

4. EFLNA convinced that the Soviet Union and its puppets as counter-revolutionary forces were out to crush our revolution persisted on the correct course it had embarked upon. We believed that the best way to pursue the matter was by holding extensive discussions with the EPLF leadership. Thus, in June 1977 we sent a representative to the field. In the series of talks held with the EPLF leadership, our representative made the point that the Soviet Union's massive involvement was to put out the flames of revolution and that as a revolutionary force the EPLF had both the national and international responsibility to expose and strongly oppose these counter-revolutionary forces. On our part, the urgency and necessity of also studying the nature of these forces was raised as an important and timely question. Our proposal was that while expressing strong opposition to the intervention of these forces it was absolutely necessary to study in a scientific way their nature. We were of the opinion that we should at least reach a common understanding of the nature of the Soviet Union within ourselves (within the EPLF). As to whether to keep our views on the nature of the Soviet Union within ourselves or make it public we were not opposed to the idea of keeping it internal for the time being. On the question of opposing the Soviet revisionist intervention we had sent a draft statement through our representative to the EPLF to see and give its views (See Appendix VI). Although we were to find out later that this was a mere deception, the EPLF leadership had at that time agreed with our proposal. An agreement was reached whereby we could publicly oppose the intervention of the Soviet Union, Cuba and other revisionist countries in our country and at the same time both we and the EPLF leadership can internally carry out a scientific study of the revisionist nature of these countries. In fact, the lengthy message the EPLF sent to our 8th Congress had these points as its theme.

5. In August 1977 EFLNA held its 8th Congress and in accordance with the recommendations of the EPLF's First Congress on mass organizations

resolved to reorganize itself into AESNA and AEWNA. An EPLF representative attended our congress. The representative read the EPLF's message to our congress which was, as we can presently analyze, merely an outwardly militant message intended to exploit the sentiment in our organizations in regard to the Soviet Union's intervention. In our discussions, the representative reiterated the EPLF's views as stated in its message to our 8th congress. In the presence of the EPLF's representative, EFLNA's 8th Congress and AEWNA's 1st Congress unanimously resolved that the Soviet Union is a revisionist and counter-revolutionary force and an enemy of the Eritrean people and the entire world's people. However, since our stand against revisionism did not yet represent the stand of the entire EPLF, our decision was to remain internal. After the conclusion of the 8th Congress, several discussions were held with the EPLF representative. On our side, it was emphasized that to uncompromisingly oppose the intervention of the Soviet Union and the task of exposing modern revisionism amongst our fighting masses is crucial to the complete victory of our revolution and thus this task must be carried out immediately.

6 In the aftermath of the conclusion of our 8th Congress, the Central Committee of AESNA with the aim of achieving maximum result in the implementation of the resolutions of the EPLF's First Congress and our 8th Congress outlined the yearly work program.

In the task of publicity exposing the activities of the Soviet Union and winning broad support for our revolution was given priority. In political education, a four month program on revisionism was prepared, and in order to meet the needs of our self-reliant struggle, our fund-raising efforts were made to increase greatly. While the new year of struggle was begun in this way, on the organizational front there were further discussions with the EPLF leadership so as to coordinate and harmonize our activities. In particular, we asked the EPLF leadership if they had begun the task of exposing modern revisionism and were conducting seminars on the question. They replied that due to the intensity of the military situation it was not possible to carry out the task. They were also asked about the question of issuing a statement on opposing the Soviet-Cuban intervention and that we on our part were about to release the statement we had prepared. Without giving any reason, they told us to wait. This was, however, a tactic which they were using to silence the matter. We argued that the question of issuing a statement was already agreed upon and should be carried out. Although we accepted the directives of the EPLF leadership, internally we pursued the struggle on these questions.

7 EFLNA was very much concerned about the state of affairs of our revolution. We were concerned about the vacillating course that the EPLF leadership was taking. Once again we decided to send a representative to the field to discuss the pressing issue of Soviet intervention and other important questions. Soviet revisionist intervention had become a colossal threat to our revolution. The heroic fighters of the EPLA were daily battling against Soviet-supplied tanks, artillery, BM21 launchers, warships and Soviet ad-

visors, Cuban and South Yemeni mercenary troops. The question of Soviet-led revisionism and putting up an uncompromising struggle against it had become the burning question for our revolution to resolve. Our people were experiencing Soviet revisionist's onslaught daily. Why is the Soviet Union waging a criminal war of aggression against our revolution? How is it that 'socialist' countries—the USSR, Cuba, East Germany—are giving all-out support to the fascist Dergue against our just and revolutionary struggle? Do we regard the Soviet Union our enemy or our friend? These and other questions became the popular questions among our people.

Our representative went to the field towards the end of 1977. Obviously the main topic of discussion was Soviet revisionist aggression. Our representative reported to the EPLF leadership that our organization was carrying out thorough study on the question of revisionism and presented the political education program we were studying and expressed that it was absolutely necessary that a similar study be made among the masses. We strongly made the point that unless our revolution takes a firm stand on this question, a dangerous precedent will follow. The EPLF leadership again gave the lame reason that the military situation had created inconveniences to carry out the task. We believe this was a lame reason because in the past the EPLF used to give priority to political and ideological clarity as a criterion for the correct development of the armed struggle and despite the critical military situation, the political education of the masses and fighters should and could have continued. It only showed the leadership's unwillingness to have the question studied. When in particular the question had become popular among our masses, our side was not convinced by the EPLF leadership's reasoning and insisted on taking up the question in the most urgent manner. As to opposing Soviet revisionist intervention, the EPLF leadership had completely dropped the previous idea of issuing a statement of opposition which we had agreed upon prior to the convening of our 8th Congress, on the grounds that the objective situation in the surrounding region didn't allow it. We were therefore again told not to issue a statement of opposition. We suggested that the 2nd regular meeting of the EPLF Central Committee, held on November 16-20, 1977 come out with a strong statement of opposition to the Soviet Union, but instead we were told that a secret protest will be made. The EPLF leadership was pursuing this policy from the point of view that the Soviet-led revisionists were socialists and can rectify their errors.

On another front, our organization was also waging fierce struggle against revisionist ideas that were being spread through the theoretical organ *Spark*. For instance, we sent an article that thoroughly criticized an article that appeared in the January-February 1977 issue of *Spark* which following the revisionist method of analysis distorted the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat and class struggle in socialist society. The EPLF leadership, however, instead of printing our main article, it printed the cover letter we sent along with it and showed the inclination of not accepting our correct analysis. We criticized other revisionist ideas such as an article in the Oc-

tober 1977 issue of *Spark* which presented the present day Soviet system as socialist and other articles that portrayed revisionist parties as genuine communist parties of which some among these were the Czechoslovak communist party the 'communist' party of Mexico, the 'communist' party of Finland, the communist party of Lebanon, the communist party of Japan, the communist party of Chile, the communist party of Spain, the communist party of Denmark the 'communist' party of South Africa, etc.

(8) At the end of 1977 our organization concluded its four month intensive study on revisionism and to sum up our studies regional seminars were organized in January 1978 A summation paper entitled Marxism-Leninism Against Revisionism was prepared for the seminars. We sent this paper along with a cover letter (see Appendix II) to the EPLF leadership EPLF offices abroad and to the leaderships of the mass organizations abroad. However we did not receive replies except from the leaders of the Association of Eritrean Students in Europe and Association of Eritrean Workers in Europe (like the EPLF leaders they see the Soviet Union as socialist and an ally of our revolution) who opportunistically asserted that there was no need to raise the issue of combatting revisionism and that the masses were not theoretically developed enough to study this question and that 'we don't have to study revisionism simply because the Soviet Union has intervened against our revolution.

(9) By the end of 1977 Soviet revisionist aggression against our revolution reached unparalleled proportions. During the battle for Massawa, Soviet warships were shelling the positions of the heroic EPLA and demolished most of the residential areas and economic installations. Cuban and South Yemeni mercenary troops actively participated on the side of the Ethiopian aggressor troops Soviet and Cuban advisors took the key role of planning and coordinating the fascist junta's war efforts. Soviet supplied MIGs and U.S. supplied F-5 war jets were on daily bombing missions of the liberated areas. Thousands of Cuban mercenary troops arrived in Asmara to save the occupation forces from complete defeat Under these conditions we felt that for our revolution to be silent short of making a strong statement of opposition amounted to cowardice and capitulation.

In view of this we sent a strongly worded letter to the EPLF leadership on February 18 1978 about issuing a statement strongly condemning the crimes that was being committed by the Soviet revisionists and their mercenaries (see Appendix III) Not only did the EPLF leadership not respond to our suggestion but kept silent while our people were being mercilessly slaughtered by the Soviet revisionist forces.

While things stood this way, in early January we were informed that an EPLF delegation would visit East Germany We immediately registered our opposition to this. We couldn't conceive of a visit to East Germany while that revisionist country constituted one of the principal parties committing aggression against our revolution. We warned the EPLF leadership the danger this trip would entail. From this it became clearly evident to us that

the EPLF leadership was getting drawn into the revisionist camp as they were embracing them as friends of the Eritrean revolution. In fact as it was revealed much later in the July issue of *Vanguard* the EPLF leaders were holding secret talks with representatives of the fascist Dergue under the auspices of the East German revisionists in East Berlin.

10) The EPLF Central Committee held its 3rd regular meeting on 26-27 February 1978. The meeting came out with the stand regarding the Soviet Union as socialist. The resolution read 'In conclusion we thank those countries and organizations that are giving us their support in recognition to our just struggle and call on them to intensify their support. We remind the socialist countries which are giving political and military support to the Dergue to rectify their wrong stand. Our two sisterly organizations EFLNA and AEWNA were outraged by this gross violation of the principle of revolution. The issue was discussed among the entire membership of our two organizations and we immediately sent our strong opposition to the serious strategic error committed by the EPLF (see Appendix IV A and B). In that letter we pointed out that the EPLF leadership by committing this error will be held responsible for splitting up the strong unity that had been built among revolutionary and progressive Eritreans. Again the EPLF leadership did not bother to respond to our letter. The EPLF leadership thus completely disregarding our views and without bringing the question for discussion among the fighters and the masses arbitrarily took a stand as it saw fit to its bourgeois class interest. What became clearly evident from this was that the line regarding the Soviet Union and other revisionist countries as socialist countries had consolidated within the EPLF leadership.

11) Between May 8-11 1978 the First Congress of the Association of Eritrean Students was held in the liberated city of Keren. AESNA sent delegates and fully participated in this congress. In this congress too, the EPLF leadership had made every preparation to impose its erroneous line on the student movement. The EPLF Secretary General addressed the congress in which he stated that the revisionist countries supporting the fascist Dergue are strategic allies of the Eritrean revolution and that to regard them as enemies is not only wrong but aligning with U.S. imperialism (see Appendix IX). The EPLF leadership made it clear that to consider the Soviet Union as revisionist and as an enemy is nonsense and that the EPLF never had any illusion about the Soviet Union not being socialist. Furthermore, our delegation found out that our literature had ceased from being distributed. Issues of our theoretical organ *Nikhat* except for V.5 No.'s 1 and 2, were banned from distribution and beginning with V.2 No.8 (May 1978 issue) our newsletter *Eritrea in Struggle* was also banned from distribution in Eritrea and the EPLF offices abroad. Thus the EPLF leadership without even notifying us had taken concrete steps to deny us our democratic rights, to express our views through our publications. This was not all, On many occasions we were criticized for expressing our opposition to the Soviet revisionist's counter-revolutionary intervention against our revolution. In regard to this question the EPLF opportunist leaders were

literally behaving like defenders of the crimes that were being perpetrated on our people by Soviet revisionists and their mercenaries. They detested the articles in our Newsletter *Eritrea in Struggle* with headlines such as 'EPLF captures Soviet tanks,' 'EPLF will smash all counter-revolutionary machinations against the Eritrean revolution' and 'Soviet-Cuban intervention cannot crush Eritrea. Their dissatisfaction with us was 'How can you write like this about the Soviet Union?' You are presenting the Soviet Union as our enemy on a par with U.S. imperialism.' Instead of encouraging our courageous initiative they made every effort to inhibit us. However we were not intimidated. As we had previously agreed with them that the activities of the Soviet Union against our people's revolution could be publicly opposed we continued our correct method of struggle. However in order to first resolve the question of the nature of the Soviet Union internally within the front, we did not publicly condemn the Soviet Union as revisionist despite the fact that we already had a stand. We maintained the principle of struggling for our correct views within the front for the sake of unity. However since it is our belief that unity can only be built on the basis of principles we never at any time, reconciled with the erroneous views of the EPLF leadership for the sake of 'unity.' It was not us but the EPLF leadership that made the issue public by openly declaring that the Soviet Union is socialist. In doing so, it was the EPLF leadership that violated the democratic right of the entire membership of the front. It was the EPLF leadership that violated the principle of democratic centralism and not us.

12. When on June 29 the leadership of both the EPLF and ELF announced about their readiness to negotiate with the fascist Dergue without preconditions, EFLNA and AEWNA greeted it as a national disgrace. The entire memberships of our two organizations discussed the issue and we immediately sent our opposition to this act of national betrayal to the EPLF leadership (See Appendix V [a] and [b]). Again no response to our letter. Shortly afterwards we received the May issue of the official organ *Vanguard* which contained the EPLF secretary general's speech to the first congress of Association of Eritrean Students. Our membership thoroughly studied the document (See Appendix IX) and exposed its reactionary content.

During this time also since we were getting prepared for our 9th Congress, we had asked the EPLF to send a representative to our congress. However despite the agreement reached, the EPLF failed to attend our congress. Instead it sent us a message and the July issue of *Vanguard* (see Appendix x) as part of the message. The July special issue of *Vanguard* was an interview with the Vice-Secretary General Isaias Afewerki. This issue contained, in the most concentrated form, the EPLF leadership's opportunist line on all the strategic questions, on the Soviet Union and other revisionist countries that support the fascist junta, on peaceful solution and on the fascist Dergue. In this publication the EPLF leadership made public the series of secret peace talks it had held with representatives of the fascist junta in East Berlin. (Although it had for a long time kept this as a secret it was finally forced to reveal it because the fascist Dergue had already made it public. The message sent to our congress (see Appendix vii) was also a warning to renounce our correct line and submit to its dictates. We were

told to drop the correct method of struggle we are following in our publications. Thus the EPLF leadership had gone as far as to forcibly impose its reactionary line on us.

Therefore, it is after waging such a long struggle and under such a condition that we chose to openly expose the opportunist and capitulationist line of the EPLF leadership, condemn the EPLF leadership and sever all ties with it rather than submit to its capitulationist line. The EPLF by departing from the correct line and abandoning the correct principles that had tied us together has broken our unity. This split has occurred because the EPLF leadership wouldn't heed the views of our mass organizations and because of its refusal to correct the grave mistakes it has committed on matters of principle. It means that the EPLF leadership has upset the mutual confidence that had existed between us. Thus the choice given to us was to either capitulate to its erroneous line or to boldly uphold the correct line and expose the capitulationist line of the EPLF leadership in front of the masses. We chose the latter.

The EPLF leadership has broken our relationship for it relied only on the "unrestricted" right it had to lead and refused to rectify its mistakes and for it wanted to command rather than convince. That is why the EPLF leadership shoulders the responsibility of being the greatest splitter of our people's revolutionary movement.

In our 9th congress we decided to sever relations with the EPLF leadership and wage an open struggle. Nothing was left that could bind us with the EPLF leadership. All means of internal struggle was exhausted. The only remaining way is to struggle openly. The other choice was to reconcile with treason, to accept Soviet-led revisionism, the murderous killer of our people and other peoples as our ally and friend and to become exponents of revisionism. This we will not do under any circumstances. It is not our tradition, nor the tradition of our heroic people to do such a thing. Our tradition is to hate and mercilessly fight against our enemies. It is therefore basing ourselves on this strong conviction that we have separated from the traitorous EPLF leadership. Our situation reminds us of what Lenin said when the Second International was dominated by the Kautskyite revisionists.

Without struggle it is not possible to clarify and without clarifying it is not possible to go forward with success, it is not possible to achieve a solid unity. Those who are struggling today are in no way destroying unity. Unity has already ceased to exist, it is broken in all its aspects. Open and direct struggle is one of the necessary conditions to restore unity.

By separating from the EPLF leadership EFLNA and AEWNA have separated from the line of treachery and capitulation. In doing so it is to restore real unity in the Eritrean struggle which the EPLF leadership by adopting a capitulationist line has wrecked. We have broken off relations with the EPLF leadership in order to struggle towards building principled unity in our revolution on the basis of fighting Ethiopian colonialism, U.S. led imperialism, Soviet-led modern revisionism, zionism and internal reaction.

EFLNA's 9th Congress and AEWNA's 2nd Congress

EFLNA's 9th Congress and AEWNA's 2nd Congress are historic ones that took a firm and bold revolutionary decision in defence of the Eritrean revolution. In a scientific manner they assessed the grave situation facing the Eritrean revolution, they dealt in greater detail with the Soviet revisionist intervention against our revolution, the counter-revolutionary maneuvers of the U S imperialists, the capitulationist line followed by the EPLF and ELF leadership and the role of our organizations in this crucial period of national trial.

The issue of focal point in our congresses was the course of betrayal and kneeling before Soviet-led revisionism that the EPLF leadership has embarked upon and the step that our organizations had to take. In the course of five days of democratic debate the points of differences between us and the EPLF leadership were thoroughly and broadly discussed. Our experience with the EPLF and the struggle we waged while we were its mass organization and in particular in the past one and a half years was summed up. The capitulationist line of the EPLF leadership was thoroughly exposed.

Over 400 members attended EFLNA's 9th Congress and over 70 members attended AEWNA's 2nd Congress. An atmosphere of vigorous debate prevailed in our congresses. Realizing that the issue with which the congresses were dealing was crucial to our revolution and would decide the course of our future struggle, members actively participated in scientifically analysing international and regional situations. Our congresses were congresses of stern class struggle, congresses of utmost discipline and seriousness. Members expressed their bitter class hatred towards all of the enemies of our people the U S imperialists, the Soviet revisionists, the Ethiopian fascists, the zionists, internal reaction and the EPLF and ELF capitulationist leaders as well as their determination to defend our revolution, to struggle for the true independence of our country and the liberation of our people. Our congresses were characterized by the high level of political and ideological consciousness, by the unanimity of views, by principled unity around the correct line, and by the vigorous spirit of struggle. On all the resolutions we voiced unanimously

Our congresses were successfully concluded. They have enabled our organizations to continue the struggle on a higher level and have illuminated the path forward. The best measurement of our congresses' success are our resolutions. Following are, therefore, the resolutions which the 9th Congress of EFLNA and the 2nd Congress of AEWNA passed—the resolutions which will have great impact on the Eritrean revolution.

Political Resolutions

The Ninth Congress of EFLNA and the Second Congress of AEWNA unanimously passed the following resolutions:

EPLF LEADERSHIP

I Having capitulated to the intimidation and pressures of the revisionist Soviet Union and its lackeys for its own bourgeois class interest, the EPLF leadership is covering up for the Soviet Union and other revisionist countries aggression and expansion in our country in blatant collusion with the Ethiopian colonialists and U S led imperialism, zionism and internal reaction. The EPLF leadership presents the revisionist Soviet Union and its puppets as socialists and strategic allies of our revolution. It presents the antagonistic contradiction between them and our revolution as a contradiction within the revolutionary camp that can be resolved by negotiations. Applying this counter-revolutionary strategy into practice, the EPLF leadership has reversed the position of the enemies and friends of the Eritrean revolution, hence leading the struggle into a quagmire of reaction. (See *Vanguard* Vol. 3 #5 June, 1978)

II Ethiopian colonialism in Eritrea, fascism in Ethiopia cannot exist without the alliance of the Ethiopian state with imperialism, zionism, Soviet-led modern revisionism and internal reaction.

At present, although the fascist junta is further consolidating its ties with Soviet-led revisionism, it has not yet broken off relations with U S led imperialism, zionism and reaction. However it can at any time in the future limit its relations with Soviet-led revisionism only, breaking all ties with U S led imperialism. Conversely it can develop its ties with U S led imperialism breaking off all relations with Soviet-led revisionism. Hence, it is only by relying either on U S led imperialism or Soviet-led revisionism or on both that the Ethiopian state can continue its colonial rule in Eritrea and its fascist dictatorship over the Ethiopian people.

Nevertheless, the EPLF leadership, forced by its own bourgeois class interest, has presented the revisionist Soviet Union and its puppets who are objectively standing against our revolution as socialists and strategic allies of our revolution. It has declared the fascist Ethiopian state as anti-imperialist and as having broken off all ties with imperialism, zionism and all reaction while it has not. *Vanguard* special issue July 1978 Vol. 3 #7) Therefore, the EPLF leadership,

- a by denying the link between Ethiopian colonialism in Eritrea with imperialism and revisionism has in fact liquidated the colonial essence of the Eritrean question it has claimed no ties between Ethiopian colonialism and imperialism and revisionism)
- b has, in fact, condemned as counter-revolutionary the democratic struggle of the oppressed Ethiopian peoples against the fascist Dergue and its masters (it claims the junta is anti-imperialist and anti-reaction)

III Violating flagrantly the principle which states that our revolution sits

down for negotiation with the Ethiopian rulers only when they recognize the self-determination (independence of the Eritrean people,' a pre-condition which our people, who realizing that they can attain independence only by means of force and not compromises, wrote with their blood 17 years ago and reiterated it in clear terms at the EPLF's First Congress,

The EPLF leadership

- a has called upon the Ethiopian rulers (the fascist Dergue) to sit down for negotiations without pre-conditions.
- b has in fact sat down with the fascist Dergue in East Germany through the mediation of the East Germany revisionists. Hence by placing Eritrea's independence as the subject of compromise it has objectively betrayed, and is working hard to liquidate the cause of independence the Eritrean people have been fighting for all along.
- c has betrayed our revolution and renounced the armed method of struggle by stating:
 - the antagonistic contradiction between our revolution and Ethiopian colonialism and its sustainers modern revisionism, imperialism, zionism and internal reaction should be resolved by peaceful means instead of through the force of arms and
 - by officially declaring that the continuation or the further intensification ' of the just armed struggle for liberation our people waged for the past 17 years and are still waging unrelentlessly "is not for the interest of the peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia.
- d. has violated the democratic rights of all members of the EPLF by making a reactionary attempt to impose, through deception and threats, the openly counter-revolutionary strategy and resolution it is charting, without conducting any studies, consultations and dialogues among the masses of fighters and mass organizations.
- e has violated the democratic rights of our organization, despite our strict observance of democratic centralism.

because, without notifying our organization, it prevented the circulation of our publications among the masses and fighters instead of distributing them, along with its own views.

because it ignored the views and objections that were made repeatedly by our organization and instead of responding in a democratic and scientific way attempted to impose its incorrect, unscientific and counter-revolutionary analysis on our organization through deception and threats.

Thus the congress, realizing that the EPLF leadership is *treacherous and counter-revolutionary*, resolved to strongly condemn it.

ELF LEADERSHIP

- 1 We recognize it to be an out and out reactionary that has never represented the masses.
- 2 We realize that it has become an open agent of the revisionist Soviet Union and is committing counter-revolutionary crimes, and betrayals

As for the fascist junta, its counter-revolutionary nature is revealed in its daily whipping up of chauvinist hysteria among the downtrodden peasants under the false claim of Arab invasion to use them as cannon-fodder in its unjust expansionist war in Eritrea. Its fake socialism is nothing else but the perpetuation of hunger disease and degradation by forcibly snatching away of the hard-earned bread from the mouth of the oppressed Ethiopian masses under the slogan of everything for the war front. In full collaboration with Soviet-led revisionism it has in the most Hitlerite manner massacred the best fighting sons and daughters of Ethiopia.

The so-called anti-imperialism of the fascist junta is a hoax. It is a deliberate but most criminal line of conciliation with modern revisionism. Although the U S imperialists and Israeli zionists have taken a low profile after the penetration by the Soviet-led revisionists in Ethiopia it is absolutely erroneous to claim as do the opportunist leadership of EPLF and ELF that the fascist junta has cut off relationships with U S imperialism and Israeli zionism. Despite the anti-imperialist demagogy of the fascist junta the U S. imperialists maintain their economic ties with Ethiopia though mainly through West European imperialist countries. Politically, too, U S. imperialism recognizes the territorial integrity of Ethiopia and supports its war of aggression in Eritrea.

Israeli zionists value their relationship with the fascist junta very much. "We want to retain the good relationship we have with Ethiopia," said Moshe Dayan (Feb 6, 1978 press conference in Zurich)

To conclude, we have shown that the opportunist EPLF and ELF leadership as agents of Soviet-led modern revisionism in Eritrea have decided to follow the rules within the counter-revolutionary camp. As such they have shamelessly closed their eyes to fascism in Ethiopia and Eritrea, condemned the anti-fascist struggle of the Ethiopian masses as reactionary and against the interest of change and progress in the region. This is a glaring experience of the savage and criminal nature of modern revisionism. It reverses the enemies and friends of the people and sabotage their revolution. The two capitulationist leaderships by covering up for fascism are together with their masters and the fascist Dergue held responsible for all the crimes it commits on our people.

over our revolution and people in alliance with the not yet exposed counter-revolutionary EPLF leadership.

Therefore, the congress, realizing that the ELF leadership *is treacherous and counter-revolutionary, resolved to strongly condemn it.*

“THIRD FORCE”

The congress strongly condemns the treacherous and counter-revolutionary Sabbe Clique for its backward and divisive exhortation and its activities to create a ‘third force’ to strangle the Eritrean revolution using the fund and material collected in the name of the Eritrean people and for its ties with U S led imperialism and reactionary Arab countries. The congress fully supports the opposition and condemnation voiced by the entire Eritrean people and the fighters of the EPLF and ELF against this traitor and counter-revolutionary clique and calls upon them to persist on it.

TO THE FIGHTERS OF THE EPLF

The congress hails the heroic and relentless struggle and the unprecedented victories the fighters of the EPLF are scoring against Ethiopian colonialism and its sustainers, U S led imperialism, zionism, the Soviet Union, Cuba and other revisionist countries as well as internal reaction. While encouraging them to persist on the armed struggle until our people attain their full independence, the congress calls upon them.

- a to condemn and expose the counter-revolutionary leadership of the EPLF which, for the sake of its own bourgeois class interest and acting in alliance with the counter-revolutionary leadership of the ELF, as a running dog of Soviet revisionism, is working feverishly to have the Eritrean people capitulate in front of their enemies.
- b to struggle together with the fighters of ELF against the two treacherous leaderships (EPLF ELF) by lining them parallel with the internal reaction and Ethiopian colonialism and its sustainers.

TO ALL MASS ORGANIZATIONS OF EPLF

The congress calls upon all the mass organizations of EPLF to condemn and expose the counter-revolutionary leadership of the EPLF and the counter-revolutionary ELF leadership, for their attempt to force the Eritrean people to capitulate in front of their enemies.

TO ALL FIGHTERS OF ELF

The congress hails the heroic and relentless struggle and the victories the fighters of the ELF are scoring against Ethiopian colonialism and its sustainers, U S. led imperialism, zionism, Soviet Union, Cuba, and other revisionist countries and internal reaction. While encouraging them to persist on the armed struggle until our people attain full independence, the congress calls upon them.

- a to condemn and expose the counter-revolutionary ELF leadership,

which for the sake of its own class interest, and acting in alliance with the counter-revolutionary EPLF leadership as a running dog of Soviet revisionism working feverishly to have the Eritrean people capitulate in front of their enemies.

- b to struggle together with the fighters of the EPLF against the two treacherous leaderships (EPLF ELF) by lining them parallel with the internal reaction and Ethiopian colonialism and its sustainers.

TO THE ENTIRE ERITREAN MASSES

The congress calls upon the broad Eritrean masses to condemn and struggle against the counter-revolutionary leaderships of EPLF and ELF, along with the primary enemies, because they have for their own class interest capitulated to the revisionist Soviet Union and betrayed the just and anti-colonial struggle for which the Eritrean people rose in arms and have shed their blood for the last 17 years by attempting to divert the Eritrean people from the correct revolutionary path of liberation (protracted armed struggle)

TO ALL ERITREAN MARXIST-LENINISTS

The congress calls upon all Eritrean Marxist-Leninists.

- a to be in the forefront of the broad masses and fighters in exposing and condemning the treacherous leadership of the EPLF and ELF which are working actively to put our people and revolution under the control of the Soviet revisionists and its puppets.
- b to vigorously and persistently work to fulfill their historic mission, realizing that it is only a vanguard party of the proletariat that can safeguard the gains of the revolution attained through unparalleled sacrifice and struggle of our people and to save and guarantee the continuity of our revolution by extricating it from the quagmire of modern revisionism and enable our people to attain full independence and liberation.

ETHIOPIA

The congress strongly condemns

- a the fascist military government of Ethiopia who utilizing its ties with U S. imperialism, European imperialist countries and zionist Israel, and the military economic and political support from revisionist Soviet Union, Cuba and other revisionist countries is pursuing the policy of:
 - colonial and expansionist designs
 - unleashing fascist repression against the Eritrean people
 - attempts to pitch the Ethiopian peasant masses, through compulsion and deception, against the Eritrean masses under various labels (“voluntary army” peoples militia, “flame,” “liberation army” etc.)

—we also condemn the fascist junta for—its conspiracy of ‘peaceful solution’ designed to cover-up its defeats, to confuse the people of Eritrea, Ethiopia and the world and to split the Eritrean revolution. the total denial of the democratic rights of the broad Ethiopian masses and the fascistic repression, massacres and terrorism it is perpetrating against progressive Ethiopians.

- b The congress supports the struggle of the Ethiopian masses and their progressive organizations to smash the existing fascist regime and build a people’s democratic state in its place.
- c We support all the progressive and democratic movements of the oppressed nationalities in Ethiopia.
- d We condemn the counter-revolutionary activities of the feudalists and other reactionaries

SOVIET UNION AND CUBA

The congress condemns the revisionist Soviet Union, its puppet revisionist countries, parties and organizations realizing that they are part of the camp of counter-revolution and for:

- a supplying the fascist Dergue with arms, mercenary troops, economic, political, ideological and diplomatic support to crush the just and revolutionary national liberation struggle of the Eritrean masses and liquidate the democratic struggle of the Ethiopian masses.
- b the counter-revolutionary role they are playing on the political, ideological, military and economic fields against the socialist countries, the national liberation struggles and the international communist movement.

The congress, realizing that without struggling against right opportunism, and revisionism one cannot fight colonialism and imperialism resolves to strongly fight modern revisionism in all fields

INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTIONS

The congress.

- a condemns the reactionary attempts of the counter-revolutionary camp, led by the U S. imperialists and Soviet revisionists, to crush the national liberation movements in the Middle East, the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa.
- b supports the national liberation struggles of the Zimbabwean, Azanian and Namibian peoples.
- c. supports the heroic struggle of the people of Palestine against imperialism, zionism, revisionism and for the establishment of a democratic Palestine. It strongly condemns the Sadat treachery which is concocted by imperialists, revisionists and their puppets, against the Palestinian revolution and the struggle of the rest of the oppressed Arab peoples.
- d supports the revolutionary struggle of the people of Oman against imperialism, its client state of Kabus and the Iranian aggression.

- e supports the national liberation struggle of the people of Western Sahara.
- f supports the national liberation struggle of the people of East Timor
- g supports the national liberation struggles in Southeast Asia (Philippines, Thailand, Malasia, etc.
- h supports the struggle of the Puerto Rican people for independence and liberation.
- i supports the struggle of the people of the world in general and that of Africa, Asia and Latin America in particular against colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism and revisionism.
supports the struggle of the revolutionary and democratic forces in the capitalist countries in general and that of the workers movement and the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed nationalities in the United States in particular
- k expresses its gratitude to all countries and organizations that support the Eritrean revolution.
- l calls upon all socialist and progressive countries and organizations to oppose the fascist Dergue and support the just struggle of the Eritrean people.

Conclusion

The decision of EFLNA's 9th Congress and AEWNA's 2nd Congress is in line with the fighting tradition of our heroic people. It is a reflection of our people's will to fight for their sacred objectives of national independence and peoples democracy no matter what it takes. In taking a firm stand against capitulation and in defence of the Eritrean revolution, EFLNA and AEWNA have set out to shoulder their national and revolutionary responsibilities.

By opposing and exposing the capitulationist leaderships of EPLF and ELF EFLNA and AEWNA have strongly reiterated their loyalty to our fighting people and our revolutionary struggle. We have called on our people and our heroic fighters to heighten their consciousness and be firm against all enemies, including the traitorous leaders of EPLF and ELF, and to persevere on the glorious road of peoples war and self-reliance. On our part, we have set forth to wage an uncompromising struggle against the line of capitulation in the ranks of our liberation struggle and against Soviet-led revisionism, U.S. led imperialism, Ethiopian colonialism, zionism and internal reaction, and to rally all patriotic and revolutionary Eritreans in defence of the fatherland. The bitter experience of our revolutionary struggle has reaffirmed that the leadership of the party of the proletariat is the most essential condition for the continuation and the success of our revolution. Towards this end, we have called upon all Eritrean Marxist-Leninists to shoulder their historic task and to be in the forefront in exposing and fighting the capitulationist line of the EPLF and ELF leaderships.

In choosing the road we have taken, it is with the full awareness that it will be long and arduous struggle with many twists and turns. We do not have the slightest illusion about the protractedness and bitterness of this road. It is the road of struggle and sacrifice.

Our revolution is today under the powerful counter-revolutionary attack of the Ethiopian fascists, Soviet-led revisionism, U.S. led imperialism and zionism. The EPLF and ELF leaders have taken the road of capitulation. Cities like Dekemhare and Segeneiti which were heroically liberated a year ago have been retaken by the Ethiopian aggressors. But this doesn't change the basic character of the Eritrean revolution in any way. Since the Eritrean struggle is just, popular and revolutionary it will always maintain its strategic superiority over its enemies. Alterations in the balance of forces will not affect the nature of the Eritrean struggle. It is to be remembered that in the past the Eritrean struggle defeated the powerful counter-revolutionary alliance between the Haile Selassie regime, the U.S. imperialists and the Israeli zionists. Today also, regardless of the strength of the forces that are arrayed against the Eritrean struggle, they will not be able to suppress it.

The effect of the huge Ethiopian, Soviet and Cuban counter-revolutionary alliance currently poised against the Eritrean revolution, the subversive activities of the U S imperialists and the betrayal of the capitulationists has caused temporary setbacks to our revolution but can never subdue our people.

Our people will never bow down to big power pressures and blackmail or be duped by treachery. Through 17 years of courageous armed struggle, the Eritrean people have concretely expressed their demand for independence and liberation. The entire people—men, women, children, the old and the young—have united behind the demand ‘nothing short of total independence. There is no force on this earth that will be able to shake this indomitable and tested will which is imprinted in the fighting spirit of our people.

The Eritrean people have demonstrated their capability to win truly great victories, defeat any enemy and defend their revolution from any counter-revolutionary attack however mighty it may be. They have a wealth of experience in waging a self-reliant protracted people's war.

Furthermore, the Eritrean people have developed extraordinary qualities of resistance that ensure their victory. Above all, they are prepared to pay any price—they are tempered in the spirit and tradition of self-sacrifice for their inalienable rights and aspirations. The revolution has taught the masses that only by making the necessary sacrifices can genuine victory be achieved. Their selfless participation in the numerous heated battles against enemy artillery, tanks and rocket launchers exemplifies this extraordinary kind of heroism of our people.

The concentrated will of the Eritrean people is expressed in their organized struggle. The unity forged between the Eritrean people is steel-like which no force can shake off. As expressed by a woman resident of the resettlement camp in Sahel province, ‘though we speak nine different languages, we are one people.’ Still more, the Eritrean people are a people in arms. They are heroic fighters who have displayed and are displaying magnificent heroism, valor and courage against the enemy—fighters who have scored unprecedented victories, fighters who strike terror into the hearts of the spineless enemy forces.

When we say that there is no force capable of defeating our people it is basing ourselves on these concrete factors prevailing in our country and on the unshakeable confidence we have in our people.

The enemies of our revolution hope that the recent setbacks will make our people abandon their struggle. Far from this, these setbacks brought about by the weight of the Soviet revisionists' pressure and intervention have not lowered the morale of the Eritrean people but, on the contrary, have increased their determination and steeled their will to fight.

Our people are well-experienced in fighting different enemies at various

stages of their history They fought the Turkish and Egyptian expansionists, the Italian and British imperialists, the feudo-militaristic regime of Haile Selassie and its sustainers the U S imperialists, and at present they are in fierce fighting against the fascist junta, Soviet-led revisionism U S imperialism and internal reactionaries and capitulationists. During the past four centuries they have acquired rich experience in the art of fighting foreign domination. From their bitter experience, they have learned the valuable lesson that there is no smooth sailing in fighting foreign aggression and in making revolution In particular the past 17 years have taught the Eritrean people that there are always setbacks in a struggle, but in the final analysis victory belongs to the people, to the masses fighting for a just and revolutionary cause.

The present alliance of forces is teaching the people yet another lesson, that their enemies are numerous and of different shades and colors, hence, the necessity of heightening their awareness, of always being vigilant about their enemies and putting up a sustained resistance against them Our people are daily experiencing the crimes being committed by the fascist Dergue and its Soviet and Cuban sustainers For the Eritrean people, the Soviet MIGs, warships, Kayutsha rocket launchers the T-54 tanks and the Cuban mercenary troops symbolize the source of evil, death and oppression. The fascist junta, Soviet-led revisionism, U.S led imperialism and the traitors EPLF ELF leaderships and Sabbe clique are trying to snatch away from the Eritrean people the fruits ripened through 17 years of protracted struggle. These counter-revolutionary maneuvers have infuriated the Eritrean people and have increased their hatred and bitterness towards all their enemies whether they come disguised or undisguised.

At every stage of their struggle, the Eritrean people have learned the indispensability of waging an uncompromising struggle against their enemies—Ethiopian colonialism, revisionism, imperialism, 'zionism, feudalism and reaction and opportunism of all hues. When they began the armed struggle in 1961 it was after they learned from bitter experience that peaceful resistance against a well-armed enemy is futile and indeed, the past 17 years have confirmed the truth of this lesson. It was by persevering on the road of protracted people's war that it has been possible to bring the struggle to its present stage. The Eritrean people are aware that in order to take the struggle right through to its complete victory it is absolutely necessary to step up the people's war and deal the enemy still more powerful blows. The dangerous activities being undertaken by their enemies have demonstrated to the Eritrean people, now more than ever the need for the intensification of the armed struggle and the necessity of persisting on the road of protracted people's war on which they have embarked.

Despite the temporary setbacks, the Eritrean people continue the armed struggle and are resolved to fight to the end. They fight with the full confidence to win. They are at present winning brilliant victories against the Ethiopian aggressor troops and Cuban mercenary troops.

As an oppressed and revolutionary people, the Eritrean people also enjoy warm solidarity among the revolutionary forces the world over. Their struggle is part of the world-wide revolutionary movements struggling for liberation, independence and socialism. Thus, in their struggle the Eritrean people have the entire oppressed people of the world on their side—in Asia, Africa and Latin America—who are waging national liberation struggles, in the capitalist countries who are fighting to inaugurate the proletarian socialist revolution and in the socialist countries who have established the dictatorship of the proletariat. Hence, the Eritrean struggle has organic links with the revolutionaries throughout the world in general, the surrounding region in particular and first and foremost, with the struggle of the Ethiopian masses who are fighting exactly the same enemies. Both people are victims of the fascist terror of the unta and the crimes of Soviet-led revisionism and U.S.-led imperialism. The fraternal ties that exist between the two neighboring peoples are based on common struggle against common enemies.

Today overwhelming odds face the Eritrean people in their just struggle. However, no matter what it takes, no matter what the obstacles are, victory definitely lies on the side of the Eritrean people. The road ahead is torturous but the future is bright and favorable for our people. The revolutionary torch lit in Eritrea will glitter, giving a bright light that will be the birth of a genuinely independent people's democratic Eritrea in the Horn of Africa.

In conclusion, we call upon the supporters of the Eritrean revolution and all progressive and revolutionary forces.

1. To closely follow the situation unfolding in Eritrea,
2. Take a firm position on the side of the Eritrean people in their struggle against Ethiopian colonialism, imperialism, modern revisionism, zionism and internal reaction and, for national independence and people's democracy.
3. Expose the capitulationist line of the EPLF and ELF leaderships and condemn the counter-revolutionary Sabbe clique;
4. Strongly condemn the Dergue's fascist rule in Ethiopia and its war of aggression in Eritrea,
5. Support the Ethiopian people's struggle against the fascist Dergue and its imperialist, revisionist masters and, to establish people's democracy.

Victory to the masses!

Appendices

Appendix I

May 19, 1977

To: The Political Bureau of EPLF
From: The Central Committee of EFLNA

Dear Comrades.

First our comradely greetings. We wish you success in the persistent revolutionary tasks you're undertaking.

That the EPLF is the vanguard of the Eritrean revolution has been tested and shown in practice. At a time when our revolution is crowning with victory after victory with every passing day, those who are terrified by this development are making frantic attempts to strangle the forces of our revolution. Because the counter-revolutionary activities going on in the Horn of Africa affect us directly, we ourselves ought to have a clear understanding of the situation and bring it to the attention of the progressive world. The EPLF, as the vanguard of the Eritrean Revolution, has an obligation to illuminate the situation to its people and the people of the world.

Here below we present our views on the situation.

1. The Soviet Union's decision to arm the fascist Dergue, the involvement of Cuban advisers, and Menghistu's visit to Moscow have made the relationship of the Soviet Union and Cuba with the Dergue an open fact. The Soviet Union and Cuba, in collaboration with the fascist Dergue, are determined to crush the democratic forces in the region.

2. The argument that their collaboration with the Dergue is not a move against the Eritrean revolution but the reactionary countries in the region is so refined a disguise that it is even strange to the ear. What is really shaking the Dergue is the Eritrean revolution. The weapons and advisors being sent to prop up the tottering Dergue are, therefore, first and foremost to 'liquidate' the Eritrean revolution and also to crush the democratic forces in Ethiopia.

3. Such arguments as 'that these countries have been deluded by the Dergue' or 'that they don't know the situation' are baseless. They very well know what is happening and who is who in the world. The Soviet and Cuban collaboration with the Dergue cannot be for any other reason than to pursue their interest and secure a force that would capitulate to them. Their intention is to place such forces in all the corners of the world which they can maneuver from the Kremlin. For this purpose in the Horn of Africa, they are collaborating with the fascist Dergue against the Ethiopian masses and the Eritrean revolution.

4. A conspiratorial proposal being presented as a solution to the Eritrean question has recently begun to surface in the international mass media. According to this proposal, the aim is to bring about the unity of 'progressive' forces in the Horn of Africa by tying Eritrea under some sort of federal union with Ethiopia. In Eritrea, it says, the Soviet Union could support the EPLF and liquidate the ELF and the Sabbe clique. This scheme,

in addition to totally disregarding the fundamental question of the Eritrean people's struggle for independence, aims at creating confusion in the Eritrean revolution. Nobody but our people and our revolution can lay down the strategy and tactics of our revolution, and no foreign force has a right to interfere in the internal affairs of our revolution. Though our stand on these questions is starkly clear, the objective condition forces us to put it in unmistakable terms that the question of independence cannot be resolved without achieving independence by waging a protracted people's war pursuing the policy of self reliance, and demolishing the enemy with his own guns and bullets. (We are enclosing press clippings regarding this proposal)

5 Today, it is important that we clearly distinguish our enemies from our friends. We believe it is important that we study the nature of these forces, the interest they represent and their role in the world-wide mass movements so that it can be clear at the very least, among ourselves.

Dear Comrades,

It is not because we don't take into consideration the situation our revolution is in that we are making these suggestions. We realize the problems the ELF creates, and the difficulties it might entail in our relationship with the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Palestine Resistance Movement. However because we have to face the forces that come to crush us, it is imperative that at the very least we explain their actions are against the democratic forces and that we oppose it. We should never forget that a strong opposition from us will shake them badly. That our right to present our views must be respected at all times is one of the fundamental demands of our people. We must be ready to oppose any outside force that may attempt to exert pressure upon us to shut our mouth. Though, we should explain our revolution to, and try to neutralize such forces (as the Soviet Union) we should primarily aim at those that can render us principled support once they understand the situation. We have been unable to give an explanation about the present situation because the EPLF has not given us any guiding instructions. Therefore, comrades, we expect your views on the situation as soon as possible.

In conclusion, we wish to express our view that the great military victories our people's army is scoring and the victory of the EPLF's First Congress and its accomplishments have further elevated our revolutionary spirit. Realizing that these victories were achieved with the blood of our gallant comrades and that self reliance is the basis of our victories we are exerting greater effort in our fund-raising undertakings so as to better fulfill our responsibilities. We are determined to advance forward with the EPLF to smash any force that may come from any corner to crush our revolution.

Victory to the Masses
Victory to the Vanguard EPLF!
Down with all Reaction!

The Central Committee of EFLNA

Appendix II

January 26 1978

To: The Polit-Bureau of EPLF
From: The Central Committee of AESNA

Dear Comrades.

Above all we send you our revolutionary greetings, and we wish you success and quick execution in all your national tasks.

Attached with this letter we are sending you a document which is the summation of four months of study that our association undertook on the question of the origins of revisionism and the ways to combat it. So far this document has only been circulated among our members and EPLF offices abroad.

On your part, we hope that you can send us the studies you are conducting on this important and timely question in our revolution, and we await with great anticipation your views on our document.

Victory to the Masses
Long Live the EPLF

The Central Committee of Aesna

Appendix III

TO: The Political Bureau of EPLF
FROM: The Central Committee of AESNA

Feb. 18 1978

Dear Comrades,

First of all, we send you our revolutionary greetings. We wish you success in your relentless revolutionary struggle in the interest of the oppressed Eritrean people.

Today, the imperialists, revisionists and all reactionaries, by amassing unprecedented size of modern weapons and deploying thousands of their mercenary troops along with that of the fascistic colonial army of the Dergue, are working feverishly to "crush" and "extinguish" the revolutionary flame which, through 16 years of bitter and resolute armed struggle has brought the struggle of our people to the threshold of victory. In the outside world, too, they are waging an orchestrated campaign of vilification and diplomatic maneuvers in order to crush our revolution by isolating it from its natural allies. On the other hand, our people, guided by the correct leadership of the EPLF have frustrated the dreams of the counter-revolutionary camp by smashing the cowardly Ethiopian army which is armed with the most sophisticated and modern weaponry and assisted by foreign mercenaries, and thereby filling all the forces of justice, peace, liberation and independence with joy and jubilation.

In particular at a time when thousands of Soviet-Cuban as well as other mercenary troops are fighting on the side of the Dergue, at a time when they have deployed their warships and are napalming liberated Eritrean towns and densely-populated villages, killing innocent civilians in the most ruthless and barbaric fashion, the EPLF's inability to put out an official statement opposing this aggression consistent with the practical opposition it is showing in the battlefield has created confusion and doubts among the entire membership of our mass organization and among our supporters—and for some it has become difficult to explain. We ourselves have found it very difficult to openly defend the EPLF's inability to put out such a statement of opposition in front of our fellow members and supporters.

Therefore, we once again raise the point we had raised before in our correspondence, through the telephone and by sending a representative, reminding that such a statement of opposition be put out—for it is even more correct and legitimate to do so at this time than at any time before.

Although you have already given us some explanation why the EPLF did not officially state its opposition, at this time when the hostility and fear that Russia and Cuba have over our revolution has become so obvious to the whole world and when they are expressing their "pride" of unleashing this fascistic and reactionary war in the name of "proletarian interna-

tionalism, we don't believe such an explanation is enough

The reactionary forces in the region cannot fail to see what the nature and stand of the EPLF is from its daily practice. In order to crush our revolution by isolating it they are desperately trying to primarily liquidate the EPLF. And this is a task entrusted to them by the entire counter-revolutionary camp. Because the Soviet Union, in alliance with its running dogs (in collaboration with the reactionary forces in the region) is the protagonist in the attempt being made to isolate our revolution and liquidate the EPLF the kind of relationship the EPLF can possibly have with the Soviet Union cannot be concealed from the reactionary forces around Eritrea. On the contrary because the EPLF's failure to express its opposition against the intervention of the Soviet Union in our revolution can be taken as a sign of weakness, the reactionary forces would be motivated to tighten their noose around the EPLF.

Therefore, at a time when imperialists, revisionists and all reactionaries have entered into a counter-revolutionary 'holy alliance' to extinguish our just struggle and to exterminate our militant people, it is imperative that the EPLF as a genuine spokesman and representative of the Eritrean people, state to the struggling peoples of the world through its official organ its opposition to the intervention. This would be in line with its revolutionary tradition and a reflection of the practical opposition it is displaying in the Eritrean battlefield where it is crushing with determination, resoluteness and heroism all the reactionary forces posing against the Eritrean people's struggle for independence and liberation. It is only when the EPLF opposes the forces working feverishly to crush our revolution and their counter-revolutionary activities in general in front of the whole world that it can strengthen unity based on common struggle with the oppressed peoples of the world struggling against these common enemies.

When the EPLF disseminates through its organ to the whole world the echo of the exemplary and relentless struggle it is waging by relying on its people and under the most arduous conditions against all enemies of the Eritrean people, then it inspires, reassures and emboldens the struggles of the oppressed peoples of the world by confirming in practice the scientific truth that if the people of a small nation dare to rise up in arms, they can defeat the aggression of a big nation. And it is by openly stating its opposition that it can expose the nature and unmask the true face of these forces which are working feverishly under the guise of "proletarian internationalism" and posing as friends of national liberation movements and revolutions, to 'extinguish the flames of revolution, that the EPLF can make its modest internationalist contribution to the archives of world revolution. It is by fulfilling this internationalist obligation that the EPLF can maintain the admiration and prestige it has won from the Eritrean people and the peoples of the world for the revolutionary struggle it has been waging.

At this moment the only correct measure to take is to openly and of-

officially state your opposition to all forces working feverishly to crush our revolution.

Victory to the masses!
Long live the EPLF
Down with Ethiopian colonialism and its sustainers
Central Committee of AESNA

Appendix IVa

April 1, 1978

To: The Political Bureau of the EPLF
From: The Central Committee of AESNA

Dear Comrades.

First of all we would like to express our revolutionary greetings on behalf of all our members and wish you all success in your relentless struggle for the liberation of the oppressed Eritrean people.

The main reason for writing this letter is to express our view on the declaration of the third regular meeting of the Central Committee of the EPLF. The declaration of the third regular meeting follows the revolutionary tradition of the EPLF in that it invites for struggle. However, we would like to express our disagreement with the erroneous view incorporated in the full sentence at the end of the declaration, which reads, "We remind the socialist countries which are giving political and military support to the Dergue to rectify their wrong stand."

This sentence we presume, refers primarily to the Soviet Union and Cuba. As to the reason why we do not look at the Soviet Union and other revisionist (ex-socialist) countries as socialists, it is stated in our pamphlet 'Marxism-Leninism against Revisionism' a summation of the four-month long study our organization conducted on the subject to reach a common understanding.

Therefore, the political and military support of the revisionist countries to the Dergue is not out of the lack of knowledge or confusion on their part on the revolutionary nature of the struggle of the Eritrean people and on the fascist nature of the Dergue; but it is because the interest of the ruling classes in these revisionist countries is best represented by the fascist Dergue. Because these activities emanate from the class nature of the revisionists, we do not entertain the view that it is a mistake that can be rectified. As such, we consider it erroneous to make a call for the revisionists to rectify their mistakes. Regarding the counter-revolutionary activities of the Soviet Union and other revisionist countries in Eritrea, the EPLF has often times stated in *Vanguard* official monthly journal of the EPLF Ed. and in your letters to us that they are doing this not by mistake but because they want to protect their interest in the Horn of Africa. This being the case, we believe that the correct stand is for our revolution to strongly condemn their counter-revolutionary and fascist activities (without going into their nature) against our revolution and call upon all the struggling and oppressed peoples of the world to condemn them.

Our organization believes that it is extremely important for our revolution to be absolutely clear on the nature of the Soviet Union and other countries which peddle in the name of socialism. It understands that any people waging a revolution will meet with great disaster if they fail to have a clear understanding of the nature of these revisionist countries. Although our

organization has for a long time had questions on the nature of the Soviet Union for its counter-revolutionary activities, it realized more the importance of resolving the question and decided to study it, especially when they in collaboration with out-and-out fascists and with all their political and military might began their activities to crush the democratic movement of the Ethiopian people and the national liberation struggle of the Eritrean people.

AESNA, as a mass organization of the EPLF, has exchanged its views with the EPLF leadership through letters and delegates, on the importance of clarifying this timely question and the need for a common understanding within the EPLF. As a result, it is to be remembered that it was agreed that we go on with our studies while a similar study be conducted in the field. Accordingly, we have notified you through letters and delegates the outcome of the study that was conducted among our members for four months and the study we are conducting now.

To analyse the nature of the ruling classes in the Soviet Union and other revisionist countries, to understand and analyse the nature of their economic system is a timely task for all Eritrean revolutionaries. At a time when the masses of our people and members of the EPLF have questioned the 'Socialism' of the Soviet Union and other revisionist countries, for their counter-revolutionary activities against our revolution in particular and the rest of the world in general to clarify by scientifically analysing their true revisionist nature and expose their socialist mask will arm the Eritrean masses against the danger of revisionism and will enable them to advance their revolution forward.

The outcome of such a study decides whether you link your struggle with theirs i.e. if you decide they are socialists, or fight against them by lining them up in the camp of counter-revolution i.e. if you decide they are not socialists. In short, the outcome of such a study is of strategic importance as it is based on this that revolutionary Eritreans chart the enemies and friends of their revolution and the world's revolution.

In the past, the EPLF has considered the Soviet Union and other revisionist countries as socialists and has taught the masses they are friends of our revolution. But at a time when all the masses and fighters have questioned the 'socialism' of the Soviet Union and other revisionist countries, at a time when they see them objectively opposing and crushing a struggle that they know is just and revolutionary at a time when our people see them arming the Dergue whose fascistic nature they know very well from their own experience, and at a time when our people see and hear them compare the out and out fascistic actions of the Dergue with the great October Revolution of Russia, at a time when the mass organizations of the EPLF in North America based on the study they made have reached a common understanding that they (the Soviet Union and other revisionist countries—Ed.) are revisionists; we believe you made a tactical error by publicly presenting them as socialists in the name of the entire front. We believe the correct step would have been to pass without mentioning the nature of the Soviet Union

and its lackies because as far as we know no intensive study has been made on the subject and no summation of the different views within the front.

What we want to clarify here is that we are not saying the central committee of the EPLF has no power to decide on such an issue. We are writing you our opposition on the declaration in the strictest observance of the principle of democratic centralism because we believe in it; we understand and accept the fact that the central committee has the authority to take a stand on any question in the name of the whole front any time in between congresses. Nevertheless we think the step you took is wrong and express our opposition because we realize that if a stand on such an important question that determines the strategy of our revolution is taken at a time when no intensive study has been conducted within the entire front on the question and no summation of the prevailing different views has been made, it will hamper the much needed unity of Eritrean revolutionaries.

Dear Comrades,

This is a question that must be handled carefully, in a manner that is scientific and devoid of sentiments. In order to develop a clear and common understanding it is important that we, together with other mass organizations that are studying this question untiringly exchange the conclusions we reach etc. on our part, we will let you know as usual, all the steps we have taken and the ones we are taking now.

It is to be remembered that when we sent you copies of 'Marxism-Leninism against Revisionism' a summation paper of the studies our organization made, we asked you to write us your views and also asked you to send us the analysis you are making to explain to the masses the fascistic activities of the so-called socialist countries to extinguish the flames of the revolutionary liberation struggle of our people and the democratic movement of the Ethiopian masses in an attempt to prolong the rule of the fascist Dergue. However since you have not yet replied we look forward to your reply.

Victory to the Masses
Long Live the EPLF!

The Central Committee of AESNA

Appendix IVb

April 4, 1978

To: Political Bureau EPLF
From: Central Committee AEWNA

Dear Comrades:

On behalf of all the members of AEWNA, we send you our revolutionary greetings. The main content of our letter regards the Declaration of the Third Regular Meeting of the Central Committee of EPLF. The declaration confirming the revolutionary line and valiant history of the EPLF reaffirms that EPLF will struggle with all its might to consolidate the unprecedented victories that our revolution is registering, smash all the internal and external attempts to obstruct and crush our revolution. By affirming its (EPLF's) determination to achieve the goal of the Eritrean people for independence and liberation it (declaration Ed. is a call to the Eritrean masses to redouble their efforts in the struggle.

Nevertheless, we would like to express our disagreement with certain views mentioned in the declaration. We would like to express our opposition to the erroneous view in the concluding sentence of the declaration which states 'we remind those socialist countries who are providing the Dergue with political and military support to correct their erroneous stand.

The fascist Dergue is supported and armed mainly by the Soviet Union, Cuba and other revisionist countries. We believe it is incorrect to present these revisionist countries supporting the Dergue as socialist.

Our organization, in accordance with the resolutions of its first congress, believes that the all-out support and arming of the fascists Dergue by the Soviet Union and Cuba emanates from their revisionist and counter-revolutionary nature. The revisionists who have seized power in Soviet Union liquidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, propagating anti-Marxist-Leninist lines at home and abroad, and committing crimes in collaboration with counter-revolutionary forces in the world in general and in the Horn of Africa in particular are lined up in the camp of counter-revolution. Under these conditions, to present the revisionist countries as socialist, we believe is incorrect.

In addition, because it presents them as socialists, and calls on the revisionist countries to correct their fascistic activities, it gives the impression that their aggressive and revisionist nature is an error in policy that can be rectified. Soviet Union and other revisionist countries are supplying the Dergue with millions worth of bombs and ammunition to commit atrocious crimes against our revolution and people, not because they don't know or are confused about the nature of our revolution, but is a reflection of the class-interest of the revisionists and indicates the intertwining of counter-revolutionary forces against the revolutionary storm of the Eritrean and Ethiopian masses.

Understanding that the question of revisionism and the nature of those countries supporting the Dergue is a question still being studied in our revolution in general, and EPLF in particular and that there is no clear line in encompassing the entire organization, we believe the correct step to take at this time should be to condemn the support they are giving to the fascist Dergue—and their activities against our revolution, and pass without mentioning their nature. Under such conditions, we believe it is incorrect to acknowledge them as socialist in public declarations.

We believe that to study and have a clear understanding about the nature of those socialist countries who are supporting the Dergue is a timely and important question. In order to combat the danger that can arise from not having a clear stand on revisionism, to enable us to struggle based on identifying the friends and enemies of our revolution, and to strengthen the ideological and practical unity of the entire front, it is of utmost importance that the EPLF and all mass organizations if the EPLF carry out elaborate study and reach a common understanding on this question.

By participating in the four-month political education sessions and seminars organized by AESNA, members of our organization have struggled to achieve a common understanding on revisionism. However since our study should be continuous, we believe that it is important and helpful for you to periodically send us the study being carried out and the conclusions reached on the part of the EPLF leadership and the other mass organizations.

We await to receive your views

Victory to the Masses!
Long Live EPLF

Central Committee AEWNA

Appendix Va

July 20, 1978

To: The Political Bureau of EPLF
From: The Central Committee of AESNA

Dear Comrades,

First we forward our comradely greetings and wish you success in all the national tasks you are undertaking.

The main reason we are writing is concerning the joint-press release of June 29, 1978 in Beirut, Lebanon given by the Secretary General of EPLF and the Chairman of ELF Revolutionary Council on behalf of the two fronts which stated that the Eritrean revolution is ready for a peaceful negotiation with the fascist Dergue.

According to official ELF publications, and as was corroborated from our telephone conversation with Comrade Romedan Muhammed Nur we have come to understand that the main points of the press release were:

Because the continuation of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia does not serve the interest of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples, we underscore the necessity of a peaceful solution and express our readiness to negotiate directly with the Ethiopian government without any pre-condition on either side.

That the negotiation be based on the democratic and just principle of the Eritrean people's right to self-determination so as to bring about a correct and peaceful solution.

Though we expressed our opposition to the joint statement right away on the phone to Comrade Romedan, we now present you the official concluding view of our entire mass organization following its thorough discussion of the issue.

a. The statement the continuation of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia is not in the interest of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples denies the justness of the persistent struggle which our people are waging with boundless heroism and for which they are making heavy sacrifices until they achieve their final victory. The Eritrean people have made great sacrifices to achieve their sacred goal of independence and democracy. In the future too they will make heavy sacrifices. However because it is only through armed struggle that they can protect their interest, the continuation of the just war our people are waging is surely in their interest. It is only by continuing their just struggle that the Eritrean people can root-out imperialism, colonialism revisionism and their lackeys from Eritrea and attain independence and democracy and, in addition, struggle in the interest of all the oppressed peoples of the world in general and the Ethiopian masses in particular. Therefore, the continuation of the just struggle our revolution is waging is in the interest of our people in particular and the Ethiopian people and the rest of the oppressed peoples of the world in general.

On the other hand, the unjust war the Ethiopian government is conduc-

ting is only in the interest of the Ethiopian ruling classes and their imperialist, zionist and revisionist masters. Such an unjust war has never been, nor will it be, in the interest of the Ethiopian masses who are being used as cannon fodder and see their national wealth forcibly used to finance the unjust war against their Eritrean class brothers, thereby becoming victims of hunger, disease and ignorance. The unjust war will not be, in the interest of the Ethiopian masses whatsoever, until such time as our people smash the fascist Dergue in Eritrea.

Comrades,

This is the only correct and scientific meaning of war and peace, a concept that the EPLF has been adhering to up to now. Why then, was this question of principle deviated from in a press release given to the whole world?

b. The statement that we express our readiness to negotiate with the Ethiopian government directly and without pre-condition denies the fundamental question and goal of the Eritrean revolution. Because Ethiopia has forcibly occupied our country, the Ethiopian ruling classes must acknowledge that they have forcibly occupied our land and accept full Eritrean independence before our revolution can start any negotiation with them. It is only after this pre-condition is fulfilled that such negotiation can start. In short, our revolution sits down with Ethiopia's rulers, not to negotiate the Eritrean people's right to independence, but to discuss such matters as ceasefire, troop withdrawal procedures and war reparations, etc. Therefore, our revolution can conduct such negotiations only when the rulers of Ethiopia accept full Eritrea independence and the EPLF and ELF as the sole legal representatives of the Eritrean revolution as a pre-condition. Under no circumstances can this question of principle and strategy be presented as a tactic. It was in recognition of its significance that the historic EPLF First Organizational Congress laid it down concretely and in unequivocally clear terms.

Instead of the precondition 'when the Ethiopian rulers accept full Eritrean independence' it may also be said that 'when Ethiopian rulers accept the Eritrean people's right of self-determination' because the latter in its scientific meaning on the Eritrean question, can only have the same meaning as the former. The pre-condition of Eritrean independence must be presented in no mistakable terms because in practice, in light of the many years of armed struggle they have been waging and the sacrifices they are making the Eritrean people's right of self-determination cannot have any meaning other than independence. Especially at this time when the fascist Dergue is peddling a chauvinistic solution to the Eritrean revolution masked with Marxist words and is saying 'I support the right of self-determination of the Eritrean people,' and when its revisionist masters are using the power of their mass media to hawk such cheap propaganda as that the Dergue has presented a 'scientific' solution to our revolution, the precondition that 'the Dergue must accept full independence for Eritrea' has to be clearly presented. The Dergue, basing itself on its fascistic and

chauvinistic nature, has already explained that the 'scientific' interpretation of the Eritrean people's right to self-determination which it says it accepts is regional autonomy within Greater Ethiopia. In what it is peddling as a 'National Democratic' program and its so-called special nine point program it has forwarded this as a solution to the Eritrean question. The Dergue has also reiterated this chauvinistic stand as the only 'scientific' solution to the Eritrean question in a special seminar held last month in Addis Abeba to 'solve' the Eritrean question.

Therefore, our revolution must present the pre-condition of Eritrean full independence to the fascist Dergue. Otherwise negotiating with the Dergue without pre-conditions would not only be wrong but also illegal for it violates the resolution of the historic First Organizational Congress of EPLF

Dear Comrades,

In the past, when the opportunist leaders of ELF and the Osman Sabbe clique attempted to use the destiny of the Eritrean people as a bargaining chip in violation of this principle, the EPLF upholding the sacred goal of the Eritrean people which the opportunists were trying to strangle and crush and standing firm on its principle, opposed, condemned and exposed them to the Eritrean masses and the world at large.

For example, we want to cite what the EPLF said in an article entitled 'Whither the Joint Delegation?' in *Vanguard* No. 20 of September 1976, quoting from an interview of the then official spokesman of the joint delegation of ELF and ex-Foreign Mission given to the Egyptian newspaper *Akbar Alyom* of May 26, 1976. The official spokesman of the delegation, responding to the Ethiopian military government's proposal for a peaceful solution said, 'Neither the Ethiopian Military government nor us should present any precondition before we meet. Though our goal is for independence, we will not insist that independence be the starting point to our negotiation with Ethiopia. Responding to this, the EPLF said, 'The statement given by the official spokesman that the Eritrean revolution should not insist on a pre-condition in negotiating with Ethiopia, *is an attempt to obliterate the 15 year struggle of the Eritrean people.* We consider this retreat from the principled stand as a betrayal (underlining ours) Wasn't this how the EPLF advocated for and protected the interest of the Eritrean people and the goals of the Eritrean revolution?

Explaining further that under no circumstances should our revolution negotiate without pre-condition, the said article added, 'As for the reasons with regards to the world situations, shifting of balance of forces and pressure of the big powers on our struggle, we want to assure them that the song they are harping on, as an old broken record would, was totally discredited in Palestine and Vietnam. This is because they want to subordinate the movement to the external factors. In any struggle the internal factors play the decisive role. Therefore, in order to be an influencing force, we must be thoroughly resolute and not be receptive to all sorts of influences.' Hadn't the EPLF therefore, clarified its correct and scientific stand on the

question?

Moreover hadn't it reaffirmed in *Special Issue* No. 3 (EPLF) of October 1974, *Vanguard* No. 22 of November 1976 and the EPLF First Congress, etc. that for our revolution to negotiate with the rulers of Ethiopia without pre-condition is unprincipled and illegal?

Why then is this principle and the correct line being violated? Comrades, we need a detailed explanation on the matter

c. The statement that the negotiation, based on a democratic and just principle of the right of self-determination of the Eritrean people, should be conducted to bring about a peaceful and just solution. does not take into consideration what the Dergue has been saying up to this day as was explained above with regard to the right of self-determination of the Eritrean people. Furthermore, it forgets that the Dergue is fascist in nature and as such can neither negotiate on the basis of the principle of the right of nations to self-determination nor bring a correct solution to the demands of the Eritrean masses. Worse still, it forgets the fact that in history oppressing classes have never solved the colonial question peacefully

All in all, at a time when our revolution is in full control of the entire country except for a few cities, at a time when it has dug the tomb where it will bury its enemies and is celebrating the eve of its victory at a time when the entire Eritrean masses with their revolutionary spirit high are ready to drive out all their enemies from Eritrea, at a time when the support and admiration from the struggling oppressed peoples of the world to our revolution is increasing, to say that our revolution is ready to negotiate without any pre-condition with the fascist Dergue which, as a result of the decisive blows from our revolution is in its death-throes, to say that the continuation of our just war is not in the interest of the Eritrean people, to call upon the fascist Dergue to bring a peaceful solution based on democratic and just principles of self-determination. in the name of our revolution is unprincipled and illegal.

Therefore, our mass organization expresses its strong opposition to this unprincipled call made on behalf of our revolution.

Comrades.

We expect your views on this matter and your response to our questions as soon as possible.

Victory to the Masses!
Long Live the EPLF

The Central Committee of AESNA

To: The Political Bureau of EPLF
From: The Central Committee of AEWNA

Dear Comrades:

On behalf of all members of AEWNA, we extend our revolutionary greetings and wish you success in all the national tasks you are undertaking.

Our letter is in regards to the press release of June 29, 1978 issued in Beirut, Lebanon by the Secretary General of EPLF and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of ELF on behalf of both fronts—the EPLF and ELF. This joint press release stated that our revolution is ready to hold peaceful negotiations with the fascist Dergue. Based on the information we received from the EPLF office we understood its contents to be as follows.

Because the continuation of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia is not in the interests of both the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples stating our belief in solving it peacefully we express our readiness to negotiate directly with the Ethiopian government without any precondition from both sides (i.e. the Ethiopian government and Eritrean revolution)

Based on the democratic and just principle of the Eritrean people's right to self determination, the negotiations should be conducted to bring about a correct and peaceful solution.

Since we believe that the joint press release negates the aim of the Eritrean revolution and the line and resolutions of the EPLF we would like to express our views.

a. 'The continuation of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia is not in the interests of the Eritrean and Ethiopian people,' denies that the heroic armed struggle being waged by the Eritrean people until they achieve their aim of independence and democracy is a just struggle. On the other hand, it denies that the war being waged by the Ethiopian colonialists is fascist aggression, that the crimes and aggression it is committing against the Eritrean people is in the interests of the Ethiopian ruling classes and their imperialist, and revisionist masters and thus is unjust war. In short when it presents it as the 'war between Eritrea and Ethiopia' it passes without clearly differentiating between the just and unjust wars. In addition, when it states that the continuation of this war is not in the interest of the Eritrean people, it denies that the Eritrean people are waging the armed struggle to protect their interests. Indeed, the Eritrean people have made many sacrifices to achieve independence and liberation and will continue to make any sacrifices in the future. Nevertheless, until they achieve their goal it is only through armed struggle that they can protect their interest. Thus the continuation of the people's war is just and is in the interest of the Eritrean people.

It is by continuing their just struggle, that the Eritrean people can drive out all imperialists, revisionists, Ethiopian colonialists and their puppets from Eritrea, achieve independence and democracy and by guaranteeing their interests can struggle in the interests of the oppressed peoples of the world in general and the Ethiopian people in particular. On the contrary the Ethiopian people have no interest in the colonial war

waged by the fascist Dergue. The oppressed Ethiopian people are forced to become cannon-fodders in the war of aggression against their class brothers—the Eritrean masses—while they languish in hunger impoverishment and ignorance, the national wealth accumulated through their sweat is being used in the unjust war. Thus, the unjust war waged by the fascist Dergue in the past, present or future can never be in the interest of the Ethiopian people. Therefore, at any moment to call for the ceasure of the unjust war being continued by the fascist Dergue and to call for the Eritrean people to firmly continue the people's war they are waging until they achieve their goal is the only just demand.

b. The sentence that states we are ready to hold negotiations with the Ethiopian government without any preconditions—basically forgets the aim of the Eritrean revolution. Since the fascist Dergue has forcibly occupied Eritrea, before our revolution holds any kind of talks with the Ethiopian colonialists, the independence of the Eritrean people must be accepted by the Ethiopian colonialists. To say that we are ready to talk with Ethiopian colonialists without this precondition is to forget the demand for independence confirmed by Eritrean people through their 17 years of heroic and determined struggle. In short, when our revolution sits for negotiations with the Ethiopian rulers, what can be presented for the agenda are forms of implementing ceasefire and withdrawal of Ethiopian invading troops from Eritrean soil, and not about the right of the Eritrean people to independence.

As the EPLF's long standing position clarifies that under any condition, in order to hold talks with the Ethiopian colonialists they must first accept the independence of the Eritrean people as a precondition. It is to be remembered that in the October 1974 pamphlet entitled "we oppose the plot of peaceful solution" in the 1976 issue of *Vanguard* and other publications of EPLF it not only opposed the peaceful solution of the fascist Dergue but also exposed and opposed the reactionary leaders of ELF and the reactionary Osman Sabbe clique who were capitulating to this plot.

Exposing the joint delegation formed by the leaders of ELF and the ex-foreign mission (Sabbe clique Ed. in the article "whither the joint delegation?" *Vanguard* No. 20, 1976) pointed out, the joint delegation is preparing to negotiate based on the proposal of the Ethiopian military government on the solution to the Eritrean question, and quoting the joint delegation who said, "Before meeting, neither our side nor the Ethiopian government should present any preconditions." EPLF denounced it by stating we understand it is "an attempt to obliterate the case the Eritrean people fought for 15 years. We consider tailing after conditions presented by the enemy and retreating from the strategical position as treachery." That the historic first congress of EPLF realizing that under any condition our revolution has to present precondition, included it in its resolutions cannot be disregarded. Therefore, since it is contradictory for the EPLF at this time to say it is ready to hold peaceful negotiations with the fascist Dergue without preconditions, we request an elaborate explanation.

c. We believe the statement "the negotiation, based on democratic and just principle of the right of self-determination of the Eritrean people should be conducted to bring about a peaceful and just solution." is incorrect. Although our revolution can present as precondition that the Ethio-

pian colonialists should recognize the Eritrean people's right to self determination, the Eritrean people through long years of struggle and sacrifices they made and are still making have confirmed that the self determination of the Eritrean people can be nothing but independence. Therefore, the precondition that the Ethiopian rulers should accept the independence of the Eritrean people must be clearly presented. At a time when the fascist Dergue, by saying that it ' supports the right to self determination of the Eritrean people' is peddling a chauvinistic solution to the Eritrean revolution under the mask of Marxism-Leninism, the precondition must clearly state that the Dergue recognizes full independence of Eritrea. The Dergue basing itself from the standpoint of its fascistic and chauvinistic views, and in what it is peddling as a 'national Democratic' program or its 'solution' to the Eritrean question the Dergue says it 'accepts but has clarified that its 'scientific meaning is regional autonomy within Greater Ethiopia.' In the special seminar held in Addis Abeba last month to 'solve' the Eritrean question, the Dergue has again confirmed that its chauvinistic view is an irreplaceable 'scientific' solution.

Therefore, our revolution should negotiate only after clearly presenting its precondition and when the Dergue accepts complete independence of Eritrea, otherwise to negotiate with the Dergue under any conditions without preconditions is not only incorrect but legally also in violation of the resolutions of the first congress of EPLF

d. The statement 'the negotiation based on a democratic and just principle of the right of self-determination of the Eritrean people, should be conducted to bring about a peaceful and just solution. not only forgets that the Dergue—because of its fascist nature cannot discuss or bring a correct solution based on the correct and just principle of self-determination but also does not take into consideration what the Dergue has in practice said up to now about the Eritrean people's right to self determination.

At a time when our revolution is on the threshold of victory, at a time when the Eritrean people with boundless self-sacrifice are armed and determined to drive out any enemy that comes along, to say that we are ready to negotiate without any preconditions with the fascist Dergue—who is in its death throes to say that the continuation of the war is not in the interests of the Eritrean people is incorrect.

We request that you send us your views

Victory to the masses
Long Live EPLF

Central Committee
AEWNA

Appendix VI

AGAINST THE ETHIOPIAN MILITARY JUNTA AND IN DEFENCE OF THE ERITREAN REVOLUTION (AESNA's statement on the intervention of the Soviet Union and Cuba against the Eritrean revolution) —October 1977

The Horn of Africa has become one of the centers of world-wide struggle between revolution and counter-revolution. Although events in this strategic area have always been keenly observed by revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces alike, a number of relatively recent developments have attracted world-wide attention. Chief among these developments are: the suspension of all military grants and sales from the U S to the Ethiopian regime, after 25 years of Ethiopia's total dependence on U S arms, the Soviet Union's taking up of the role as the major supplier to the Ethiopian regime; and Cuba's sending of military experts to train Ethiopian troops.

With these developments, certain quarters have escalated their long propaganda hailing the Ethiopian junta the Dergue as 'Marxist revolutionary' socialist etc. denouncing the Eritrean liberation movement as a 'reactionary' separatist movement instigated by imperialism and reactionary Arab regimes and slandering the revolutionary and democratic forces in Ethiopia as 'counter-revolutionary'. The fascist Ethiopian junta is the source of these lies and distortions. It presents itself as a 'socialist' regime besieged by 'counter-revolutionary' feudalists, separatists and anarchists as well as by aggression from reactionary Arab regimes.

The Soviet Union, Cuba and most East European countries have faithfully echoed the Ethiopian junta's propaganda. They have lauded the Ethiopian junta to the skies, unleashing a steady stream of praise for the 'achievements of the revolutionary Ethiopia'. Fidel Castro has gone to the extent of comparing the Ethiopian Revolution under the leadership of the junta to the Bolshevik Revolution, because the leaders of the military junta, etc. have made an anti-feudal revolution while working at the same time for socialism. (*Granma* May 22, 1977) Moreover the Soviet Union and Cuba have with great zeal slandered and attacked the Eritrean revolution. The Soviet newsweekly *New Times* refers to the Eritrean revolution as 'reaction-inspired activities of the separatists which has become the ally of the arch-reactionary forces which are bent on stifling the revolution in Ethiopia' (*New Times* No. 32, August 1977). Carefully hiding the fact that the Eritrean liberation forces, in particular the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) have repeatedly attacked the U S military base and the U S Information Service in Asmara and captured American military personnel from the base in order to expose U S support for the junta, *Granma* has slandered the Eritrean struggle, stating, 'The U S con-

sulate in Eritrea and the diplomatic missions of other NATO nations and the Sudan were centers of conspiracy, subversion and support for separatist elements in that province who oppose the policy of change and hamper the progress of the revolution and the achievement of indispensable national unity" (*Granma*, May 8, 1977)

The noisy and pernicious propaganda of the Ethiopian unta and its backers and apologists notwithstanding, the reality is altogether different. Today, Ethiopia is ruled not by a "Marxist", "Socialist" or "progressive" regime, but by an anti-people, anti-democratic and fascist military junta. The Eritrean struggle, led by the EPLF is a thoroughgoing anti-colonial, anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and anti-zionist national liberation movement. In Ethiopia, it is revolutionary and democratic forces and not feudalists and counter-revolutionaries who are the main force fighting the reactionary military regime.

Let us substantiate these points.

Junta's Anti-Democratic, Anti-People Nature

Contrary to the shameless propaganda of the Ethiopian unta and its apologists, it was the heroic struggle of the Ethiopian people workers, peasants, students, women, oppressed nationalities, rank and file soldiers,) and the mighty blows of the Eritrean liberation struggle that shook and finally toppled the Haile Selassie regime. It was only the lack of a steeled vanguard organization in Ethiopia that the military unta usurped state power

Riding to power on the back of the intense mass struggle, the military junta had to come up with some reforms and engage in demagogy. From the very outset, however it was opposed to the struggle of the masses to thoroughly smash the rule of feudalism and imperialism and establish a people's democratic regime. Immediately after its seizure of power the Dergue set out to crush the very forces that struggled against and finally overthrew the Haile Selassie regime. The Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Union (CELU) which had a membership of 100,000 workers and whose 3 day general strike in March 1974 dealt heavy blows to the autocratic regime was banned and many of its leaders arrested or executed. The Ethiopian student movement which since 1965 waged a sustained struggle against the feudal regime was violently suppressed. The militant University Students Union of Addis Abeba (USUAA) and the High School Students Unions, which Haile Selassie had banned a number of times, were banned once again by the junta. So was the Ethiopian Teachers Association.

Under the guise that the oppressed (Ethiopian) people have not yet come to consciousness ' to be able to enjoy democratic freedoms" the

*Mengistu Hailemariam in an interview with Lebanese paper *Al Hurrat*, reprinted in DFLP Report, No. 16, July 1977

Ethiopian junta has snatched the elementary democratic rights which the Ethiopian people won for a short period through their heroic February 1974 upsurge. Over the past 3 years, the Dergue has unleashed fascist repression on the Ethiopian masses and massacred tens of thousands of revolutionary workers, peasants and intellectuals. On the eve of May Day 1977, the Junta massacred in cold-blood over 4,000 revolutionary youth in the streets of Addis Abeba alone. Such is the anti-people, anti-democratic and fascist nature of the Mengistu regime.

This being the case, the apologists of the fascist regime are not only busy whitewashing the junta's crimes, but turning truth upside down, they are trying to throw dust over people's eyes with their claims that the military junta is 'organizing and arming' the Ethiopian masses. They have lauded to the skies the military junta's trade union federation, peasant associations, the 'Kebele district) Associations and people's militia. They carefully evade the question of why the Dergue would smash the revolutionary mass organizations of the people which fought heroically before, during and after the February '74 upsurge and then establish new mass organizations? They carefully evade the question on what basis, towards what ends the junta's mass organizations have been formed and what role they are playing? The junta's mass organizations have been established through demagoguery and compulsion* through chauvinist calls for 'defending the motherland' from those who are trying to sell it to the Arabs. They have been established in order to suppress and destroy the independent organizations of the masses, bring the masses under their control and turn them into cannon fodder in the junta's war of aggression in Eritrea and its counter-revolutionary war against the progressive organizations in Ethiopia. In fact, the armed 'Kebele Associations' have become vigilante squads committing widespread massacres against revolutionary workers, students and youth. The so-called 'people's Militia' is being airlifted by the thousands to Eritrea to fight the junta's genocidal war. So much for the junta's concern to organize and arm the masses. The junta's apologists seem to have forgotten that the national socialist Hitler also organized and armed the people to crush the revolutionary struggle of the German working class and dominate the world.

Junta's 'Revolutionary Reforms

The Junta's apologists have loudly praised the military regime for its radical, far reaching reforms such as land reform and the nationalization of industries.

The land reform program which declared the 'nationalizations of all rural land' the 'abolition of landlord-tenant relationship' and which set

*To give some examples. The junta has forced 10 percent of the workers in each factory to sign up for the 'people's militia'. Quotas have also been imposed on every village. Almost all the peasants were not told why they were being recruited or where they were being sent. Many were told that they would be trained and armed so they could return to defend their village, only to find themselves fighting against the EPLF in Eritrea.

a 10 hectare (22 acres) limit on the maximum amount of land per family was promulgated by the military junta on March 1975. However, it was not a 'gift' from the junta to the Ethiopian masses but a concession snatched by the masses from the military regime.

Ever since 1965, 'Land to the Tiller' had been one of the foremost demands of the Ethiopian masses. During the February 1974 upsurge, the peasantry launched a fierce struggle throughout the countryside, expropriating land from the landlords, seizing granaries, trying and executing notorious landlords and their agents and establishing its own power. In the urban areas, the workers, students and other democratic forces expressed resolute support for the peasantry and demanded land reform. They denounced the junta's foot-dragging and its treachery in suppressing the peasant uprisings by disarming, imprisoning and executing hundreds of revolutionary peasants. The junta, whose hold on power was still shaky, was forced to declare land reform.

Ever since its declaration, the Dergue has taken a number of measures designed to obstruct the full implementation of the land reform, such as issuing substantial amendments to certain parts of the proclamation and suppressing revolutionary peasants and students leading the struggle for land reform. However, even if the land reform was implemented in full and the nationalized land was parcelled out to the peasants, this would not, in and of itself bring to an end 'feudal and capitalist exploitation' or lead Ethiopia towards 'socialist-oriented path' as the junta's apologists are claiming. Land reform can bring fundamental change only if it is carried out with the full participation of the oppressed peasants as part of an overall democratic revolution, leading to the building of socialism. Lenin has pointed out that 'the transfer of the land to the state can and will be very useful only when the state becomes a fully democratic republic, when all government officials are elected by the people, when the standing army is abolished, and so forth.' In other words, the question of who holds state power is decisive. Since the state in Ethiopia is not a dictatorship of the workers, peasants and other democratic classes but a fascist military dictatorship of the bureaucrat and comprador bourgeoisie, the land reform cannot lead to emancipation, but only to their continued exploitation, in a slightly different form.

Lenin has pointed out that the peasants need protection not only from the landlord but also from the market economy and hence the mere transfer of land ownership to the state will not do away with the poverty of the masses. Ethiopian peasants with the backward instruments of production and lack of fertilizers, etc. (which the land reform declaration makes no provisions for) produce only enough to subsist on. Part of what they produce, they have to sell in the market to buy the basic necessities. The market in Ethiopia is controlled by the comprador bureaucrat bourgeoisie (who also control the state) and is tied to the imperialist world market, with all its vicissitudes. Before the year is out, most peasants exhaust their food supply and are forced to buy grain for seed as well as food,

at prices much higher than that at which they sold their produce. This process is leading to the impoverishment of the majority of the peasants and the creation of a minority of rich peasants and is speeding up the development of the rural bourgeoisie. A number of impoverished peasants are joining the ranks of the rural or urban proletariat. The land reform declaration is not doing away with the poverty of the masses.

The apologists of the fascist junta find no praise too high to describe the military regime's nationalization or its taking of majority shares in a number of industries owned by the aristocracy or foreign capital, which they claim has brought industry "under the people's control"

In the first place, those who have taken up the dishonorable role of prettifying the junta, carefully hide that foreign monopoly capital still controls substantial sectors of the Ethiopian economy. To give some examples, the Franco-Ethiopian Railway Company which handles close to 50% of Ethiopia's import-export trade has not been nationalized. U.S. companies control 40% shares in the Ethiopian Highway Authority. Boeing has a 49% share in the Ethiopian airlines. In the financial sector U.S. firms control 41% of the shares in the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. British, Swedish, and Dutch agricultural projects, which produce a substantial amount of the country's foreign exchange has not been nationalized. The *Ethiopian Herald*, the junta's newspaper even reported that a British import-export firm, Mitchell Cotts, donated Eth\$100,000 (U.S.\$50,000) to the public fund for the junta's people's militia.

The domination of vast sectors of the Ethiopian economy by foreign, especially U.S. capital is not surprising. After all the military regime's policy declaration, *The Economic Policy for Socialist Ethiopia* clearly states, "The government of Ethiopia strongly encourages foreign investment in Ethiopia. Indeed foreign private investment will be given ample opportunities in many areas of economic activity and will be assured fair and adequate returns."

However even if the military regime had nationalized all industry and prohibited foreign investment, that would still not mean industry had been placed under the people's control. Once again the question of who holds state power is decisive. As long as people's power has not been established, nationalized industry will not be under the control of the people and will not serve their interests. In fact, nationalization of industry by reactionary ruling classes or joint ownership with foreign capital serves to facilitate the exploitation of the working class and the suppression of their struggles. This is borne out by the Ethiopian junta's denial of the worker's right to strike.* It is also borne out by the exceedingly hard lot of Ethiopian workers who are suffering from low wages, runaway inflation, high unemployment and denial of the most elementary democratic rights.

*The fact that the junta's apologists claim that Ethiopia has "Africa's most progressive labor legislation," even though this legislation does not provide for the workers' fundamental right to strike, shows how shameless their propaganda is.

The Junta's Sham "Anti-Imperialism"

The Ethiopian junta and its apologists have noisily sang the praises of the Ethiopian regime's "anti-imperialism" Fascist Mengistu has declared that Ethiopia has "cut the umbilical cord" to imperialism and is besieged and attacked by "imperialism and its agents" In chorus, his apologists declare: "Ethiopia is under a full-scale attack co-ordinated by imperialism." But is there any truth to these statements? Let the facts speak for themselves.

When the powerful February uprising threatened the rule of feudalism and imperialism, the U S. supported the Dergue's seizure of power For two and a half years, U.S. imperialism continued and even stepped up its arms delivery to the Ethiopian military regime. During the February 1975 offensive of the Eritrean liberation forces, U S. imperialism airlifted emergency arm supplies to the fascist junta, enabling it to commit atrocities, the likes of which had not previously been seen in Eritrea. In June 1975 the U S. provided the junta with U S.\$25 million worth of arms. In August, Washington agreed to refit the Ethiopian airforce and army and signed a U S.\$200 million arms deal. Former President Ford declared that the arming of the fascist Ethiopian regime was in the national interest of the United States

Despite the all out support of U S imperialism, the Ethiopian junta could not check the rising tide of the struggle of the Eritrean and Ethiopian masses Realizing the instability of the Ethiopian junta and alarmed by the rapid advance and deepening of the Eritrean revolution, U S. imperialism began to strike a neutral pose and intensified its calls for a peaceful solution of the "Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict" in an attempt to woo and infiltrate the Eritrean movement and impose a neo-colonial solution on the Eritrean people. Consequently the U S. began dragging its feet on the increasingly larger arms demand of the junta. At the same time, Washington began to support the aristocratic survivals grouped in the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) as an alternative to the junta. On its part, the fascist junta, which was equipped, lock, stock and barrel by the U S. imperialists, was finding it extremely hard trying to convince the Ethiopian people and the people of the world of its anti-imperialist pretensions.

Under these circumstances and once it had assured itself of an alternative source of arms and all out backing, the Ethiopian junta ordered U S military advisors out of Ethiopia and closed the U S. military base in Asmara, Eritrea* Although the Ethiopian junta and its apologists noisily trumpeted the end of 'socialist Ethiopia's ties to imperialism' the truth is altogether different U S imperialism and its western European imperialist allies as well as the Israeli zionists continue to provide all sided support to

*As far as the closure of the Kagnew base in Asmara is concerned, the U.S. imperialists had decided to close it before the end of 1977 After 25 years of service as an indispensable spying facility the base had become indefensible from the repeated attacks of the Eritrean liberation forces. Moreover the U.S. imperialists had built a substitute facility in Diego Garcia in the Indian ocean. Thus, the junta's "kicking out" of U.S. was more ado than substance.

the fascist junta. In May 1977 the U S dominated International Monetary Fund provided Ethiopia with a U S \$57 million loan. At the same time, the European Economic Commission gave the junta U S \$30 million in 'aid'. In September 1977 the U S gave a bilateral aid of U S \$200,000 and an aid package of U S \$10 million is in the works. And now the Mengistu regime and U S imperialism have started discussions on the resumption of U S arms supplies to Ethiopia. To facilitate the discussions the junta has ordered the Ethiopian news media to refrain from attacking U S imperialism and denounce instead international imperialism.

With the Israeli zionists, the tools of U S imperialism, the fascist junta has maintained exceptionally close relations. The Israeli zionists still have their spying facilities on the Eritrean islands of Haleb and Fatma. Israeli counter-insurgency experts train the infamous 'Nebelball (Flame) Brigade—hundreds of whom have been captured by the EPLF. Israel provides spare parts for U S aircraft (F-5E's and small arms to the Mengistu regime and provides maintenance crews for the Ethiopian airforce. In critical situations, such as in the battle of Nacfa which was liberated by the EPLF on March, 1977) Israeli pilots flew the jet fighters and helicopters of the Ethiopian airforce. Over 40% of Ethiopia's imports are shipped by the Israeli Shipping Co. Zima*.

Facts show that despite its dependence on the Soviet Union, the Dergue maintains close ties with U S and Western European imperialism and exceptionally close relations with Israeli zionism. The Ethiopian junta's much touted anti-imperialism is a hoax. No wonder. How can Fascist Mengistu who on a public speech on February 18 1975 openly declared.

Let alone in defending its own territorial integrity Ethiopia has made itself known throughout the world by sending its heroic children to fight in Korea and the Congo in the interests of international peace and security' have turned into an 'anti-imperialist hero' ?

Junta's Annexationism and Chauvinism

In their attempts to prettify the junta and slander the Eritrean and Ethiopia people's struggle, its apologists have gone so low and have become so shameless that they even claim that the Dergue has recognized the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination and envisages a democratically based peace settlement of the Eritrean question, but the

*The junta's apologists have found it exceptionally trying to defend the Mengistu regime's close ties to Israeli zionism. Therefore, they have resorted to denying incontestable facts—facts corroborated by the testimony of hundreds of Israeli-trained Ethiopian troops and officers presently held by the EPLF. The junta's apologists declare that the Dergue has no relations with the zionists and that Mengistu has offered the PLO to open an office in Addis Abeba. In their zeal to prettify the junta, some have even claimed that it was the junta which 'broke' diplomatic relations with Israel. All this has nothing to do with the truth. It was Haile Selassie who 'broke' diplomatic relations with Israel. Haile Selassie had also invited the PLO to open an office in Addis Abeba. Despite these pretenses, the autocratic regime maintained extremely close relations with the zionist state and so does the Mengistu regime.

Eritreans have refused" These are out and out lies and distortions.

The Ethiopian junta does not recognize the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination. Lenin has clearly pointed out that, The right of nations to self-determination implies exclusively the right to independence in the political sense, the right to free political separation from the oppressor nation. The Ethiopian junta is violently opposed to the right of the Eritrean people to national independence. Under its chauvinist banner

'Ethiopia is one and indivisible' the junta has vowed to "fight to the last drop of blood to safeguard the territorial integrity of Ethiopia, that is to crush the national liberation struggle of the Eritrean people and maintain the 25 year-old forcible annexation and occupation of Eritrea.

To cover up its annexationist nature, the Ethiopian junta, in its Program of the National Democratic Revolution and its '9 point peace proposal on Eritrea, has declared it is willing to recognize the Eritreans right to self-determination through regional autonomy' For the Ethiopian junta the right to self-determination does not mean the right to national independence but is limited to regional autonomy' It is the caricature of the right to self-determination.

It is no wonder then that fascist Mengistu cannot envisage a "peaceful democratic solution for the Eritrean question but can only seek to crush through brute force and demagoguery the Eritrean people's heroic struggle for national liberation. In fact its calls for peaceful solution are only meant for public consumption and designed to cover up its preparations for military offensive. The Junta's first all out assault to crush the Eritrean struggle which was launched in February 1975 was preceded by a sham call for 'peaceful solution' intended to lull the Eritrean liberation forces and the masses. In a similar manner the fascist junta was making extensive preparations for a "peasant march intended to crush the Eritrean struggle in a human wave within two months when it dished out its "9 point peace proposal in May, 1976 Even today the Mengistu regime is in the midst of what it calls an all out 'offensive' in Eritrea and at the same time trying to make believe that it seeks a peaceful solution.

And is it true that progressive forces in Eritrea have rejected peaceful solution? By no means. In its historic 1st Congress, the vanguard of the Eritrean people's struggle, the EPLF stated its willingness to negotiate for a just, peaceful solution and clearly stated its preconditions for negotiating with the Ethiopian military junta. The EPLF is prepared to enter into discussion for a peaceful solution when the Dergue:

- 1 Recognizes the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination and independence.
2. Recognizes the two fronts, the EPLF and the ELF as the only legitimate representatives of the Eritrean people; and
- 3 Agrees that the dialogue be conducted on the international forum of the United Nations

However, the EPLF shall not enter into any discussion without the

participation of the ELF

If the Mengistu regime genuinely recognizes the right to self-determination which as we have seen is a lying phrase without the right to form an independent state and is genuinely interested in a peaceful solution, there is no stumbling block on the side of the Eritrean people. But the fascist junta is not interested in a peaceful, democratic solution. The EPLF's preconditions expose the junta's sham "peaceful solution" which is only designed to swindle public opinion and split the Eritrean liberation movement, by trying to lure one or the other Front in Eritrea into separate negotiations, on the basis of betraying the clearly expressed fundamental demands of the Eritrean people: the establishment of an independent and democratic Eritrea.

Facts show that the Ethiopian junta neither recognizes the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination nor is it interested in a just, peaceful solution. The Mengistu regime follows exactly the same expansionist, chauvinist policy as that of the Haile Selassie regime. It is vainly attempting to drown in blood the 16 year old heroic national liberation struggle of the Eritrean people and maintain the forcible annexation of Eritrea. It has committed unspeakable crimes and atrocities surpassing those of the autocratic regime. Its hands are drenched and dripping with the blood of the Eritrean people. And so are the hands of those who are whitewashing the junta's crimes going to the extent of claiming that it has "recognized the right of self-determination."

Whether one looks at the junta's attitude towards the Ethiopian masses and the Eritrean people's struggle or, its attitude towards imperialism and zionism, the essence of the Ethiopian junta is clear. Despite its nauseating demagoguery the junta is not 'revolutionary' or socialist but a reactionary expansionist and fascist regime. It is the mortal enemy of the Eritrean and Ethiopian masses.

The Eritrean Struggle Is Just, Popular and Revolutionary

The Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples who are oppressed by the reactionary and fascist Mengistu regime are waging revolutionary struggles for their emancipation.

In Eritrea, which was annexed by the Ethiopian occupationists with the instigation and total backing of the U.S. imperialists in 1952, a just, armed struggle for national independence which is supported by over 99% of the people is being waged. The Eritrean struggle did not start after the junta came to power but has been going on for 16 years and has fought against the Haile Selassie regime and now against the military regime. Even more, it is a continuation of the Eritrean people's centuries old heroic struggle against successive colonizers and for national independence.

In the face of overwhelming odds, the Eritrean struggle has, over the past 16 years, overcome a number of obstacles, solved numerous problems and developed into a thoroughgoing revolutionary national liberation move-

ment. Today, the revolutionary Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) has become the dominant force—politically and militarily—in Eritrea. Under the leadership of the EPLF the Eritrean revolution is scoring brilliant victories over the Ethiopian occupationists, imperialism, zionism and local reaction. The entire countryside and a number of major towns have been liberated. Profound transformation is taking place in the liberated areas. The EPLF is organizing, politicizing and arming the masses. It is leading the poor landless and middle peasants to expropriate the land of the big capitalists, and feudalists. People's democratic power is being established. Unswervingly adhering to the principle of self reliance, the EPLF is leading the masses in the economic and social reconstruction. Agricultural production is being developed. Small scale industries, schools hospitals, clinics, roads and people's shops are being set up. The features of the new independent, progressive, anti-imperialist, people's democratic Eritrea are taking shape in the Liberated areas.

In Ethiopia, the revolutionary struggle of the masses is intensifying. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) are waging armed struggle in the countryside. Vigorous mass struggle is raging in the cities. Oppressed nationalities—Tigreans, Oromos, Somalis are astir. It is the national liberation struggle of the Eritrean people and the revolutionary struggle of the Ethiopian masses that is shaking the fascist Ethiopian junta to its very foundations.

The Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU), the gang of feudal, comprador and aristocrat scums of the Haile Selassie regime, which the junta's apologists claim poses the major threat to the military regime, enjoys no support among the masses. Revolutionary and democratic Ethiopian organizations have waged vigorous and sustained struggle—including armed struggle against the EDU. The EPLF has time and again denounced the counter-revolutionary EDU and clearly stated that the contradictions between the junta and the EDU is a contradiction within the enemy camp. Both the EDU and the junta are the mortal enemies of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples.

U.S., Soviet Role

At present, the U.S. imperialists have adopted double-pronged tactics towards the struggle in Eritrea and Ethiopia. Directly as well as through their Western European imperialist allies and the Israeli zionists, the U.S. imperialists are maintaining their ties with and are supporting the junta. Simultaneously, they are maintaining ties with and giving support to the EDU. In close coordination with the reactionary regimes in the area and Eritrean reactionaries, they are working to weaken, isolate and crush the EPLF. They impose a reactionary leadership on the Eritrean liberation movement and force a neo-colonial solution on the Eritrean people.

The Soviet Union, Cuba and most Eastern European countries are giving

all out military political, economic and diplomatic support to the Ethiopian junta. The Soviet Union is providing the junta with U.S.\$385 million worth of arms (Mig's, tanks, armored cars, artillery, light weapons, etc. Cuba has sent over 400 military 'advisors' The Soviet Union and its allies are pouring a daily barrage of propaganda singing praises to the Ethiopian junta and villifying the just and heroic struggle of the Eritrean people and the revolutionary forces in Ethiopia. They are putting tremendous pressure on numerous countries, liberation movements and organizations to support the Ethiopian junta and denounce the Eritrean struggle. The Soviet Union, Cuba and most Eastern European countries are playing a role that runs counter and is directly opposed to the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed masses in Eritrea, Ethiopia and the region.

Today the fascist junta, armed to the teeth, with U.S. and Soviet weapons, its troops trained by Israeli and Cuban advisors' is waging a counter-revolutionary war of aggression against the Eritrean people. But no amount of weapons and "advisors" the junta receives and from whatever quarters can stop the Eritrean people's revolutionary national liberation struggle.

The efforts of U.S. imperialism to impose a neo-colonial solution are bound to fail as the Eritrean people are thoroughly familiar with the ugly feature of U.S. imperialism. They consider U.S. imperialism—which was responsible for the annexation of Eritrea by the Ethiopian regime—as one of their arch-enemies—as well as an arch enemy of the people of the world. This is why the Eritrean masses and their vanguard, the EPLF, have vehemently denounced the Sabbe clique's traitorous call on U.S. imperialism to come to the aid of the Eritrean people. They are determined to fight and frustrate the maneuvers of U.S. imperialism and its puppets.

Nor will the Eritrean people drop down their arms and capitulate because the Soviet Union and its allies are supporting the fascist junta. The over 2,000 Cuban trained Ethiopian troops which the EPLF has recently wiped out, the 5,000 brand new AK-47's and 6 brand new tanks it has captured are proof to this. The Eritrean people have made it clear that they will persist in armed struggle until the goal for which they have fought and shed their blood for decades—the establishment of a people's democratic Eritrea—is achieved.

The EPLF wages the protracted national liberation war by totally relying on the ardent patriotism and revolutionary zeal of the Eritrean masses. The vile and pernicious propaganda of the fascist junta and its apologists notwithstanding, the EPLF does not receive any aid from imperialism nor does it receive millions of dollars from Arab countries. In fact, for the past two years, i.e. since the expulsion of the Osman Sabbe clique, the EPLF has received virtually no outside support. Putting its faith on the broad masses of the Eritrean people and upholding its slogan "Destroy the enemy with his own guns and bullets" the EPLF has fought mainly with weapons captured from the Ethiopian aggressors. In the past 9 months alone, the EPLF has captured over 11,000 light and heavy weapons. Today over 60% of the

EPLF's people's army the Eritrean People's Liberation Army (EPLA), is armed with weapons captured from the Ethiopian fascists. With the numerous U S. and Soviet tanks, armored cars and other military vehicles it has captured, the EPLF has even set up the first motorized unit of the EPLA.

While the Eritrean people and the EPLF consider self reliance to be primary they highly value and have never underestimated the importance of international solidarity One of the main aims of the enemies of the Eritrean struggle is to isolate it from the revolutionary and progressive forces throughout the world so as to weaken and then crush this revolutionary struggle. It is the duty of all revolutionary progressive and democratic forces to defend and actively support the Eritrean struggle.

The Association of Eritrean Students in North America (AESNA) calls on all revolutionary progressive and democratic peoples to:

1. closely follow the development in Eritrea, Ethiopia and the region
2. vehemently condemn and expose the reactionary puppet and annexationist Ethiopian military junta
3. firmly oppose and condemn the U S. imperialist maneuvers to subvert and crush the revolutionary struggles of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples
4. firmly oppose and condemn the Soviet Union s and Cuba s all out support to the Ethiopian junta, their arming and training of the junta s troops and their campaign of villification and slander against the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples struggles.
5. firmly support the just, popular and revolutionary struggle of the Eritrean people for national independence and democracy under the leadership of the EPLF
6. firmly support the revolutionary struggle of the Ethiopian masses for the overthrow of the fascist junta and the establishment of a people's democratic regime.

AWAT NEHAFASH!!

VICTORY TO THE MASSES!!

Aug 1978

**EXCERPTS FROM THE EPLF'S MESSAGE TO THE
9TH CONGRESS OF EFLNA AND THE 2ND CONGRESS OF AEWNA
(Translation from original Tigrigna is ours)**

Dear Comrades.

Another activity accomplished in the past year and worth mentioning here is in the area of foreign affairs. It is true that the Dergue, ever since it came to power has presented its reform activities in an exaggerated manner raised pseudo-revolutionary slogans and waged anti-Eritrea diplomatic campaigns thereby causing great political confusion in the Middle East Africa and the rest of the world. The Soviet Union, other socialist countries and nationalist regimes support it in various ways. Under such circumstances, especially after the convening of the second regular meeting of the central committee, it was important on our part to work toward rectifying the wrong stand of the socialist countries and struggle to get their support and the support of progressive and democratic countries and organizations in the Middle East, Africa and Europe. The outcome of such a struggle was that not only have we registered the support of several countries and organizations in Africa, the Middle East and Europe, but have also neutralized many forces whose stand was full support for the Dergue; that is, although these forces do not oppose the Dergue, they recognize the just struggle of the Eritrean people, and the right of self-determination of the Eritrean people, and it has been possible to make them oppose any military aggression by the Dergue.

Dear comrades. Incidentally a point we believe we should clarify before going to other subjects concerns our relations with the forces of the world, that is, with the Soviet Union, other socialist countries and other systems and political forces. Regarding the policy the Soviet Union follows in the world and the errors that are reflected, we have time and again clarified our position to you. We have already made it clear that we don't submissively accept the Soviet Union's erroneous stand in regard to its support to governments that are installed through coup d'etats in the third world countries, to the so-called anti-imperialist regimes, to the limited support it gives to national liberation movements, to the policy it follows in its relationship with the different communist parties and the policy it ought to follow in connection with the people's struggles in different parts of the world. We have also explained that we have our own stand and opinion regarding political questions inside the Soviet Union and the controversial questions of political differences among the revolutionary forces of the world. We have our differences with the proletarian parties and national liberation movements of the world on the wrong position they have on

various political questions and we struggle against all wrong political stands and views. We could have a wrong position and we will rectify it when we realize it. But we have never for any reason considered the Soviet Union as our enemy, as an imperialist force, as a capitalist system and as a counter-revolutionary force.

By the same token, we have never considered the parties and liberation movements, whose wrong political positions we criticize, as forces of counter-revolution. We cannot say that we alone have the correct view and line. We commit many mistakes as a result of our lack of experience and limited capacity to perceive and understand. Our policy of struggle is to oppose and correct mistakes manifested in the world revolutionary forces, correct our own mistakes and wage a resolute struggle against world counter-revolutionary forces. This is talking in terms of clear positions of principle. As we have explained time and again, since we are a Front and not a party, it is wrong to give priority to, and to set the focus of our struggle, by indulging ourselves into political questions on which we have a clear stand, leave alone on other controversial ideological questions. To claim a certain country party or organization has this or that line or has a wrong line and through such analysis to dump into the camp of counter-revolution all those who do not fit into your line and views is erroneous and adventurist, it means to fight against everybody. At this particular time, in regard to their political stand on Eritrea, there is no significant difference as such among the Soviet Union, other socialist and non-socialist countries that support the Dergue, except on the question of supplying or not supplying of arms to the Dergue. We have stated more than once our opposition to the support the Soviet Union is giving to the Dergue. This, however, is not to mean that we consider the Soviet Union as an imperialist, counter-revolutionary force, nor does it mean we should concentrate all our propaganda machinery for an attack on the Soviet Union. It is taking all this into consideration that the Central Committee in its second regular meeting assessed the stand of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and came up with a position of registering a reminder—the policy which it is currently following. At the moment we are working to get support not only from progressive countries but also from nationalist and neo-colonial regimes, regardless of the type of their systems. Therefore, if there is anything at all that we want to remind you, it is the rectification of the wrong handling of this question in your publications.

Appendix VIII

EPLF-ELF JOINT PRESS RELEASE ON PEACEFUL SOLUTION June 21, 1978 Beirut, Lebanon

Representatives of the Joint Supreme Political Leadership of the two organizations, the Eritrean Liberation Front—Revolutionary Council and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, held a meeting on June 21, 1978. On the basis of the April 20, 1978 agreement and the political principles agreed upon on May 20, 1978, this meeting issued the following declaration.

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front and the Eritrean Liberation Front—Revolutionary Council are the sole representatives of the Eritrean people and the only legal spokesman on all issues concerning the Eritrean people's struggle. The Eritrean revolution strongly rejects all attempts by the imperialists and their allies to force upon it their policy of containment and tutelage. It reaffirms its continued independence from the imperialist containment policy and the necessity of persisting in its struggle against the plots of imperialism, zionism and their collaborators in the (Red Sea) region.

The continuation and intensification of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia does not serve the interests of the two peoples and their victories. It brings much suffering and destruction to the Eritrean people and the peoples of Ethiopia. Proceeding from this understanding, the Joint Supreme Political Leadership underscores the necessity of a peaceful solution and expresses its readiness to negotiate with the Ethiopian government for a just peaceful solution of the Eritrean case based on the right to self-determination and on just and democratic principles without preconditions. It reaffirms that the Joint Supreme Political Leadership is the sole legal spokesman in any negotiation with the Dergue concerning the destiny of the Eritrean people.

The step taken by the two organizations shows that the Eritrean revolution is conscious of all the developments in the region and is vigilant towards all the conspiracies of imperialism, zionism and their collaborators against the peoples of the region. The two organizations call on all friends and supporters to appreciate and support the initiative that we have taken to find a just peaceful solution for our people's struggle and for the common interests of the peoples of the region.

(Reprinted from EPLF *Vanguard* Vol.3 No.3 July 1978)

On the basis of what was agreed upon on April 20 1978 between the two organizations—the ELF and the EPLF—and the principles governing our foreign policy as elaborated by the Joint Supreme Political Command, we declare that the representatives of the two organizations composing the joint leadership have agreed upon the following basic points in their meeting held on June 21 1978:

1 That the ELF and the EPLF are the sole and legitimate representatives of the Eritrean people and that the Joint Supreme Political Command is the only body authorized to speak on behalf of the Eritrean people on matters connected with our people's struggle and their destiny

2. That the Eritrean Revolution strongly opposes and denounces policies being hatched by world imperialism and its agents to subjugate and instrumentalize it to serve the evil imperialist designs. Our Revolution reaffirms that it will unrelentingly resist these policies to remain independent of them, and continue waging the fierce struggle against imperialism, Zionism and their lackeys in the region.

Furthermore, the Joint Supreme Political Command agreed that the fighting between Eritrea and Ethiopia and its further escalation does not serve the interests of both peoples. And in view of this conscious understanding of the situation, we would like to declare our belief in the peaceful settlement of the Eritrean-Ethiopian conflict and announce our preparedness to start direct negotiations with the Ethiopian regime without preconditions posed by either side. The negotiations should be conducted with the aim of reaching a peaceful and just solution to self-determination of the Eritrean people. The Joint Supreme Political Command, representing both the ELF and the EPLF is the only organ authorized by the Eritrean people to enter to such negotiations and settle all matters relating to the future of the Eritrean people and the Revolution. We would also like to affirm that this agreement reflects the awareness of the Eritrean Revolution of the developments unfolding in the region and our Revolution's full alertness and vigilance to ward off the conspiracies of imperialism, Zionism and their running dogs being machinated against the peoples of the region.

We, therefore, call upon all brotherly and friendly peoples and governments to fully understand our peace approaches and initiative to solve the Eritrean problem on just and peaceful grounds that would ultimately safeguard the common interests and aspirations of the peoples of the region.

Reprinted from ELF: *The Eritrean Newsletter* Issue No. 25 July 1 1978)

Appendix IX

EXCERPTS FROM THE SPEECH OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF EPLF TO THE FIRST CONGRESS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF ERITREAN STUDENTS—as printed in the June 1978 issue of the official organ *Vanguard* (V.3, No.5) (Translation from original Tigrigna is ours)

Beloved Comrades

We saw the road which was taken and the struggle that was waged to reach the First Congress of the Association of Eritrean Students. Because our masses of people and students are expecting a lot from this congress and in order for this congress to be able to adequately answer the questions that are being asked and to meet the expectations it must be clearly understood by every participant under what political (international, regional and internal) and organizational situation this congress is being held.

On the international level, even though the balance in the struggle between world revolutionary forces—the socialist systems, the proletariat movement in the capitalist countries, the people's governments, anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist liberation movements in colonial and neo-colonial dependent countries—and world counter-revolutionary forces, (imperialism, colonialism and internal reaction) is tilting in favor of world revolutionary forces, the world counter-revolutionary force has not died yet. Not only is it still alive but in order to lengthen its life span and if possible to minimize its losses it is making a desperate attempt to make use of every crack and it will never refrain from doing so. Therefore, there is absolutely no reason to underestimate its danger.

World imperialism, after its dreams and designs failed in Southeast Asia, has now focussed its attention on the Middle East area in general, the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa in particular. In this region, imperialism, in collaboration with its puppet regimes, is by using various tactics and greater force is struggling to crush popular and liberation movements and anti-imperialist and democratic systems. On the other hand, the anti-imperialist and anti-reactionary forces have from time to time stepped up their fight and they are scoring great victories over imperialism and reactionary forces.

Because the Palestinian and Omani liberation movements, the Lebanese national movement, the Eritrean national liberation struggle and the popular movement of the Ethiopian masses pose dangers to the interests of imperialism and the reactionary forces of this region, there is nothing which imperialism and the reactionary forces have not tried to crush them. When imperialism together with its agents in this area, Zionist Israel and other regimes, are stepping up their struggle in order to protect and guarantee their interests, the socialist and democratic systems and organizations and

all peace loving people of the world have stood on the side of the forces of this region which constitute an integral part of the world revolutionary force. As a result we find the contradiction and the struggle between the world revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces burning. However due to some political developments in the region we find the situation complicated.

Due to the heroic and long national liberation struggle the Eritrean people waged and due to the strong popular movement of the Ethiopian peoples, Haile Selassie's feudal system, which was an agent of imperialism and reaction in the Horn of Africa, crumbled in 1974. However the Eritrean revolution, because of its sub active shortcomings, was unable to achieve independence. The Ethiopian masses, who were not organized and lacked capable leadership, also were unable to substitute the feudal system with a popular government. However in the Eritrean revolution because the democratic force was growing in strength and increasingly assuming a decisive role; and in Ethiopia—although a petty-bourgeois military group stole the hard won fruits of the struggle of the Ethiopian masses and assumed power—the struggle of the Ethiopian masses did not stop in 1974 but instead intensified. Under this condition, in order to stay in power and lengthen its lifespan the vacillating character of the Dergue forced it to accept some changes, make some progressive proclamations and loosen its ties with imperialism. Due to these, the reactionary forces in the area are struggling to crush the Eritrean revolution by strengthening their ties with the reactionary force in Eritrea and they are also struggling to use the struggle between the two forces inside Ethiopia for their own benefit.

The socialist countries and many democratic systems and organizations which are the strategic allies of the Eritrean revolution have never given any political or material support to the Eritrean revolution prior to the downfall of Haile Selassie's feudal system. Nevertheless, basing themselves on the change that was brought about by the heroic Eritrean revolution and the popular movement of the broad Ethiopian masses, the steps that the Dergue was forced to take, in order to encourage an anti-imperialist Ethiopia and to oppose the intrigues and machinations of imperialism and forces of reaction in this region, they have taken a wrong stand directly against our revolution by supporting the Dergue not only politically but also by supplying it with massive weapons and other military assistance. Although they say that they believe in the just struggle of the Eritrean people they have not given it any form of support. There are even some democratic systems which once cooperated with the Eritrean revolution but now they are fighting against the Eritrean revolution by sending their troops in support of the Dergue, claiming that the revolutionary flame has moved from Eritrea to Ethiopia. In particular at the time the Ogaden war started, because these socialist and democratic systems tremendously increased their military assistance to the military government of the Dergue and because the Ogaden war was easily brought to an end it has given the chauvinist character of the Dergue a breath of life and has encouraged the Dergue's dreams and attempts to

militarily solve the Eritrean question.

The socialist and democratic forces which have taken a wrong stand in supporting the Dergue say that the Eritrean question must be resolved through peaceful means and negotiations and not by military means. However, without seeing the distinction between the Dergue's chauvinist character and the changes which were brought about by the Eritrean revolution and the struggle of the Ethiopian masses, as well as the reforms the Dergue was forced to accept and implement, it is clear that they themselves—so-called socialist countries—(Ed. are obstructing the means of peaceful solution which they say they believe in) through their supply of weapons and other military assistance to the Dergue.

Given this politically intricate situation, what policies does the EPLF follow?

Although imperialism and forces of reaction may assume various colours and employ differing means they are enemies of any national democratic struggle. To crush our revolution, it is known that they will put up a much tougher fight and not an easier one than what they are doing now. Thus, we ask that we should struggle harder against these forces. The contradiction and struggle between us and imperialism, colonialism and reaction occupies a primary position. Regarding the reactionary systems in our surroundings, as each country has its specific situation and because some have close relationships with the Eritrean people and their revolution, we should employ suitable tactics to those that can be won and those that can be neutralized but against the others we should always be vigilant.

As our revolution is an integral part of the world wide revolutionary forces, all socialist and democratic systems and liberation forces are our strategic allies. Therefore, the contradiction between us and those socialist and democratic systems and organizations that have taken a wrong stand on the Eritrean question and have sided with the Dergue is a contradiction within the world wide revolutionary force. For this reason it occupies a secondary position. Hence, to make them understand the situation of the Eritrean revolution and to correct their wrong stand through opposition we shall continue our struggle within the world revolutionary force. To see this struggle as identical to and on the same level as the struggle waged against imperialism, colonialism and reaction and to follow the same methods of struggle is wrong. It will not enable the masses to recognize their strategic friends from enemies and will lead to failure and disaster: it means to fall into the trap of imperialism and reaction.

It is after adequately studying and understanding these international and regional political situations and the subjective capability of our revolution that the Central Committee of EPLF in its second and third regular meetings resolved to protest to the support which the socialist and democratic systems and organizations are giving the Dergue and ask them to correct their wrong stand regarding the Eritrean question.

Comrade Delegates!

After adequately understanding and discussing these existing international and regional political situations it is expected of you to pass political resolutions that take all aspects into consideration.

Appendix X

Excerpts from Special Issue of *Vanguard* V 3 No.7 July 1978 (The entire issue is an exclusive interview with the Vice-Secretary General of EPLF Isaias Afewerki) (Translation from original Tigrigna is ours)

Question. To what extent have we succeeded in our political activities abroad to present the correct image of the Eritrean revolution to the world? What are the difficulties we've faced and are still facing?

Answer: Well, to begin with, the influences brought upon the Eritrean revolution, by the political changes in the Horn of Africa and the Middle East cannot be underestimated. When we observe with a broad outlook, the struggle we are waging inside Eritrea, our struggle is not different from the other struggles in our region. The political situation in this region is also very complicated.

For instance, in Somalia there was what you call a democratic regime. All the socialist countries used to support this regime. At that time, in Ethiopia, there was Haile Selassie's regime which was supported by imperialism, zionism, and other reactionary states in this region and the world.

After the changes of 1974, the present military regime (Derg) came into power in Ethiopia. It came to power not because it had its own clear political line or as an organized force to achieve certain goals but because there was a power vacuum. When it seized power because of its natural character and class interest it was merely greedy to stay in power. To materialize its greediness, the Derg had to go in accord with the then prevailing political atmosphere. This was not a willingness but the tactic that the Derg had to follow to achieve its desired goal. Here, a question concerning the then existing atmosphere in Ethiopia, may be raised.

And this was, The Ethiopian masses had for many years struggled against the feudal exploitation, oppression and degradation against imperialist neo-colonial exploitation and oppression and in opposition to the oppression of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie and high officials of Ethiopia. Due to the intensification of this struggle during the last days of the Haile Selassie regime, that system collapsed. In Ethiopia, at that time, the question was who would lead the Ethiopian revolution. It is true there were different political organizations, However the so-called progressive or democratic organizations, inside Ethiopia, had no strong unity. As organized political forces their capacity was extremely limited and very localized. Besides, these political organizations had no strong relations with the masses. Perhaps, due to the terror unleashed by the oppressive regime of Haile Selassie, the formation of broad political organizations, with strong relations with the masses, was not possible and when the government was overthrown through the coup d'etat of the Derg a power vacuum was created. Then the Derg came to power.

In general, although the struggle of the Ethiopian masses was not able to achieve its desired victories, the masses continued their struggle spontaneously to bring changes through their own pressure and to seize their own political power to bring economic changes that safeguard their own interest, and to establish a society that represents the Ethiopian masses workers, peasants and other oppressed classes socially and culturally. In such an atmosphere the Derg had to take up these slogans. This was because, although spontaneous, it was the struggle of the Ethiopian masses that was the main pushing political force or that had a heavier weight inside Ethiopia. Therefore, in order to stay in power it was a must for the Derg to continue to pace with the general storm. This is not peculiar to Ethiopia. It has been experienced in many third world countries. When military men seize power they temporarily go in accordance with the existing emotional movements or along with the unorganized mass movements. After the seizure and consolidation of their power they gradually actuate to establish a system that safeguards their own class interest. At the time this regime (Dergue-Ed. came to power the Ethiopian masses were waging a struggle to free themselves from imperialism, reactionary forces and zionism. The question raised therefore, was not only about the changes inside Ethiopia but also about its alliances in the world. That is, whether the Derg would ally with revolutionary or counter-revolutionary forces. Due to the pressure exerted by the Ethiopian masses, the Derg was being forced to gradually cut off its relationship with imperialism.

When the Derg accomplished the overthrow of the old regime, it did not cut off its relationship with imperialism all at once. In fact it was not its desire to do so for it had common interest with imperialism and zionism. In such a situation, the Derg terminated its relationship with imperialism gradually. The Derg presents this occurrence as if it was done in a tactful way—i. e. as if it was a well studied gradual procedure. In reality however it happened in such a way only because the Derg was being pulled by two opposite forces. On one side was the pressure exerted by the Ethiopian masses to cut off relations with imperialism, zionism and other reactionary forces, and on the opposite side was the Derg's common class interest with imperialism and zionism. After oscillating between the two forces for quite a while, finally the Derg cut-off its alliance with imperialism because the storm of the masses was the stronger force. This was created by the then existing atmosphere inside Ethiopia. It was not because the Derg as an organized political force had a clear political line which it followed against imperialism.

These conditions brought about big political changes in the Horn of Africa. These changes were brought about by the struggle of the Ethiopian masses and the bitter struggles that ensued inside Ethiopia. These changes that took place in various areas and the changes in relations within Ethiopia and the world complicated the general political situation in the Horn of Africa. Because, in contrast the Eritrean revolution, guided by well-defined

progressive principles, was waging its social revolution against imperialism, zionism Ethiopian colonialism and internal reaction. Within Ethiopia also, the struggle of the Ethiopian masses brought down the Haile Selassie regime and subsequently the above expounded situation followed. Under these conditions, the present regime in Ethiopia started to cut off its relations with imperialism, zionism and reactionary forces. Thus, when the socialist countries and the world's democratic forces developed a new view on the nature of this regime, necessarily complications had to develop. Putting the general situations in our surroundings into consideration, our view on the relation between Eritrea and Ethiopia can only be at variance with that of these forces so-called socialist countries—Ed. As it is evaluated by different political forces, the regime of Haile Selassie was tied with imperialism, zionism and other reactionary forces. It is also said the oppression and exploitation that it had afflicted upon the masses is different from that of the Derg's regime. As far as we know, except for token changes, no basic change has been made to differentiate the present regime from its predecessor

The present regime in Ethiopia has undertaken some reforms. These reforms, although obtained as a result of the pressure of the Ethiopian masses as far as the 'socialist countries' and 'democratic forces' are concerned—Ed. it is seen as its (the political force in power) own achievement. Besides, it has also cut-off its relations with imperialism, zionism and reactionary forces. Also in the general anti-imperialist struggle, the Dergue struggles to form an anti-imperialist front that includes even non-progressive forces. Basing themselves on these questions many socialist countries and democratic forces commenced to offer political support to the Derg. This political support created some complications for the Eritrean political situation abroad. This is so because as real strategic allies of the Eritrean revolution, all socialist countries, liberation movements, communist parties and democratic movements in different western countries (i.e. Europe and America) were supposed to stand on the side of the Eritrean revolution and against Ethiopian colonialism. However, at a time when the political stand of the strategic allies of the Eritrean revolution is on the side of the Ethiopian regime, the contradiction between Ethiopian colonialism and the Eritrean revolution enters a complicated situation. This situation was perhaps more complicated by the war between Ethiopia and Somalia that started in 1977

Here there is one fact that should not be forgotten. That is, normally any democratic force believes in the principle that the nationalities in Ethiopia must have the right to self-determination. The war between Ethiopia and Somalia by itself was able to alter the alliances in this region. Somalia had a system that had a strong alliance with all socialist countries. With the downfall of the Haile Selassie regime, the Dergue was through pressure gradually getting isolated from imperialism, zionism, and other reactionary forces and it started to strengthen its relationship with the socialist countries. In the Horn of Africa therefore, on one side was the so-called demo-

cratic system of Somalia which enjoyed the support of all socialist countries, and on the other the Dergue's regime in Ethiopia supported by the socialist countries. However the contradiction between Ethiopian and Somalia was not eliminated, but continued as it used to be. This in itself created a complicated situation. The stand of the socialist countries upon the ongoing war between the two regimes was clear. It was on the side of the Derg. The Somali regime immediately cut off its relations with the socialist countries. After that when the regime in Somalia started asking for the support of the western and neighbouring countries the former alliances were altered. The Derg joined the socialist countries and Somalia isolated from the socialist countries joined another camp, consequently the then prevailing political situation was complicated. Such conditions brought the Derg big political benefits. That is, due to the political errors being committed by the political leadership of Somalia, the Derg was able to get big political gains abroad. Such political changes were factors to further complicate the Eritrean political question.

Now let's come back to the initial question. The question is then, what the Eritrean revolution was doing in such complicated political changes.

In the first place, the Eritrean revolution had to strive to get the support of its strategic allies. We are in the stage of national liberation struggle. This stage governs the foreign policy the Eritrean revolution should follow and on what it should depend on. Based on this the foreign policy outlined in the organizational congress (First Congress of EPLF) was explicit. Although our general political activity abroad does not deviate from the defined lines we were encountered with a question on how to fight given the complicated situation.

Our primary goal was to attain the support of all socialist countries, elucidate the existing political situation, explain the nature of Derg; describe the political depth of the Eritrean revolution, and to clarify our view concerning the general political situation of this region. While conducting all these struggles we were also striving to secure the support of socialist countries, communist parties in different countries, and the liberation movements in the world. It was also fundamental to acquire the support of the regimes in this region, which can cooperate with the just struggle of the Eritrean people without any intention of direct political influence or interference in the internal affairs of the Eritrean revolution. Generally speaking, as a result of our political endeavors abroad, it has been made possible for all the socialist countries to clearly understand the true nature of the Eritrean revolution. It has come to be clear to these countries, that the Eritrean revolution even considering the presence of a 'third force' and the activities of other reactionary forces, is a social revolution dominated by a democratic force. When this question became clear to the socialist countries, the stand they have taken to resolve the complicated political situation is a peaceful solution to the question of the Eritrean revolution. They have started taking steps to peacefully resolve the contradiction between the Dergue's regime which they support and the democratic movement of the Eritrean people.

On our part we had and still have a clear view concerning the peaceful solution of the Eritrean question. We, in all our might supported the initiative taken by the socialist countries and we are striving for it. In our opinion, for the socialist countries to take such a stand while providing support to the Derg, is positive. We believe this positive stand was a result of their positive consideration of the Eritrean revolution, and the struggle waged on our part to make them understand and acquire their political support. However the intrigues and oppositions directed against our struggle by the regimes in this region such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and other well known reactionary regimes is crystal clear. There were times that they went to the extent of prohibiting their ground and airways for the transference of any supply intended for our people's struggle. All the opposition to our struggle by Saudi Arabia and other reactionary forces is a reflection of their role and outlook upon our revolution and shows the nature of our struggle. The force which they support and nurture in the Eritrean revolution is known. Our stand against such forces is clear. With the other neighboring countries which support our just struggle without interfering in our internal affairs as long as this status is not altered we intend to keep and flourish our relationships. This is the foreign policy that we follow in regards to the forces in this region.

Of all our strategic allies and friendly neighbouring countries democratic Yemen was an intimate friend of our revolution. The stand of democratic Yemen, in the near past, was perhaps in some ways different from our views or political line. However due to either the struggle waged in the Eritrean revolution or due to the studies they made concerning the conditions in Ethiopia their stand on the Eritrean revolution is back in line with what it used to be. The relationship between the regime in South Yemen and our revolution is developing. This is one example of the outcomes of the ongoing struggle we are waging abroad and is a reflection of the achievements of our struggle and relationships with our friends.

The liberation movements in this region—the liberation movement of Oman, the liberation movement of the Palestinian people—other democratic movements like the Lebanese national and progressive movements have a supportive stand on the Eritrean revolution. The struggle we wage to strengthen this relationship is not easy. Besides, contacts have been made with African countries which have democratic systems and with whom we had no contact previously. Clarifying our just struggle we have asked them to offer political support to the struggle of the Eritrean people. In general, although we do not expect big changes in a short time) it has been confirmed that they have a good understanding of our struggle. This is the general political status of Eritrea abroad.

Question: It is a known fact that South Yemen had its troops deployed on the side of the Dergue in the Dergue's military invasion of Eritrea. Now that a delegation of our organization has visited Aden, it is expected that this question has been discussed. How does democratic Yemen answer this question? That is what reasons does it give for its military intervention? And

what is its stand on the Eritrean revolution now?

Answer: It is true, that as it was answered in the first question, it is really difficult to understand the political complications created in this region. It is no secret that worsening relationship among the surrounding democratic regimes themselves, the relationship of the forces in this area with world revolutionary forces in general and the relations the world revolutionary forces have with different democratic forces in this region added up with the contradictions in this area have created a very complicated situation. Under such circumstances, although Democratic Yemen's position towards and its support to our revolution didn't basically change, because of the changes that occurred in Ethiopia and in this area, it developed diplomatic ties with and gave political support to the Dergue. At a definite time in fact according to their views, in order to strengthen the Dergue and help it against

Imperialist attacks they took a stand of supporting the Dergue militarily and went as far as deploying their troops on the side of the Dergue. This military intervention of South Yemen truly faced an opposition by the Eritrean revolution. But even though this oppositional stand existed, the Eritrean revolution's view i.e. the EPLF's view on South Yemen did not change from the basic strategic line. In the struggle we have waged so far we explained to them that the military intervention was wrong, that it should be corrected and that we oppose it. Because of South Yemen's intervention there were times when our relations with Democratic Yemen was stagnant. But now it has been disclosed that all of Democratic Yemen's troops that were in Ethiopia have been withdrawn. And truly we have been officially told that Democratic Yemen's position about this question has changed.

As we noticed from the general explanation given to us, primarily Democratic Yemen's political decision was hasty and this hasty decision led their regime into committing mistakes. In addition, in our estimation we feel that the incorrect reports that were furnished to them from different corners can be reasons for their confusion. No matter what reasons Democratic Yemen gives for the military intervention—the reasons under the guise of—defense against imperialism and exposing the conspiracy of imperialism and reaction—when its forces were deployed to suppress the Eritrean Revolution and the struggle of the Eritrean people they were obviously incorrect. Any justification for this act is unacceptable by us. Any way we consider the measure taken now to correct these mistakes as positive and we support it. Under this condition the relation between Democratic Yemen and us is improving. It is true, that regime has diplomatic ties with the Ethiopian regime—the Dergue—it might also have other ties, but because it has relations and diplomatic ties with the Dergue, it does not mean that our relations with it should worsen. Similarly, because of some mistakes made by Democratic Yemen the view that our stand should be one of condemnation or opposition and should continue as such is erroneous. It should be realized that as much as possible we have to develop good relations with Democratic Yemen.

Question—Besides that of South Yemen, there is also the position of Cuba. It is evident that Cuba supported and is still supporting the Ethiopian

military regime. To what extent could it be said that Cuba is siding with the Dergue on questions regarding Eritrea? How does Cuba's position differ, if it does at all, from Democratic Yemen's previous position. And what is Cuba's present stand?

Answer—Generally as I have explained earlier the stand of most socialist countries is clear. It is obvious that Cuba began sending its troops to Ethiopia in large numbers at the start of the Ogaden war. In Eritrea, although in a limited number its troops have participated in battles as the South Yemeni troops did. As a whole, the view we held and still maintain towards its participation and stand on Eritrea is quite clear. We reject any kind of excuse given by any socialist or democratic country to its military intervention. It can never be justified. Although the position of Democratic Yemen and Cuba on the Eritrean revolution is basically the same, Democratic Yemen has a much deeper knowledge of the Eritrean revolution. It is a regime (South Yemen Ed. with long years of close relationship and cooperation with Eritrean democratic forces. The relationship that the Eritrean revolution had with Cuba was not that close and deep. If we go to details Cuba's knowledge about the Eritrean revolution cannot be the same as that of Democratic Yemen. Regarding their military intervention perhaps there could have been a difference in size but their motive was almost the same. As was explained earlier since the recent stand of all socialist countries is to seek a peaceful solution to the Eritrean question, it has been officially stated that Cuban troops will not take part in Eritrea. At this time they do not have any participation.

Question—In addition to these countries, there are others in our region like Iraq in particular that used to oppose the EPLF. Iraq used to support the ELF and it has been supporting the 'third force' of the Sabbe clique up to this date. What was the outcome of our delegation's recent tour to Iraq?

Answer—That Iraq's stand, particularly on forces of the Eritrean revolution was at first on the side of the ELF and that now it has sided with the 'third force' has been quite clear. We were very clear about that. We had opposed their one-sided stand until recently. Our stand is the same on the different countries and organization with similar political stands. With this stand of opposition, however we have never refrained from explaining our political line and the nature of our struggle. In addition to this last tour similar visits were made repeatedly to Iraq before. The purpose of the tour was to explain the nature of the Eritrean revolution, to spell out why Iraq's stand should be corrected and to urge them to support the EPLF. It can perhaps be said that repeated efforts in the past were not successful.

From our last tour in Iraq, we came to realize that the stand Iraq had on the Eritrean revolution, as it was mentioned above, was based on, that EPLF's stand on unity (Eritrean national unite—Ed. was not acceptable to them. As they officially explained to us, the reason why they stayed on the side of ELF (it does not mean this is our stand) was that EPLF does not want to unite with the other force, especially the ELF. We also clearly stated our view on unity in the Eritrean field. Our strategic view on how to

bring about unity in the Eritrean field, and establish one organization by eliminating the difference between us and the ELF is quite clear. And we have never deviated from this stand. We explained, however, that we differ with them (Iraq) and some other forces on what road to take to achieve this aim.

We presume, the other basic reason for their (Iraq's) stand was associated with their political line. The system in Iraq is the Baath system, the Baath political line, and the depth and extent of its influence is clear to all of us. According to them Eritrea is an Arab country. Since many Eritreans approach them representing themselves as Arabs and followers of Baathism, they probably consider the struggle in Eritrea as an Arab national struggle and thus found it correct to support those who have been coming to them under such a mantle of Arabism. Therefore, they have been siding with those forces who approached them in this manner. However, the official explanation given to us on this question was that the entire Iraq's Baath party has recently resolved that the question whether Eritrea is an Arab or not is for the Eritrean people themselves to decide. Secondly, they also explained that they will welcome those groups or individuals who come to them saying 'we are Arabs and our struggle is an Arab national struggle.'

Their first stand, that whether the Eritrean people are Arabs or not, that they (Eritrean people—Ed.) determine their own nature, seems to be basically positive to us. Because, since the Eritrean people know who they are, there is no need of explanation for their identity. We think it is correct to leave this question up to the Eritrean people. It means they (Iraq—Ed.) have stopped from interfering in the internal affair of the Eritrean people. On the other hand, we have expressed our opposition to their support to groups or individuals that appeal to them in the name of an Arab national struggle. We explained to them that opportunist Eritreans might approach them with various political colours to further their opportunist lines or to gain economic benefits. Similarly, we explained that they can exploit by presenting themselves to the Iraqi Baath system as Arab nationalist fighters. Moreover, because what they the opportunists present has nothing to do with the nature of the Eritrean people and revolution, and in effect opposes the struggle of the Eritrean people, we on our part do not support it. We have confirmed to them (Iraqis) that we oppose those who want to struggle in Eritrea holding such a view. In spite of all this as a result of the discussions we had it was possible to clarify each others stand. On this occasion where we clarified each others stand, we expressed our opposition to their policy in particular their policy towards such opportunist Eritreans. The points which link us with them (Iraq—Ed.) are our common struggle against imperialism and reaction in the surrounding areas.

Because Iraq's stand on the just struggle of the Eritrean people and the Eritrean revolution in general is one of support, we think it is positive. Therefore, we support each other, we accept the support it renders based on this stand to our front and to the Eritrean revolution in general, for it is not against our political line. Following the tour and the mutual understanding

reached, they are already giving us their support. This in itself we think is positive. Thus, we have been able to establish a good relationship with Iraq based on clear stand.

Question—To make it appear as if it is ready to solve the Eritrean case peacefully and, to legalize and legitimize its preparation for a third big military invasion against the Eritrean people, the Dergue is in particular since last June waging a massive propaganda and diplomatic campaign both inside and abroad. With regards to the peaceful solution to the Eritrean case, it has repeatedly portrayed the EPLF as not having a clear stand and as if it believes only on the force of arms. It further claims that in order to resolve the issue peacefully it tried to meet with the EPLF through different means and that its peace efforts through the mediation of Democratic Germany was frustrated because of EPLF. Could you explain how true this news is?

Answer—To begin with, repeated explanations were given on the nature of the Dergue's politics and the tactics it follows. Regarding this question the peaceful solution to the Eritrean question. Ed. in particular the Dergue has the aim of crushing the struggle of the Eritrean people by military force. It should be clear to everyone what the Dergue is saying now is only just a tactic to get the time to prepare the military offensive it wants to launch in order to solve the various political questions—including the Eritrean question—and to consolidate its political power. The series of political campaigns it is waging under the signboard of peaceful solution is therefore based on such a tactic.

It is no secret that lately the Dergue through the newspapers and the radio has been claiming to have met with the EPLF that the EPLF 'is not ready' for the peaceful settlement of the Eritrean case, that the EPLF's view on the historical origin and nature of the Eritrean question 'is reactionary' and other similar infantile political campaigns. Basically the main aim of the campaigns that were being conducted are that first, the Dergue, at this moment feels it has made the necessary military preparations. Having completed the Ogaden war it believes it can now push all its forces towards Eritrea. It is waging this campaign by claiming that since its previous 'peace' slogans have failed, it says, "we are tired of attempts for peace. Ed. therefore we have now taken a military step and because the military aggression we are waging is just and correct it must be accepted." The second aim is to deceive public opinion in the region, be it that of the peoples of Ethiopia or Eritrea on this question. Since its claim of a talk with the EPLF and its accusations against the Eritrean revolution were based on false political grounds, its main goal is to deceive the Ethiopian people by claiming that attempts were made where there was none, and pretending that genuine efforts for negotiation were made but only to be frustrated before being carried through to the end. To clarify this question it becomes important to mention the activities of the Dergue with regards to peace, right from the outset.

As the Dergue has been stealing slogans from the Ethiopian masses but

only to implement them in a reformist way ever since it came to power it grabbed and diverted the slogan of peaceful solution to the Eritrean question from the masses and attempted to use it for tactical reasons since 1975. At the time when Haile Selassie was in power the Ethiopian democratic and progressive forces as representatives of the interests of the Ethiopian masses had raised the slogan that the Eritrean people's demand should be solved in a peaceful and democratic way and were struggling under this principle. Haile Selassie's regime, who due to its very nature is against this principle and against justice, made every attempt to militarily crush the Eritrean people's demand.

This democratic slogan, like all the other slogans that were raised by the Ethiopian people or the political goals the Eritrean people were struggling for became a challenge to which the Dergue had to respond.

Pretending to accept and put this slogan into practice, the Dergue formed a 'peace' committee composed of elderly Eritreans. The formation of the committee itself its structure, the policy the Dergue followed in implementing the slogan of peaceful solution, not only revealed the nature of the Dergue but also confirmed that it has been using this slogan as a tactic. Furthermore, at the time of the formation of the committee, the Dergue did not have a clear position on what it meant by 'peace' and how it saw the Eritrean question and how it intended to solve it. Our revolution (EPLF) raised questions repeatedly through the committee for the Dergue to explain what it (Dergue) meant by 'peace', how it sees the struggle of the Eritrean people and what it meant by a peaceful solution. However let alone appropriate responses to these questions there was no reply of any kind for a long time, though the committee continued to run back and forth. Then finally in 1976, the Dergue announced what it called the 9 point peace policy and explained that it intends to solve the Eritrean question by granting internal autonomy.

The military aggression that the Dergue waged in the past and the military preparations underway is yet another proof that it was only for tactical reasons that it launched its activities under the slogan of peaceful solution. Although the Dergue says it has raised the slogan of 'peaceful solution' since 1975 it carried out and still is making military preparations. Its first and second attempts using 'volunteer' troops failed. Its military preparations proved to be a fiasco. The peace proposal was thus a political scheme that went side by side with the military campaigns. The Dergue, without limiting itself inside Eritrea conducted an intensive campaign abroad using the same 'peace' slogan to deceive outside forces as well. This activity was not a genuine attempt to find a peaceful solution to the Eritrean question but to isolate the Eritrean revolution from the world, deprive it of political support, and put it in a dilemma, and by saying 'the forces in Eritrea do not want peace' they are instruments of imperialist and reactionary forces, it was waging a political campaign to stragulate the Eritrean people's struggle.

Following the overall political changes in the Horn of Africa, proposals

for a peaceful solution to the Eritrean question, for negotiations to start between the Dergue and the Eritrean democratic forces came from most of the world's democratic forces, national liberation movements and socialist countries. On our part, we accepted these views not for tactical reasons but as a matter of principle. Since a peaceful solution that all democratic forces actively work for can help bring about a genuine peaceful solution, we wholeheartedly supported and followed these initiatives. The first initiative was taken by the Democratic Republic of Germany. Following repeated invitations from the Democratic Republic of Germany the EPLF made the first contact with the Democratic Republic of Germany during its general tour at the beginning of November 1977. A second contact was made in January 1978, a third in March 1978 and finally another contact was made in June 1978.

The aim of the first tour was to make acquaintances. The task of our delegation was to explain the justness of the struggle of the Eritrean people, the political line of the EPLF and its stand on the overall political changes in Ethiopia and the region. The second meeting was held during the second tour to elucidate the points raised and discussed at the first tour. At this time it was explained to our delegation that within the Dergue there are democratic forces that have genuine democratic inclinations who believe besides the declared 9 point proposal, in the Eritrean people's right to self-determination, but that the present political situation doesn't permit them to declare such a stand now. The Democratic Republic of Germany on its part fully supports the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination and its main goal is to work to bring the Dergue and the Eritrean revolution together for a meeting so as to reach such a solution. Furthermore, it forwarded repeated suggestions that such a meeting with representatives of the Dergue be held so that the Eritrean revolution directly know the views of the Dergue. The question of whether to meet or not to meet with the Dergue was an important question for our delegate to consider. As it was important to clarify the views they (D R G) had presented and to know what new views the Dergue had come up with, the delegation had no objection to the meeting as such. Hence, another meeting was held in January 1978 during the second tour and the Dergue delegations submitted its proposal.

One thing that should be made clear here is that the proposal submitted by the Dergue was not different from its already declared position. Anyway, the proposal was explained to us and we heard it. That was how the second round of meeting ended. At that time an understanding was reached with the Democratic Republic of Germany for such meetings to continue but in order to clear the way for a genuine negotiation there should be repeated contact between the two of us and that regular and protracted contacts are needed to carry the proposal, of solving the Eritrean question peacefully through to a successful conclusion. We had no opposition to the view that such contacts would serve as a preparatory step to clear the way for genuine negotiation. Based on this, a third tour was made to Berlin in

March 1978 On the basis of the report given by the Dergue's delegation, we went prepared to clarify our view on different political questions—the history and origin of Eritrean question, the nature of the struggle of the Eritrean people, and our views on the right to self-determination. Coincidentally at that time (i.e. during the third tour) there were points that were forwarded by the Democratic Republic of Germany. The points presented by Democratic Germany during the third tour were:

- 1 That the Dergue accepts and declares the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination,
2. That a cease fire be declared in Eritrea,
3. That some roads be opened so as to ease the economic problems created in some places, especially around Asmara,
- 4 And that official negotiation start after all these measures went into effect.

On our part, we decided to respond to these points in mid-May after discussing it in the Central Committee. The third tour ended in this way. The EPLF and Dergue delegates thus returned to their respective places to prepare appropriate responses to the questions presented to them. After conducting a study the EPLF prepared a lengthy memorandum not only to answer the questions but also to clarify its views on the Eritrean question as a whole and the road it follows to solve it. However, as the authorities of Democratic Germany were busy with other things at the time of our next visit, the proposed meeting date was postponed to the beginning of June. At the fourth meeting the memorandum was presented to the authorities of Democratic Germany. The Dergue's delegation also came with its responses.

The Dergue's representative gave the pre-condition that in order for it to accept the four point proposal, the Eritrean revolution or the democratic forces in Eritrea—the EPLF included—must accept the 'national democratic programme' of the Dergue. That meant unless the Eritrean revolution—the EPLF—accepts this condition the Dergue will not enter into negotiations. The representative said that when the Eritrean revolution accepts this pre-condition the Dergue would sit for negotiations. On our part, we explained our position that the views presented by the Dergue are obstacles to any negotiations from starting, that it is connected with the Dergue's military preparations. We also made our views clear that its aim at this time in particular is to abandon the "peaceful solution" campaign it has been waging so that peaceful solution or negotiations would not be effected. By creating a new condition for the Eritrean revolution to accept the Dergue's national democratic program or to capitulate, it shows that the Dergue is interested only in implementing its military aggression presently underway and is not prepared for a peaceful solution. Thus the meeting ended this way.

Lately the Dergue has been waging a campaign by falsifying the nature of these contacts to villify the Eritrean revolution abroad and create confusion among the broad masses. In fact, if at all there is one thing that was exposed

as a result of these contacts, it is only the nature of the Dergue. Maybe the Dergue's continued relationship with the socialist countries is different from this question. The fact that it continued its relationship with the socialist countries doesn't mean it was not exposed. The reason is because this is connected with the stand of socialist countries. The truth that was unmasked from these attempts was that the Dergue's erroneous slogan for peaceful solution is in the final analysis only a tactical maneuver used to serve its military preparations. The current military preparation and aggression further affirms this. This in general were what the contacts were about.

Question—As was mentioned above, the preconditions put forth by the Dergue reveals the true nature of the Dergue's slogan for 'peaceful solution,' but since the position of the socialist countries is that the Eritrean issue should be solved peacefully a position which they are pressing forward, how would the Dergue's stand affect the relationship of the socialist countries with both the Dergue and the Eritrean revolution?

Answer—One thing that should be clear here is that if the Dergue takes such a stand, it is not up to us either as an expectation or will, to determine whether the socialist countries should sever their relationship with the Dergue. As I have explained it earlier they say they have their own reasons which oblige them to support the Dergue. This stand cannot be acceptable to us, whatsoever especially where it affects the Eritrean question. On our part, we do not accept it. Recent stands of the various socialist countries confirms that they do not support a military solution to the Eritrean question. The stand of the Soviet Union or Cuba, that of Democratic Germany or other socialist countries on this issue has been officially explained. In practice, they have assured us that their military forces in Ethiopia will not participate in Eritrea as they did in Ogaden. We think this is a positive stand. The Eritrean revolution must encourage and carry this stand forward. Besides, there is the Dergue's military aggression. The three million Eritrean people must arm themselves to oppose and defeat this unjust military aggression whose aim is to cow them and crush their struggle. While this is in process, the Eritrean revolution must be seriously prepared for a peaceful solution and must continue its political struggle in different fields, among the Eritrean and Ethiopian masses and among all peoples and different democratic forces abroad. The stand of the Eritrean revolution with regard to peaceful solution has been made clear. The Dergue's tactical stand on peaceful solution, has been made clear and the clear stand of the socialist countries, other democratic forces and liberation movements has been explained as well. The struggle of the Eritrean people inside Eritrea and the political struggle abroad constitute a stage which will bring about a result. That the correct line of the Eritrean people will triumph is inevitable. Military situations might change—one might press forward or pull back, but this can only be temporary and not the last change. Because the struggle is continuous and protracted. In the final analysis, it is certain that the just struggle of the Eritrean people will be victorious.

Q What consequences could the political activities we conducted outside, as already described, bring on the relationship we have with the ELF especially the present one?

A. On this question, it may perhaps appear to many that the EPLF entered negotiations alone abandoning the ELF and such views could be raised by many. However under no circumstance has the EPLF so far deviated and will ever deviate from its principled line on either the question of negotiations or peaceful solution. EPLF had declared that the legitimate representatives of the Eritrean people are the EPLF and the ELF and believes in this declaration. This is not a tactic. About the contacts made, meaning the initiative taken by Democratic Germany it did not involve EPLF alone. Since the view that there are three forces in Eritrea prevailed, even) representatives of the reactionary clique—the third force—were invited by Democratic Germany. What views they presented while they were invited, we cannot know. When asked by Democratic Germany about these forces (the forces in Eritrea) we explained that the ELF is a nationalist force, although we have some contradictions with them, in order to democratically resolve the contradictions that some steps towards unity have already been taken between us and ELF and are struggling to establish one organization.

With regard to the 'third force' clique, however we clarified that not only is it reactionary and non-nationalist but one that has direct strategic links with imperialism and reactionary regimes and is a tool of the same. In all the contacts made, the view we repeatedly expressed to the leaders of Democratic Germany was that in spite of some differences, our relationship with ELF is developing well, and in the end, when a true negotiation starts, representatives of the two of us (EPLF and ELF) would participate. Towards the end, especially after April 20, 1978 when we agreed on the interpretation of the October 20th agreement with ELF) we had informed the leaders of Democratic Germany of the formation of a joint delegation and that this delegation could represent us. Our appointment to respond to the four points presented by Democratic Germany was around March, while the time we and ELF formed joint bodies was the end of April. At the time of the last call) from Democratic Germany—Ed.), we learned that representatives of ELF would be going to Democratic Germany and we tried to contact ELF leaders outside since we held the stand that the views to be presented should be done jointly. Because of some reasons, however, it was not possible to make the contact. We learned that they (ELF) would be going elsewhere and were not coming to Democratic Germany. Towards the end of the month of June, when we were in Germany however we learned they too were there. We offered to meet them before presenting the views we brought with us. But they misunderstood the matter and made it clear that they on their part would give response to the four points. On our part we did what was to be done and came back.

Even then our efforts did not stop there. We made efforts to contact them abroad so that they would not misunderstand or misconstrue the contacts

we made or the steps taken. In the end when we met representatives of ELF in Aden, we explained to them the steps we took and the memorandum we presented to Democratic Germany so that they could know what views we presented. Regarding our other general principles, we assured them that under no circumstance would we enter any negotiation without the ELF and that we have not started any negotiation. They expressed that they were displeased because they thought we had started to negotiate alone, without them. After our explanation, however, such a misunderstanding was avoided. On top of that the representatives of ELF expressed that they don't have any objection to the contacts. Their suspicion that we alone had already started negotiations, was cleared. After that, we agreed on the general foreign political policy we should jointly follow. A joint declaration was given on this issue; and from now onwards it is certain that we will take joint political stands and steps. The contacts we made can in no way have negative effects.

Q True, the nature of the Dergue is one of the factors that has complicated the political situation in the Horn of Africa, as was described in the first question. Particularly the Dergue, ever since coming to power in order to appear progressive, has never stopped from talking about the formation of political parties. Taking this empty talk into account could you describe the political nature of the Dergue?

A. First on the question of how the Dergue came to power we have had a clear understanding right from the beginning. In Ethiopia, revolutionary changes or a revolution cannot be brought through the vanguardship of men in uniforms. To begin with it should be clear that the Dergue's class position is not the question of the mass of the army but that of the military clique in power. Since the clique interestwise is not basically linked to the workers, peasants and the other oppressed classes, as a petty-bourgeois class, it has its own tendencies, be they military or class. Because it cannot advance with the general social characters of the Ethiopian revolution, we have never taken the Dergue as the representative of the Ethiopian revolution. Regarding the Dergue's ascent to power and the political circumstances of that time, we have always clearly described.

One question that arises here is whether the Dergue is democratic or non-democratic. It is true that the Dergue due to the pressure from the Ethiopian masses has brought about some changes in the economic field or social field as well as on political questions from the preceding regime. This cannot be denied. In foreign relations too, again due to the pressure from the struggle of the Ethiopian masses, the relations the Dergue had with imperialism and other reactionary forces have been loosened. Especially if we come to the military aspect the aid from imperialism has been stopped, and the Dergue is now obtaining aid from socialist countries. The main political question here is on the leadership of the Ethiopian revolution. The fact that the Dergue's regime has, up to now been not only unable but also unwilling to find solutions to the different political questions in Ethiopia, the fact that the Dergue has been unwilling to find the correct solution to the just cause

of Eritrea all explain the political nature of the Dergue. Had there been in Ethiopia a truly democratic progressive organization in power it would not have been difficult to find just solutions to the different political questions and to the question of the struggle of the Eritrean people. At this time in Ethiopia, however, there is not a truly revolutionary political organization in power. Those who are in power are soldiers who banded together for different reasons, who carry out reforms haphazardly forced by the revolutionary storm of the Ethiopian people, and who follow some deceptive tactics to stay in power.

Because the establishment of a progressive, Marxist Leninist political party as the sole guarantor of whatever changes are to be made in Ethiopia, was one of the earliest demands of the democratic forces in Ethiopia, this has been a critical question facing the Dergue for a long time. In its campaign to answer this question, the Dergue has been repeatedly claiming for the last three years that preparations were underway to establish a 'workers party'. We on our part know very well that a revolutionary political party cannot be patched up in a year or two, or a month or two. Only a party created through the struggle of the Ethiopian masses can be a true party. There cannot be a political party created by the military power itself by pulling together and patching up elements from here and there. This being the case, the basic contradiction in the political power in Ethiopia is between the military who disguised in different colors, want to stay in power and those that represent the genuine aspiration of the Ethiopian people and the establishment of people's political power. In order to establish a truly peoples' political power of the Ethiopian people a truly revolutionary political organization must be in power.

Of the democratic forces or progressive forces that we know in Ethiopia the EPRP was one. Although we did not have any relations with it another group that claimed to be progressive was MEISON. The Eritrean revolution had direct contact with EPRP only. The Eritrean revolution's cooperation or struggle with EPRP as well as its stand on the latter was based on the principle of mutual cooperation and mutual support. Ever since the Dergue came to power the organization that became the Dergue's first target was the EPRP. Accusing this force sometimes of being an imperialist tool, sometimes of anarchism, the Dergue under the cover of "red terror" executed and jailed thousands of EPRP members in an effort to eliminate this fairly organized revolutionary force which had a role in the struggle to bring about a truly democratic power in Ethiopia. Instead of solving its contradiction with the EPRP politically the Dergue attempted to solve it by crushing EPRP militarily and still continue to do so.

Besides EPRP another group which was considered as "progressive" before the downfall of Haile Selassie's regime was the movement, MEISON. At the time of the Dergue's ascent to power MEISON held the view 'this power the Dergue is better than the previous regime' and through cooperation with the Dergue, one can bring about changes and on that basis, MEISON allied itself with the Dergue and both have been strug-

gling together up to now. As it became evident towards the end however that tactic or that kind of view was not correct. In the end, when MEISON started to make moves against the Dergue, to establish peoples power the Dergue saw the continued existence of MEISON as a political group, dangerous to its power and set to take measures to weed out MEISON. Finally the Dergue jailed thousands of MEISON members, executed hundreds. While executing some of the main leaders of MEISON the Dergue has jailed the rest. Other small groups, mainly those the Dergue used to refer to as the five Marxist groups, the fifth being MEISON) appeared after the Dergue's ascent to power. The one group that claims to be a Marxist and is said to have the biggest role is the military's so called the Revolutionary Flame (Abyotawi Seded) and belongs to the Dergue itself. It is this group that plays the decisive role. The remaining three so called Marxist' groups are, (1) Marxist-Leninist Revolutionary Organization (Emalerid) (2) The Proletarian League, and (3) Co-operative of Ethiopian Marxist Leninist Organizations (Echat).

Here, there is one basic truth that should not be slighted. That is, there cannot be four-five Marxist groups or Marxist lines. There is only one scientific socialist line. They can differ over a strategy in such a case when they differ on strategic questions, one should be right and the other should be wrong. If they differ over a tactic, however they can find ways that lead them to unity. If one asks, why were the different groups created as political groups following the Dergue's ascent to power? Why did they call themselves Marxist-Leninists and were established separately? Why couldn't they form a single Marxist-Leninist party? It means either they have different views on strategic questions or they have different views on the tactical solutions of the different political questions. Basically, what can primarily be said about these groups is that they are not Marxist parties that have the support of the Ethiopian masses. One can also say that they are groups established by opportunists who attempt to gain the support of the masses by conducting political activities under the shelter of the Dergue's power. In general, however it is the military power, the one that possesses the decisive political role, who, by crushing MEISON and using the small Marxist groups as a cover has been attempting to deceive the Ethiopian masses and hoodwink world opinion, by claiming that it will establish a proletarian party that is in conducting political struggles by uniting under one body the different Marxist Leninists, and still continues on this basis. What all this shows is that the main organizations that were said to be progressive in Ethiopia have been suppressed and weakened. All that is left is the military power alone; and one cannot say the military power can establish a political party and become the vanguard of the revolution of the Ethiopian masses. Never has this ever happened. In different countries perhaps men in uniform, who came to power could have waged struggles and brought about some reforms by portraying themselves as democratic and anti-imperialist. However such a regime can be called neither progressive nor democratic. In our surrounding, those regimes who, by severing their ties with imperialism

and strengthening their relations with socialist countries, are struggling against imperialism are quite a few

However this does not mean that the systems they have established are democratic systems of the masses—representing the workers, peasants and the other oppressed classes, safeguarding the economic, social or cultural interests of the same, and abolishing exploitation. The nature of the Dergue so far is also the same. Unless a truly mass power is established in Ethiopia, we cannot say there is a democratic government in Ethiopia. This sums up our views on the situation in Ethiopia and on the Dergue that is in power

The view given by those socialist countries, parties, or liberation movements who have taken a stand on the Dergue is, 'The regime now in Ethiopia is better than the former one; it has brought about changes in the country' there are democratic tendencies or elements within it, therefore to such a regime that has taken an anti-imperialist stand, it is better to support and encourage it rather than to stand against it so that it can develop along a positive direction and establish a truly peoples political power. Based on this view, they are supporting the Dergue. In our judgement, unless a political power that truly represents the Ethiopian masses is established inside Ethiopia, the support given to the Dergue is not only to suppress and harm the Ethiopian people but also will undoubtedly bring dangerous consequences to the political situation in the area. A political power that represents the Ethiopian masses must be established. Then and only then can the political problems of the different national movements inside Ethiopia, be it that of the Oromo or Tigray or other national movements and other democratic questions, and even that of the Eritrean question, find correct solutions in a democratic way. So long as the Dergue with its present views and attitudes remains in power however the Eritrean question will not get a peaceful solution, also the Ethiopian political problems will not get any solution. If the Dergue continues as it is now it will tend to be more chauvinistic and more militaristic and will be dangerous to the political situation in the area. Such experiences are not new to our surroundings. It is evident that many regimes, who initially struggled with anti-imperialist and nationalist colors, have in the end become bourgeois ruling-class systems, they have gradually alienated themselves from the socialist countries and other world revolutionary forces and are strengthening their relations with imperialism. At this time in Ethiopia too, there is a situation that can only lead to such a phenomenon. When a true change in political power comes, however, it is certain that basic changes can come. Our view on whether the Dergue is democratic or non-democratic is based on this.

Price: \$1.50