



ERITREAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT

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Date..... January, 31; 1980

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Declaration of the Central Committee of the EPLF concerning negotiations with the Ethiopian regime.

On Jan 29, 1980, President Numeiri of the Sudan declared that the Ethiopian military junta has given the Sudan a "green light" to act as intermediary between the Ethiopian junta and the Eritrean Resistance movement for a "peaceful settlement" of the Eritrean problem in the framework of an autonomous "Ethiopian" region.

While President Numeiri's declarations do not bear a new element as regards the conflict and the Ethiopian junta's stand on the Eritrean question, they have created a considerable confusion in the international public opinion. Being the party directly involved in the on going war and thus the solving of the problem directly affects, the Central Committee of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front would like to state its position on the just and correct solution.

Since coming to power in 1974, the Ethiopian military junta has frequently stated its "preparedness" to settle the Eritrean question by peaceful means. But it must be noted that experience has shown that whenever the Dergue raised the slogan concerning a "peaceful solution" it was a fraudulent tactic designed to deprive the Eritrean Resistance movement of its international support and gain time to consolidate itself militarily. It is interesting to note the timing of the various Ethiopian proclamations calling for a "peaceful solution" -the proclamations reflect acute political, economic and military crises the Dergue faces.

While the Ethiopian military junta has consistently sought and continues to seek a military solution of the Eritrean question it has (since June 1976) come out with its 9-point policy on Eritrea- a policy stemming from the chauvinist greed of "Greater Ethiopia" and other considerations such as its hold on Eritrea's outlets to the sea as well as its economic and strategic interests. In proposing its 9-point program of regional autonomy, the Dergue distorts history and poses as if it alone has the right to determine their own destiny.

What's new, therefore, in the Dergue's giving the "green light" to the Sudan to intervene in the negotiations (between the Eritrean Resistance movement and itself) for regional autonomy for Eritrea ? The answer is: NOTHING !

Again why is it now that the Dergue pretends to be "ready for negotiations" and gives the "green light" to the Sudan to act as mediator, whereas, intoxicated by the huge quantity of sophisticated arms it received from the Soviet Union and by its military "successes" over the last 18 months it was declaring that the only solution is a military one ? And wasn't the regime trumpeting loudly that it has finally, settled the question militarily and no such thing as the Eritrean question exists ? Now after 18 months of successive military campaigns to crush the Eritrean people's struggle, the Dergue (indirectly) admits that the problem exists. Such a turn around can only reflect the internal contradictions and weakness of the regime caused by the determined struggle of the Eritrean people, its inability to impose its will by force of arms and was designed to gain some breathing space (until, maybe, it receive new supply of armaments).



Central Committee
Eritrean People's Liberation Front
31.1.80

VICTORY TO THE MASSES !

The Eritrean people do not seek war. But they will, as in the past, fight with determination and courage until the noble goals for which they have been struggling for over 18 years are realized.

2. Withdraw its policy declaration of "regional autonomy" and accept to negotiate negotiations without preconditions.

1. Ascertain its readiness to resolve the Eritrean question peacefully and begin Ethiopian regime. The Ethiopian regime on its part must:

on ourselves. We reiterate our readiness to start negotiations with the destiny of the Eritrean people can only lie in their own hands. No one speaks Ethiopia has accepted to negotiate on the basis of "regional autonomy" the irrespective of the Sudanese president's statement to the effect that

after a week's seminar, declared that the only solution is a military one).

leadership in June 1978 (ironically, 24 hours later the Dergue, EPLF in its memorandum of April 1978 as well as by the Joint Supreme Political a correct and just solution of the problem. This position has been expressed by the time and again the EPLF and the Eritrean people have stated their position for

traditions. the Resistance movement and the Sudan and soothe its own military and political com- mediator ? With such a move, the Ethiopian regime intends to sever the ties between Menghistu and President Numairi in February 1979) now call on the Sudan to act as and refused to discuss the Eritrean question (as in the Monrovia Summit between Why would the Dergue, which has until quite recently been condemning the Sudan

the other hand it is preparing for another military offensive against the Eritrean people. While the Dergue on the one hand calls on the Sudan to act as mediator, on

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الجبهة الشعبية لتحرير اريتريا



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