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ABYOT



● *information bulletin  
of the ethiopian peoples' revolutionary party*

● *bulletin d'information  
du parti révolutionnaire du peuple éthiopien*

● *bollettino d'informazione  
del partito rivoluzionario del popolo etiopico*



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"Rise like lions after slumber  
In unvanquishable number-  
Shake your chains to  
earth like dew  
Which in sleep had fallen  
on you-  
Ye are many- they are  
few."  
(SHELLEY-1819)

MUCH ADO ABOUT THE UNITED FRONT OF ETHIOPIAN FASCISTS

Ever since the junta took state power, in an objective role of short-circuiting the revolutionary mass struggle, it has been faced with a relentless mass offensive that has refused to subside till democracy and socialism become, not peper-tiger proclamations, but vibrating realities. With each influx of the mass action the junta has been constantly using the not-so original dual tactics of repression and demagogy. To the demand for popular provisional government it responded by shooting and arresting progressives while at the same time promising that it will relinquish power "as soon as possible". It even set-up its own civilian advisory board composed of a pwerless group of indiviiduals. Land reform, nationalisat-ion and the like all died on paper-good proclamations but alien to the practice of the junta.

A year after the junta's accession to power there is absolutely no doubt amongst the masses that the junta is their enemy, that it is a fascist force serving the interests of the bourgeoisie and imperialism. With every passing day, even the sections of the petty-bourgeoisie that had hoped to get a sizable portion of the cake had abandoned the junta. If the junta rules it is thanks to terror and blind repress-ion, thanks to full imperialist backing. Massacred Eritreans, butchered Ethiopian trade unionists, peasants, students, progr-essive soldiers and oppressed nationalities have testified in blood that the junta is isolated, hated, that its 'socialism' is no different than the fascist variety, that it is being firmly resisted by the oppressed masses.

Isolated in the internal scene and more and more exposed as a repressive pro-imperialist force internationally, the junta has been flirting with one ploy after another in an effort to cover its true fascist face and appear as a progressive force with a sizable social base. In this respect

it has been toying with the idea of setting-up a "revolutionary Supreme Council" composed of the top junta members and well known pro-junta civilian bureaucrats. Perhaps the most recurring and feverishly pursued dream of the junta is to set-up its own exclusive and unique political party. This junta party has been in the planning stage for long. The junta thinks of it as a magic wand that will make all prejudices about its nature disappear into thin air.

The first time the junta announced its intentions of setting-up a unique party, sometime in the middle of last year, the reaction of the masses was one of indignant fury. The oppressed masses who had been calling for an end to military rule and the recognition of democratic rights (especially the right to organise) castigated this intention, and correctly so, as the junta's ploy to prolong its rule in a new form. The demand for the right to organise and form political parties thus become a much more burning demand than ever before. And to add to the junta's predicaments, the EPRP revealed its existence by distributing its political programme on August 31/1975. Teachers and workers, who held their congresses, attacked the whole idea of a unique government party as a cheap power-mongering tactic and anti-democratic action.

Shivering under isolation, fuming at the growing strength of the EPRP and the mass offensive, the junta has opted, as usual, to use a combination of force and demagogy. It is not as yet fully clear as to whether it wants to set-up a unique political party or a "united front" that will be paraded as a "democratic body regrouping progressives"! Anyway, the junta has set-up an "organising committee" whose president is a certain Haile Fida known for his notoriously reformist and opportunist stand. Characteristically, the organizing committee consists of a myriad of well-known opportunists ready to serve

the fascist junta. Be it a party or a front, there is no doubt that the body that will be set-up will be no more than a conglomeration of fascists and their boot-lickers. It will be no more than an instrument in the service of the junta which is desperately trying to legitimise its rule and control the militant mass organisations. Already the junta has dissolved arbitrarily CELU (confederation of Ethiopian Labour Unions) and announced its intention to form its own labour union organisation to be called "All Ethiopian Trade Unions". It has dissolved the student unions and is trying to form its own "youth organisation". It has dissolved militant peasant associations which have escaped its control and has put out a new law that will assure the control of the bureaucracy over the peasant organisations. The Teachers Association has been more or less dissolved and its leaders all put under arrest. The militant Ethiopian Women Coordinating Committee has an uncertain future. In short, the junta is trying to set-up puppet "mass organisations" that will give a certain degree of credibility to its claim that its fascist party or front has a certain degree of mass support.

Front or party the junta's organisation will represent no one but the junta and its hirelings. Its talk of democracy are no more than smoke screen tactics intended to dupe the international opinion and cover up the fascist and anti-democratic nature of the regime. There can be no democracy so long as the revolutionary elements are hounded and shot, so long as workers and peasants and the broad masses are slaughtered en masse, so long as Eritreans and oppressed nationalities in Ethiopia are subjected to chauvinism and genocide. It is clear that democracy under the junta will be empty and hallow, a democracy that will require absolute obedience to fascism and its slogans like Ethiopia Tikdem.

We have no doubt that the near future will see the birth of quite a few "organisations" who will be tripping over one another to ally with the junta. A front of all these will thus be a front of fascists and reactionaries with different names adopted for duping purposes. The Ethiopian masses and the EPRP oppose all this, they oppose and fight the junta, they oppose and fight its party/front, they firmly oppose and vow to fight its ambitions to prolong its life. It is natural that the Ethiopian masses will fight and oppose all those elements who help the junta in its devious aims. This is the correct position that flows from the principled belief in democracy and socialism, from the conviction that democracy is not a gift or a thing to be manipulated by the ruling class, it is a belief that manifests the unshakeable conviction of the post-February Ethiopians in the supremacy of the popular will and sovereignty over that of a handful of fascists and their hirelings or imperialist masters.

It is in this spirit that the last extra-ordinary congress of CELU passed the following resolution to show the workers' and mass opposition to the junta's unique political party:

"...the present historical task in Ethiopia is to carry the popular democratic revolution through to the end. This requires the independent, conscious, militant and organised participation of the oppressed classes. As such, the historical task of the proletariat is to mobilise the broad masses and coordinate their struggle. For such historical task, there can be no substitute or alternative to the party of the proletariat. Trying to find such a substitute or an alternative will undoubtedly end in total failure.

Such being the reality, and when the regime has suppressed and trampled upon democratic rights and condemned and persecuted the organisations-a party, which is formed by the government for its own interests with a handpicked individuals, who are neither elected by nor represent in any way the broad masses, is unacceptable. Such a party cannot fulfill the interests, needs and

"objectives of the oppressed masses, and as such cannot be supported by the oppressed masses in general and the proletariat in particular. Such a party is a devise of the few to stage a mock delivery of power to their pet (party) and to institutionalise themselves. Such a party could not safeguard and promote the rights and interests of the masses. On the contrary, as its very creation is meant to dupe the masses to submission, the proletariat vehemently opposes such devious aims and devices."

(resolution of the CELU Sept. 18-21 Congress/75)

CELU is against the junta's party. The Ethiopian masses are for democracy and against the junta's party. The EPRP is against the junta's party. All are against the junta and its rule. This being the case, whom does the junta and its appendages try to cheat with all this sweet talk about a party/front and revolution!!!

...../.....

ANOTHER MASSACRE IN WOLLO

The masses in Wollo, who have yet to recover from the wounds and grief resulting from the RUF's massacre committed by the junta some months ago, have now been subjected to another massacre in the hands of paratroop soldiers sent by the junta. The massacre occurred in the Borana region of Wollo. It is to be remembered that some time ago a feudalist had been active in the region, proclaiming himself king of Wollo and terrorising the peasants through armed violence. The junta, which still opposes the idea of arming the poor peasants, was satisfied only in giving warning to the peasants "to put an end to the

FLASH NEWS +FLASH NEWS+ FLASH NEWSJUNTA EXECUTES AROUND A HUNDRED PEOPLE IN SECRET!

In the first weeks of January an estimated number of around 103 opposition elements have been executed in secret by the ruling military junta in Addis Abeba. The execution, which has been shrouded with extreme secrecy by the publicity wary Dergue, has claimed the lives of a great number of military officers and soldiers who have been opposed to the Dergue. The majority of those executed are military men from various units-they are notably, the soldiers and officers who were arrested from the Army Engineering section when this unit was assaulted by the soldiers led by the late Aman Andom a year ago. The soldiers and officers of the Engineering unit were at the time calling for the establishment of a popular provisional government in the place of the Dergue (this demand is still the popular demand of the masses). Others executed are soldiers and officers who refused to go to war in the Afar and Eritrean areas and who had some months ago manifested their opposition to the junta's war by shooting in the air right in the heart of Addis Abeba. A sizable number of other soldiers and officers arrested for opposing the Dergue figure amongst those executed in secret. None of the arrested trade union leaders have been executed till

ANOTHER MASSACRE IN WOLLO!

The masses in Wollo, who have yet to recover from the wounds and grief resulting from the KutaBer massacre committed by the junta some months ago, have now been subjected to another massacre in the hands of paratroop soldiers sent by the junta. The massacre occurred in the Borena region of Wollo. It is to be remembered that sometime ago a feudalist had been active in the region, proclaiming himself king of Wollo and terrorising the peasants through armed violence. The junta, which still opposes the idea of arming the poor peasants, was satisfied only in giving warning to the peasants "to put an end to the

feudalist's rebellion or else..!". The unarmed peasants of the Borena region was thus caught between two evils-the junta and the armed feudal bandits. And when the junta finally decided to take a "determined action to wipe out the rebellion" it was to send paratroop soldiers who committed untold massacres of innocent villagers. The self-proclaimed king of Wollo has, quite leisurely, left the area and has now joined the ewiled Sultan Ali Mirah in the neighbouring countries.

200 MORE SOLDIERS SENT TO AMERICA FOR ANTI-PEOPLE TRAINING

A batch of 200 officers and non-commissioned officers from the various sections of the Armed Forces have arrived in Virginia, USA, for what is known to be an intense and accelerated course in intelligence and counter-insurgency. Though the Dergue had been sending officers to America for anti-guerrilla training, this is the first time that such a big number has been sent at once. Though the duration of the course is not known at present, it has been learnt that some of these officers are going to be trained in Sea Patrol and coast guarding. This is in line with the junta's decision to "effectively patrol the Red Sea" with the fast patrol boats it has received recently from Israel with a view of cutting the supply lines of the Eritrean Liberation fighters.

36 WORKERS KILLED IN THE AWASH PLANTATION FARMS

The EPRP has revealed in the January issue of its worker organ, LABADER, that 36 workers from the Awash (Asbe Teferi) farms have been shot dead by the junta's soldiers. Another 48 workers have "disappeared without a trace"-a usual euphemism of the junta for those killed in secret. All these workers had participated in the general strike called by CELU last September as a result of the junta's massacre of workers in Addis Abeba and elsewhere. LABADER has dedicated its January 6 (Eth. Cal.) to the martyrs of Awash.

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"COMMITTEE FOR THE RENAISSANCE OF CELU" ISSUES ITS PROGRAMME.

The above-mentioned clandestine committee has been active since last September when the junta proclaimed a state of emergency in Addis Ababa and undertook a massive campaign of arrests, torture and killing of labour union leaders, and all revolutionary elements. The Committee has, since then, distributed many clandestine leaflets exposing the junta and calling on the workers to intensify their struggle.

Following the publication, by the Committee, of the leaflet entitled "CELU's Call of Struggle" last December, the Committee for the Renaissance of CELU has now put out its own programme of action. The main points of the programme distributed at the end of December are:

1. to win through struggle all democratic liberties including the right to strike so as to raise the contribution of workers to the democratic revolution;
2. to struggle for a progressive labour law that will assure the workers their rights including social security; to have a minimum wage level proclaimed;
3. to struggle for the existence of CELU led by the workers themselves without any outside interference; to struggle for the release of all the arrested labour union leaders and workers;
4. to struggle for free education to the children of workers and medical services to working peoples;
5. to struggle for the right to assure the political education of workers and the right of workers to do political work amongst the masses;

The Committee has also declared that in order to realise these as well as other similar democratic objectives, it will cooperate with all mass organizations and organised or unorganised democratic forces.

Present political reality attests that the struggle of the Ethiopian workers to have their own labour union (CELU) and to assure their interests as well as the general interests of the oppressed masses continues in a more organised and determined manner. The Committee which is born out of the workers struggle is a testimony to this.

JUNTA'S "LABOUR LAW" OPPOSED BY WORKERS!

It had been reported that on December 8 the junta officially dissolved CELU (Confederation of Ethiopian Labour Unions) and announced its intention to set-up 'its own' labour union that it has christened as the All-Ethiopian Trade Union (AETU). The whole package of the dissolution as well as the intention to form a new general union was made via a new "Labour law" issued by the junta on this date.

The "Labour law" is the junta's answer to the persistent demands of the Ethiopian workers for a progressive labour law that will guarantee the rights and safeguard the interests of the workers. Such has been the demand of the various congresses of CELU including that of September 1975. In proclaiming the "labour law" the junta aims to achieve two things mainly:

- a) to claim demagogically that it has responded to the demands of workers and thereby to try to cover up the fierce anti-worker stand it has continuously taken;
- b) to dissolve CELU and legitimise its own puppet union by selling it through as part of a whole package of "labour law".

Needless to say, the mass media of the junta has hailed and applauded the junta's measures and assured all workers that 'they have at last become free'!! But the truth, as usual, is quite another thing. The whole gist of the junta's law was in fact carried in the statement through the Radio prior to the reading of the law in which the workers were told quite bluntly that "in socialist Ethiopia strikes are anti-worker actions"!

The Ethiopian workers have made their opposition to

The opposition of workers to the junta's anti-progressive measures continues unabated despite the fierce repression they are facing. The mass media of the junta, as well as our labour union activists are still languishing in the prisons and concentration camps. Many have been brought before courts after their arrest none have been brought before any of the junta's tribunals. Robust and honest courts are not to be expected.

The facility of the junta's law is not to be taken as a sign of its weakness. It is to be seen that it is not only the workers but also the Eritrean people who are being deceived. The Eritrean people have been declared as a separate nation. The Eritrean question can be settled only in a peaceful and democratic manner, by fully recognising the rights of the

the junta's actions and law quite clear via many channels including clandestine leaflets. On the whole, the workers oppose the law for not responding to their legitimate demands and for its being an anti-worker action which dissolved their own legitimate union-CELU. Specifically, they are opposed to the 'labour law' because:

- it doesn't set down minimum wage specifically;
- has denied workers the means that could guarantee them to be controllers of their produce or fruits of their labour;
- it denies workers the right to have any say in the conditions of work and the allocation (spending) of the profit (income) from their production;
- it denies workers the right to strike which is the weapon necessary to fight employers who violate joint agreements or engage in anti-worker actions;
- it forces workers, in cases where they have disputes with employers, to take their cases to courts where the judges are not appointed/elected by workers but are close to the employers;
- it denies workers the right to argue/fight for a wage that is commensurate to the rising cost of living and the profit obtained by the employers;
- it denies quite specifically the right to strike protesting low wages;
- it denies workers their basic democratic rights and assures their slave-like existence;
- it denies workers the right to freely form their own labour unions.

The opposition of workers to the junta's anti-proletarian measures continue unabated despite the fierce repression they are facing. The main leaders of CELU as well as numerous labour union activists are still languishing in the prisons and concentration camps. Many have been tortured. Months after their arrest none have been brought before any of the junta's "rubber-stamp" kangaroo courts.

### ERITREA: JUNTA'S FUTILE WAR

The war in Eritrea may no longer be in the headlines of many newspapers, as it was in February during the Asmara battle, but it grinds on with relentless ferocity, with immense human costs. In fact, of late, the war has intensified as the junta, gripped by the dream of a military victory, has heightened its bombardments and killings of villagers.

The war that the junta pursues in Eritrea is a futile war, it is a war that is doomed to meet disastrous defeat. For 14 years Haile Selassie had been chasing the ephemeral "military victory" but he has never found it. On the contrary, despite the huge displacement, despite inhuman massacres, bombs, chauvinist hounding and persecution, the Eritrean masses had persisted in their struggle, have become stronger than ever before. The Dewg, which does not realise that nothing can stop a people struggling for its inalienable rights, deluded itself into believing that just a few more massacres, just an intense Hitlerite chauvinist raving, just a little more bombs covered with demagogy will achieve what Haile Sellasie failed to realise in 14 years. Meeting the impregnable wall which is the determination of the Eritrean masses to struggle for their right to independence, the junta has become frantic and murderous. To the bombing of villages wholesale, it has added the odious chauvinist practice of witch-hunting all Eritreans and all those who speak Tigrigna. Impotent, it has resorted to shameful villification of a people, desperate it attempts to poison the fraternal feelings between the Eritrean and other masses.

The futility of the junta's war is not lost on anyone. But this does not decrease the need for us all to oppose it firmly and to express active solidarity with the Eritrean masses. The EPRP has been declaring consistently that the Eritrean question can be settled only in a peaceful and democratic manner, by fully recognising the rights of the



Eritrean masses to decide their destiny, by stopping the war and negotiating with the liberation fronts. The junta, which searches for another solution, will only meet defeat in the hands of the valiant Eritrean and Ethiopian masses.

"REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH MOVEMENT" PUBLISHES ITS OWN JOURNAL.

The Ethiopian Revolutionary youth, who are bearing the brunt of the junta's repression and propaganda campaign, have stepped up their anti-junta offensive with a concrete organisational campaign aimed at consolidating the youth movement and deepening its actions. With this in mind the revolutionary youth movement has started to put out a new clandestine revolutionary paper called "Abyotawi Wotat" (Revolutionary Youth).

It is to be remembered that the paper has, in its first issue, specified its aims as follows:

- to expose and fight relentlessly the feudo-imperialist system;
- to expose and fight the opportunist forces who have blindly allied themselves with the reactionary and fascist forces;
- to make an effort to point out the correct path and rally all those elements who sincerely may be following the wrong path of struggle due to the complexity and changes of/in the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-fascist struggle;
- in general, to serve as the voice of the revolutionary youth, to present the correct slogans in accordance with the struggle/situation, to attempt to point out the right course, to give vent to the anger and ultimatum of the revolutionary youth and to express the victories of their struggle.

True to its pledge the "Abyotawi Wotat" has, in its first issues, exposed the fascist junta, highlighted the struggle of the youth and exposed the handful of opportunist and disgraceful intellectuals, like Haile Fida and Senaye Likke, who have officially proven their determination to serve the junta in its attempt to prolong the life of its very terroristic regime.

N.B.

SPIC will, in the near future, present an English translation of some of the issues of the "Revolutionary Youth".

U. S. IMPERIALISM TIGHTENS ITS GRIP ON EHTIOPIA

The announcement by Washington of its decision to supply and renovate the Ethiopian Army with sophisticated weapons (see the report in the Los Angeles Times or the International Herald Tribune, January 21/1976) is one more evidence of the dependence of the junta on US imperialism and the neo-colonial nature of the regime/country. It is hoped that perhaps this additional event may put to rest all doubts about the pro-imperialist nature of the junta, doubts which have been cunningly planted/nurtured by the demagogy of the regime and certain of its apologists.

Officially the US or rather the Pentagon gives the junta an arms assistance of some US \$22 million as part of the overall military assistance package for every year. Though this aid is forthcoming the US has now officially decided to supply the junta with modern armament on a vast scale (tanks, jet fighters, patrol boats, artillery, etc.). The total amount of this deal is kept in secret but estimates put the figure at a US \$100 million dollars or more. As usual, the reason given by the US to justify its decision to arm the junta to the teeth is "the Soviet threat in neighbouring Somalia"!

The mechanism of control that US imperialism uses to enslave Ethiopia is multi-faced even though the role of aid (economic and military) play a very significant part. Thanks to the Military agreements that Haile Selassie signed with Washington (in 1953 and 1960 especially) the United States has been given the full right to construct bases on Ethiopian soil, to station its soldiers, use the airports, ports, etc. In compensation, the US has trained and equipped the Ethiopian Armed Forces and supplied military and economic credit and 'aid'. Fully neo-colonised by America, the Haile Selassie regime played a great role in pushing imperialist interests in the region, in Africa and gave big help for the American

plan to manipulate the OAU. It is in this respect that a reputed number of hundreds of CIA agents were given access in Ethiopia and planted as advisors within the OAU, ECA, the prime minister's office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Not to mention the "advisors" in the Ministry of Defense and the Public Security (political police) department.

Since the Dergue (junta) took over power the relations with U.S. imperialism had not slackened. In fact, as the aforementioned military "aid" attests the dependence on US imperialism has heightened. Let us look at this more closely:

a) none of the neo-colonial treaties (military especially) that tie Ethiopia to imperialism, especially US imperialism have been revoked or even revised by the junta. On the contrary new agreements have been signed.

b) not only is the Kagnev espionage base stationed in Asmara (Eritrea) not closed, but the junta discusses the advantages of giving the Americans new military bases in Gode (see Abyot no. 1). MAAG (Military Assistance Advisory Group) personnel still function all over Ethiopia, very well identified CIA agents still occupy important posts in the government bureaucracy and Armed Forces as 'advisors' or 'experts', hundreds of Ethiopian officers continue to flock to America to get anti-guerrilla training, etc.

c) the junta not only maintains the US dominance of Ethiopia but it even feels proud about this relationship. Its top leaders, such as Major Mengistu, continue to boast of the "heroic services rendered by Ethiopian troops in Korea and the Congo" during the wars there! More importantly, the junta's circular to the mass media has specifically prohibited "any direct attacks on America concerning its role in Ethiopia or elsewhere".

d) economically, the junta has launched its so-called invitation to foreign capitalists to invest in the strategic sectors of the Ethiopian economy. It has published a new

labour law that protects the interests of the capitalists. Restrictions on investment have also been lifted within the last month. Though the previous nationalisation only partially affected American firms (eg. Mobil was not nationalised but made to give 51% of the share to the regime) the latter have now a much more freer field for economic investment. The fact that the World Bank loan assistance which was US \$43.4 million for fiscal year 1974 increased to US \$75.5 million for fiscal year 1975 has vital implications concerning the relations between the Derg and America.

Leaving aside the Derg's earlier demagoguery of opposing "imperialism", perhaps many people have been confused by the news reports that the "United States refused to supply arms/ammunitions following the execution of Aman Andom and Haile Selassie's ministers and generals on Nov. 1974. To add to the confusion the junta and its scribes spread the news that "the Derg has bad relations with America and good ones with certain socialist countries"!! All this, and the EPRP has said through its organs, is no more than a cunning propaganda smoke screen exploded by the Derg. For, even though the Americans regretted the death of Aman Andom, the puppet they chose to stabilise the situation and calm the mass offensive, they did at no point stop supplying arms and ammunitions to the Derg. This has been revealed by the Committee of Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives when it sat on a session to examine the US policy and request for sale of arms to Ethiopia, on March 5, 1975. We shall quote below the relevant passages:

Edwar W. Mulchay (assistant secretary of state for African affairs)

"I might add, Mr. Chairman, there has been no interruption in meeting our commitment and agreements to the Ethiopian Government, whether the former regime, the transitional regime of General Andom, or the current regime which took power at the end of November."

Mr. Fascell: "I gather ammunition is in the pipeline?"

Mr. Bader: "That is correct."

Mr. Fascell: "So the present request, while it is urgent, is not that urgent?"

Mr. Bader: "There is some---"

Mr. Fascell: "Let us say duplication. That is why it has military implications but its greatest thrust is political."

Mr. Bader: "Both of the above, Mr. Chairman".

Mr. George W. Bader is Director of African Region of the office of International Security Affairs in the US Dept. of Defense while Senator D. B. Fascell is chairman of the subcommittee of International Political and Military Affairs of the Committee of Foreign Affairs).

Not only has the Derg all the time being receiving arms and ammunitions from America but the United States has also declared (see the June memorandum written by Gerald Ford to Kissinger-published by the Federal Register in 1975) that to arm the Derg "is in the national interest of the United States"!! Definitely, with each day passing the dependence of Ethiopia on imperialism is bound to be strengthened. Following the footsteps of the Americans, the West German and other imperialist powers have also stepped up the signing of credit aid, loan, economic agreements with the junta.

In the words of E. W. Mulchay: "the United States has traditionally had friendly, mutually beneficial (sic) relations with Ethiopia and important interests there, including the Kagnew communications station established at Asmara since 1942, access to Ethiopia's airfields and ports and a potential market of 26 million people. We believe that this long-time relationship is worth preserving. In recent years the strategic location of Ethiopia, close to the Middle East oil supplies and the Indian Ocean oil routes, has become increasingly important. Protracted instability in this second most populous

"country in black Africa could have adverse repercussions".

Hence, America will see to it (and it is seeing to it that the elements who cause this protracted instability are crushed. By arming the Derg to the teeth it facilitates and pushes the repression of the Ethiopian and Eritrean masses. It numerous CIA agents (the US officially admits that there are, at least, 1700 Americans in Ethiopia, excluding Eritrea, of whom 75 are MAAG officials) supply list of revolutionaries for the regime's security forces to arrest, torture and liquidate.

Taking this reality into consideration, it seems very difficult to entertain any doubt about the absence of anti-imperialism in the politics and options of the junta. U. S. imperialism and the fascist regime in Addis Abeba are the enemies of the Ethiopian and all other oppressed peoples.

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#### JUNTA MAKES PEACE WITH FEUDAL BANDITS.

In the last days of December, the junta had dispatched a "Reconciliation Committee" (Astaraki Committee) to the four administrative regions (Tigray, Wollo, Begemdir and Gojjam) in the North, where feudal bandits are busy harassing and killing the peasants whom the government refuses to arm. The committee first went to Gojjam and from all reports it seems to have met with success. The feudal bandits in Gojjam presented three conditions that the junta should fulfill before they lay down their arms. The conditions are: 1) no application of the land reform law in Gojjam, (2) the expulsion of Zematch students from Gojjam, (3) that the government stop referring to them as shiftoch (bandits. Reports indicate that the junta has accepted the conditions. The Committee, which later proceeded to Begemdir, was, however, ambushed near Metema by armed bands who killed 4 members of the committee and some soldiers accompanying them. The work of the committee has not been suspended. It is to be remembered that 21 awrajas in Begemdir are not to be affected

by the land nationalisation decree thanks to the revision of the law made by the junta. This reconciliation of the junta with feudal bandits falls within the anti-peasant logic of the Derg and, if fully realised, will enable the Derg to wholly concentrate its forces on the revolutionary opposition forces. In the Ethiopian countryside seething with intense class struggle the alliance between the landlords, the police and the bureaucracy has already cost the lives of many peasants and continues to be a great reactionary obstacle on the path of the peasants struggling for land and freedom (democracy).

#### REPRESSION AGAINST WORKERS.

LABADER, which is the workers' newspaper put out by the EPRP, continues to expose the repression to which the Ethiopian proletariat is being subjected. In its January issue (no. 22), LABADER has presented some more of the facts we present below:

-it is to be remembered that the junta had taken under state control the Anbessa Bus Company and dissolved the labour union, dispersed the union leaders and unleashed a campaign to divide workers on lines of nationality. In addition, the junta had prohibited the members from taking/using the money collected as payment or membership fees in the union; it was announced that all those who were getting a salary of more than Eth. \$285.00 are barred from raises. The junta's labour law, despite the propaganda, was painfully silent on the question of salaries and wages. However, the chief administrator of the company (who held the same post before the nationalisation), colonel Benyam is a well known bureaucrat bourgeoisie imposed on the workers on whom he uses his dictatorial power to the full. In such an arbitrary show of anti-worker power the colonel has appointed a soldier with certain technical knowledge at a salary of Eth. \$600.00. Workers who protested that this act is unjust in view of the fact that they had the necessary technical knowledge but are kept without improvement or wage increment. The colonel has threatened the workers, "you are in our hands", to work obediently or else be punished. Labour law or not, the workers have found out that they have no protection from the actions of the bureaucrat/manager/military officer.

-the owner of the Fetán Transport Company, Mamo Yinberberu, has fired 25 workers and given notice (warning) to 22 others. He also refused to respect the joint agreement signed with the union, has refused to give workers any pay raise. He has also

bribed the security police ('gift' of E\$20,000!) and caused the arrest of militant workers and union activists; Tadesse Tessema, the union president, is thus arrested just like the union secretary Gebreyes Shafe.

-Two workers, Asrat Shiferaw and Kassa Woldu, have been fired without any notice by the Akaki Iron works.

-of the eight workers at the Cinema Ras Total (petrol), the owner has fired five who were leaders or active supporters of the Total Stations union.

-Sgt/major Tamrat Bayu, who was sent to investigate the situation in the Archuispo company whose Italian owner has fled, has stolen the money of the factory, arbitrarily promoted or appointed workers and fired several others. Many of the fired workers are those who know about the financial situation of the factory and are as such dangerous for the Major's embezzlement operation. Among the expelled workers figure the secretary of the labour union there—a woman worker who knew the financial situation (income/expense).

The above cases are duplicated each day and in several factories. The firing of workers without reason, notice, compensation has been accentuated in view of the fact that the workers who are thus expelled have no remedy but to file their case with a committee composed of the employers and their men. In addition, workers are subjected to an intense campaign by the junta aimed at dividing them on lines of nationality. This odious attempt is a big threat to the maintenance of the united class actions of the proletariat. The junta divides and represses the workers, it has dissolved CELU and strives to organise a fake election to make workers 'elect' leaders for the union that the junta intends to establish. The developing labour unrest (demand for the release of the arrested workers and trade union leaders, demand for the setting-up of a minimum wage scale and the right to freely organise) shows, however, that the proletariat is combative, vigilant and united and has not been duped or repressed into submission.

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ABYOT will present in the near future a translation of

LABADER (no. 20) which exposes the junta's labour law and its anti-worker provisions.

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"Voice of the Air Force" and the Struggle of Democratic Soldiers.

The struggle of rank and file soldiers and progressive officers played a significant part in the February revolution. Even though, this movement has been recuperated there are still persistent indications that the struggle is continuing within the armed forces for a democratic and socialist society. The number of progressive officers from the Engineering Unit, Army Aviation, Body Guard, etc executed by the Derg testify to this. Truly, the democratic current within the soldiers has a long way to go; but there is no denying that the continuing mass struggle is accentuating the polarisation within the armed forces itself. Beyond and above the rumors of coup attempts and internal power struggle within the Derg, there is an agitation, weak but persistent, within the armed forces for the same demand as the popular masses. Despite the bloody purges the soldiers and democratic officers have made their opposition heard. Such is the case of the anti-junta leaflet distributed by members of the Army Division fighting in Eritrea, in which they expose and oppose the junta's war there. Below, we present a translation of the leaflet distributed clandestinely by the democratic elements within the Ethiopian Air Force. Though much of the biting irony and forceful tone of the document is lost inevitably through translation, ABYOT believes that it will give a good insight of the developing current within many units of the Armed Forces and show the isolation of the junta.

"VOICE OF THE AIR FORCE"  
ONE CAN'T REPEATEDLY CHEAT THE AIR FORCE

The member of the Air Force, united with the oppressed Ethiopian masses (the proletariat, peasantry, progressive students and teachers, oppressed soldiers) has played a significant role in the popular revolution that has been going on since February 1974.

The Air Force still struggles and will continue to do so.

During this time (February-ABYOT) the Air Force, along with the struggling comrades, demanded long before the Derg proclaimed its government-major rights including:

1. democratic liberties to the oppressed masses;
2. the establishment of a revolutionary provisional government.

However, since the Derg was obsessed with power it swore that "the military will return to the barracks as soon as the people are organised and we hand them power". The Derg also started to propagate that to allow democratic liberties will give the reactionaries the chance to dupe the people. This propaganda of the Derg was able to dupe for a short period of time. Meanwhile, the Ethiopian masses, who had understood the necessity of democratic rights in order to organise the people, strengthened their struggle demanding full democratic rights (free speech, press, freedom to organise, assemble) for the oppressed, and dictatorship over oppressors; the people struggled to be organised by intellectuals who come from their midst (who have the masses' confidence) and to take over power. The Air Force, on its part, demanded the adoption of socialist democracy.

However, the Derg, though it still continued to trumpet that "we will go back to the barracks as soon as the people get organised to take power",:

1. proclaimed anti-democratic, anti-organisation and counter-revolutionary laws that denied the basic rights that are crucial for organisation;
2. based on these proclamations it massacred many progressives and arrested countless others;
3. instead of organising the unorganised, it dissolved existing mass organisations (CELU, Teachers' Association, students unions, peasant associations), arrested or killed their leaders
4. within the Air Force it (Derg) arrested the progressives like Yigezu;
5. it killed progressive students and Zematchoch whom it villified as "reactionaries"; it arrested them en masse;
6. ignoring the opposition of the Air Force, it went ahead to squander money on a square (the "Revolution Square" which was built by the junta at huge cost-ABYOT) while the masses suffered from the famine; it, again,

ignoring the opposition of the Air Force, spent money on new uniforms for soldiers in an effort to buy their allegiance;

7. it has unleashed its security agents over the masses and imposed on them a fascist regime like Franco of Spain and Salazzar of Portugal.

Understanding this, refusing to be a colonialist over one's own peoples, affirming its oneness with the masses, the Air Force has said NO to the junta's rule. However, the Derg believing wrongly that the Air Force will not bother about the masses once its interests are kept, considering us as mercenaries, as people who do not care about the masses, it (Derg) tries to allege that the opposition of the Air Force is motivated by "the internal disagreements between officers and others". And with an underestimation of the Air Force, the Derg speaks separately to officers and others (in the A.F.-ABYOT) acting as a mediator between husband and wife. All this is to cheat us like innocent children the Air Force that has fully opposed their (the Derg's) rule.

Hence, from now on, as we have fully understood the situation and as we love our country and class comrades more than any stage character (clown) we affirm that the Air Force will never be tricked by the sweet words and fake smiles of a hundred actors of the likes of Major Sisaye (he is a top member of the Derg and a former Air Force officer known for his ultra) fascist tendencies-ABYOT).

We shall deal below with the reasons for the present attempt (by the Derg) to divert our attention from national issues to inter Air Force ones by analysing the origin, nature and solutions for the contradictions in our midst. At present, while we have risen up to oppose the fascist proclamations made, in the name of the revolution, against the masses and the Air Force, Major Sisaye and likes are flocking here (to the Air Force base at Bishoftu-ABYOT) uttering one nonsense after another in the belief that the maintenance of the internal contradictions in the Air Force will be advantageous to them.

This means that they intend to practice their divide and rule techniques by making sure that the internal problems keep us from following the crimes they commit at the national level and push us to concentrate on battling within ourselves. Now that we have risen up understanding the suffering and injustice prevailing in the country and realised that the oppression and injustice we suffer inside (the Air Force) is just a part, and a small one at that, of the overall fascist oppression existing in the country, and now that we have up together with our class comrades-workers, peasants, progressive intellectuals and students-they (the Derg) want to separate us from our class brothers, to make us "reconciled" even for a short time and to make us continue to bomb and support their fascist massacres (of the masses) by making us believe that the

other sections of the oppressed masses are as "free" as we in the Air Force. This attempt reminds us of the attempt made by General Mulugeta (chairman of the High/Military/Security Commission, a reactionary organisation set-up by the then prime minister Endalkatchew Makonen to control the soldiers' movement-AB) to push us to sacrifice ourselves and the people in defence of a monarchy that the masses hated and wanted removed. Similarly, the Derg at present is trying to make us support it while the masses want it removed and hate it (the Derg). We have fully realised that this attempt is a trap to make us act against the masses!!

The contradictions that exist within the Air Force are, at present, as follows,:

1. between officers and others;
2. between soldiers (officers included) and civilian employees of the Air Force;
3. between the Air Police and Airmen, between technicians and cadets.

Of all these, the first one is primary and antagonistic. And this is because the officers and the others stand for quite different and contradictory interests. If one satisfies his interest it will inevitably be at the expense of the others.

The officers, with the exception of a few progressive ones, consider the other soldiers as human animals (beasts) employed to carry out their orders. They consider them ignorant, stupid, incapable of thinking or giving opinions. On the other hand, the officers consider themselves as angels, as learned (philosophers), as those whose orders would always be obeyed because all that they say and do are at all times and places correct, as those whose words are always to be believed as they never "lie"!! If an officer eats with other lower-rank soldiers in one mess hall, if he sleeps with them in one compound...he considers himself degraded/profaned. If soldiers with lower ranks enter the officers' mess hall the officer considers himself and the mess hall profaned. Such is the Air Force officer, the human angel living separately in a special compound. This is the reality that no amount of denial can hide or wish away.

In a society divided into classes, the ruling and oppressed classes have their own distinct outlooks (ideologies). While the 'ruling class in our Force considers us, the oppressed, in the manner described above, we the oppressed have also our own outlooks on the rulers/officers. We say the officers are human, we say that they (despite their decorations and baseless self-aggrandisement) are in many cases inferior to lower rank soldiers be it in work or knowledge. We say that the lower-rank soldiers are as human as any other. With the exception of a few paid agents and reactionaries, we all

believe this to be true. In fact, officers are reactionary and contra change. As such, lower-rank soldiers oppose the divine respect accorded to these reactionaries and demand the abrogation of the special privileges accorded (hospital, lodging, assignment, gasoline) to these anti-change officers. The soldiers say that to obey anti-revolution officers is to be counter-revolutionary oneself. This is correct. Hence, the lower-rank soldiers (NCOs) say: "let the angels who do want to bear our hardships and who do not want to eat on the same table with us return to the country of the angels"!! They say: "let us administer ourselves by electing for ourselves and by ourselves those who have the capability, the dedication and the knowledge to lead us".

This contradiction cannot be solved separately from the objective situation that exists in Ethiopia. It can only be solved, and to forget this is foolish/utopian, when a genuine socialist revolution is made in Ethiopia and only when the present army (structure/set up, etc) is destroyed and a new one built. Aside from the contradictions with the officers all the other contradictions within us are now antagonistic, they can be solved in a democratic way.

With the exception of a few reactionaries, all of us NCOs, civil employees and progressive officers within the Air Force demand the implementation of the following demands so that we can solve our own minor differences and struggle together with our class comrades for liberty, equality and a scientific socialist revolution:

1. Demissew and his likes (officers) who say that they have gone to the S. Union to learn how to form a political party should stop declaring that "democratic liberties should not be accorded to the masses during revolutionary times." They should stop their deceitful actions because we know fully that they want to cling to power under the pretext that the "masses are not still organized."

We know (and we did not have to voyage to the Soviet Union to know this) that "a revolution without an organisation and an organisation without democratic liberties" cannot just come about. "Revolution is a festival of the oppressed", and we know quite clearly that popular democracy is necessary (crucial) during the time of revolution. HENCE WE DEMAND THAT DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES BE ACCORDED TO THE OPPRESSED MASSES: (emph. added)

2. We have heard that these persons taking courses in the S. Union have erased from Marxist books what Marx and Marxists have said on (a) the need to destroy the army set-up by the oppressing classes and build a new (people's) army and (b) the incapability of soldiers to lead the socialist revolution. Our intelligent philosophers(!)

have made this revision on the ground that "Ethiopia's revolution is different from all other revolutions"! Bravo socialists!! But this is not socialism.

WE HAVE REALISED THAT THE DERG'S REGIME IS NOT SOCIALIST BUT FASCIST. If it was not so how does one account for, at least, the problems caused by the reactionary officers within the Air Force? The workers, peasants, progressive students and intellectuals as well as oppressed soldiers are struggling to recuperate the rights that the Derg forcefully deprived them. The masses are struggling in an organised manner. Hence, the Derg should immediately stop its attempts to make us believe that the soldiers are the vanguard of the socialist revolution, and it should cease its attacks against the struggling masses whom it accuse of "greedily vying for power" or "of sabotaging the revolution". It is the Derg that is greedily vying for power, it is the Derg that is sabotaging/reversing the revolution. Power belongs to the masses and it is the masses who are demanding to have power, to have what is justly theirs. It is the Derg that is vying for power and to deny this or blame the people instead of the Derg is like blaming the mother for the father's mistakes.

3. The Derg should stop telling us to obey "our superiors" by claiming that "popular discipline should exist" or that "in the Soviet Union also there are those who are superior and those who obey orders". The Derg dries for discipline, while it assigns to high positions reactionaries like Demissew, officers who were arrested during the February Revolution, anti-revolution officers like the Air Force general and the agents of the C.I.A. Popular discipline can exist and popular decisions passed in a democratic way can be put in practice only when our superiors are officers who are progressive, who are elected democratically and whose interests are not contradictory to ours. Otherwise, we say NO. We refuse to conspire and act against the revolution and the revolutionaries by allying with counter-revolutionaries!!

4. WE DEMAND THE REJECTION OF EXPANSIONISM THAT THE DERG TRUMPETS and all such blatant declarations. Major Sisaye's statement that "the Derg is not opposed to Djibouti's independence but will not allow it to be member of the Arab League" is an expression of such expansionism. By independence we understand the right of the people to decide its destiny freely, and thus Sisaye's statement not only manifests expansionism but also a contempt for (underestimation of) intelligence/understanding.

5. To proclaim one fascist law after another over the people and to slaughter individuals who present revolutionary ideas/options and at the same time to declare "tell us your problems, ask us questions" is no more than an invitation to present ourselves (sheepishly) for sacrifice. Hence, if democratic discussions are really desired, all the

present anti-democratic, anti-people and anti-organisation proclamations must be repealed/revoked. Prisoners like Yigezu Benti (Air Force), the labour union leaders, the teachers' association leaders and progressive Zematch students should be immediately released.

6. PEASANTS AND WORKERS SHOULD BE ARMED so that the revolution can be victorious, so that they can control their localities and so that they can put an end to the activities of feudal bandits. LANDLORDS SHOULD BE DISARMED. The Derg should stop asking us to bomb whole villages on the ground that there are bandits.

7. WE DEMAND THE IMMEDIATE DISSOLUTION OF THE DERG AND THE FORMATION OF A REVOLUTIONARY POPULAR PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT MADE UP OF EXISTING POLITICAL PARTIES, LABOUR UNIONS, PEASANT ASSOCIATION, TEACHERS' UNIONS, STUDENTS UNIONS AND OPPRESSED SOLDIERS.

The struggle of the Oppressed Soldiers and the Broad Masses will be Victorious!!!

(NB- the above document was distributed at the end of NOV/75)

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FAMINE CONTINUES TO RAVAGE THE MASSES.

It has now become adequately clear that the military regime pays only lip service to the seriousness of the famine situation in Ethiopia (especially in the Bale and Hararghe regions where thousands of people are affected and there has been deaths according to reports of UN agencies) while practicing a Haile Sellasie type attitude to the plight of the masses. As the Air Force document cited above indicated the regime spent huge sums of money on "prestige projects" like the building of squares for celebrating a non-existent military revolution! Huge sums of money are still being spent on similar ventures like the building of parking spaces for the forthcoming African cup football match in Addis. More significantly, the regime has appropriated the famine aid money for buying bullets and has used huge trucks sent for transporting food to carry troops to war-areas. It has also used the famine situation for political purposes and blocked the food aid from reaching the masses in Eritrea in an effort to make the masses act versus the Fronts, etc. Meanwhile, many are perishing from a famine that can easily be averted.

IRAN-OMAN: SAME COMBAT, CERTAIN VICTORY

The barbarian Iranian regime has once again bathed in the blood of Iranian patriots and Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries by arbitrarily executing them in defiance of the world-wide protest. One another level, Iranian aggressor troops continue to bomb and massacre Omani villagers in a futile effort to liquidate the Omani revolution and the PFLO. The Anglo-Iranian campaign which started on 16/10/75 to "cut the supply lines of the PFLO" continues and despite its failure has caused immense suffering to the Omani masses.

Iranian masses and Omani masses have the same combat, the same objectives. In fact, all revolutionaries within the region have a common struggle against a common enemy--imperialism and its puppets in the region. The strategic importance of the Arabian Gulf and the passage for the oil tankers has made this region a hot spot for imperialist attempts of hegemony. U. S. imperialism, which in the present post-Vietnam period finds its wings somewhat clipped, is depending more and more on the local puppets to bolster one another through direct military assistance. (A similar thing is happening in Angola with the intervention of Zaire and South Africa). The Iranian intervention in Oman, the intensified and relentless repression against Iranian revolutionaries, the setting-up of US military bases in the Gulf area and Diego Garcia, the plots against South Yemen, the colonialo-reactionary

machinations in Djibouti, the imperialist action in Ethiopia, all fall within this overall imperialist offensive to keep the region under its control, to liquidate the revolutionary movements (Lebanese, Palestinian, Iranian, Omani, etc.).

Same combat. Same enemies. True, but this necessitates also a much more close, a principled and firm coordination of struggle. It calls on the revolutionaries in the region not only to unite their own forces but also to achieve a degree of viable coordination and unity with other progress-



ive and revolutionary forces in the region. The developing class struggle at the local, regional and international level calls for this. The crying need for a proletarian party, for a united front at all levels is felt more than ever before.

The EPRP has absolutely no doubt that the masses in the region will defeat imperialism and its puppets and will frustrate the wily machinations of the imperialist. The victories of the PFLO, the sacrifices and continuing struggle of Iranian revolutionaries, the cornering of colonialism in Djibouti, the developing struggle of the Eritrean and Ethiopian masses, of the North Yemeni masses,...coupled with the crisis that the imperialist countries are going through gives concrete base to this conviction. Specifically, the struggle of the Iranian and Omani masses assumes a great regional and international significance. Revolutionary solidarity with their struggle is imperative not only for those who want to see a liberated Iran or Oman but for all those who want to see the Gulf area, the Red Sea Coastal countries, the Middle East freed from imperialist and Zionist oppression. The EPRP pays homage to the revolutionaries executed by the Iranian buther regime and calls on all the revolutionary and democratic forces to express their solidarity in an active and concrete manner. Victory over imperialism and the local reactionaries is certain and internationalism, principled unity, relentless class struggle and revolutionary vanguard leadership will assure it.

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ABYOT is the information bulletin of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party published by the Foreign Section with a view of presenting the truth about the country, in order to inform the progressive world the continuing struggle of the proletariat and masses, to express active solidarity with the struggle of the working class and oppressed peoples in other places. ABYOT means Revolution and was formerly the name of one

of the organs of the EPRP published inside Ethiopia (which is now called LABADER or Proletariat).

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