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Zena

Newsletter of Ethiopian Student Union of North America (member of WWFES)

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Editorial

Facing such ferocious, powerful and multiple enemies, the Ethiopian revolution will be and cannot but be very complex, protracted and tortuous, with many twists and turns. (Resolution of the 25th Congress of ESUNA, August 1977).

Events in the last eight months have more than confirmed this thesis and there is no doubt future events will confirm this further.

Soviet social imperialism is daily tightening its neo-colonial grip on Ethiopia. Close to 20,000 Soviet backed mercenaries are stationed in Ethiopia. Out of these 17,000 are reported to be Cubans who have come in under the oft-repeated noxious pretext of preserving the "territorial integrity," and rescuing "the revolution."

There is no mystery as to why the Soviets have stepped up their penetration of Ethiopia. In their contention with U.S. imperialism for world domination, the social imperialists are frantically running around to control strategic areas such as the Horn of Africa. It is to squeeze out the other super-power in every region, to be in a better position to launch a new world war. In the meantime the soviet revisionists want to extinguish the peoples revolutionary struggle in Ethiopia and to use the country as a stepping

stone to throw their weight around and commit further aggression in other parts of Africa.

The Ethiopian military regime and its revisionist masters are literally intoxicated by 'successes' achieved in the Ogaden. In cities and villages there is bloodbath everywhere and terror reigns supreme. There is a large scale preparation to wage a brutal campaign against Eritrea and/or to threaten the liberation fronts into capitulation. But we are confident that this will come to no good end for the Eritrean people, who have waged seventeen years of relentless struggle will not be cowed by such counter-revolutionary schemes. It is characteristic of all reactionary forces to pose as indomitable. This false posture of the imperialists and the military regime will in no way change their real essence, that all reactionaries, in the final analysis, are paper tigers.

The vicious enemies the Ethiopian revolution faces indeed complicate the struggle and make it more protracted. Such a situation, of course, demands of the revolutionary forces to make a scientific assessment of the objective situation to defeat vicious enemies such as Soviet social imperialism.

At present the Ethiopian revolution is at a critical juncture.

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Eritrea: New Czars Step Up Agression



The heroic struggle of the Eritrean people which has raged on for the last 17 years is still advancing in spite of the intrigues and conspiracies of U.S. imperialism, Soviet social imperialism and the Ethiopian military regime. At present the ELF and EPLF, who control almost all of Eritrea but for a few garrisons and cities such as Assab and Asmara, are gradually forging unity.

The resounding victories delight all friends of the Eritrean people while they have struck deep fears in the hearts of the Mengistu regime and its imperialist backer.

It is to be remembered that the military regime's savage policy of seeking a military solution to the Eritrean question is a continuation and further escalation of the same policy under Haile Sellassie. The only difference under the self-styled "socialist" regime is that the same policy is couched in "Marxist" phraseology. This was the case when the junta was under U.S. imperialism and still remains the case when the junta has changed its master to Soviet social im-

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Editorial (con't. from page 1)

Like all previous revolutions who have been crowned with victory, if the Ethiopian revolution is to achieve final victory, it has yet to give scientific answers to some cardinal questions. The correctness or incorrectness of the ideological and political line decides everything. This is no mere rhetoric, for its relevance to the Ethiopian revolution is more evident now than ever before. To have an overall correct line it is imperative that revolutionaries approach a society from a materialist point of view. The nature of the society, the strategic tasks of the revolution, the stage and character of the revolution and its motive forces must be clearly defined. The attitude and policy towards the question of friends and

African Liberation (con't. from page 7)

ism. The Soviet social imperialists come under the sign board of supporting liberation struggles and try to lull the vigilance of the people. Not only do they use demagoguery and deceit to infiltrate liberation movements, the greed of social imperialists is so intense that they use mercenaries for their neo-colonial scheme as was manifested in Angola, Zaire and Ethiopia.

The desire of the two superpowers to dominate the world is daily being expressed by their contention at strategically important areas like southern Africa.

It is against these two ferocious enemies that the African people are struggling. At present the banner of opposing imperialism and colonialism is being held aloft by the people of Azania, Namibia, and Zimbabwe. The Azanian people have stood up against the racist Vorster regime in a self-denying manner as they did in Sharpsville in 1960 in protest of the "pass law" and in 1976 in Soweto. The reactionary scheme of separate development of the Bantustan and the harassment, incarceration and slaying of prominent Azanians like Steve Biko and Robert Sobukwe of the Pan-Africanist Congress has not extinguished the raging flames of Anti-Apartheid struggle of the Azanian people. The Vorster regime is also being dealt with arms by the Namibian people and SWAPO. The Namibian people have liberated the major portion of their land from illegal occupation by South Africa.

The Zimbabwean people are also dealing blows to imperialism and the racist regime of Ian Smith. The armed struggle that was started in 1966 is still continuing with vigor despite intense military and political repression by Ian Smith. Of late realizing the hopelessness of his case, Ian Smith has resorted to talk of detente, peaceful transition to majority rule and other such things, to lull the intensity of the armed struggle. However, the Zimbabwean people and the Patriotic Front are persevering in the armed struggle.

In celebrating African Liberation Day we note that the African people are standing up against imperialism, social imperialism, colonialism, racism and Zionism. We also note that the struggle of the African people against the two superpowers will be long and drawn out and will require a united action. We are confident that the African people will still win greater victories against the two superpowers. □

enemies of the revolution must be deduced from the analysis of the above in order to avoid confounding friends and enemies, to isolate real and principal enemies and to unite with all the forces that can possibly be united. Here no ambiguities, equivocations and phrase-mongering would do.

Such are some of the tasks that Ethiopian revolutionaries face at present. Of course there are no hard and fast solutions to these problems. The road to the achievement of the solutions requires serious study and investigation. It requires taking full account of past revolutionary experiences of all lands, those with similar conditions in particular; and the specific character of the Ethiopian revolution.

The question of the Soviet Union is also a problem that needs a scientific approach. At present one's attitude towards the Soviet Union is not a minor question. It is a question of being able to distinguish real friends from real enemies, especially those who come with "honey on their lips" and "murder in their hearts".

Only when the Soviet Union is understood as a blood-thirsty imperialist super-power can one courageously stand-up against and fight it to the finish.

From the strategic point of view, to understand the Soviet Union as an imperialist superpower means to understand its decaying and moribund nature. It means, to recognize it as an imperialist power which is besieged by internal and external problems and which is increasingly being isolated and with no future. Hence it follows from this that if people take the initiative into their own hands, have faith in themselves, unite with their numerous friends both at home and abroad, dare to struggle and dare to win, final victory will definitely be assured against Soviet social imperialism.

From the tactical point of view, to understand the Soviet Union as an imperialist superpower—"socialist in words and imperialist in deeds"—means to understand its deceptive, aggressive, bellicose, treacherous, and ruthless nature. It means, to recognize it as an imperialist superpower which has amassed a large quantity of sophisticated death machines plus millions of its own soldiers and thousands of foreign mercenaries at its disposal with the experience of encroaching upon the territory, independence and sovereignty and extinguishing the peoples struggle from Czechoslovakia to Angola, Zaire and the Horn of Africa. Hence an enemy to be taken quite seriously. No wavering or half-heartedness would change its ferocious nature and make it benevolent. In fact, it will do just the opposite. From here it follows that it is the type of enemy that must be exposed politically and ideologically in a consistent and an all-round manner. Militarily it will not do to anticipate quick victory, to engage in decisive battles in an adventurous manner. In the face of such an adversary one can only prepare for a long and protracted struggle, defeat the enemy piecemeal by striking at its weakest points and accumulate strength for the final victory.

In the final analysis the problems Ethiopian revolutionaries face still boil down to creatively applying the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism and especially the Thought of Mao Tsetung to the concrete realities of Ethiopia. □

Eritrea (con't from page 1)

perialism.

Not so long ago, the revisionists, in particular the New Czars and their Cuban stooges, claimed to be "friends" and "natural allies" of the Eritrean people. Today the same Eritrean movements are waging a just war against the same repressive regime which is engaged in an unjust campaign of genocide.

But where do the revisionists who once claimed to be such great "friends" stand now? It is an open secret that not only do the Soviets and their cohorts laud the junta to the skies as "socialist" and Marxist-Leninist" but they shamelessly hurl abuses and slanders at the valiant struggle of the Eritrean people. According to these revisionists the Eritrean struggle is now a struggle of "secessionists" (Castro) who are "agents of international imperialists and Arab reactionaries" (Pravda).

Like all reactionaries the revisionists too employ the dual stick-and-carrot method to subvert the peoples revolutionary struggle. For example, the Cubans, while denouncing the Eritrean struggle on the one hand, they have been putting on a pretentious air of "concern" on the other, in an attempt to disarm the Eritrean combatants. According to certain western reports (Observer, 3/12/78), Cuba's vice president Carlos Rafael Rodrigues had said that Cuba had helped the Eritreans "in their fight for self-determination" and that Cuba would not allow the Derg to use Cuban troops to put down the "Eritrean liberation movement". He also added "Eritrea is an internal problem of the Ethiopian revolution" and hence a "political" solution should be sought.

The "concern" of the revisionists and their seeming interest in negotiations can only stem from ulterior motives. Of course, as a matter of principle, one should not oppose negotiations since it is an important method of struggle. But what the Soviets and Cubans seek in "negotiations" and "political" solutions is something diametrically opposed to the fundamental aspirations of the Eritrean people who have waged a long and bitter armed struggle. There are negotiations and negotiations. But what the revisionists want is a negotiation under their supervision and dictate. Their "political" solutions and "negotiations" are baits designed to lure the liberation fronts to compromise in the interest of Soviet social imperialism. It is an old reactionary trick of waving the olive branch with one hand while drawing the sword with the other.

Facts show that the revisionists are mortal enemies of the Eritrean people. Already over 4,000 Cuban troops have been airlifted to the besieged city of Asmara. Ethiopia's commercial planes were busy airlifting Cuban mercenaries from Angola to Eritrea. Under the supervision of Soviet social imperialism an air strip is being built for Migs in the city of Makalle, which is located only 80 miles from the southern border of Eritrea. In Gondar and Axum supply depots are being built. To accommodate light reconnaissance planes smaller air strips are also being built on Dahlak Islands. In Assab an army, navy and air force base are being hastily

constructed. The overall military operation is of course being supervised by Soviet social imperialism.

Furthermore, Soviet tank and artillery experts have been busy working with the junta in preparing the offensive against Eritrea. For instance, during the battle for Massawa, Soviet ships were reported to employ BM-21 multiple rocket launchers in an attempt to break the siege of the city.

At present the junta's policy of repression have been further escalated with the stepped up support of soviet social imperialism. According to a recent EPLF spokesman (Reuter, 11 April), soviet-built Mig jets were dropping napalm and cluster bombs on villages near Asmara and Massawa in an attempt to recapture the strategic road linking the two cities. As the spokesman further pointed out "the Mig jets have been bombing the suburbs of Massawa...and the villages of Nefasist and Gimda with the express purpose of "trying to demoralize the civilian population" and to release the liberation forces' strangle hold on Asmara.

But the Eritrean people have not been cowed by such a pressure. Militarily, they have already captured several soviet-made tanks and downed many planes. They have also foiled several attempts by Mengistu's as well as the Soviet-Cuban troops to recapture areas under the control of the liberation forces. And politically, they are working towards unity.

At present the military junta is busily engaged in fanning a reactionary and chauvinist hysteria by presenting the Eritrean struggle as an "Arab-Imperialist" plot to dismember Ethiopia. This fraudulent spectre of an "Arab-Imperialist" plot is a false pretext to confuse public opinion both at home and abroad as to who the real imperialist power is, the Arabs or the Soviets.

The Junta's reactionary scheme has nothing to do with the interest of both the Ethiopian and Eritrean peoples. In fact, it is against the interest of both people. It is in the service of the U.S. imperialism and Soviet social imperialism who are fiercely contending over the Red Sea region and the Horn of Africa. The Ethiopian and Eritrean people have nothing to gain from fighting each other; but they have a whole world to win by fighting against the hegemonist and enslaving ambitions of Soviet Social Imperialism and U.S. Imperialism.

We are confident that so long as the Eritrean people persevere on the time-tested path of armed struggle, primarily rely on themselves, unite with their real friends in the region and internationally, final victory will be assured.

The Ethiopian Students Union in North America, reflecting the deepest aspirations of both the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples, has always maintained a principled support to the just struggle of the Eritrean people and their right to determine their own destiny.

We call on all progressive and democratic forces the world over to condemn and expose the nefarious activities of Soviet social imperialism and the Ethiopian junta and to show an active solidarity with Eritrean people who are waging a heroic armed struggle against Soviet social imperialism. □

REPRESSION: Special

Zena would like to present to its readers a factual report on the fascist repression in Ethiopia made by the International humanitarian organization, Amnesty International. By reprinting almost the whole text of the report *Zena* wants its readers to see up to what proportion the repression on the democratic forces has reached, especially in regard to the workers, students, intellectuals, etc. At the same time *Zena* likes to remind its readers that it does not necessarily endorse all the views advanced by Amnesty International...

31 March 1978

THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT'S "RED TERROR" CAMPAIGN

Background:

In early December 1977 Amnesty International produced a report on 'Human Rights Violations in Ethiopia.' This report, focusing on the period of the revolution under military rule since 1974, documented the destruction of the rule of law in Ethiopia, and its replacement by mass political detention and killing, usually accompanied by torture. These flagrant and gross violations of basic rights—the right to life, freedom from arbitrary political imprisonment and torture—are encouraged and approved by the military regime, and carried out by military, police and civilian security officers.

Since December 1977, the human rights situation has become even worse. The military regime (*Derg*) has intensified its policy of inflicting 'Red Revolutionary Terror' against those it considers 'counter-revolutionaries.' This is carried out without any reference to any framework of law. It is not a new policy, having been adopted on previous but less bloody campaigns against alleged opponents of the regime on three previous occasions:

(1) Following the murder of the head of state, Brigadier Teferi Bante (and other *Derg* leaders) on 3 February 1977, the new *Derg* chairman who had ordered this summary 'execution' (without trial), urged his armed supporters to administer 'revolutionary justice.'

(2) In April to May 1977, 'revolutionary measures' were taken against large numbers of children and students, including the massacre of about 500 youths on April 29.

(3) Following the government-sanctioned murder (described as a 'revolutionary measure') of Lieutenant Colonel Atnafu abate, the *Derg* vice-chairman, on 11 November 1977, the government adopted a policy of spreading 'Red Revolutionary Terror.' This campaign of government-initiated terror has now continued for over four months, and is carried out in all urban and rural areas of Ethiopia. 'Red Terror' is concerned with internal civilian political opposition and not the armed conflicts in Eritrea for the Ogaden. It is directed mainly against alleged sympathisers or members of the clandestine opposition Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP). . . . But this

policy has been implemented in an extreme and arbitrary manner, especially against children and youths of both sexes and aged between 8 and 20, which AI considers cannot be justified by the level of opposition faced by the regime. The government claim that the emphasis is on 'rehabilitation,' rather than 'liquidation' is not borne out by the constant official reports of the 'liquidation' of 'counter-revolutionaries' and the constant unofficial reports of widespread political killings by government officials, which often reach massacre proportions. There is evidence that 'Red Terror' could continue indefinitely until the *Derg* considers it has eliminated all opposition....

...In Eritrea too, the pattern of extreme repression against civilians opposing government policy on Eritrea continues. The Vice-Governor of Eritrea who recently sought refuge in Sudan stated that on 14 December 1977, 100 civilians were arbitrarily killed and 160 the next day, presumably in reprisal for the success of the Eritrean People's Liberation front (EPLF) against government forces. In Asmara, thousands of Eritreans have been tortured and killed under the military regime on suspicion of supporting the autonomy of Eritrea. In January 1978, people were killed in Asmara for such so-called political offences as looking at anti-government posters. Reprisals against civilians in areas of armed conflict are very common, and there are frequent bombings of towns and markets in the areas held by the liberation movements. Eritreans living in Addis Ababa are also under constant threat of being denounced as supporters of Eritrean autonomy and an unknown number have been arbitrarily murdered by the security forces on these grounds.

'Red Terror'

The *Derg*'s 'Red Terror' campaign consists of three elements:

(1) Summary killing without legal process of those suspected of an actual 'counter-revolutionary' offence, eg. alleged implication in political assassination, possession of EPRP literature, participation in anti-government demonstrations, or suggestion of contact with 'imperialists.'

(2) Mass detention without legal process of those suspected of 'counter-revolutionary' sympathies, in order to put them through harsh political instruction.

(3) The systematic use of torture against most of those detained in this way, in order to obtain information on other alleged 'counter-revolutionaries.'

The 'Red Terror' campaign is now described in more detail.

(1) **Political killings:** The number of those killed during this process, whether by soldiers, police or 'revolutionary defence squads' attached to kebelles or other organizations, is very difficult to estimate. The level of political killings of this nature reached a peak during December 1977 and January 1978, when nightly killings of up to a hundred were common in Addis Ababa, and bodies were constantly exposed in public. There seems to have been some reduction

Amnesty International Report

in the rate of the killings since then, and indeed reports of assassinations by opposition groups of government officials have also declined. Red Terror however continues, especially in Addis Ababa but in all other parts of Ethiopia too, and persons are killed every day and night. Between December 1977 and January 1978, estimates range between 750 and 5000 killed in this way, though a reasonable estimate would be in the region of 2500 to 3000. In February and March, the figure is probably up to half that number again.

The mode of political killing, as described by several witnesses, has special features. Some victims are shot arbitrarily, others are arrested and then shot in the back of the neck and others are shot deliberately in front of their parents or friends (this is described by the *Derg* as 'execution,' though it takes place without any legal formalities). Victims' bodies are usually exposed in public as a warning to others. The bodies are often left near the victim's home or school. Bodies exposed in public are sometimes deliberately mutilated after death. In many cases parents have been forced to approach the body of their child (but not touch it or take it away) and are forbidden to mourn. They may be forced to join in the denunciation of the dead 'counter-revolutionary,' whose crime is usually written on a placard around his neck—'this is a counter-revolutionary' or some such phrase. Several relatives of political murder victims have been forced to pay large sums of money to receive the body back for burial, supposedly to pay for the bullets which killed the victim. More recently the *Derg* prefers to deny Christian (or Muslim) burial rites to these murder victims,

and they are merely dumped in mass graves. These graves are dug by detainees who are themselves killed, or are blasted by dynamite or dug out by tractors.

(2) **Political indoctrination in detention:** The number of those detained for the purpose of political indoctrination runs into tens of thousands. The number may be estimated by the fact that each of the 291 *kebele* (urban-dwellers) associations in Addis Ababa has a prison capable of holding between 20 and 200 people (usually in extremely over-crowded conditions). The 25 'higher *kebelles*' have prisons which can hold around 600 to 700 at a time. Anything from 30,000 people upwards to 100,000 may be held at any one time in Addis Ababa alone. Most are boys and girls but adults are also held. It should be noted that even though they are held in detention continuously during this period of political indoctrination, the government does not regard them as 'detainees,' and indeed has not processed them through any legal formalities.

This period of detention usually lasts one or two months, during which time those who are employed are not paid. The 'course' consists of severe beating for many, either because they are thought to be strongly anti-government or to be resisting 'rehabilitation' in any way—being beaten on the head, shoulders, buttocks or feet. In addition, there are harsh physical exercises which are possibly as painful as this cruel treatment itself, especially for those who have been beaten. The course centers on constant political indoctrination under conditions of deprivation of sleep and food, ar-

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**Torture —
Cuban
style?**

Repression (con't. from page 5)

bitrary commands, forced participation in the chanting of political slogans and songs, confessions of counter-revolutionary ideas, denunciation of counter-revolutionaries, etc.

Many of those who have undergone this treatment have been 'released,' after being judged as 'rehabilitated,' though for a large number, they are not freed but sent to work compulsorily on state farms or other rural projects. However for some, the process can lead to long-term detention of further torture or even death, if there still remain suspicions of counter-revolutionary activities or ideas. Some people against whom allegations are strongest are forced to 'purge' their offense by participation in the ill-treatment and interrogation of others.

(3) **Torture:** It is extremely difficult to obtain testimonies of torture in Ethiopia, principally because of torture victims' fears of reprisal. However the use of torture has been described so frequently, and with such similarity of detail, that AI has no doubt that torture is systematically practiced in Ethiopia, and that it is a key feature of 'Red Terror.'

AI has recently received information from usually reliable and impartial sources that torture is practiced not only by military and police officials in the various police stations and military camps, but also by *kebele* armed guards in their various *kebele* headquarters. Furthermore, former torture victims are often forced by *kebele* guards to torture other detainees. This added 'punishment' of being forced to torture others in the same way in which they were tortured, is supposed to prove that they have now been fully rehabilitated and support the Revolution in all its measures.

The purpose of torture appears to be to obtain information about other suspected 'counter-revolutionaries' as well as to intimidate political opposition. The victim of interrogation is usually forced to give the names of three suspected 'counter-revolutionaries,' who will then be arrested and interrogated and tortured in the same way. This is thought to arise from the military government's belief that the clandestine EPRP is built on a three- or four-person cell structure, and can therefore be broken if every suspect reveals the names of other cell-members. This escalating use of torture means that a considerable proportion of those subjected to political detention and indoctrination have also been forced to undergo torture. Torture, threats of torture, and death threats, are the main means of interrogation. Public denunciation of counter-revolutionaries is also strongly encouraged at the twice-weekly political indoctrination meetings which are held in all places of work, in educational institutions, and in *kebele* association meetings. Such meetings are compulsory for all concerned, and failure to attend is a major offence which might suggest counter-revolutionary sympathies.

The method of selecting those who will undergo this political indoctrination in detention was earlier by arbitrary arrest, but is now carried out through public meetings of *kebele* associations or at each place of study or work (eg. factory, commercial organization, office, government

ministry, etc.). Confession of EPRP sympathy is called for, and the refusal to confess may be taken as evidence of guilt. Thus confession is preferable to further interrogation and there have indeed been mass confessions from people anxious to avoid further suspicion. It is much more serious for someone to be denounced by another—which could lead to interrogation and torture—than to confess 'voluntarily' and undergo the rehabilitation process. Amnesty International considers that confessions and denunciations of this kind (which have led to instances of children denouncing their parents, who have then been led away and killed as a consequence) are extremely unreliable and that this system of obtaining information is constantly open to abuse for corrupt ends or personal hatred.

The methods of torture used in the Red Terror campaign are reported to be as follows:

- Electric shock torture (practiced mostly at the Third Police Station).
- Severe beatings on the head, shoulders, buttocks, or the soles of feet (often carried out with the victim placed on a hard surface so as to increase the pain).
- Beating of the victim while hung from the wrists or suspended upside down from a horizontal iron bar to which he is tied ('the parrot's perch' form of torture familiar in some Latin American countries).
- Burning of the hair.
- Forcing the prisoner to roll on broken stones.
- Tying a heavy weight to the penis or testicles, or squeezing the testicles or inserting needles.
- The rape of girls, even from the age of nine years upwards.
- The insertion of a red-hot iron bar or a bottle into girls' vaginas, causing permanent mutilation.
- Other mutilations of the body, with salt, pepper or acid placed in cuts.

While some of these methods of torture have been practiced on political detainees in numerous cases in the last three years, others—such as the mutilation of girls' sexual organs—appear to be new. Torture victims are generally denied medical treatment . . .

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The report concludes by calling all concerned individuals, organizations and governments that deal with the military regime to condemn the so-called 'Red Terror' and to express their concern to the regime.

The Committee for Human Rights in Ethiopia of ESUNA had consistently been and is still calling all democratic and peace-loving people, organizations and governments to condemn the now escalated repression and to demand their immediate halt. □

in solidarity...

AFRICAN LIBERATION DAY

The people of Africa have a long history of struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. On many occasions they stood up against colonial aggression. The battle of Adwa of 1896 that resulted in the total defeat of the Italian colonialists by the Ethiopian people stands out as one of shining examples of heroism and resistance. At the turn of the century, almost the whole of Africa with a population of close to 300 million was suffering under the shackles of colonialism. The African people were trampled underfoot and turned to slaves of the colonialists.

Repression breeds resistance. The atrocities of the colonialists fanned the resistance of the African people. Their struggle continued unabated until the late 50's and early 60's when the whole continent was ablaze with independence movements. Independent African states mushroomed everywhere. The heroic deeds of the African people found their expressions in the Battle of Algiers, the Mau Mau uprisings and others. This period heralded the disintegration of the British and the French colonial empire in Africa.

In the late 60's and early 70's the anticolonial struggle of the African people found its best expression in the struggle of the peoples of Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and Angola against Portuguese colonialism and the Arab people against Zionism. With the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in these countries more than 90 % of the continent was liberated from the shackles of colonialism. The number of independent states grew from 3 in the late 50's to 49 at present, all of which belong to the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Colonialism has been crushed except in Southern Africa.

Although this is a magnificent victory won by the African people, still old style colonialism by changing its face to neo-colonialism is striving to perpetuate the subjugation of the masses. The biggest neo-colonialists are the two hegemonic superpowers, U.S. imperialism and Soviet social imperial-

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MAY DAY

May Day is an international working class holiday. It is the festival of the oppressed.

The International Workers Congress which met in Paris in 1889 declared May 1 as the day to commemorate the violent class warfare of the American proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Ever since, International Workers Day has been celebrated by toilers of all lands who as Lenin said "feed the rich and the powerful by their labour, who spend their lives in back-breaking toil for scanty wages, who never enjoy the fruits of their own labour, who live like beasts of burden..."

May Day originated in the struggle of the American working class, which in 1886 staged massive demonstrations demanding an 8-hour day and better working conditions. It is a day which symbolizes the militancy of the multi-national U.S. working class which staged a 350,000 strong general strike nearly a hundred years ago.

May Day is a day on which the international proletariat and its allies the world over sum up both their positive and negative experiences. It is a day on which workers and oppressed people heighten their vigilance, reaffirm their solidarity, consolidate their gains and victoriously march forward.

This year's May Day is being celebrated in the midst of great upheavals throughout the world. It is being held at a time when the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America are courageously standing up against imperialism, social imperialism and all reaction. It is being celebrated at a time when the struggle of the working class has intensified in the capitalist countries as witnessed by the recent heroic strike of the U.S. coal miners.

All in all May Day 1978 is being held amidst great disorder which is favourable to all workers, oppressed peoples and nations of all lands, and unfavourable to the imperialists, in particular the two superpowers. □



Recent ESUNA publications

COMBAT

**"Theory of Non-Capitalist Development":
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VOL. VII NO. 2 JAN. 1978

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COMBAT

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