

Self-Reliant Struggle in Eritrea

Third in a series written for UNITE! by the Association of Eritrean Students in North America (AESNA).

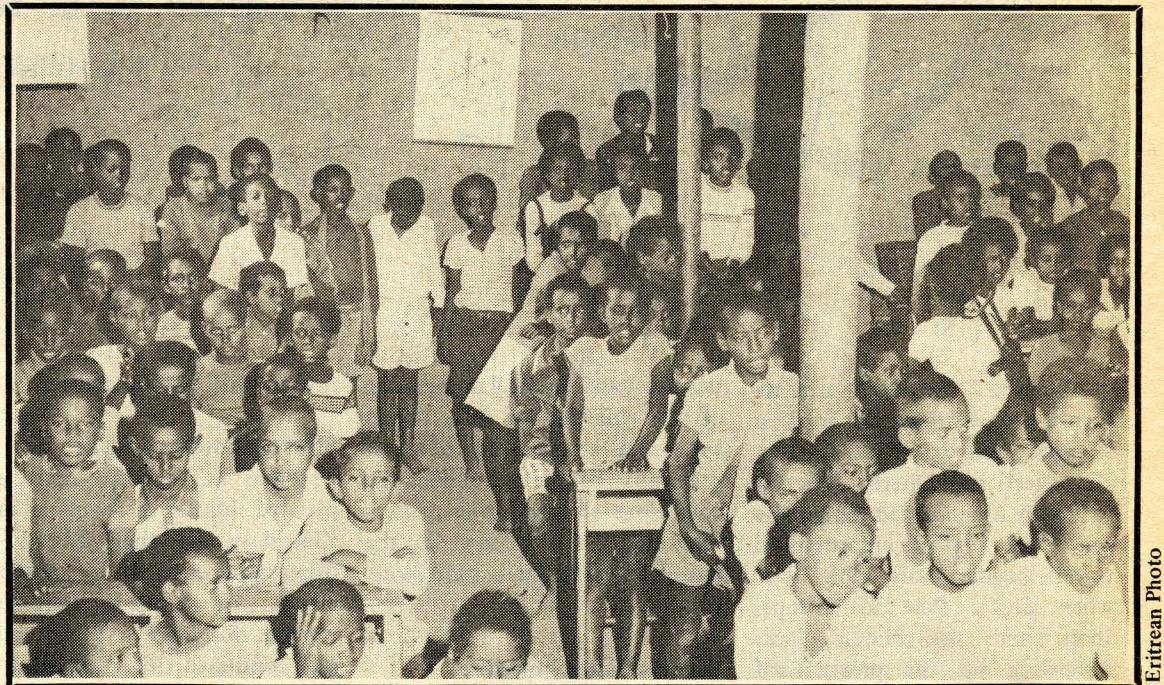
The revolutionary armed national liberation struggle of the Eritrean people now in its 17th year is irresistibly advancing forward. Led by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), the Eritrean revolution is winning decisive victories against the Ethiopian aggressors, imperialism, zionism and internal reaction. Despite massive Cuban and Soviet intervention to crush the Eritrean revolution, the fighting Eritrean masses and their vanguard EPLF are continuing their triumphant march forward. Ethiopian colonialism is now in its final demise and almost the whole of Eritrea is liberated with the solid groundwork for a new people's democratic Eritrea already laid.

The vast liberated areas of Eritrea have today become an impregnable revolutionary fortress where deep-going social transformation is being carried out. Adhering to the principle of self-reliance, the EPLF is building a new social order on the ruins of the colonial and feudal structures. The reconstruction and consolidation of the liberated areas is fully underway. The EPLF has achieved tremendous progress in organizing, politicizing and arming the masses and in leading and assisting them to set up their democratic people's power. By mobilizing the material and human resources of the country, the EPLF is developing a self-reliant economy and a revolutionary mass culture. It is spreading mass education and extensive health services throughout the country. It is leading the peasant masses in a thorough agrarian revolution to own their land and overthrow the feudal order. Self-reliance is the watch-word in implementing the national democratic program. The strategy of a self-reliant development is rooted in the EPLF's basic trust and confidence in the will and strength of the Eritrean people to liberate themselves from colonial and feudal oppression and exploitation. Realizing that revolution is the work of the masses, the EPLF relies on the Eritrean masses through mobilizing them

and releasing their boundless energy and revolutionary zeal.

In its self-reliant effort the EPLF gives top priority to the organization, politicization and arming of the masses. On this basis it is successfully leading the masses in building their own strong mass associations. Hence today the mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth and students have become the sole organs of power. In the liberated villages and cities, the masses through their associations have established their people's assemblies and are managing their own affairs. The EPLF has armed the masses by forming people's militias to defend the gains they have won.

On the economic front, following the slogan "self-reliance is the key to victory", the EPLF is making every effort to attain self-sufficiency in food production and other necessities. In this task large plantations of fruits, vegetables and cotton that used to be owned by the Ethiopian colonial government and foreign capitalists have been nationalized to serve the needs of the revolution and the masses. The EPLF's Department of Agriculture has reclaimed large tracts of land and is growing crops such as sorghum, corn, peas, etc. to satisfy the food needs of the fighters and the masses. By providing all possible assistance, the EPLF has also enabled the masses to increase production. By pooling every bit of knowledge and experience in the front and using local resources and material captured from the enemy, underground workshops and small factories have been established throughout the liberated areas to manufacture necessary goods such as tables, chairs, pots and pans, oil lamps, shoes and other leather items and spare parts for damaged weapons and machines. People's stores have been established throughout the liberated areas to provide the masses with necessary consumer goods. The EPLF also provides modest transportation services to the masses. Connecting all parts of the country, it has constructed thousands of kilometers of roads of which the Liberation Road—1500 km—is the most outstanding achieve-



A classroom in one of the more than 200 new revolutionary schools. The EPLF is carrying out an extensive literacy campaign throughout the liberated areas in order to raise the political consciousness of the masses and improve their cultural well-being.

ment. Using the numerous buses and trucks captured from the enemy, extensive bus lines have been set up. Considerable effort is also being made to put the rich mineral resources of the country in the service of the revolution. At this stage the EPLF is extracting salt not only for home consumption but also for export.

On the educational, cultural and medical fronts great strides have also been made. To raise the political consciousness and cultural level of the masses, the EPLF is carrying out an extensive literacy campaign and establishing new schools with revolutionary curriculum. Over 200 schools of the new type have already been built where young and old, men and women, are able to attend. In Sahel province, a revolutionary model boarding school where 1300 students are at the moment attending, has been built. Likewise, in the field of culture, the EPLF is developing a new mass culture and in this task of promoting a revolutionary culture among the masses the EPLF has set up a youth cultural group. The Cultural Branch develops songs and dances promoting the progressive aspect of the nationalities' culture and popularizing the militant and patriotic history of the people, and plays an important role in politicizing and uniting the masses in struggle.

Despite its limited resources, the EPLF's medical service to the masses have been extensive. In this effort it has built six large hospitals, 32 clinics and trained over 500 squad doctors. In the first nine months of 1977 alone, EPLF's Department of Health treated over one million people in its hospitals and clinics and is making an extensive campaign to educate the masses in preventive medicine, to eliminate communicable diseases through inoculation and vaccination.

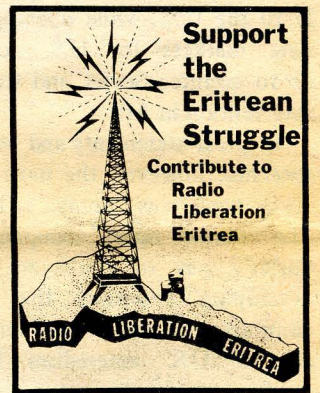
On the military front, implementing the slogan of self-reliance, "destroy the enemy with his own guns and bullets", the EPLF has captured thousands of light and heavy weapons including Soviet and U.S.-supplied tanks from the Ethiopian aggressors. Hence today, the vast

majority of the Eritrean People's Liberation Army and the entire EPLF's people's militia are armed with weapons captured in the battlefields.

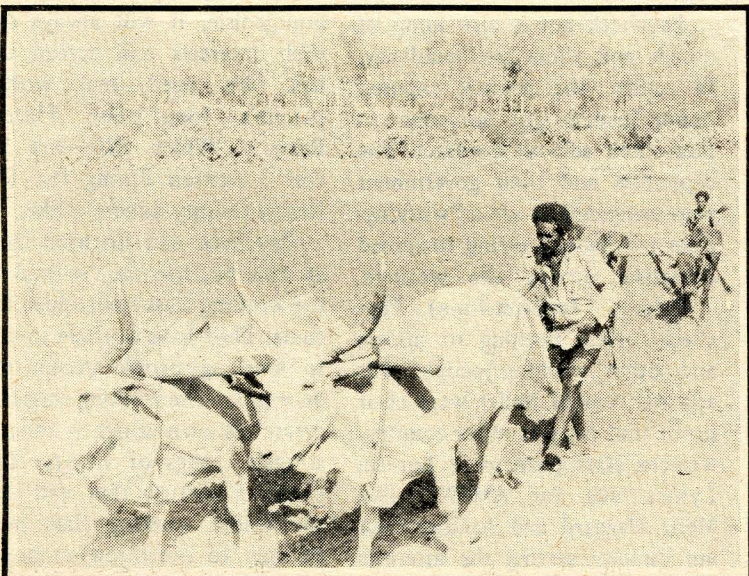
Self-reliant protracted people's war is the only way to victory. At the same time the political, material and moral support of the revolutionary and democratic forces of the world is necessary for the acceleration of the victory of the Eritrean revolution. The Eritrean revolution has concretely proven that only by following a self-reliant road can a revolution guarantee its independence and complete victory. The unprecedented victories the revolution has been winning are results of the implementation of the revolutionary principle of self-reliance. The road of self-reliance is shattering the counter-revolutionary machinations of the enemies of the Eritrean revolution and earning it the

support and admiration of the revolutionary forces throughout the world. The self-reliant Eritrean struggle will definitely surmount all difficulties and give forth an independent people's democratic Eritrea in the near future.

Onward with the Struggle!

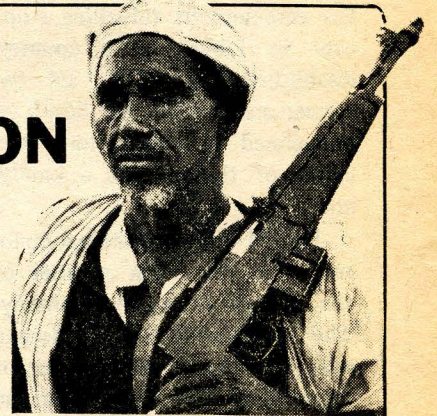


Send to: Radio Liberation Eritrea
c/o UNITE! PO Box 8041
Chicago, Illinois 60680 U.S.A.
Payable to Radio Liberation Eritrea



Fighters are engaged in production in the Eritrean countryside. Unlike imperialist armies, the liberation soldiers of the EPLF do not make themselves a burden on the masses. Instead, they join the struggle to raise production self-reliantly.

REVOLUTION IN ERITREA!



a film showing

Revolution in Eritrea! is a 27-minute, documentary film made by the BBC in April 1977. The film depicts life in the liberated areas of Eritrea, the fighting between the people's army and the troops of the fascist Ethiopian junta, and the Eritrean people's struggle for national independence and new democracy under the leadership of the Eritrean Peoples's liberation Front.

Eritrea in Revolution!
will be shown in the following cities:

San Francisco / Oakland
Los Angeles
New Orleans, Louisiana
Birmingham, Alabama
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Chicago, Illinois

Sponsored by UNITE! and the Association of Eritrean Students of North America, watch for dates and times in UNITE! and local newspapers.