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**ABYOT**



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EDITORIAL

FASCIST TERROR AND FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA

IN FEBRUARY 1974, the oppressed Ethiopian masses rose up in their millions and toppled the feudo-bourgeois regime of Emperor Haile Sellasie. One of the immediate causes, which played a considerable role in triggering the momentous revolutionary movement, was the Famine which was hidden by the regime and which claimed the lives of at least 300,000 people. The February Revolution expressed the masses' intense desire and determination to destroy the rule of reactionaries which meant famine, suffering and death.

The military junta, which usurped power, frustrated this mass desire by imposing its own particularly bloody and fascistic rule. In the last four years, and especially since the junta sold the country to Soviet social imperialism, no less than 300,000 people have perished as a result of the junta's repression and anti-people war campaigns. And as if to dramatically expose the junta's inherent oneness with the past and other such reactionary regimes, famine has once again erupted in Wollo, some parts of Tigray and Gondar.

Admittedly, there is a difference between 1974 and now. The junta, unlike the previous regime, talks about the famine and has asked for international help. There is also the locust invasion, God sent scapegoats for the junta. But these are irrelevant differences for the people who are dying in increasing numbers because of the famine. For, without any hesitation, the full blame for the state of affairs falls on the fascist junta and its social imperialist masters.

To begin with, as early as mid-1976 and 1977 international bodies warned of a famine threat in Ethiopia, and singled out Wollo administrative region. The junta turned a deaf ear to these warnings. On September

1977, Ethiopian government officials and experts informed the junta of an impending famine that had already started to creep in. The junta called this "an anarchist rumour" and explicitly warned the officials not to spread such "counter-revolutionary gossip". In short, the junta ignored the impending famine and focused its whole reactionary attention to its war efforts against the EPRP, the Eritreans - and in Ogaden.

Late last year a report entitled "Expected Famine in Ethiopia" was prepared by the Swedish expert Dr. Lars Bondestam, who had for long worked in Ethiopia, and was submitted to the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission. In the report, Dr. Bondestam warned that "there is an inevitable risk of famine in Ethiopia, possibly of the same magnitude as the one of 1973". The report cited as "the regions worst affected" by the famine threat all the areas (Tigray, Wollo, Gondar, Bale Harghe, Sidamo, Arussi) in which the junta has been and still is carrying out its anti-people wars.

As stated in the report and as is factually observed, the problem stems not mainly from natural calamities but from the disruption and destruction caused by the regime itself. In all these areas, the junta has been carrying out intensive acts of repression against the EPRP/EPRA, against nationalist groups and the peasantry at large. The regime's forced conscription of thousands of peasants into its so-called "Militia" has disrupted production, as the report affirmed correctly. "Peasants", in addition, "are forced to flee, others are recruited" by the regime to serve as local "cadres" in charge of security and repression work. The government's top priority is its anti-people war effort to which it has diverted all financial, human and material resources. Thus, transport facilities are used not to take grain (which is rotting in the ports) to the needs but to carry troops to the various war fronts. As the report by Dr. Bondestam mentioned: "Ethiopia faces its main danger", not from natural calamities, but "from a general economic breakdown brought about by political

and military factors.<sup>M</sup> The famine affects the peasant population and the urban lower classes, the report added. With the grain stock declining, with agricultural and industrial production falling and with the regime putting all its efforts and the potential of the country into its reactionary war efforts, the famine threat has become actualized and continues to claim the lives of scores of people daily. Especially in Wollo where fungus disease has also spread, partially caused by the poisoned fertilizer which the junta had earlier sold to the peasants.

Hence, despite the locusts and the junta's albeit forced, admission of the existence of the famine situation, the MAIN RESPONSIBILITY for the famine falls on the regime and social imperialism. The rule of fascist terror, war and social imperialist neo-colonization has reduced the country into a situation of total disruption, economic breakdown, political upheaval. The junta's slogan of "everything to the war front!" has literally meant the death and starvation (and death) of thousands of people. The country's financial and human resources are directed towards war against the people themselves by a regime that is desperately trying to stabilize itself. Social imperialism, which is feverishly striving to consolidate its grip over Ethiopia and the region, aids the fascist junta in this anti-people endeavor.

Once again, it is clear that the people of Ethiopia can be free from famine and terror only by overthrowing the reactionary regime. The fascist junta and social imperialism are the causes of the famine, they are the terrorist butchers of the Ethiopian masses. Locusts did not divert the grain to the war fronts, they did not drive the trucks away from the famine-stricken areas, neither did they force and drag thousands of peasants into the "MILITIA". The junta did all this. Social imperialism did all this. Thus, our sacred struggle against the fascist junta and social imperialism continues with even more determination and vigour.

"Ethiopia faces its main danger from a general economic breakdown brought by political and military factors . . . Relief supplies are not reaching those in need . . . Official priority for transport is heavily weighted in favour of the military, so that insufficient vehicles are available to carry vital imports such as wheat and fertilizers arriving at the port of ASBAB."

from the report by Dr. L. Bondestam

### MENGIET AND MOSCOW -- WHAT PROBLEMS?

Social imperialism, as recent events in Africa and Afghanistan indicate, pushes its hegemonist ambitions through the use of force, terror and coup d'etat. Once the social imperialists are implanted in a country they try to stabilize themselves by arranging coups which bring to power more malleable and more secure Moscow puppets. Terrorist assassinations of a covert type by the KGB is also used in this line.

The "Negede Gobeze" affair is a case in point. The Soviet social imperialists have a long-standing relation with the Meisone group led by Haile Fida and Negede Gobeze. It was in fact this group which served, in its own words, as a bridge between the junta and Moscow and which brought the two together. As it is to be expected, the Russians advocated a strong alliance between Meisone and the junta and strived to form a Party and government in which Meisone would play a prominent role. However, despite the fact that the dictator Mengistu played a "centrist" role of courting and protecting Meisone while at the same time letting his own followers grouped within Seded push their anti-Meisone line, the balance/the alliance was not destined to be durable. After the February 3 coup d'etat of Mengistu in which Teferi Benti and others were killed, the Meisone leaders flexed their muscles, called for the legalization of Meisone and challenged SEDED. The rupture was consummated when Seded begun liquidating Meisone leaders and militants. Abdullahi Yusuf, Kebede Mengesha

and other Meisone leaders were eliminated while Haile Fida and scores of others got arrested. The purge within the bureaucracy, in which Meisone was implanted thanks to the backing of Mengistu who needed them in the junta's anti-EPRP drive, got intensified. The state radio stepped up its campaign against the "right-roaders" the name now given to Meisone. The Right-roaders were accused of fleeing in the face of danger, of abandoning the revolution, of capitulating to the EPRP, etc...

As a result of the junta offensive, many Meisone militants, who were supporting it for careerist objectives, changed camp, denounced it and joined the junta/Seded Haile Fida and the other leaders were reportedly tortured but the pressures from the Russians and their allies, coupled with the double-dealing game played by Mengistu himself, impeded their being executed. Another group, which was allied to the junta and had closer links to Meisone, called Icha'at, also fell victim to the junta's repression; its leader the perennial opportunist Baro Tumsa, was reportedly liquidated by the Seded squads.

With the elimination of Meisone, the social imperialists lost one of their revisionist bases in the country. Their developing alliance with Mengistu was a loaded one. The dictator's reputed opportunist actions, whatever he may say about "eternal relations with Moscow", did not escape the notice of the social imperialists. Hence, while staying close to Mengistu, the social imperialists stepped up their overt and covert actions to fill the military and the bureaucracy with elements on whom they can rely. Within the junta itself, they focused on second lieutenant Legesse Asfaw, chief of the political and military affairs of the Derg, who had been trained in Moscow in one of the usual marathon courses in Political Science. And together with this, they persistently worked to bring about a reconciliation between Meisone and the junta. For, the Soviets hold the view that with Meisone in power or sharing power, it is possible to settle even the Eritrean question and to best assure social imperialist interest in Ethiopia and the region as a whole. It is with this in mind that they tried to stage their own "mini coup" or at least to force Mengistu to make a reconciliation with Meisone by reportedly smuggling

into Ethiopia the exiled Meisone leader, Negede Gobezie.

Whether Negede was really in Ethiopia or not is not the crucial issue, even though western sources affirm that he was hiding in the Cuban Embassy. What is important is the fact that there was a clear and firm move to either get rid of Mengistu or to make him strike a new alliance with Meisone. A firm advice to this effect was given to Mengistu by Castro during the former's visit to Havana. In any case, the incident served to trigger the intensifications of the repression against Meisone. Numerous pro-Meisone elements from within the bureaucracy and the Kebele associations were either purged or liquidated. Meisone, now officially identified by name as an "enemy of the Ethiopian People", has thus consummated its rupture with the junta.

The Seded-Meisone conflict assumes importance in so far as it highlights the problems of the junta desperately searching for stability and in so far as it points out the social imperialist uneasy alliance with Mengistu. The conflicts between Mengistu and Legese are simmering but not ended. The dictator is also preoccupied with the machinations of his social imperialist allies to whom his indispensability may not at all be "eternal". The "lack" of concrete backing in terms of Cuban mercenary troop participation (like the Ogaden) in so far as Eritrea is concerned has also been noted by their dictator who is pushing for a military solution to the Eritrean war. For the moment Mengistu can't do without his allies. The social imperialists, on their part, will continue to back his regime while all the time trying to assure their hegemony by all means.

## NEWS

### SHORTAGE OF GRAIN AGAIN BLAMED ON "SABOTEURS"

The overall anti-people policies of the junta at all levels have undoubtedly led the country to more political and economic problems and chaos. The fall in industrial and agricultural output is caused by the junta's re-

pressive actions against workers, its anti-people wars which have led to the closing down of factories, its forced press-ganging of thousands of peasants into its "militia", the absence of fixed price scales for goods, etc.

The shortage of and the exorbitant price that has to be paid for basic commodities/food stuffs has now become a fact that the junta and its apologists can hardly hide. In the capital itself, there is an acute shortage of food and other basic commodities affecting the oppressed masses. To "solve" these problems, the junta has made a series of meetings. But like the latest meeting held under the chairmanship of Lt. Col. Debella Dinsa, the solutions proposed are the same "the grain shortage is the work of saboteurs and it can be solved by intensifying the terror against the EPRP and small traders"!!

Meanwhile, as the terror intensifies, famine grips several provinces and the situation in the cities, including the capital, has reached acute levels. The grain shortage and all other related problems will no doubt afflict our people till the junta's reactionary rule gets terminated by the struggle of the masses.

### FLEEING OF THE PEOPLE INTENSIFIED

During the war in the Ogaden, the people were forced to contribute money, blood and labour. To fall short of fulfilling these "voluntary" obligations meant sure death as one gets immediately labelled "anarchist" or EPRP supporter. Workers, peasants, civil servants were all plundered. Housewives were forced by the Kebele associations to spend days and nights preparing food for the so-called militia.

Now that the Ogaden war is at least officially over, the plunder has, instead of decreasing, reached higher levels. At present, the people are

called upon or rather ordered to contribute money and other material to "the war affected zone". And then there is the junta's other war in Eritrea for which the masses have to contribute money, blood and labour. Thus, under this war-mongering junta the people continue to be plundered, starved, exploited and murdered. The junta fleeces the people to finance its wars against the masses themselves.

This practice has also been extended abroad and Ethiopian embassies are refusing to renew passports of those who have not "contributed" to the war fund.

#### JUNTA SETS UP "NATIONAL" PEASANT ASSOCIATION

As part of the junta's continued drive to set-up "mass" organizations under its direct control, the junta has set-up the so-called ALL-Ethiopian Peasant Association (AEPA), which, along with the junta controlled trade union (AETU) is planned to serve as a basis for the junta's Party (as yet to be declared) and rule.

The delegates to the AEPA founding congress were meticulously screened even though the junta had earlier purged genuine peasant leaders as being EPRP supporters or sympathizers. The congress was addressed on May 3 by the dictator Mengistu and by Zegeye Asfaw, the minister of Agriculture and Settlement. The following persons were appointed as leaders of the AEPA: Abdella Sonessa-Chairman; Benti Deres-Vice Chairman; Kedir Mohamed-Secretary General; Melaku Dagnaw-Treasurer; and Ayalew Engida as Chairman of the so-called "Revolutionary Defense Committee".

The AEPA is expected to play a crucial role of serving as the junta's political and security apparatus assuring the peasant's subservience to the regime. However, the contradictions between the peasants and the junta appointed officials continues to grow and has reached serious levels in some

places like Kaffa and Sidamo.

#### JUNTA TRADE UNION BECOMES MEMBER OF WFTU

A delegation led by the ALL-Ethiopian Trade Unions (AETU) first secretary general, Getachew Legese, participated in the ninth congress of the social imperialist controlled "World Federation of Trade Unions" (WFTU) and became a member of this Russian outfit.

The WFTU is an organization controlled by Moscow and is one of its arms/means of assuming influence and control over other trade unions, especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The admittance of the AETU into the WFTU is one aspect of the continuing integration of Ethiopia into the social imperialist controlled camp. The AETU has been elected, by the Congress held in Prague, in mid-April, to be a member of the WFTU Supreme Advisory Council for the coming four years.

#### TOP MEISONE LEADERS LIQUIDATED BY JUNTA

MEISONE, the revisionist and social fascist group that was the firm ally of the junta till last year, has revealed that some of its top leaders have been eliminated physically by the junta. The recent revelation affirms that top Meisone leaders like Terefe W. Tsadik, former Minister of Education, Atnaf, who is the latter's wife and played a major role in the repression against the militant women's organizations and movement, and Eyob Tadesse, a notorious Meisone leader, have all been killed. Others reported dead include Merid, a reputed torturer, Nigist Adane, a Central Committee member of Meisone and her husband Desta Tadesse, who was also a top leader of Meisone and had extra-close ties with

Moscow, where he studied along with his wife.

The liquidation campaign directed against Meisone, by the regime which it itself strengthened to an extent, is continuing and many of the arrested leaders are expected to meet the fate of their comrades-in-crimes.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF AETU PURGED/ARRESTED

The Executive Committee of the junta's trade union have been purged and "put under control" (possibly also liquidated) by the junta. Explaining this move, the junta stated that these leaders were "saboteurs and fake progressives working in league with Meisone and EPRP"! ! A new executive committee has been put in place.

The purge testifies to the junta's drive to cleanse all pro-Meisone elements from the administration and the various organizations. It is to be remembered that the AETU and the Kebelle associations were filled by elements appointed by Meisone in its heydays of alliance with the junta and its control over the so-called People's Organizing Office (POMOA). As is usual, the junta has announced that several unions have sent it messages of support for the purge members.

#### FASCIST TERROR INTENSIFIED IN NORTHERN TOWNS

The brutal fascist terror, dubbed the "red terror" by the fascist junta, is continuing with inhuman ferocity. While the killings in Addis Abeba, Awassa, Harar and other towns is now done secretly within the confines of the various jails and concentration camps, in the northern cities and towns

of Gondar, Tigrai and Wollo administrative regions, the terror campaign is in full swing publicly. In Gondar city alone, some 350 people have been summarily executed, and the bodies of some were thrown on the streets.

At the same time, the junta is intensifying its anti-EPRP repression in the Tigrai towns of Adigrat, Makalle, etc and is benefitting from the reactionary war that the TPLF launched against the EPRA. Dessie, Kobo, Korem, Maichew and other towns in Wollo have also become victims of the terror campaign.

Meanwhile in Addis Abeba, junta officials are swallowing back their earlier claims of having "finished" the EPRP and warning their officials that the EPRP has "hidden itself and not died". The fascist repression continues as brutally as before but with less publicity so as not to attract international disapproval.

#### GONDAR ACTING ADMINISTRATOR CALLS AGAIN FOR A VAST ANTI-EPRA OFFENSIVE

The acting administrator of Gondar has once again called on the junta to launch a vast offensive against the EPRA. IN a radio interview of June 19, he revealed that the EPRA "represents the main and only danger" in the region as its activities continue to spread throughout the administrative region. The acting administrator, after having admitted that a number of people have been continually flocking to the EPRA in Tselemt region, called for an intensified action on the part of the regime in order to "crush the EPRA". The acting administrator revealed during the interview that EPRA units had attacked government forces in Libo province and caused grave losses.

Government troop reinforcements continue to arrive in Gondar and a

new airport for MIG jets is being built just outside of Gondar city.

### SOMALIA REPORTS ATTACKS BY JUNTA AIR FORCE

The Somali government has reported that the planes of the junta bombed the region of Beled Weyn, which is 40 miles from the Ethiopian-Somali border. In this raid, according to Mogadishu, one person was killed and four others wounded while a previous raid on another Somali town reportedly killed 13 persons and wounded 50.

The bombing raids, which come on the wake of junta's threat to carry the war into Somalia "unless the guerrillas stop their actions", highlights the fact that the Ogaden war is continuing. Somali national guerrillas and Oromo peasant fighters are reportedly actively fighting the junta's forces in Hararge, Bale and Sidamo. The fascist junta has carried out a series of bloody reprisal actions against poor peasants in the area. The junta which had imagined that the Cuban mercenary actions in the Ogaden had brought it victory, is now caught in the marsh of a prolonged guerrilla war over a vast territory. The struggle of the oppressed nationalities for democracy and self-determination, is a just struggle which is firmly supported by the EPRP.

### CUBA & JUNTA SIGN SUGAR AGREEMENTS

A seven-man Cuban delegation led by the director of Havana's Sugar Industry, Raul Colta, visited, in late June, the Ethiopian sugar factories at Wonji, Shoa and Metehara. The visit was second in a series of planned visits by Cuban sugar industry officials and experts.

The Cuban and Ethiopian side have signed a joint agreement (signing on the Ethiopian side was Hailu Shawl, Chief of the Ethio-Sugar industries) for the "development" of the sugar industry in Ethiopia. The Cubans have also agreed to train Ethiopians as engineers and workers in the field. This agreement is one of such agreements that the junta has been and is signing with Moscow and its puppets in a concrete act of assuring the dependence of Ethiopia's economy on social imperialism and its allies.

### CUBAN AGRICULTURAL DELEGATION VISITS ETHIOPIA

A 20-man Cuban agricultural delegation led by Raul Curbelo Morales, member of the Central Committee of the "C.P. of Cuba, has visited Ethiopia and made an extensive tour of the country "assessing the agricultural undertakings in the country."

The delegates were received by the dictator Mengistu. The aim of the delegation, it was learnt, was to study possible fields of investment in which Cuba and its master, Moscow, could fruitfully be engaged in.

### HOUSE OF "PEACE, FRIENDSHIP, SOLIDARITY" OPENED WITH RUSSIAN HELP

The Derg Secretary General has opened the House of "Peace, Friendship and Solidarity", which was built with Soviet help in Addis Abeba, near Tewodros Square. Attending the opening ceremony were many revisionist delegates and the social imperialist delegate Edward Sarkissov, who is the Vice Chairman of the Presidium of the Soviet Committee for



"friendship and Solidarity". Surkissov spoke during the opening ceremony.

The House is intended to serve for local and international conferences and meetings which have the blessing of the Soviet Union.

The reactionary playwright, with strong Russian connection, Tsegaye Gebre Medhin, has been named Acting Head of the Provisional Secretariat of the "Friendship" House.

#### HIGH LEVEL EAST GERMAN DELEGATION VISITS ETHIOPIA

A five-member East German educational delegation led by the Director General of the Ministry of Education, Herbert Geerhardt, arrived in Addis Abeba on June 15 on what has been officially called "a working visit".

The delegation "will hold talks", with junta officials, on "cooperation and bilateral relations between the two countries in the field of education. It has been learned, however, that one of the main subjects the East German body has raised concerns the question of East German teachers in Ethiopia. Berlin wants to increase the number of its teachers in the University and to have several others teaching at the junta's "ideological schools".

It is to be recalled that a three-member junta delegation (Hussein Ismael-permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education; Yayehyirad Kitaw, Commissioner for Higher Education; and Dr. Duri Mohamed, President of the AA University) had visited Moscow and East Germany in the first weeks of May.

#### JUNTA & SOVIETS SIGN "CULTURAL AGREEMENTS"

A "cultural cooperation agreement" was signed in Addis Abeba between the junta and the USSR to assure "the utmost facilitation and development of cultural ties between the two countries.

Yusuf Ahmed, Minister for Transport and Communications and Chairman of the recently established Committee for "Ethiopian-Soviet Friendship and Solidarity", signed for Moscow. As a result of this agreement, the social imperialists have set-up in Moscow, on June 13, the so-called "USSR-Ethiopia Friendship Society" which is to be headed by Nikolai Vasilyev, member of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. and First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the R.S.F.S.R.

The building of the "Friendship House" in Addis Abeba (the only one of its kind in Africa), the numerous delegations from Moscow and Eastern Europe flocking to Ethiopia, the setting-up of "Solidarity" organizations headed by high ranking officials emphasize the social imperialists determined drive to ensnare and neo-colonize Ethiopia.

#### COFFEE AND THE ECONOMY

Experts have stated that this year's coffee output in Ethiopia will be no more than 50,000 tons, which is 20,000 tons less than the past two years. In fact, Ethiopia's coffee production has not increased in any way, but the high world price for coffee has brought in more money for the junta which is haranguing Ethiopians to drink less coffee. Since the junta made the barter deals with Moscow and its puppets, almost half of the coffee produced is sold to them at 15% below the world market rate. In a related field, the foreign exchange reserve of the country has been re-

duced by almost more than half since 1976, at which time positive estimates put it at 620m. Ethiopian birr. The reason for this: payment in cash to the Russians for the arms.

### CASTRO, LENINISM AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

During junta chieftain Mengistu's pilgrimage to Havana, the mercenary chieftain Castro took the liberty to give a lecture on "Leninism and the national question" in respect to the Eritrean question.

According to Castro, "Leninism recognizes the right of nations to self-determination and this means the right to regional autonomy. "The pupil of Brezhnev not only hops around Africa fighting against genuinely popular forces but is also indulging in the distortion of Leninism, which defines the right to self-determination as the right to separation, to independence.

But this is not all. Castro also declared that some countries can possibly arrive at socialism via humanism, Islamic Socialism and other such concoctions! Just like his master's "non-capita list path . . ." filth, the Cuban chieftain is also trying to distort socialism and to justify and prettify reactionary, fascist and pro-Moscow (the qualifications tend to go together) regimes as progressive ones embarked on the path of transition to socialism. Castro practices and preaches none other than revisionism.

In connection with the visit of butcher Mengistu to Havana, the Cuban press has published a biography of Mengistu in which it is alledged that the fascist thug was a Marxist revolutionary since a long time ago and that he had formed secret Marxist cells during the Emperor's time! A gross falsification to cover the fact that the darling of Castro, the

fascist Mengistu, was no more than a loyal and backward soldier of Haile Sellasie.

### EPRP RENEW CALLS FAR A REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT

In order to surmount the difficulties imposed on the revolutionary camp by social imperialism, so as to unite all revolutionary and progressive forces for the lofty struggle against the fascist junta and social imperialism, the EPRP has stepped up its call and concrete efforts to realize the formation of a United Front of all revolutionary and Democratic forces.

Bearing in mind that the formation of such a Front is one of the strategic requirements for the successful accomplishment of the New Democratic Revolution, the EPRP had continuously strived to form a United Front. The Democratic Front formed by the Party, the formation and development of several militant mass organizations have been useful achievements in this line. The concrete cooperation existing between the EPRP and certain nationalist groups/organizations, though it needs to be deepened and strengthened, is also a positive development. However, there is still much to be done and numerous problems to be surmounted. One of these problems, as the Party's organ, DEMOCRACIA, stated (in Vol. 5, No.2) is the existence of certain groups, like the so-called TPLF, who collide with the fascist junta and work to divide the revolutionary camp.

As DEMOCRACIA pointed out, the present calls on all revolutionary forces to put aside their secondary contradictions/differences and concentrate on working out ways and means of uniting their forces against the common enemy. This is the only way we can assure the united might of the masses and concretely intensify the attack against the fascist junta and social imperialism.

The renewed call of the EPRP is accompanied by practical efforts and is sure to bear fruit in the near future. Existing cooperation must be broadened and strengthened by the revolutionary forces.

## ERITREA-THE JUNTA'S "MILITARY SOLUTION"

Just as it did during the drive to recapture the towns in the Ogaden with the help of Cuban troops, so once again the junta has unleashed its disgusting chauvinist propagandist machinery and its Russian-made war machinery against the Eritrean people. "Death to Secessionists!" cry the junta and its mass media. And the Russian MIG's deal out death and destruction as they strafe and bomb Eritrean villages in a final and all-out effort to crush the popular struggle of the Eritrean masses for independence.

Apologists of the chauvinist junta, above all Havana and Moscow, spread the false illusion that the junta wanted to settle the question "peacefully and democratically". Those who did not know the junta were duped and even some believed that the junta, once the Ogaden war is over, will negotiate with the Eritrean Fronts. For a chauvinist junta that hates peace and hounds any trace of democracy Eritrean independence struggle has meant no more than an affair that ought to be closed through violence, by wiping out the "rebels" and all their supporters. Time has once again proved that the war-mongering chauvinist junta stands against the rights of the people.

In the last few months the junta has been transporting more and more troops into Asmara. It has also beefed up its garrisons in Tigray and Gondar and built military airports for the Mig fighters in Tigray (Completed) and Gondar (still under construction). Its besieged forces have periodically made probing attempts to break their encirclements by the Fronts while the planes have stepped up their raids against villages and towns controlled by the Fronts. These acts can hardly be the acts of a regime that wants peaceful talks and negotiations!

The fact is that the junta has never really wanted to negotiate. For the junta, any talk of the independence of Eritrea is out of the question. It has presented the "regional autonomy" package and any one who opposes this is an enemy of the Derg. On the other hand, for the Eritrean masses the question of their independence is a question of their basic right, it is the reason for their 17 years long bitter and heroic struggle. Hence, as the Derg has shortcircuited all talks by previously limiting the outcome, all its talks of the need to negotiate amount to sheer propagandist machinations or ploys for buying time and international sympathy. In fact, the junta itself has declared that it met with EPLF leaders three times in the East German capital and could not

agree with them at all. For the junta, the question is settled-either they accept its regional autonomy (which, we can surely say, would have no resemblance to any autonomy at all) or they face its destructive wrath. The justification is there-the junta is revolutionary, those who oppose it are counter-revolutionary.

The propagandist offensive against Eritrea has surpassed the Haile Selassie days. Only the jargons are different, otherwise the nauseating chauvinist attacks have all been not only kept but 'refined'. The vilification of a heroic people's struggle knows no bounds. The anti-Arab hysteria mounts. In the last few weeks, the anti-Eritrean propagandist of the regime has been escalated. The campaign has notorious conductors. Legese Asfaw made quite a few trips here and there fuming against the Fronts ("reactionaries") and promising decisive junta action against them. On June 14, the chief butcher, Mengistu, gave a press conference and answered pre-arranged questions concerning Eritrea. The gist of the conference was not novel-"the Fronts are reactionaries, the struggle is an Arab plot against Ethiopia, the Eritrean people support the junta", etc, etc. A week before the dictator had also made a radio speech to the nation affirming the junta's determination to settle the Eritrean question by military means. Three days after the butcher's press conference a so-called "Seminar On Eritrea" started in Addis Abeba with much fanfare. The seminar was attended by representatives brought from the various government organizations and bodies as well as junta ambassadors and charge d'affaires abroad. Officially the seminar had as its task to discuss the "problem in Eritrea". To what purpose? What kind of study? To suggest what? The seminarists didn't have to worry or dare to ask. Everything was prepared.

The seminar was opened by a speech from the Derg's Secretary General, Captain Fikreselassie who briefed the participants about the "crimes of the Fronts" and how they have "alighted themselves with counter-revolutionary groups like the so-called EPRP, aristocrats, landlords and right wing petty bourgeois to undermine the revolutionary process". After calling on the participants to prepare themselves for "the life and death struggle against separatists," the Captain, tongue in cheek, told them that theirs is a democratic discussion whose result he "was sure about". In the next days, till the seminar got closed on June 27, the participants got lectured by a number of junta officials like Major Berhanu Bayeh and Sub. Lt. Tamrat Ferede. The main "discussion paper" was presented by Tesfaye Makonen, Secretary General of the POMOA. The paper entitled "Friends and Foes of the Ethiopian Revolution" made it clear that the junta defines as foes the Eritrean Fronts, the EPRP and all other anti-junta forces. The Eritrean struggle, the paper emphasized, is the action

of divisive groups paid by Saudi Arabia and Iran.

The seminar, called a "historic and scientific parley" by the junta, closed on June 27 passing the expected "resolution" supporting the junta's war efforts and condemning the Eritrean struggle. In fact, according to Tamrat Ferede, the seminar had smashed "the intermittent propaganda of counter-revolutionary groups like the EPRP concerning the situation". So, thanks to the week-long seminar, "the masses are no longer confused and misguided on the situation in the region" (Eritrea).

Putting the war cries to practice has not been so easy and it is bound to be difficult. Up to now the junta's attempts to break the encirclement by the Fronts has not succeeded. On the other hand, while social imperialism and its puppets continue to back the junta the Cuban mercenaries have not been so enthusiastic about throwing themselves into the fight directly. They know that the Jijiga operation cannot be easily repeated in Eritrea. Meanwhile, the junta continues to bomb and kill and is bleeding the Ethiopian masses white by forcing them to pay money, to donate blood, to serve as cannon fodder for the reactionary war against the Eritrean people.

The EPRP, on its part, continues to firmly support the independence struggle of the Eritrean masses. The Party, as it has stated on so many occasions, reiterates again that there can be no solution to the conflict so long as the junta refuses to recognize the right of the Eritrean masses. In this respect, in such a situation, the only solution is for the Eritrean masses to persevere in their struggle, to settle secondary differences and coordinate their forces and persist in the armed struggle against the fascist junta and social imperialism as it is not possible to separate the two aspects of the struggle. Whatever may be the intensity of the junta's destructive actions, whatever may be the setbacks, victory inevitably and ineluctably belongs to the Eritrean masses for their cause is JUST! !

### MAY DAY 1978

#### UNDER THE BANNER OF OUR MARTYRS & PEOPLES' WAR

While the anti-worker fascist junta celebrated May Day with revisionist fanfare, the oppressed Ethiopian masses observed this historic day

with a firm commitment to intensify the struggle against the fascist junta and social imperialism. In the areas controlled by the EPRA, the day was observed by fighters and peasants who expressed their revolutionary optimism and commitment and who paid their solemn tributes to the fallen comrades.

On May Day 1976, in the first celebration of its kind in which the workers came out to express their stand, the proletariat and oppressed masses raised high the banner of the EPRP and clearly expressed their rejection of the junta's rule. It was the day in which the junta realized in no uncertain terms that the EPRP has beaten it thoroughly and unequivocally in the political struggle. As it is to be expected, workers who expressed their firm support to the EPRP and opposed the junta's planned march on Eritrea (the so-called RAZA PROJECT) were repressed by the fascist junta. From this time onwards, the junta and the Meisone thugs hastened their war preparations to liquidate the EPRP.

May Day 1977 came after revolutionaries had been subjected to the junta's anti-EPRP repression campaign, to its house-to-house searches, to its summary executions, brutal torture, massive arrests and the like. It came at a time when worker leaders like Marcos Hagos and others had paid the ultimate sacrifice heroically struggling for the liberation of the masses. It came at a time when heroic EPRP leaders like Tesfaye Debesai and others had sacrificed themselves in the process of the sacred struggle. May Day 1977 was observed amidst the sound of bullets as the junta and Meisone murderers roamed from Kebele to kebele killing and murdering hundreds of militants and democrats. But the bullets did not come only from the reactionary side. The EPRP and the revolutionary forces also fought, arms in hands, giving due punishment to countless fascists and social fascists.

May Day 1977 was like the past year a day of struggle. But it was a day that came in a year which has witnessed higher and more bitter forms of struggle. In this way, it augured the coming days and months and years of prolonged struggle entailing heavier sacrifices and carrying ever more new victories.

In celebrating May Day 1978, the Party and the EPRA have taken due note of the past and all that it entailed be it positive or negative. To begin with, the last year has seen the massive intervention of social imperialism, there has been the Ogaden war and all the consequences of these. The Party has also lived through a savage and barbarian terror campaign unleashed by the fascists and their Russian masters. Countless militants have been killed, tortured and jailed. In these long nights of terror

and blood, vallant fighters of the Party have stood firm, fought back, died and assured the continuation of the struggle. At the same time, traitorous vermins who had sneaked into the Party hoping for easy and sure victory so as to realize their naked ambition for power not only capitulated to the fascists but became the coordinators and executors of the fascist terror. But on the whole, the Party stood firm, adopted newer tactics, dug deeper and persisted in the struggle. The EPRA, on the other hand, successfully carried out a long rectification campaign, eliminated erroneous tendecies, summed up positive qualities, revolutionized further its structure and fighting and organizing methods and intensified the armed operations against the fascist junta and social imperialism.

May Day 1978 has been celebrated under the banner of our fallen martyrs. It has been celebrated under the banner of the protracted armed struggle and peoples' war being waged by the EPRP/A. May Day has been a day of reaffirming the determination to persist in the struggle, to rally around the Party and the EPRA more firmly and wholly. To continue to fight under the leadership of the proletarian party, to face all hardships, to combat vacillators and capitulators accordingly, to struggle against the class enemies dauntlessly, and to put into practice the party's call to: "Strengthen what is weakened and Consolidate what is Strong" as far as the organization is concerned.

Just as on May Day 1976, the rallying cry remains to be: "The EPRP is Our Party!", "Down with the Fascist Junta!", "We say firmly "Death to Social Imperialism!", "Long Live and Victory to the People's War led by the EPRP!". We say with conviction that many more Assimbas are flourishing and that the blood shed by our martyrs and the heroic Ethiopian proletariat, the leader of the revolution, paves the way for the victory of the EPRP and the oppressed masses over the fascist junta and social imperialism.

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The Ethiopian proletariat played the leading role in the February 1974 Revolution which toppled the Haile Sellasie regime. After the junta take-over, the proletariat has continued to lead the revolutionary struggle against the fascists and imperialism. The proletariat is organized within and around its party-the EPRP- and has also its own clandestine trade union (Il'aama). The death of trade union leaders like Marcos Hagos and countless others have not succeeded to break the firm determination of the workers. On the contrary, workers have stepped up their revolutionary political

armed and economic struggle against the fascist junta and its Russian masters. By persisting on the path of the martyrs and struggling under the EPRP, they are sure to win! ! !

### SHABA/KABUL/ETHIOPIA...

### SOCIAL IMPERIALISM'S HEGEMONIST DRIVE

The armed incursion into Shaba (formerly Katanga) by Angola-based and Russian supported former gendarmes of Tshombe, the coup d'etat in Afghanistan which brought pro-Moscow officers and Parties to power, the attempt to oust Mengistu or at least to make the junta accept Meisone back into its fold. . . . are all connected events-they all show, along with other events, the feverish drive of social imperialism to impose its hegemony over a number of countries considered by it to be key areas for its world-wide hegemonist ambitions. C d'etats, terror and outright intervention using tested Cuban mercenaries have now become the known practices of Soviet social imperialism.

In Africa, and especially in the Horn of Africa, social imperialism is the dangerous enemy facing the oppressed people in their struggle for liberation. Social imperialism attaches great importance to the Horn as it falls squarely within its plan to control the Red Sea and the oil routes and thereby effect a strangle hold over Europe. This is in addition to the Russians expressed ambitions of plundering the raw materials of Africa as a whole. Soviet social imperialism is dangerous not only because it is ruthless and aggressive but because it masquerades as a "socialist" country and as a "friend of the people" struggling against U.S. imperialism. In this way it has duped quite a number of forces in many areas and especially in Africa, so much so that there are some forces against whom it is openly working but who still consider it a "strategic ally" !

Soviet social imperialism is dangerous also because, unlike U.S. imperialism, it still has to suffer disastrous defeat in the hands of the oppressed masses. The Moscow expansionists have no sizable local protest movement to fear. They have and continue to stifle dissent, they hound and persecute genuine Marxists, jail them in psychiatric hospitals and drive them crazy or pack them off to concentration camps. At home and in their satellite countries, the social imperialists have imposed a rule of terror and dictatorship. They falsify events and hide their role in foreign countries from the Soviet people. Thus, with their reactionary hands relatively free they have stepped up their meddling in the affairs of other countries.

Africa is a contention point as well for itself as for its importance for events elsewhere (e.g., Europe). This is why social imperialism has stepped up its activities in Africa. It backs anti-people regimes, foments wars and rivalries, exploits existing conflicts, uses arms and weapons and other "aid" to trap and neo-colonize. Its activities in Ethiopia and Zaire, considered key countries by Moscow, are cases in point. In addition, social imperialism is the main backer of the bloody regime of Idi Amin, through Cuba it strives to enlarge its influence in Equatorial Guinea (run by another dictator), it plots and works to control and subvert the liberation struggles of the peoples of Southern Africa, it is conspiring to foment a rebellion against Banda of Malawi and to set-up a pro-Moscow regime, it has stepped up its contacts with military men and trade union elements in a number of other places, etc.. It exploits differences to attach itself to one force or another (Egypt-Libya/Ethiopia-Somalia, etc.). In areas where the popular struggle threatens its client regime it sends its caribbean mercenary troops from Havana who sing non-alignment to practice alignment and neo-colonization. Truly, social imperialism is the dangerous enemy of the African peoples.

The struggle of the African people against the two super-powers can only achieve victory if the machinations of social imperialism are exposed and combatted. To declare oneself anti-imperialist or for the libera-

tion of Africa and then to turn a blind eye to social imperialism's counter-revolutionary activities is to adopt an attitude that is sure to lead to conquest and subjugation. African revolutionaries must see through the demagogy of the social imperialists and should entertain no illusion about this imperialist power. Moscow is adept at deception. When it backs a fascist regime like Mengistu's it labels it progressive and even socialist and presents its intervention as an anti-imperialist act, an internationalist endeavour. When it backs certain forces to oust a regime (as it tried in Zaire) it labels its clients as revolutionaries struggling to overthrow a reactionary regime. That Mobutu and his likes are anti-people and reactionary is beyond dispute. But it is equally beyond dispute that social imperialism is out only to establish its own puppet reactionary regime and not to liberate the masses, who need no foreign liberators anyway.

African revolutionary forces must evolve clear and concrete forms of coordinating their activities to realize the liberation of the African masses. This can be worked out on the basis of an all-out and determined struggle against the two super powers and by uniting all the democratic and revolutionary forces in a United Front to be led by revolutionary Proletarian Parties. A close monitoring of the social imperialist offensive in the continent and elsewhere as well as the massive arms buildup undertaken by Moscow can easily point out in bold relief that Africa's great danger comes from the enemy that pretends to be a friend, from the imperialist that is wearing the "socialist" mask. In short, the struggle for the liberation of Africa, the struggle against U.S. led imperialism necessarily calls for an intense and firm struggle against social imperialism. This is the only way to stop Africa from being the playground of imperialists and reactionaries.

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