

ERITREA IN STRUGGLE

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Hail the EPLF-ELF Unity Agreement

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) held a meeting from April 22-24 in the liberated areas to implement the "Document for the Implementation of the October 20th Agreement" they signed on March 15, 1978 in Khartoum. The document signed on March 15 outlines the specific principles and procedures for implementing the general principles agreed upon by the two fronts in their October 20th, 1977 meeting.

In their October 20th agreement the two fronts "ascertaining their conviction on the necessity of forming a single national democratic front in the Eritrean field a) agreed to form a joint political leadership, b) agreed to form joint committees in the military information, foreign relations, economic and social affairs fields, c) agreed that the joint political leadership will be responsible for the preparation of a unification congress in accordance with the common political principles and procedures agreed upon by the leaderships of both organizations, d) called on the rank and file of the so-called "Popular Liberation Forces" (the Sabbe clique—Ed.) to join either of the two fronts."

Under the heading "Document for the Implementation of the October 20th Agreement Between the Eritrean Liberation Front and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front," the document signed on March 15, 1978 underlines the political principles binding the two fronts and defines the concrete steps to be taken to implement them, i.e., the formation of the joint political leadership, the joint committees in the five various fields and on the unification congress. Below are the essential parts of the document.

At this stage our struggle is witnessing the most complex situation in the world and the region. Our colonial enemy is increasing its strength to liquidate our revolution militarily and escalating its political and diplomatic efforts to distort the justness of our cause and isolate our political struggle internationally. At the same time, internal reaction is likewise labouring to disrupt the unity of the Eritrean people. At this crucial stage of our struggle, therefore, the unity of the two organizations becomes the central and fundamental issue in the Eritrean revolution in order to challenge the enemy militarily and frustrate its political and military plans, to score more victories in all fields, and to achieve the goal of complete national independence for which our people have offered their resolute sacrifice. The October 20th agreement to ascertain the need for the creation of a single national democratic organization came as a result of the belief of the two fronts in the creation of such an organization. The existence of such a belief in the two fronts and their agreement in this central goal solidifies our challenge to the force of Ethiopian colonialism. Furthermore, it indicates the

firm ground on which our revolution stands, and ascertains the victory of our revolution and democratic principles in our country.

To accomplish this step and implement it practically, a succession of meetings of representatives of two sides were held in Khartoum during March 6-15, 1978 and the two sides adopted points for the practical implementation of the Agreement (of October 20th).

I. GENERAL POLITICAL PRINCIPLES

The following political principles have been agreed upon by the two fronts and will be binding for both fronts.

1. To believe in full Eritrean independence, and be anti-Ethiopian colonialism, world imperialism and zionism.
2. To be against internal reaction, that is, against all those who weaken the unity of the Eritrean people exploiting the ills of tribalism, regionalism and religion, and exploit and oppress the Eritrean people.
3. To be against any foreign interference that touches upon the identity and unity of the Eritrean people.
4. Safeguard the democratic rights of the masses.
5. Struggle to strengthen the unity of the Eritrean people.
6. Strengthen solidarity with progressive forces and liberation movements.

II. ON THE FORMATION OF A JOINT SUPREME POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

A. Formation

The joint supreme political leadership is formed from 6 members of leaderships of the two organizations, each having an equal number of (three) representatives.

Each organization has the right to change its representatives.

B. Duties and Powers

1. It is to be guided by the general political principles set in all its functions.
2. It is the highest body that sees the implementation of functions agreed upon by the two organizations.
3. It represents the two organizations in any negotiations that may be made with Ethiopian colonialism.
4. It coordinates and directs the works of the other joint committees in different fields.
5. On the basis of plans agreed upon, it gives directions to the joint foreign delegation.
6. It divides contributions jointly acquired among the two organizations.
7. In order to create unity of outlook, it conduct seminars at the rank and file, cadres and leadership levels.
8. It calls emergency meetings of the joint committees.

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9. It calls emergency meetings of the two leaderships.
10. It solves problems or misunderstandings that might be created in joint activities, and it can create a fact-finding committee.
11. It presents memoranda to governments and international organizations.
12. It sends a delegation from its members abroad when necessary.

C. Meetings and Reports

1. It holds regular meetings every two months; and when called for, it holds emergency meetings.
2. It presents regular reports of its activities to the leaderships of the two organizations every two months.

D. Duration

It commences its works on April 20, 1978 and continues to function until the total unity of the two organizations materializes.

III. ON THE FORMATION OF JOINT COMMITTEES

1. The Joint Military Committee . . .
 1. To draw joint military plans and implement them.
 2. To exchange military techniques and experiences.
2. The Joint Information Committee . . .
 1. To expose the conspiracies, propaganda and military aggression of the enemy.
 2. To inform the world public of the justness and legitimacy of the Eritrean people's struggle.
3. Joint Foreign Delegation . . .
 1. To present memoranda to governments and international organizations on the justness and legitimacy of the Eritrean people's struggle.
 2. To ask for political, material and moral support from fraternal, friendly and supporting countries and organizations.
 3. To co-ordinate the offices of the two fronts abroad.
 4. To hand over assistance acquired from abroad to the supreme political leadership.
4. Joint Economic Committee . . .
 1. Work to alleviate the problems of the economic liberation struggle, fulfill what needs to be fulfilled and solve the problems that face the struggle.
 2. Draw and implement joint plans to alleviate and solve the economic problems of the people.
5. Joint Social Affairs Committee . . .
 1. Work to alleviate and solve the problems of people who have been hurt, forced to emigrate or be displaced due to illness, drought, war or other natural causes.

IV. ON THE UNITY CONGRESS

1. A four member committee is to be formed to study the differences that exist between the two fronts in all fields, and it presents its report to the supreme political leadership six months after the date of its formation.
2. The supreme political leadership likewise prepares a special report of its accomplishments during this period, and calling for a wider conference of the two leaderships, presents its reports and that of the study committee.
3. In this conference the two leaderships study the two reports, and when they have reached an agreement, they decide on the procedure of the unity congress.

V. ON THE RANK AND FILE OF THE "P.L.F."

1. Once again, we call on the rank and file members of the "PLF" to join either one of the two organizations.
2. We call on friendly countries not to support this force.

In concluding, we call on our resolute people and the heroic fighters of our revolution to move to greater victories and unity with all their capacity and efforts everywhere on the basis of this historic step. Moreover, we call on friends and supporters to support this step and increase their political, material and moral support.

**Long Live the Unity of the Eritrean People!
Long Live the Eritrean Revolution!
Defeat to Ethiopian Colonialism!**

The implementation of the March 15 document has been effective since April 24. The Joint Supreme Political Leadership and the various joint committees have been formed and have begun their work. Upon concluding the meeting the Joint Supreme Political Leadership issued a statement of declaration to the Eritrean people on the important step taken to bring national unity. It addressed large mass gatherings in both Keren and Agordat. On their part, the Eritrean people have responded to the unity agreement with deep felt rejoicing and optimism.

The important document signed by EPLF and ELF and its implementation is a significant political victory for the Eritrean revolution on the road towards the realization of genuine national unity. It is a correct step that corresponds with the objective situation in the Eritrean struggle and tackles the crucial question raised by the Eritrean revolution. The two fronts have agreed to implement the correct step by step path to principled national unity—a national unity that safeguards the interests of the revolution and the broad masses. The minimum basis of unity between the two fronts laid down in the document, i.e., the political principles binding the two fronts and the methods of implementation, are in conformity with the national democratic line. It means that with each front maintaining its organizational and political independence the political and ideological obstacles to the establishment of a single national democratic front will gradually be eliminated through unity and struggle. Once that it accomplished a unification congress will be held to form a single national democratic front.

The signing of this important document and its implementation at this particular juncture of the Eritrean struggle are of paramount significance. As the document rightly states, at a time when "our colonial enemy is increasing its strength to liquidate our revolution militarily and is escalating its political and diplomatic efforts to distort our just cause and isolate our political struggle internationally and at the same time when internal reaction is laboring to disrupt the unity of the Eritrean people the unity of the two organizations becomes the central and fundamental issue in the Eritrean revolution." At a time when the Eritrean revolution is threatened by the onslaught of various powerful forces, at a time when the Ethiopian aggressors with the all-out support of their Russian and Cuban backers have launched a large scale military, political and diplomatic offensive to crush and isolate the Eritrean revolution, at a time when the Soviet Union and Cuba have escalated their intervention to extinguish the flames of the Eritrean revolution to an unprecedented level and at a time when the U.S. imperialists have intensified their subversive neo-colonialist activities against the Eritrean struggle, the forging of national unity in the Eritrean field, stands out as a question of prime necessity. The forging of principled national unity is an indispensable weapon for the Eritrean revolution to foil all the external and internal counter-revolutionary machinations directed against it and to guarantee its victory. The important document signed between EPLF and ELF and its implementation will enable the Eritrean liberation struggle to unite all its forces and direct all its energies against the common enemy and finally emerge victorious.

The realization of principled national unity is a question of strategic importance to the Eritrean revolution. It is a principal condition for the victory of the revolution. Throughout the 17 years of our people's heroic armed struggle, a protracted life and death struggle has been waged to unite the struggle and the fighting masses under a correct political line and one national democratic front. During the 1960s when the movement was dominated by backward, reactionary and divisive elements, the Eritrean masses and the democratic and patriotic rank and file fighters resolutely fought for the establishment of a revolutionary democratic movement to fulfill the age-old demands and aspirations of the masses—national independence and liberation. In 1970, the EPLF was formed as a revolutionary organization representing the national democratic line to lead the revolution. The formation of EPLF heralded a new chapter in the history of the struggle and be-

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People's Militia Formed in Keren and Dekemhare

EPLF's overall strategy of liberating the whole of Eritrea step by step is based on mobilizing and raising the consciousness of the masses. The objective is to bring fundamental social changes and replace the reactionary colonial and feudal structures with a social order fully representing the interests of the masses. To guarantee such a development the EPLF leads and assists the masses in setting up people's assemblies and people's militias.

In this spirit, Keren and Dekemhare established people's militias in the first week of February and on the 24th of February respectively. In the spectacular and daring advances of last year, it is to be remembered that the heroic EPLA fighters liberated the cities of Keren and Dekemhare within a span of three days on July 6 and 8 respectively. Even before their liberation, however, the EPLF had prepared the ground for a full participation of the masses by secretly organizing and politicizing the people in their respective cities according to their class and group affiliations. The citizens of Keren and Dekemhare organized and politicized by their vanguard, the EPLF, and fully aware of their role in the revolution waged a forceful political struggle smashing the colonialist and feudo-capitalist structures and replacing them with people's assemblies.

To defend the People's Power and the gains of the revolution from internal and external enemies Keren and Dekemhare established people's militias in the first week of February and on the 24th day of February respectively.

Members of the newly formed people's militias in Keren and Dekemhare are composed of workers, women and youth whose high political consciousness has been tested in practice. During the ceremony held at the completion of the intensive political and military training given to members of the people's militias, the broad masses of Keren and Dekemhare expressed their joy over the achievement by organizing mass rallies and peaceful demonstrations. In Keren the occasion led to a spectacular demonstration involving the broad masses. The newly formed people's militia participated in the demonstration accompanied by members of the

various mass organizations and tanks plucked out live by the heroic EPLA fighters in the midst of the heated fire of battle with the enemy. Throughout the demonstration the broad masses, unrestrained with their pride and joy, could be seen clapping and embracing their new fighters, the people's militia.



Peoples militia (mainly workers) in training in Dekemhare

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came the prime condition for the realization of principled national unity. The resolute struggle waged by EPLF, the Eritrean masses and the democratic fighters in the ELF for the cause of principled unity has, by traversing many hurdles, achieved many successes. The counter-revolutionary civil war declared by the reactionaries in the ELF in 1972 was brought to cessation in late 1974. Since then great efforts have been made by the EPLF vanguard, the fighting Eritrean masses who in particular formed their own independent committee to unite the two fronts, and the democratic fighters in the ELF to build genuine national unity. The several attempts made by the internal reactionaries to impose an unprincipled national unity on the Eritrean people and to weaken the democratic forces have been thoroughly exposed and shattered.

During the 17 years of heroic armed struggle, many lives have been sacrificed, hundreds of heroic fighters have been martyred for the cause of unity of the Eritrean liberation movement and the Eritrean masses. Hence, the agreement reached by EPLF and ELF—the signing of the important document and its implementation—is an achievement brought through an arduous and protracted struggle waged by the Eritrean masses and all the democratic and patriotic fighters. The signing of the document and its implementation are a victory for the national democratic line in the Eritrean struggle, for the truly revolutionary, democratic and

patriotic forces who now have the dominant position in the struggle. On the other hand it is a big setback and defeat for the internal reactionaries who are bent on impeding the progress of the revolution and disrupting the unity of the Eritrean people. The Sabbe clique is the biggest loser. The EPLF-ELF agreement demands the dissolution of the Sabbe clique and calls on the rank and file manipulated by it to join the ranks of the patriotic struggle, thus isolating the Sabbe clique. The EPLF-ELF agreement is likewise a big blow to the external enemies of the Eritrean revolution whose interests would have otherwise been served by the disunity of the Eritrean Liberation movement. Now that the Eritrean liberation movement is closing its ranks the Ethiopian aggressors and all the forces arrayed against the Eritrean revolution will be met by a united force of the Eritrean revolutionary and patriotic struggle. There is no doubt that the united force of our peoples' heroic struggle will frustrate the counterrevolutionary machinations against the Eritrean revolution, smash the Ethiopian aggressors "all out offensive" and be crowned with victory.

The Association of Eritrean Students in North America vigorously hails the important document signed by the EPLF and ELF and its implementation. We are convinced that the thorough implementation of the agreement will lead to the realization of principled national unity which will definitely accelerate and guarantee the victory of the Eritrean revolution. We call on all the friends of the Eritrean revolution to strongly support the document signed by EPLF and ELF and its implementation and firmly stand on the side of the Eritrean revolution.

EPLF Replies to Pravda's Slander of Eritrean Struggle

In a Pravda editorial dated March 15, 1978, the Soviet Union slandered the Eritrean struggle as "objectively helping the realization of imperialist designs" and pronounced its "ideological and political" prerogative to support the Ethiopian fascist junta against the Eritrean revolution. The EPLF has appropriately replied to Pravda's slanderous charges. Following is the full text of EPLF's reply released on April 28, 1978 under the heading "Position Statement."

"On March 15, 1978 a certain Alexander Serbin published a statement in *Pravda*, the organ of the CPSU in which he alleges that:

- a. The imperialist forces are interfering in Ethiopia's internal affairs through the activities of the "secessionists" in the north-eastern "province" of Ethiopia.
- b. The aim of this "secessionist" war is to weaken Ethiopia and c. to deprive Ethiopia of access to the sea.
- d. The Eritreans are taking part in, and objectively working to safeguard imperialist designs.

Convinced of the justness and progressive nature of our anti-imperialist struggle and convinced that these false accusations by *Pravda* cannot in any manner affect our determination to persist in armed struggle until final victory, the EPLF wants to clarify its positions vis-a-vis these false accusations.

1. That *Pravda* claims Eritrea as a "province" of Ethiopia is a gross falsification of history. The evolution of Ethiopia and Eritrea as two separate entities and that Eritrea never formed part of present day Ethiopia (formed by military conquest) is clear to all those who want to see the Eritrean question in its correct picture. Eritrea "officially" was turned into the 14th province of Ethiopia when it was annexed by force of arms in 1962, thus abrogating the UN-imposed federal resolution (390 A/V of 1950). *Pravda's* claim is, therefore, echoing the Ethiopian claim. Needless to say *Pravda* is echoing the colonial claims of Ethiopia. In a similar manner colonial France maintained that Algeria was an "overseas province" until the heroic Algerian people crushed French colonialism. Thirty years back the Soviet Union recognized the independence of Eritrea.

How, then, can *Pravda's* claim be explained?

2. *Pravda* is very much "worried" about Ethiopia's access to the sea and its progress. Again we cite another historical fact. When, 30 years ago, the Soviet Union, along with a few other states, advocated the independence of Eritrea in opposition to the U.S. proposal of "federation" with Ethiopia, the problem of Ethiopia's access to the sea existed. In Africa alone, there exist 14 land-locked countries. Why then doesn't *Pravda* justify and support the provocation of wars by these land-locked countries against neighbouring countries to have access to the sea? The welfare and progress of the Ethiopian people interests the Ethiopian peoples as well as the Eritrean people, who have been and are still oppressed by the same enemy and against which they are fighting in common. But Ethiopia's access to the sea is one that can and should be discussed and settled between two sovereign states and cannot be imposed by force or through foreign intervention. That the EPLF has incessantly strived and continues to strive to create strong ties of solidarity with the heroic Ethiopian masses is a fact to which the Ethiopian masses testify. *Pravda's* defamations are therefore void of principles and the author has no background on the subject for which he pretends to be a specialist, or *Pravda* has become more humanitarian than it was 30 years back.

3. Reading *Pravda's* statement one gets the feeling that the Eritrean people's armed struggle emerged in February 3, 1977 with Menghistu's "revolution." The armed struggle of the Eritrean people (now in its 17th year) is the continuation and the highest stage of the Eritrean people's struggle against foreign domination, exploitation and oppression—to create a new and just society. In a span of 22 years, the U.S. alone provided Haile Selassie's regime military support worth more than 600 million dollars to crush the Eritrean and Ethiopian people's aspirations to independence and democracy. In that situation the Ethiopian ruling classes tried to portray the Eritrean revolution as a tool of external forces—the Arabs. And in that situation the Soviet Union never provided any form of support to the Eritrean revolution—not even moral. On the contrary, the Soviet Union maintained good relations with the Haile Selassie regime and contributed to the consolidation of the economic infrastructure of the oppressive regime. Against all odds the Eritrean people, relying on their own forces, persisted in armed struggle and, along with the mass uprising in Ethiopia, toppled the Haile Selassie regime. The present regime of Menghistu, which is a continuation of the old regime, inherited this problem and escalated the war of oppression and genocide against the Eritrean people.

The Eritrean revolution started and continues to exist because of the objective conditions in Eritrea—the Eritrean people are colonized, exploited and oppressed and face physical extermination. These facts cannot be denied by all peace-loving peoples. Nor can a revolutionary assert that revolutions can be imported from some capitals abroad. That the Eritrean revolution is by its nature anti-imperialist is crystal clear. The progressive nature of EPLF is verified not in slogans but in its day to day work with the Eritrean masses and the efforts it is making to create a new society. The Eritrean people and the EPLF are conscious of the objectives for which they are struggling, of their true enemies and friends and do not need any labels as to the nature of the struggle they are conducting. Similarly, the Eritrean people are conscious of where their true interests lie and are not in need of any "advice" or "directive" as to the path they have to follow to safeguard their interests.

Two points to be made clear are that the Ethiopian regime's arrogant refusal to live in good neighbourly relations with a progressive, anti-imperialist Eritrea clearly exposes its expansionist and fascist nature and that the Soviet Union's support to a fascist regime objectively weakens the revolutionary forces and creates fertile ground for U.S. imperialism. In so far as the Eritrean question is concerned, Carter has, in his recent statements, firmly expressed his government's opposition to Eritrean independence. How is it to be explained then that *Pravda's* position perfectly coincides with the U.S. position which *Pravda* accuses of manipulating.

The Eritrean revolution is not a tool of external forces—imperialism or otherwise. As a genuine revolutionary force the EPLF has created the necessary material conditions with which the Eritrean people will safeguard their neutrality and independence. The EPLF strongly affirms its determination to resolutely oppose and frustrate all machinations to impose all covert and overt forms of domination on the Eritrean people.

Pravda's statement and its implications are clear. They are unfounded, false accusations to mask the true intention of the Soviet Union—that of safeguarding strategic (national) interests sacrificing the liberation of peoples."

Film and Cultural Shows in the Eastern Front

From January 14 to 16, 1978, the EPLF gave film showings to over 7,000 people in the historic town of Zula and the nearby villages of Foro and Afeta. Four films were shown on this occasion of which the first three dealt with advances of the EPLF in 1973-4, in 1975 and in 1977. The last and fourth film dealt with the victorious struggle of the Kampuchean people. The purpose of the film showing was, on the one hand, to familiarize the masses with the many advances that the vanguard EPLF is achieving in many fields and, on the other, to build solidarity and to show the unity of the Eritrean people's struggle with the struggles of oppressed peoples and revolutionary forces elsewhere in the world.



A revolutionary culture for a new society.

The residents of Zula, Foro and Afeta were extremely pleased with the film showing. The EPLF's cultural branch also visited Zula, Foro and Afeta from February 13 to 16, 1978.

The cultural branch was warmly received. On its part the cultural group entertained the people with revolutionary songs and music from the various nationalities. It was easy to see that after so many years of colonialist and reactionary propaganda aimed at dividing the masses on cultural and religious lines, the cultural show was contributing to the breaking down of the barriers created by the colonialists and internal reaction and uniting the people with a new and revolutionary culture. The masses of Zula and its surroundings stated that the cultural show was useful in bridging the artificial division created among the three dominant nationalities in the region: the Tigre, Saho and Afar nationalities, as well as a large number of Arabs who had settled in this area since the period of Italian colonialism.

The film and cultural shows are part of the struggle of mobilizing and politicizing the masses of our people. For example, backward ideas towards women are breaking down. During a slide show that was presented four months earlier the attitude that women should not be seen together with men was prevalent and the EPLF was forced to organize two separate slide showings for men and women. Subsequent struggle waged by EPLF against this backward idea resulted in equal participation of women and men in the film and cultural shows. This proved to the masses that the EPLF is indeed a serious and genuine force of liberation determined to bring social transformation of the Eritrean society.

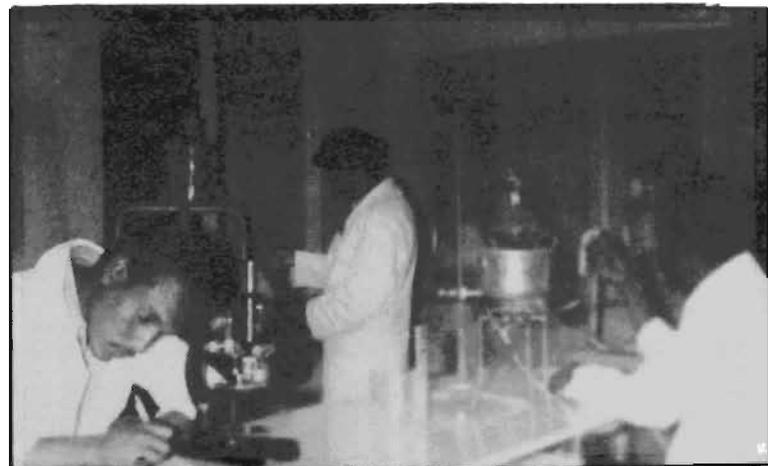
The masses of Zula, Foro and Afeta are solidifying their principled links with their vanguard front and participating in the struggle for national independence and liberation.

(Adopted from the February-March issue of *Vanguard* Vol.III, No.2)

Central Chemical Laboratory Established in the Liberated Areas

Scientific study and research has an important role to play in the on-going national democratic revolution in Eritrea. Conscious of this, the EPLF has recently established, in the liberated area, a central chemical laboratory to conduct various studies and research. The establishment of the chemical laboratory is an important development which is an integral part of the struggle to build a new democratic Eritrea. The chemical laboratory is part of the handicraft section which is the basis for the flourishing industrial development and has close links with the various sections in agriculture, mining and other production units. Its general thrust is to make essential studies and research to improve and increase production methods and output.

The newly established chemical laboratory lacks many of the necessary tools that befit a modern laboratory. However, it is striving in spite of these limitations to make good its stated goals—largely with laboratory instruments and tools captured from the enemy arsenal. It is already clear that the young technicians assigned to the laboratory have made strides in their undertaking of important research and studies for efficient and inexpensive methods of production in areas such as soapmaking and the manufacture of alcohol, fertilizers and gun powder. Furthermore, research is being conducted in analyzing and identifying stones and minerals from all over Eritrea with the aim of exploiting such mines and opening them up for production.



Scientific research in the central chemical laboratory.

Soviet-Cuban Intervention Cannot Crush Eritrea

Today, the whole world is witnessing a massive Soviet and Cuban intervention to crush the Eritrean revolution. The Kremlin and Cuba have thrown their all-out military, political and diplomatic backing behind the Ethiopian fascist junta in its war of genocide against the Eritrean people.

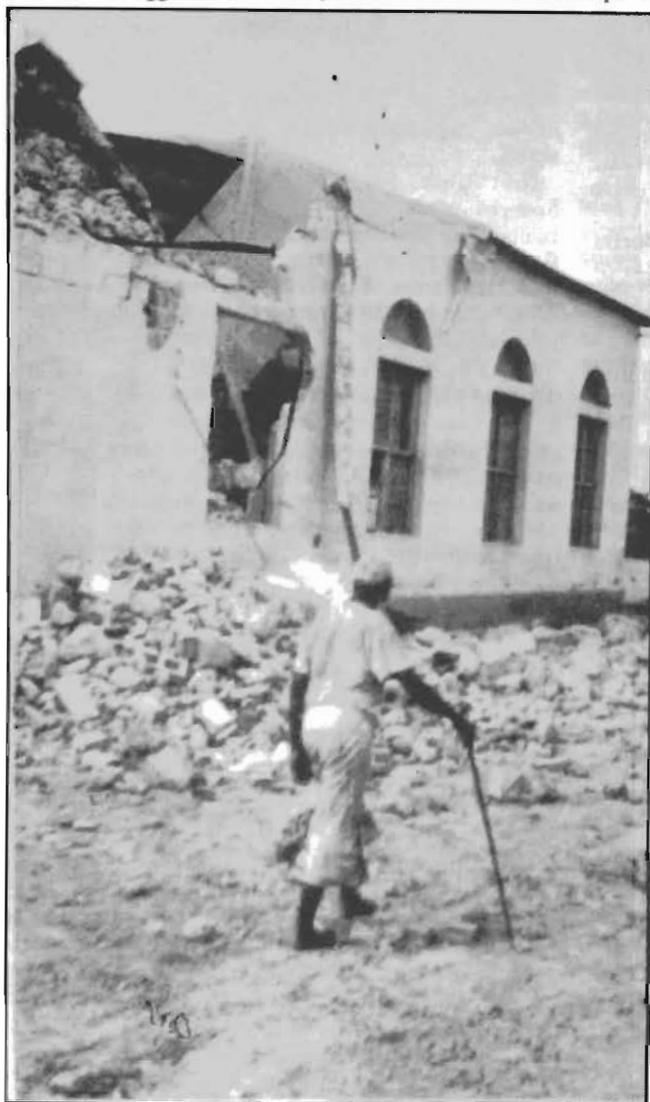
One billion dollars worth of sophisticated weapons has been flown to the Ethiopian fascists from the Soviet Union, most of which is being used against the Eritrean revolution, while Cuban along with Zionist experts have been training tens of thousands of Ethiopian troops for deployment in Eritrea. Even more startling is the deployment of 17,000 Cuban troops and the presence of thousands of Soviet advisors in Ethiopia and Eritrea to crush the Ethiopian and Eritrean struggles. Moreover, about 25 Soviet warships have

entered Eritrean territorial waters, four of which have been shelling the port city of Massawa since early December 1977. Soviet supplied MIGs are engaged in daily savage raids of the liberated areas of Eritrea. Over 3,500 Cuban troops have already arrived in our country's capital, Asmara, and are actively assisting the Ethiopian aggressor troops against the Eritrean people. The Soviet Union's and Cuba's intervention to extinguish the Eritrean revolution is unprecedented.

The Soviet Union and Cuba have also been carrying out a concerted propaganda campaign hailing the Ethiopian fascist junta as "anti-imperialist," "socialist" and even comparing it to the great Bolshevik revolution and slandering the revolutionary armed struggle of the Eritrean people as a "reactionary," "separatist" movement instigated by imperialism and reactionary Arab regimes. Along with its intensified military involvement against the Eritrean revolution the Kremlin has recently escalated its slander of the Eritrean struggle to the most rabidly monstrous level. The vicious attack in a *Pravda* editorial on March 15, 1978 is a case in point. (The EPLF has replied to this—see EPLF Replies to *Pravda's* slander of Eritrean Struggle.)

Nevertheless, the large-scale Soviet and Cuban military intervention and their pernicious propaganda notwithstanding, the Eritrean struggle led by EPLF is a thoroughgoing revolutionary struggle capable of militarily and politically defending itself from any counter-revolutionary attack. Let facts speak for themselves. The Eritrean struggle is a truly anti-colonial, anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and anti-zionist national liberation struggle. None other than the enemies of the Eritrean struggle dispute this truth. Experience has shown that the Eritrean struggle is a mighty revolutionary struggle capable of defeating its enemies. The brilliant victories achieved in the last year and early this year alone testify to the fact. To the humiliation of its enemies, Eritrea's victories continue monthly, daily, hourly.

But the enemies of the Eritrean struggle have not and will not be reconciled. A coordinated Soviet, Cuban and Ethiopian offensive against Eritrea is now about to begin—a three-pronged attack, from the Tigray border in the south, from the sea (Massawa) and from Asmara. The fascist junta, the Soviet Union and Cuba are making a last-ditch attempt to turn the situation in Eritrea around. This genocidal campaign will cause more destruction in Eritrea, but as to reversing the tide in Eritrea, never! The Eritrean people led by EPLF are fully ready to frustrate it. Nothing can stop the Eritrean people from achieving their long cherished objectives—national independence and liberation. The EPLF and the Eritrean masses will continue to fight for the total liberation of their country and will appropriately defend their revolution from any attack be it military, political, propaganda, etc. By persisting in the self-reliant protracted people's war they have embarked upon they will surmount all difficulties and achieve complete victory.



One of the residential houses in Massawa demolished by the savage shelling of Soviet warships.

Junta Escalates War of Genocide in Eritrea

The fascist regime in Ethiopia, preposterously declaring it will "destroy" and "totally obliterate" the Eritrean liberation movement, has tremendously escalated its genocidal war against the Eritrean people. In a frenzied manner the junta has set out to conduct the most brutal campaign of aggression and genocide in Eritrea.

The fascist leaders are making repeated statements of their intention to physically exterminate the Eritrean people. This is what the blood-stained Mengistu declared on April 26, 1978 in Havana, Cuba and on May Day in Addis Ababa. A well orchestrated chauvinist hysteria is being whipped up to pit the Ethiopian masses against the Eritrean people and bring incalculable damage to the relations of the two fraternal neighborly peoples. Towards this end on April 6, 1978 the fascist leaders declared to the Ethiopian people "a bitter struggle awaits us as regards the total obliteration of all reactionary groups including the Eritrean secessionists, and we have to brace ourselves for that."

"Everything to the war front in Eritrea" has become the slogan of the Ethiopian fascists. They have directed all their might against the Eritrean struggle, concentrating tens of thousands of troops on the southern Eritrean border and dispatching columns of convoys loaded with ammunition, heavy weapons and other supplies to Eritrea.

Its troops' ground movement completely shattered by the heroic Eritrean Peoples Liberation Army the junta has intensified the air war. The MIG and F-5 fighter bombers bestowed on it by the Soviet Union and the U.S. are bombarding the liberated areas of Eritrea round the clock. So far hundreds of civilians have been killed in the villages around Asmara by the criminal air raid. To accelerate the air warfare and cause more killing and destruction more Soviet supplied MIGs are also being assembled in Addis Ababa.

With the immediate objective of breaking the siege of Asmara as well as Massawa and then opening both the Asmara-Massawa and Asmara-Dekemhare roads the junta has made these roads the main targets of its aerial bombardments.

By escalating the savage war, the junta hopes to hold on in Eritrea. Evidence is however proving the opposite. Despite the intensified air raids the EPLF and the Eritrean masses firmly hold their position and continue to win more victories.



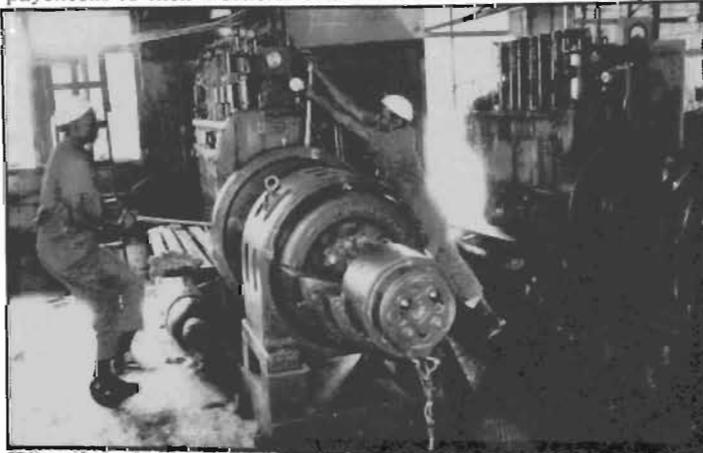
A scene of the destruction of the junta's criminal air raid in Massawa

The Eritrean Peoples Liberation Army supported by the EPLF's people's militia and the entire Eritrean masses is, with resolve, defending the liberated areas from any enemy encroachment. It has transformed both the Asmara-Massawa and Asmara-Dekemhare roads into impregnable revolutionary fortresses and is swiftly crushing repeated enemy attempts to break the siege of Asmara.

Once again the "final offensive" the junta is launching in Eritrea today is doomed to fail. Although the Ethiopian fascists are diehards who wouldn't admit their defeat for all practical purposes, they have completely lost in Eritrea. The junta's past "final offensives" with the so-called "Volunteer Army," the "Flame Brigade," the "People's Militia" and the "Red Army" were successfully frustrated by the Eritrean people. The same is happening to the present one.

Fascist Dergue Fires 10,000 Workers in Asmara

In a circular on January 24, 1978 the Ethiopian Ministry of Industries ordered factory managers in Asmara to cease issuing paychecks to their workers. The secret document obtained by the



What if the fascist junta fires thousands of Eritrean workers from work! The Eritrean working class is building the new Eritrean industry in the vast liberated areas.

EPLF in effect fires over 10,000 workers who had been without work since all industrial production had come to a standstill. The directive from all the junta's ministry also closes all access to credit for workers still on its payroll.

The advancing Eritrean People's Liberation Army having crushed the Ethiopian occupation forces has effectively closed the lifeline of the enemy by bringing under its control all roads and arteries leading to the city. As a result it has been a long time now since production in major industries and factories came to a complete standstill.

Ethiopian colonial authorities attempting to buy off the workers in order to prevent them from supporting the liberation struggle had continued to issue weekly paychecks to the workers without work. However, the workers wouldn't be tricked by the junta's deceptions and have thrown all their support behind their vanguard, the EPLF. Having lost all hope of dissuading the workers, the junta had to stop bankrolling the salaries of the workers.

This desperate move indicates the junta's hopelessness of reopening the Asmara-Massawa road and that the sun is setting on its infamous rule. It also signals that a new Eritrea which protects the interests of the working people is on the rise.

Hail May Day!

May 1st, International Working Class Day, is being vigorously celebrated by the international proletariat and all oppressed peoples this year. May Day symbolizes the unity in struggle of the workers of all countries against the bourgeoisie, imperialism and all reaction. On this day workers of all countries and other oppressed peoples solemnly pay tribute to the courageous and militant struggle waged by the international proletariat to free mankind and the vanguard role it plays in leading the revolution. On May Day each year the international proletariat sums up its experience and pledges to heighten its struggle.

The proletariat as the most conscious revolutionary force in society is destined to lead all oppressed peoples in the fight to attain mankind's loftiest ideals—freedom from any form of oppression and exploitation, and true liberation.

The proletariat guided by its scientific revolutionary theory has been and is waging a determined class struggle to overthrow the rule of the reactionary bourgeoisie and build socialism. From the Paris Commune to the Great October Revolution in Russia to the Great Chinese Revolution and up to the present the international proletariat has achieved great victories in its historical mission to liberate mankind from slavery. The proletariat has acquired tremendous experience in the art of revolutionary war against the bourgeoisie and in its resolute struggle against all sorts of opportunism.

Today, the class war between the international proletariat and the international bourgeoisie has reached a stage where the bourgeoisie is greatly weakened and the fighting capacity of the proletariat strengthened. The proletariat and the oppressed peoples have escalated the class war against international imperialism and reaction. Throughout the world the making of revolution is on the agenda. Although international reaction is engaged in all kinds of counter-revolutionary schemes to stamp out revolution, the proletariat and the oppressed peoples have firmly affirmed that revolution is the invincible trend and its victory is inevitable. In the socialist countries by consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat and building a new society, in the capitalist countries by heightening its class consciousness and preparing for the proletarian socialist revolution and in the oppressed nations by waging the national liberation struggle in alliance with the peasantry and other democratic forces the revolutionary proletariat is carrying the revolutionary torch forward. The proletariat is rising in struggle in every corner of the globe. The recent heroic coal miners strike right in the heart of U.S. imperialism is a revealing example of the courageous struggle the proletariat is waging against monopoly capitalism.

In our country, Eritrea, the Eritrean proletariat is actively participating in the national liberation struggle. In the revolution led by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, the proletariat is the principal motive force and its ideology the guiding principle. The Eritrean proletariat has established a solid alliance with its most trusted ally, the peasantry, and the other democratic forces in the national democratic revolution to liberate our country from Ethiopian colonial occupation and imperialist domination. Favorable conditions are being created for the Eritrean proletariat to organize itself and lead the revolution to victory. The Association of Eritrean Workers, the mass organization of Eritrean workers, is today drawing in its ranks the broadest membership possible of the working class and is training revolutionary workers to take up key tasks of the revolution. Eritrean workers are in the forefront in the war of national salvation against the Ethiopian aggressors and to build an independent people's democratic Eritrea. The Eritrean

working class is vigorously implementing the principle of self reliance and is laboring with all its might in the building of the new economy in Eritrea.

On May Day 1978, the Eritrean working class joins hands with all working and fighting peoples in the spirit of solidarity in the common struggle against imperialism and all reaction. Eritrean workers and the entire fighting Eritrean people celebrate May Day in the spirit of heroism and determination, in the spirit of pledging to continue the fighting and in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. Celebrating May Day 1978 at a time when our country is on the eve of its complete liberation has deep meaning to the heroic Eritrean masses. It means re-dedicating themselves to intensify the struggle to foil the counter-revolutionary machinations against their revolution and hence complete the liberation of the fatherland.

On the occasion of May Day 1978, the Association of Eritrean Students in North America warmly salutes the international proletariat and wholeheartedly expresses its solidarity with all working and struggling peoples in all countries.

We express our deep admiration and love for our country's workers, without whose exemplary role the victories of our revolution would have been impossible. We honor deep in our hearts the martyred workers for the cause of our people's liberation and praise those who are in the forefront continuing the struggle.

**HAIL MAY DAY 1978!
GLORY TO THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT!
LONG LIVE PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM!
WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES
OF THE WORLD UNITE!**



Hail African Liberation Day!

African Liberation Day is the day of international solidarity with the African peoples struggle. This years African Liberation Day has arrived at a time when the revolutionary situation in Africa is excellent. The African peoples have greatly intensified their struggles for independence and liberation.

On the other hand imperialism, driven to frenzy, is making frantic moves in the continent to crush and subvert the peoples struggles. The enemies of the African peoples—imperialism, colonialism, racism and all reaction—are laboring with all their might to extinguish the torch of freedom, independence and liberation throughout Africa.

However, the revolutionary situation in Africa has exploded to such an extent that it is out of the control of imperialism and reaction. Revolution is on the rise in Africa. The national liberation struggles of the African peoples are irresistibly surging forward. The armed struggles of the Zimbabwean, Namibian, Saharan and Eritrean peoples are forcefully storming at imperialism, colonialism and reaction.

In Southern Africa, the Zimbabwean, Azanian and Namibian peoples have rejected the imperialist instigated neo-colonialist solutions and are continuing the legitimate and correct struggle they have embarked upon. The Zimbabwean masses having strongly condemned the so-called "internal settlement" reached between the racist Smith regime and the three traitors with the blessing of Anglo-American imperialism, have firmly reiterated their stand to continue the armed struggle until complete victory. Although the imperialists and the racist Vorster regime are busy trying to create a replica of Zimbabwe in Namibia, the Namibian people led by SWAPO have made it absolutely clear that they will not accept anything short of a just solution. In Azania, although the fascist Vorster regime is employing the most terroristic methods of suppression, the Azanian people carry on the struggle following the militant spirit of Soweto. They continue the fight against the setting-up of the so-called "homelands" or Bantustans by staging strikes and boycotts in defiance of the racist regime's brutal practices.

Another area of the continent where the forces of reaction have focused their attention is the Horn of Africa. Here the Eritrean

people led by EPLF have liberated almost their entire country and are clearing off the last traces of Ethiopian colonial occupation. The efforts by the fascist junta to maintain its colonial rule in Eritrea with enormous Soviet and Cuban support and the designs of U.S. imperialism for a neo-colonial solution are being successfully frustrated. After 17 years of heroic armed struggle the Eritrean people are today preparing for the celebration of the complete liberation of their country. The victory of the Eritrean people is a big victory for the fighting African peoples.

Also in Western Sahara, the Sahouri people led by POLISARIO, unperturbed by the intensified French and U.S. support for the Moroccan and Mauritanian expansionists are marching forward in their armed struggle.

The revolutionary tide in the neo-colonial African countries is also rising. The workers, peasants and other democratic forces in the neo-colonial countries are responding to the economic and political crisis with popular uprisings, strikes, demonstrations, etc. In Ethiopia, the masses are putting up stiff resistance to the terroristic rule of the fascist Dergue. Early this year workers staged a powerful strike and demonstration in Tunisia. The strike was so frightening to the reactionary ruling class that it had to use tanks to suppress it. Student protests and other mass movements are also rampant across the continent.

Thus, Africa is irresistibly moving forward. The revolutionary trend in Africa is gaining momentum. The African people are winning in the battlefields. Complete victory lies in the hands of the African people.

On the occasion of African Liberation Day 1978, the Association of Eritrean Students in North America, reflecting the sentiments of the Eritrean People and the EPLF Vanguard, reiterates its staunchest solidarity with the struggling African peoples and with all oppressed and fighting peoples the world over.

**HAIL AFRICAN LIBERATION DAY 1978!
LONG LIVE THE AFRICAN REVOLUTION**

EPLF Condemns Sell-Out Deal in Zimbabwe

In a statement published in the February-March issue of its official organ, *Vanguard*, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front has strongly condemned the imperialist instigated sell-out deal reached between the racist Ian Smith regime and three Zimbabwean traitors.

Under the heading "Imperialist conspiracy against the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe" the statement said "the racist Ian Smith regime representing the interests of the few white settlers and imperialism is conspiring with native traitors to crush the Zimbabwean people's struggle . . . Under the guise of "majority rule" the set up is to install a neo-colonial government." The statement con-

tinued "although the imperialists and their puppets are busy implementing their neo-colonial agreement, the heroic people of Zimbabwe and their patriotic organizations, waging armed struggle, are resolved to frustrate it."

In concluding, the statement reiterates the EPLF's unbending support for the Zimbabwean people's struggle. "The EPLF supports the firm decision of the Zimbabwean people and their patriotic organizations and strongly condemns the "internal settlement" which the imperialists, the racist Smith regime and the native traitors have hatched. Victory belongs to the Zimbabwean people!"

NEWS FROM THE LIBERATED AREAS IN BRIEF

(Adopted from the February-March issue of *Vanguard* Vol.III, No.2)

DEKEMHARE

When in January the Eritrean People's Liberation Army Liberated in a spectacular way the towns of Dongolo, Ghinda, Emba Atkala, Nefasit and Mai Habar on the Asmara-Massawa road and brought the entire highway under its complete control, the joy felt by the Eritrean people was extraordinary. In the liberated cities and villages the masses took to the streets to express their heartfelt joy.

One of the scenes of colorful celebration was Dekemhare. The residents of the city celebrated the EPLA's sweeping victories by staging a big mass demonstration on January 28. A large majority

of the residents of the city participated in the demonstration through their respective mass associations. The workers association led the demonstration singing "Let's light our torch ablaze with the leadership of the proletariat." Besides the workers', women's and youth associations the participants included the Red Flowers (the most conscious elements of children between the ages of 7-15) who paraded in the avenues of the city with the wooden guns they made themselves.



The Red Flowers in combat exercise with their wooden guns.

RELIEF SUPPORT FOR THE RESIDENTS OF MASSAWA

When the heroic EPLA advanced on the Ethiopian occupation forces in Massawa in December it was with the full support of the Eritrean masses in the city. During the intensive battles with the enemy, the people welcomed the EPLA fighters, joining them in the fighting and providing them with needed supplies. This close collaboration between the masses and the EPLA along with the stunning battle defeats facing them enraged the enemy forces. They retaliated by showering the city with bombs from the air and the sea.

The intensive shelling of the city by aerial bombardment and Soviet warships forced 20,000 of its population to evacuate to safety behind EPLA lines. The EPLA immediately took up the responsibility of caring for the evacuated population. The evacuees were moved to the rear bases where they were readily taken in at the homes of their fellow compatriots in the liberated areas. EPLF is providing them with emergency supplies of food, clothing and medicine.

At the same time over 5,000 Ethiopians mainly from Tigray were also evacuated from Massawa. Since the voluntary choice of these Ethiopians was to return to their respective homeland, the EPLF, in cooperation with democratic organizations in Ethiopia, arranged for their safe passage to the Ethiopian border.

In taking up the responsibility of caring for the resettling of Massawa's evacuated population of 20,000, the EPLF faces major problems in meeting their immediate needs. Many of the evacuated peo-

ple of Massawa, especially the children, lack adequate supplies of food, clothing and medicine. Despite its limited resources however, the EPLF, consistent with its principles of relying on the masses, is working hard to solve these problems.



Residents of Massawa displaced from their city by the enemy's ferocious violence await to be moved to the rear base.

SEHARTI—SOUTHERN FRONT



Spreading literacy to the masses—a peasant reading the EPLF's monthly journal—*Vanguard*

The peasant residents of Seharti have greatly developed their political consciousness and their organized tasks. The mass associations in the village deciding to translate their political education into practice have taken concrete steps in that direction. Rejecting the narrow feudal and petty bourgeois mentality of individualism they have agreed to carry out cooperative activities every two weeks. The activities include digging wells, building bridges, constructing roads, planting collectively owned trees and cleaning their village.

The development in Seharti is a concrete indication of the high level of revolutionary consciousness of the Eritrean peasantry and a manifestation of the revolutionary changes sweeping over the Eritrean countryside.

AFABET

The residents of Afabet and the surrounding area under the slogan "the arm of the masses smashes reactionaries" have within ten days constructed a 30 km. road that runs from Afabet to Gulbub through Sheib and Kufurlah. The road began its service to the masses on January 25, 1978. The participants in the task were the peasant's association, the women's association, the youth association, the small shopkeepers (petty bourgeoisie) association and also members of the EPLF's Branch of Construction and the Department of People's Administration.



The population of Afabet in mass demonstration in support of EPLF.

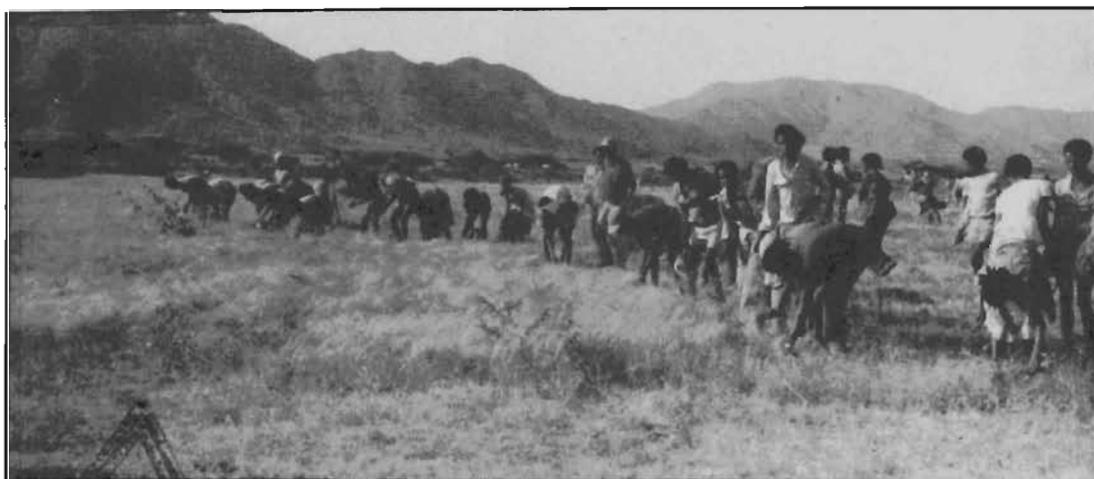
of revolutionary and patriotic songs, depicting the invincibility of the masses and the revolution, the heroism of the EPLA and in praise of EPLF.

The masses fulfilled the task in a sense of duty and obligation to their revolution and their vanguard, the EPLF. This reflects the high level of political consciousness of the Eritrean masses and their active participation in production and in the revolution.

HAZEMO—SOUTHERN FRONT

In the rich grain area of Hazemo the EPLF and the masses are greatly increasing crop production. The peasant masses of Hazemo and the surrounding area are consciously working hard to satisfy the food needs of their revolution and to support in deed their leader, the EPLF.

In the month of January 450 peasants, one third of whom were women, taking the initiative themselves, harvested EPLF crop fields of sorghum. The production work that took ten days was conducted in a happy spirit and revolutionary vigor with the singing



Harvesting a bumper crop of "taff" in the southern front.

Residents of Ghinda Celebrate Liberation of Their Town

The town of Ghinda was liberated by the heroic EPLA on January 24. On February 1, a large mass rally was organized to celebrate the liberation of the town. The masses who had suffered so much under Ethiopian fascist occupation for 26 years came out in thousands to rejoice over the beginning of liberation in their town. Of the 7,000 residents of the town, 6,000 turned up for the



Triumphant EPLA having liberated Ghinda on the move to liberate Emba Atkala.

The head of EPLF's Eastern Administrative Zone addressed the rally and spoke on the history of the armed struggle, the development of the EPLF and elaborated the national democratic program of the EPLF point by point. The comrade assured the residents of the town that the EPLF would provide them with necessary commodity goods, electricity and water; that it would struggle to assist them raise their political consciousness, spread literacy; that the

schools would resume their normal function; and that they would be organized into their respective mass associations. He then called on them to be vigilant and heighten the struggle and to give every assistance to their fellow countrymen who have been displaced.

The masses who witnessed people's democracy being practiced for the first time in their life expressed their deep feelings. Several of them spoke freely and militantly recounting the crimes that were inflicted on them by the Ethiopian aggressors and bitterly expressed the life of servitude they had lived with Ethiopian colonialism. They praised and thanked the EPLF and the heroic EPLA fighters for bringing them liberation and pledged to follow the EPLF and unreluctantly continue the struggle to reconstruct their town and contribute to the liberation of the cities still under enemy control. One of the speakers stated, "Today, thank God, thanks to our heroic sons here we are free. I wish this opportunity to our people still living in the few enemy occupied cities. I would like to say that all of us, the residents of Ghinda, without being afraid of any sacrifice ought to fight side by side with our organization, EPLF, struggle harder than before until the complete liberation of our country is ensured."

Three days after the victory celebration the residents of Ghinda had another great occasion, this time with the EPLF Cultural Group. Upon the request of the residents of the town the cultural group again entertained them on the 6th of February.

The people of Ghinda have rid themselves of colonial oppression and exploitation and are enjoying a life of full freedom. Their town which had for years been under the rule of successive colonialisms today belongs to them. Its rich and extensive agricultural land which had for years been a playground of foreign capitalists are today serving the interests of its true owners—the Eritrean masses.

Enemy Troops Routed in Hand to Hand Combat



The EPLA is smashing the Ethiopian reactionary army of aggression into pieces.

Despite the fascist junta's incessant aerial bombardment the Eritrean People's Liberation Army is scoring fresh victories. The EPLA continues to tighten its encirclement of Asmara and is crushing every attempt of the Ethiopian aggressor troops to break the siege of the city.

Just recently on April 14, the EPLA engaged thousands of enemy troops in fierce hand to hand combat one mile outside of Asmara. The enemy forces suffered heavy losses with hundreds killed and wounded. The EPLA has captured one Soviet supplied heavy anti-aircraft gun, many cases of shells, mortars, rocket launchers and large quantities of Klashinkhov rifles.

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