

RESISTANCE



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HAIL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

March 8th is International Women's Day. In 1910, at the Second Congress of the International Socialist Women's Association held in Copenhagen, March 8th was declared "International Women's Day" in solidarity with the struggle of women for emancipation. Every year since, March 8th is celebrated in all parts of the world as a day of solidarity with struggling working and oppressed women. On this joyous and historic day commemorating the glorious history of unity in struggle for the liberation of women, working and oppressed women sum up their rich experience of struggle for liberation and rededicate themselves to intensify the struggle for their complete emancipation which, as an integral part of the class struggle, must necessarily be bound up with the anti-imperialist and socialist revolutions.

Ever since society was divided into classes, women have been the most oppressed, exploited and downtrodden section of society. In all class structured and exploitative societies women suffer from double oppression. In addition to class exploitation and oppression,

they are also oppressed by the patriarchal order. In such societies, the laws, institutions, customs, etc., keep women oppressed and downtrodden. With little participation in the economic, political, social and cultural life of society, women are economically, politically and socially disenfranchised. In short, in all exploitative class societies women constitute the most oppressed among the oppressed.

The revolutionary potential of women hardly needs to be overemphasized. They constitute a great force, a force that must be galvanized. As a section of society that suffers most from the exploitative and oppressive system, women have always been responsive to social changes and to the call of revolutions. History has recorded that in all revolutions of historical significance, women played a major role in bringing about the desired social changes.

The struggle for the emancipation of women is an important component part of the national democratic revolution and the subsequent socialist revolution.

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FURTHER UNITY AGREEMENTS BETWEEN EPLF & THE ELF

Representatives of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (E.P.L.F.) and the Eritrean Liberation Front (E.L.F.) held a meeting between January 12-12-79 to reassess the obstacles encountered in implementing the previous 20th October Unity agreements and chart out new measures that would enhance the smooth coordination of the liberation fronts in the patriotic war.

The meeting deeply analysed the causes that impeded the smooth progress of the unity process and accordingly passed amendments to the October 20 unity agreement and March 15 Document for its implementation.

Resolutions passed by the representatives of the E.L.F. and E.P.L.F. include:

On the Military field.

- Delineation of a common military strategy at the national level.

- Organization of the armies of both fronts into a unified combat force under a Central Military Com-

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REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS EXPRESS SOLIDARITY WITH THE ERITREAN STRUGGLE

More than a dozen liberation Fronts, revolutionary parties and political groups from the Middle-East, and the Arabian Gulf met in Baghdad in January 2-4 and issued a communique in full support for the just struggle of the Eritrean people.

Participants in this conference included:

the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestinian Liberation Front, the Popular Palestinian Struggle Front, the People's Front for the Liberation of Bahrein, the National Palestinian Revolutionary Movement (FATAH) revolutionary Council, and the Jordanian People's revolutionary Party.

The conferees recognized the Eritrean struggle as an integral part of the world revolution and declared their opposition to Dergue's military campaign to crush it. The communique describes the 18 years old Eritrean armed struggle as one between two distinct political

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TRAITOROUS "EFLNA LEADERSHIP" EXPOSED: DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY MAKING STEADY PROGRESS IN REORGANIZATION

It is to be remembered that the Association of Eritrean Students in North America (AESNA), at its 9th Congress in August 1978, passed a resolution condemning the EPLF leadership as "treacherous and counter-revolutionary", and severed its ties with AES and EPLF. (See *Resistance*, Vol. I, No. 2) Developments following the congress clearly show that the resolution was reached through carefully orchestrated conspiratorial tactics and intrigues on the part of the AESNA "leadership" which, out of defeatist and opportunist motives, took advantage of the "opportune" time created by the temporary military setbacks of the time. The left opportunist and traitorous "leadership", now unabashedly and ironically calling itself "Eritreans for Liberation in North America (EFLNA)", "stands exposed stark naked and politically isolated. On the other hand, the democratic and patriotic forces, who now comprise the majority of the members, are steadily progressing in their reorganization efforts towards the reestablishment of a truly democratic and patriotic organization that stands on the side of the Eritrean revolution.

The democratic members have repudiated the 9th Congress' resolution, condemned and rejected the opportunist, defeatist and counter-revolutionary EFLNA "leadership", and reaffirmed their support of EPLF as the vanguard of the Eritrean revolution.

Events immediately following the 9th Congress were characterized, on the one hand, by efforts on the part of democratic members to rectify the erroneous and counterrevolutionary resolution imposed by the traitorous EFLNA "leadership"; and, on the other hand, by frenzied efforts on the part of the EFLNA "leaders" to cover up their opportunist and traitorous line through intimidation and threats on those members who started raising questions. The height of their frenzy was expressed when, upon learning of the presence of EPLF representatives in North America (in New York in October on an assignment to the U.N.), in rabid hysteria dispatched a letter threatening members with membership revocation if they, in any form, tried to contact or talk to the EPLF representatives. Several members had already repudiated the 9th Congress resolution and rejected EFLNA "leadership"; the latter's efforts were therefore to no avail. Democratic members arranged several meetings with the EPLF representatives in different parts of North America. Public discussion programs also were arranged in a number of cities. Such programs helped to clarify questions and offered an opportunity to learn about the actual facts and objective conditions of our revolution which had been distorted by the traitorous EFLNA "leadership". Furthermore, the programs helped clear the confusion, caused by this same clique's vilification campaigns against EPLF, among progressive organizations, groups and other supporters of the Eritrean revolution.

Several open letters and expository statements have been distributed by the democratic members in North America denouncing the 9th Congress resolution and the traitorous EFLNA "leadership". Some were from whole chapters, some from majority members of chapters, and some from study groups and individual members. The statements explain the erroneous nature of the resolution, expose the treachery of EFLNA "leadership" and describe the motives behind the resolution and the current counterrevolutionary activities

of the EFLNA "leadership".

Referring to the congress resolution that condemned both EPLF's and ELF's leaderships as "counterrevolutionary", one of the statements described it as "unscientific and infantile.... one that confuses the primary and secondary contradictions of the Eritrean society and betrays the objective conditions of the Eritrean revolution". Another one characterized it as "a counterrevolutionary resolution that calls for the ignition of civil war in the Eritrean revolution". One of the open letters described the resolution as "an adventurist resolution that negates national and patriotic responsibilities".

The various expository statements also explain the intrigues and other reactionary tactics the EFLNA "leadership" used to create a suitable atmosphere for the passage of their resolution. Such tactics included, as one statement described, "sheer lies and distortions of facts.... exploiting the patriotic feelings of the members, and misusing the trust the membership had in them". Another statement gave a more explicit description when it stated:

Agents of this renegade clique (EFLNA "leadership") began polluting the atmosphere outside the congress hall with unsubstantiated rumours and lies about EPLF, while inside the congress, a detailed report sharply attacking the EPLF, boasting of the so-called "one year and a half internal struggle", was presented with a make-believe dramatization. It was carefully staged to arouse the patriotic feelings of the members so as to lead to one resolution: condemnation of EPLF leadership as "counterrevolutionary".

In describing the motives behind the counterrevolutionary resolution, the various expository statements point to EFLNA "leadership's" chauvinistic attitude of entertaining illusions about leading the Eritrean revolution from North America. The fact that the traitorous "leadership", putting itself above the 9th Congress, singlehandedly included (in the Congress report issued later) a resolution calling for the establishment of a proletarian party, as issue not discussed let alone resolved at the Congress, can only be seen in light of such illusions.

The democratic members who have rejected the traitorous EFLNA "leadership" now comprise the majority of the total membership. Reorganization efforts towards the establishment of a truly democratic and patriotic mass organization, are in full swing. As a first step, four zonal committees (eastern, midwestern, southern and western United States) have been established to coordinate political education, publicity, fund-raising and other revolutionary activities in their respective regions. The zonal committees held a meeting at the end of December. After hearing reports on the membership situation in their respective regions, they discussed the immediate tasks of further exposing the traitorous EFLNA "leadership" and of stepping up material and political support to EPLF, the vanguard of the Eritrean revolution. As a further step in the reorganization and centralization process, the zonal committees agreed to form a preparatory committee whose responsibility in the preparations for a general congress and the coordination of those activities that can be coordinated on an overall level until a general assembly is convened.

Meanwhile, rejected by the overwhelming majority of the membership and discredited in the eyes of

DEMONSTRATIONS HELD BY EPLF MASS ORGANIZATIONS IN EUROPE

A.E.S.E., A.E.W.E., and E.W.A.E. (students, workers and women organizations respectively) branches all over Western Europe, in co-operation with the Eritrean solidarity committees organized in the months of December and January marches, public meetings and demonstrations in condemnation of Soviet supported Ethiopian genocidal offensives launched last November. Many local progressive student associations, anti-imperialist groups, workers movements, liberation movements and other democratic movements attended the demonstrations and expressed their solidarity with the just struggle of the Eritrean people.

For most of the last four centuries, Eritrea has, at times totally at times partially, been plundered by successive colonialists. The Turks occupied most of the eastern lowlands from 1557 until they were later replaced, in 1872, by the Egyptians. The Western lowlands were occupied by the Fung Kingdom of the Sudan from until when they too were replaced came under the Egyptians. The highland people were also victims of various incursions from the abyssinian feudal lords as well as from the foreign aggressors who had occupied the lowlands. Finally in 1889, Eritrea was colonized by the Italians. The Italians were replaced by the British in 1941 and this latter by the U.S. concocted and U.N. imposed sham federation with Ethiopia in 1952. Ten years later, Ethiopia annexed Eritrea.

In brief, Eritrean history is a history of successive colonial aggression. Like the majority of the people in the third world, the Eritrean people have tasted the bitter experiences of colonial exploitation, racial discrimination, dehumanizing oppression and cultural denigration.

Like all oppressed people, they too have risen against the aggressors. Indeed, the Eritrean people have repeatedly and through their precious blood demonstrated their opposition and rejection of any form of domination. In particular, they have paid much sacrifice and suffered a lot in the course of 18 years of the on-going struggle. Over half a million Eritreans are now homeless, tens of thousands have been killed.

But there is a sadly unique dimension to the Eritrean struggle. The Eritrean people have been virtually isolated, with minimal support from international progressive movements when gross injustices were committed against them. In 1962, when Ethiopia annexed Eritrea, no voice of protest was raised either by the international organizations who profess to be opposed to annexation, or by progressive movements. International support has not also grown in the years of the armed struggle to the same scale, to draw parallels, as has been the case with Sahara or Namibia although the Eritrean case is no different in content.

In spite of this isolation, the Eritrean people have continued to struggle. And although the enemy was first by the U.S. and Israel and later by the Soviet Union massively supported, the Eritrean struggle had advanced throughout the years. Particularly after the birth of the EPLF, the Eritrean struggle had assumed a clear ideological line. In the liberated areas under the EPLF, all the democratic tasks of the revolution, i.e. the land question, the woman question, the political participation of the masses, etc.; have been taken up for solution and were advancing with great momentum.

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY...

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Without the victory of the national liberation struggle and the proletarian revolution the emancipation of women is impossible. This is due to the fact that the underlying cause for the economic exploitation, political oppression, social degradation and cultural deprivation of women is the system of private ownership of the means of production. It is thus only with the total destruction of this unjust system and the establishment on its ruins of a just system with no exploitation of man by man that women can win their emancipation.

It must be brought home, on the other hand, that without the active and full participation of women no revolution can triumph. Hence the need for a conscious effort to draw women into the revolutionary movement. There is no instance in history of a revolution that succeeded without the participation of women; and there will be none in the future. The militant role played by women in the Great October Socialist Revolution and in the victorious revolutions in other countries attests to this truth.

In Eritrea, as in all semi-feudal and semi-colonial or colonial societies, women have very low status. Their conditions are essentially the same as their counterparts in the feudo-capitalist societies of Africa, Asia and Latin America. In addition to the exploitation and oppression that Eritrean women suffer under the clutches of imperialism, colonialism and feudalism, they also suffer from the archaic patriarchal order.

In the patriarchal Eritrean society, women are subordinate to men. They have a minor role to play in the political, social, cultural and administrative life of the society. In this male dominated society, decisions regarding the affairs of the society, village, family, etc., are made by the men. The lowly position of the Eritrean women arises from the existing relations of production which are based on private ownership and class exploitation. The masses of Eritrean women are deprived of ownership of any means of production and are either totally excluded from social production or play a role secondary to that of men.

Despite the fetters of the feudal patriarchal order, Eritrean women have a militant history of struggle. Ardent patriotism and undauntedness have been the fine tradition of Eritrean women. Throughout the long anti-colonial and anti-feudal struggle of the heroic Eritrean people, Eritrean women have made a worthy contribution to the great cause of war for national independence and liberation. An old saying, "for the land, the woman fights", expresses the glorious history of resistance of Eritrean women.

The initiation of the armed struggle in 1961 was a turning point in the age-long struggle of the Eritrean people for national independence and liberation. As the armed struggle expressed the deep aspirations and wishes of the masses of the Eritrean people, Eritrean women, like their menfolk, welcomed it and gave it their whole hearted support. In the early stage of the armed struggle, women - both inside and outside the country - by raising funds for the armed struggle and by providing food, shelter and information about enemy movements to the fighters, played a crucial role in protecting and sustaining the revolution. All this bears witness to their militant and selfsacrificing tradition.

Until 1970, however, despite their ardent patriotic sentiment, women's participation in the revolution was

limited. The feudal patriarchal oppression coupled with the lack of correct leadership made them "the lowest to stir". It was with the formation of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front that women began to play an increasingly active role in the on-going armed struggle for national liberation and independence.

The birth of the EPLF in 1970 opened up a new vista for the Eritrean revolution in general and the struggle of the Eritrean women in particular. From the outset the EPLF realized that the woman question is one of the democratic questions that the revolution has to take up for solution, that without the active and full participation of women the revolution cannot triumph, and that without the victorious conclusion of the revolution women cannot win their emancipation. Basing itself on this scientific outlook, the EPLF formulated correct and revolutionary policy on the women question. EPLF's correct and revolutionary policy on the woman question can clearly be seen from its National Democratic Programme which was adopted by the EPLF's historic first congress. The political program calls, among other things, for "a broad program to free women from domestic confinement, develop their participation in social production, and raise their political, cultural and technical levels".

The EPLF, committed to the emancipation of women, has taken a number of concrete measures to enhance the position of women in the society, and enable them to bring their revolutionary potential into full play. In order to broaden and deepen women's participation in the revolution and the life of society, the EPLF has trained and continues to train women cadre from all the nationalities. Land reform laws that guarantee the equality of women with men have been drawn up. In areas where land reform has already been effected, women, who have always been deprived of land ownership, have received equal share.

A new revolutionary marriage law based on equal rights for both sexes, love and free choice of partners, and protecting the lawful interests of the woman has been promulgated.

With the active support and under the leadership of the EPLF, Eritrean women have set up their own mass organization, the Association of Eritrean Women (AEW). The AEW, which has been able to draw tens of thousands of women from all walks of life both inside Eritrea and abroad into its membership, is playing a vital role in mobilizing, organizing and politicizing women and in demolishing the backward feudal culture and ideas that oppress woman and that severely hamper their participation in political and social activities.

EPLF's correct policy on the woman question and the measures taken to bring into full play the revolutionary potential of woman have resulted in deep-going changes in the status of women, in their attitude towards themselves and in men's attitude toward them. Today, under the leadership of the EPLF, Eritrean women are participating in all aspects of the revolution. Women in their thousands are participating in the struggle to defend, consolidate and transform the liberated areas. A sizeable part of the Eritrean People's Liberation Army is made up of women fighters. These women fighters are assigned to all departments of the front and are doing a commendable job.

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MASS SUPPORT TO THE EPLF GROWS

To-day the fascist Dergue is launching big offensive with the aim of crushing the Eritrean revolution. In this counter-revolutionary war, it is directly supported by the Soviet Union. The Dergue has at its disposal huge quantities of sophisticated Soviet weapons, as well as Soviet Personnel to man the heavy and new equipments.

The Eritrean people are not new to such a situation. And although certainly this time, there is a higher scale of big-power collaboration with the Ethiopian regime, the correlation of forces between the colonial regime and the Eritrean revolution in the context of the above indices has invariably been the same throughout the 18 years of the on-going armed struggle. The Haileselassie regime and later the Dergue were getting modern weapons and military advisors (MAAG, etc.) from the U.S. and Israel. Now, the Soviet Union has slotted in.

The E.P.L.F. and the Eritrean people are boldly facing this challenge and standing, as before, against the incongruously superior technical and material strength of the forces arrayed against them on their own. And at these difficult times, the Eritrean masses are raising their commitments, stepping up their contributions to encouragingly high levels. Eritrean students in Libya have contributed their monthly allowances for December (78) in full in support of the struggle. So are our people in the liberated areas, contributing, whatever they can spare. Only recently, villagers around Nacfa, the villagers of Meio, Hidai, Ghedzidi, Karworah, have raised money, food and flour in support of our heroic combatants.

Certainly, the present situation is a difficult one for the Eritrean people and the E.P.L.F. More than 100,000 Eritrean civilians are to-day exposed to extremely difficult conditions. These are mostly people from the liberated areas whose villages have been raised to the ground by enemy bombings. (In the November offensive, no less than 154 villages were bombed). This massive bombing campaign is continuing. Since the enemy's troops are not militarily in a position to physically penetrate the liberated country-side, the raining of napalm, cluster bombs on civilian centers has become a major component of the enemy's annihilationist strategy.

These displaced people are mostly under the care of the E.P.L.F. Many of them had been wounded by enemy bombs, the majority of them old men and women, and children on top of. The EPLF's limited resources and at a time when the aggressors are launching successive offensives on many sides it becomes very difficult to meet all their basic needs, although they are receiving whatever is available. Despite urgent appeals, relief aid from international humanitarian organizations is not forthcoming in the required scale

(No doubt, as in the past, some are shelving their responsibility with ridiculous excesses of being legally bound not to bypass the Ethiopian regime.... etc.)

All these difficulties, cannot, however, stem the inevitable advance of a determined people's struggle. Our people's ever-growing commitment to our just cause, the prevailing readiness to give all for the revolution, our combatant's heroic determination to persist on the road of self sacrifice are sure guarantees that we will pass any hardship and achieve victory. Popular support and participation, coupled with EPLF's line of principled self-reliance has brought us brilliant victories in the past and it sure will lead us to victory.



....DISPLACED & WOUNDED BY ENEMY BOMBS

A E S Activities

On 19.1.'79, the executive committee of A.E.S. held a meeting with the executive committee for the Federation of Italian Socialist Youth (FGSI). FGSI indicated in the course of the meeting that they are preparing an International Public meeting, where they are inviting liberation movements and workers movements and democratic organizations in Europe, in support of the just struggle of the Eritrean People.

A.E.S. representatives also met with the executive committees of the national student union of Iraq, Syria, and Libya. The discussions centered on the present situation in Eritrea and on solidarity work.

FURTHER UNITY AGREEMENTS...

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mand. The Central Military Command comes under the direction of the Higher Political Leadership. (H.P.L.)

- Formation of a Unified Armoury.

ON ORGANIZATIONAL AND POLITICAL FIELDS

- To launch, under the guidance of the H.P.L. (Higher Political Leadership), political education campaigns and seminars among the fighters of both fronts and the mass organizations.

- Establish a permanent office in the liberated areas for the Higher Political Leadership and all joint committees under it.

- The Study Committee (which was set up after the 20th October agreement) would start its work and present proposals on the methodology and timing of the Unification Congress to the H.P.L.

The meeting also resolved to issue jointly a monthly publication "Unity" and other periodicals reflecting the achievements and progress of the Unity process. As regards the "third force", the meeting condemned its anti-unity and counter-revolutionary activities and repeated its call for the rank and file to join either of the liberation fronts.

The E.P.L.F. had since its inception underlined the need to unite all the patriotic forces in the anti-colonial war. This did not mean however, as some insisted, glossing over the obtaining differences of the two liberation fronts, but seeking and formulating policies and organizational structures that would allow maximum co-operation in the anti-colonial struggle while providing favourable conditions for the gradual attain-

ment of a common outlook and revolutionary practice through a common struggle. To this effect and taking the Eritrean reality into account, the E.P.L.F. had, on numerous occasions, put forward timely proposals that would guarantee and enhance the harmonious co-operation of the two liberation fronts. At the time of the civil war, the E.P.L.F. argued for solving all (secondary) differences through peaceful dialogue and re-direction of all guns towards the main colonial enemy. Eversince, it exerted much effort towards achieving principled unity of the two liberation fronts. This struggle finally bore fruit in the signing, hence at least a theoretical rapprochement of the liberation fronts, of the October 20 Unity Agreement. The present agreements mark additional victory in that they represent refinements of the previous agreement as well as including organizational structures that would increase their effective practical translations.

These agreements are also a big blow to the Ethiopian aggressors and their backers. The enemy's all sided efforts to crush to Eritrean revolution has included capitalizing on the existing differences of the two liberation fronts and employing many tactics in order to exacerbate it. Rapprochement and all-rounded co-operation of all patriotic forces certainly represent, besides the military advantages, significant political victories over the isolationist and divisive tactics of the forces of aggression.

The A.E.S. hails the positive achievements, as illustrated by these agreements, on the path of unity and asserts its commitment to work unreservedly for the implementation of these agreements. □

MASS SUPPORT...

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The enemy was militarily cornered and besieged in few cities.

It is at this stage that the Soviet Union has come out in support of the faltering Ethiopian regime. Without the large-scale intervention of the Soviet Union the Ethiopian regime could not stall the advance of the Eritrean revolution.

This massive aggression is now aimed at weakening the EPLF, reversing all its revolutionary achievement and prolonging the colonial subjugation of the Eritrean people. Since the Eritrean people have long rejected domination and chosen revolutionary sacrifice in its place, they are ready for a long struggle. They also understand that this new aggression can at best extend colonial occupation by a few years but that in the final analysis it is doomed to failure.

The question one asks is whether, once more again, world public opinion and in particular international progressive movements would shy away from their responsibility and deny support to the just struggle of the Eritrean people. The forces arrayed against the Eritrean people; and particularly the Soviet Union are today resorting to the most base propaganda and all forms of pressures in order to isolate our struggle. The demonstrations of the branches are a call of the Eritrean people, a challenge to the international progressive movements to condemn the aggression commit-

ted by the Ethiopian regime and the Soviet Union against a just struggle. □

REVOLUTIONARY PARTIES...

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entities - Eritrea and Ethiopia. The communique concludes with "..... the Ertrean struggle, being anti-imperialist, anti-zionist and anti-reactionary is just and legitimate..... We call on all progressive people's and governments to seek a peaceful solution on the basis of the Eritrean people's right to self-determination".

The forces of aggression are to-day, more than ever, resorting to all sorts of lies in order to justify their counter-revolutionary war. This has become crucial the more so since those arrayed against our revolution want to present their motives as revolutionary, pure and simple. And hence they are labelling our struggle as "objectively serving the cause of imperialism"

But their vilifications, their manoeuvres and even pressures, are proving to no avail. And International support to our struggle is growing every day.

The growing international solidarity with the Eritrean people from revolutionary organizations and parties is not only a valuable source of moral strength to the fighting Eritrean people but one more demonstration of the baselessness of enemy allegations, a severe blow to the enemy isolationist tactics. □

THE TIGRAI PEOPLES'S ARMED STRUGGLE

The People of Tigray, led by their Vanguard the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), are in their fifth year of armed struggle for national self-determination. Tigray is situated in the northern part of Ethiopia, bounded by Eritrea in the North and Ethiopian provinces of Wollo and Beghemider in the South and South West.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The historical roots and revolutionary basis of the Tigrean people's struggle against national oppression is better illustrated by the following paragraph from **Woyeen** (official organ of the TPLF).

"..... It is true that the countries of the third world have a low level of economic, social, cultural, etc. development but the tragic aspect of Tigray is that besides being a member of the third world and thus subject to the development checking activities of international imperialism, it has also with the other oppressed nations become the third world of Ethiopia under the exploitation and oppression of the dominant Amhara nation. This has extremely aggravated the conditions in Tigray and as such has made the national

The Haileselassie regime further intensified the exploitation and oppression of the dominated nationalities. Through a discriminatory economic policy based on the interest of the (Amhara) ruling classes, it barred the prospectis of economic development (i.e. even along capitalist lines, although the people were forced to pay exhorbitant taxes for "developmental" purposes. Industries and factories are infact concentrated in the "center", while the "periphery" was relegated to acute backwardness. It further reinforced their cultural oppression through the imposition of Amharic in all, administration departments, schools, courts..... etc. As for the fascist Dergue, it has, inspite of its hollow phraselogy, continued in substance the oppressive policies of the previous regime, committed many crimes on them for their democratic demands for equality and self-assertion, used them as cannon-foder in its colonial war in Eritrea.

The backwardness and abject poverty resulting from this continued oppression is starkly evident in Tigray to-day. In the whole of Tigray, there are no major factories, and barely 4 hospitals for a population of about 5 million - unemployment, illeteracy, poverty, disease are excessively widespread. The people have suffered periodic epidemics and famine.



contradiction between the dominant nation and Tigray to be very acute.....".

These statements graphically express the relations that obtain between the oppressor and oppressed nationalities in Ethiopia. Indeed, for all the Dergue's talk of "revolutionary" and even "Socialist" Ethiopia, Ethiopia remains a multi-national Empire state marked by various national oppression and social-degradation of the various dominated nationalities that make it up. Historically, Ethiopia in its present form was forged as a single entity towards the end of the last century during the rule of Menelik (an Amhara feudal lord). Menelik conquered, with the help of war materials given to him by European colonial powers, and incorporated into his Empire the lands of the Tigreans, the Oromos, Sidamos, Somalis, ... etc. ... The Amhara ruling classes subjected the conquered poeple to stark economic exploitation and national oppression. A substantial part of their land confiscated, the majority of these people, especially in the South were reduced into tenants of their own land.

THE ARMED STRUGGLE

Like any oppressed people, the Tigrean people have also risen against their oppressors in the past. In particular in 1943, in the Woyane revolt, the people of Tigray rose in arms against the Haileselassie regime. Haileselassie, however, ruthlessly suppressed the uprising with the help of the British.

In February 1974, when the popular upsurge in Ethiopia was in full swing, progressive individuals and groups organized themselves under the Tigrean National Organization (TNO) with the aim of leading the peaceful political struggle of the Tigrean people. The Dergue, however, responded with brute force and killed many Tigreans for "anti-unity, anti-Ethiopia..... etc. activities". These repressions further exasperated the acute contradictions that existed between the oppressed and oppressor nations and prompted the launching of the armed struggle. And thus, the T.P.L.F. was formed in February 1975.

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY...

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The changes made in the status of Eritrean women in the past several years are undoubtedly profound. These changes are laying the foundation for women to play an active role in independent Eritrean society. The impressiveness of the gains achieved by Eritrean women in such a short space of time can be better appreciated when viewed in light of their yesteryear status under the old order. Despite the impressive and remarkable gains made thus far, the struggle for the complete emancipation of women has a long way to go. As an integral part of the national liberation struggle for independence and democracy, complete emancipation of women can come about gradually, step by step. The problem of emancipating women is a long and arduous process with many dimensions. It is a broad and many-sided struggle that calls for a number of measures of ideological, political, economic, cultural and educational character.

This year's International Women's Day comes at a time when there is a stormy situation in all parts of the

world, at a time when the Eritrean revolution is passing through a crucial and trying period, and at a time when the Ethiopian fascist junta, with the direct participation of the Soviet Union, is committing barbarous acts of aggression against the freedom loving Eritrean people.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Association of Eritrean Students.

- Hails all heroic Eritrean women who selflessly sacrificed their lives for the cause of national liberation and women's emancipation;

- expresses its firm solidarity with all fighting women throughout the world;

- calls on all Eritrean women to roll up their sleeves, tighten their belts, and rise up to meet the challenge that faces the Eritrean revolution, and;

- calls on all working and oppressed women of the world to condemn Ethio-Soviet aggression in Eritrea and to stand on the side of the heroic Eritrean people.

Long live International Women's Day!

TRAITOROUS "EFLNA" LEADERSHIP...

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progressive organizations and groups in North America, the traitorous EFLNA "leadership" and a handful of diehard lackeys frantically continue to vilify the glorious and splendid achievements of the EPLF. Not only are they squandering resources collected in the name of the Eritrean people and the EPLF, but they also are engaging themselves in activities that objectively support the causes of the enemies of the Eritrean masses and of their revolution. However, their frenzied efforts are in vain and futile; "may flies lightly plot to topple the giant tree" says Chairman Mao.

As was pointed out in our last issue, such an experience is not new to the Eritrean revolution. Opportunists, both from the right and the left, have surfaced a number of times in the history of the revolution; the surfacing of left opportunism is not unique to the Eritrean revolution either. As Lenin stated:

Historical experience teaches us that always, in all revolutions, at a time when a revolution takes an abrupt turn from swift victory to severe defeats, there comes a period of pseudo-revolutionary phrase-making that invariable causes the greatest damage to the development of the revolution.

The traitorous and opportunist EFLNA "leadership", hiding its true nature and its intentions behind a smoke screen of revolutionary phrases, had caused temporary confusion among the struggling patriotic Eritreans residing in North America. AES does not have any doubt that the democratic members will intensify their struggle to rectify the situation by exposing and isolating the opportunist "leadership" and, indeed, the EFLNA "leadership" is now stark-nakedly exposed. The Eritrean revolution will settle accounts with the EFLNA "leadership" as it has done with all traitors and opportunists in the past.

Long live EPLF!
Down with opportunism!

TIGRAY PEOPLE'S...

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The T.P.L.F. has scored many victories in the last four years not only against the Dergue but also against the reactionary Ethiopian Democratic union. It has liberated almost the whole north-central countryside of Tigray. What is more important it has introduced radical changes in the liberated areas. In the Agame, Aksum and Worwallo liberated areas, it has effected equitable land redistribution. And breaking the feudal bureaucratic system of administration it has established democratic self-administration units in these areas.

The T.P.L.F. has also carried extensive politicization of the masses. It currently produces and distributes revolutionary publications such as **Woyeen** (revolt), **Tegadel** (struggle), **Itek** (get organized) - specially directed to the peasants - **Nekah** (get conscious).... etc. In order to train mature vanguards for the revolution, it has established a **Cadre School** that provides an advanced political and ideological knowledge for the fighters.

The T.P.L.F. has also formed peasant organizations in the country-side functioning openly in the liberated areas and as underground in the Semi-liberated areas. Mass organizations of workers, student, youth and women's study groups have been formed.

In the economic and social fields, the T.P.L.F. is trying to improve the livelihood of the people in the liberated areas by giving them practical guides and providing them vital consumer goods blockaded by the Dergue. It has also constructed in collaboration with the masses, a 200 km. long road. The T.P.L.F. also renders medical and educational services that its capacity allows to the neglected masses.

The struggle of the Tigrean people, led by their Vanguard the T.P.L.F., has not yet reached the end of the road. Nonetheless, it has registered numerous victories and as a struggle of an oppressed people, it will triumph.