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Ethiopian Student Union In North America

(A member of the World-wide
Federation of Ethiopian Students)

STATEMENT ON THE FORMATION OF THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLES' RE- VOLUTIONARY PARTY

(EPRP)

Great things have to be conquered in struggle. Without the multi-faceted revolutionary massive struggle of the February Revolution, the political power of autocracy would not have crumbled of its own volition. The present bourgeois military dictatorship of the fascist type rules with multiple forms of political, ideological, organizational, military and economic counter-revolutionary methodologies whose actual displacement requires a corresponding revolutionary multiple and programmatic forms of political, ideological, organizational, military and economic methodologies. Undoubtedly, the February revolution was richest in struggle and ideas. The single most tragic fact of the February revolution was the absence of a strongly rooted guiding, centralising and integrating centre, capable of concentrating the released, scattered energies, struggles and ideas of the broad masses in order to brighten the correct evolution of the revolutionary path. This guidepost was absent. It has now arrived with its plebian humility stretching out its brilliant programme from its forced illegal condition and base. What a historic development of earthshaking significance in the history of class struggles in Ethiopia. Ethiopia has at long last its Marxist-Leninist Party! It has the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party! This is indeed the

glorious moment - the real moment of the festival of the oppressed!
To the EPRP we extend a militant and class welcome! We vow to help in every conceivable way the EPRP to win or conquer the widest possible support and influence among the student youth abroad and the international forces of social progress, democracy, national liberation, socialism and peace!

According to the Programme of the EPRP (released in August 1975 in Amharic, Tigrigna, Oromogna, Arabic, English and French), Ethiopia's party of the proletariat was formed $3\frac{1}{2}$ years ago. That is to say, the EPRP was formed $2\frac{1}{2}$ years before the onset of the unprecedented February revolution. Ever since its formation the EPRP has undertaken full agitation and propaganda work. It has prepared both theoretical and special pamphlets. The EPRP has produced the leading agit-prop organs of the country for more than a year. Democracia and Abiyot (re-named as Labader) have provided timely agitational, propaganda and organizational leadership since the February revolution in Ethiopia. These two organs have taken the leading theoretical position on the politico-ideological fronts. This fact was a matter appreciated by wide sections of the popular intelligentsia, workers and students. Both friends and enemies of the Ethiopian revolution have recognized whether they like it or not, the historically crucial role that the EPRP-produced Democracia and Labader (Proletariat) are playing.

The coming into existence of the EPRP conforms to the highly accelerating dynamic revolutionary situation propelling Ethiopian society, to the level and stage of historical and social development, objectively obtaining in Ethiopia, to the rich class struggle in the country. There were and are two mutually hostile, mutually irreducible, mutually antagonistic,

mutually contradictory sets of analysis on the nature, scope, perspective, potentialities of the February revolution. The erroneous view argued that the February mass movement did not constitute a revolutionary situation. Consequently the struggle against feudalism and imperialism is in the future. The exponents of this view held that the objective and subjective factors to form the party of the proletariat are weak. The group held that Ethiopia lacked an industrial proletariat. In fact, according to this group there is no proletariat to speak of. The Ethiopian proletariat according to these persons, is "petty-bourgeois". Thus the essential basis to form the multi-national party of the proletariat is absent. The working class movement is said to be dominated by paid off "labour aristocrats" of the comprador type". In fact, the Ethiopian Confederation of Labor Unions was falsely cast as reactionary, imperialist tied, etc. Equally important, this group has a wrong estimation of the development of socialist thought in Ethiopia. It lacked faith in the existence of a socialist intelligentsia. The group subjectively assigned the leadership role of the February revolution to the petty-bourgeoisie. It called on the workers and revolutionary peasantry to disarm and be fully subservient to the dictation of the military bourgeois dictatorship of the fascist type. It claimed that the principal struggle is between those who uphold the development of the capitalist forces of production and between those who uphold the feudal forces of production. Consequently, the social class alignments must be on the one hand, the workers, peasants, petty-bourgeoisie, imperialism and its associated varieties of bourgeoisies, and on the other the feudal aristocracy, the royal family, feudal reaction and "Arab reaction". It is claimed that it is in the interest of the proletariat to solidify the alliance against the feudalists only!

In direct opposition to this view, the revolutionary forces have appraised the February revolution scientifically. The February revolution, according to the revolutionary view, marks a critical turning point in the history of the broad masses since the fascist times of World War II. It marked the strategic New Democratic stage of the Ethiopian Revolution. It is a period of whether the New Democratic revolution will result in a complete defeat of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism or not. It is a period of whether the hegemonic role of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution will occur or not. It is a period of whether the worker-peasant alliance will be constructed or not. It is a period of whether the conditions for the transition to socialism will be fulfilled or not. It is a period of whether or not the broad masses are won over to new democracy and the socialist perspective. In short this view held that the working class movement existed. Advanced or conscious workers, the socialist intelligentsia, i.e., both the objective and subjective conditions to form the party of the proletariat existed in the February revolution. Consequently, the formation of the party of the proletariat does not come as a surprise. It is something that was expected and theoretically anticipated by the noticeable resounding slogans that ESUNA called since 1972 - Long Live the Multi-national Party of the Ethiopian Proletariat!!

Nevertheless to foretell beforehand the exact moment of the party's formation is impossible. This question of when or how "soon" the party of the proletariat would be formed can only be a favorite past time for fortune tellers. But "Marxists are not fortune tellers. They should, and indeed can, only indicate the general direction of future developments and changes; they could not and cannot fix the day and the hour in a mechanistic way. But when I say that there will soon be a high tide of revolution, I am emphatically not speaking of something which in the words

of some people 'is possible coming', something illusory, unattainable and devoid of significance for action. It is like a ship far out at sea whose mast-head can already be seen from the shore; it is like the morning sun in the east whose shimmering rays are visible from a high mountain top; it is like a child about to be born moving restlessly in its mother's womb." (Mao Tse-tung) The birth of the EPRP happened 3½ years ago. We never noticed it. But our slogans, agitations and propaganda were aimed at helping the Marxist-Leninists of Ethiopia to unite and create the Ethiopian party of the proletariat. Conforming to Lenin's ringing instruction, we called time and again, "Give us an organization of revolutionaries, and we will overturn (Ethiopia)". Now that organization of revolutionaries has been created in Ethiopia. It is an inevitable law of history that no matter how difficult the path, nothing will prevent the EPRP from overturning Ethiopia!! And we say Long Live to the EPRP!

The EPRP follows the best traditions of the Communist League founded by Marx and Engels in 1847. It follows in the footsteps of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party of 1898. It follows the Communist Party of China (1921) and Vietnam (1930). It has behind it the history of rich class struggles extending from Europe, Russia (1905-1917), China, Vietnam, etc. All these parties formed as first embryos of independent political parties. As Lenin clarified, "The party is the politically conscious, advanced section of the class, it is its vanguard. The strength of the vanguard is ten times, a hundred times, more than a hundred times, greater than its numbers. Is that possible? Can the strength of hundreds be greater than the strength of thousands? It can be and is, when the hundreds are organized. Organization increases strength tenfold." (Col. Works, Vol. 19 p. 406). Judging by its activities and programme, the EPRP is well

organized (e.g. producing Democracia, Labader). In its programme, the EPRP has called for the highest form of revolution. It has distinguished itself from bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties by recognizing the all-round dictatorship of the proletariat as the only step to bring about the destruction of the exploitation of man by man. It has identified the minimum demands for democracy and national liberation by resolving to lead the fight against feudalism, imperialism and bureaucratic capitalism. It has resolved to guide, the democratisation of the state system, the national movements, the struggle for democratic liberties by the broad masses, the struggle of the peasantry for land and liberty, the working class struggle for economic well-being and democratic rights. The programme has specified how the basic demands of the class, social, economic, religious, nationality, etc. categories will be satisfied in a people's Ethiopia under the leadership of the proletariat. The foreign policy of the EPRP is guided by proletarian internationalism. It is anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, anti-racist, anti-Zionist and stands for the genuine unity of the different states on the African continent. Thus, the programme of the EPRP is principled and inspiring. It demands support from all the socialist countries, the working classes of the capitalist/imperialist countries, the liberation movements in the third world and progressive anti-imperialist countries the world over. We call upon the peoples of the world to rally support for the EPRP! The EPRP is an authentic vanguard of the working class in Ethiopia which combines socialist thought with the working class movement.

The EPRP has to integrate its scientific Marxist-Leninist world outlook to the concrete conditions in Ethiopia. The current situation in Ethiopia is complex. It requires great creativity and imagination. Briskly, the situation in Ethiopia at present can be characterized by an extreme

fragmentation of political power. Political power is slowly but surely slipping away from the military bourgeois dictatorship. The revolutionary situation is developing in a protracted fashion. A new high tide is inevitable soon. In the southern provinces, conditions for a favourable insurrection exist. Peasants, students and militants on one side and local gentry, local military officials and police are engaged in fierce combat for land and political power. Popular peoples tribunals, peasant associations, revolutionary peasant committees, popular armed militias are being rapidly formed and have directly undermined police and junta authority in the region. The counter-revolution is also being organized. The junta and the landlord counter-revolution is being aimed at the rich gains of the southern revolutionary peasantry. Except for provincial and sub-provincial towns, bastions of Junta-landlord counter-revolution, the countryside is seething with the revolutionary power of the peasantry. In some regions student-peasant power is absolute. In others dual power exists. In still others, the landlord-junta counter-revolution is powerful. The net resolution of the different power vectors favours the peasant movement and disfavors the landlords and the Junta. (For an empirical evidence see Democracia, Vol. II, No. 2).

The Northern Abyssinian territories are virtual bastions of entrenched feudal counter-revolutions. The peasantry is demobilized by feudal, church and gentry domination. Many pre-capitalist feudal sharks are rearing armed bands to deprive peasant initiative in the region.

The eastern lowlands in the Danakil Depression are under the control of the forces of Ali-Mirah. The military Junta has acknowledged its failure to keep "security" even in the capital city of Eritrea. It is isolated both in town and countryside in Eritrea. Its terroristic and fascistic policies have regrettably created and are creating an immense

hatred among the brotherly Ethiopian and Eritrean masses. No where has this Junta bungled so badly as in Eritrea. Even at this writing 2 Americans and 6 Ethiopian soldiers manning the Kagnaw station have been detained by the Eritrean National fronts.

The military Junta is shying away from the foreboding problems of the country and has started indulging in wasteful corruption and extravagance. In its bid to come to power, it used the extravagant ways of the ex-emperor to mobilize support. Now it is engaged ironically in draining the country's limited resources! Now it out ranks the ex-emperor by spending \$3 million dollars on building a pretentious "Red Square!" Amid intractable problems of the country, it chose to spend the stolen resources of the masses on a fictitious "Red Square". Do the masses need squares or food? What a pathetic sight!?

In Ethiopia today--

a) Inflation is skyrocketing, unemployment is on the rise, production is declining, the working people are facing awful economic deprivations. Thus a more serious economic crises than the period of the autocracy has gripped the country. b) The country is gripped by a galloping famine. Far from checking the famine, the regime is escalating it. It is diverting relief supplies to buy weapons to suppress the masses. It has cruelly barred others from providing relief assistance to the distressed regions in Eritrea. c) The effects of its separation of politics from economics is becoming materially evident daily and hourly. The junta is creating more concentration camps than the previous regime. The number of prisoners has reached unbelievable proportions. There is still a complete blackout of democratic liberties, the state machinery is highly bureaucratized, the state now has a monopoly of means of production over and above a monopoly of violence and coercion. d) The regime has

attacked the Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions (CELU). It has attempted to liquidate it since CELU is becoming more and more radical. Recently it resolved to cut its ties with AFL-CIO, IFCTU and with imperialism. Members of CELU have translated into Amharic the great classic of Marxism-Leninism--the Communist Manifesto. These increased radicalisations of the working class of Ethiopia prompted the Junta's fascist attack against CELU! Moreover, teachers, students, the unemployed are being killed, tortured and imprisoned. Over 2,000 striking students are jailed to prevent any possible "disruption" to the celebrations of the Junta at its "Red Square!" e) The fighting with the Junta hierarchy is growing. Coups and counter-coups are daily occurring. The stability of the regime is totally lacking. Its existence for all intents and purposes is becoming daily doubtful. f) The masses are poised for a new upsurge. The repressed soldiers, the workers, the peasants, the students, teachers, the town poor and unemployed are poised for another popular conflagration.

It is under these conditions when the Junta is in a helpless fix that the party of the proletariat chose the moment of its emergence! Nothing could be more inspiring than this well timed emergence when the masses have a thirst for genuine leadership. The working class and Ethiopia's broad masses have at last their self-sacrificing and death-defying EPRP! The Junta has lost the initiative. The popular masses are gaining the initiative. The core that can safeguard their independence and their individuality has come out to the light. Viva EPRP!! Support born out of nothing but ideological conviction!!! We support the EPRP from the class stand of the proletariat! The social fascist clique will definitely mete out the EPRP with division and all sorts of imaginary abuses. Nothing "good" comes out of the social-fascist clique in Europe and its sympathisers elsewhere. The middle roader will be indecisive

and will conjure up all sorts of stuff--Eaten by doubt, this element (the hesitant intellectual) wavers to and from as long as it is ground of its own storm of doubts. The junta and its sympathisers will almost invariably resort to persecution against the EPRP! The junta will design brutal repressions, police and clerical persecutions against the EPRP. The Junta will raise its grand inquisition and will recruit the social fascists to help it in its spy network against the EPRP. Royalist monarchist sympathisers will cringe at the success of the proletariat in creating its party thereby voiding the flimsy chance of the feudalists for stepping in the event of the demise of the Junta. Certain strata of the petty-bourgeois who hate the unity of the multi-national proletariat will try to create all sorts of stories against the EPRP. This basic class alignment of society will also be reflected among the student youth. That this will be so is inevitable. Since as Lenin said, students are "the most responsive section of the intelligentsia, and they most consciously, most resolutely and most accurately reflect and express the development of class interests and political groupings in society as a whole. It is in spite of all persecutions and in a struggle against all calumnies that the EPRP will be victorious. The enemies of the EPRP would like to bury it with devilish ruthlessness using of alternating both the policy of the carrot and stick with the latter as a primary instrument. But the EPRP is the new rising thing. It is a part of the proletariat, It is their authentic voice. The EPRP has therefore a future because the proletariat and the masses have a future. And it is an inviolate law of history that the new must grow out of the old. It must win in spite of the old. In fact because of the old. It must rise and grow, develop and consolidate in an endless dialectical spiral. It must win against the old. It will win by purging the influences of the old in the ranks of the NEW. This is a veritable postulate of history.

- ESUNA calls upon all revolutionary groups, circles, clandestine nuclei etc. to grow out of their circle mentality and develop indissoluble links with the Marxist-Leninist EPRP!
- ESUNA calls upon all mass organizations, democratic parties, national fronts to form political and revolutionary united front ties with the EPRP to defeat in a strategic manner feudalism, imperialism and the fascist Junta.
- ESUNA calls upon the Ethiopian proletariat to protect, give unreserved support to its vanguard.
- ESUNA calls upon the teachers associations, teachers forum, the women organization, soldiers deputies, and the student youth organizations to develop links and conditions for mutual influence with the EPRP.
- ESUNA calls upon the Zemetcha students to avidly develop ties with the EPRP as they are heroically doing with the peasantry.
- ESUNA calls upon the organizations in WWFES to take a firm stand in support of the EPRP.
- ESUNA calls upon all nationality democratic movements (e.g. Eritrea, Oromo, etc.) and student nationality organizations to take a firm stand in support of the EPRP.
- ESUNA calls upon the heroic Ethiopian broad masses to defend, protect and expand indissoluble ties with the EPRP.
- ESUNA calls upon the Ethiopian peasantry and workers and soldiers to provide the army of the people under the leadership of the EPRP.

--ESUNA calls upon the worker peasant strata within the present army institution to desert the present fascist authorities and join a peoples' army based on the model of the programme of the EPRP.

Long live the EPRP!

Down with Junta Party!

Long Live the proletariat!

Down with Junta Socialism!

Long live the worker-peasant alliance!

Down with Junta workers control!

Long live peoples' democratic Ethiopia!



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