



ERITREA IN STRUGGLE



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Eritreans For Liberation in North America

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1976: Year of struggle and victory

The year 1976 is coming to an end. It was a year of struggle and victory for the working and oppressed peoples and a year of intensified subversion and dismal failure for the imperialists and other reactionaries.

1976 witnessed a vigorous upsurge in the struggle of the peoples of southern Africa, Southeast Asia, East Timor, Western Sahara, and throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America. The working class and oppressed people in the capitalist countries stepped up their economic and political struggles.

In the Middle East, intensified imperialist subversion and counter-revolutionary force has caused temporary setbacks to the revolutionary struggle of the Palestinian and Omani peoples. In the face of the imperialist onslaught, however, the revolutionary people of Palestine and Oman have defiantly persisted and stepped up their struggles. Experience proves that the worldwide struggle of the working and oppressed peoples for independence, liberation and revolution is irresistible.

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MORE ON THE BATTLE FOR NACFA

The town of Nacfa, capital of Eritrea's northeastern province of Sahel, has been under siege for the past 3 months.

On September 17, 1976, the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Forces (EPLF) launched a powerful offensive against the Ethiopian occupationist troops stationed in Nacfa. Within a month, three of the four Ethiopian camps in the town were destroyed. The EPLF wiped out close to 700 Ethiopian troops, captured 130 of them and shot down 11 enemy planes.

The remaining Ethiopian troops are now huddled in their single remaining camp. They have mined the whole area surrounding the camp. Supplies to the besieged troops are being dropped from the air. A number of times, the supplies have fallen on the mines, causing them to explode. On other occasions, the supplies have fallen into the hands of EPLF fighters. Engineering units of the EPLF are now working to remove the mines. Already close to 500 mines have been removed

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1976:...

For the Eritrean people, 1976 was a year of significant victories in all fields of revolutionary activity. In the military field, the liberation forces, after freeing the entire countryside have begun to attack small and medium-sized towns. The attack on Nacfa, provincial capital of Sahel province, where, so far, 700 enemy soldiers have been killed, 130 captured and 14 planes downed is a case in point. Politically, the military junta's "peace" initiatives have failed to deceive the Eritrean people. Within the liberation movement, the expansion and consolidation of mass organizations, the expulsion of the reactionary Osman Sabbe clique and the setting up of a provisional foreign mission reflect the hegemony of the progressive forces. In the liberated area, land reform is being carried out. Agricultural production, health work and education are developing. People's militia and popular administration is being set up.

For EFLNA, 1976 was a year of internal consolidation. Our organization has also stepped up its efforts to publicize the Eritrean struggle and strengthen its links with the progressive movement in North America. In addition to our bi-monthly journal, LIBERATION, we have put out this monthly newsletter to provide our readers with news and analysis of current events in Eritrea. We are happy to see wider sections of the progressive movement gaining a better understanding of, and coming out in resolute support of the Eritrean struggle.

In the coming year, EFLNA is determined to unite closely with our compatriots from Africa, Asia and Latin America, with the progressive peoples of the U.S. and Canada and work harder in support of the common struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperial-

ism and zionism. We are confident that you will be with us in the coming year of hard struggle and exciting victories.

...Nacfa

and are being used against the enemy in other combat areas.

In the meantime, Ethiopian planes continue to bomb indiscriminately around Nacfa in an effort to relieve the besieged troops. Using anti-aircraft guns, EPLF combatants have shot down 3 more enemy planes, bringing to 17 the total number of U.S. supplied Ethiopian planes shot down since September, 14 around Nacfa and 3 in the central highlands. On November 22, 1976, the occupationist troops attempted to move a heavily protected convoy towards Nacfa which was forced to beat back its retreat in the face of a forceful EPLF ambush. On their way back, the aggressor troops burned crops in the surrounding area.

All the desperate measures of the Ethiopian aggressors to "save" Nacfa are meeting with miserable failure. The EPLF, with the enthusiastic participation of the masses, is tightening the noose around the Ethiopian aggressors camp. At the same time it is calling on the enemy troops to surrender and avail themselves of the EPLF's humane treatment. Whether the Ethiopian aggressor troops give themselves up or are buried beneath the ruins of their camp, Nacfa will be liberated and set a precedent for what is bound to happen in all of Eritrea's major cities.

Achievements of the Eritrean Revolution:

ON THE MILITARY FRONT

Beginning with this issue, Eritrea in Struggle, will present a series of short articles under the general heading, "Achievements of the Eritrean Revolution". We will present, in summary form, the advances made in the military, political, economic and social (land reform, education, health, culture, etc.) fields in 15 years of armed struggle and in particular since the birth of the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Forces (EPLF) in 1970. Our first article will deal with the military front.

The Eritrean liberation forces are on the offensive. They control the entire countryside. The Ethiopian occupation troops are huddled in their fortified camps in the towns and cities. Even this last piece of ground is about to be pulled from under the enemy's feet as the liberation forces have begun to mount forceful attacks on small and medium-sized towns.

The prevailing excellent situation is the result of the ardent patriotism of the masses, the self-sacrificing heroism of countless liberation fighters and the correct revolutionary line of the EPLF. In military affairs, the EPLF follows the strategy of people's war: build and consolidate base areas, liberate the countryside step by step, encircle and finally liberate the cities. In 1972, the EPLF built its first permanent base in Sahel province and has since built consolidated base areas in various parts of the country.

The EPLF has a several thousands strong conscious people's army, made up of fighters mainly of peasant but also of worker and student background. There are a large number of women and youth (ages 8-15) in the people's army. To become a member of the EPLF people's army one has to go through a 6 month political and military training period during

which literacy classes are also held.. In the EPLF army, there is no rank. Commanders and rank and file soldiers have an equal standard of living and regularly practice criticism and self-criticism. Conscious and disciplined, the EPLF people's army, not only fights against the enemy, but also engages in mass mobilization and participates actively in production.

In addition to the people's army, the EPLF is establishing people's militias by arming the organized masses. Consistent with the EPLF's slogan of "Destroy the enemy with his own guns and bullets", the militias are armed with weapons captured from the Ethiopian aggressors.

The Eritrean liberation forces have staged a number of heroic and politically significant exploits. They have wiped out thousands of enemy soldiers and captured thousands. They have captured huge quantities of heavy and light weapons: mortars, M-14s, M-1s, Uzis, grenades, etc. They have destroyed vital industrial enterprises and important bridges. They have also carried out military operations inside Ethiopia (in neighboring Tigray pro-

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Achievements...

vince) in cooperation with progressive Ethiopian organizations like the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party (EPRP) and the Tigray Peoples Liberation Forces (TPLF).

To give some examples, the Eritrean liberation forces have destroyed the electronic microwave communications base on the Tigray border and the Japanese copper mine at Debarra. They have shelled and damaged the notorious U.S. Kagnev military base, the American library and the international airport in Asmara. They have turned into ashes important enemy bases such as those in Ad Tekelezan, Sheka Wadi Besrat and Shegrini. They have freed 1000 political prisoners from the enemy prisons at Asmara and Adi Quala. They have smashed the Ethiopian junta's infamous armed "peasant march" on Eritrea. And now they are breaking Ethiopia's "air superiority". In the past 3 months alone the EPLF has shot down 17 enemy planes.

The balance of forces has tipped irreversibly in favor of the Eritrean people and their liberation forces. It is only a matter of time before the Ethiopian aggressor troops are forced out of their remaining hideouts in the cities. In the meantime, the people's army and militia, that will defend the people's power in liberated Eritrea are being tempered in the crucible of revolutionary struggle.

Oman...

main assets remain the people's support and the preservation of our military and human potential".

The struggle continues in Oman and is bound to end up with the victory of the Omani people and their vanguard, the PFLO.

Haiti

without even being allowed to see their relatives and their few possessions are taken away arbitrarily.

The Dominican progressive forces and the Haitian political exiles have strongly denounced the treatment of Haitian workers and in particular, the intensification of the anti-Haitian campaign. Despite the attempts of the reactionary regimes and their U.S. imperialist masters to divide the two peoples, Haitians and Dominicans are struggling side by side against their common oppressors.

Here, in New York, Haitian and Dominican progressive organizations have formed a "Haitian-Dominican Solidarity Committee" to oppose the anti-Haitian campaign in the Dominican Republic, condemn the reactionary Duvalier-Belaguer alliance and support the struggle of the two fraternal peoples. EFLNA expresses its resolute support for these aims.

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OMAN

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

In December, 1973, the Shah of Iran with the approval of U.S. imperialism, staged an all-out military invasion of Oman with the declared aim of crushing the struggle of the Omani people. In the past 3 years, the Iranian invaders have dropped thousands of tons of bombs, sowing death and destruction, throughout Oman and in particular, in the liberated areas.

Oman is an oil-rich country, strategically located on the Arabian/Persian Gulf, through which 60% of the world's oil passes. It is ruled by a reactionary Sultanate, totally subservient to imperialist interests. The U.S. is building a military base in the strategic Omani island of Masirah.

The armed struggle of the people of Oman started in 1965. Under the leadership of the Peoples Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO), it aims to overthrow the reactionary Qaboos regime and establish a truly independent and democratic Oman.

In the past 11 years, the Omani revolution has irrefutably demonstrated its popular and revolutionary nature. Within a few years after its birth, the PFLO succeeded in liberating the province of Dhofar. In the liberated areas, the PFLO started agricultural production and convinced the nomadic population to lead settled lives. It solved the age-old tribal animosities among the people. It built clinics and schools, where none had existed before. Conscious that the victory of the revolution is unthinkable without the full participation of women, the PFLO is fighting for the liberation of

women - abolishing polygamy, bride price, child marriage, etc. A large number of women have become PFLO militants.

It was these successes of the revolution and the consolidation of the PFLO that led the U.S. imperialists and their puppets to decide on the Iranian invasion of Oman in 1973. In addition to the 30,000 Iranian troops, the PFLO has in the past three years faced, thousands of Omani troops, hundreds of Jordanian and British officers, all armed with U.S.-supplied ultra-modern and sophisticated weapons. And this formidable counter-revolutionary force is arrayed against the liberation movement of a small country with a population of less than one million.

The combined U.S.-British-Iranian onslaught has caused temporary setbacks to the struggle of the people of Oman. The Iranian invaders have penetrated and established bases in the liberated areas. The PFLO has been forced to break its armed forces into smaller guerrilla units.

However, contrary to the wishes and declarations of the imperialists and the reactionaries, the Omani struggle and the PFLO are by no means crushed. The PFLO is determined to persist in armed and political struggle and continues to enjoy the resolute support of the overwhelming majority of the people of Oman. Herein lies the strength of the Omani struggle. As a PFLO representative said, "Our two

Condemn The Anti-Haitian Campaign In The Dominican Republic

Haiti - a rich and beautiful island in the Caribbean. Its people - hardworking and talented.

Haiti- ruled by one of the most repressive dictatorial regimes in the world. Its people - forced to live under extremely wretched and degrading conditions, mercilessly exploited by U.S. imperialist monopolies, like Gulf and Western, and the local feudal and comprador capitalist classes. The conditions are so bad - unemployment is so high - that a large number of Haitian workers and youth are forced to migrate in search of better job opportunities and living conditions.

In accordance with the treaties signed by the two repressive governments in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, thousands of Haitian workers are taken every year, to the sugar cane fields of the Dominican Republic to carry out the hard work of the sugar cane harvest.

In the Dominican Republic, the Haitian workers have no rights whatsoever. They are forced to live in open field concentration camps where they are watched by armed military detachments. Health facilities are non-existent. (The body of a young worker, who died of tuberculosis because of lack of medical care was left lying on the ground for two days.) If the workers complain about their condition, they are beaten, jailed and at times murdered by the Dominican authorities, or are sent back to Haiti where they face execution by the Duvalier regime. Young women are threatened and often raped by the guards.

The trans-nationals Gulf and Western, in collaboration with the Dominican and Haitian governments

reap the fruits of the Haitian workers' labor. Ten percent of the workers salaries is directly payed to the Haitian government. The rest is supposedly given to the workers by the Dominican government. By the time the sugar cane harvest ends, however, the workers have no money left after paying the debts incurred, in order to barely feed themselves.

In the Dominican Republic, the harsh repression is not limited to the immigrant workers. Patriotic Haitian political exiles also face the same inhuman treatment from the puppet Belaguer regime. A number of Haitian patriots are languishing in jails throughout the Dominican republic.

The Belaguer and Duvalier regimes have done their best to divide the Dominican and Haitian peoples. Haitians are pictured as thieves, sorcerors, criminals and as persons that come to the Dominican republic to take jobs away from the Dominicans. At the same time, Dominican women are presented to the Haitian people as prostitutes.

Since Oct., 1976, the Belaguer regime has intensified its repressive and abusive acts against Haitian workers. Under the pretext that the sugar cane harvest has ended, Dominican police are searching every corner of the country in order to apprehend the Haitian workers and send them back to their country. The apprehended workers are beaten by the police; in many cases they are deported

Resources

1. **LIBERATION**
Bi-monthly organ of Eritreans For Liberation in North America (EFLNA). Provides analysis and reportage of all aspects of the struggle in Eritrea and the surrounding region.

2. **VANGUARD**
Official organ of the Eritrean People's Liberation Forces (EPLF) Special issue of "Vanguard", translated into English by EFLNA is available at 50¢ per copy. Mostly issues available in Arabic and Tigrigna.

3. **REVOLUTION IN ERITREA**
A special pamphlet of EFLNA. Exposes the sham "socialism" of the Ethiopian junta and reveals its fascist nature. Presents an analysis of the nature and development of the Eritrean revolution.

4. **ERITREA: GUERRILLAS OF THE RED SEA**
Eyewitness account by J. L. Peninou, a French journalist. The report was first serialized in the French daily, "Liberation". Translated with an introduction and a postscript by EFLNA. 50¢ per copy.

5. **REACTIONARY CLIQUE FORCED OUT OF EPLF**
A pamphlet on the class struggle in the Eritrean liberation movement and the events surrounding the resignation of the Osman Sabbe clique from the EPLF.

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SHAH MURDERS IRANIAN PATRIOTS

The fascist regime of the Shah of Iran has tortured to death 8 Iranian patriots and has arrested 11 others. Three of the 8 martyrs were women. The 11 still under arrest are in severe torture and their lives are in danger.

The recent cold-blooded murders brings the number of Iranian patriots executed by the Shah's troops and his notorious secret police, the SAVAK, to about 200 in 1976 alone. Thousands of others have been arrested, imprisoned and tortured. It is estimated that there are over 100,000 political prisoners in Iran. The political prisoners are held in the most abominable conditions. They are subjected to the most barbaric torture in an attempt to force them to sign false confessions. Many have died under torture.

The Shah of Iran has based his rule on savage repression. This shows the anti-popular, anti-democratic nature of the Shah's regime and its isolation from the Iranian masses.

Despite, and as direct result of the severe fascist repression, the democratic and anti-imperialist movement of the people has grown unprecedently within the past few years. Revolutionary organizations have emerged and increased their activity. Women are ever more active in the people's daily struggle. There have been many workers' strikes and student demonstrations in this year alone. 54 striking workers were massacred in one incident by the Shah's troops last May.

Abroad, Iranian students have persisted in vehemently opposing and exposing the Shah's fascist dictatorship and U.S. imperialist domination of their country. They have vigorously supported their people's struggle for independence and democracy. One of the 8 murdered patriots was

an active member of the Confederation of Iranian Students National Union (CISNU) while abroad. His murder brings to 4 the number of former CISNU members tortured to death this year.

To protest the recent murder of 8 patriots and the arrest of the 11, the Iranian Student Association in the U.S. (member of CISNU) is holding hunger strikes in New York, Washington D.C., Houston Oklahoma Philadelphia and the Bay area. They have raised 5 demands. 1) Release the names of the 11 arrested people immediately. 2) Stop the torture of political prisoners immediately. 3) Make public the reasons for arrest and charges against the 11. 4) Announce the date of their trial. 5) Allow an international medical team of observers to attend the trial of the 11 patriots.

EFLNA expresses its full support for the just demands of the ISA and condemns the fascist Iranian regime for its massacre of patriotic Iranians.

The Shah's regime, which on the orders of the US imperialists, has spilled the blood not only of the Iranian people but also of the people of Oman and of the whole region, will surely pay in blood for its crimes. The Iranian masses will triumph.