

Ogaden Area recaptured by Ethiopian Forces with Soviet and Cuban Support -International Ramifications of Ethiopian-Somali Conflict - Incipient Soviet and Cuban Involvement in Ethiopian Warfare against Eritrean Secessionists -Political Assassinations inside Ethiopia

In the armed struggle in the Ogaden area of eastern Ethiopia between Ethiopian troops and Somali forces—consisting mainly of units of the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) supported by regular troops and aircraft of the Somali Democratic Republic (although the latter did not acknowledge the presence of its forces in Ethiopia until Feb. 21, 1978)—a turning point was reached in January-February 1978 as a result of two successive counter-offensives by the reorganized Ethiopian Army with strong Soviet and Cuban support both on the ground and in the air, and in mid-March Somalia [see 26650 A; 26931 A; 27323 A]. withdrew the remainder of its troops from Ethiopia.

The Soviet and Cuban involvement in the conflict with Somalia, and also in Ethiopian Government operations against Eritrean secessionist movements, became a major factor in early 1978 in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, and strong concern was expressed by various Western governments at the apparently increasing Soviet presence in the Horn of Africa. Soviet influence in the area had initially been concentrated on Somalia, but as explained in Somalia had in November 1977 expelled all Soviet experts, had withdrawn military facilities which had been granted to the Soviet Union and had abrogated the 1974 treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union, and had in addition broken off diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Although the Somali forces had approached the city of Harar (Harer) in November 1977 [see 28730 A], having captured the strategic town of Jijiga further to the east in September [see page 28634; for maps, see pages 28432 and 28633], they made no further advances and the first Ethiopian counter-offensive was launched on Jan. 21–22 with the use of Soviet-made T-55 tanks, armoured troop carriers, BM-21 multiple rocket launchers and 155 mm and 185 mm artillery—this equipment being far superior to any of the (largely also Soviet-supplied) arms at the disposal of the Somali forces.

A second counter-offensive was reported to have begun on Feb. 3, to have involved an estimated 120 Soviet T-54 and T-62 tanks, advancing from north of Dire Dawa and east of Harar, and to have resulted in at least 3,000 Somali deaths by Feb. 6. According to later reports, a force of helicopter-borne Soviet tanks had landed in the rear of Somali forces who had thus been encircled and destroyed. The Somali Government stated on Feb. 8 that over 600 tanks were advancing through the northern Ogaden while refugees added that the tanks were supported by MiG-21 and MiG-23 aircraft "hunting in packs of 30 at a time". The ruins of Jijiga, against which a special offensive had been started on Feb. 19, were re-occupied by Ethiopian forces after severe fighting on March 3–5.

According to Somali intelligence sources, quoted on Feb. 10, the Soviet officer leading the Ethiopian offensives was General Grigory Grigoryevich Barisov, who had been among the Soviet military advisers to Somalia before their expulsion in November 1977 [see 28460 A].

Not only did Somalia's tank forces suffer heavy losses, but the Somali Air Force virtually ceased to operate by early February, some of its aircraft having been shot down, others being grounded for maintenance and others still not having been committed to battle against superior Ethiopian aircraft.

The Somali Government proclaimed a general mobilization on Feb. 9 and a state of emergency on Feb. 11, when it repeated the order for general mobilization and announced that regular troops would be sent to the front.

General Aden Abdullahi Nur, a member of the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party's Central Committee, claimed on Feb. 13 that in the Mogadishu region alone 30,000 young volunteers had presented themselves for military service.

An earlier claim by the Somali authorities that Ethiopian aircraft had carried out a number of raids on towns in northern Somalia was officially denied in Ethiopia.

Early in December 1977 Hargeisa was said to have been attacked by Ethiopian jets causing the death of at least nine persons, and on Dec. 28 it was officially claimed in Mogadishu (the Somali capital) that eight Ethiopian aircraft had raided Hargeisa (killing two children and injuring 13 persons) and also Berbera, and that altogether six Ethiopian aircraft had been shot down. On Feb. 7 six Ethiopian aircraft were said to have again bombed Berbera and Hargeisa.

Mr Cyrus Vance, the US Secretary of State, declared on Feb. 10 that in agreement with other Western countries the United States was ready to supply Somalia with arms if the current Ethiopian counter-offensive should turn into aggression against Somalia, but that the Soviet Union had assured him that Ethiopian troops would not enter that country. (Mr Vance also said that what was happening in the Horn of Africa was "not compatible" with a reduction of forces in the Indian Ocean on which US-Soviet discussions had been taking place for over a year.)

Lieut.-Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, the Ethiopian head of state, confirmed on Feb. 14 that Ethiopian forces would not cross the Somali border, saying: "We will not interfere in any way in the internal affairs of other people. The defensive war we are waging goes as far as our frontier."

An appeal made by the commander of the Ethiopian forces on Feb. 8 for the immediate surrender of Somali armed forces on Ethiopian territory "under pain of total destruction" remained unheeded. However, after the fall of [see below] Jijiga on March 5 it appeared that the Somali forces had largely ceased offering resistance to their more numerous and better equipped opponents and were withdrawing, while Ethiopian forces successively occupied all major strategic points in the Ogaden area.

The Franco-Ethiopian Railway Company announced on Feb. 25 that the Addis Ababa-Djibouti line, which had been cut by Somali guerrillas in June 1977 [see 28633 A], had been reopened to traffic on that day.

President Carter of the United States, in a message to President Siyad Barreh of Somalia on March 7, proposed that a ceasefire should be called in the Ogaden area and that it should be supervised by neutral observers who would also be able to prevent reprisals against the civilian population.

In response President Siyad Barreh informed President Carter on March 8 that Somali troops would be withdrawn from the Ogaden area and that he was informing the ambassadors of France, West Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States of this decision, and was asking them what aid their countries would henceforth accord to Somalia.

During the night from March 8-9 the US Government informed the Soviet Government of the Somali Government's decision and asked the USSR to show "moderation" on the battle ground and to facilitate a separation of the fighting forces.

The Somali withdrawal was officially announced on March 9 by the Central Committee of the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party, which stated that Somalia had had to "send some units of its forces to support the liberation movements in Western Somalia" and that it was not Ethiopia which had forced Somalia to withdraw, but the presence of Soviet and Cuban forces in that country (estimated by US sources at 11,000 Cuban and about 1,500 Soviet military personnel, said to be under the command of General Vasily Ivanovich Petrov, first deputy commander of Soviet ground troops).

On the same day the Somali Government appealed to the great powers to ensure "the withdrawal of all foreign forces present in the Horn of Africa" and "recognition by the interested parties of the right to self-determination" of the population of the Ogaden area, and also called on the same powers to begin a process which would lead to "a negotiated, peaceful, just and durable settlement" in the area.

In the Somali announcement it was also stated that Somalia had been "advised by big powers to solve the problem in a peaceful manner"; that these powers had guaranteed the withdrawal of foreign troops from the area and had promised that "the rights of Western Somalia" would be safeguarded; and that the Somali decision had been taken partly because "allied foreign forces" had "launched attacks and continuous air raids against some parts of the Somali Democratic Republic".

President Carter, speaking at a press conference on March 9, welcomed the Somali announcement of the troop withdrawal. The United States hoped, he said, that the result of this decision would be an immediate end to the bloodshed in that area; that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) could move quickly to help all parties to end hostilities and to agree on measures enabling the Somali forces to return rapidly to their country; and that, as soon as the Somali withdrawal was complete and Ethiopian forces had re-established control over their own territory, the withdrawal of "the Soviet and Cuban combat presence" would begin. He went on: "The United States looks forward to the complete withdrawal of all foreign forces from the two countries, Ethiopia and Somalia, at an early date. We stand ready to assist the OAU in working out the

basis for negotiations between Ethiopia and Somalia which would ensure the territorial integrity of all countries in the region and the honouring of international boundaries." He added that before the United States would be ready to discuss providing economic aid or selling defensive weapons to Somalia there would have to be a tangible withdrawal of Somali forces from the Ogaden and a renewed commitment not to dishonour the international boundaries of either Ethiopia or Kenya.

The Ethiopian Government, in a statement issued on March 10, insisted on Ethiopia's right to seek foreign help to safeguard its territorial integrity and declared that Somalia would have to renounce all territorial claims before ceasefire talks could start.

On March 11 the Ethiopian Foreign Ministry officially rejected Somalia's offer to withdraw its troops from the Ogaden region and named as Ethiopia's conditions for "a just and lasting peace" Somalia's unconditional abandonment of all claims to territory in Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti, and the abrogation of all juridical bases for such claims; a "public and solemn promise" to recognize all principles and decisions of the United Nations and the OAU; and a "solemn" declaration that Somalia would "at all times adhere to international agreements and the principle of a non-military solution of international conflicts".

For the WSLF, however, Mr Abdullahi Hassan Mahmud, its secretary-general, stated on March 11 that its forces would continue to fight until the liberation of Somalis "oppressed" by Ethiopia had been achieved, and he criticized the United States for its "treacherous attitude" adopted in the face of Soviet and Cuban intervention which had caused the loss of "several thousand" Somalis.

The Soviet Government indicated on March 12 that it would not agree to withdraw its own and Cuban forces from Ethiopia in return for the departure of Somali forces from the Ogaden area, this request having likewise been rejected by the Ethiopian Foreign Ministry. The Foreign Ministry also refused a US proposal that observers should be sent from neutral countries to monitor a ceasefire agreement, on the grounds that this would represent interference in matters falling "under Ethiopia's sovereignty" (although the US State Department had announced on March 10 that this proposal had been agreed to by the Soviet Union).

The completion of the withdrawal of Somalia's regular forces from the Ogaden region was announced in Mogadishu on March 14; the US State Department stated on the same day that fighting in the Ogaden desert had "effectively ceased" and that the Ethiopian and supporting Soviet and Cuban forces were respecting the international border with Somalia.

According to diplomatic sources in Nairobi (the Kenyan capital), quoted on March 5, the main Somali force in the northern Ogaden had been "destroyed" and their retreat generally had been "far from orderly". By March 15 more than 100,000 refugees had crossed into northern Somalia alone, while President Hassan Gouled Aptidon of Djibouti said on March 19 that some 250,000 Ethiopians and Somalis (or more than the total population of his country) had arrived there after fleeing from Ethiopia.

Hr Poul Hartling, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), appealed in mid-April 1978 to 68 governments, including those of Cuba and the Soviet Union, to contribute to a \$12,000,000 fund needed to carry out a relief programme for 300,000 refugees in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia. A UNHCR mission had found that many villages in the Ogaden area had been destroyed and that 82,000 persons had been accommodated in emergency camps in Somalia. In Mogadishu, however, it was claimed that 500,000 refugees had reached Somalia, while in Ethiopia UNHCR aid was requested for "over 500,000 persons directly affected by the recent combats in the Hararghe, Bale and Sidamo Regions" (i.e. the Ogaden area). Confirming the withdrawal of its armed forces from Ethiopia the Somali Government on March 15 called on the superpowers to "fulfil their promise to bring about a just and lasting settlement to the issue in the Horn of Africa" which could "only be arrived at by granting the people concerned their rights to independence and freedom".

A spokesman for the Ethiopian Revolutionary Operations Command announced on March 24 that the last town on the southern front had been recaptured and that the whole front had been liberated, while Ethiopian troops were "reorganizing and pacifying the people".

Mr Mohamed Said Samantar, the Somali ambassador in Paris, had alleged on March 23 that "bloody reprisals" were being carried out against the population of the Ogaden by Ethiopian forces and Cuban "mercenaries", but this was denied by Mr Mesfin Retta, the Ethiopian charge d'affaires in Paris, who in turn alleged that regular Somali forces had "destroyed and pillaged" whole towns in the area.

Mr Samantar also complained that—while "large and medium-sized powers" had "forced Somalia to cease fighting" and had promised that there would be "no massacres or reprisals", that negotiations would be opened immediately and that international forces would be sent in to protect the population—once Somalia had done what had been asked for, everybody had forgotten the problem and had thought that Somalia could be forced to make further concessions. He added that there could be "no peace until the rights of the

Somali people to self-determination are recognized and foreign forces have been withdrawn from the Horn of Africa".

Despite the withdrawal of Somali armed forces, the WSLF claimed to be engaged in further battles with Ethiopian troops in late March, and the Somali Foreign Ministry declared on March 29: "Somalia is morally bound to assist its brethren in Western Somalia and will never waver in its determination [to fight for] their right to freedom and independence." It added that its conditions for peace were the removal of foreign troops; the presence in the Ogaden of neutral forces to stem "on-going genocide and reprisals"; recognition of the Ogaden people's right to full independence; and negotiations to be conducted through the OAU.

The Arab League (of which Somalia had become a member in 1974 [see 26392 A]A) decided at a meeting of its Ministerial Council in Cairo on March 29 to extend military and other assistance to Somalia to help it defend its borders against any external attack; to condemn interference by the Soviet Union and Cuba in the conflict; and to call on those two countries to withdraw their forces from the region immediately.

As the Somali Government continued to express its support for the "liberation movements" inside Ethiopia and these movements persisted in claiming to have, at various localities, inflicted heavy casualties on Ethiopian and Cuban troops, Mr Mengiste Desta, the Ethiopian ambassador in Kenya, declared in a statement issued on April 14 that, if such aggression continued, Ethiopia would "take all appropriate measures to deal a severe blow" to Somalia, and that "this time" the battle would "not be fought within Ethiopia's borders".

The nature and volume of Soviet and Cuban assistance supplied to the Ethiopian military regime emerged only gradually during the decisive Ethiopian counter-offensives in January and February 1978, but both the Soviet Union and Cuba had made their attitude to the conflict clear much earlier.

Mr Andrei Gromyko the USSR Foreign Minister, in a speech at a banquet given in Moscow on Nov. 29, 1977, in honour of Brigadier Joseph Garba, the Nigerian Commissioner for External Affairs, called on African peoples to support Ethiopia in its war against Somalia.

Although the Cuban Foreign Ministry had stated on Nov. 5, 1977, that no combatant military units were engaged in Ethiopia, Dr Fidel Castro, the Cuban leader, declared in Havana on Dec. 24: "Cuba's solidarity with the peoples of Africa is not negotiable. We are helping and shall help Angola... [and] the Ethiopian revolution. We shall also help the liberation movements in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa."

The Ethiopian Government, however, continued at first to deny the presence of any Soviet or Cuban military personnel in Ethiopia.

Major Dawit Wolde Ghiorgis, the Ethiopian Deputy Foreign Minister (and formerly Permanent Secretary at the Foreign Ministry), said during a visit to London on Jan. 18 that Ethiopia wished to remain non-aligned and that, although (he said) there were no military personnel from the USSR or Cuba in Ethiopia, his country was "getting adequate assistance from our friends, enough to defend our territory and our revolution". He also accused "certain reactionary countries" of planning to make the Red Sea "an Arab lake", this plan being condemned by Ethiopia [see also 28348 A; page 28402]. The ethnic minorities in his country, which had been "oppressed under the feudal regime", would (he added) be given regional autonomy, but there would be no "special cases" (for Eritrea or the Ogaden), and all would be treated equally.

Major Berhane Bayih, a member of the 13-man standing committee of the Ethiopian Provisional Military Administrative Council PMAC), speaking in Nairobi on the same day, similarly denied both the presence of any Soviet or Cuban military advisers in his country and also a report that Sr Raul Castro Ruz (the Cuban Minister of Defence) and Marshal Dmitry Ustinov (his Soviet counterpart) were visiting Ethiopia to plan an invasion of Somalia. He accused the United States of having instigated the Somali invasion of Ethiopia and emphasized that there would be "no ceasefire and no peace talks" while Somali troops remained on Ethiopian soil,

The Soviet attitude was explained in statements issued in Moscow on Jan. 18.

It was stated that, after the Somali leadership had, "despite friendly warnings by the genuine friends of the Somali people", decided to send troops to Ethiopian territory, the Soviet Union had, "as always in such cases", sided with the victim—whereas other countries, notably the United States, had aided and abetted the aggressor. The Soviet Government added that "the immediate withdrawal of all Somali forces from Ethiopian territory" was a necessary precondition for a peaceful settlement of the dispute. At the same time it was announced that the Soviet Union was giving "material and technical aid" to Ethiopia to repel Somalia's aggression (although the report of Marshal Ustinov's visit to Addis Ababa was denied).

According to unconfirmed statements made by the Somali side (e.g. on Jan. 20 by Mr Dahir Hussein Dirir, Somalia's charge' d'affaires in Nairobi), there were some 20,000 military personnel from the Soviet Union, Cuba, East Germany and other East European countries fighting in Ethiopia. The military operations by Ethiopia were on Jan. 21 reported to be directed by a committee consisting of Lieut.-Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, five other Ethiopians, five Soviet officers, nine Cubans and two South Yemenis.

The co-ordination of Soviet, Cuban and South Yemeni military aid to Ethiopia was discussed in Moscow by President Brezhnev and Mr Alexei Kosygin (the Soviet Prime Minister) (i) on Feb. 1 with Sr Raul Castro Ruz, the Cuban Defence Minister, and (ii) on Feb. 2–3 with Mr Ali Nasser Mohammed, the Prime Minister of South Yemen. (Mr Mohammed and Mr Kosygin were reported to have agreed on Feb. 2 on aiding Ethiopia's struggle not only against the Somalis in the Ogaden area but also against the Eritrean separatists— see below.)

Dr Feleke Gedle Ghiorgis, the Ethiopian Foreign Minister, on Feb. 13 described the help given to the Ethiopian Army by Cuban "instructors as necessary and justified", and on March 2 Lieut.Colonel Mengistu confirmed for the first time that Cuban troops were fighting at the side of Ethiopian forces. (These Cuban forces had on Jan. 28 been reported to be commanded by General Arnaldo Ochoa Sánchez, who had first visited Ethiopia in February 1977 – see page 28423—and who was said to have played a key role in the 1976 war in Angola—see 27661 A.)

According to Middle East reports of March 8, South Yemeni aid to Ethiopia involved about 2,000 infantrymen, 160 infantry officers acting as military advisers, 60 men manning tanks and artillery units, and 24 pilots flying Soviet MiG interceptors.

The intervention of Cuban forces in Ethiopia was officially supported in Tanzania (for the first time) on March 13, when the government-owned *Daily News* objected to Western protests against the presence of Cubans in Ethiopia, saying that there had never been such hostility to the "presence of French or South African forces in a certain number of African countries".

President Senghor of Senegal (whose Government was one of the few in Africa which had not recognized the Government of President Neto of Angola, and who said on April 4, 1978, that he would not change his policy in this respect until Cuban forces had been fully withdrawn from that country) was on April 7 quoted as indicating that he did not disapprove of Soviet-Cuban support for Ethiopia in the Ogaden area as this support was similar to, for instance, France intervening in Mauritania in defence of frontiers inherited from the colonial era. While stressing the principle of the inviolability of such frontiers, however, he also advocated a certain degree of autonomy for the peoples of the Ogaden area and of Eritrea.

When Tass, the Soviet news agency, on March 12 published the Ethiopian Government's rejections of "attempts by the US Government and its allies to interfere in the solution of matters falling under Ethiopian sovereignty" [see above], it described these moves as "attempts to link a Somali troop withdrawal with the presence in Ethiopia of military personnel invited by the Ethiopian Government".

In Havana, the participation of Cuban forces in the fighting in the Ogaden was for the first time officially admitted on March 14.

In an article published in *Granma*, the official organ of the Cuban Communist Party, it was stated that Cuban air pilots, tank drivers, artillery units and armoured infantry battalions had arrived in Ethiopia in December 1977 and had taken part in the fighting since the end of January 1978—following an urgent call by the Ethiopian Government to the Cuban Communist Party. *Granma* continued: "The turn in the war has been the Cuban-Ethiopian counter-offensive of Jan. 23–27 near the road between Dire Dawa and Harar. Ethiopia has given guarantees not to cross the Somali frontier.... Aggression against the Ethiopian revolution from Somali territory [must] definitely cease."

The article also stated that the "opportunistic and criminal" attack on the Ethiopian revolution by Somalia had taken place with the knowledge and approval of Western states, including the USA, and was comparable with the (1935) Fascist attack by Italian troops, and that it was only "resolute international aid" which had preserved Ethiopia's independence.

Dr Castro himself declared on March 15: "The objective of the war was to liberate the occupied territory. We therefore think that the war between Ethiopia and Somali has finished." He added that at a secret meeting of Cuban officials with Somali and South Yemeni leaders in Aden in March 1977 [see also 2840 A] Somalia had promised not to invade Ethiopia but that it had nevertheless begun its aggression in June 1977.

Details of the Soviet and other communist military involvement were reported from various sources. It was confirmed on Feb. 24 by Admiral Harold Shear, NATO Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces Southern Europe (based in Naples), that "large quantities" of arms and military equipment were being taken

to Ethiopia in civil aircraft passing through Turkish airspace and in merchant vessels (via the Bosphorus and the Suez Canal), while other Soviet material was sent to Ethiopia by sea from the Far East, and that some 20 Soviet warships were stationed in the Horn of Africa area. (In Turkey it was confirmed at the same time that despite Turkish warnings Soviet commercial aircraft believed to be carrying arms for Ethiopia had been overflying Turkey.)

In the Belgrade daily *Politika* (quoted on March 23) it was stated that Soviet aid to Ethiopia had been worth \$1,000 million; that some 15,000 Cuban soldiers were stationed in Ethiopia and were taking part in the fighting; that East German technicians were assembling Soviet jets in Addis Ababa; and that the strategist of the Ethiopian victory in the Ogaden had been General Petrov, who had organized the surprise landing of 70 airborne tanks behind the Somali lines.

According to European diplomats in Nairobi (who had recently been in Ethiopia and who were quoted on March 24), Ethiopian Airlines aircraft had made 78 night-time flights between November 1977 and March 1978 to pick up Cuban troops from Luanda (Angola), overflying the Sudan, the Central African Empire and the Congo.

Sr Isidoro Malmierca Peoli, the Cuban Foreign Minister, together with three senior Cuban officials, visited Addis Ababa from March 17 to 23. In a communique' issued on March 23 it was stated: "Cuba and Ethiopia agree that peace in the Horn of Africa can be established only when Somalia has publicly renounced its territorial claims on Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti and has put an end to its interference in the internal affairs of these countries." The communique also condemned the "reactionary and imperialist Arab regimes conspiring with Mogadishu in deliberate aggression against Ethiopia, and the sinister actions taken in the Horn of Africa and the area of the Red Sea by international imperialism and its allies who exacerbate ethnic and religious differences, and attempt to challenge the existing frontiers by force

At the end of a visit to Moscow by Lieut.-Colonel Mengistu on April 4–6 it was stated in a communique' on April 7 that the USSR and Ethiopia wished to strengthen their "friendship and co-operation in the interests of their peoples as well as efforts for peace in Africa".

Mr Moshe Dayan, the Israeli Foreign Minister, disclosed in an interview in Zurich on Feb. 6 that Israel had been selling arms to Ethiopia with which, he said, it had had co-operation "for years and years" and with which Israel wished to retain this good relationship.

In Israel Mr Dayan's remark at first aroused little attention, although on Feb. 8 an official denial was issued in respect of an allegation made by Eritrean secessionists that Israeli experts were training the Ethiopian Army and that Israeli pilots had taken part in the bombing of Eritrean liberation forces' positions.

The truth of Mr Dayan's statement was however, officially denied in Ethiopia, while the Ethiopian embassy in London stated on Feb. 14 that the minister's remark was "a deliberate and sinister act to isolate Ethiopia from the revolutionary and progressive Arab states" (hostile to Israel).

On Feb. 19 Mr Yossi Sand, an opposition member of the *Knesset* (the Israeli Parliament), stated on Israeli television that, shortly after Mr Dayan's remark, all Israeli advisers [see also page 28635 A] had been expelled from Ethiopia within 24 hours.

After Mr Dayan had stated that the news of Israeli arms aid to Ethiopia had already been disclosed in the world's press before he had made his remark, Mr Menahem Begin, the Israeli Prime Minister, said on Feb. 17 that Mr Dayan's remark was "a human error and declared that no arms sales had in fact been made to Ethiopia for some time.

Somalia's action in the Ogaden region had also caused apprehension in Kenya, to whose north-eastern Province the Somali regime had laid claim in earlier years but with which a peace agreement had been concluded in 1967. [see 22386 B] Kenya had concluded a mutual defence agreement with Ethiopia in 1963 [see 19809 D], but this agreement had not been invoked by Ethiopia after the start of the Somali action.

On Dec. 1 Ethiopia had obtained permission from Kenya to use the port of Mombasa for the importation of vital supplies, to be conveyed to Addis Ababa by air, while Kenya was reported to have donated 10,000 tonnes of maize and also quantities of tea and of powdered milk to Ethiopia.

Between December 1977 and February 1978 the Nairobi press frequently reported on clashes between Kenyan security forces and "Somalis armed with sophisticated weapons" in the North-Eastern Province.

On Feb. 15 the Kenyan Air Force compelled an Egyptian aircraft carrying arms to Somalia to land at Nairobi airport, after three previous similar flights had been ignored by Kenya. However, on Feb. 17 the Egyptian aircraft was returned to Cairo—with its cargo of Soviet-made arms—after the Egyptian authorities had temporarily seized two Kenya Airways airliners and had forced a third one to land in Egypt.

Following a remark made by the Shah of Iran on Jan. 1 that his country would not stand idly by if Somalia were invaded by Ethiopian forces with Soviet and Cuban backing, Dr Muniya Waiyaki, the Kenyan Foreign Minister, on Jan. 10 expressed his concern at this remark to Dr Ahmad Tavakoli, the Iranian ambassador in Nairobi, and stated later that Iran, not being an African country, had no right to interfere in African affairs. Mr Abbas Ali Khalatbari, the Iranian Foreign Minister, thereupon announced on Feb. 18 that his Government had decided to close its embassy in Nairobi and to recall its ambassador and his staff. While confirming the Shah's attitude in the event of an Ethiopian attack on Somalia, Mr Khalatbari denied that Iran had sent any supplies other than medical ones to the latter country. [For earlier developments in relations between Iran and Somalia, see page 28760.]

Dr Waiyaki visited Ethiopia on March 29-April 2, after which he said that Kenya supported Ethiopia's four conditions for peace in the Horn of Africa [see above]. Although he had said earlier that the mutual defence agreement between the two countries, which was due to expire in July 1978, was to be renewed, no announcement was made to this effect, and Dr Waiyaki was reported to have said that in the event of war Kenya would have to be self-reliant.

A Kenyan delegation led by Vice-President Arap Moi had talks with Mr James Callaghan, the British Prime Minister, and Dr David Owen (the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary) in London on March 6 and was reported to have asked Britain to speed up deliveries of weapons to Kenya. After talks held with Vice-President Moi in Washington President Carter announced on March 2 that the United States would supply Kenya with a squadron of F-5 fighter aircraft.

The importance attached by the Soviet Union to its involvement in the area was revealed by Mr V. Sofinsky, head of the press department of the USSR Foreign Ministry, who stated on Feb. 3: "The Horn of Africa is first and foremost of military, political and economic significance. The importance of the area lies in its location at the junction of the two continents of Asia and Africa. There are a lot of good seaports in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. Moreover, there are sea-lanes which link oil-producing countries with America and Europe."

President Sadat of Egypt, speaking to US senators during a visit to the United States on Feb. 7, warned them that the Soviet Union had taken over power in Ethiopia and could threaten Egypt's trade route through the Red Sea and also the supply of half of Egypt's water (reaching Egypt from Lake Tana, north-west of Addis Ababa, through the Blue Nile). (The Egyptian President also said before members of Congress that Egypt had already supplied weapons worth \$30,000,000 to Somalia and was likely to send more, and that he would "not exclude the possibility" of sending Egyptian military personnel to Somalia. However, Mr Hodding Carter, spokesman for the US State Department, said on Feb. 8: "We feel that anything which would encourage the escalation of the fighting is not useful. We have made this clear to a number of parties.")

The apprehension felt in Arab countries opposed to Soviet involvement in the area was also expressed by President Nemeiry of the Sudan, who said on Feb. 13 that, in the absence of any reaction by the United States, the Soviet Union had "undertaken to take over Africa bit by bit"; that, although the Soviets would not allow the Ethiopians to conquer Somalia by force of arms, they would take it over by subversion; and that "when they have completed the occupation of the Horn of Africa they will be interested in the Sudan". Their first objective, however, he added, would be Kenya, as they were already engaged in underground activities by training Kenyans in the Soviet Union and in Ethiopia.

On Feb. 24 the US attitude to the conflict was outlined in a statement made by Mr Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's Assistant for National Security Affairs, who said that there were more than 10,000 Cubans in Ethiopia organized in two infantry brigades and one mechanized brigade; that the USSR had delivered about 400 tanks and some 50 MiGs to Ethiopia; that Ethiopia's military operations in the Harar area were being directed by a Soviet general; that this constituted "a flagrant foreign intervention in a purely internal African conflict"; that there was "no doubt that it is Somalia which has violated the Ethiopian frontier"; that the Somalis "must withdraw from the Ogaden"; and that the Soviets and the Cubans "must also leave".

Tass, however, stated on Feb. 27 that the Soviet Union was providing assistance to the Ethiopian Government in rebuffing aggression by Somalia; that it supported an end to hostilities once Somali troops withdrew from Ethiopia; and that any other interpretation of Soviet aims was "premeditated distortion". For the question of "linking" the situation in the Horn of Africa with general East-West relations and in particular with the current SALT talks on strategic arms limitation.

In Ethiopia the US Government was repeatedly accused of siding with Somalia in the Ogaden conflict.

Thus Lieut. -Colonel Mengistu accused the United States on Jan. 30 of secretly supplying Somalia with arms in agreement with Iran, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, with such arms being allegedly sent from US bases in West Germany and Iran, and with arms also being bought in Western Europe or in the United States. These allegations were, however, immediately denied by Mr John Trattner, spokesman for the US State Department, who emphasized that the USA neither had supplied nor intended to supply any military equipment to Somalia and that material of US origin should not be furnished without US authorization [see also page 28760rsqb;.

On Feb. 14 the Ethiopian head of state again accused the United States (this time together with Britain and West Germany) of supplying arms to Somalia and of planning to "subvert and destabilize" Ethiopia, adding that, if these countries continued their policies, "maintaining diplomatic relations with them would become totally meaningless". He also alleged that since committing its full forces to the invasion of Ethiopian territory in July 1977 Somalia had deployed "more than 70,000 troops, 250 tanks, 350 other armoured vehicles and over 40 aircraft" and had also fired missiles at the Red Sea port of Assab.

However, after a US mission led by Mr David Aaron, US Deputy Assistant for National security Affairs, had visited Addis Ababa on Feb. 18-19 and had been told that Ethiopia would continue fighting until all Somali forces had been expelled from its territory, it was indicated in a White House statement on Feb. 21 that President Carter had, through Mr Aaron, received a personal assurance from Lieut.-Colonel Mengistu that Ethiopia's forces would not cross the Somali frontier and that the Ethiopian Government would soon agree to the appointment of a new US ambassador to Ethiopia. [The posts both of US ambassador in Addis Ababa and Ethiopian ambassador in Washington had been vacant for a considerable time; for appointment of Ethiopian ambassador to the United States, see page WARNING : convertartid() 'f 28635n01eth' is not a valid article reference 28635 .]

During February 1978 the United States supplied Ethiopia with "non-lethal" equipment worth \$1,000,000 and consisting of lorries, jeeps and vehicle spare parts--this being the first consignment since the suspension of the US-Ethiopian defence agreement in 1977 [see page 28423], since when, the Ethiopian Government claimed, \$40,000,000 worth of weapons and equipment ordered and paid for in May 1977 had remained undelivered. (Earlier, on Dec. 28, 1977, the USA was reported to have agreed to provide Ethiopia with \$2,000,000 in aid for famine relief, to be used to buy 150 lorries.)

In a statement by Captain Fikre Selassie Wodgeress, the secretary-general of the PMAC, on April 6, however, the Ethiopian Government declared: "Unless the Western powers, in particular the United States, Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany, are persuaded by public pressure at home to abandon their policy of bloodshed in Africa, it will become quite meaningless to maintain diplomatic relations with them... The US Government must stop its campaign against the Ethiopian people and revolution."

Naval exercises held off the Horn of Africa early in April 1978 and involving five British frigates, two US destroyers and two French frigates, with four (British) Royal Navy support ships, were condemned as "provocative and intimidating" by the Ethiopian Government, while *Pravda* on April 6 denounced them as NATO exercises which demonstrated that "Western military circles" had "not abandoned attempts at bringing pressure to bear on Ethiopia and at inventing new pretexts for interference in the Horn of Africa". A repeated demand by Mr Vance for the withdrawal of Somali forces from Ethiopian territory was rejected by President Siyad Barreh on Feb. 13, when the President declared that his people were ready "to the last man" to defend territory inhabited by Somalis (which, he said, included the Ogaden area), and that Western policy as dictated by the USA was playing into the hands of the Soviet Union.

The President was, however, at the same time reported to have taken up contact not only with the UN security Council and the OAU but also directly with the Soviet Union. Despite the expulsion of Soviet personnel from Somalia in November 1977 the Somali Government had not broken off its diplomatic relations with the USSR, and it was later reported that during a visit to Mogadishu on Feb. 20-22 Signor Gianni Giadresco, a senior official of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), had delivered to President Siyad Barreh messages from the Soviet Union and also from Signor Enrico Berlinguer the secretary of the PCI, to the effect that the Soviet Union wanted a negotiated settlement of the conflict and would respect Somalia's frontier. The Somali President was said to have replied that he would continue to maintain his country's diplomatic relations with the USSR.

Discussions with the Somali Government on US aid took place during a visit to Mogadishu on March 19-23 by Mr Richard Moose, US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, and Mr Paul Henze, a member of the US National security Council's staff, when Mr Moose was reported to have made it clear that US military aid would be dependent on Somalia renouncing its traditional claims to territory in Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti. A new agreement signed by Mr Moose and Mr Muhammad Yusuf Weyrah,

the Somali Minister of Finance, on March 19 provided for the supply of food by the USA worth \$7,000,000 over the next six months, with repayment to be spread over 40 years. (Recent US aid had been limited to a consignment of 100,000 tonnes of food which had arrived in Mogadishu on Jan. 31, 1978.)

In Ethiopia it was officially claimed on March 19 that the United States was "manoeuvring world public opinion to pave the way for arming the Mogadishu regime which continues to pursue a policy of expansionism".

President Siyad Barreh repeatedly appealed to other countries, in particular in the Arab world, to come to Somalia's aid in order to avert an Ethiopian invasion of his country. Between December 1977 and March 1978 he personally visited most of the Arab countries likely to heed his appeal (calling on some of them more than once) and also Iran.

During his visit to Tehran President Siyad Barreh said on Dec. 28 that he had asked the Shah to give a message to President Carter of the United States (who was due to visit Iran on Dec. 31—see 28894 A) and added that he did not think that the "wait-and-see" position adopted by the United States on the Somali-Ethiopian conflict was a wise one. As stated above, the Shah himself said on Jan. 1 that, if Somali territory were violated, his Government would not stand idly by, and on Jan. 4 it was reported that Iran had promised Somalia military and development aid worth \$300,000,000.

The Shah's announcement was strongly criticized in a number of African countries, and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in a press statement issued on Jan. 20, warned Iran against "meddling" in African affairs, saying: "Iran had better address herself to the question of finding a peaceful solution to the crisis in the Horn of Africa and assist the OAU in this task." The OAU also condemned Iran's continued association with South Africa which was alleged to receive "90 per cent of its oil supplies from Iran" [Notably since the Arab and African embargoes imposed in 1973—see 26245 A; 26246 A]—a fact which did "not qualify [Iran] to play any role on the African continent".

The Government of Saudi Arabia stated on Jan. 15 that in the event of an attack on the territorial integrity of Somalia it would also react.

President Siyad Barreh made similar appeals for aid to Western countries, and in particular to the United States, but the official attitude of the Governments of these countries remained not to supply weapons to either side in the conflict.

After President Siyad Barreh had, on Jan. 16, asked the ambassadors of France, West Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States to pass on to their governments his request for assistance by means of troops and arms for the defence of Somalia against an imminent attack from Ethiopia, the US State Department repeated on Jan. 17: "We will not contribute to a conflict by pouring gasoline on it."

In Britain Dr Owen said in the House of Commons on Jan. 18 that Britain was supplying no arms to either Somalia or Ethiopia. He added that Britain would be prepared to increase its aid to Somalia and demonstrated its "wish to have friendship with the people and Government of Somalia" but that this did not mean that "we could underwrite it by supplying arms to support the action taken in Ogaden".

Representatives of the five Western countries, meeting in Washington on Jan. 22, issued a statement saying that no lasting solution of the conflict could be found by force of arms; that negotiations were the only means by which the fighting could be brought to an end; and that they "reaffirmed their full support for the efforts of the OAU and its mediation commission" [see page 28634].

A Somali Government spokesman said on the same day that his Government had always maintained that the conflict could be solved peacefully and through the OAU and he called for non-interference by foreign forces and for their withdrawal.

In unconfirmed reports it was alleged that Somalia had, since the expulsion of the Soviet and Cuban advisers in November 1977, received limited amounts of light arms and also of obsolete tanks and of other armoured vehicles from various sources (including Egypt), and some such arms of Western origin were captured by Ethiopian forces and placed on show by them.

Mr Abdulkasim Salad Hassan, the then Somali Minister of Information and National Guidance, stated, however, on Feb. 9 that, contrary to Western press reports, Somalia had received no military aid from Western countries or from other anti-communist states such as Egypt, Iran or Saudi Arabia, although such aid had been pledged.

At a press conference in Mogadishu on Feb. 21 President Siyad Barreh admitted that Somali troops were present in the Ogaden area in "insignificant numbers" (this being the first such acknowledgement); he added that the decision to send them to the front had been "postponed to avoid further complications" and that he had asked the Western powers to supply him with arms "equal in quantity and quality" to those of his opponents but that these requests had not yet been heard.

Colonel Hussein Haji Ali Dualeh (39) defected from Somalia to Kenya in January 1978, having in September 1977 been recalled from his post as Somalia's ambassador in Nairobi after advocating the establishment of a joint Kenyan-Somali commission to avoid border incidents. He stated in Nairobi on Feb. 28 that a Somali Democratic Action Front (Solef) had been set up in Rome in 1977 by former Somali Army officers and officials with the aim of overthrowing the regime of President Siyad Barre. At the same time he appealed to Western powers not to supply arms to Somalia but to use their influence to stop the war. On March 20 a close collaborator of President Siyad Barre was quoted as saying: "From this war we have learnt the lesson that second-rank powers have no influence on the decisions of the two super-powers and that in future we shall have to rely above all on ourselves."

Under agreements signed in Bonn on Jan. 12 and confirmed in Mogadishu on Jan. 18, the West German Government granted Somalia an unconditional credit of DM 25,000,000 and also a supplementary credit of DM 15,000,000 (for the resettlement of nomads)—both together equal to over £10,000,000 or nearly US \$20,000,000.

During the negotiations Frau Marie Schlei, then West German Minister for Economic Co-operation, had indicated on Jan. 21 that the first of these credits might possibly be used for the purchase of arms by Somalia, but Herr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the Foreign Minister, pointed out on Jan. 23 that in the preamble to the relevant agreement it was expressly stated that the West German aid was destined exclusively for Somalia's economic and social development, and the Somali embassy in Bonn stated that the Somali Government had no intention of using these credits for arms purchases. (These West German credits had been agreed after the Somali Government's co-operation in allowing German border police to take action against terrorists holding a Lufthansa airliner at Mogadishu airport on Oct. 17–18, 1977 [see pages 28918]–20.)

The West German ambassador in Addis Ababa, Dr Johann Christian Lankes, was expelled by Ethiopia on Jan. 22.

However, Major Dawit Wolde Ghiorgis, the Ethiopian Deputy Foreign Minister, said in Rome on Jan. 23 that the expulsion of Dr Lankes was not a reprisal for West Germany's aid to Somalia but was due to his "personal conduct", as he had sent his Government "biased reports" on the situation in the Ogaden area. (Earlier, on Jan. 9, 1978, the Ethiopian Government had asked West Germany to withdraw its military attache' and his staff, as there was no military co-operation between the two countries. At the same time the German school in Addis Ababa had been closed.)

Although President Siyad Barre made approaches to leaders of various African and Arab states, and even directly to the military regime in Addis Ababa, with the object of obtaining a settlement of the dispute by negotiation, the differences between the two sides remained unbridgeable.

Thus on Jan. 5 the Somali President called on the Mengistu regime to end the bloodshed and to grant independence to the "colonialized" peoples in Ethiopia, while on Jan. 6 he proposed negotiations between the Ethiopian Government and the liberation movements on the basis of self-determination, as well as an end to foreign interference in African affairs. In this latter context he appealed to the African states to contribute to the solution of "this urgent and purely African conflict" and to the international community to recognize "its share in the responsibility" in view of the Soviet-Cuban intervention.

In Ethiopia, however, Lieutenant Legesse Asfaw, member of the PMAC responsible for military and political affairs, said in Assab on Jan. 17 that, although President Siyad Barre desired negotiations, there could be no reconciliation with "a reactionary enemy who would have to be "repulsed and annihilated". The Ethiopian Government was on April 3 reported to have set four conditions for a lasting peace as being Somali under-takings (i) to pay war damages (said to amount to \$500,000,000 according to a statement made on March 27 by Colonel Lemma Gutema, Ethiopia's administrator of the Hararge Region); (ii) to respect the principle of renouncing the use of force to settle international disputes; (iii) to adhere to the principles laid down in the UN and OAU Charters on interstate relations; and (iv) to renounce publicly all territorial claims against Somalia's neighbours (Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya).

In Eritrea further advances had been made in November and December 1977 by the forces of the (Marxist-Leninist) Eritrean Popular Liberation Front (EPLF), which had increasingly to rely on its own resources, contrary to its smaller rival, the (traditional) Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), which enjoyed some support from conservative Arab states such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Throughout part of the Eritrean countryside, and especially at the town of Keren (which it had captured in July 1977—see page 28634), the EPLF had set up its own administration. It also held (according to a statement made in London on Dec. 22 by Miss Mary Dines, general secretary of War on Want, after her return from Eritrea) between 4,000 and 5,000 Ethiopian prisoners, whose existence was denied by the

Ethiopian Government. (It was reported by deserters from the Ethiopian Army that under the direction of political officers massacres had taken place of Army officers and men opposed to the war in Eritrea, and also of numerous civilians suspected of sympathizing with the EPLF, especially in Asmara, the capital of Eritrea, which was besieged by EPLF forces.)

The ELF claimed on Dec. 18 that on Dec. 13 it had taken the Ethiopian strongpoint of Adi Caieh (with a garrison of about 7,000 men) on the road from the port of Massawa to Addis Ababa. After this action the Ethiopian forces were left with only four towns—Asmara, Barentu, Massawa and the port of Assab (in eastern Eritrea).

Also during December EPLF forces occupied all land approaches to the port of Massawa but were unable to take the city centre and the port which, according to independent observers, were defended with the aid of multiple Soviet-made rocket launchers and of South Yemenis driving Soviet T-54 tanks, while two Soviet ships had joined four Ethiopian vessels in firing guns and rockets, and Ethiopian reinforcements reached the port by sea. [For alleged Somali firing on Assab, see above.]

During January 1978 the Ethiopian Air Force began to carry out sporadic air raids, reportedly with the use of napalm and cluster bombs, against EPLF positions, with the result that thousands of refugees fled from the towns to the countryside and also to the adjoining Sudan.

During this period it became increasingly apparent that the Soviet Union was giving massive support to Ethiopia's forces in their fight against Eritrean secessionists.

The EPLF stated in an appeal issued in Paris on Jan. 20 that the Soviet Union was intervening with "the most sophisticated armaments" which could be operated only by Soviet or Cuban personnel; that the arsenal which was being assembled in Ethiopia and the aid given to Ethiopia "by the USSR, Cuba and Israel" was much too large to be justified merely by the liberation wars in Eritrea and the Ogaden area; and that the people's liberation struggle remained "the only possible response to the hegemonic designs of the super-powers".

The involvement in Eritrea of the Soviet Union was subsequently admitted by the latter.

In an article in *Pravda* on March 15 it was made clear that the USSR would support the Ethiopian forces against "rebels" in Eritrea because Western and Arab support for the secessionists was aimed at weakening Ethiopia and depriving it of its outlets to the Red Sea and because the secessionists were "objectively helping the realization of imperialist designs".

Cuban involvement was confirmed by diplomatic sources in Addis Ababa reporting on March 16 that Cuban troops had arrived in Asmara.

As late as February 1978 Sr Carlos Rafael Rodríguez Rodríguez, one of Cuba's Vice-Presidents and Deputy Premiers, had declared that Lieut.-Colonel Mengistu was not entitled to use Cuban "specialists" against the Eritrean rebels, as self-determination was an internal problem which would have to find a political solution. The US State Department, however, announced on April 6 that it was in possession of information showing that Cuban military personnel was increasing in Eritrea and had "engaged in combat"; that "the argument first used to justify the massive presence of Cuban troops by the need to defend Ethiopia against external attack" no longer existed; and that the US Government was asking the Soviet Union to use its influence to hasten the reduction of the Cuban presence in Ethiopia.

While the Ethiopian Government also on April 6 announced that a new offensive had been launched to end the "persistent insecurity in the province", Captain Fikre Selassie Wodgeress, secretary-general of the PMAC, declared: "We shall never allow Eritrea to become the springboard for new incursions inspired by imperialists."

In London, Dr Owen (the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary) said in a Mansion House speech on April 5 that Britain's relations with the Soviet Union would be adversely affected if that country and Cuba were actively committed, on a massive scale, to a military campaign in Eritrea.

Dealing firstly with the general situation in the area, he declared that nobody should be in any doubt about the true nature of the Soviet and Cuban intervention in the Horn of Africa, and why it placed such a large question mark over the future of detente. He continued: "Had it not been for the fact that the Soviet Union invested so much military hardware in Somalia for so many years, far beyond the legitimate needs of national self-defence, the Somalis would never have been in a position to invade the Ogaden in the first place. The Soviet Union can claim to have ended the war but it was a war which they themselves fuelled with their own arms and was between two states which had formerly been their friends. The outcome is hardly a creditable chapter in Soviet foreign policy."

Turning to the use of Cuban forces which moved around in Africa "tilting the military balance indiscriminately at the whim of the feudal barons", he said that it would hardly be "a principled policy" if they were now to be used against the Eritreans, whom they had earlier supported, and that even more complications would result for Africa and for East-West relations if Cuban forces were used in an attempt to undermine current talks to bring peace and democracy to Rhodesia and Namibia.

Dr Owen's remarks were strongly condemned by Ethiopia, the Soviet Union and Cuba.

Mr Ayalew Wolde Ghiorgis, the Ethiopian ambassador in London (who had been present during the speech but had walked out halfway through it), stated inter alia that the question of Eritrea was an internal matter which would be solved as Ethiopia saw fit, and that a nine-point plan issued by his Government for a peaceful settlement had not met with any response from the secessionists.

In a statement by the Soviet embassy in London it was claimed that Dr Owen had "grossly distorted" Soviet policy in Africa and that in fact this policy was "aimed at building friendly relations on the basis of respect for the principle of the inviolability of frontiers, sovereign equality, territorial integrity of states and non-interference in each other's internal affairs".

The Cuban Foreign Ministry stated on April 7 that Dr Owen should not forget that he was the representative of a colonial power which for centuries had been regarded as an example of oppression and ill-treatment of the peoples of Africa and which had since tried to maintain colonialism in the modern form of neo-colonialism. The statement also said that Dr Owen had no right to meddle in affairs which should only be discussed by the parties concerned and that the internal situation in Ethiopia, including the Eritrean problem, was strictly a matter for the Ethiopian Government and people.

During the period from November 1977 to April 1978 mass killings were officially announced on numerous occasions, not only of government officials and supporters—murdered by opponents of the regime—but also of such opponents summarily executed by the police or by death squads organized by the regime.

These killings led to the defection of several Ethiopians who held diplomatic or consular posts abroad.

Mr Aden Chide, counsellor at the Ethiopian consulate-general in Djibouti, on Nov. 3 asked for political asylum in that country, saying that he condemned massacres alleged to have taken place in Ethiopia.

Dr Hailu Wolde Ghiorgis, who had been Ethiopia's ambassador in Paris since December 1975 (and who was now thought to be in disagreement with his Government), was on Jan. 24 reported to have asked to be released from his post because he wished to devote himself to research on Ethiopia.

Mr Ayalew Mandefro resigned on Jan. 29 from his post as Ethiopian ambassador in Washington and his country's permanent representative at the United Nations (to which he had been appointed in September 1977—see page 28637) and was on Feb. 12 reported to have applied for permission to remain in the United States (though not for political asylum in that country). He was said to have been the target of an assassination attempt before taking up his posts in the United States.

The assassination of a number of officials was announced in particular between November 1977 and February 1978.

Among those murdered were Dr Makonnen Jote, chief administrator of Shoa Province (on Nov. 11, 1977); Mr Worky Tegegn, head of the Addis Ababa office of the Ethiopian news agency (on Nov. 30); Mr Kebede Gebre Mikael, chief treasurer of the All-Ethiopia Trade Union (on Dec. 3); and 13 high-ranking government officials, among them Mr Vondima Destu, head of Addis Ababa's department of planning (on Feb. 13), with the assassins having been executed by the police.

The principal organization held responsible for such murders was the illegal (Marxist-Leninist) Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP—see page 28421), which was opposed to the regime on the grounds that a military junta would not be able to achieve a genuine revolution.

In a statement issued in Khartoum (Sudan) on Jan. 30, 1978, the EPRP claimed that during the previous three years some 3,500 persons had been "assassinated" by the PMAC and that in Addis Ababa alone about 8,000 people had been arrested and deported to the countryside.

The "red terror" launched by the regime in November 1977 against the so-called "white terror" of the EPRP [see page 28761] in Addis Ababa and also in various other towns was the subject of several reports in the Western press during February and March 1978.

Thus the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* reported on Feb. 15 that in Addis Ababa some 300 *kebeles* (neighbourhood "blocks" of from 3,000 to 5,000 inhabitants each) had their own administration with armed guards and offices issuing identity papers without which nobody was allowed to move about, and also with their own prisons, torturers and death squads who might be ordered to arrest and kill "counter-

revolutionaries" and "anarchists", in particular EPRP followers. The *kebeles* also had powers to enforce attendance at mass actions and terrorized young people into denouncing others as alleged EPRP members. In a lengthy report in *The Times* (of London) on March 22 reference was made to the alleged killing of up to between 100 and 150 people, most of them between 12 and 20 years of age, every night during February and March 1978. The report also claimed that "the methods and the entire system" had been "taken over from Eastern Europe" and that Ethiopia's secret security office was headed by a general from the German Democratic Republic.

The *Times* correspondent in Nairobi reported on March 24 that Addis Ababa radio had in the previous six months announced the killing of 477 "enemies" of the regime and the arrest of another 3,053 persons (most of them outside Addis Ababa).

The PMAC, in a statement published in *The Times* on March 25, called the newspaper's report of March 22 "a gruesome and a wild story", "a vain attempt to tarnish the image of the Ethiopian revolution" and "a fairy tale" written by a person "averse to witness the hitherto oppressed masses of Ethiopia struggle to emancipate themselves from the yokes of feudalism, imperialism and bureaucratic capitalism". The PMAC statement finally declared: "The revolutionary forces of Ethiopia are determined to struggle till final victory and will certainly found the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia".

Dr Alemu Abebe, the Mayor of Addis Ababa, had earlier stated on Feb. 8 that the "white terror" had been subdued but not yet eliminated, and that the only way to stop it would be achieved "when the enemy has been liquidated and the revolution has consolidated itself" —(Times - Daily Telegraph -Financial Times - Guardian - International Herald Tribune -Le Monde - Neue Zürcher Zeitung - New York Times - Cape Times - US Information Service/International Communication Agency - Soviet Embassy Press Department, London - BBC Summary of World Broadcasts) (*Prev. rep. 28760 A*)

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