

**AFRICA NEWS**  
A Weekly Digest of African Affairs

**HORN OF AFRICA Diplomatic Pace Quickens**

[AN] Recent Ethiopian diplomatic initiatives involving neighboring Sudan and Kenya appear to have given the Addis Ababa government a major boost by isolating its foes in the troubled Horn of Africa.

Perhaps most remarkably, concluding his visit to Ethiopia last week, Sudanese President Jaafar Numeiry told a press conference before departure that he and Ethiopian leader Mengistu Haile Mariam were in full agreement on problems in the region. The Sudanese government has long tolerated the presence of several guerrilla groups operating against the Ethiopian government from its territory, and in particular it has given some diplomatic backing to the Eritrean movements fighting for independence from Ethiopian rule.

Numeiry's visit to Addis Ababa, however, may signal a shift in this policy.

Following the wide-ranging talks, Numeiry pledged his government to do anything possible to end the war in Eritrea and the protracted conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia. In addition, a joint communique stressing "mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of frontiers and non-interference in each other's domestic affairs" was seen in Addis Ababa as clear Sudanese support for the Ethiopian position in the Eritrean and Ogaden conflicts.

As the Numeiry-Mengistu conversations were ending, Kenyan radio announced that the Ethiopian head of state would arrive in Nairobi on

December 1 for talks with Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi. Kenya's policies have a strong pro-Western slant, including the recent agreement for use of bases by the U.S. military, and Ethiopia has a military alliance with the Soviet Union. The two have found common cause, however, in opposing neighboring Somalia, which has long laid claim to portions of Kenyan and Ethiopian territory as part of a greater Somali nation.

Somali-speaking guerrillas fighting for the nationalist cause have won some official backing, and the conflict has reached the level of full-scale war in Ethiopia's Ogaden region, where Ethiopian troops are reported to be gaining ground against the insurgents. But Kenya's northeastern area, mainly populated by Somali-speaking people, has also been a focus of unrest. In early November, a raid by a group of Kenyan Somalis on the town of Garissa resulted in the deaths of five people, including a Kenyan district officer.

With Ethiopia gaining diplomatic strength in the region, the largest Eritrean guerrilla movement, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), has come out with a new peace plan of its own. Some observers see in this an effort to forestall a Sudanese decision to expel the Eritreans. Already last week authorities in Khartoum expelled two journalists, Briton Nicky Cowan and American Dan Connell. Connell had reported on the Eritrea question for *Africa News* and other media, and shortly before his expulsion order, he filed this last report:

**KHARTOUM** — The EPLF plan calls for the formation of a special committee to supervise a cease-fire and a referendum, a committee to be formed by a mutually-agreed organization, such as the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the Arab League, or the Non-Aligned Movement. The referendum would give voters a choice between full independence (supported by the EPLF), a return to federation with Ethiopia, or regional autonomy within the Ethiopian state.

The plan also envisages unrestricted political activity by all concerned parties throughout Eritrea between the implementation of a cease-fire and the holding of the referendum.

After the referendum, there would be free supervised elections for a local administration in Eritrea, which could serve either as a national government or as a regional body, depending on how the referendum had turned out. This point is aimed at avoiding the thorny question of how to represent the bitterly divided Eritrean guerrilla movements in the peace process. The EPLF has for eleven weeks been engaged in a civil war with the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), and there are several other minor nationalist factions based outside Eritrea which oppose both guerrilla armies.

Under the EPLF plan, representatives of the Ethiopian government and of all nationalist factions would be given guaranteed access to all parts of Eritrea, regardless of who now controls them militarily.

The EPLF plan represents a significant breakthrough on several



**Exxon Support For ECSU**

Exxon recently joined Elizabeth City State University's CLUSTER program and underlined the company's growing support of the university with a gift of \$2,000 for "educational purposes." Sharing in the presentation above are (l-r) Dr. Maurice Powers, Chairman of the Department of Geosciences; Dr. Jimmy R. Jenkins, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; Dr. Mack Gypson, Exxon research chemist and annual recruiter of Geoscience students for Exxon employment, and Dr. Marion D. Thorpe, Chancellor.

previous sticking points, largely by leaving a number of questions aside. It also appears to indicate that the EPLF now feels it has majority support for its left-wing policies within the divided Eritrean movement and is confident of winning such a referendum and election.

The Ethiopian government has had no chance as yet to respond to the EPLF proposals, but since 1976 it has called for an end to the war based on its own nine-point program for regional autonomy, without any option for independence or federation.

**SOUTH AFRICA Military Prepares With Nukes, Black Recruitment**

[AN] The long war in Zimbabwe came to an end in 1980. The Namibian conflict, where up to 70,000 South African troops have faced guerrillas fighting for independence, just might come to an end next year, should current diplomatic efforts stay on track. In South Africa itself,

however, the war may just be beginning. South African military officers have been telling citizens around that country in recent briefings.

Increased guerrilla actions as well as continued unrest could be expected, Brigadier A. Potgieter told one such gathering in Fort Beaufort, eastern Cape, which was attended by the *Christian Science Monitor's* Gary Thatcher. Potgieter explained the government's strategy for a "total response," including political reforms and "sound race relations." But a more conventional stress of military preparedness is also on the agenda.

Within the military field, South Africa's planners have emphasized developing the capacity to fight a mechanized counter-insurgency war, with heavy reliance on retaliatory air strikes against neighboring countries, and extensive use of mobile air and ground attack troops. And the escalation of conventional firepower shows no signs of stopping. In recent

years, South Africa has also focused on high technology — the development of a nuclear capacity, for example — and, on the other end of the spectrum, expanding the military manpower pool by turning to the recruitment of blacks. (White males are already subject to the draft.)

Expert opinion is agreed that South Africa now possesses the capability to produce nuclear weapons, but a debate still persists over whether a test device has actually been exploded. Following a mysterious South Atlantic explosion detected by the U.S. Vela satellite, most defense analysts reached the conclusion that the satellite had indeed, as was its function, detected a nuclear blast, and some experts attributed it to a South African or joint Israeli-South Africa venture. A scientific panel convened by the White House, however, eventually released a report in July arguing that the evidence was inconclusive, and suggested instead that a freak micro-meteoroid

collision with the satellite may have been responsible.

In the latest episode of the controversy over the September 22 blast, Britain's "World in Action" television program, in an October 21 broadcast, reviewed the evidence and concluded that the blast was most likely a tactical nuclear device fired by the extended-range 155mm howitzer supplied to South Africa by the U.S.-Canadian Space Research Corporation.

The estimated height of the explosion, "World in Action" claimed, citing an unpublished CIA report, was eight kilometers — approximately the maximum height of the extended-range 155mm shell. "World in Action" also asserted, without further detail, that one of Space Research Corporation's nuclear scientists visited South Africa in September, 1979.

But while the nuclear threat might prove some deterrent in a showdown with independent African countries, it is of little use in counter-insurgency

campaigns such as that in northern Namibia, or in combating guerrilla actions spotted throughout South Africa's own urban and rural areas, where, in spite of apartheid, whites and blacks come in daily contact in the ordinary workings of the economy. With the expansion of national service for whites, the civilian economy is already feeling both a pinch for trained manpower and a small but worrisome growth in draft evasion — as many as one in eight do not appear when called up. In addition, the increasing difficulty in getting whites to occupy absentee-owned farms along the border is frequently mentioned in the press as a security risk.

White citizens are being urged to sign up for duty in local volunteer commando units, and companies, including foreign-owned ones, are being asked to establish white reserve militias. But there has also been a new thrust to incorporate more blacks within the military service. Though blacks had previously served in a variety of subordinate roles in the armed forces and in the police, the current prime minister has at least as 19/0 pledged that "the Bantu" would serve not in the Defence Force, but only, along apartheid lines, "in his own eventually independent homeland." In 1974, however, a special "21 Battalion" for Africans was established, as well as a unit in Namibia for black Namibians. Since then, Kenneth W. Grundy of Case Western Reserve University reports in a recent paper presented to the African Studies Association, the use of Africans has expanded slowly but surely, despite the ambiguity of government attitudes, and the fact that according to apartheid theory all blacks will eventually become citizens of independent "homelands."

The incorporation of blacks has proceeded farthest in Namibia. Not only have blacks from South Africa been sent to fight

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