

Smith Tries To Look Liberal But Nobody Is Fooled

Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith this week made known legislation to ease racial discrimination in that country, a hasty move to acquire some credibility for his "internal negotiations" with domestic tribal chiefs. Smith wants to undercut the position of the Rhodesian nationalist Patriotic Front and pre-empt expected new British interventions to bring about a peaceful transition to majority rule in Rhodesia.

Spokesmen for the Patriotic Front contemptuously rejected Smith's maneuver. The Front maintains that the basis for resumed negotiations is the willingness of Britain to take responsibility for enforcing the settlement.

Forward to the 1950s

Smith's anti-discrimination legislation, graciously approved by his Rhodesian Front Parliamentary caucus yesterday, essentially moves Rhodesia forward to the racial policies of pre-1954 Mississippi — optional rather than mandatory racism. Some restaurants, bars and lunch counters will now legally have the privilege of deciding for themselves who they will and will not serve, and some aspects of the Land Tenure Act, which sets racial policy for land ownership, will be set aside, although that act is not fundamentally changed.

Smith also trumpeted his "liberalization" move in an interview broadcast on the Feb. 20 "Issues and Answers" program on ABC-TV. The Rhodesian outlaw prime

minister asked for U.S. support for his internal negotiations in Rhodesia, adding that he "could think of nothing better" than the Carter Administration handling the situation.

Smith has in no way changed the Patriotic Front and front-line states' position, expressed some weeks ago and reiterated in the Feb. 21 issue of *Pravda*: "When Great Britain shows its readiness to take an unambiguously positive and more resolute position in order to achieve the transition of power, to the people of Zimbabwe, we can take a look at the question of initiating preliminary talks *with the British*."

Since that time, Patriotic Front co-chairman Joshua Nkomo has been lining up support for his movement in North Africa and from the Italian government of Giulio Andreotti. Last week Nkomo met with Italian Deputy Foreign Minister Ratti, who issued a communiqué supporting the Patriotic Front. Nkomo returned to Rome from Libya this week for further consultations.

It has been mooted, according to BBC, that new British Foreign Minister Owen may soon visit the front-line states and South Africa. In preparation for this, British representative Sir Anthony Duff had several meetings with State Department Africa Bureau chief William Schaufele. Far from inviting another round of U.S. shuttle-sabotage, Duff's mission was to discern American intentions, or, as a State Department spokesman put it, "the meetings were for *reconnaissance*."

EXCLUSIVE

Ethiopia Struggles To Escape Role As 'Horn Of Africa' Hotspot

by Douglas DeGroot

On Feb. 3 fighting broke out at the headquarters of the ruling Dergue (Provisional Military Coordinating Committee) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It began with an attempt to purge an alliance of nationalists and socialists which was quickly gaining increasing power over the Dergue. Had the purge succeeded, the country would have been plunged back into the disorder from which it has been slowly emerging since the end of 1975 after a period of complete chaos with the downfall of Emperor

Haile Selassie in 1974. But the purge attempt failed, and the ensuing half hour of fighting included among its victims the perpetrators of the intended purge, including its chief conspirator, Gen. Teferi Bante, the head of the Dergue.

The purge attempt occurred one month before the early March Afro-Arab summit meeting is scheduled to take place in Cairo. African and Arab governments have been preparing for this summit for months. It is intended

to establish the basis for Arab cooperation with the development of African countries.

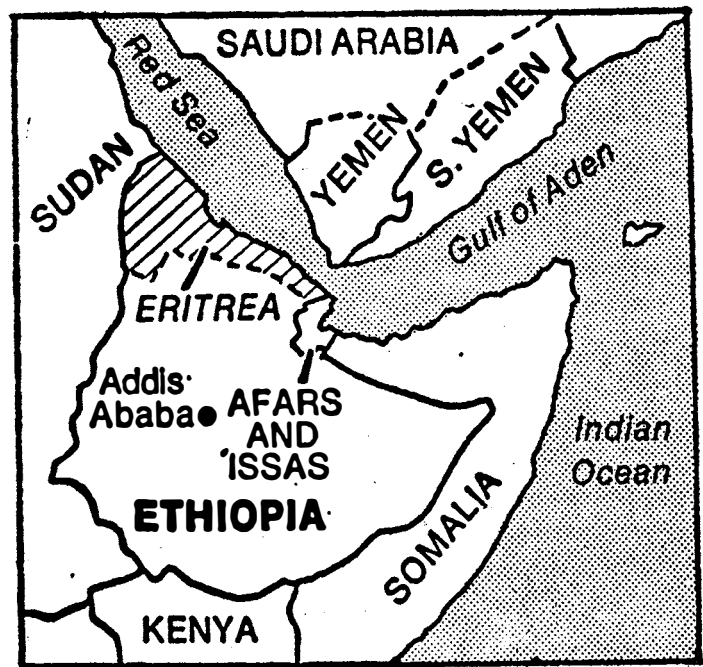
The disruption of this consolidation of Afro-Arab ties has been timed to coincide with a wave of Carter Administration-engineered disruptions stretching from the Mideast throughout Africa, and an escalation of the Rhodesian crisis, all intended to set the stage for a U.S. confrontation with the Soviet Union, as envisaged in Carter advisor James Schlesinger's "aura of power" doctrine of global strategic bluff. The administration's desire to use Ethiopia to disrupt Afro-Arab cooperation prompted the recent attempt to destroy that country's tenuous stability. Carter's hand was tipped by United Nations ambassador Andrew Young who "predicted" last week that East Africa would become the next African hotspot, and raised provocative charges of Soviet "playing around" in the area as a possible pretext for a U.S. intervention.

The takeover by the Dergue in 1974 was a classic CIA "progressive military" operation engineered to guarantee that the eastern Horn of Africa would remain unstable. Ethiopia has long been the cornerstone of Wall Street's policy of maintaining tensions in the area to preclude the consolidation of substantial Afro-Arab ties; tension between Ethiopia and Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia, as well as Ethiopia and its own province of Eritrea all had served as the basis for keeping the region unstable. When former ruler Selassie showed signs of no longer being willing to cooperate in this process, the CIA chose the "progressive military" option. However, the CIA's ploy backfired when a pro-development military faction became hegemonic in what the agency thought would be a servile and pliant Dergue.

The leadership of the Ethiopian military was trained exclusively by the U.S. and Israel. The CIA planners thought that as a result of these connections, no truly nationalist or development-oriented faction within the military could gain sufficient strength to dominate the country; they envisioned that under the military the policy of continuing chaos in Ethiopia and tension with surrounding countries could be maintained. However, as has often proved the case with the "progressive military" option, a pro-development faction began gaining hegemony in Ethiopia, especially throughout 1976, after the initial period of confusion following the coup. This required stepped-up CIA-Israeli activity to prevent a complete takeover. The unsuccessful Feb. 3 events were designed to destroy the pro-development faction's growing hegemony.

Following the Feb. 3 attempt, the Ethiopian government charged Teferi, one of those killed in the fighting with cooperating with the CIA. An ex-intelligence official, Teferi was Ethiopia's military attaché in the U.S. for five years until 1970, and returned to the U.S. five times, including once to take courses at the U.S. military Staff and Command College at Leavenworth, Kansas.

Lt.-Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, who played a key role behind the scenes in engineering the downfall of Selassie, was named President of the Dergue following the coup attempt, as well as head of the government as reorganized in December. An ardent nationalist of no particular philosophy, Mengistu has since the end of 1975 become increasingly allied with the pro-Soviet socialist



grouping in the country best typified by Fida Haile, head of the Office of Political and Mass Organizing (OPMO).

The OPMO was set up in December 1975 for the purpose of organizing and educating the population to facilitate the regeneration of the country's collapsed economy, particularly to turn around a disastrous situation in agricultural production. Fida also was instrumental in setting up a political party, the All Ethiopia Socialist Union (AESU), to introduce order into the political vacuum existing since the fall of Selassie. The AESU was founded as a pro-Soviet socialist political party willing to cooperate with the military to set up a viable, stable government which would proceed with the development of the country.

Two opposition movements, both of them directed from outside the country, have been used to keep the government sandwiched in, to prevent it from consolidating control of the country and developing independent policies. The Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) groups together former feudal landed interests who have been dispossessed, and other feudal pro-Selassie leftovers. The EDU is based in London, and backs most of the 16 separate guerrilla groups resisting the government in different parts of the country, the remnants of the private armies which were maintained by feudal landowners until the demise of Selassie.

The other opposition force is the clandestine Ethiopia People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP), an extreme-left radical group which opposes any form of cooperation with the Dergue, which the group flatly characterizes as fascist. In an interview with the Cuban press agency Prensa Latina, following the Feb. 3 attempt to destroy the government, Fida reported that EPRP is linked to the CIA; the majority of its members, who have conducted assassination campaigns against those willing to cooperate with the government, were students educated in the U.S., and the group has large sums of U.S. dollars to finance their operations. Notorious left-cover CIA agent Paul Sweezy sponsored the founding conference of

EPRP in the U.S. and was supported in this effort by a gaggle of the CIA's maoist grouplets including the Canadian Communist Party Marxist-Leninist.

Strategic Importance of the Region

The Horn of Africa, the meeting place of Islam and Christianity, as well as Arab and African, is considered strategically important by the U.S. for its dealings with both the Soviet Union and the Arab oil producers. Of primary concern with respect to the Soviets, the U.S. wants to maintain the Indian Ocean as a launching site for nuclear missile bearing submarines, which requires the access to military ports and bases in the area, as well as communications stations. The U.S. has such rights in Kenya, for example, and has constructed a base on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia. In the 1950s the U.S. established Kagnew Station, a huge military-communications and intelligence-monitoring installation, in Eritrea, near Asmara. Missiles aimed at Soviet targets from Indian Ocean launching sites open up another area of the USSR to vulnerability to nuclear attack, making it more difficult — in the view of U.S. defense hardliners — for the Soviets to set up an effective Anti-Ballistic Missile defense system.

With respect to the Arab oil-producers, the Rockefeller oil interests set up the east African Horn after World War II as a zone of tension to destabilize and unbalance the security-conscious Arab nations, who have always been concerned with the security of the Red Sea and consequently the countries bordering it. The Rockefellers saw this as a means to help maintain their control over global energy supplies.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the boundaries of the countries located in the Horn of east Africa were delineated in such a way as to maximize the potential for conflict in the area. This was due to efforts by the Rockefeller family, which used the decolonization activity of the United Nations as a key lever.

The border of Islamic Somalia was drawn up to exclude areas in Kenya and Ethiopia which were occupied by Somali-related populations. In addition, the small area called the Territory of Afars and Issas, where the port city of Djibouti is located, was left in French hands. This territory is slated to become independent this summer, and scenarios are being activated by the CIA to provoke Somalia and Ethiopia into conflict over it. The majority of the population of Djibouti is largely the same as a tribal grouping in Somalia. The port serves as Ethiopia's access to the sea for over 60 percent of its exports and imports. It is on the basis of a supposed conflict of interest over control of this territory that the CIA is attempting to prepare a Somali-Ethiopian war later this year.

Eritrea, the Ethiopian province bordering the Red Sea has since the Second World War, been torn between forces outside Ethiopia and Eritrea who either wanted the province to become part of Ethiopia or to become an independent entity. It was formally decided in the early 1950s to incorporate it into Ethiopia, a goal which has never been successfully accomplished.

How Rockefeller Controlled and Used Ethiopia

The political structure of Selassie's Ethiopia was made up of tightly woven and complex networks of interests

and personalities dominated by feudal landowners and the official Ethiopian Coptic Church; Selassie constantly played forces off against each other to maintain his position. Beginning in the early 1950s the Rockefellers moved in, especially penetrating the army and air force, as well as the nation's trade union organization. The U.S. has been the sole supplier of military equipment to Ethiopia, in addition to providing large numbers of military advisers. Even in 1975, with support levels sharply reduced, the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) based in Addis Ababa still numbered more than 50 men, amounting to about half of all MAAG personnel in Africa.

In addition, as early as the 1950s, the Israelis began playing a big role in Ethiopia. U.S. and Israeli military personnel together trained the Ethiopian military, and Israeli intelligence has always been heavily involved in Ethiopia. In addition, Israelis have been involved in the areas of agriculture, education, health and public works.

The Feb. 14 issue of the French news magazine *Le Point* reported the existence, moreover, of a secret Israeli airbase in Ethiopia for the purpose of surveying the straits of Bab el-Mandeb, the entrance to the Red Sea. Israeli Chief of Staff General Bar-Lev was also involved in Israeli operations in Ethiopia and made a public visit to Selassie in the early 1970s.

Ethiopia was used by the Israelis as a base for covert operations against neighboring countries. For example the 17-year rebellion in southern Sudan against that nation's central government was instigated and armed by the Israelis. It was fear of just such CIA-Israeli activity that caused varying neighboring Arab governments at different times to support the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) in an attempt to deny free use of the Eritrean coast to the CIA-Israeli forces in operations against the various Arab countries.

It is ironic that Eritrea, which has been in a more or less constant state of rebellion for these reasons, holds precisely the key to the future liberation of Ethiopia from its backwardness, because of Eritrea's more developed population.

Eritrea attained a more advanced level of economic and cultural development than did the rest of Ethiopia due to the period of Italian colonization, which produced a certain amount of infrastructural and economic development, along with the accompanying education of sections of the population. Ethiopia itself was never effectively colonized, and thus never subjected to the modernization and development that accompanied European colonization elsewhere in Africa.

So feudal relationships remained, keeping Ethiopia's population at an animal-like level of existence. This is what accounts for the unfortunate Ethiopia being the most backward country in Africa today. Ethiopia still has the lowest per capita consumption of energy of any country in Africa.

The Lion of Judah Outlives His Usefulness

In the 1970s, Selassie became less willing to permit destabilization operations to be run against neighboring countries from Ethiopia. In 1970 Ethiopia began experiencing a severe collapse in agricultural production

due to drought. With 80 percent of the population involved in agricultural activity, the results were disastrous both for the population and for Selassie's methods of rule. With the country confronted by a massive food shortage, the personal, regional and ethnic feuds, as well as other interest groups' differences, could no longer be played off against each other.

Faced with increasing difficulty in holding his feudal kingdom together, Selassie became willing to make deals. In 1972, for example, he agreed to no longer allow aid and arms to get through to the anti-government rebels in southern Sudan, which had been going on for 17 years. In return he got a withdrawal of aid by Sudan for the rebellion in Eritrea. Having begun to take matters into his own hands somewhat in the interests of his own self-preservation, Selassie was no longer a reliable or useful CIA puppet.

In February 1974, the CIA-Israeli networks put into motion the operation that led to Selassie's ignominious downfall in September of that year. In late February a revolt in all divisions of the military surfaced, calling on the government for more pay and better conditions. The spark soon spread to students and organized workers, and the troops began escalating their demands, condemning the government for corruption and failure to alleviate the famine and demanding political reform.

In mid-spring, the troops elected 120 representatives to the Provisional Military Coordinating Committee, called the Dergue. No one above the rank of colonel was eligible. The Dergue began slowly arresting government figures charging them with corruption and criminal negligence in the drought, gradually asserting more and more of its new-found authority. This process was accompanied by events which included workers' and students' strikes and a demonstration by 30,000 Muslims demanding equal rights from the Christian government. A new government was installed which made concessions, but suppressed grievances continued to come to the surface. Tax collectors, the hated government administrators and landlords became objects of the peasants' antagonism.

The Dergue stepped up the rate of arrests, systematically picking apart the networks that Selassie had always used and thus dismantled the monarchy. By September Selassie was totally isolated, and the Dergue merely dispatched a Volkswagen to His Imperial Majesty's palace to pick him up and cart him off to prison.

In November 1974, the first president appointed by the Dergue, Gen. Aman Michael Andom, was assassinated, reportedly at the behest of Mengistu and Lt.-Col. Atnafu Abate, a more traditional member of the Dergue. Widespread calls for reform rapidly arose from students and workers; peasants called for land reform which the landowners resisted. The Dergue itself faced considerable opposition.

The Dergue Makes Some Changes

In December 1975 the Dergue set up the Office of Political and Mass Organizing (OPMO) under Fida Haile. Peasant associations were formed to organize land takeovers, called for in a Dergue proclamation the previous March but largely unimplemented.

The present peasant associations possess up to 800 hectares of land each, which are cultivated as a cooperative. In conjunction with the move to organize the land takeover, the OPMO organized conferences and seminars in cities, towns and throughout the countryside to explain the program of what they called the democratic revolution. In addition, the OPMO conducted political courses for functionaries, peasants, workers and members of the military.

Also in December 1975 the Dergue disbanded the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions, and set up the All Ethiopia Trade Union. The situation has already begun to improve. This past year agricultural production has risen 10 percent, following the land reform, a success which has come largely despite attempts at sabotage by the EDU and EPRP right- and left-counter gangs.

The clandestine ultra-left counter gang EPRP was set up in August 1975 and has been deployed consistently against the OPMO and the All Ethiopia Socialist Union (AESU), the political party set up by the OPMO under the auspices of fida Haile. In addition to organizing demonstrations against the OPMO, EPRP has also been carrying out assassinations of OPMO members and potential members, condemning the OPMO for trying to work with and influence the military government.

This activity stepped up sharply following the arrival in Addis Ababa last September of the new U.S. ambassador, McMurtrie Godley, a notorious CIA operative with numerous "dirty tricks" operations to his credit. Godley worked for the CIA's predecessor, the OSS during the Second World War; he was sent to the former Belgian Congo as ambassador in 1960-61 to help oversee the murder of Premier Patrice Lumumba and the installation of the government of the slavishly pro-U.S. Joseph Mobutu instead; in the late 1960s he was in Laos, where he was responsible for conducting the CIA's secret war; and he was in charge in Lebanon in 1974 at the beginning of the devastating civil war there.

Following Godley's arrival in September, an assassination attempt against Mengistu occurred on Sept. 23, followed by a wave of political violence and assassinations, with the EPRP specifically targeting the OPMO.

EPRP has been singling out for assassination former EPRP members who have decided to leave the EPRP and begin working with the OPMO. One OPMO provincial leader who had formerly been a member of EPRP was assassinated by EPRP in October, and six other leading OPMO members were assassinated in October and November alone. Despite the fact that EPRP constantly condemns the OPMO for working with the military government, however, all those who have been attacked by EPRP have been civilians. Their deployment is designed specifically to make it difficult for the government to organize civilian support for its efforts.

In late 1976, provocations leading to heightened border tension with Sudan also escalated, putting more pressure on the Dergue.

CIA-Israeli-run operations into Sudan have been threatening Sudan President Numiery's government, leading to attacks by Numiery on the Ethiopian government. To prevent the Dergue from taking any decisive

Israel Revs Up Civil War In Sudan

"The birth of a new republic" in southern Sudan was prominently announced in the Jerusalem Post Feb. 20. The Post cited as its source a letter ostensibly sent from Addis Ababa by the "Genuine Movement for the National Independence of Immantong Republic," which said that the Israelis should be "fully informed that they have potentially genuine allies in the very heart of the African continent. With this proclamation, the Israelis are making known a CIA-Israeli move to rev up again their civil war against the Sudan government which lasted 17 years and was finally ended in 1972. The Sudanese civil war scenario from independence in 1956 until 1972 had prevented development of Southern Sudan and the country as a whole. Sudan development projects have sharply increased since the end of the southern rebellion, concentrating especially on capital-intensive agricultural programs based on extensive irrigation projects.

action to stop this activity, the various EDU gangs, as well as the anti-government gangs in northern Eritrea, have been attacking army outposts in the northern border areas near Sudan. This deliberate demoralization of these army outposts has made it impossible for the Dergue to stop the interventions into Sudan from Ethiopia, and also has raised the possibility of the Dergue no longer being able to maintain any influence in Eritrea province, which could lead to rapid independence for Eritrea. Even the Eritrean Liberation Front is apprehensive about this possibility, since Rand-style CIA scenarios are available to immediately turn Eritrea into an Angola-style civil war battleground among the three primary political factions in Eritrea.

Government Reorganization

In December the Dergue reorganized the government, setting up a structure along the lines of the East bloc countries. A permanent committee of 17 was established, and a larger Congress which is to meet every four years to deliberate on the actions of the committees was set up.

Although this kind of reorganization had been sought since the formation of the OPMO a year earlier, because of differences in the Dergue it did not take place until December. At the time of the reorganization, Teferi Bante, Dergue leader, was made president of the Permanent Committee. In addition, the OPMO, which prior to the reorganization had certain autonomy, was put under the control of the Permanent Committee, the real power in the government.

This arrangement appears to have been demanded by those members of the Dergue who are pro-CIA as a

condition for their approval of the reorganization. Extreme tension among the members of the Permanent Committee was reported following the reorganization. The unsuccessful attempt by Teferi and his allies to gain unquestionable hegemony of the Permanent Committee has left the OPMO and Fida in a stronger position.

In his Feb. 14 interview with Prensa Latina, Fida charged that the CIA had a dual policy toward the Dergue. On the one hand, he stated, it wanted to eliminate the Dergue, since the progressive military team wanted a pro-development policy and was moving toward setting up a socialist government to attain that goal. At the same time, Fida said, Teferi and his associates acted as a fifth column within the Dergue to frustrate the revolutionary process. The original 120-member Dergue has been reduced to 50-60 members by assassinations and executions.

Since the Feb. 3 coup attempt, the government has announced its intentions of maintaining and strengthening its pro-development policy orientation. It has called for the formation of a popular militia, an important move for eliminating the disruptive activities of both the EPRP and the EDU. In addition, the government has called for the strengthening of relations with the socialist countries, and announced a foreign policy of non-alignment. To further consolidate the pro-development forces influenced by Fida and the OPMO, Mengistu has called for the formation of a vanguard political party, as well as a further cleaning up of the trade unions.

Lt.-Col. Atnafu, in charge of arming the militias and the military, has announced following the attempted coup that Ethiopia from now on will obtain arms from socialist countries. Until now the U.S. had remained the sole supplier of military equipment to Ethiopia, continuing its flow of supplies after the fall of Selassie as a means of retaining influence on the Dergue. Switching from U.S. arms supplies is the necessary first step to cutting ties with CIA and Israeli intelligence circles.

To support the present government in this effort, the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, Yugoslavia and other East European countries and Cuba have come out publicly since the coup attempt in support of the Mengistu government. Significantly, China, which in the early 1970s had been involved in arming the Eritrean rebels, has also come out in support of the new government. Algeria, Libya and Guinea have also given backing to the new government.

Moving to reduce tensions in the region, the government is attempting to iron out the problems with Eritrea, offering a plan of regional autonomy in the context of Ethiopian unity. The government has also announced that the prospects for resolving whatever differences may exist with neighboring Soviet-allied Somalia through amicable discussions look good. The prospects for resolving problems with Sudan do not look as bright, a government spokesman has stated. The government will first have to put border regions under its control to be able to stop the destabilizing operations being conducted into Sudan from Ethiopia before the Sudan problem can be sorted out.