

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.