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ERITREA: SEPARATISM AND IRREDENTISM 1941 - 1985

By

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A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

ERITREA: SEPARATISM AND IRREDENTISM, 1941-1985

By

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First and foremost, this is a political history of Eritrea from the beginning of the British Administration following the Italian defeat in Eritrea in 1941 through the federation period from 1952 to 1962, and continuing through the subsequent efforts of Eritrean rebels to separate Eritrea from Ethiopia, up to 1985. In the first section, the concentration is on the development of political parties, the failure of the Four Power Commission to resolve the international problem of the disposal of Eritrea at the end of WW II, and the temporary success of the UN Commission in resolving the question. This is followed by a chapter on the negotiations for the settlement of Eritrea as an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia. The federation period is one of Ethiopia's gradual usurpation of authority and the eventual demise of the arrangement in 1962, after which Eritrea is incorporated into Ethiopia as a province. Before the end of

federation, there began in the western lowlands of Eritrea a movement toward independence, which continues to this day.

Data for this dissertation came from three primary sources: the Public Record Office in London, the National Archives in Washington, D.C., and the UN library in New York City. In addition, numerous newspapers and periodicals were consulted. Also, interviews of participants in the events were conducted in Cairo, Jeddah, Khartoum, London, New York, and Washington D.C..

Conclusions: The UN failed to recognize that placing Eritrea, with half of its population being Muslim, in the hands of a traditional, Christian-dominated monarchy was preparation for Eritrea's eventual revolt. The failure of the rebels to unify themselves has shown the diversity of Eritrean culture and the importance that religion has played in Eritrea in determining relationships.

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The orthography of names and place-names does not follow any established standard, since one does not exist. Commonly recognized spellings have been followed where possible; otherwise, phonetic rules have dictated renderings.

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ABBREVIATIONS

[illegible]

NSC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	National Security Council
NTEN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<u>New Times & Ethiopia News</u>
NYT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<u>The New York Times</u>
O	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Order
OETA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Occupied Enemy Territory Administration
OIR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Official Intelligence Report
ON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Official Notice
OR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Official Records
par.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	paragraph
PRO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Public Record Office
SAE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<u>Statistical Abstract of Ethiopia</u>
SecDf	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Secretary of Defense
SecSt	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Secretary of State
State	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Department of State
T	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Telegram
TIAS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<u>US Treaties and other International Agreements Series</u>
UK	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	United Kingdom
UN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	United Nations
UNGA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	United Nations General Assembly
UP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Unionist Party
USG	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	United States Government
V	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Volume
WO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	War Office
YUN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<u>Yearbook of the United Nations</u>

I N T R O D U C T I O N

To enable the reader to appreciate more fully the complexities and problems, inherited from Eritrea's history, a physical, political, and linguistic description has been provided.

This dissertation aims to describe and explain, as far as evidence permits, the political developments in Eritrea from 1941 to 1962 with an epilogue describing events up to 1985. In 1941, the Italian colony of Eritrea became the occupied enemy territory of the British Government, which shortly thereafter became the British Military Administration, shortened in 1949 to the British Administration. It was the responsibility of London to administer the former colony, until which time the Big Four - England, France, USA, and USSR - decided how to order the territory's disposition. After the failure of the Four Power Commission, the problem was turned over to the United Nations, which after several more years of exhaustive reports and discussions, determined that Eritrea on 15 September 1952 should be wholly federated with Ethiopia, the latter controlling all extra-domestic affairs, while Eritrea was to have internal autonomy.

For the next ten years, Eritrea's autonomy was slowly undermined by the combined efforts of the Ethiopian Government and those Eritreans who thought union with Ethiopia would be more beneficial than federation. After the demise of federation in November 1962, a small

minority of Eritreans, who opposed union and who had already begun to rebel, organized an incipient revolution, which in later years became known as the Eritrean Liberation Front and gained the active support of a majority of Eritreans.

The epilogue deals with Eritrea's independence movement, its disunity, and its failure after more than thirty years to achieve its goal.

CRITICAL COMMENTARY OF SOURCES

Data for this dissertation came from three primary sources: the Public Record Office in London, the National Archives in Washington, D.C., and the UN library in New York. In addition, numerous newspapers and periodicals were consulted. Also, interviews of people who had been and, in some cases, still are active participants in Eritrea's political arena were conducted in Cairo, Jeddah, Khartoum, London, New York, and Washington, D.C.

Documentation for the period from 1941 to 1952 comes primarily from British sources. London's thirty-year rule has precluded obtaining documents beyond 1953. For the period following 1952 documentation comes from two major sources, the American archives, in particular Department of State files obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, and the UN library. In general, British documents were found to be more detailed in their information and more trenchant in content than American papers. The British administrators and their staff officers had had more experience in African affairs and were more likely to have spoken local languages and to have been acquainted with

local customs and history, whereas the American consuls and staff in Asmara had little if any background in African affairs.

Another important source for the pre-1952 period has come from The Eritrean Daily News, a large number of whose issues exist in the Berkeley collection and were read in their entirety. Also, in Tigrinya there is Nai Ertra Samunawi Gazetta (The Eritrean Weekly News) in the British Museum collection, all of whose issues were read with the help of a former student. In addition, the nearly complete collection of the generally unreliable New Times and Ethiopia News was read at Collindale in London.

UN documentation tended to be well-organized, detailed, but lacking in analysis; however, much information for the period leading up to federation is available from no other readily available source. The Eritrean Gazette proved an invaluable source of information for the activities of the Eritrean assembly, the acts it passed, and the implications that could be drawn.

Documentation for the post-1962 period is dependent on American archives, copious materials published by the three major liberation groups, and interviews of Eritrean leaders both past and present. Great care was taken in evaluating sources from the liberation groups. Much of the information from these sources has been corroborated by reference to a wide variety of newspapers and periodicals and to Erlich's competent The Struggle Over Eritrea, 1962-1978. Interviews of Eritreans tended to corroborate information obtained from other sources, but in some cases revealed details not found elsewhere.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF ERITREA

Eritrea is today Ethiopia's most northerly province.¹ It covers approximately 48,000 square miles (124,320 K²),² about half the area of Italy, excluding Sardinia and Sicily. It is shaped like an irregular triangle and comprises four distinct topographical zones. Resting on the base of the triangle and stretching north towards its apex is a spur of land which is the northern extension of the Ethiopian highlands that reaches down to the sea at Massawa. To the west of the spur lies a wide, arid plain, intersected by the seasonally dry beds of the Gash/Mareb and Setit/Takazze rivers. The latter running eastward from the Sudan border for about 150 miles forms the southwestern border with Tigray Province. To the north of the spur are low-lying hills extending to the Sudan border where it meets the Red Sea. To the south and east of the spur lies the long narrow arid plain which extends south to the northern border of Djibouti and is known as the Danakil or Afar Desert. Eritrea shares most of its border with Tigray Province except for a short distance of about 200 miles along the southern end of the Danakil with Wollo Province, through which runs the important road leading from the port of Assab to Ethiopia's capital at Addis Ababa.

There are three rivers of some importance, all having water throughout the year: the Barka which flows north from the Keren district into the desert of Sudan, the Gash/Mareb which flows west from the highlands forming the southern boundary of Seraye and Akkele Guzai with Ethiopia, and the Setit/Takazze which runs west from the highlands of western Tigray and forms the southeast boundary between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The savanna, interspersed with trees, between the Gash and

Setit Rivers offers rich agricultural opportunities. During the rainy season from May to October, the highlands may receive as much as twenty inches of rain.³

POLITICAL DESCRIPTION

The Italians administered seven divisions roughly corresponding to Eritrea's physical configuration. The western plain comprised the Agordat division, the northern hills - Keren division, south of that - the Massawa division, and further south still - the Assab division, and the three divisions of the plateau - Hamasien to the north, Serae to the southeast, and Akkele Guzai to the southwest. During the British administration, Agordat and Keren were combined into what was called the Western Province, while Massawa and Assab divisions were combined into the Red Sea division. Since early Islamic times, arid lowlands have remained the preserve of largely nomadic, Muslim herdsmen, who migrated to the lower portions of the escarpment during the lowland's dry season. The highlands, on the other hand, have been the domain from very early times of sedentary agriculturalists because of the usually plentiful rainfall and have remained largely Christian (Ethiopian Orthodox) since the early fourth century.

LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Tigrinya,⁴ a Semitic language, is spoken almost entirely by the Orthodox half of Eritrea's inhabitants, living on the plateau, and by a

small group of highland Muslims, known as Jiberti,⁵ who are primarily merchants. Tigre, Eritrea's second language, is also Semitic and is spoken by about one-fifth of the population among the people of the northern hills and eastern plain. Tigre is closer to Geez, the liturgical language of the Ethiopian Orthodox, than Tigrinya. Although Tigrinya and Tigre are of common origin with Amharic, the national language of Ethiopia, and use the Ethiopic (Amharic) script, they are mutually unintelligible. Beja, an Hamitic language, is spoken by about three to four percent of Eritrea's population, among the Beni Amer people of the western plain, although many of those "belonging" to subordinate castes of the Beni Amer speak Tigre as their first language. Saho, belonging to a language family group called southern Hamitic (Afar-Asiatic), is spoken by about six to seven percent, in eastern and southeastern Eritrea. Closely related to Saho is Afar (Dankali) spoken by about two to three percent, in the southern part of the eastern plain. Belin, spoken by three tribes in the southern part of Keren division, is a Cushitic language of the Agau sub-family. Belin speakers are said to have come from the region of Lasta perhaps four or five hundred years ago.⁶

About seven percent of the population speaks either Baria, Kunama, or Ilit, probably Sudanic languages, which have yet to be properly classified, but of some importance is the fact that they are not related to the other languages surrounding them, indicating that their speakers may represent remnants of the earliest peoples of western Eritrea or western Sudan, who were pushed into western Eritrea.⁷ They are mutually unintelligible, although it is thought that Ilit is merely a dialect of Kunama, but the Ilit distinguish themselves from Kunama. The Baria live north and west of the town of Barentu. The

Kunama inhabit the area south and west of Barentu as far as the border with Tigray Province. The Ilit occupy an area around the town of Haikota, about half way between Barentu and Tessenei, near the Sudan border.

Arabic is used by Eritrean Muslims as a lingua franca in the market place and of course in religious practice. Arabic is also spoken by a few tribes, the Rashaida in the east and the Shukria in the west, whose arrival in Eritrea is of comparatively recent date.⁸ Although there is not in Eritrea any one unifying language which all speak, the use of second languages: Arabic, Italian, and English has enabled most Eritreans to speak with each other.

RURAL SOCIETY

Modern anthropological scholarship of ethnic groups in Eritrea is almost entirely lacking. Aside from Pollera and Nadel [see bibliography] and Ostini's compilation,⁹ which leans heavily on Pollera and Conti Rossini, there is virtually nothing published using modern anthropological techniques. Nadel in the early 1940s did field work for the British administration, whose findings were undoubtedly used in preparation of Britain's contribution to the Four Power Commission.

The administrative dualism established by the Italians (territorial divisions on the central plateau and tribal/kinship divisions in the lowlands) corresponds somewhat to the two main livelihoods of Eritrea: mainly settled agriculturally based villages in the highlands and nomadic and seasonally-nomadic with some settled

communities in the lowlands. At the end of the Italian period, the boundaries of livelihood and political organization were not sharply defined as periodic migrations of nomadic groups from the plains to the plateau tended to blur the distinctions. The escarpment, in fact, had become a semi-permanent habitat of some seasonally nomadic groups some of which had become tenants of the land-owning highlanders. To discover the origins of the various ethnic groups in Eritrea is, according to Nadel, nearly impossible because of the constant intermingling of the individual clans, etc. with their neighbors.¹⁰

In the western plain, the Italians had subdivided the area into three divisions (residenze), whose urban centers were Agordat, Tessenei, and Barentu. These towns, established under the Italians as military posts and centers of administration and trade, are the major urban centers in the western plain. The small village of Um Hager was the center of a vice-residenza. The British lumped these divisions together under the rubric, Western Province. Each of these subdivisions corresponds somewhat to ethnic divisions: the larger part of the non-Hamitic Baria and Kunama groups occupy Barentu sub-division, while the majority of the Hamitic Beni Amer live in the Agordat sub-division.

A mutual antipathy arose between the Beni Amer and the Kunama/Baria from the constant raiding of the former on the latter. Between 1850 and 1860 the population of the Baria and Kunama was decimated by a combination of Beni Amer and their "cousins" across the border in Ethiopia.¹¹

Islam is the dominant religion in the western plain, but a few (c. 500 in the early 1940s) Kunama are equally divided among Catholic and Protestant, but more recently have begun converting to Islam. The

twenty-five branches of the Beni Amer are joined together in a political, loose federation which pays allegiance to one paramount chief, the Diglal. They are largely nomadic herdsmen, whose wealth lies in camels, cattle, sheep, and goats and to a very small extent in agriculture. During the dry season, they wander far afield, in particular to the east and south as far as the valleys in the districts of Keren, Akkele Guzai, and Serai, while in the rainy season, semi-permanent villages spring up along the Barka River. In the southeast, a few sections of the Beni Amer have begun exchanging nomadic life for that of settled farmer.

The Baria and Kunama are sedentary agriculturalists, divided into clans. Only the Baria has a paramount chief, although the Kunama did have one up to 1884 when he was killed in battle and the office died with him.

The northern hills of Eritrea were divided by the Italians into two residence: Keren in the south and Nakfa in the north. Under the British, the two became the Keren division. The Keren district is occupied primarily by sedentary groups, while there are nomadic groups in the Nakfa district. In the south, live the Belin, corresponding both to language and people, divided into two houses, the Tawke and Tarke, each claiming different origins from Hamasien and the Ethiopian highlands. They are sub-divided into clans, corresponding to kinship groups. Until 1932, each clan had its own autonomous head, but in that year, the Italian administration created two district, unpopular chieftaincies for the Tawke and Tarke. The Belin before the Egyptian occupation from the early 1860s to 1881 (then referred to as the Bogos) were Orthodox but since that time have been largely Islamized, although among the Tarke there remained a small Orthodox minority and in the

1940s about 5,000 mission converted Catholics and a few Protestants. As agriculturalists, they live in small hamlets of from four to five families.

Also in the Keren district live three other groups: the Maria, the Mensa, and the Bet Juk. The Maria are divided into two sections, each with its own chief and each of which is sub-divided into kinship groups. Originally, like the Belin, they were Orthodox or as tradition suggests were Islam, then Orthodox, and were in the early 1800s converted or re-converted to Islam. Although farmers on a small scale, their main wealth is represented by large herds of camels, cattle, sheep, and goats. Their migrations are largely limited to the Keren district but some sections move to the Barka valley.

The Mensa, divided into two sections, each of which is sub-divided into kinship groups, have also become Islamized although about 1,000 were converted by the Swedish mission. They are cultivators, living in small permanent settlements with chieftainships corresponding to territorial jurisdictions. Like the Mensa, the Bet Juk are agriculturalists, living in permanent settlements, whose political organization is territorial.

In the northern Nakfa section there live eight groups, all Muslim, all nomadic herdsmen with one exception, the Ad Tekles primarily agriculturalists, each having autonomous non-territorial chieftaincies, except the Ad Tekles, and each of which is sub-divided into kinship groups. One group, the Rashaida, in former times dealt in slave trading.

In addition, there are four Orthodox districts on Keren's southern border with Hamasien, each of which is organized into villages with village chiefs. Socially, they are organized into large kinship groups

(endas). In 1932, the Italians united these four districts under one paramount chief. In Debre Sina district is the monastery of the same name, which under Italian rule lost its land and temporal powers.

The eastern plain is divided into three zones: the Samhar from the Bay of Zula north to Massawa and beyond, the Sahel (meaning plain) from beyond Massawa to the Sudan border, and the plain of Dankalia stretching from the Bay of Zula to the border of Djibouti. The geographical divisions determine the ethnic configurations. A fourth area comprizes the foothills along the escarpment to the west and southwest of Massawa where live both sedentary and nomadic groups. During the British period, the Samhar and plain of Dankalia eventually were known as the Red Sea Division, while the northern Sahel became part of the Keren division. The people of the central plains in the Massawa district spend nearly equal amounts of time on the plain and in the foothills.

In the plain of Dankalia live the Afar speaking people, also known in the literature as the Danakil. They are of Hamitic stock, all Muslims, divided into at least thirteen sections, some of which are autonomous, each of which may have one or more kinship lineages, all speaking a common language, Afar. As nomadic herdsmen, they own camels, cattle, and goats. A few groups on the shores of the Red Sea are fishermen and one group mines salt. Water comes from wells. Under both the Italians and British, each headman acted as the government's representative in matters of taxation. The only higher allegiance is that still paid to the sultan of Aussa in Ethiopia.

In the northern half of the eastern plain, there is considerable ethnic diversity resulting from the historical importance of Massawa as a port. Despite this diversity there is considerable uniformity of

custom and social organization and ways of livelihood. Islam dominates. Only a few groups in the Samhar are sedentary, concentrated in the towns of Massawa and Arkiko and the few villages scattered over the plain. The remaining groups are nomadic herdsmen during the dry season but during the wet season practice limited cultivation. Politically, most groups have an elected chief while two are hereditary chieftaincies. Off the coast of Massawa are the Dahlak Islands, only a few of which are occupied by fishermen of mixed Arab, Somali, and Afar blood.

In the northern foothills of the northern half of the eastern plain live eight groups, all but one are seasonally nomadic while two are both pastoral and nomadic. All are Muslims and have chieftaincies, some of which are hereditary. Agriculture in the foothills depends on rainfall whereas in the plains irrigation supplies the water. In the Sahel,¹² there are no permanent settlements.

The towns of Massawa and Arkiko have existed as far back as the early sixteenth century Portuguese landings. Until the seventeenth century, Arkiko was the more important when Massawa's significance as a port began to increase. Arkiko was the seat of the Naib, the Turkish appointed governor, until Egypt's occupation of Massawa in 1813, although the title continued to be used.

The central plateau comprises three divisions: Hamasien, whose capital and largest city of the entire province is Asmara; Serai, whose district capital and largest city is Adi Ugrî; and Akkele Guzai, whose district capital and largest city is Adi Kaieh. Where the lowland political divisions are largely the artificial creations of first the Italians and then the British, the plateau divisions are the result of a long historical process. Each of these plateau divisions represents

different customs, history, and character although they are united, by and large, religiously, linguistically, and in a general sense, historically. The highland bloc is culturally united by the Orthodox religion, the Tigrinya language, and a livelihood of sedentary peasants living in villages and towns.

The Eritrean plateau's land tenure system, with some differences, is similar to that of the northern plateau of Ethiopia.¹³ Briefly, land tenure on Eritrea's plateau is characterized by ownership of land collectively by a community and ownership by the Orthodox church, by the crown (government), and by individuals. Those lands owned by the church, especially monastic lands,¹⁴ or by the crown are tilled by tenant farmers.¹⁵ Eritrean customary courts as well as those in northern Ethiopia were plagued with cases of rights of entitlement to land. Serai is agriculturally the richest. Akkele Guzai has a large seasonally nomadic, Muslim population. Since the downfall of the empire land tenure systems not only in Eritrea have changed but both the changes and their effects have yet to be explained.

Politically, the villages of the plateau are under a village chief, *chika*, nominated by the village and confirmed by the government, while the districts are under district chiefs, *meslanie*, either appointed by the government or hereditary. The Italian administration split up or united certain districts either to create new offices for favored chiefs or to limit the power of too influential traditional chiefs. Under the Italians, while many hereditary chiefs continued in office, new men, mostly ex-soldiers, were rewarded with chieftaincies for services rendered to the central government. Political power among all Eritreans came from three sources: the heads of great families, traditional village and district chiefs, and direct military and civil

administrative representatives of the central government, who were often alien to the districts over which they had power. The first two categories were the most influential.

THE ITALIAN PERIOD

The Italian period may be divided into two sections: pre-Fascist and Fascist. During the pre-Fascist days, the small European, mostly Italian population had, by and large, congenial relationships with the Eritrean people.¹⁶ Although urban development, road building, railroad construction, cattle inoculation, and the establishment of schools and hospitals primarily benefited Italians, many Eritreans drew profit from their presence.

As the colony's boundaries were being drawn, its administration took shape. After Eritrea's security had been established, an administration was devised that in the words of Longrigg proved to be "meticulously thorough [and] minutely organized."¹⁷ Legislation, he says was "copious and elaborate." The colony's first balanced budget, at least on paper, did not occur until 1927/28. Eritrea, however, never really achieved financial independence. The local population was "on the whole treated by the administration with sympathy and goodwill,"¹⁸ although during the emergence of political parties in the late 1940s, the Italian occupation was vilified by some Eritrean politicians [see below].

In matters of central government, early colonial policy dictated that Eritreans were to occupy positions only as low-paid clerks or orderlies although many Eritreans took part in district affairs [see

below]. It became clearly understood who were the rulers and who were the ruled, especially during the Fascist period. Local political units, both settled and nomadic, however, were fully recognized and legally formalized. In creating administrative divisions, traditional and natural considerations were observed.

From the battle of Adwa to WWI, the development of the colony was slow, owing to the disaster of Adwa and a lack of definite direction. From 1895, the Italian Government's colonizing effort was neglected until, in 1899, two large farms were successfully established at Asmara, which were soon followed by others.¹⁹ Beginning in 1901 and 1902, experiments in tobacco, cotton, and coffee were successful enough that in ensuing years there developed an export trade in these commodities. By 1902, land concessions amounted to 3,000 acres, made primarily to Italians, but to Eritreans as well, for cultivation along European lines. In 1911, land concessions amounted to 28,000 acres; however, by 1933, there were 155 concessions amounting to only 22,562 acres,²⁰ but by 1940, the number of concessions had reached 163 amounting to 70,789 acres. By 1962, there were 615 tenants occupying 83,328 acres of concession land.²¹

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, Italian emigration to the colony was not great.²² Nor was the colony very successful in absorbing Italian exports;²³ however, it did supply Italy with "fine and loyal" troops for its various military campaigns in other parts of Africa.²⁴ By 1920, there were only about 3,000 Europeans living permanently in Eritrea.²⁵

By the beginning of the Fascist period in the early 1930s, the colony had built a cableway from Massawa to Asmara to carry freight,²⁶ 557 miles of paved roads, following for the most part old caravan

routes, the length and breadth of the territory,²⁷ and a narrow gauge railway from Massawa to Bisha via Asmara [see below]. The rail connection from Massawa to Asmara (an altitude of over 7,200 feet), a straight line distance of only thirty-five miles, covered a rail distance of eighty miles through twenty-nine tunnels, a remarkable engineering achievement. Begun in 1900, it was completed in 1911. The bulk of Eritrea's import/export trade passed on this line. The port of Massawa, the "best natural harbour on the Red Sea,"²⁸ became not only the most important port for Ethiopia's northern markets, but also the entrance for Italy's invasion of Ethiopia in 1935.

Western educational opportunities were primarily for the European population, as Italian schools were generally not open to Eritreans.²⁹ Although usually limited to the first four years, there were a few schools established for urban Eritreans.³⁰ By 1920, there were three industrial schools for Eritreans in printing, telegraphy, carpentry, blacksmithing, and other trades.³¹ In 1938/39, there were twenty elementary schools for Eritreans, two of which had trade schools attached, with 152 teachers and a reported enrollment of 4,177, including students from eleven schools in Tigray.³² Each class had only one text book, containing general knowledge. Mission schools (Capuchin, Swedish, American, and Protestant) provided further educational opportunities; however, in 1932 during the Fascist period, all mission schools were closed except the Swedish Mission School in Asmara. In addition, there were twenty-five village schools with uninstructed Eritrean teachers.³³ Altogether, the total irregular attendance was perhaps 6,000, about ten percent of the school age population in Eritrea.³⁴

By 1912, 1,080 miles of telegraphic wires had been laid.³⁵ Three of these lines were international: a sub-marine cable from Massawa-Assab-Perim; two overland lines from Asmara-Keren-Agordat-Sabderat-Kassala and from Asmara-Adi Ugri-Adi Kwala-Adwa-Makalle-Dessie-Addis Ababa. Labor for the colony came primarily from the colony itself, but also from Yemen and Tigray and other sections of the Ethiopian plateau.

Agriculture was the main endeavor of Eritreans and Europeans on the plateau and in some lowland areas, especially in the western plains between the Gash and Setit Rivers. Cotton, coffee, and tobacco were grown primarily for export, while grain (wheat, durra, barley, millet, & local varieties), dates, oil seeds, peas, beans, and flax were produced primarily for local consumption. Ginning mills of American and Egyptian varieties of cotton were established at Agordat and Massawa. What water that could be obtained from wells and small barrages never permitted agriculture to develop to the extent that it was not usually necessary to import grain, primarily from Ethiopia and India, to meet local needs.

Due to lack of water, stock raising rather than agriculture became the colony's most important industry. Cattle, camels, goats, and sheep were a major source of wealth, especially among Eritrea's indigenous plain's population. By 1905, there were estimated to be 1,105,000 domestic animals.³⁶ By 1914, the census for cattle alone was estimated at 700,000, more than double the number in 1905. Despite the large number of cattle slaughtered during the Italian campaigns of WWII, by 1944 the number of cattle had increased to 1.2 million, while sheep and goats amounted to 1.6 million.³⁷ As far as limited services could provide, treatment of periodic cattle disease met increasing

success, but without border controls it remained a constant problem. By 1920, the government's anti-rinderpest serum laboratory maintained immunization stations throughout the colony.³⁸

Forestry products were of a very limited range, the most important being the dum nut palm, which was grown along the Barka River and used in the manufacture of buttons. Forests "not heavy or widely extended,"³⁹ and consisting primarily of wild olive, juniper, euphorbia, gum-arabic acacia, dum nut palm, and baobab were largely denuded during the early and mid-1930s by the Italian Government in preparation for its invasion of Ethiopia;⁴⁰ however, the forests around Asmara had long before been cut down by the local population. But, reforestation had been grossly neglected during the Italian Administration.⁴¹

The most important manufacturing industry was a meat-packing plant in Asmara. Most of the cattle killed for the plant were bought from northern Ethiopia. There was fishing along the Red Sea coast and a mother-of-pearl industry in Massawa. Mining initially was also very limited. Small amounts of gold were mined near Asmara and Keren. The most important mineral was potash of ninety percent purity, found in the Danakil Depression in unending quantities in the Asale plain about ten miles across the border in Ethiopia.⁴² There was also an industry for the collection of salt obtained from saltpans near the coast at Massawa and in the Dahlak Islands. In the 1910s, about 40,000 tons of salt were exported annually, primarily to India.⁴³ Local crafts never went beyond the satisfaction of local needs. In general, the resources of the country as far as they had been exploited by WWI were "extremely scanty."⁴⁴

Commercial and caravan⁴⁵ trade gradually developed with Eritrea's neighbors, especially Ethiopia. This was due to two main factors: one, the tranquility that Italy's occupation brought to the territory which had been "continually in process of upheaval as the result of tribal disputes and raids,"⁴⁶ and two, the development of urban centers and a road and rail system to serve them. In 1913, transit trade with Ethiopia, which paid no duties on exports to Eritrea, amounted to about fifteen percent of Eritrea's total trade, while in 1915 it had increased by five to ten percent,⁴⁷ although in reality the transit trade held a larger percentage of the total trade by considering products imported from both Sudan and Ethiopia and then re-exported.

In 1915, half of the colony's total trade was with Italy. This trend continued throughout the colony's existence. During the Fascist build-up in Eritrea in the early 1930s, imports from Italy far exceeded (by more than twice) Eritrean exports.⁴⁸ From the colony's inception, Eritrea's trade always remained out of balance, imports exceeding exports. From 1911-34, Eritrean exports averaged forty-four percent of imports;⁴⁹ thus, imports averaged nearly twice in value that of exports.

From 1899 to 1911, imports increased twenty fold, while from 1911 to 1920, eleven fold and from 1920 to 1934, two fold. Goods imported from countries other than Italy required an eight percent 'ad valorem' duty to be paid. If competition had been more favorable so also might have Eritrea's exports compared to imports; thus, with a freer market, Eritrea's economy might have been more healthy. Before WWII, the colony's most important trading partners, outside of Italy, were, in order of importance, Arabia, India, the Sudan, Aden, the USA, and Great

Britain. Eritrea's most valued imports, in order of value, were cotton goods, durra, iron and steel, wine, coffee, and sugar, while its exports, in order of value, were dried skins (c. 50%, mainly to Italy), salt to Calcutta, dried meat to Italy, palm nuts, mother-of-pearl, and pearls.

Industrially, there were in 1914 only about fifteen commercial firms, ten of which exhibited at the Colonial Exhibition at Genoa in 1914.⁵⁰ In addition to Italian enterprises there were Arab merchant houses in Massawa and Asmara. Mainly Greeks handled retail and provision trades, while Indians (Banyans⁵¹) controlled the distribution of cotton goods.

The key to Eritrea's economy was the improved port at Massawa.⁵² By 1920, it could be said that Massawa was the best port on the approximately 3,000 mile African coast between Port Sudan and Mombasa.⁵³ Eritrea's negative trade balance might have been made up if agriculture had been more emphasized eliminating the necessity of importation of grains; if preferential treatment had not been shown Italian goods, which would have stimulated greater competition and ultimately more trade; and if with increased competition there had been established more non-Italian commercial firms.

The currency of the colony in the early stages was the Maria Theresa silver dollar (thaler), which by WWI had a value of about two English shillings.⁵⁴ By the beginning of WWI, there were about 200 million coins in circulation or hoarded in the Red Sea commercial district. During and after the war, about one third of these were bought up, as the price of silver rose, to be melted down into bullion. Because the thaler was used extensively in Ethiopia, the colonial government had great difficulty in substituting its use in the colony

with Italian money, having a special colonial stamp but having no intrinsic value like the MT silver dollar. This caused the government to prohibit the export of thalers from the colony by sea in 1915 and their use in early 1917 as payment for goods, except foreign products.

On 31 May 1918, by royal decree the royal mint at Rome created a silver trade dollar designed to replace the Austrian coin. Somewhat more than one half million Italian dollars, resembling the Maria Theresa dollar, were introduced into Eritrea, but local people, especially in Ethiopia, preferred the well-known and trusted MT.⁵⁵ The Maria Theresa dollar persisted as a major currency well into the British Military Administration with a value marked at one shilling ten and a half pence per dollar.⁵⁶

Banking began in 1913 with the establishment in Asmara of a branch of the Banca d'Italia. In 1914, the branch was entrusted with servicing the colonial treasury. Financially, Eritrea was a disappointment. The colony rarely had a balanced budget and was unable to absorb many of Italy's exports.⁵⁷ Eritrea was never self-supporting and required in the years before WWI about twenty-five percent of its annual expenditures to be made up by the Italian Government.⁵⁸

In regard to indigenous affairs, taxation remained light. The administration established itself as an arbiter of never-ending land disputes, while local land rights were, by and large, safeguarded and "not seriously" threatened by Italian settlement,⁵⁹ primarily because Eritrea proved unsuitable for large scale immigration from Italy;⁶⁰ As a result, there was never any need or attempt to disturb local land tenure systems.

Although land rights of local inhabitants were, for the most part, protected, there was some confiscation of locally owned land. By the land statute of 1909 (revised in 1926), certain Eritrean-owned lands became 'terre demaniali' (domanial or crown lands). Expropriation, comprising a large variety of lands, involved three main categories: lands whose titles were abrogated for military, economic, or utilitarian reasons (e.g. lands needed for roads, fortifications, aerodromes, mines, quarries, and forests); lands whose titles were repealed for political reasons; and lands to which clear title did not exist.⁶¹ There was also devised an elaborate administrative machinery to deal with local land disputes.

Indigenous employment was moderate and enthusiastic, especially in the military services, where titles, grades, and uniforms engendered loyalty. The construction of churches, mosques, a few local schools, and public buildings supplied an extensive use of native labor, in particular from Ethiopia. Also, those in the cities and towns (primarily established and developed by Italians for Italians and Eritrean tradesmen) could avail themselves of limited medical treatment, inoculation of their domestic stock, and the introduction of new crop cultures. Before Fascist days, a color bar was little employed, but afterwards, it was "rigorously" enforced.⁶²

For the purpose of administration the colony was divided into districts, governed by salaried chiefs, appointed from the local area or other districts, or by ex-soldiers, who were thus rewarded for past services.⁶³ Although districts for the most part corresponded to geographical and ethnic zones, the sub-districts did not.⁶⁴ In some instances, local leaders, who had exercised political autonomy, lost it with the advent of Fascism.⁶⁵ Also, some monasteries, such as Debre

Sina and Debre Bizen, had their land confiscated by the colonial government and their temporal powers abrogated.⁶⁶ Some groups who were the "serfs" of another gained their freedom under the Italians and became autonomous.⁶⁷ In the highlands, before the Italians came, many villages enjoyed an autonomous state, but afterwards, the majority were united under district and sub-district leaders. Also, in the highlands, some areas that had, prior to the arrival of the Italians, been considered part of one district were placed under the control of another; thus, parts of Hamasien and Akkele Guzai were incorporated into the Serai, while an area of northwest Serai became part of Agordat district.⁶⁸

Evaluating Italian colonial legislation, Lord Rennell of Rodd estimated that "a good deal of it looked quite good and even enlightened; but little of it was carried into effect and much of it vitiated by Fascist doctrines and practices."⁶⁹ Despite the worst effects of Fascism, it was said of the Italian administration that "it would be unwise...to suggest that Italian rule in this country [Eritrea] was oppressive or [had] left bitter feelings amongst the inhabitants."⁷⁰ Further, Brigadier B. Kennedy-Cooke, Eritrea's first British administrator, said of the Italian administration: "Although native education had lagged far behind the standards reached in the neighboring Sudan, the Italian administration had, on the whole, been beneficent and the evils of Fascism had affected the lives of the people very little."⁷¹ Above all, the Italian administration had given Eritreans a sense of belonging to a political unit larger and more important than their local communities.

In 1935, Fascist Italy began making preparations for its invasion of Ethiopia by importing more than 50,000 Italian laborers, by tripling

the recruitment of Eritreans to be trained militarily, by enlarging and improving the port at Massawa, by refurbishing an aerial ropeway, the longest in the world, from Massawa to Asmara with a dozen stations and a capacity of 500 tons a day, by re-equipping and rebuilding the colony's airports, especially at Gura, and by improving and rebridging of Eritrea's road system.⁷² On 3 October 1935, General De Bono's forces crossed the Rubicon (the Mareb River), which ended the colony's peaceful relations with Ethiopia. On 16 November, De Bono was replaced by Marshal Badoglio, who entered Addis Ababa on 5 May 1936 and proclaimed a new empire. The latter was divided into six provinces. Eritrea was united with its southern neighbor of Tigray, which united for the first time all Tigrinya-speaking peoples for the brief period of five years. To this was added in 1939 the district of the Wolkait, bordering on the Setit River in southwest Eritrea. Five years later, the emperor was put back on the throne with the support of the British Government and Eritrea's boundaries assumed their pre-1935 limits.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE BRITISH

On 17 January 1941, Italian troops withdrew from Kassala in Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.⁷³ Two days later, Lt-General Sir W. Platt occupied Sabderat, while Italian troops withdrew to the foothills of Agordat and the defile of Keren. With reinforcements from the 4th Indian Division and other sources, Platt took Agordat on 1 February and Barentu the following day. On the 10th, a temporary military administration was set up at Agordat with Brig. B. Kennedy-Cooke, former governor of Kassala Province, as its head and Lt.-Colonel D.C. Cumming as

secretary. After Keren fell on 26 March, the Italians realizing that any further resistance would be in vain surrendered Asmara on 1 April to Platt's advancing troops. On the 2nd, the administration was moved to Asmara. Final resistance in Eritrea ended in Massawa on 8 April and in Assab on 11 June. Until 18 May when the Italians surrendered at Amba Alaje, the Tigray which had been annexed to Eritrea for administrative purposes by the Italians was administered by the Asmara administration, although it was not handed over to Ethiopia until 1 August.

Initially, British officers were in short supply, necessitating in the first few years the continuation of much of the Italian administrative machinery, which from the outset was restricted to the central government, to the urban centers of Asmara and Massawa and their satellite settlements, and to the Hamasien plateau.⁷⁴ A 'modus vivendi' was established between the few British officers available and the large number of Italian government officials who remained in Eritrea after surrender. Because British propaganda in Eritrea prior to its occupation had promised "freedom" to Eritreans, the restrictions on liberty and the Italian administrative presence sparked feelings of disappointment and suspicion.⁷⁵

In the provinces, it remained for the British Military Administration (hereafter BMA) to re-establish a new administration, which was done on the Sudanese model. As was done during Italian times, where there were no hereditary chieftainships, district chiefs were appointed by the chief administrator on the recommendation of the local district officer.⁷⁶ One of the primary functions of the district chiefs besides keeping the administration abreast of local activities was the collecting of a tribute tax [see below], one

thirtieth of which could be retained by the chief.⁷⁷ Collection presented problems, since in some areas, such as around Barentu, the Kunama had "little organization, had never paid any taxes, and were primarily engaged in stealing camels from the Sudanese Beni Amer."⁷⁸

In addition to district chiefs, the BMA continued the Italian practice of appointing local leaders, notables,⁷⁹ to various positions whose functions were advisory and judicial (acting as assessors, arbitrators, and conciliators). Headmen of villages or kinship groups would be recommended by district or tribal chiefs as tax (tribute) collectors and were entitled to one tenth of that collected. Town or ward chiefs, who were also recommended by higher level chiefs and were not entitled to a percentage of the tribute, in most cases, received a salary. Market chiefs, whose functions were judicial, advisory, and executive, in that they published all orders affecting the control of the market, received a salary and customary legal fees. Cultivation chiefs, whose functions were to issue permits for the use of land and to collect the cultivation tax, also received a salary. Lastly, qadis and other religious notables likewise received a salary and customary legal fees and were appointed directly by the chief administrator upon recommendation of the president of the sharia court for qadis and of the appropriate religious leader for Orthodox assignments.⁸⁰ In addition to the many Eritreans occupying civil and judicial appointments, in the early months of 1942, an Eritrean "native council" was established to act as a liaison group between senior British administrators and the Eritrean civil service.⁸¹ Its composition of twelve members was, with one exception, entirely Christian and predominantly irredentist in feeling.⁸²

Eventually, Eritrea was divided into seven administrative divisions: Asmara and Hamasien, Akkele Guzai, Serai, Western Plains (Western Province), Eastern Plains (Massawa district), Keren, and Assab. By the end of 1943, Italian officials existed only in Asmara, Serai, and Assab divisions, while there were special Italian commissioners in municipal functions in Massawa, Keren, and Akkele Guzai divisions.

The colonial police forces were entirely reorganized, although in the initial stages it was necessary for many of the Italian police to continue until reorganization had been completed. Eventually, the new Eritrean police force consisted of three divisions: a mixed force of foot police for the towns and settled communities, camel mounted formations for the southwestern and southeastern districts along the Ethiopian and Sudanese frontiers, and mule mounted units for the countryside to be used against raiding parties across the frontiers. In addition, there was a marine unit for Massawa port and dhow control. These were led by British, "carefully selected Italian police officers and noncommissioned officers," and Eritreans.⁸³ While the duties of the military administrator were government, law, and order, those of the area commander were defense and the quelling of public disturbances.

The EMA's guide for its responsibilities was contained in the rules of war in the Hague Convention of 1907. At the end of the war, the Hague rules no longer applied and the administration's temporary authority rested on international consent.⁸⁴ After the peace treaty, the EMA's power to alter institutions and laws was greater. In essence, the main function of the military administration and its successor, the British Administration (hereafter BA), was that of a

caretaker. There were no major changes of Italian institutions in place. All outward signs of Fascism were expunged. In the main, democratic ideals dominated, although a color bar remained in effect, at least on buses.⁸⁵ There were no new taxes. All proclamations, orders, etc. were published in the administration's official organ, The Eritrean Gazette.

Although only a caretaker government, the BMA/BA attempted to encourage agricultural development through annual agricultural shows at Adi Kaieh beginning in 1943,⁸⁶ through seed treatment⁸⁷ and seed loans, by protection of crops against locust infestation,⁸⁸ and with the dissemination of information and technical advice. In the first few years of the BMA, there was a significant increase in per acre yields for four of seven major crops.⁸⁹ A program for reforestation was initiated with the planting of 438,000 trees within the first twenty months.⁹⁰ In matters of public health, the BMA/BA increased the number of hospital beds for Eritreans from approximately 800 in 1941 to 1,642 in 1952. Altogether, in 1941, there were nine hospitals, while in 1952, there were only eight hospitals, but eighty-six dispensaries throughout the territory.⁹¹ To encourage local industries the administration organized an industrial exhibition which opened on 21 December 1943.⁹² Industrial enterprises remained centered in Asmara.⁹³ Dhow trade in Massawa was encouraged with the government's release of stocks of MT dollars.⁹⁴ Although the cost of living rose sharply after 1945, the administration's policy of price control helped to keep inflation at a minimum.⁹⁵ Freedom of the press was encouraged with the establishment of two publications: the Eritrean Daily News in English and Italian, with a circulation at the end of

1943 of 11,000, and the Eritrean Weekly News, a four page paper in Tigrinya.⁹⁶

Beginning in 1946 through 1952, perhaps to defray the costs of the administration,⁹⁷ some port facilities at Massawa and Assab were dismantled and sold at auction: a floating dock, purchased by Reppon Company and sold to Pakistan, the cement factory on the peninsula of Abd el Kader, an aerodrome and personnel quarters, two cranes - one sold to Egypt and one to Malta, and a number of miscellaneous buildings.⁹⁸ This action caused considerable disappointment among both Eritreans and Ethiopians. Despite the sale and demolition of some of Massawa's facilities, Eritreans, by their own admission [see below], had, in general, benefited from the British administration.

FOOTNOTES

¹ The designation, Ethiopia, which comes from the Greek, and was made the official name in 1941, has not been used by all writers, either Latin or English, with consistency through the ages; however, in this work the word, Ethiopia, will be used throughout except in reference to the Aksumite Kingdom.

² H.P. Huffnagel, Consultant to FAO, Agriculture in Ethiopia, Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO, UN, Rome, 1961, 5.

³ USG, Department of Commerce, Special Consular Reports, No. 82, "Eritrea," Addison Southard, American Consul, Aden, 1920, hereafter Southard, 11.

⁴ Through the efforts of Catholic and Protestant missionaries, the transformation of Tigrinya was accomplished by the adoption of Geez characters. Missionaries supplied many useful volumes of grammars and vocabularies of Eritrean languages. See Four Power Commission of Investigation for the Former Italian Colonies, "Report on Eritrea," 22 Je 48, hereafter FPC, 70. For a fuller discussion of languages of Eritrea, see E.D. Thompson, "Languages of Northern Eritrea," in M. Lionel Bender, ed., The Non-Semitic Languages of Ethiopia, Michigan State University Press, 1976, 97-165 & 597-603.

⁵ They traced their conversion to Mohammed EL Negash (buried in Tigrai near Adi Grat), a self-appointed disciple of the Prophet of Ethiopian origin, who is said to have lived at the time of the Hejira. They are Tigrinya-speaking Muslims who lived predominantly on the highlands, especially in Serae. For further details see Nadel, "Races and Tribes," 31 and Alberto Pollera, Le Popolazioni Indigene Dell' Eritrea, Bologna, 1935, hereafter Pollera, Le Popolazioni, 149-152.

⁶ Thompson, 598.

⁷ Thompson, 598-600.

⁸ UK, PRO, BMA, S.F. Nadel, "Races and Tribes of Eritrea," FO 371/35658/4110, 3-4, hereafter Nadel, "Races and Tribes,."

⁹ Felice Ostini, Trattato di Diritto Consuetudinario dell'Eritrea, Asmara, 1956.

¹⁰ Nadel, "Races and Tribes," 4.

¹¹ Nadel, "Races and Tribes," 9.

¹² Sometime between 1963 and 1975, Keren division was subdivided into Keren and Sahel divisions, Nakfa being the administrative seat of the latter. Sahel for many generations, however, has been used to refer to

the sparsely inhabited northeastern plains.

13 For as complete a discussion as exists in print, see S. F. Nadel, "Land Tenure on the Eritrean Plateau," Africa, V-16, N-1, Ja 1946, 1-22 and N-2, Ap 1946, 99-109.

14 There are at least 15 monasteries on the Eritrean plateau. 'Gulti' land, free of taxation, developed mainly in Serai and Hamasien, by the British period had largely disappeared, although a few monasteries such as Enda Sellassie in Akkele Guzai and Debre Bizen in Hamasien still owned small tracts of gulti land, from which by agreement with tenant farmers came to the monastery 1/5 of its produce. See Nadel, "Land Tenure on the Eritrean Plateau," 20-21.

15 In 1962, there were 615 tenants of governmental concessions totaling 33,736 hectares. Of these 54% of the tenants were on the plateau, holding on average about 7 ha. In the western lowlands, in particular between the Gash and Setit Rivers, and in the Samhar district, 4.2% (26) of the concessionaires controlled 76.6% of the concessions over 100 ha in size. The largest concession measured 16,000 ha at Tessenei of the Societa Imprese Africane. Two other large concessions were those at Elaberet (1,000 ha) owned by De Nadai/Casciani and at Wakiro, north of Massawa, of c. 2,000 ha, owned by Mohammed el Safi. See Emmanuel, Hailu W., "Concession Agriculture in Eritrea," The Ethiopian Geographical Journal, V-2, N-1, Je 1964, 35-45.

16 The indigenous population in 1900 numbered about 330,000, while in 1928 the estimate had increased to 510,000. S.H. Longrigg, A Short History of Eritrea, Oxford, 1945, 134. Elderly Eritreans who were interviewed in 1983-84 corroborated Longrigg's estimation of the cordial relationships existing between Italians and Eritreans.

17 Longrigg, A Short History of Eritrea, 132.

18 Longrigg, A Short History of Eritrea, 134.

19 "Eritrea," Peace Handbook, No. 126, 17.

20 Four Power Commission for the Investigation of the Former Italian Colonies: Report on Eritrea, hereafter FPC, Appdx 37.

21 Emmanuel, H. W., "Concession Agriculture in Eritrea," 37.

22 At its peak in the late 1930s, Eritrea never had more than 20-25,000 permanent settlers.

23 From 1931 to 1934, Eritrean imports from Italy averaged only 1.5% of Italy's total exports. See and compare R. Pankhurst, "The Trade of Northern Ethiopia in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," JES, V-2, N-1, Ja 64, 147 and "Sommario di Statistiche Storiche dell'Italia, 1861-1975," Istituto Centrale di Statistica, Roma, 1976,

114.

24 "Eritrea," Peace Handbook, No. 126, 18.

25 Southard, 11.

26 Begun in 1935 and finished in March 1937, it was the longest in the world. It measured 71.8 kms and included many relay stations with 1,500 buckets having a capacity of 300 kilos for each spaced at 100 meter intervals moving at a speed of 2 meters per second. The Massawa-Asmara haul required 7 hours to complete. See FPC, Appdx 75. On 1 May 1943, during the BMA, it was closed down because of excessive costs of repairs and operation. See UK, PRO, BMA, "Annual Report for 1945," 30, FO 371/46113/3352.

27 By 1913, there were 356 miles of roads with 125 more projected. See "Eritrea," Peace Handbook, No. 126, 22. In 1942, in addition to the 557 miles of paved roads, there were 98 miles of gravelled roads. See USG, State, "O.E.T.A., Eritrea, Half Yearly Report, 1 Ja - 30 Je 1942," 865D.01/607.

28 "Eritrea," Peace Handbook, No. 126, 23.

29 Up to 1938, "half-castes" who had been recognized by their fathers were admitted to Italian schools, but after 1938, they were denied admission. See FPC, 69. By Italian law No. 822 of 13 May 1940, children of mixed marriages were unable to be recognized by their Italian fathers or to carry their names, and thus they were also unable to become Italian citizens. The law was repealed by the Italian Government on 3 August 1947, but the repeal was not binding at the time in Eritrea; however, Proclamation 125, passed in the final days of the British Administration in spring 1952, put an end to such discriminatory provisions. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 9 My 52, D-177, 777.34/5-952.

30 In 1938/39, there were 20 elementary schools for Eritreans, two of which had trade schools attached, with 152 teachers (33-Italians, 86-nuns, 27-Eritreans, and 6 others). The number of native students reported for the year 1938/39 was 4,177, including natives of 11 schools in Tigrai. It was estimated that only 1 of 5 native students remained to the end of the academic year. See FPC, 69-70.

31 Southard, 12.

32 FPC, 69-70.

33 UK, "First to be Freed, The Report of British Military Administration in Eritrea and Somalia, 1941-1943," Ministry of Information, London, 1944, 33.

34 In 1935, the total indigenous population of Eritrea was accurately estimated by Pollera at just under 600,000. See Pollera, Le

Popolazioni, 289-300. Assuming about ten percent of any population is of school age, then 6,000 represents about 10%. The BMA through investigations during 1942-43 estimated Eritrea's native population at c. 770,000. See Lord Rennell of Rodd, British Military Administration of Occupied Territories In Africa, 1941-47, HMS Stationery Office, London, 1948, hereafter Lord Rennell of Rodd, 99.

35 "Eritrea," Peace Handbook, No. 126, 23.

36 Sheep (35%), goats (32%), cattle (27%), camels (4%), donkeys (2%), mules (0.5%), and horses (0.09%-c.1,000). See "Eritrea," Peace Handbook, No. 126, 26.

37 USG, State, Tuck to SecSt, Cairo, 30 Je 45, No. 870, encl: "Annual Report by the Chief Administrator on the British Military Administration of Eritrea for the Period January 1 to December 31, 1944," hereafter "Annual Report ... for 1944," Appdx 8, 865D.01/6-3045. The count for pigs (consumed only by Europeans) was 21,000, for horses, 1,000, and for mules, 14,000.

38 Southard, 20.

39 Southard, 23.

40 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 25 Ap 51, D-131, 777.00/4-255.

41 Lord Rennell of Rodd, 100.

42 Southard, 23. A 35 year concession was obtained from the Ethiopian Government in 1911 by its Italian discoverer. A narrow gauge rail line extended from the port at Mersa Fatima, about 76 miles south of Massawa, to the Ethiopian border, where a road link connected the rail line to the mine.

43 Southard, 26.

44 "Eritrea," Peace Handbook, No. 126, 25.

45 This was particularly strong with Ethiopia during the 1920s. See JES, V-2, N-1, Ja 1964, 154.

46 USG, State, Division of Research for Near East and Africa, hereafter DRNEA, Office of Intelligence Research, hereafter OIR, Report No. 5311, "The Capacity of Eritrea for Independence," 25 Jy 50, 4. Elderly Eritreans speaking before the FPC. Conti Rossini gives Eritrea's indigenous population in 1902 as c. 327,500. See C. Conti Rossini, "Il Censimento delle Popolazioni Indigene della Colonia Eritrea," in Rivista Geografica Italiana, V-9, Firenze, 1902, 52. Southard gives much the same figure in 1920. Between 1920 and 1947, the population of Eritrea nearly tripled, primarily due to the fact that peace prevailed within Eritrea during that time except for the few months beginning in 1941 marking Italy's defeat. Compare Southard with

Appdx A. For an evaluation of the Italian Administration, see Pollera, Le Popolazioni, 177: "Nella pace e nella assicurata giustizia dell' amministrazione italiana, le lotte fra tribu finitime sono cessate, come quelle interne per ragione di comando; le divisioni per vedette di sangue, conciliate;"

47 "Eritrea," Peace Handbook, No. 126, 27.

48 R. Pankhurst, JES, V-2, N-1, Ja 1964, 147.

49 R. Pankhurst, JES, V-2, N-1, Ja 1964, 148-49. Statistics supplied are for the years 1911, 1914, 1916, 1917, 1925, 1929, & 1934.

50 "Eritrea," Peace Handbook, No. 126, 28.

51 For a detailed discussion of the presence of Indian merchants in the Horn of Africa, see Richard Pankhurst, "The 'Banyan' or Indian Presence at Massawa, the Dahlak Islands and the Horn of Africa," JES, V-12, N-1, Ja 1974, 185-212.

52 With the exception of Port Sudan, Massawa around 1920 had the most up-to-date facilities for shipping of any port on the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Ocean going vessels could dock and load and unload at a stone quay. There were 3 steam traveling cranes for handling cargo, each capable of lifting 3 tons. There were also coaling and watering piers and an electric conveyor for loading salt into steamers. Provisions could be had in "reasonable" quantities and were "comparatively cheap." Port and pilot dues were "nominal." The only real difficulty was the inadequate coaling stocks as were available at Aden and Port Sudan. Also, there were "commodious" warehouses of recent construction with nominal charges for long term storage. See Southard, 8 & 13.

53 Southard, 7.

54 "Eritrea," Peace Handbook, No. 126, 28-29. The dollar weighed slightly more than 28 grams. First minted at Trieste in 1780 and stopped temporarily in 1914 when Trieste passed into Italian hands. Each dollar bore the date of 1780. See Southard, 31.

55 Southard, 31 and Collin R. Bruce, II, ed., Standard Catalogue of World Coins, Krause Publishers, Wisconsin, 1985 edition, 516. The Italian silver trade dollar (510,000) was struck only once in 1918.

56 UK, War Office, Command Paper 6589, "British Military Administration Of Occupied Territories In Africa During The Years 1941-43," London, 1945, 7 & 10. In 1944, the MT had fluctuated between 2.96 and 3.26 E.A. shillings. See USG, State, "Annual Report... for 1944," 20, 865D.01/6-3045. The MT was nearly continuously minted from its first striking up to at least 1968, variously at Vienna, Milan, Venice, Rome, and London (from 1936). For full details see, M.R. Brooke, "The 1790 Restrike Talers of Maria Theresia," The Numismatic

Chronicle, The Royal Numismatic Society, London, 7th Series, V-12, 1972, 221-45.

57 Longrigg, A Short History of Eritrea, 132-33.

58 Southard, 34-35.

59 Longrigg, A Short History of Eritrea, 134. See also, UK, PRO, FO, Research Dept., "Eritrea and Italian Somaliland," 6, 2 Fb 44, FO 371/35658/2437.

60 In 1944, only 1% of Eritrea's land mass was under cultivation by both Eritreans and Italians, a total of 301,508 acres. See USG, State, "Annual Report ... for 1944, 865D.01/6-3045, Appdx 7.

61 For a fuller discussion of land confiscation and Italian land law see S.F. Nadel, "Land Tenure on the Eritrean Plateau," Africa, V-16, N-1, Ja 1946, 18-20 and N-2, Ap 1946, 99-108.

62 Longrigg, A Short History of Eritrea, 134.

63 See Nadel, "Races and Tribes," 33. The twin districts of the Anseba, in western Hamasien, were administered by ex-soldiers with no hereditary rights to their chieftainships (Nadel, 38). In the case of the sub-district of Zaid Akolom in Seraye, the ex-soldier, who attained the chieftainship, proved to be ill-suited for the job, and after complaints that he was robbing the people, he was deposed in 1928 and the sub-district returned to its original house (Nadel, 42). The same occurred in Kwole Seraye sub-district. Some chiefs were transferred to districts other than their own. Others, such as Dejatch Behta Hagos from Tsenadegle, joined the Italians and was rewarded with a chieftainship of Akkele Guzai (Nadel, 34). In addition, Ras Baraki, who died in 1939, of Hamasien and Dejatch Tesfamariam of Seraye through their aid to Italian occupation gained control of lands that neither could claim on traditional grounds. With the advent of the British, Ras Baraki's family was in control of 9 of 15 districts in Hamasien (Nadel, 36). Obversely, those who had not cooperated with the Italians lost their lands to those who had. Such was the fate of one Kantiba Tesemma, who fled to Ethiopia after Italian occupation (Nadel, 36). In certain highland sub-districts, especially in the Seraye, in Ethiopian times, there developed a system called "endaba," whereby an area - usually one that had been under monastic control or part of a large estate - and its villages gained autonomy. The villages operated under the guidance of a council of elected elders. This system was revived in 1925 by the Italians but abolished in 1931 and the villages given over to the administration of district chiefs. There are many examples in Nadel of Italian administrative techniques.

64 Nadel, "Races and Tribes," 1.

65 The two Belein tribes around Keren, the Bet Tarke and Bet Tawke, were unpopularly placed in 1932 under the administrative control of a

district chief or as the office was called, meslanie. See Nadel, "Races and Tribes," 14. The four districts, Debresina, Lamacelli, Adirba, and Dakandu, were also autonomous before 1932, but after, they were united under one paramount chief. See Nadel, 18.

66 Nadel, "Races and Tribes," 18 and 39. Much of the confiscated monastic lands were made into crown lands, which were annually leased to native cultivators. Nadel reported that the small tract of land allotted to Bizen was made poor use of by the monks.

67 The 100 to 200 people living on the island of Hawakil, just south of the Buri Peninsula, were prior to the arrival of the Italians the serfs of the Damoheita of Buri, but after, became autonomous. See Nadel, "Races and Tribes," 21.

68 Nadel, "Races and Tribes," 41.

69 Lord Rennell of Rodd, 101.

70 UK, PRO, BMA, Stafford to Scott-Fox, FO, 18 Ja 47, Report No. 4, 12, 371/63175/428.

71 B. Kennedy Cooke, "Ethiopia and the Italian Colonies," The Spectator, 17 Ag 45, 153, in FO 371/46114/2634.

72 Longrigg, A Short History of Eritrea, 140.

73 Lord Rennell of Rodd, 97 ff.

74 Lord Rennell of Rodd, 104.

75 UK, PRO, BMA, S.H. Longrigg, Ch. Ad., "Some Problems of Administration in Eritrea," hereafter Longrigg, "Some Problems...", Mr 1944, 2, par. 9, FO 371/46116/748.

76 Trevaskis Papers, Bodleian Library, Mss-s367, British Empire, Box 1, Item 4, "Notes of Guidance for District Officer," 8 ff.

77 Trevaskis Papers, "Notes of Guidance for District Officer," 10. The collection of tribute was a continuation of the Italian system of taxation which had been patterned upon pre-Italian traditions.

78 Lord Rennell of Rodd, 102.

79 The English word, 'notable,' was commonly used to denote those Eritreans/Ethiopians who held local titles, such as ras, dejazmatch, grazmatch, kenyazmatch, fitarari, etc. See Glossary of Terms. The Ethiopian Government lodged a formal protest to the HMG for continuing a practice the Ethiopian Government felt should have been reserved for the emperor. See UK, PRO, Riches to FO, T, 13 Ap 45, FO 371/46092/1319. An example of the conferring of titles by the BMA may be found in the Eritrean Gazette, hereafter EG, General Notice 189, 13

Jy 45, 275-77, in FO 371/46116/366.

80 Trevaskis Papers, "Notes of Guidance for District Officer," 11-15.

81 Lord Rennell of Rodd, 143.

82 Membership: 7 from Hamasien, 3 from Akkele Guzai, 1 from Serae, and 1 from Massawa. See S. Pankhurst, "British Policy in Eritrea and Northern Ethiopia," The Walthamstow Press, London, n.d., 24-25.

83 Lord Rennell of Rodd, 111.

84 UK, PRO, BMA, Fitzmaurice, Minutes, 6 De 46, FO 371/63186/399.

85 Eritrean Daily News, hereafter EDN, 2 Ap 42:3.

86 EDN, 2 No 44:2de.

87 EDN, 19 Fb 44:4a.

88 Trevaskis Papers, "Notes of Guidance for District Officer," 64 and see ch. III, pt. II, ftnt. 163.

89 Lord Rennell of Rodd, 135.

90 USG, State, Talbot Smith to SecSt, 5 Mr 43, D-97, 865D.01/607, 32. In the first half of 1943, a further 800,000 trees were planted. In each planting, a 25% loss was figured. In 1944, just over 2 million seedlings were replanted and a further 2 million in 1945. See USG, State, "Annual Report ... for 1944," 32, 865D.01/6-3045 and UK, PRO, BMA, "Annual Report for 1945," 28, FO 371/46113/3352.

91 FPC, 72 and UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrean Final Report," 1952, FO 371/96719/1011/3, par. 72.

92 EDN, 15 De 43, Supplement and Lord Rennell of Rodd, 139.

93 Of 45 industries listed in February 1946, 39 were in Asmara, 2 in Decemhare, & 1 each in Massawa, Keren, Agordat, and Adi Ugri. See EDN, 24 Fb 46, Supplement.

94 At the end of 1944, BMA stocks of MT dollars amounted to 2,556,133. See USG, State, "Annual Report ... for 1944," 20, 865D.01/6-3045.

95 EDN, *passim*.

96 Lord Rennell of Rodd, 141. The Tigrinya type had been confiscated from the Swedish Mission by the Italians when Sweden applied sanctions to Italy and was rescued by the BMA information services. See UK, PRO, BMA, Grubb to Sorivener, FO 15 No 44, "Overseas Planning Committee, Plan of Propaganda to Eritrea, Aims and Objectives," 2, 25 Sp 44, FO

371/41531/4196.

97 From April 1941 through 30 June 1947, the British Government made a grant in aid to the BMA in the amount of 1,385,803 pounds. See FPC, Appdx 51.

98 UK, BMA, PRO, Stafford to Scott-Fox, FO, Egypt, 21 De 46, Appdx B, FO 371/63175/26 and Sylvia Pankhurst, "Why Are We Destroying The Ethiopian Ports?," New Times and Ethiopia News Books, Essex, 1952, 15.

CHAPTER I

EMERGENCE

OF

POLITICAL PARTIES

(1941 TO 1950)

As soon as the emperor¹ returned to the throne in May 1941, he immediately set about to establish and support an irredentist movement for the incorporation of Eritrea and Italian Somaliland into the Ethiopian state.² It was not evident until the mid-1940s. In Eritrea, this took the form of an organization called 'Mahabar Feqri Hagar Ertra' (Society for the love of the land of Eritrea).³ It became officially known as the Unionist Party, after Major General J. M. Benoy, Chief Administrator of the British Military Administration (BMA)⁴ in Eritrea from 14 August 1945 to 1 November 1946, announced in mid-1946 that political parties could be formed following the announcement by the Four Powers (England, France, USSR, and USA) that a commission would be sent to Eritrea to sound out their political aspirations. It remained primarily Christian and wedded to the ideals of the highlands. Secret discussions among Christian and Muslim leaders had begun as early as 1939, but, when the party's avowed purpose to unite Eritrea with Ethiopia became publicly understood, after a conference held at the Bet Ghiorghis Church in Asmara in summer 1946, most of its Muslim membership led by Abdulkadir Kabire left. The majority of the Christian contingent, initially led by Gheresmicael Woldu, continued its litany of protest that Italy had "stolen" Eritrea, which on grounds of "historic, cultural, religious, geographical, and economic" connections with Ethiopia should be "returned" immediately.⁵

In Britain, the banner was taken up by Sylvia Pankhurst, of the great Emmeline Pankhurst tradition, who was Haile Sellassie's most ardent foreign spokesperson.⁶ She published a weekly newspaper, New Times and Ethiopia News, which stressed that Ethiopia's claims upon Eritrea were not only historically but also morally correct. Her

newspaper became the prime reference outside Ethiopia for the emperor's propagandists. Pankhurst also went to Eritrea several times and directly aided the Unionist Party in its propagandistic efforts. She also suggested, on more than one occasion, through the columns of her paper, that Great Britain was attempting to advance its own imperialistic interests in Eritrea.⁷ Also, she ardently supported "a fanatical dream of a greater Ethiopia, to include, in her own words, 'The Horn of Africa,'"⁸

The Unionist Party claimed to have been established in April 1941, although there is no record of its presence in Eritrea before November 1947,⁹ when the Four Power Commission (FPC) arrived, an event which also stimulated the establishment of rival political parties. Nonetheless, the irredentist cause had achieved popularity at least among Eritrean, primarily Christian intellectuals, concentrated in Asmara, in the early years of the BMA,¹⁰ but resistance to any future incorporation of Eritrea into the Ethiopian empire also had its following.¹¹ Yet, according to a reliable British observer, the majority of Eritreans (c. 200,000¹²) in Ethiopia did not favor unconditional union with the Solomonic crown.¹³ The ethnic affinity of the Eritrean highlands with Ethiopia ended at the border of the Tigrinya block in Tigrai. Eritreans were strongly conscious of their separate identity.¹⁴ Furthermore, that Eritrea did not comprise an ethnic, geographic, linguistic, or cultural unit and that this fact presented serious barriers to its being awarded as a unit was clearly and early acknowledged by the BMA.¹⁵

Late in 1946, separatists opposed to Eritrea's union with Ethiopia began to organize. In December, one such group made its appearance at Keren, forming what became known as the Moslem League (Shaban al

Muslemin); it drew its membership from the heavily Islamic areas of the Western Province, Massawa and the Red Sea districts, with a small following of Christians from the highlands. Later, in the spring of 1947, a splinter group from the Moslem League withdrew to establish the National Moslem Party of Massawa (Hezbi el-Watani). A third predominantly Muslim faction, The New Eritrean Pro-Italy Party, emerged late in September 1947, on the eve of the commission's arrival. Its members, largely supported by the Italian community, hoped that, by supporting Rome's desire to maintain a hold on Eritrea, Italy would help it to achieve independence. The party felt that the economic and educational opportunities its members had enjoyed under the Italian and British administrations would undoubtedly be lost if Eritrea were to come under the Ethiopian Government. The predominantly Christian party, the Eritrean Liberal Progressive Party, which opposed the union of Eritrea with Ethiopia, was established on 18 February 1947.¹⁶

The three predominantly Muslim parties and the Eritrean Liberal Progressive Party shared one common interest - to avoid being incorporated into Ethiopia, whose government's motives many Eritreans (Christian and Muslim alike, but especially the latter) quite rightly suspected were not altruistic.¹⁷ Collectively the parties opposing union with Ethiopia claimed the support of an overwhelming majority of the population. The total number of adherents claimed by all parties amounted to nearly twice the population of Eritrea, estimated by the BMA at slightly more than one million. Obviously, the party's figures were exaggerated, particularly those of the Unionists. Their claims and those of the Moslem League were significantly higher than the estimates of each organization's strength given in the appendices of the FPC report.¹⁸ Such hyperbole made it especially difficult for

the commission to sift through the many statements and memoranda to decide who genuinely represented whom and how many they were.

As the political parties began to organize through meetings and public demonstrations, the BMA made preparations for the "election" of representatives in the families and clans to facilitate the commission in its job of ascertaining the wishes of the people.¹⁹ It was the opinion of Brigadier F. G. Drew,²⁰ Chief Administrator in Eritrea from 1 November 1946 to 19 February 1951, that not more than ten percent of the people were "in any way sufficiently politically conscious or [had] sufficient education to appreciate what the issues [were], or to express a considered opinion thereon."²¹ He added, however, that "political consciousness in the territory [had] increased substantially in view of the expected arrival of [the] Commission."²² The members of the various clans and families did not actually participate in any sort of election process as it is understood in the Western sense. In most rural sectors, elders of clans and villages appointed representatives or themselves took on the assignment.²³ Minority groups were left out of the process altogether. In the towns and cities, the majority of industrial workers did not participate in any election process, while others submitted their names and party cards, if they existed, to their representatives, who then acted "on their own initiative" without consulting their constituents.

The lack of a census presented an additional problem, although Brigadier Drew supplied a figure of 1,062,518, of which 1,005,882 were indigenous, based on, inter alia, inquiries of chiefs, clan heads, etc., made in December 1946 on the eve of the commission's arrival.²⁴ Figures provided by such sources were usually exaggerated depending on the purpose for which they were to be used. If they were for tax

purposes, they were exaggerated down, if for the commission, then up. The population, according to the census used by the commission to determine the standard estimate against which the claims of representatives were compared, was 930,847.²⁵

The difficulty of estimating the exact number represented by each elected deputy was further complicated by the fact that some claimed to speak only for male adults, while others stated they spoke for their entire constituency. In regard to voting procedures, the delegation from Pakistan found that "the Commission was not able to verify whether the persons presenting themselves to it had really been chosen by their villages or community,"...and that "a comparison with the census figures revealed that the representatives had greatly exaggerated the size of their communities."²⁶ It is clear that the bulk of the population, whose literacy in 1947 was judged to be not more than five percent,²⁷ did not go beyond the interests of their families and clans in their appreciation of political and social problems. Moreover, there was no standard of how many people were to be represented by one deputy. After the hearings were completed, the four major parties (the Moslem League, the Unionists, the Liberal Progressives, and the New Eritrea Pro-Italy Party) had widely varying ratios of representative to those represented: Moslem League, 479/1; Unionists, 342/1; Liberal Progressives, 169/1; and Pro-Italy, 316/1.²⁸ Such lack of distinct, consistent criteria for representation caused the commission a good deal of uncertainty in formulating their final opinions.

It is clear from the commission's summary reports that the division of opinion about the future of Eritrea among the representatives was along political, religious, and, to a lesser extent, geographic lines.²⁹ Many delegates had no idea just whom or

what they were supposed to be representing. Some respondents to the commission were "parrot-like," especially among those who favored the Unionist cause,³⁰ while other representatives indicated very little understanding of the political parties they purported to support. Letters³¹ sent to the commission by disgruntled Eritreans (who felt that their opinions were not being properly represented and who therefore demanded an interview with the commission) strongly suggested that the "electoral" process employed by the BMA had been far from thorough. The Unionist Party argued that there had been no absolute criteria established to determine who should be represented. It maintained that only those who had been born in Eritrea and were of indigenous parentage should have the right to participate in determining Eritrea's future.³²

The BMA had difficulty not only in establishing a process of representation that would meet the requirements of the commission but also in dealing with the problem of political consciousness among Eritreans, most of whom were inarticulate and totally unfamiliar with Western political processes. In 1944, Longrigg described political consciousness, at least among the Orthodox of the highlands, as being slight,³³ but by 1947, it had risen somewhat, largely due to the flurry of activity associated with the emerging political parties. The majority of Eritreans, however, could scarcely have grasped the importance of what they were being asked to do. Never before in Eritrean history had there been anything that remotely resembled the political parties that developed there in the mid- and late 1940s. Hitherto, political direction had been determined by colonial regimes and before that by traditional authorities. The BMA had the Herculean responsibility to instill modern European political consciousness among

the people and to acquaint them with the political processes by which their future was about to be determined.

Not only was the task of the administering authority hampered by Eritreans' lack of understanding of these political processes, but also, during the subsequent formation of the Eritrean Government, by the lack of a sufficient number of Eritreans educated to assume positions of leadership and administration. When the British Administration (BA)³⁴ began to accept applications for administrative and clerical positions in what was to become the federation government, the response fell far short of the need, primarily because of the educational requirements, which were subsequently reduced in order to fill positions with as many qualified Eritreans as could be found.³⁵ Some of the many thousands of Eritreans resident in Ethiopia,³⁶ some of whom had had a secondary education in pre-war Italy³⁷ and 1,600 of whom had worked as civil servants in the Ethiopian Government,³⁸ returned to Eritrea at the beginning of federation to assume posts in the new government.

On 12 November 1947, the Four Power Commission arrived in Asmara and remained in Eritrea until 3 January 1948.³⁹ It had until approximately June 1948 to complete its work.⁴⁰ The tasks of the commission were to collect information about social, economic, and political conditions in Eritrea; to ascertain the views of the local population in accordance with the Joint Declaration of the Governments of the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, and France concerning the Former Italian Territorial Possessions in Africa; and to keep in mind the "wishes and welfare of the inhabitants and the interests of peace and security."⁴¹ Upon its arrival, the commission issued a press statement explaining its task, methods of work, and its

willingness to receive written declarations regarding Eritrea's future.⁴²

A vast amount of information about the social, economic, and political conditions, with a historical perspective, was supplied by the chief administrator. During the first two weeks, the commission interviewed representatives of the political parties, both Eritrean and Italian, and other communities and organizations in Asmara. Political views regarding Eritrea's future were also invited from thirty-six other professional and social organizations. From each political party, three executive and three ordinary members were heard. Prior to the hearings, each party had been required to submit a written transcription of the statement to be made before the commission, concerning the terms of its constitution, organization, program, and membership. Altogether, 173 documents were received by the commission, including letters from several mission societies operating in Eritrea.⁴³

In order to hear the views of the population, after the hearings in Asmara, the commission visited fifteen centers in all parts of Eritrea, where representatives of various villages, clans, etc. could be heard. Three basic questions were asked of each representative heard: "1) Do you understand the object of the visit of this Commission and the aims of this Commission? 2) What form of government would you like to see in your country? 3) a. Do you require any help in the government of your country? b. [if yes] In that case, what country's assistance would you like?"⁴⁴ All questions were recorded, analyzed, and summarized, and a vague picture began to emerge of the divergency of political opinion in Eritrea.

As is normal in any political process there were those who belonged to one or another party for very personal reasons. Some merchants and urban notables, for example, felt that union would bring freer trade by eliminating the customs barriers between Eritrea and Ethiopia. This in fact occurred upon federation. Others chose a party on the basis of its potential for success, since to have espoused political opinions and offered support to the losing party would be to court, possibly, violent reprisal, as indeed happened to several leaders of the anti-unionist group, notably, Woldeab Woldemariam. There were others, "dismissed headmen and officials, rivals and pretenders, criminals and fanatics," who, "discontented with their present lot,"⁴⁵ supported irredentism, hoping that Eritrea under Ethiopia's leadership would bring them some advantage. Finally, as Harold Courlander, historian for the Gura Aerodrome Project,⁴⁶ had observed, there were some small chiefs and lesser individuals who had collaborated with the Italians and the British and who feared union would expose them to personal harm from any Ethiopian regime.⁴⁷

Financing of the political parties strongly revealed the interests of their backers. The non-unionist parties were financed largely by their memberships, although outsiders occasionally made contributions. The New Eritrea Pro-Italy Party, favoring either Italian trusteeship or rule, was sustained largely by the Italian community,⁴⁸ although membership dues were required. The Unionist Party was handsomely subvented by the Ethiopian Government, although, of course, this was never publicly admitted.⁴⁹

Throughout the early and middle 1940s, the Orthodox priesthood openly encouraged its co-religionists to favor the union of Eritrea with Ethiopia. The effect of the church's propaganda was not difficult

to assess. In Eritrea, Abuna Marcos, the Orthodox archbishop of Eritrea and Tigray, was the emperor's chief resident agent for unionist propaganda.⁵⁰ Longrigg, who thought the abun "clever and unscrupulous,"⁵¹ observed that the "priesthood, a powerful force especially in rural districts, [could] expect greater liberty and privilege under a Coptic Empire."⁵² The Orthodox Church in Eritrea not only supplied money, through its agents, to the Unionist cause but also warned its congregants that if they failed to support union, they would suffer disfavor, possibly excommunication.⁵³ In early 1944, Abuna Marcos had been instrumental in organizing a five thousand-signature-petition directed to the BMA for the immediate amalgamation of Eritrea with Ethiopia.⁵⁴ The Ethiopian Government, through the Unionist Party, continued to criticize the BMA, accusing it of thwarting the efforts of irredentists and of abridging common freedoms, but, considering the circumstances, the BMA allowed maximum self-expression within the limits of order.

Upon replacing the Italian Administration on 2 April 1941,⁵⁵ the British occupation expunged all fascist elements, both legal and symbolic, but necessarily retained, by and large, the Italian body of laws and court system, deleting only those regulations which might have been interpreted as prejudicial to native Eritreans. The fact that the OETA had, by necessity, retained a large number of Italian officials in the administration (from a pre-occupation figure of 3,141 to a post-occupation figure of 2,242) must have caused a degree of bitterness among those Eritreans who lost their positions in the transition,⁵⁶ although by 1950, there were some 3,600 Eritreans employed by the BA plus an additional 2,500 in the police and prison services, with only about 500 Italians remaining.⁵⁷ The British also had established a

Native Court of first instance with limited civil and criminal jurisdiction⁵⁸ and had encouraged the operation of the Sharia and Kadi Courts. In addition to the administering authority's responsibility of supplying statistics and information for the two commissions,⁵⁹ it had the delicate and difficult task of maintaining an orderly environment in which Eritreans might enjoy the maximum opportunity to participate in determining their political future.⁶⁰ In order to help create a positive ambience, the BMA had established a weekly Tigrinya newspaper, Nai Ertra Samunawi Gazeta (The Eritrean Weekly Gazette, hereafter NESG), whose editorial policy permitted the fullest expression of divergent opinions and thereby encouraged the establishment of political parties.

One of the most unruly parties, and one that gave the administration considerable trouble, was the Patriotic Association for the Union of Eritrea and Ethiopia, (Mahabar Feqri Hagar Ertra), better known as the Unionist Party, reportedly founded in April or May 1941 in Asmara. In February 1944 in Addis Ababa, an organization of a similar name, The Society for the Unification of Ethiopia and Eritrea, was established, but in Asmara, there was no evidence of such a group existing prior to 1947. Its president was Beiene Beraki,⁶¹ but Tedla Bairu⁶² was its most active member as secretary-general, and, from at least 1947, began to receive a monthly stipend from the imperial treasury. It claimed 729,193 members,⁶³ of whom 100,000 were said to be "serfs."⁶⁴ The party had a central committee located in Asmara and regional committees in the major highland towns, where its main strength was concentrated. Longrigg observed that Muslims, who formed approximately half of Eritrea's population and occupied about nine-tenths of its land, were generally opposed to union with Ethiopia,

although this was never acknowledged by irredentists.⁶⁵ The Unionists also made the exaggerated claim to 195,000 members "who are Eritreans resident in Ethiopia."⁶⁶ The commission noted, in regard to the organization of the Unionist Party, that the "relation of the various officials and bodies to each other and the method by which they [were] chosen [were] not made clear in the documents presented by the Association."⁶⁷ Such lack of clarity in the party's organization, while undoubtedly due to the emperor's indirect control, was not lacking in its program.

The program of the Unionist Party called for the unconditional union of all Eritrea with Ethiopia. It opposed partition or trusteeship, the latter on grounds that the status implied preparation for self-government, and the Unionists, considering Eritrea not to be economically self-sufficient,⁶⁸ did not want to admit any possibility of Eritrean national sovereignty.⁶⁹ The party also advocated the granting of Ethiopian citizenship to all inhabitants of Eritrea, including Italians. Although the Unionists argued for the release of the Tigrai from their feudal ties,⁷⁰ the vast majority of the Tigrai supported the Moslem League since a number of their prominent overlords from the Western Province, who wanted to avoid having to pay for goods and services that were free under feudal relationships, had joined the Unionist Party.⁷¹ The Tigrai described their condition in exaggerated tones in a letter to the commission as a "form of slavery that not even the Nazis have given the world."⁷² They concluded that Ethiopia, with its long history of social inequality, would provide them no advantage in their quest for social justice.⁷³

The Unionist Party gained some of its popularity by issuing propaganda that the Italians were going to return to power. There were

still noticeable numbers of Italians in official positions, especially in the courts.⁷⁴ In its early stages of growth, however, the party relied upon unemployment⁷⁵ and the generally unsettled post-war economy to increase its membership.

There were other less orthodox methods, such as terrorism, which the Unionist Party reportedly sanctioned. During the summer of 1947 there was unprecedented political violence as the main parties vied for support: in June and July 1947, several bomb incidents occurred in Asmara; on 9 June, a handgrenade was thrown at the Muslim League headquarters in Piazza Somalia, with little damage and none injured;⁷⁶ that same night, another handgrenade was thrown at A.B.I. Campbell of the Eritrean Police Force, causing him severe injury; and on 2 July, in the early evening, a handgrenade was hurled into the courtyard of Dejjatch Hassan Ali, a leader of the Moslem League,⁷⁷ the second attack on his life.

On 8 July, it was reported that Woldeab Woldemariam, sub-editor of the Tigrinya newspaper, Nai Ertra Samunawi Gazetta, had suffered his second bomb attack in two weeks.⁷⁸ Following these incidents, there were several arrests of Unionist partisans, who had in their possession handgrenades and other types of ammunition.⁷⁹ At the end of July, the violence culminated in the arrest and conviction of three members of the youth section of the Unionist Party, known as the Andinnet Party or 'Mahabar Menisay,' whose president was Ghere-sellassie Garza.⁸⁰ These and other members of this group had posed as Muslims when they attacked members of opposing parties.⁸¹

The youth section of the UP became involved in other incidents of violence. At a meeting of the Four Power Commission at Terramni in the Adi Ugri Division on 30 November 1947, "a gang of Andinnet Unionist

Party members," assaulted a number of delegates of the New Eritrea Pro-Italy Party, attempted to prevent Azmatch Asmeron Asmeghiorghis (an Eritrean Liberal Progressive Party leader from Adi Kwala) from distributing flags to party delegates, and attacked an Eritrean police sergeant who had attempted to control the mob. The group continued to encroach on the site occupied by a faction of the Moslem League, called the Liberal-Moslem League, and impeded their legitimate activities.⁸²

The Ethiopian Government was never officially identified with this terrorism. It employed more orthodox methods to further its irredentist activities. In March 1943, Addis Ababa requested London's permission to place a trade representative in Asmara, where the authorities felt such an agent would act clandestinely as an avenue for Ethiopian propaganda. Finally, in a despatch from the Middle East Command to the War Office, the idea was firmly refused.⁸³

Later, in early 1949, however, an Ethiopian liaison officer, Colonel Negga Haile Sellassie, was appointed by the emperor. His duties were to be mainly consular, but, in fact, he acted as a spokesman to promote the cause of union with Ethiopia. The colonel and his chief secretary were thorns in the side of the administration until April 1949, when, after a raid of the offices of the Andinnet Party in Asmara by British authorities, various "compromising documents" were uncovered suggesting that Colonel Negga and his chief secretary, "may have had some connection with the assassination on 27 March of Abdul Kadir Kabire," an anti-unionist leader of the Moslem League, who on the next day would have left for Lake Success in New York for United Nations' discussions on the disposal of Eritrea. The British Administration (as it was known after 1 April 1949), having long tried to force the colonel's chief secretary to leave Eritrea, now had

sufficient evidence to expel him.⁸⁴ Colonel Negga, however, continued to represent the emperor in Asmara until 8 January 1951, when, after much pressure from the British Government, he was replaced by Ato Amdemikael Dessalegn.⁸⁵ The Andinnet Party was declared illegal and dissolved on 6 April 1949, and its president and vice president were sentenced to fifteen and ten years imprisonment respectively;⁸⁶ however, it resurfaced by mid-1951, with the sixth attempted assassination of Woldeab Woldemariam.⁸⁷ Another strategy of Addis Ababa was the appointing of many Eritreans, including former members of the BMA police force, to the Ethiopian army and civil service.⁸⁸

The Unionist Party was financed partly through membership fees, but sustained mostly by the Ethiopian Government, which helped to finance another irredentist political group. On 27 February 1944, in Addis Ababa, an organization called 'Natsa Hamasen' (Free Hamasien⁸⁹), also called The Society for the Unification of Ethiopia and Eritrea,⁹⁰ was established with imperial sponsorship.⁹¹ Among its founders was Tsahafe Tezaz Woldeghiorghis, the emperor's minister of the pen, who, in a letter from the British Legation to the chief administrator, was described as being a "nationalist, adept at intrigue and armed with summary powers of banishment";⁹² Dawit Ogbazgi, the vice governor of Addis Ababa, who was one of the more active partisans of the irredentist cause; and its president Ghebremeskal Habtemariam, the director of the Ethiopian ministry of posts and telegraph, who stated in fall 1945 that its membership was about three thousand, of whom eight hundred were active members.⁹³ The main thrust of the organization was to supply support propaganda, although its stated goal was to assist destitute, unemployed Eritreans living in Addis Ababa, who were to be placed in jobs or else repatriated to Eritrea.

On 25 September 1945, the society assembled some five thousand people in Menelik Square, then the principal meeting place in Addis Ababa, to demonstrate for the "return" of Eritrea and Italian Somaliland to Ethiopia.⁹⁴ The "parade of protest" began with prayers in the compound of the neighboring St. George's Church, attended by several government ministers. From there, several thousand people, led by Ghebremeskal Habtemariam, proceeded to the Imperial Palace, but were denied admission, (although the following day a contingent from the association was received by the emperor). The crowd moved on to the British Legation, where it forced its way through the gates, causing a general disturbance, which, however, did not interfere with Ghebremeskal's speech, outlining the reasons why Eritrea and Italian Somaliland should be "returned" to Ethiopia.⁹⁵ The crowd next visited the Russian Legation, to be received without incident. Outside the French Legation, the Ethiopians were met at the gate by the acting chief of mission. At the United States Legation, they were allowed to enter the compound, where Ghebremeskal read his prepared statement. The Ethiopian authorities supported the demonstration by allowing government employees to absent themselves on the day of the parade. Following the day's activities, the Belgium minister, in his capacity as doyen of the diplomatic corps, and the British Legation protested the inadequate protection afforded missions by the government.

The finances of the Unionist Party were constantly under the scrutiny of rival parties. The Moslem League supplied the commission admittedly uncorroborated evidence⁹⁶ that certain officials of the Unionist Party were receiving their salaries from the Ethiopian Government through its liaison officer in Asmara.⁹⁷ Relations between the Unionist Party and the BMA were anything but cordial. In a letter

to the commission, dated 7 November 1947, the Unionist Party claimed that "the British Military Administration has imperialistic aims in Eritrea"; that it encouraged "every movement in opposition to the union of Eritrea with Ethiopia"; and that the administrative methods "used by the British Administration are unjust and non-democratic."⁹⁸ Even though the BMA had great difficulty in keeping order while still permitting people to demonstrate and hold public meetings, none of the other parties complained about the motives and methods of the BMA.

The Unionist Party also accused the BMA of press obstruction. The party had received permission to establish a newspaper in Tigrinya and Arabic to propagate its political views, although the BMA's chief secretary could "forbid, modify, or delay any publication."⁹⁹ By the time the UN Commission arrived in February 1950, editors were no longer required to submit their newspapers for compulsory pre-censorship; however, as of September 1946 "articles or cartoons which were defamatory of the BMA, H.M. Government, the British Information Service, or any individual or official of the existing government; which discussed judicial proceedings (as opposed to factual reports of trials); or which in any way might cause some danger to law and order" were forbidden publication.¹⁰⁰ Because of these restrictions the Unionist Party complained of discrimination in a note to the commission, claiming that the administration had been "in defiance of any principle of political freedom" and had "frequently behaved in a dictatorial manner."¹⁰¹

After the Four Power Commission presented its report in August 1948, its figures showed that the Unionist Party cause had not attracted a majority.¹⁰² The combined figures for those political parties opposing union (c. 675,000) was approximately twenty-three

percent greater than those in favor (c. 547,000). The Unionist Party's main strength was in the districts of Hamasien and Serai. The figures seem to have been most exaggerated in Serai when compared to the estimated census figures which the BMA supplied the commission. In Serai's Adi Kwala Division, for example, the total number of claimed Unionist supporters was twice that of the district's estimated population. By the end of 1949, the BA estimated that only about forty percent of the population favored union with Ethiopia, about seventy percent of whom resided in the highlands.¹⁰³ As a result of this speculation, the Unionist Party became increasingly hostile to the BA and openly militant toward those Eritreans who did not favor union with Ethiopia.

Collectively, the political parties had demonstrated to the commission a divergency of opinion so wide that it could not agree on any one political direction for Eritrea's future. For the moment, therefore, the Unionist Party had failed in its mission, but Eritrea's political future had not yet been decided. The Council of Foreign Ministers (the allied powers) had agreed that one year from 15 September 1947 would be given to deciding Eritrea's future; thus, one year later, the council unable to reach a consensus referred the matter to the United Nations¹⁰⁴ in conformity with Article 23 and Annex XI of the 1946 Treaty of Peace with Italy.

Each of the Four Powers had submitted different proposals. One of the most important issues to be decided was whether Eritrea had the capacity for independence: its regular budgetary deficits,¹⁰⁵ its few marketable resources,¹⁰⁶ its strong dependence on Ethiopian transit trade¹⁰⁷ and its continued reliance upon foreign financial assistance for its domestic police and general defense led the FPC to conclude

that "Eritrea [had]...neither the resources nor the revenue to make her economically viable in the foreseeable future."¹⁰⁸ This judgment more than any other influenced each of the Four Powers to suggest for Eritrea a solution other than independence (although later two members of the United Nations Commission were to suggest independence after a ten year UN trusteeship).

France had proposed that with the exception of the territories situated between the Gulf of Zula and French Somaliland, Eritrea should be placed under the trusteeship of Italy and that the territories between the Gulf of Zula and French Somaliland should be assigned Ethiopia "in full sovereignty."¹⁰⁹ The Soviet Union had recommended placing all of Eritrea under the trusteeship of Italy for a "definite acceptable term." The United Kingdom had suggested that "Ethiopia should be appointed to be Administering Authority in Eritrea for a period of ten years" after which the UN General Assembly would decide whether, and if so under what conditions, the Ethiopian administration should continue indefinitely. To implement this, the UK had further suggested that an Eritrean commission be established to oversee the Ethiopian administration and that an Eritrean advisory council have the right to suspend any legislation on certain reserved subjects introduced by the Ethiopian administration. From time to time, the advisory council and the Ethiopian administration would report to the Eritrean commission, which would remain distinct from a trusteeship. Finally, the US had proposed that the southern section of Eritrea, the Danakil, and the districts of Akkele Guzai and Serai be ceded to Ethiopia, while a decision on the remainder, including Asmara and Hamasien, be postponed for one year.

The capacity of Eritrea to sustain independence continued to be an issue long after the commissions had done their work. In 1950, it was the recommendation of at least one intelligence report of the US Department of State that "Eritrea is neither socially, politically, administratively, nor economically qualified for independence nor will it be for some time." Nevertheless, in consideration of Eritrea's relatively low budgetary deficits, the prospect of peace and security in the area (requiring minimal military expenditure), and a properly managed government and economy, the report concluded that "under the most favorable political and economic conditions an independent Eritrea could support itself if not at its present standard of living, at least at one not far below it."¹¹⁰

After the UN postponement of the Eritrean question following the April-May session of 1949 and after the appearance in May 1949 of the Bevin-Svorza agreement, by which Italy renounced any claim to a trusteeship over Eritrea, various political parties opposing union with Ethiopia formed a coalition in June 1949, known as the Independence Bloc. The Unionists regarded the group as traitors and began a new wave of terrorism.¹¹¹ As a result, in January 1950, the Ethiopian Government urged a deputation of Unionist Party members to form its coalition with other pro-union parties, but its leadership preferred to remain separate and to continue attacking anti-unionists.¹¹²

Harassment of those Eritreans and Italians not supporting irredentism continued up through 1951. It was undoubtedly the increasing involvement of Italians in local politics to further the independence cause that prompted its opponents to use terrorist tactics. Articles in the local Italian and Eritrean press were so inflammatory that, in December 1949, the BA was forced for the sake of

public order to ban temporarily all partisan newspapers, including the four main Italian papers and the official organs of the three main political parties.¹¹³

Violence did not diminish, however, and by the end of 1949, nineteen Italians and two prominent Eritreans had been murdered.¹¹⁴ In January of the following year, there were further bomb attacks against prominent Italians in Asmara and Decemhare. In the first half of February, there were assaults upon political leaders, in every case except one, opponents of the unionist cause. In the last week of February just after the UN Commission's arrival, there were serious riots in Asmara between Christians and Muslims, the former angry about the latter's seemingly exaggerated claim of the degree of opposition to union, especially on the plateau. The violence continued and in March three more Italians were killed, which led to an Italian deputation complaining to the UN Commission about the lack of security.¹¹⁵

Initial opposition to union was taken up by the Moslem League, the result of a movement, led by Ibrahim Sultan¹¹⁶ in late 1946, to support the cause of emancipation of the Tigre-speaking "serfs" and to lead Eritrea away from union with Ethiopia. Ibrahim Sultan, himself a Tigray from the Rugbat clan, had been an interpreter for the Italian Government and saw, in the restlessness of the Tigray "serfs" to free themselves from the traditional tithes,¹¹⁷ an opportunity to lead the Muslim people of the Western Province. Later in 1948, the BMA removed the obligation to pay the tithes (dues) and assigned tax collection to governmental agents, which released about 180,000 serfs from their disabling relationships in the Agordat and Nakfa districts, although in the Keren Division the system remained untouched.¹¹⁸ Moreover, tribal

society in Agordat and Nakfa areas was reorganized according to choice, which tended to eliminate the attachment of serfs to masters.

These acts, which benefitted the Tigrai serfs, also tended to deny the Moslem League one of its most important points of contention and helped to reduce its influence. Through the resurrection of the ancient Tigrai tribes and clans as important political units - that had gradually disappeared during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries - Ibrahim Sultan could aspire to a chieftainship over the Tigre-speaking tribes.¹¹⁹ Since many of the Beni Amer chiefs and overlords had joined the Unionist Party, it was clear to Ibrahim Sultan and his associates that their work toward the Tigrai emancipation could be served by organizing a party opposing union with Ethiopia. Therefore, on 3 December 1946, he met with Muslim leaders and community representatives at Keren to consider Eritrea's political future. At this meeting Said Abubaker El Mirghani¹²⁰ was elected president of the Moslem League and Ibrahim Sultan was voted secretary-general, with the responsibility for "preparing documents¹²¹ and arguments subject to discussion," thus giving him the power to guide the direction of the party.

At the next meeting at Keren on 20-21 January 1947, attended by several thousand, a consensus was finally reached, despite divergent opinions. The Tigrai and the Baria, of the Western Province, and the Maria from the Keren district felt their interests would be best served under a British trusteeship, leading to independence, while the few Beni Amer chiefs and shumagalle, who had joined the League, favored an immediate independence that would, they hoped, reinstate their former power, especially in matters of tax collection.¹²² The Kunama, who had received guns from both inside and outside Eritrea, favored immediate independence, or, if not possible, then a British trusteeship, a

solution London had no interest in.¹²³ The Saho from the Red Sea Division supported the Moslem League's program, although they were distressed by the lack of British protection from periodic Ethiopian incursions. While some Afar in the Danakil may have blamed the British for the death of their unofficial leader, Mohammed Yahyo, the Sultan of Aussa, at the hands of the Ethiopian Government in 1944,¹²⁴ the majority, the Dahemela, whose paramount chief and some of its people lived in Tigray Province, remained loyal to the crown, which had continued to recognize the sultanate's autonomous relationship with the empire, while the minority, the Damahoita, mostly supported the Moslem League.

The large majority of Muslims, wishing above all not to be joined to Ethiopia, had even suggested a dual administration, one for the highlands and one for the lowlands. The closure of the naval base at Massawa in 1946, which caused considerable unemployment, provided reason enough for many in Massawa to oppose any continuation of a British administration and to recognize the advantages of employment in Italian import/export firms which had been largely responsible for the port's activity. Lastly, the more than seventeen thousand Sudanese, Arabs, Somalis, and Indians, who had little to gain from Ethiopian rule, variously supported the Moslem League and other parties opposing union.¹²⁵

As a compromise, the League finally adopted a program for complete independence, with the qualification that "if [it were] not considered possible, an international trusteeship for ten years, with internal independence under the control of the British Government"¹²⁶ should be established, or an "administration by the United Nations" (not feasible under the UN charter). Most at the Keren conference agreed it was not

the time to place Eritrea under the tutelage of another foreign country, especially Ethiopia, after its sixty years of Italian administration. The boundaries of Eritrea were to remain as they had been in 1935, unless "the restoration to Eritrea of territories inhabited by people seized from it in the past [namely the Afar from north-eastern Ethiopia and the Beja peoples of eastern Sudan¹²⁷] was possible." It was further decided that Ethiopia was not to receive access to the sea since it could not be accomplished "without gravely prejudicing Eritrean interests."¹²⁸ The conferees felt sure that, with foreign aid and proper management, Eritrea could become self-supporting and therefore quite capable of self-government.

The party was organized into a "superior council," which elected the president and the secretary-general. There were popularly elected regional councils and twelve provincial committees, who elected the superior council. The League's official language was Arabic, a fact which encouraged Christian separatists to form their own party. The Moslem League was financed by annual membership fees and voluntary contributions.¹²⁹ The League claimed to have 731,764 mostly Muslim members (including women and children),¹³⁰ although in the early stages before splinter parties began to form there were significant numbers of Christians.

When the party's program became known, the alternative suggestion of a British trusteeship caused the Unionists to accuse the League of being under the control of the EMA. While the charge is surely exaggerated, it is clear, after examination of statements made by the Canadian Government to the Four Power Commission, that the British Foreign Office was interested in partitioning Eritrea in hopes that the Western Province, after a period of trusteeship, might one day be

annexed to Sudan. In a letter to the commission, Canada stated it supported "the union with Ethiopia of that portion of the highlands of Eritrea in which the Four Power Commission reports that the great majority of the people desire to be included in the Ethiopian Empire [while] the remainder of the territory would be placed under trusteeship." Further, Ottawa expressed "support for the designation of the United Kingdom as administering authority for that part of Eritrea which is not included in the Ethiopian Empire," namely the Western Province.¹³¹ This plan was also supported by Italy.¹³² To win Rome's support, Great Britain diplomatically encouraged the return of Italian settlers to their African homes, where they could use their considerable knowledge and skills in furthering Eritrea's economic development.

A memorandum from the League to the commission argued that the Ethiopian Government "still retains the old worn out 'Feudal' system of Government; its people are in such a state of disorganization, ignorance and backwardness that they have had to face chronic poverty despite the fertility of the land and the privilege of independence."¹³³ It blamed the Orthodox Church for Ethiopia's historic isolation from the enlightenment of the western world. The party also claimed that in a country where a "Muslim doesn't have the right to be equal to a Copt," Ethiopia was not fit to be granted any more territory in its "hope for imperialistic expansion."¹³⁴ The League's negative estimation of Ethiopia's ability to guide Eritrea was further elaborated in a memorandum to the commission on 16 December 1947:

Is it just that a still barbaric and primitive nation such as the Ethiopians - whose government is

unable to improve the lot of its own people - should come into possession of a territory which is far more disciplined, advanced and civilized than Abyssinia?¹³⁵

At least one highranking British Government official would have concurred.¹³⁶

The same document attacked also the defunct Italian administration for thinking of Eritreans "as beasts," and for viewing "a simple Italian peasant [as] better than 1,000 of the so-called chiefs and notables." While blaming village chiefs for hindering educational and material progress in Eritrea, the League especially attacked headmen who had profitted from selling labor to the Italians and recruiting soldiers to join the colonial army for service in Libya, Somaliland, and Ethiopia in 1935-36.¹³⁷ It became politically advantageous for Ibrahim Sultan and the Muslims, whom he represented, to denigrate the Italian experience in favor of British tutelage, in the name of British trusteeship. At the sixth hearing of the commission on 18 November 1947 at Asmara, a deputation of League members¹³⁸ commented favorably on the idea of a British trusteeship:

In the history of the country five nations have occupied it, and we examined them well and did not find any better than the British. We have the example of the British Administration in the Sudan, where the Sudanese are well educated. ... In the 50 years the British have administered the Sudan, the Sudanese have received good education and are filling posts in many departments. In Eritrea, the Italians have not given any such opportunities.¹³⁹

According to the Four Power Commission, although the League did not enjoy majority support, its general program of political non-alignment with Ethiopia accorded with the views of a majority of Eritreans.¹⁴⁰ The commission's findings demonstrated that a majority

wanted either independence or a trusteeship which would lead eventually to independence after a set period of time. Even if the commission had reached agreement, the League's program probably would not have won the day due to the determination of the crown, and its client the Unionist Party, to join Eritrea to Ethiopia.

In March-April 1947, Muslims of Massawa, desiring to separate themselves from the Moslem League set out to establish a separate party, The National (Muslim) Party of Massawa, whose program, however, was nearly identical to that of the League.¹⁴¹ In a letter to the commission of 19 December 1947, Osman Adam Bey, spokesman for the National Party, stated it was impossible at this time for Eritrea to receive "freedom and independence" and therefore demanded British trusteeship for a period of ten years, to be followed by complete independence; his party felt that Great Britain was "the only Government which could easily enable the people of this country to be free and independent."¹⁴² He further commented that "the British Military Administration in Eritrea has been very much interested in the welfare and progress of the people of the country."¹⁴³

The leaders of the National Party stated they were impressed with the fact that under the British, forty-six new elementary schools had been opened, that health conditions had improved, and that despite the slump in the economy of Massawa and indeed of other parts of Eritrea following the termination of hostilities in Europe in 1945, the economic situation generally had improved in the first four years of the BMA, from 1942 through 1945.¹⁴⁴ It was felt by party members that the past seven years under the British had been more beneficial than the previous sixty under the Italians.¹⁴⁵ The establishment of native courts in the very early years of the BMA also had made a favorable

impression on the National Party. Finally, Eritreans were being granted a degree of freedom in determining their own future that they had not known before. The party claimed a membership of 56,377, of whom 25,000 were said to be Afar of the northern Danakil tribes. The commission, however, came to doubt if the Afar were actually members, after a deputation of northern Afar failed to mention such an affiliation.¹⁴⁶ The party, whose membership the FPC gave as less than 14,000, eventually became absorbed into the Independence Bloc after the failure of the Four Power Commission to find a solution for the future of Eritrea.

The opinions of the Moslem League regarding Eritrea's political future were also shared by a number of Eritrean Orthodox who also did not see any advantage in being joined to Ethiopia. As Orthodox were unwilling to join the League, they decided that their interests would be best served by establishing a party of their own, which was accomplished at Adi Kaiye on 18 February 1947. Although its official title was the Eritrean Liberal Progressive Party, it became more commonly known as "Eritreans for Eritrea." Its president was the venerable conciliator, Ras¹⁴⁷ Tesemma Asberom.¹⁴⁸ A successful merchant, Grazmatch Seium Maascio,¹⁴⁹ acted as secretary-general up to 1950, but one of its most active members was Woldeab Woldemariam, the sub-editor of the Tigrinya newspaper, Nai Ertra Samunawi Gazetta,¹⁵⁰ published by the British Information Services, and later editor of Hanty Ertra (Eritrean Unity).¹⁵¹ Woldeab was described by the American Consul in Asmara as being "clearly one of the most able and best educated of the Tigrinya Christians,...the proto-nationalist of modern Eritrea."¹⁵²

The party claimed 53,000 members, of whom only 1,200 were from the predominantly Christian area of Hamasien. It was financed exclusively by its members, each of whom had to have been born in Eritrea but who could enroll immediate family members, providing they lived with him. The party's internal organization was similar to the other parties with a president, vice president, and secretary-general, all elected by an assembly of members. A managing committee, composed of 29 members, including the elected officials and three representatives from each territorial division, decided the program of the party, which was similar to that of the Moslem League.

On 26 October 1947, the managing committee unanimously decided that Eritrea must have absolute independence within its present boundaries under the guidance of an Eritrean committee of "intellectuals" and the present administration which, under the general supervision of the United Nations, gradually would give over its power during a period of no longer than ten years. But, the party failed to note or deliberately ignored the fact that the only organ of power the United Nations had at its disposal to achieve the party's program was the Trusteeship Council.

The party took up the banner of the Tigray Province irredentists, who felt that all Tigrinya-speaking people should once again be united as before 1 October 1889, when Count Pietro Antonelli, representing Rome, signed a treaty establishing Eritrea's southern boundary along a Halai-Saganeiti-Shikelti line, altered to the Mareb-Belessa-Muna River line after the treaty between Italy and Ethiopia, dated 26 October 1896. In addition, the party demanded that the territory in the Sudan, inhabited by the Habab, Beni Amer, and in general all Beja speakers, be annexed to Eritrea.¹⁵³ It categorically opposed ceding Assab or

Massawa to Ethiopia as such a move, the party stated, would "paralyze the general economic life of Eritrea."¹⁵⁴ In order for Eritrea to develop its economy, the party advocated the granting of a long-term loan by the United Nations; raising domestic taxation;¹⁵⁵ enlarging the fishing industry; developing the salt industry; reducing the salaries of foreign employees (who might remain in various departments after independence); improving the cattle stock through cross-breeding; suspending further immigration; and increasing the productivity of the gold industry.¹⁵⁶

The party sought to create a parliament on the British model, and thought the courts (still based largely on the Italian system)¹⁵⁷ should be completely reorganized and new laws promulgated to determine jurisdiction over Europeans and Eritreans. During the Italian Administration, cases involving an Italian and an Eritrean were heard in Italian courts, whereas cases between Eritreans only were usually heard by customary courts and codes, both Christian and Islamic.¹⁵⁸ During the British Administration, the Italian colonial system was retained with the addition of six new courts, one of which, The Standing Court (after 1 April 1949), held jurisdiction over Italians and Eritreans alike in nearly all serious (murder and robbery) and many non-serious (traffic) cases of offence or contravention. The British Native Courts, which had assumed the jurisdiction of the former Italian Commissioner's Tribunal (Il Tribunale di Commissariato), dealt with offences dealing with feuds between tribes, races, or groups concerning rights of pasturage, water, lands, or cases of blood revenge where there was no personal injury. When the British assumed control, there arose the problem of jurisdiction and which sets of laws would preside: Italian, English, Koranic/sharia, or traditional. The issue

was made more complicated by the fact there were courts with overlapping jurisdictions and by the incompetence of many British and Eritreans who sat as judges without legal qualifications. Until a permanent government could be established it became necessary for the administering authority to make use of the Italian court system and Italian judges who were juridically competent. This patchwork system continued until federation when the Eritrean judicial system was put in order.

From its inception, the Eritrean Liberal Progressive Party was continually harassed by pro-unionists, who frequently resorted to violence, often directed at the party's most ardent and articulate leader, Woldeab Woldemariam, who, by April 1950, had suffered at least five assassination attempts.¹⁵⁹ In assessing Woldeab, Sylvia Pankhurst, an ardent spokesperson for the emperor, claimed, as she had for anyone skeptical of uniting Eritrea with Ethiopia, that some considered him an "Eritrean Quisling" and a "protagonist of Brigadier Longrigg's policy to annex the Ethiopian Tigray to Eritrea and to put the Territory thus enlarged under British Trusteeship."¹⁶⁰ Her claims regarding annexation were correct.

On 18 May 1943, a committee had been formed under the chairmanship of Lord Moyne, one of whose members was Brigadier Longrigg, then chief administrator. One of its purposes was to attempt a unification of the Tigrinya-speaking people living on the highlands in southern Eritrea and in Tigray Province, despite the fact that an agreement had been signed between Great Britain and Ethiopia concerning, inter alia, the latter's full sovereignty over Tigray.¹⁶¹ Ato Woldeab, an active nationalist, was encouraged from the early days of the British Administration to rally his fellow countrymen around the idea of not

only independence but also a greater Eritrea, encompassing Tigray Province south of Axum to the town of Endasellassie up to the Alawaha River.¹⁶² Ato Woldeab also agreed with the Moslem League's estimation that the BA had given more opportunity for individual progress to Eritreans than the Italians had done in the previous fifty years.¹⁶³

Through continued intimidation, the party began to lose its following as political sentiment turned toward the Unionists. Throughout 1948 and 1949, highland Christians, as well as Italians, opposing the Unionist cause, were threatened with violence in letters and pamphlets if they continued to support the Independence Bloc.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, the Orthodox Church published a warning in the columns of Ethiopia, a Unionist publication, appearing first in 1948, that the Church would not grant facilities as regards baptism, marriage, burial, communion, and absolution to members of the bloc or to their families.¹⁶⁵ In addition, Muslim Tigray of the Western Province, who did not have Unionist Party membership cards, were "ejected by the Ethiopian authorities"¹⁶⁶ when they attempted to cross the frontier in search of grazing during the dry months of winter and spring. Under such pressures, the Liberal Progressive Party eventually split. The Unionist cause had demonstrated that intimidation and constant propaganda could have its desired effect. By mid-1949, Seium Maasho, leader of one of the factions, continued to favor independence, but only after a twenty- or thirty-year Anglo-Ethiopian trusteeship.¹⁶⁷

After the Council of Foreign Ministers decided on 25 September 1946, that Rome must renounce all claims to her former colonies, the Italian community in Eritrea recognized a need to ally themselves with a group either espousing independence or trusteeship, if they were to retain any of their former influence. In July 1946, the Italian

Government declared that it intended to send a commission to Eritrea to examine the claims of Eritrean colonial veterans.¹⁶⁸ The following spring, the formation of the Eritrean Veterans' Association was announced. Analogous to the British Legion, it was composed entirely of former Eritrean soldiers and was non-political.¹⁶⁹ Its object was to press the Italian Government to honor its obligations to pay Eritrean ex-soldiers their back wages and to pay others gratuities and pensions.¹⁷⁰ In July or August 1947, declaring itself in favor of Italian trusteeship, it applied to become a political party. The BMA advised it to form a separate group since its original statutes did not permit a political program; thus, the New Eritrea Pro-Italy Party was formed, in part a front for the Italian community's efforts to re-establish control over Eritrea. Unionists and League members objected to the existence of any group that favored the return of Italian rule over Eritrea and protested so strongly to the British Administration that a month passed before the party received official sanction on 29 September 1947.

Not all members of the association became members of the party. Of the approximately 35,000 members of the Eritrean Veterans' Association, about 30,000 were in favor of an Italian trusteeship,¹⁷¹ most of whom were probably active members of the party; however, both organizations continued to exist side by side, the party acting as the political arm of the association in their mutual attempt to recover unpaid wages for Eritrean ex-soldiers.

The party's general headquarters was in Asmara. Originally, it had requested Keren, but the BMA refused, considering that the strong Italian elements within the party needed close supervision. Its grossly exaggerated membership, including women and children, was

estimated at 219,600, approximately the same number later claimed by the Eritrean Veterans' Association to the commission.¹⁷² There were seventeen branches throughout Eritrea, each having administrative officers elected by local assemblies. The party's president was Omar Mohammed Baduri, a wealthy import/export merchant who helped to finance the party. Its vice president was Blatta Mohammed Abdella Ali, but perhaps its most influential member was Idris Hassen, the Naib¹⁷³ of Massawa. Although the Pro-Italy Party claimed to be solely financed by its members, the Unionists, Moslem League, and the BMA believed that most of its funds came from the Italian community.

The party's platform called for an Italian trusteeship, leading to independence "as soon as possible" under the strict control of the UN. It advocated the establishment of a parliament and "equality of rights for all persons residing in the territory."¹⁷⁴ Because its political aim, however, was to influence the Italian Government to pay ex-Eritrean soldiers their back-wages, the party was extravagant in its praise of the Italians. Although it was true that the majority of Italians had not been as bad as the Unionists had characterized them, on the other hand, such statements as "their [Italians'] work has always been directed to the benefit and progress of civilization in this country"¹⁷⁵ represented an exaggerated picture of the Italian legacy in Eritrea. The political impact of the Pro-Italy Party was negligible.

After the commission left Eritrea, the party came under the influence of the Italo-Eritrean Association (composed of 11,000 Italians born in Eritrea, 1,300 long-term Italian settlers, nearly 15,000 mixed-bloods, and about 17,000 Eritrean women, the wives or mothers of Italians and half-castes).¹⁷⁶ Its first president and one

of three principal founders was the prominent industrialist, Guido De Rossi,¹⁷⁷ who represented Italian interests at both the Four Power Commission and at Lake Success. In order to preserve the influence of the Italian community, the Association supported independence. The group realized that after the failure of the Bevin-Sforza proposals¹⁷⁸ in the United Nations on 17 May 1949, it could no longer hope for an Italian trusteeship and so had no other choice but to support a program which would create a nominally independent Eritrea under Italian political and economic domination. The Association also hoped that Italian mixed-bloods would be recognized as 'de jure' and 'de facto' citizens of Eritrea with full rights,¹⁷⁹ later to become a minor issue in the drawing up of Eritrea's constitution. The New Eritrea Pro-Italy Party, therefore, emphasized the Eritrean aspect of the party name and its Eritrean roots, hoping to attract more of those who had only nominal economic ties with the Italian community.

In 1949, during the spring session of the United Nations, a bloc delegation from the New Eritrea Party (formerly the New Eritrea Pro-Italy Party), led by Gherenkiel Baraki; the Italo-Eritrean Association, led by Guido de Rossi, Angelo Maiorani (a lawyer), and Michael Pollera (a merchant); and the Eritrean Veterans' Association, led by Ali Ibrahim (a politician) went to New York, where they formed a coalition with the Moslem League. The alliance was augmented later by the Liberal Progressive Party and the National Party of Massawa. In combination, they opposed union with Ethiopia and thus became known as the Independence Bloc, led by Ibrahim Sultan. Two other groups, the Independent Eritrea Party¹⁸⁰ with an estimated strength of 23,000 (composed mostly of former Unionists from the Keren district) and the Intellectual Association of Eritreans (composed of a small number of

educated Eritreans, only one of whom had a university degree, its president, Gheresghier Woldemariam) joined the bloc in a collective effort to secure independence for Eritrea.

The decision of Ibrahim Sultan to join forces with the Italians in the New Eritrea Pro-Italy Party under the covert control of the Italo-Eritrean Association was a grave mistake which led to the destruction of the unity that had been achieved by those Eritreans who sought to ensure that Ethiopia would not gain political control over their country. Sultan countered Ethiopian Government accusations that he had received bribes by vowing that he had made no real commitments to Rome but asserting that he favored Eritrean/European cooperation and would willingly accept money from the Italian community to further that aim.¹⁸¹ When it was reported that he had admitted promising Addis Ababa such economic advantages as transit rights and customs concessions, he had become tainted in the eyes of his co-religionists, and his political following began to dissipate.

Early in 1949, the Italian Government appointed Count Adalberto Figarolo Di Gropello as liaison officer in Eritrea. Feeling that any rapprochement with Ethiopia was impossible and that cession¹⁸² of any part of Eritrea would be unproductive, he accordingly "took little pains to conceal his activities of disbursing very considerable sums of money in the cause of independence."¹⁸³ As a result, the Unionist Party began to lose members, especially Muslims.¹⁸⁴ The Belin (the Bet Tawkay and the Bet Tarkay), a predominantly Muslim group with a significant Catholic minority living in the Keren-Hal Hal district on the fringes between the Muslim lowlands and the Christian highlands, deserted the unionist cause, whose support in the Western Province was reduced to about 23,000.¹⁸⁵ Italian money was having its desired

effect, but that was soon to be reversed, for the rank and file members of the Independence Bloc feared that independence would mean a government guided by an Italian elite. Eventually, in April 1951, after numerous complaints from the Italian community that Di Gropello's sympathies with neofascists had damaged the community's chances to protect its commercial interests by making peace with Eritreans and Ethiopians alike,¹⁸⁶ he was replaced by the more diplomatic Marchese di Capomazza E di Campolattaro, former charge d'affaires in Madrid.¹⁸⁷

Towards the end of 1949 and the beginning of 1950, Ibrahim Sultan began to realize that he was losing his core support. By August 1949, three factions emerged in the Western Province: an Italo-phile, anti-partition group, estimated by Trevaskis at 76,000; an Italo-phobe group, favoring independence, but who would accept partition to avoid Rome's domination, estimated at 140,000; and a largely indecisive group who, estimated at 56,000, would probably oppose partition.¹⁸⁸ Both the United States and Great Britain had indicated to Sultan their support for partition and for cession of at least the eastern portion of Eritrea to Ethiopia, but only London, through the Canadian Government's communications with the commission, had suggested a trusteeship for the Western Province. This solution was opposed by the majority of its inhabitants and would have meant an end to Sultan's political career.¹⁸⁹

The violence between October 1949 and February 1950 caused further disunity among bloc members. During this period, nine Italians,¹⁹⁰ one Indian, one Greek, three Christian supporters of the bloc, and four Muslim tribesmen were assassinated; Italian cafes in Asmara and Adi Ugri were attacked; handgrenades were thrown at Italian and Eritrean supporters of the bloc; Italian farms were raided and ransacked; and an

open assault was made on a village whose district chief favored the bloc.¹⁹¹ These disturbances culminated in a massacre in Asmara between 21-24 February 1950. The UN Delegations of Guatemala and Pakistan reported in a memorandum to the commission that in Asmara on 21 February a "bomb" had been thrown from "near the headquarters of the Unionist Party," at the funeral procession of Nassreddir Said, a prominent Muslim who, opposed to Unionists, had been murdered the previous day by a gang of "'Shifta,'" or political terrorists in this case.¹⁹² (The BA had indicated to the Delegation of Pakistan that from time to time shifta bands "attacked those persons who were opposed to union with Ethiopia," and that "it was common knowledge in Eritrea that these gangs withdrew from Eritrea into Ethiopia whenever they were pursued by forces of law and order."¹⁹³) The consequence was three days of rioting, during which at least forty-seven persons were killed and 221 injured with property damage estimated at ten thousand pounds, mostly to that of Muslim traders. The administration immediately effected a 7pm to 5am curfew, which was strictly enforced for the first month only, although it lasted until 21 March of the next year.¹⁹⁴ Following the riots, the Independence Bloc spurred on by the polemics of the Italian press became openly hostile toward the BA.¹⁹⁵

Politically motivated disturbances and violence continued throughout the remainder of 1950 and up to mid-1951, especially against the Italian community. In March 1950, three Italians were murdered while others suffered loss of property; in May, there followed the murder of three more Italians and an influential Italo-Eritrean, Vittorio Longhi; in November, two Italian railwaymen were killed;¹⁹⁶ and at the end of April 1951, the assassination at Um Hager of a very prominent Italian industrialist, Rudolfo Melotti, in the company of an

administrative officer from the Agricultural Department.¹⁹⁷ As a result of the constant intimidation and incidents, the politically oriented Comitato Rappresentativo Italiano dell'Eritrea (hereafter CRIE), through which Italian money had been channeled in the support of an independent Eritrea, was dissolved on 21 December 1950, but in the following spring, a cultural association, Casa degli Italiani, with the same political motives sprang into its place.¹⁹⁸

Threats and continued violence, coupled with the distrust of Ibrahim Sultan's Italian connections, brought final disintegration to the Independence Bloc and the unity necessary to bring about an independent Eritrea. The first group to break away called itself The Independent Moslem League of Massawa and was led by Kadi Mohammed Omar and Sheik Mohammed Jahia Dirghi, an ex-member of the Moslem League. Most of its adherents had been members of the Moslem League or of the Andinnet Party of Unionists, resided mainly in the Red Sea, Hamasien, and Akkele Guzai Divisions, and favored union with Ethiopia under "conditions" designed to protect Muslim interests. After sending a deputation to Addis Ababa, they received guarantees from the Ethiopian Government that the conditions, namely a respect for Muslim institutions and an understanding that Arabic would be taught in the schools along with Amharic, would be given every consideration.

Shortly after the arrival of the UN Commission in late February 1950, three more parties emerged from the Independence Bloc.¹⁹⁹ The first, led by Seium Maasho and Dejatch Abraha Tesemma,²⁰⁰ was the Liberal Unionist Party (composed of primarily Christian, southern highlanders, a few of whom had been members of the Liberal Progressive Party), which sought a compromise with the Unionist Party rather than an Italian-sponsored independence. It was convinced, after Dejatch

Abraha from Akkele Guzai visited Addis Ababa,²⁰¹ that internal affairs would be left to Eritreans, whose languages and customs would be preserved.²⁰² He and his party therefore pledged themselves to bring about a conditional union with Ethiopia. In December 1950, rumors began to surface that the BA considered Dejazach Abraha the prime candidate to unify Eritrea's disparate elements into an Eritrean state.²⁰³

The second break-away group, led by Khalifa Saleh Bemnet, was the Keren-centered Independent Eritrea United to Ethiopia Party (composed of former members of the Independent Eritrea Party²⁰⁴), advocating union with Ethiopia but agreeable to independence, provided that union with Ethiopia followed.²⁰⁵

Shortly before the arrival of the UN Commission, a third group left the bloc, calling itself the Moslem League of the Western Province (later known as the partition party), composed of former members of the Moslem League.²⁰⁶ Although its president was Hamid Mohammed Nur Abu Alama,²⁰⁷ it was the creation of Sheik Ali Mohammed Redai²⁰⁸ of the Tigrai tribes and enjoyed the unofficial encouragement of some members of the British Administration, who thought that unifying the Beja tribes on both sides of the Sudan/Eritrean border would give Sudan easier access to Red Sea ports.²⁰⁹ The party had become suspicious of Italian influence in the Moslem League, and, although it preferred federation or union with Sudan rather than with Ethiopia, it did not want the Western Province to be annexed to the Sudan because of the Beni Amer-Hadendowa quarrel.²¹⁰ It, therefore, advocated, at least for the Western Province, the continuance of the British Administration for a period of ten years, leaving the rest of the territory to decide its own future. By August 1950, it had the

support of eighty to eighty-five percent of the Western Province, approximately 275,000 people.²¹¹ Since it did not seek a separate government, opposed federation, and did not want to be annexed to the Sudan, its leader came to terms with the Unionist Party; Sheik Redai indicated that his party would not oppose a separate solution for the Western Province if its inhabitants did not wish to be joined with Ethiopia, but in that case the Unionist Party would then demand the unconditional annexation of the rest of Eritrea. Initially, Redai's group had a detrimental effect on Sultan's support, but after the latter's publication of a petition in which 173 Muslim leaders from the Agordat area, a Redai stronghold, requested the abolition of the administration's tribal councils, which had deprived prominent Muslims of influence in their respective communities, support for the Moslem League of the Western Province declined.²¹²

The Independence Bloc continued to receive support from the New Eritrea party (formerly the New Eritrea Pro-Italy Party), the Independent Eritrea Party, the Liberal Progressive Party, the National Party of Massawa, the Eritrean Veterans' Association, the Intellectual Association, and the Italo-Eritrean Association, all of which still advocated immediate independence for the whole of Eritrea. The New Eritrea party and the Italo-Eritrean Association both advocated a United Nations' trusteeship if independence should prove unworkable. The Intellectual Association did not object to union with Ethiopia, if after independence an elected Eritrean parliament approved such a union.

The Italo-Eritrean Association sought to appease those who had left the bloc by suggesting some sort of union with Ethiopia, advocating free harbor zones at Massawa and Assab to afford Ethiopia

its much desired access to the sea. The association continued to stress the important "civilizing" role Italians had played in Eritrea and argued that annexation or federation with Ethiopia would be a step backward, for in its eyes Eritrea enjoyed a higher social, cultural, and economic standard than Ethiopia. Its efforts at compromise were in vain, for on 2 December 1950, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 390 A (V), which stated that "Eritrea shall constitute an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian crown."²¹³

The five member commission had been divided and, thus, the resolution represented a compromise proposal. The Delegations of Burma, Norway, and Union of South Africa stated that "Eritrea [was] a poor country, without any prospects of progressing as a separate economic entity, and dependent in most vital respects on Ethiopia's rich farming resources and transit trade."²¹⁴ Such dependence had precluded a solution "which [had] as its aim the creation of an entirely separate Eritrean State, whether in the immediate future or after an interval of international trusteeship." Further, they had concluded that it was "not unlikely" that a majority of Eritreans favored union with Ethiopia, especially in view of the defection of the Moslem League of the Western Province from the Independence Bloc. They also had felt that Ethiopia's aspirations for access to the sea were legitimate on both economic and security grounds. The best solution, they concluded, would be some sort of close political relationship with Ethiopia. Therefore, Burma and the Union of South Africa had proposed that "Eritrea be constituted a self-governing unit of a federation of which the other member shall be Ethiopia, under the sovereignty of the Ethiopia crown."²¹⁵

Burma, Norway, and South Africa had also acknowledged that the Eritrean economy was "dependent on the technical proficiency and managerial activities of the Italian settlers."²¹⁶ The details for the creation of a federation, for which Burma and South Africa had given guidelines, were to be worked out over a period not to exceed three years, while the BA continued administering the territory. Norway, however, considered that since there existed an "economic interdependence"²¹⁷ between the two areas, the "whole territory of Eritrea" should be united with Ethiopia, but that since the Western Province "in refusing union either with Ethiopia or Sudan, [had] aim[ed] at the setting up in this area of a separate and independent State,"²¹⁸ the Western Province "could provisionally and for a limited period of time be left under the present British Administration."²¹⁹

The Delegations of Pakistan and Guatemala had submitted a separate memorandum, in which they had observed the following: that the influence of religion [had been] a "preponderant factor in the development of political trends in Eritrea";²²⁰ that terrorism had had its effect on determining political opinion; that "the political conviction of many of the inhabitants who [had] support[ed] the Unionist cause [could] not but be viewed with doubt";²²¹ that "at nearly all the gatherings of the Unionist Party a large number of priests [had been] seen with church emblems, and it [had been] obvious that the clergy [had been] using its influence over the laity";²²² that partition be avoided and Eritrea remain unified; that "economic, ethnic, historical, and security reasons...[had] not [been] sufficient ...to recommend [annexation]";²²³ that the majority of the population [had] not wish[ed] annexation, but since Eritrea did not possess sufficient, trained people to assume the government of the

territory,²²⁴ the "welfare of Eritrea [could] best be promoted by placing the territory under direct trusteeship by the United Nations for a maximum period of ten years, at the end of which it should become completely independent."²²⁵

As an interested government, The United Kingdom continued to maintain that the highlands and the Danakil be incorporated into Ethiopia while the Western Province should become a part of Sudan.²²⁶ Further, it reiterated its belief that independence was not practicable because Eritrea did not possess religious, ethnic, linguistic, and geographical unity.²²⁷ Italy maintained that the wishes of the Eritrean people should be followed, but that the Italian community's interests as well as those of Ethiopia should be considered in any solution. Egypt indicated its interest that Eritrea should remain whole and that the wishes of its inhabitants be respected; France acknowledged Eritrea's heterogeneity but thought Ethiopia was entitled to "compensation for the past" with guarantees for the future and that the wishes of both the indigenous and Italian populations should be safeguarded.²²⁸

The decision to join Eritrea as an autonomous unit within Ethiopia was greeted in the Eritrean highlands with "little enthusiasm" but with "no overt opposition."²²⁹ In the lowlands, in particular in the Western Province, the news came as a "surprise and a shock."²³⁰ A contributing reason for the creation of the Partition Party had been Muslims' legitimate feelings that their interests would be ignored in a government ultimately dominated by Christians and Italians because of their greater political maturity in matters of administration and their better education, enabling them to gain the most influential positions in a new government.

The Italian community greeted the UN's decision "with...skeptical resignation,"²³¹ and relief that at least a decision had been reached and it provided Italians with a 'modus operandi' in Eritrea. On 17 December 1950, in a mood of conciliation, they held a solemn mass of thanksgiving at the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Asmara, with heads of all political parties attending, but with the conspicuous absence of any BA representative.²³² This event was followed by a meeting of reconciliation on 31 December, sponsored by a non-partisan committee of representatives from all political parties, which agreed in resolution to work together for the accomplishment of the UN Commissioner's purpose.²³³ (The UN had yet to appoint a second commission to implement the resolution.) Each political party saw in the UN resolution something of their own aims, although it was in at least some respects objectionable to everyone; however, the resolution represented a compromise and an end to the uncertainty of Eritrea's future that had resulted in considerable unrest and disturbances of both a political and criminal nature.

By the time the second, implementing commission's consultations of 11-20 July 1951,²³⁴ between the political parties and the UN Commissioner were held, the Independence Bloc had changed its name. In early January,²³⁵ the bloc became the Eritrean Democratic Front, composed of the Moslem League of Eritrea, the Liberal Progressive Party, the New Eritrean Party, the Independent Party, the Italo-Eritrean Association, and the Eritrean Veterans' Association. In the first two weeks of February, to enhance his support for the bloc, Sultan made fourteen speaking engagements in the Western Province, discussing his UN experiences and Eritrea's prospects.²³⁶ The Front's main concern, under the honorary leadership of Ras Tesemma Asberom, was

to prevent the emperor from having any representative in the executive of the new government or in Eritrea at all. The Liberal Unionist Party was willing to allow an imperial representative in the Executive, provided that the individual was merely an observer without powers. The Independent Party thought the monarch should have an advisory representative, while the Unionist Party felt the stronger the federal link between Eritrea and Ethiopia the better. The efforts of the Eritrean Democratic Front failed, however, to prevent the emperor from having a representative in the Eritrean assembly. Concerned that Eritrean affairs would be dominated by Ethiopia, the Front attempted unsuccessfully to delay implementation of federation by suggesting a transition period toward federation of ten years.²³⁷ With a sense of insecurity and impending trouble, the Front further organized a youth section of about 9,000 as a protection against possible violence.²³⁸

The rivalry between the Democratic Front and the Unionist Party continued into 1952 creating a tense atmosphere, exacerbated by both groups. In August 1951, an influential group of unionist Muslims broke away because the party's central committee would not recognize Arabic as an official language of Eritrea. The splinter group sent its own delegation to speak to the UN Commissioner,²³⁹ demanding Arabic as an official language, an Eritrean flag as well as a federal one, and non-admission of an imperial representative in the formation of the Eritrean Government.

In January 1952, to enhance its popularity, the Unionist Party launched a "peace campaign" throughout Eritrea in an attempt to mitigate the fears of those opposed to union with Ethiopia and to encourage an end to communal conflicts between Christian and Muslim.²⁴⁰ The speeches of Unionist Party members, including one by Tedla Bairu,

emphasized the Ethiopian character of the coming federation and implicitly warned the people that disagreement and protest would not be tolerated. Ibrahim Sultan's newspaper, Voice of the Eritrean Moslem League, ridiculed the unionists as "hypocrites" and reminded his co-religionists of the "plight" of Ethiopian Muslims. Rather than bringing about an atmosphere of tranquility, the campaign only heightened the prevailing distrust and antagonisms between Christians and Muslims and between those who favored union with the empire and those who did not.

As federation approached, Muslims who had been firmly in the Unionist camp grew anxious. By the end of August 1952, on the eve of federation, the prominent pro-Unionist, Mohammed Omar Kadi²⁴¹ published in the Independent Moslem League's newspaper, Unione E Progresso (a weekly that had begun publication only a few months before) a number of articles critical of the emperor, the BA, and the UN Commissioner.²⁴² Because the Eritrean constitution had not been submitted to the Ethiopian senate or parliament for ratification, Kadi rightly felt that the two entities, federation and the empire, were basically incompatible and that eventually Eritrea would lose the rights and freedoms guaranteed under its constitution. On the other hand, he mistakenly implied that Brig. Stafford had favored Ethiopia during negotiations concerning the constitution and had thus compromised Eritrea's future interests.²⁴³ He also stated that he thought the task of the UN Commissioner was unfinished, since there was still a body of enabling legislation yet to be enacted and the exact constitutional relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea to be properly defined. The articles foreshadowed the conflict yet to come. Prominent Massawa

Muslims now felt that rather than federated with Ethiopia, Eritrea was about to be, in all but name only, annexed to Ethiopia.

The disastrous turning point in the progress of those parties advocating independence or trusteeship (for a specific period of time, ultimately leading to independence) came with the close association of the Independence Bloc with the Italian community. Eritreans distrusted the motives of Italians in supporting independence but also were equally skeptical about joining hands with Ethiopia. The resulting disunity among anti-unionists helped the Ethiopian Government convince the UN that Eritrea's future best lay with the Solomonic crown. With the UN resolution in effect, Eritrea's political and economic future had now been firmly linked with that of Ethiopia.

Nonetheless, hundreds of Eritrea's leaders had been involved in the political process, and political consciousness had been raised considerably, an experience that ultimately made Eritrea more difficult for Ethiopia to govern. Some of Eritrea's political leaders, such as Dejach Tedla Bairu, attained high positions in the new government, which was formed with the help of the BA and the UN Commissioner. Others, such as Woldeab Woldemariam, Ibrahim Sultan, and Abraha Tesemma, eventually were forced to flee Eritrea and seek political asylum. Woldeab Woldemariam and Ibrahim Sultan did not abandon their opposition to the UN's solution of Eritrea's political future, and in the late 1950s in Cairo they began to organize anew. As time went on, Eritrea came more and more under the firm grip of the Ethiopian Government, and many Eritreans, including some of those who still supported the cause of union, became increasingly disenchanted.

Dissatisfaction developed into overt protest. With the gradual usurpation of Eritrea's independent federal status by Addis Ababa,

especially through the emperor's representative in the Eritrean assembly, many Eritreans began to realize that the country would soon become only another Ethiopian territory. When, in the fall of 1962, the assembly "voted unanimously" under duress to change Eritrea's status to that of a province, thus abrogating the UN resolution that had created Eritrea as a federal state, protest grew and eventually developed into an active movement for the complete independence of Eritrea. This movement became known as the Eritrean Liberation Movement, aspiring to achieve what the Independence Bloc had failed to accomplish.

FOOTNOTES

1 In the first months after he entered Addis Ababa, the emperor was "in an insecure position, without money, without an organized army, without means of establishing an administration and with some ... of the notables ready to take advantage of any weakness in his position." Under protest, he was totally dependent on the British Government. See UK, PRO, Memo, War Cabinet, "Control of O.E.T. and Ethiopia," Je 1941, FO 371/27562/1812. Ethiopia required a grant from the British Gov't of from .25 to .5 million pounds per year until the end of the war. See UK, PRO, BMA, Longrigg to H.Q., "Future Disposal of Eritrea," 4, 12 Ag 43, FO 371/35658/4110.

2 See "Note from Ethiopian Gov't Respecting Eritrea," in Howe to Eden, 29 My 42, FO 371/31608/2807.

3 Translation by Dr. David Appleyard, School of Oriental and African Studies, U. of London. Puglisi gives the starting date of 5 May 1941, the date of the entrance of the emperor into Addis Ababa. See Giuseppe Puglisi, Chi e ? dell' Eritrea 1952, Dizionario Biografico, Agenzia Regina, Asmara, 1952, xviii.

4 The Occupied Enemy Territory Administration ceased on 28 February 1943, being replaced by the British Military Administration.

5 UK, PRO, BMA, Telegram: Fit. G/Meskel Woldu to Mins. of For. Affs. of UK, USA, USSR, & France, 15 Je 46, FO 371/57184/6377. There were numerous petitions forwarded to the BMA from unionists demanding that Eritrea be joined to Ethiopia. See UK, PRO, BMA, Reid to Hood, FO, 19 Fb 46, FO 371/57172/2117.

6 For her efforts, the emperor awarded her in January 1945 two medals: the insignia of the 3rd class of the Order of Sheba (reserved for women) and the Patriots Medal with five palms, one for each year of the campaign. See UK, PRO, Howe to Eden, 23 Ja 45, FO 371/46070/823.

7 For a discussion of Britain's interests in the Ogaden, see John H. Spencer, Ethiopia At Bay: A Personal Account Of The Haile Sellassie Years, Reference Publications, Algonac, Mich., 1984, esp. chs. 8, 10, & 14. For her interests in western Eritrea see below.

8 This was to comprise Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Somalilands. See UK, PRO, BMA, Ministry of Information, 4 De 44, FO 371/41510/4505.

9 Puglisi gives the date of 1 January 1947 as the date of transformation of Mahabar Feqri Hagar Ertra to the Unionist Party. See Puglisi, xviii.

10 S.H. Longrigg, Ch. Ad., "Some Problems of Administration in Eritrea," hereafter Longrigg, "Some Problems...", Mr 1944, 6, par. 29,

Foreign Office, hereafter FO, 371/46116/748.

11 UK, PRO, BMA, Longrigg, "Some Problems...", Mr 1944, 6, par. 29, FO, 371/46116/748; Overseas Planning Committee Plan of Propaganda to Eritrea," 6, 25 Se 44, FO 371/41531/4196; and "Ethiopian Irredentism in Eritrea," 3, 25 Mr 43, FO 371/35631/1923.

12 The UN representative from Ethiopia claimed there were 200,000 Eritreans permanently living in Ethiopia. See Yearbook of the United Nations, hereafter YUN, 1950, 365b.

13 UK, PRO, BMA, Longrigg to HM Minister, British Legation, Addis Ababa, hereafter A. A., 7 Je 44, FO 371/41499/2344 and USG, State, J. K. Caldwell, American Legation, A. A., to SecSt, 28 No 44, 865D.01/11-2844.

14 UK, PRO, BMA, "Overseas Planning Committee ...," 6, FO 371/41531/4196.

15 UK, PRO, BMA, Longrigg, "Italy's Colonies," The Spectator, V-175, N-6109, 27 Jy 45, 78-79.

16 FPC, Appdx 102, 3.

17 PRO, S.H. Longrigg to Minister, A. A., 7 Je 44, par. 4, FO 371/41499/2344; Longrigg, "Some Problems...", pars. 31 & 34, FO 371/46116/748; FPC, Appdx 103: 4 & 5, Memo by Moslem League; for a brief discussion of the historical relationships between Eritrea and Ethiopia, see S.F. Nadel, "Eritrea and Her Neighbors," FO 371/35658/4110; Savell, H.M. Charge d'Affaires to E. Bevin, M.P., 12 Se 45, British Legation, A. A., FO 371/46114/3481; & memo containing the important articles of the Hewitt Treaty (so called), which Ethiopia wrongly advanced as Great Britain's recognition of her claim to Eritrea, FO 371/46092/3649; and the more accessible Margery Perham, The Government of Ethiopia, Faber & Faber, London, 1948, Appdx G.

18 See Appdx A: Representation of Eritrean Political Parties.

19 According to the FPC, there were 3,337 representatives from 1,128 "villages," 343 "tribal communities," and 753 "kinship groups." All representatives, except one from Senafe, wanted some solution other than a continuation of the British Administration. See FPC, "Analysis of Hearings of Representatives of the People," 99-102, based on Appendices 159-173. The spokesman for the Moslem League claimed there were 293 tribal units in Eritrea, of which 197 were Muslim and 96, a mixture of Muslims and Christians. See YUN, 1950, 367. Further, he made the exaggerated claim that about 70% of the population was Muslim. See YUN, 1950, 364.

20 Member of British Delegation of League of Nations, 1930-31. See Who's Who, 1952, 812.

21 FPC, Appdx 119, 8.

22 FPC, Appdx 119, 2. For the sake of argument, I have assumed that what Drew and others meant by "political consciousness" was Eritreans' awareness of Western political systems and values which were about to be used to determine Eritrea's future. Certainly Eritreans who had taken part even at low levels in the Italian administration had some idea about Western political systems. Those few Eritreans who did emerged as the territory's leaders in the coming political struggle. However, in the struggle's initial stages, the Eritrean general public knew very little about such matters.

23 FPC, 114.

24 FPC, 5 and Appdx 119, 5.

25 FPC, Appds 159-173. See Appdx A: Representation of Eritrean Political Parties.

26 FPC, Council of Foreign Ministers (Deputies), Former Italian Colonies, Supplementary Views of Other Interested Governments, United Nations, hereafter FPC, CFM, C.F.M./D/L/48/IC/166, 5 Ag 48.

27 FPC, 116. Estimations of literacy in Eritrea varied considerably. It was reported to the UN Commission, most of whose data on Eritrea came from the BA, that literacy in 1950 was about 30%, but that only 6% of Eritrea's school age population attended schools. See United Nations General Assembly, Report of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea, Supplement No. 8, (A/1285), Lake Success, New York, 1950, hereafter UNGA, Report, (A/1285), 73b. Literacy, however, in the lowlands was probably not greater than 20% in 1950.

28 FPC, "Analysis of Hearings of Representatives of the People," Summary, 102.

29 FPC, Appds 159-173.

30 FPC, 115 and Summaries in Appds 159-173.

31 FPC, Appds 137-173.

32 FPC, Appdx 121, 4. This point later was to cause a good deal of argument concerning half-caste representation in the drawing up of Eritrea's constitution.

33 UK, PRO, BMA, Longrigg, "Some Problems...", 6, par. 28, FO 371/46116/748.

34 On 1 April 1949, The British Military Administration became The British Administration.

35 UNGA, Progress Report of the United Nations Commissioner in

Eritrea During the Year 1951, hereafter Progress Report, 1951, (A/1959), Paris, 16 No 51, Annex 3, "Registration For Future Employment Of Eritreans By The Administration Or Other Employers," Appdx.

36 In a wild exaggeration, the Unionist Party estimated 195,000 Eritreans in Ethiopia belonged to the party. See FPC, Appdx 94, 6.

37 Until the beginning of federation, there were no secondary schools for Eritreans, who had been denied entry into Italian schools. See FPC, 69.

38 USG, State, DRNEA, OIR, Report No. 5311, 1.

39 The heads of the delegations were Etienne Burin des Roziere (France), Artemy Feodorovitch Feodorov (USSR), Frank Edmund Stafford, C.B.E. (UK), and John Ellington Utter (USA).

40 The Four Power Commission's final report was submitted on 31 August 1948. To avoid the domination of any one member of the commission, the chairmanship was rotated every seven days.

41 FPC, Appdx 1.

42 FPC, 80-81.

43 FPC, Appdx 84-86.

44 FPC, 81.

45 UK, PRO, BMA, Longrigg, "Some Problems...", 6, par. 30, FO 371/46116/748.

46 In early 1942, the US Armed Forces entered Eritrea to establish military stores, a recreation area at Ghinda, and an airstrip at Gura.

47 USG, State, Harold Courlander to President Roosevelt, 22 Mr 43, 865D.01/608.

48 It was guided by liberal promises of money (not entirely fulfilled) from Commendatore Luigi Ertola (a prosperous concessionaire at Keren), Com. Giacomo De Ponti (agriculturalist and industrialist from Keren, member of CRIE, and adviser to the Italo-Eritrean Ass.), Com. Filippo Casciani (agriculturalist and industrialist from Elaberet and the second president of the Italo-Eritrean Ass.), Com. Guido De Rossi (industrialist from Senafe and second president of the Italo-Eritrean Ass.), and Dr. Armando Albini (lawyer in Asmara from 1947 to 3 Ap 1951 when he became consultant to the Italian Government's rep. in Eritrea). See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 28 Fb 52, D-125, 777.00/2-2852 and Puglisi, 10a, 73a, 108a, 109b, & 119b.

49 The Moslem League maintained that the officials of the Unionist Party received monthly salaries ranging from 10 to 50 pounds. Village

chiefs who adhered to the party also received large, unspecified amounts. See FPC, Appdx 107, 4. The money was brought in from Ethiopia by individuals close to the emperor and the Ethiopian Government, such as Ato Zaccaria, Manager of the Ethiopian Bank of Addis Ababa, who was the uncle of the party's secretary-general, Tedla Bairu. See FPC, Appdx 107, 3. Saleh Jaber Gulai and Said Mohammed, both former officials in the Eritrean Government also testified that large amounts of money came from Ethiopia into the coffers of the Unionist Party. Salaried agents from Ethiopia existed in Eritrea as early as 1942. See UK, PRO, Drew to Hood, FO, 7 Mr 46, "Contemporary Politics In Eritrea," 5, FO 371/57173/2769.

50 Made abun by the Italians, whom he supported before occupation, Abuna Marcos intrigued against the British during the battle of Keren, was 'persona non grata' with the emperor at the beginning of British occupation, visited the emperor three times between April 1941 and Janaury 1942, made a further visit to Addis Ababa in August 1942 carrying letters of irredentist support to the emperor from Eritrean chiefs, and made an irredentist speech in Addis Ababa on the eve of his departure for Asmara in January 1943. See UK, PRO, BMA, Witt, Intelligence Report, "Ethiopian Irridentism in Eritrea," 25 Mr 43, 1-2, FO 371/35631/1923; Howe to H.Q., Khartoum, 14 Ag 42, FO 371/31608/2807; and Madgwick, WO to Oakeshott, FO, 2 De 46, "No. 11 Monthly Political Report, No 1946, 3, FO 371/63212/122. Upon Abuna Marcos' return to Asmara, he busied himself by soliciting irredentist support among the bureaucrats and notables in Eritrea. The most prominent of these was Ghebremeskiel Woldu, a member of the Asmara Native Council. See FO 371/35631/1923, 3. He spent a further four to five months in Addis Ababa at the emperor's request from June to 29 November 1944. See UK, PRO, BMA, Intelligence Summary No. 40, FO 371/46065/296.

51 USG, State, Smith to SecSt, D-97, 865D.01/607: "O.E.T.A., Eritrea, Half Yearly Report for Period 1 Ja - 30 Je 42," 8.

52 UK, PRO, BMA, Longrigg, "Some Problems...", 6, par. 27, FO 371/46116/748.

53 FPC, Appdx 99, 7-9. In December 1949, the Unionists attempted to coerce Orthodox opponents to union by denying them rights of the Church unless they joined the movement. See The Times, London, 15 Fb 50:6e.

54 UK, PRO, Drew to Lord Hood, FO, 7 Mr 46, "Contemporary Politics in Eritrea," 6, FO 371/57173/2769.

55 Asmara was occupied on 1 April and the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration (OETA) was established there the following day. Massawa was occupied on 8 April and Assab on 11 July. See Puglisi, xviii.

56 The number of Eritreans employed under the Italians was 737. This had been decreased by the incoming British to 276, a 63% reduction as compared to a 29% reduction for Italians. See USG, State, E. Talbot Smith to SecSt, Asmara, 12 Ja 43, 865D.01/605.

57 USG, DRNEA, OIR, Report, No. 5311, 2.

58 By 1950, there were 17 Eritreans presiding over native courts and 17 over Sharia courts. See USG, State, DRNEA, OIR, Report No. 5311, 2.

59 The Four Power Commission visited Eritrea from 12 November 1947 to 3 January 1948, and the UN Commission from 24 February to 4 April 1950.

60 In 1950, the BA employed 55 Eritrean native police inspectors, empowered to prosecute before the courts and in most cases responsible for urban substations and rural posts. Also, there were 18 Eritreans who had recently replaced British officers as administrative assistants in charge of districts and subdistricts. See USG, State, DRNEA, OIR, Report No. 5311, 2.

61 See Appdx D: Biographical Sketches.

62 See Appdx D: Biographical Sketches.

63 FPC, Appdx 20, 1, (198,000 in Hamasien, 106,768 in Akkele Guzai, 195,466 in Seraye, 203,869 in the Western Province [Agordat and Keren divisions], and 25,000 in Massawa); it should be noted that the figure 729,193 is 33% higher than the FPC's estimate of the party's strength. See Appendix A: "Representation of Eritrean Political Parties."

64 These were the Tigre-speaking Eritreans, primarily of the Western Province, who were bound to the ruling families and clans of the Beni Amer tribe by monetary and service obligations. In 1944, the BMA estimated their numbers at about 30,000, although several years before, an Italian source had claimed 48,000. There were also an unestimated number of slaves, mostly Tigray, perhaps as many as there were serfs, but no estimates are available. For a thorough discussion of Tigray tithes, see S.F. Nadel, "Notes on Beni Amer Society," Sudan Notes and Records, V-26, pt. 1, 1945, 51-94 and A. Pollera, Le Popolazioni Indigene Dell' Eritrea, Bologna, 1935, Chap. 34, 168-190. The use of the word, Tigray, should not be confused with the province.

65 UK, PRO, BMA, Longrigg, "Some Problems...", 6, par. 28, FO 371/46116/748.

66 FPC, Appdx 20, 1.

67 FPC, Appdx 20.

68 S.H. Longrigg, Chief Administrator of Eritrea from 4 May 1942 to 9 November 1944, was very doubtful of the potential self-sufficiency of Eritrea, although owing to the temporary nature of the administration, no long-term economic projects could be planned. Moreover, throughout the British administration financial credit was never available for expansion of existing and new industries except at usurious interest rates. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 30 Jy 52, D-7, 777.00/7-3052.

Whether Eritrea's economy could stand alone, therefore, remained a moot question throughout its period of political uncertainty.

69 It was unofficially suggested by the BMA in the early 1940s, and later supported by an unofficially sponsored political party, the Moslem League of the Western Province, that the Western Province be annexed to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan in order to unite all the Beja peoples of eastern Sudan and western Eritrea, but the idea was abandoned due to widespread disapproval among the inhabitants of the area in question. See FO 371/46116/748.

70 The Tigrai were bound to a feudal-like system, by which oppressive land-rent taxes, payable in kind or labor or both, were collected, and asymmetrical obligations of goods and services were required. Throughout Ethiopia, it was generally known as the 'gabbar' system.

71 FPC, Appdx 18.

72 FPC, Appdx 18, 2.

73 See Slavery Proclamation 22, passed by the Ethiopian Government, 26 August 1942, indicating the presence of domestic slavery; The Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society's paper to Anthony Eden, 21 July 1941, FO 371/27537/2777; memo, "Slavery in Ethiopia" by Lord Lugard, 16 Ap 41, FO 371/27537/1028; F.A.G. Cook, H.M. Charge D'Affairs to A. Eden, 30 My 44, par. 5, indicating the presence of child slavery in the northeast corner of Wollega Province, FO 371/46056/30; and De Halpert, MSS. Africa, s1459, Item 1, "Slavery in Abyssinia, 1923-1939," Rhodes House Library, Oxford, England. There was also the example of the Ethiopian Gov't's ill treatment of Muslims in the Ogaden prior to Italian annexation. Furthermore, Ethiopia's southern province of Borana along the Kenya border had been used by Menelik and his successors as a slave raiding reserve. See UK, PRO, Memo, War Cabinet, "Control of Occupied Enemy Territories and Ethiopia," Appdx 2, "Extract from a Note by Sir Philip Mitchell," Je 1941, FO 371/27562/1812. For the post-war presence of slavery in western Ethiopia, see UK, PRO, Llewelyn, British Consulate, Djibouti, to Cook, British Legation, A.A., 12 Fb 45, "Slavery," Sarell, 18 Ja 45, FO 371/46056/1062. The governor of Ilubabor had been held in the early 1940s in Addis Ababa on charges of "encouraging the slave trade in his province and of making from it an excessive profit."

74 At the end of the war, administrative positions had been greatly reduced and were not replaced by British counterparts or other Eritreans. It was necessary to keep a certain number of Italians, who could not easily be replaced, in technical positions. See USG, State, Talbot Smith, American Consul in Asmara, to SecSt, 12 Ja 43, D-7, 865D.01/605. Also, it should be noted that under the Hague rules of war of 1907, the British were obliged to retain, basically, the same system of government that was found when Eritrea was occupied in 1941. See FPC, Appdx 119, 1 & 4.

75 After the end of hostilities in Eritrea, thousands of Eritreans who had been connected with the colonial armed forces were released from duty and had little to occupy themselves. Many returned to their villages while some took up banditry as an occupation. See discussion in following chapter.

76 EDN, 12 Je 47:3.

77 EDN, 4 Jy 47:3.

78 EDN, 8 Jy 47:3.

79 EDN, 8 Jy 47:3a & b and 23 Jy 47:3a & c.

80 UK, PRO, Wardle Smith to FO, 23 Mr 53, D-1011, FO 371/102634/1018/17.

81 FPC, Appdx 124, 3.

82 FPC, Appdx 142, Annex.

83 UK, PRO, 7 Ap 43, FO 371/35031/1542.

84 USG, State, D.F. Bigelow to SecSt, 11 Ap 49, 884.00/4-1149.

85 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 5 Mr 51, D-100, 777.00/3-551, 5 and UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 5 Ja 51, T-4, FO 371/90319/1015/4. Born in Ankober, Shoa Province, on 27 January 1913, he studied French at the Menelik II School, continued his studies at the Tafari Makonnen School, and finished at the Haile Sellassie I Secondary School in Addis Ababa. From 1947, he was director of the Department of Press & Information for the Ethiopian Government. See Puglisi, 15a.

86 UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea, Annual Report for 1949," 6, FO 371/80864/31243. Its ringleader, Dejatch Araia Wassie, also went to jail, but was released in spring 1951. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 26 Sp 51, D-74, 777.00/9-2651. Dejatch Araia, born in Keren in 1906, from a titled family, had held several important positions in the Eritrean and later Ethiopian colonial governments, including interpreter for Vice Marshall R. Graziani (My 1936-De 1937) and for Duke A. d' Aosta (De 1937-Fb 1940), and was one of the founders of Mahabar Feqri Hagar Ertra. See Puglisi, 21a.

87 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 26 Sp 51, D-74, 777.00/9-2651.

88 UK, PRO, Drew, War Office, to Lord Hood, Foreign Office, 7 Mr 46, FO 371/57173/2769.

89 Although Hamasien is in the highlands, it was intended to symbolize all of Eritrea.

90 It is unclear whether there were two separate organizations, both

led by Ghebremeskal Habtemariam and both established at approximately the same time; however, internal evidence and consistency leads one to conclude that they were one and the same.

91 Another irredentist organization in Addis Ababa was a club of Eritrean government officials called "Friends of the Hamasien," sponsored by the minister of interior. Its newspaper, Jehamasien Dimitz (Voice of the Hamasien), was published by the Ethiopian Gov't Press. See UK, PRO, BMA, Intelligence Summary No. 40, No 1944, FO 371/46065/296. S. Pankhurst claimed that about 20% of the Ethiopian Gov't's officials were Eritrean. See S. Pankhurst, "British Policy In Eritrea and Northern Ethiopia," The Walthamstow Press, London, n.d., 26. Spencer has indicated that Eritreans after the war came "gradually to dominate the Ethiopian Air Force and the police, 40 percent of the Army officer corps, much of telecommunications and nearly 100 percent of the taxi drivers in Addis Ababa." See Spencer, Ethiopia At Bay, 303. It should be noted that Eritreans' disproportionate numbers employed in the government and other jobs requiring some sort of education or mechanical skills was primarily due to Eritreans' greater opportunities for education obtained under the Italians and British.

92 UK, PRO, BMA, Longrigg to Minister, Addis Ababa, 7 Je 44, FO 371/41499/2344.

93 USG, State, William E. Cole, Jr., Charge d'Affaires ad interim, to SecSt, 3 Ot 45, 884.014/10-345.

94 USG, State, W.E. Cole to SecSt, 3 Ot 45, 884.014/10-345.

95 UK, PRO, Sarell, British Legation, A.A., to FO, 25 Sp 45, T-335, FO 371/46092/3171.

96 FPC, Appds 104 & 107.

97 UK, PRO, BMA, Longrigg, "Some Problems....," par. 28, FO 371/46116/748.

98 FPC, Appdx 95, 5.

99 UK, PRO, BMA, Proclamation 42, Article 6, 1945.

100 FPC, Appdx 22.

101 FPC, Appdx 97, 2.

102 See Appendix A: "Representation of Eritrean Political Parties."

103 UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea, Annual Report For 1949," 6, FO 371/80864/31243.

104 On 21 November 1949, by resolution 289 A (IV), the UN established a commission consisting of representatives from five member nations:

Burma, Guatemala, Norway, Pakistan, and the Union of South Africa, with a rotating chairmanship, twice for each member, for the purpose of "examining the question of the disposal of Eritrea and [of] prepar[ing] a report for the General Assembly, together with such proposal or proposals as it may deem appropriate for the solution of the problem of Eritrea...." In gathering information and conducting interviews, the group was to repeat much of the work of the Four Power Commission. The body of data, gathered by the FPC, UN Sub-Committee 17 had deemed insufficient. The important distinction of the UN commission in contrast to the Four Power Commission, was that the former had no special interests to serve as did the latter and therefore was more likely to reach a consensus or at least a majority opinion. Further, the UN commission was to take into consideration the "rights and claims of Ethiopia based on geographical, historical, ethnic, or economic reasons," and "in particular Ethiopia's legitimate need for adequate access to the sea." See UN Res. 289 C (IV), 2 (c). Both of these stipulations were not made to the Four Power Commission.

105 In the first nine years of the BMA, from 1941 through June 1950, the total deficit was a modest 530,000 pounds, excluding expenditure for military and Italian repatriation, and the more than 310,000 pounds spent by the British for locust control. See USG, State, DRNEA, OIR, Report No. 5311, 10. By the end of the BA, the total deficit paid by the British Government for the administration of Eritrea was about 950,000 pounds. From private correspondence with Brig. Frank Stafford. As part of the final financial arrangements for the federation of Ethiopia with Eritrea, it was agreed that the Ethiopian Government would pay 950,000 pounds to the British Government on or before 15 September 1953. On 2 January 1954, Addis Ababa forwarded a check for the above amount to the Foreign Office finance department. See UK, PRO, FO 371/102658/1117/1 and 16 and 108232/1111/1.

106 For copper mining from Debarewa during the years of 1974-75, see final chapter; for salt and potash mining in exportable quantities in the Danakil Depression and asbestos and nickel mining near Agordat, see USG, State, J. Simonson, Am. Emb., A. A., to SecSt, 28 De 53, 875A.2561/12-2853; for limited gold mining see table below in subsequent footnote; for exportable iron ore deposits, estimated at 4 million metric tons of 60% iron at Agametta, 60 Ks SW of Massawa, and exportable manganese from Dallol in the Danakil Depression, see USG, State, Loomam to SecSt, 3 Fb 61, D-58, 400.75A9/2-361; for exportable iron ore deposits at Ghedem, south of Massawa, see USG, State, Loomam to SecSt, 2 Sp 60, D-27, 400.75A9/9-260; for a general discussion of Eritrean minerals, see D. Gherardi, member of the BA, Public Works Dept., "Preliminary Geological Survey of Eritrea," The Mining Magazine, V-84, N-5, My 1951, 265-276; V-84, N-6, Je 1951, 338-347; and V-85, N-1, Jy 1951, 21-27. Also, there is H.L. Holloway, "Eritrea," The Mining Magazine, Ag 1945, V-73, N-2, 73-81 and "Salt Deposits of the Dankalian Depression," Ot 1945, V-73, N-4, 211-16.

107 In 1948, 40% of Eritrea's total commerce consisted of its transit trade with Ethiopia. See USG, State, DRNEA, OIR, Report No. 5311, 8.

108 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 16, par. 100. In 1950, Eritrea had to import 1/8 (c. 12,500 tons) of its total cereal requirement. See YUN, 1950, 363.

109 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 2.

110 USG, State, DRNEA, OIR, Report No. 5311, 11 & 9.

111 The Unionists may have taken inspiration from the accounts of contemporary, Palestinian protests reported in the Eritrean Daily News.

112 UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1950," 5, FO 371/90314/31109.

113 UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1949," 5, FO 371/80864/31243.

114 UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1949," 5, FO 371/80864/31243.

115 UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1950," 5, FO 371/90314/31109.

116 See Appdx D: Biographical Sketches.

117 The more than 50 Tigre-speaking tribes/clans among the Beni Amer, primarily in the Barka region of the Western Province and in the Sahel in the eastern part of the Western Province, were governed by 'noble' clans calling themselves shumagalle. Among the Beni Amer in the Barka, the Tigrai were ruled by the Nabtab, whose paramount chief was called diglal; in the Sahel, by the Bet Asghede, whose paramount chief was called Kantibai, and by the Ad Scheik; and in the Maria district of the Western Province by the Ad Schium. Tigre-speakers, all Muslims, lived primarily in western and south-central Eritrea. See Nadel, Sudan Notes and Records, V-26, pt. 1, 57, and A. Pollera, 172-173.

118 USG, State, DRNEA, OIR, Report No. 5311, 21.

119 FPC, Appds 17 & 18; and Pollera, Le Popolazioni, 168-190. The emancipation of the Tigrai had been initiated 20 years earlier by Eritrean soldiers in the employ of the Italian army, but the movement had been suppressed by the Fascists, although supported by non-fascist Italians, and their leaders arrested.

120 The Mirghani clan traced its lineage to the Prophet Mohammed. In Eritrea, it was the most respected Muslim family and, thus, acted as a unifying element of all Eritrean Muslims. After the death of the head of the clan, Said Sir Ali el Mirghani, in 1953, his younger son, Said Mohammed Osman, became head of the clan to the great disappointment of his elder son, Said Abubaker. Said Sir Ali's intention was announced

in November 1946. It was Said Abubaker's failure to be named to succeed his father, that encouraged him to support the Moslem League. See UK, PRO, BMA, Madgwick, WO, to Oakeshott, FO, FO 371/63212/122.

121 Frequently, documents were prepared by resident Italian lawyers.

122 The administering authority had appointed its own tax collectors, called nazirs.

123 By respecting local institutions and traditions, by not raising taxes, and by making no new land confiscations, the British had gained the respect of a majority of Eritreans, both Christian and Muslim.

124 The Sultanate of Aussa, located entirely within Ethiopia (in the eastern parts of Tigray, Wollo, Shoa, and the northern part of Harar Provinces), sustained loyalty from Afar speakers in the Red Sea Division as well as from those in Ethiopia. Mohammed Yahyo was instrumental in aiding the success of the British blockade of the French Somaliland coast in early 1942. He was under the advisement of a British liaison officer. See Lord Rennel of Rodd, 146-47. Later, in 1944, he died in a prison in Addis Ababa. He was succeeded by his nephew, Ali Mirah, the present sultan. From "A Message From Aussa," pt. II, 2-3, private papers of Sultan Ali Mirah, Jeddah, tr. from Arabic by Ahmed Ali Mirah, son of the sultan.

125 USG, State, H.L. Farquhar to British Legation, 17 Feb 47, 884.014/2-2047.

126 FPC, Appdx 20, 3.

127 FPC, Appdx 20, 3.

128 FPC, Appdx 20, 3.

129 Ibrahim Sultan had requested Muslims to donate goat skins, the sale of which enriched the coffers of the League by about 2,000 pounds. He also induced a wealthy unnamed Italian planter to contribute 3,000 pounds. USG, State, George R. Merrell to SecSt, 29 Aug 49, 884.00/8-2949.

130 368,624 from Western Province, 44,370 from Seraye, 168,400 from Akkele Guzai, 47,370 from Hamasien, and 103,000 from Massawa; the total figure of 731,764 is 48% higher than FPC's estimate of its strength. See Appendix A: "Representation of Eritrean Political Parties."

131 FPC, C.F.M./D/L/48/IC/179, 9 Aug 48; see also Minutes in FO 371/41510/3693.

132 UNGA, Official Reports, hereafter OR, 3rd Session, pt. 2, 1st Committee Annexes A/c. 1/466.

133 FPC, Appdx 103, 4.

134 FPC, Appdx 103, 4.

135 FPC, Appdx 107, 2.

136 "Ethiopia is a feudal state with no administrators, little or no conception of an enlightened administration of a subject people, and no money available to put into a dependent area." See UK, PRO, Riches, British Emb., A.A., Minutes, FO 371/46114/3481.

137 FPC, Appdx 107, 2.

138 It comprised the presidents of the League from Asmara, Keren, and Massawa, two notables and Ibrahim Sultan.

139 FPC, Appdx 124, 2.

140 See Appendix A: "Representation of Eritrean Political Parties."

141 FPC, Appdx 20, 10.

142 FPC, Appdx 116.

143 FPC, Appdx 116.

144 FPC, Appdx 66 (Imports/Exports) and British Government, Ministry of Education, "First To Be Freed, The Record of B.M.A. in Eritrea and Somalia, 1941-1943," London, 1944. At the arrival of the UN commission in February 1950, the economy of Eritrea had unavoidably deteriorated, such that it seemed to three of five UN delegations Eritrea was not capable of being self-sufficient.

145 Due to the highly emotional nature of the issues at hand, Eritreans, especially Christians, were reluctant to acknowledge these benefits which the Italians had brought to Eritrea. It was acknowledged by elder Eritreans that Italy, inter alia, had given Eritrea a semblance of peace and order that had not existed before the Italian occupation. See USG, State, DRNEA, OIR, Report No. 5311, 4.

146 FPC, Appdx 134.

147 Named ras in 1944 on the occasion of the first agricultural exposition organized by the EMA. At the same time, his son, Abraha Tesemma became dejatch. The family came from the important agricultural district of Haddagti, between the towns of Decemhare and Saganeiti in Akkele Guzai Division.

148 Later, in early 1951, Ras Tesemma became involved with the Italo-Eritrean Association, led by the half-caste Guido De Rossi. See Memo, 8 Ja 51, FO 371/90319/1015/8. Among its founders was Ras Tesemma's son Dejatch Abraha Tesemma. See Appdx D: Biographical Sketches.

149 Born in Halai 3 Mr 1914, son of Dej. Maascio Zewoldi; graduate of Scuola Roma, Adi Kaieh; employed as civil servant in Ital. Ad. in Akkele Guzai & residenza of Makalle (1930-40); merchant in Eritrea and Makalle (1941-43); sec-gen. of Liberal Progressive Party (1947-50); & employed by Eritrean Government in trade & supplies. See Puglisi, 271b.

150 The NESG had a circulation of about 5,000, but reached many thousands more through the literate reading to the illiterate.

151 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 5 Mr 51, D-100, 777.00/3-551. Hanty Ertre was first published in February 1950, the organ of the Eritrean Democratic Front Party.

152 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 5 Mr 51, D-100, 777.00/3-551, 6.

153 These tribes also had been divided, by the convention of March 1890.

154 FPC, Appdx 20, 7.

155 Light taxation had been true under both Italian and British rule, although it should be noted that during the Italian period (which had abolished the Nabtab tithe system), the Tigrai were forced to contribute both the annual tribute (payable by the Beni Amer tribe to the Italian administration) and the tithes.

156 From 1931 through 1940, 1,719 kgs of gold had been mined in Eritrea. In 1939 and 1940, just prior to the defeat of the Italians, in a flurry of activity, nearly 800 kgs were mined. From 1941 through 1952, the end of the British Administration, only 524 kgs were mined. See table below from UN, Statistical Yearbook, 1948 (p. 154), 1954 (p. 139), and 1958 (p. 143). Most gold mines in Eritrea, including the largest at Ugara in the SW, were owned by the government. See USG, State, Loooram to SecSt, 2 Sp 60, D-27, 400.75A9/9-260.

TABLE OF GOLD PRODUCTION IN KILOGRAMS IN ERITREA FROM 1931-1962

1931....6	1938...156	1945....65	1951....21	1957...140
1932....59	1939...426	1946...106	1952....22	1958...200
1933...111	1940...373	1947...109/	1953....42	1959...520
1934...250	1941....22	114	1954....46	1960...160
1935...156	1942.....0	1948....68	1955.....5	1961...172
1936....47	1943.....2	1949....70	1956...100	1962....72
1937...135	1944.....5	1950....34		

157 For details on the Italian courts in Eritrea and the subsequent changes undergone during the BA, see Nathan Marein, The Ethiopian Empire - Federation and Laws, J. Vurtheim & Sons, Ltd., Rotterdam, 1955, ch. 17 & Appdx III.

158 Marein, 371-376.

159 On 15 August 1951, Ato Woldeab suffered his sixth assassination attempt, which was linked to the Andinnet Party. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 26 Sp 51, D-74, 777.00/9-2651, 2. It prompted the chief administrator to publish a notice on 19 August warning the public that the liberties to organize political parties would be abridged if violence continued, an action that would have given the emperor reason to complain publicly that the BA was incapable of keeping order. USG, State, I.R. Billman, American Vice Consul, Asmara, 21 Ag 51, D-37, 777.00/8-2151.

160 E. Sylvia Pankhurst and Richard K.P. Pankhurst, Ethiopia and Eritrea. The Last Ten Years of the Reunion Struggle, 1941-1952, Lalibela House, 1953, 96-97.

161 The British Foreign Office in the early 1920s had considered the desirability of uniting Tigrai with Eritrea. See UK, PRO, Russell to Curzon, 14 Ag 23, FO 371/8409/A5380/5097/1. For full details, see Haggai Erlich, "Tigrean Nationalism, British Involvement And Haila-Sellasse's Emerging Absolutism - Northern Ethiopia, 1941-1943," Asian and African Studies, V-15, N-2, Jy 1981, 191-227.

162 Tigrai sympathies naturally, by blood, language, and history, lay with the Eritrean highlands. It was this "Tigrinyan nationalism" which Shoa rulers since Menelik had constantly sought to destroy. See UK, PRO, Drew, WO, to Lord Hood, FO, 7 Mr 46, FO 371/57173/2769.

163 In addition to more than fifty new elementary schools established during the BMA/BA, an Eritrean Children's Welfare Society had been initiated in October 1943 at the instigation of Brigadier Longrigg, which in 1944 alone dealt with 34,590 cases at its four clinics in the Asmara area. Other clinics were opened in Keren, Agordat, and Massawa. It should be noted that Dejazach Beiene Beraki, president of the Unionist Party, was a subscriber. See EDN, 8 Mr 45:2a and 4 Fb 47:3c.

164 G.K.N. Trevaskis, Eritrea, A Colony in Transition, Oxford, 1960, 96. During the BMA and BA, Trevaskis held administrative positions in Assab (1943), Seraye (1944), Western Province (1946); became political secretary of the BA in 1950; was a member of the British Delegation to the FPC from 1947-1948; and acted as British liaison officer to the UN Commission in Eritrea in 1950. For further details of his life, see Who's Who 1984, St. Martins Press, New York, 2299a.

165 Trevaskis, 96.

166 Trevaskis, 96.

167 USG, State, Merrell to SecSt, 29 Ag 49, 884.00/8-2949.

168 Trevaskis, 79.

169 FPC, Appdx 119, 4. Its president was Asmatch Ali Ibrahim and vice president, Asmatch Khasai Berhane. See FPC, Appdx 136.

170 Approximately 250m lire (c. 143,000 English pounds) was promised by early 1950. See The Times, London, 15 Feb 50:6e.

171 FPC, Appdx 136.

172 9,600 from Hamasien, 32,500 from Akkele Guzai, 6,000 from Seraye, 157,000 from Western Province, 8,500 from Massawa, and 6,000 from Assab. See FPC, Appdx 98.

173 Naib, or agent, is a Turkish title given to the family in Massawa who administered the Semhar district around Massawa and, later, only Massawa itself.

174 FPC, Appdx 20, 9.

175 FPC, Appdx 20, 9.

176 FPC, Appdx 111, 2.

177 For details of his life, see Puglisi, 109b; the second president was Filippo Casciani, an important industrialist and plantation owner at Elaberet. See Puglisi, 73b.

178 In addition to Italy's renunciation of its desired trusteeship over Eritrea, it stated "that Eritrea, except for the Western Province, be incorporated into Ethiopia and that the Western Province be incorporated into the Sudan." UNGA, OR, 3rd Session, pt. 2, 1st Committee Annexes, A/c 1/466.

179 FPC, Appdx 110. Italian Government Proclamation No. 22, 1942, granted citizenship to half-castes. See FPC, Appdx 111, Annex 2.

180 Under the leadership of Woldeab Woldemariam. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 5 Mar 51, D-100, 777.00/3-551.

181 USG, State, Merrell to SecSt, 29 Aug 49, 884.00/8-2949. Sultan denied that the League had ever received any significant financial contributions from the Italian community. Conversation with him in Cairo in January 1983. However, Brigadier Stafford stated otherwise. See UK, BA, Stafford to FO, 22 July 52, FO 371/96723/1016/19. Because of Sultan's waning influence, prominent Italians were dissuaded by Di Gropello himself from financing his jaunt to Lake Success in fall 1950. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 13 Nov 50, T-74, 777.00/11-1350.

182 At a meeting in Massawa in early 1949, Di Gropello suggested to a contingent from the New Eritrea Pro-Italy Party that Ethiopia be given Assab to satisfy the crown's desire for an outlet to the sea. The suggestion was rejected. In conversation with Abdella Mohammed Saik,

representative before the UN Commission from Massawa, in Jeddah in November 1983.

183 Trevaskis, 95. The British Administration reported at the end of 1950 that the Independence Bloc was being financed "largely by Italian money." See UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1950," 29, FO 371/90314/31109.

184 In August 1948, more than 300 Ethiopian flags were displayed in the largely Muslim Western Province to celebrate the emperor's birthday; while in August 1949 there were only a few. See USG, State, Merrell to SecSt, 29 Ag 49, 884.00/8-2949.

185 USG, State, Merrell to SecSt, 29 Ag 49, 884.00/8-2949.

186 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 10 Ja 51, A-69, 777.00/1-1051, 2.

187 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 2 Ap 51, T-137, 777.00/4-251.

188 USG, State, Merrell to SecSt, 29 Ag 49, 884.00/8-2949.

189 USG, State, Merrell to SecSt, 29 Ag 49, 884.00/8-2949.

190 During this and subsequent violence, 56 Italians fell victim to political terrorism. See YUN, 1950, 367b.

191 Trevaskis, 91.

192 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 29; UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1950," 30-31; and USG, State, H.M. Byington, Min. Counselor, Rome, Statement of Brusasca, A-782, 14 Mr 50, 777.00/3-1450.

193 UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1950," 29-32. There were three types of shifta activity: tribal disputes, often resulting in raids on herds of animals; terrorism and murder, associated with political parties; and ordinary robbery and banditry. The first was of two types: cattle and grain raids and counter-raids confined primarily to the Western Province between the Kunama on one side and the Beni Amer and Baria on the other and fighting between Muslim villages and Orthodox villages in Serae and Akkele Guzai Divisions over land. The second type involved bomb throwing and assassinations of political motive usually instigated by unionist elements in both Eritrea and in Tigray Province in Ethiopia. The third manifested itself in particular in holding up trains, buses, trucks, and cars on Eritrea's major roads. At the end of 1950, the British Administration in its struggle to quell these disturbances killed 71 shifta, captured 119, and wounded 60, while 400 surrendered. The latter was due primarily to the publication of the BA's amnesty proclamation on 7 January 1950.

194 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 30 Mr 51, D-106, 777.00/3-3051. Curfew passes for Eritreans could be secured from the police almost automatically upon application of their employers.

195 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, D-5, 1 My 50, 777.00/5-150, 2.

196 UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1950," 5. Altogether in 1950, there were 13 Italians, 1 American soldier, and 156 Eritreans killed in shifta activity, the latter mostly villagers, in intertribal disputes. See "Eritrea Annual Report For 1950," 31.

197 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 3 My 51, T-161, 777.00/5-351.

198 Led by Dr. Vincenzo Di Meglio, a physician, and Vittorio Vercellino, a lawyer, the CRIE had attempted to preserve Italian business interests in Eritrea, but some Italians felt it had done more harm to fragile Ethiopian-Italian relations because of its fascist leanings than it had accomplished in protecting the Italian economic position in Eritrea. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 21 De 50, T-99, 777.00/12-2150; 1 Mr 51, D-96, 777.00/3-151; 5 Mr 51, D-97, 777.00/3-551; and 25 Ap 51, D-130, 777.00/4-2551. As an outspoken champion of Eritrean independence under Italian guidance, Di Meglio left the political arena after publication in December 1950 of UN proposal 390 and returned to his medical practice, which in January 1952 led him in company with three other Italian doctors to Jeddah, KSA to start a medical center. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 31 Ja 52, D-115, 777.00/1-3152.

199 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 16-21.

200 See Appdx D: Biographical Sketches.

201 Frank Stafford, FO adviser to the BA, [see Appdx D: Biographical Sketches] had approached Ras Tesemma Asberom, president of the Liberal Progressive Party, to convince him to come to terms with the emperor by renouncing his political program and favoring union with Ethiopia. He declined, but his son, Dejatch Abraha willingly went to Addis Ababa with a letter of introduction to the foreign minister. As a result, Dejatch Abraha and the secretary of the LPP left the party and formed the Liberal Unionist Party although most of the members of the LPP declined to follow. Source: private and protected.

202 Trevaskis, 98.

203 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 18 De 50, T-97, 777.00/12-1850.

204 In mid-August 1950, 83 members of the party signed a public declaration of "dissatisfaction" with its leaders, Woldeab Woldemariam and Fissaha Woldemariam, indicating they wanted more flexibility in political matters, probably concerning their willingness to compromise toward union with Ethiopia, which its leaders adamantly opposed. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 16 Ag 50, T-35, 777.00/8-1650.

205 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 1 My 50, D-5, 777.00/5-150.

206 Primarily representatives from the Maria Kaieh, Asfada Sahel, Mikal Sahel, and Ad Takles tribes of the Western Province. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 18 Ag 50, T-37, 777.00/8-1850, 3.

207 Kadi of the Western Province. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 19 My 50, D-7, 777.00/5-1950, 2.

208 Ali Redai had attended Lake Success in September 1949 with the Moslem League, but had returned an advocate of partition of the Western Province. Shrewd and tactful, he gained a large following from areas of Agordat, Tessenei, and Nakfa where he was trusted by tribal sheiks. See UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 10 Sp 52, T-192, FO 371/96723/1016/21. See also Appdx D: Biographical Sketches.

209 Both G.K.N. Trevaskis of the BA and Frank Stafford, political adviser to the administration, supported partition.

210 USG, State, letter from Ali Redai in Mulcahy to SecSt, 18 Ag 50, T-37, 777.00/8-1850. Since the border had been drawn between Sudan and Eritrea (by protocol for the demarcation of the British and Italian spheres of influence in East Africa, 15 April 1891, and more specifically by the boundary agreement between the Egyptian and Italian Governments, 25 June-7 July 1895, as rectified 18 February 1903) there had been periodic raids across the border, mainly for cattle. When the British occupied Eritrea in 1941, the Hadendowa in the Sudan assumed that grazing lands in the Barka lowlands in the Western Province, which they used annually, would soon become theirs. Early in 1942, a tribal war was set off by a Beni Amer raiding party, in reprisal for a camel theft by the Hadendowa. Fighting continued off and on for more than three years until in December 1945, a peace settlement was reached. In this agreement, the Beni Amer were to pay the Hadendowa several thousand pounds in compensation and to hand over about 700 rifles while in return the BMA pardoned about 250 Beni Amer. As a result of this longstanding feud, the Western Province, led by the Beni Amer chiefs, opposed partition.

211 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 16 Ag 50, T-36, 777.00/8-1650, 1.

212 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 18 De 50, T-97, 777.00/12-1850 and Asmara to SecSt, 15 My 51, T-169, 777.00/5-1551.

213 UNGA, Final Report of the United Nations Commissioner in Eritrea, hereafter Final Report, 7th Session, Supplement 15, 1952, (A/2188), 74a.

214 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 24a, par. 156.

215 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 25b, par. 170. Sometime before, at least one political leader, Woldeab Woldemariam, had privately supported a federative solution.

216 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 25b, par. 168.

- 217 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 27a, par. 175.
- 218 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 27a, par. 176.
- 219 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 28b, par. 183.
- 220 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 30a, par. 191.
- 221 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 30a, par. 194.
- 222 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 30a, par. 192.
- 223 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 31a, par. 203.
- 224 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 31b, par. 206.
- 225 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 35b, par. 265.
- 226 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 23a.
- 227 The specious arguments used by the UK to suggest Eritrea was not "prepared" for independence might well have been used against Ethiopia, which as a result of the colonial expansion of Menelik also did not possess religious, ethnic, linguistic, or geographical unity. The UK's arguments were designed to rationalize its basic attempt to annex western Eritrea to the Sudan.
- 228 UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285), 22-23.
- 229 UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1950," 8-9.
- 230 In conversation with Saleh Jaber Gulai and Said Mohammed, both former officials in the BA and the subsequent Eritrean Government.
- 231 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 4 De 50, T-88, 777.00/12-450, 2. The Italian community represented by Di Meglio and Emidio Liberati, later in 1951 vice president of Casa degli Italiani, made one final, but unsuccessful, plea, in fall 1950, to Italy's Foreign Office to stall any definite solution along federal lines in favor of a long term trusteeship with UK at the helm. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 13 No 50, T-74, 777.00/11-1350. For details of Liberati, see Chi e ? dell' Eritrea, 182a.
- 232 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 10 Ja 51, A-69, 777.00/1-1051.
- 233 It was attended by approximately 5,000 people. As a genuine show of good faith, old enemies such as Ras Tesemma Asberom, nominal head of the Independence Bloc, and Ras Kidanemariam Gheremeskel, honorary president of the Unionist Party, embraced on stage and Colonel Negga and Count Di Gropello shook hands. The fact that no British representative attended signaled to Eritreans the administration's

dissatisfaction with the UN resolution, since all the UK's attempts to restructure Eritrean/Ethiopian boundaries along ethnic lines had failed. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 4 Ja 51, T-102, 777.00/1-451 and UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1950," 3.

234 UNGA, Progress Report, 1951, (A/1959), Paris, Sect 6, par. 94 ff. Consultations in the five divisions of Eritrea including Asmara occurred between 23 Jy - 8 Ot. See ibidem, Sect 6, par. 131 ff.

235 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 21 Fb 51, D-92, 777.00/2-2151, 1.

236 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 29 Ja 51, T-111, 777.00/1-2951. By this time Redai had become politically inactive, but he had become firmly established as a Muslim leader.

237 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 30 Mr 51, D-106, 777.00/3-3051, 2.

238 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 4 Ja 51, T-102, 777.00/1-451.

239 USG, State, J.R. Billman, Vice Consul, Asmara, to SecSt, 24 Ag 51, D-46, 777.00/8-2451.

240 In the early part of 1951, there had been disturbances resulting in some deaths between the pagan/Christian Kunama and their Muslim neighbors. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 24 Ja 52, D-110, 777.00/1-2452 and 5 Mr 51, D-100, 777.00/3-551, 2.

241 He had attended, in the company of Tedla Bairu, the Fifth Session of the UN General Assembly on a ticket paid for by the Ethiopian Government. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 26 Ag 52, D-16, 777.00/8-2652.

242 See example in USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 26 Ag 52, D-16, 777.00/8-2652, enc.

243 Kadi was suspicious of Stafford's partition leanings and the fact that he was about to become an adviser to the crown. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 27 Ag 52, D-18, 777.00/8-2752, enc.

CHAPTER II

NEGOTIATIONS

AND

IMPLEMENTATION

(1950 - 1952)

On 2 December 1950, UN resolution 390 A (V) decided the immediate future of Eritrea. The resolution represented a compromise between the unionists who had demanded immediate qualified union with Ethiopia and the Democratic front which had advocated independence. On 24 September 1948, after the Four Power Commission had referred the Eritrean question to the UN, the General Assembly referred the question to the UN's First Committee, which, owing to an already full agenda, deferred the issue to the second part of the UN's third session in April-May 1949.

From 6 April to 13 May 1949, a wide variety of proposals was presented with respect to each of the three regions of Libya, Italian Somaliland, and Eritrea. Of the twelve proposals advanced concerning Eritrea, eight suggested that Ethiopia be ceded an access to the sea; six advocated a UN trusteeship, supported by the Latin American and Soviet blocs, the UK, and the USA; Ethiopia, seconded by Liberia, proposed that all of Eritrea be immediately transferred to Ethiopia; India asked that a UN plebiscite be held; Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries offered a solution of a UN trusteeship for the whole territory for a "definite" period; and China suggested a trusteeship for only part of the region.¹

After examining the proposals of the First Committee, Subcommittee 15 recommended that Eritrea, except for the Western Province, be incorporated into Ethiopia and that the Western Province be annexed to Sudan, an idea that had been pushed by the UK. After several amendments, the subcommittee's proposal was adopted.² Subsequently, the First Committee reviewed the entire question of the disposal of the former Italian colonies. The Soviet bloc argued with some justification that the proposal was merely a paraphrase of the Bevin-

Sforza Agreement which had just been concluded and further that it had been dictated by the United States in order for the latter to secure military bases in Africa. After considerable discussion, paragraph three of the First Committee's proposal, which stated that Eritrea, except for the Western Province, be incorporated into Ethiopia, was adopted while Egypt's amendment to incorporate the Western Province into Sudan was rejected. Next, the First Committee's whole draft resolution (A/873) was voted and rejected by a strong vote against partition by the Latin American, Soviet, and Middle East blocs.³ Then the entire matter was referred to the General Assembly. The USSR's stand for independence for all three former colonies was soundly rejected. After several other proposals suggesting the matter be taken up by special committees, the assembly adopted a Polish resolution that the matter be postponed until the fourth regular session of the General Assembly.

During the fourth session, from 21 September to 10 December 1949, the First Committee again took up the question of the former Italian colonies. There was an overwhelming consensus that Ethiopia's "just" claims for an outlet to the sea be met.⁴ Outright independence now received additional support from Argentina, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Italy. Partition was out. Ethiopia strongly opposed a plebiscite⁵ or a new UN commission. The First Committee's report provided for the establishment of a new commission to ascertain more fully the wishes and welfare of the Eritrean people.

After the failure of several amendments along the lines of independence under a UN trusteeship with access to the sea being granted to Ethiopia, the committee turned to the issue of the composition of the commission. Burma introduced a proposal that Burma,

Guatemala, Norway, Pakistan, and South Africa (all of whom advocated differing solutions) comprise the new commission. The proposal was adopted (40 to 6 with 9 abstentions). The First Committee's suggestion for a new commission was then voted on and passed (47 to 5 with 6 abstentions). On 19 November 1949, the First Committee's proposal was considered by the General Assembly. Adopted by a wide margin, the resolution had four sections, one for each of the three former colonies and an implementing paragraph.⁶ Section one, granting independence to Libya, was passed (49 to none); section two, giving independence to Italian Somaliland after a ten year trusteeship, was adopted (48 to 7-Ethiopia and the Soviet bloc with 3 abstentions); section three, establishing another commission of inquiry to ascertain the wishes of the Eritrean people, whose report was to be submitted to the UN secretary general no later than 15 June 1950, was adopted (47 to 5-Soviet bloc with 6 abstentions, which included Ethiopia); and the implementing section four was passed (44 to 5 with 4 abstentions). Resolution 289 A (IV), as a whole, passed on 21 November 1949 (48 to 1 with 9 abstentions).

On 28 June 1950, the UN Commission for Eritrea submitted its report (A/1285), which was promptly referred to the Ad Hoc Political Committee for consideration. From 8 to 25 November, five resolutions were submitted: the USSR proffered immediate independence; Iraq proposed that a national, representative assembly of Eritreans vote on federation or independence to be determined no later than 1 July 1951; Poland recommended independence after three years during which Eritrea would be governed by a council of six members (one from Ethiopia, two from the Arab countries, and three from Eritrea - two Eritreans and one European); Pakistan submitted a similar proposal recommending

independence no later than 1 January 1953, after a national assembly framed a constitution and set up a provisional government under the guidance of the administering authority; and finally, a joint resolution was presented by fourteen countries⁷ recommending that Eritrea be federated with Ethiopia as an autonomous unit with a transition period not to extend beyond 15 September 1952, during which a constitution would be prepared and a government organized. After considerable debate including criticism by the representatives from Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Uruguay that the joint resolution severely restricted Eritrea's chances for self-determination, on 24 November, only the joint 14-power resolution was adopted (38 to 14 with 8 abstentions). The committee also passed a resolution for a commissioner. On 2 December, the General Assembly considered and passed the Ad Hoc Committee's two resolutions with amendments (45 to 5 with 6 abstentions).

Resolution 390 called for a transition period from 2 December 1950 to 15 September 1952, during which the BA had been charged with the tasks of continuing to conduct the affairs of Eritrea; negotiating, if desirable, a temporary customs union between Eritrea and Ethiopia; organizing an Eritrean administration; inducting Eritreans into all levels of that administration; arranging for and convoking a representative assembly; and arranging for the transfer of powers to the newly formed government. In addition, the administering authority was to consult with the UN Commissioner on the preparation and drafting of Eritrea's constitution.

The main problem, or rather crisis, for the BA was maintaining order. Security had remained a problem for the BA since its entry into

Eritrea. When the Italian army demobilized in 1941, many thousands of Eritrean colonial troops drifted back to their villages to a life far from the excitement of military engagements. Also, large caches of arms and ammunition were left in the hands of departing soldiers.⁸ After the end of world hostilities in 1945, the boom of Eritrea's war economy gradually disappeared and left many unemployed. A further cause for increased unrest was the general weakening of traditional social structures due to the introduction of foreign governing systems and the sequestration of land before the war. It was especially after the political future of Eritrea began to be discussed that disturbances increased.

Unrest came from a variety of sources: communal unrest from vendettas, blood feuds, and claims to land, grazing, and water;⁹ the desire on the part of individuals or families to prosecute dynastic feuds; raids on Italian concession lands, some of dubious legality, by Eritreans wanting to "reclaim" these lands which had been alienated from them during the Italian administration; political attacks on Italians and non-unionists; and the desire by some toward banditry.¹⁰ As British forces were demobilized - the Frontier Striking Force in 1944, the Sudan Defence Force (hereafter SDF) in 1947, and the police establishment reduced in 1944 from 3,200 to 2,800¹¹ and again from 2,800 to 2,500 in 1947, violence gradually increased, especially during and after 1947, when political activity rose and battle lines were drawn.

Although shifta activity, both political and criminal,¹² continued, it was not until after December 1950 and the UN decision to unite Eritrea with Ethiopia, that disturbances of all kinds began to increase. By the end of 1950, it was estimated that 2,000 shifta were

in the field and in complete control of some areas that were practically unadministered by the BA.¹³ In Serai, there were two shifta groups, one each from the Christian Tzenadegle and the Muslim Teroa, who not only raided each other but also, on account of the general disorder, took opportunity to rob the general public.¹⁴ In the latter part of 1950 and the first part of 1951, shifta incidents were averaging 130 per month¹⁵ despite the BA's two battalions, numbering about 1,400 officers and men, maintained up to September 1951.¹⁶

Bandits had organized themselves into large gangs and frequently used the long, rugged, unguarded border with Tigrai and Ethiopia as an escape route from pursuing Eritrean security units. It was rumored that some Christian shifta leaders were in the pay of the emperor¹⁷ and that they had received honors and titles for their efforts to disrupt the administration.¹⁸ The BA was further hampered because Eritrean police were so poorly paid. Police were sometimes willing to overlook shifta for bribes; and villagers were generally not helpful because either they sympathized with the shifta or were intimidated by them.¹⁹ Even the agreement, negotiated between Addis Ababa and the BA at the end of 1950, giving permission for BA to enter Tigrai to investigate rumors of shifta concentrations, did little to abate the growing shifta menace. The Ethiopian Government did, however, cooperate in at least one matter, the return of cattle stolen from Kunama herdsmen of the Western Province by shifta from Tigrai Province.²⁰

On 7 January 1951, a conditional amnesty was announced by the BA. By the beginning of April 1951, 296 shifta had surrendered, but most of them were not leaders.²¹ There was no real inducement to surrender

since the amnesty was only for those not guilty of murder, and shifta leaders who feared the full force of the law remained in the field. Finally, on 19 June 1951, an unconditional amnesty was proclaimed, which was to last for one month. Between the time of the two amnesties, the Ethiopian Government, through the Unionist Party, hinted in January that if order were not maintained in Eritrea it would publicly demand that all British troops depart and let two thousand imperial troops into Eritrea to check shifta activity.²² Disturbances continued at such a pace that on 13 May, in its official organ, Ethiopia, the Unionist Party published a warning, suggesting that the BA evacuate its troops and allow the Ethiopian Government to deal with the matter.²³ A similar threat had already been published in the Ethiopian Herald, on 21 April, and given wide distribution in Asmara.²⁴

The unconditional amnesty had resulted after an Ethiopian delegation of two Christians and two Muslims of Eritrean origin were sent in March to discuss the matter of assistance to the BA. The delegation argued that since a partial amnesty had not worked, an unconditional amnesty be effected, which for the BA meant that shifta recently sentenced to death would have to be reprieved and that others convicted of shifta violence would be released. As an aspect of the amnesty, on 5 June, the BA agreed in secret with the Ethiopian Government that nineteen "notorious" shifta leaders would be retained in Ethiopia, that the police units on both sides of the border would cooperate fully, and that it would be expressly stated that Addis Ababa had had no part or connection with the shifta activities.²⁵

The amnesty was proclaimed on 19 June and given wide distribution throughout Eritrea by dropping leaflets by air. To give strength to

the amnesty, on 14 June, a new security and special courts proclamation (No. 104) had been invoked giving wide powers to the administration: use of special courts with accelerated procedures, power to confirm death sentences - hitherto the prerogative of London, power to levy fines and take bonds on a communal basis, and a provision of severe punishment for those who did not avail themselves of the amnesty.²⁶ Also, over 900 additional security forces were added to the permanent establishment, which totaled more than sixty British officers and nearly 2,400 men. The Field Force was increased by two companies, comprising twenty mobile platoons, bringing that unit to a strength of 36 officers and nearly 1,900 men.

At the end of half the period of amnesty, only fifty-one shifta had surrendered, partly because Muslims did not want to surrender before Christians did and vice versa. On 4 July, the administration issued a notice to heads of districts, tribes, and villages, reminding them that they should desist from harboring and aiding shifta since "the administration [had] accumulated enough evidence of this to justify punishment of the majority of villagers and tribes of Eritrea under the new Public Security Proclamation."²⁷ Two days later a further and stronger notice was published to the shifta themselves.²⁸ A known offender's name, in particular that of a shifta leader, was attached to a separate notice indicating that if he did not surrender within the time limit he would be hunted down, tried, and hanged. The ploy was very effective.

By the end of the amnesty, 903 shifta had surrendered at reception centers in all divisions, where they gave up their weapons,²⁹ were given food and in some cases clothing and a small amount of money.³⁰ Where shifta declared they had no means of livelihood, they were

provided with jobs on special projects, which gave them a living wage.³¹ In the week following the end of the amnesty, a further 258 shifta surrendered. Over the next few weeks, additional surrenders brought the total to more than 1,300, which included more than 90% of known offenders. Among those who surrendered during the amnesty and the first week after, 65% were Christian.³²

Communal responsibility brought the confiscation of nearly 300 cattle in collective fines under proclamation 104. Where blood feuds were involved, conciliation committees were set up to resolve the issue in order that the shifta could return to his village. As promised in the amnesty notice, all prison sentences were reviewed and about 200 prisoners convicted of shifta offences were released.³³ By January 1952, nineteen shifta had been hanged and two others awaited execution.³⁴ Despite the great success of the amnesty, shifta activity persisted but at a greatly reduced rate. In September 1951, the number of incidents recorded was six, while in the previous April there had been nearly 300.³⁵ Up to the end of the BA, continued vigilance, with the added cooperation of many villagers, some of whom had been armed by the administration, resulted in the capture of more shifta, averaging sixteen per month. There remained at large three small Christian gangs operating on the plateau on the three main roads out of Asmara: to Massawa, to Keren, and to Adi Ugri. For a variety of traditional reasons, including economic, shifta activity continued into federation.³⁶

While the BA was endeavoring to maintain security in Eritrea, it had to forge ahead with its other responsibilities in organizing an Eritrean government. The BA's next consideration was the organization of an Eritrean administration. The BA had to consider which aspects of

its administration would change and which of its departments would be continued under federal responsibility and which under Eritrean domestic responsibility. The BA immediately realized that the future administration of Eritrea would have to become greatly simplified and radically changed. On 1 April 1952, the BA was divided into two branches: one for those affairs which would either cease or become a part of the federal apparatus and one, the Eritrean Affairs Secretariat, for those offices to become the Eritrean Government. The Eritrean administration was subsequently divided into four departments or ministries: interior, social services, financial-economic, and legal-judicial. The first two were immediately formed, while organization of the latter two was postponed until later in the year. The director of the secretariat and the directors of the newly created departments would become the responsibility of the future chief executive and his department heads.

Until federation, the latter posts were assumed by British officials with senior Eritrean officials as understudies to learn the procedures and problems which they would likely encounter if the chief executive appointed them to these offices. The understudies, however, would not necessarily be the ones whom the chief executive might appoint. Eritreans, however, were provisionally appointed to the district administration upon approval by the newly formed executive committee,³⁷ which had been formed in July as a consultative committee³⁸ under the chairmanship of Ali Redai,³⁹ but which in reality was a rubber stamp for the BA's scheme to fulfill its obligations as set out in Resolution 390. In regard to the physical division of the territory for administrative purposes, the BA once again redivided the Western Province into its former Italian divisions

of Keren and Agordat, as it had been before 1947, when it was consolidated by the BMA.

The BA's next consideration was the induction of Eritreans into all levels of the newly formed administration.⁴⁰ The main problem was in finding qualified people, since little preparation had been made prior to December 1950 to train Eritreans for mid- and high level positions. Moreover, many potential candidates were precluded from entering training programs because of their inability to speak, read, and write, either English or Italian, especially the former, which became one of the important working languages in government and business circles after federation. Although the BA had greatly increased educational opportunities, especially on the primary level, and a few new middle schools had been added, there were only two secondary schools and one teachers' training college by the end of the BA.⁴¹ Yet, it was imperative that as many Eritreans as possible be placed in positions of responsibility before the BA left the territory.

In April 1951, therefore, the BA published a notice inviting candidates to register for training to fill administrative, technical, and clerical positions. Eventually, after a lowering of the initially required standard, some 720 Eritreans registered with the labor office of whom about 600 were placed with departments, mostly as trainees.⁴² In June 1951, an intensive clerical training course was begun with 189 trainees (149 Christians and 40 Muslims) out of 1,140 candidates (865 Christians and 275 Muslims).⁴³ A further 73 candidates, who qualified only in Tigrinya (61) or Arabic (12), were registered for employment when the need arose.⁴⁴ Additional courses were initiated in the technical departments.

The public works department trained apprentices as mechanics, electricians, masons, plumbers, and artisans. The railway department, which by the end of 1951 was already operating trains entirely by Eritreans, taught its own mechanics. The transport department educated fifty in motor engineering, nineteen in wireless telegraphy and twenty-four in radio operation. Considerable attention was paid to the Police Force, where requirements were not as high as for other departments. Six senior Eritrean police inspectors were sent to England for further instruction. At the close of 1951, the Police Field Force Wireless Service, with its twenty-eight mobile stations, was entirely manned by Eritreans. By the end of the BA, all rural police stations in Hamasien and nearly so in other divisions were commanded solely by Eritreans.

Between July 1951 and July 1952, 1,973 Eritreans were inducted into various departments, including more than one thousand in police services. Appointments to senior administrative posts were left for approval by the Eritrean Government, although temporary appointments were made with the approval of the executive committee. As of 15 September 1952, the total number of Eritreans employed by the Eritrean Government, either salaried or hourly, was 7,947 (96%) with 354 non-Eritreans primarily in high level administrative and technical positions.⁴⁵

Wishing to start the Eritrean Government off with a balanced budget necessitated the reduction of both Eritrean and non-Eritrean personnel. Other factors which led to displacement of existing employees were the process of simplification of government services and an elimination of redundant staff. Eritrean personnel who numbered on 1 September 1951 9,731 were reduced by eighteen percent to 7,947, while

non-Eritreans, mostly Italians, were reduced from 2,217 to 354, a reduction of eighty-four percent. The retention of non-Eritrean staff was based entirely on need and the inability of the BA to find qualified Eritreans to fill posts. Many senior positions were held by either British or Italians, especially in the medical department. The directorships of interior, social services, medical services, education, and agriculture and veterinary were either British or Italians, as were the controllers of public works, transport, and labor departments. The commissioner of police and prisons and the superintendents of prisons and of the Eritrean police field force for the Red Sea and Agordat Divisions were British.

The task of convoking a provisional representative assembly presented a different set of problems for the BA. Great care had to be taken that it would be truly representative of all groups and that it would be accepted by the people. To accomplish this, a general election was necessary, since Resolution 390 demanded that the assembly consist of "Eritreans chosen by the people."⁴⁶ Since there had never been an election held in Eritrea,⁴⁷ there had never been a census, and since a significant percentage of the population was nomadic or semi-nomadic, a territory-wide general election was considered impractical; it was decided, therefore, that only in Asmara and in Massawa would direct elections be held, while in the remainder of the territory there would be indirect elections in two stages. First, each village, district, or tribal group, within a constituency elected a number of delegates, in proportion to the constituency's estimated population. At the second stage, the delegates to each of fifty-nine electoral colleges for the whole territory elected, by

secret ballot, one person to represent the constituency in the assembly.

In each constituency, an electoral committee headed by a British officer supervised the elections to ensure no irregularities. In Asmara and in Massawa, with seven and two constituencies respectively, election was by direct, secret ballot after the registration of each voter on electoral roles. Based on tribute and rationing roles, the entire territory, including Asmara and Massawa, was divided into sixty-eight constituencies, each representing approximately 15,000 people. This gave Akkele Guzai twelve seats, Serai twelve, Hamasien seven, Red Sea five, and the Western Province twenty-three.⁴⁸ With one exception (see below), care had been taken that no community was split between two or more constituencies.

Candidates in all cases were required to be male, at least thirty years old, possessing no foreign nationality, and having one parent or grandparent of blood wholly indigenous to Eritrea; thus, by the latter stipulation, Italo-Eritreans were not excluded from either voting or becoming candidates, providing they did not hold Italian citizenship.⁴⁹ The same stipulations held for electors except for the age requirement of twenty-one years. Further, candidates had to have resided in their constituencies for two of the past ten years; had to be nominated, in case of direct elections, by five qualified voters and, in the case of indirect elections, by two members of its electoral college; and had to deposit 200 EAS (c. US \$28.00), which would be forfeited upon failure to poll ten percent of the total votes cast.⁵⁰ To avoid double voting by those who belonged to a village, district, or tribal unit, but who resided in either Asmara or Massawa, their names, if they chose to vote with their village, district, or tribal unit,

were excluded from the urban registration roles, while each of the non-urban constituencies was advised that none of its members residing in either Massawa or Asmara could vote in indirect elections unless the BA communicated their names to their constituencies.

On 28 January 1952, a proclamation (No. 121)⁵¹ for the election and convocation of a representative assembly was published and given wide distribution. According to the proclamation, Ethiopians who had been resident in Eritrea for at least one year prior to the election were eligible to be electors. The electoral roles in Asmara and Massawa were closed on 21 February.

The first stage in the indirect elections occurred from 26 February through 4 March, which resulted in thirty-one unopposed candidates being declared elected. On 4 March, nomination for candidates for Asmara and Massawa closed. On 11 March, a list of accepted candidates for both the rural, indirect and the urban, direct elections was completed. On 15 March the second stage of the indirect elections began, lasting for several days, and on 25-26 March direct elections were held resulting in a further thirty-five being elected, leaving a tie in two constituencies in the Western Province, where new elections were held on 12 May, several weeks after the assembly had been convened on 28 April.⁵²

The results of the direct⁵³ and indirect elections delivered thirty-four Muslims and the same number of Christians. Political parties had figured more strongly in the urban, direct elections, whereas religious affiliation had tended to determine the outcome in the indirect, rural ballot constituencies.⁵⁴ The Unionist Party had polled thirty-two seats, Ali Redai's Moslem League of the Western Province, fifteen, and the Democratic Front, eighteen, while

independents took one, and one each was held by the Independent Moslem League and the National Party of Massawa, both with UP sympathies. Since a voting quorum constituted two-thirds of the assembly, it was clear that the Moslem League could not stave off a coalition of the unionists and Ali Redai's British-favored group, which constituted one more seat than was necessary for a quorum. Remarkably, although his party gained three seats, Woldeab Woldemariam lost his bid for a seat. Equally surprising was the failure of Mohammed Omar Kadi, Sec-Gen. of the Independent Moslem League, standing for Arkiko. Ras Tesemma Asberom won his seat by a wide margin, but resigned on 29 May in favor of his son, Graz. Gerekidan Tesemma, who in a by-election held on 19 June was returned unopposed.⁵⁵ Despite complaints, that in at least two cases, delegates to an electoral college did not vote for the person for whom they had been instructed to vote, the elections experienced no violence. Of those elected to the assembly, only about two or three were illiterate.⁵⁶

Besides the complaint by Ibrahim Sultan of attempts by the BA to keep him from taking a seat, the Bet Asghede tribal group, located on the coastal regions of the Western Province in the Sahel area, legitimately complained that they were not represented.⁵⁷ The group numbered about 20,000 divided among four subgroups. During the attempts of the BA to interest the Western Province in partition, the Bet Asghede had not been cooperative with the administration's blandishments and thus felt that they had been gerrymandered among the surrounding groups all of whom supported the Moslem League of the Western Province. Although the leaders of the Bet Asghede might have remained independent, their Islamic affiliation would have given the Muslims a majority in the assembly and would have certainly curtailed

the strength of the pro-unionists. After a series of protests in writing to the administration beginning on 7 February, all of which were ignored, the Bet Asghede were eventually told by the UN Commissioner that the BA did not regard the Bet Asghede as a tribal unit⁵⁸ and that its constituents had been grouped with elements of surrounding peoples. All the pleas for restitution of the Bet Asghede's right to representation continued to be ignored and the assembly was duly convened on 28 April.

On the first day, speeches were read by the chief administrator, the UN Commissioner, and the imperial representative, Amdemicael Dessalegn, who began to read his speech in Amharic, but was immediately interrupted by Kadi Ali Omar Osman, a delegate from Senafe, representing the Saho and Minniferi, shouting out that Amharic was not one of the working languages of the assembly.⁵⁹ Before the Kadi could be removed, the outraged member of the assembly, speaking for many Muslims, sat down and the British clerk waved his hand for the emperor's representative to continue. The scene had been set for the battle to come.

After the election of the assembly's officers, the next order of business was consideration of the constitution. The important questions were: 1) should there be one or two assemblies and of what duration; 2) what should the executive consist of; 3) how should the executive be selected; 4) should the emperor be represented in the new government and, if so, to what degree; 5) what should the rules of suffrage be; 6) how should future elections be determined; 7) what should the official languages be; 8) and what type of flag should be flown?⁶⁰ In drafting the constitution, the UN Commissioner, E. A. Matienzo,⁶¹ had been charged to create a document based on democratic

principles. The Ethiopian Government's aim was to bring Eritrea as closely as possible under the imperial wing and thus frequently differed with Matienzo on the latter's interpretation of what the character of the document should become. On the other side, those within the Eritrean political arena who had opposed union, including Italians, wanted a constitution which would ensure Eritrea's autonomy as prescribed in Resolution 390.

Before Matienzo began his work of drafting the constitution, he went to Eritrea to consult with its inhabitants and to explain Resolution 390. On 9 February 1951, he arrived in Asmara and immediately made a public speech in which he described the resolution as a compromise which would satisfy all the aspirations of Eritrea's diverse population as well as the desires of Addis Ababa to have access to the sea and to be joined, in a fashion, to territory it regarded as having been traditionally tied historically to central Ethiopia.⁶² From the end of February to mid-May, he journeyed to each division, holding meetings in the principal towns, villages, and traditional meeting places to talk with leaders, both secular and religious, peasants, and representatives of minority groups. He attempted to instill in the people a willingness to cooperate with him and accept the resolution as the best possible solution, but in doing so, he felt the people held little confidence in the idea of federation and were particularly pessimistic because of the continuing shifta problem.

On 11 July, a delay of nearly two months because of continuing unrest, Matienzo began formal consultations with the Eritrean people and their representative organizations. Before beginning, he wrote a document based on his experience, summarizing the nature of the Eritrean question and explaining that the objective of the draft

constitution was to assure "the maximum autonomy attainable"⁶³ and that its character was to be "truly representative of the people."⁶⁴ It was "in no way [to] impair the international status and identity of the Ethiopian Empire,"⁶⁵ the jurisdictions of the Federal and Eritrean Governments, and therefore would include the aspects of the first seven articles of Resolution 390, comprising the Federal Act. The document was presented on 29 June;⁶⁶ amendments were made; it was then translated into Tigrinya and Arabic and printed in a bilingual pamphlet,⁶⁷ which was given wide distribution throughout the territory.

In addition, the commissioner reiterated the UN's continuing concern that it be recognized that Eritrea's economic prosperity was intimately linked to the collaboration of the foreign communities. Despite these efforts to explain the next step in the process of creating a government, there were still Eritreans who did not understand the commissioner's purpose and thought that the future of Eritrea was still a question.⁶⁸ Between 11 and 20 July, the commissioner heard the views of the fifteen officially registered political parties, from 30 July to 3 August those of religious leaders, and at various times views from the foreign communities (Italian, Jewish, Arab, Indian, Greek, and Sudanese), and from cultural and professional organizations.

Regarding the main issues, the Eritrean Democratic Front wanted two assemblies (a senate and house of representatives) with a term of two years. Further, it considered that the executive should be nominated jointly by the assemblies, that he should choose his ministers with the approval of the assemblies, taking into consideration the mixed population of Muslims and Christians, that the

executive's program should meet the approval of the assemblies, and that the executive should stay in office no longer than the assemblies, but resign if defeated on a vote of no confidence by the assemblies. The front opposed imperial representation in the government, since it had not been mentioned in Resolution 390. Also, it sought indirect elections and proportional representation for the Muslim minorities on the plateau and for the Christian minorities in the lowlands; and direct elections for the cities of Asmara, Massawa, and Keren. In regard to official languages, the coalition asked for Arabic and Tigrinya, although later changed its attitude to Arabic only because of the uncompromising stand of Christians for Tigrinya only. In addition, it suggested an Eritrean flag distinct from a flag for the federation.

On 11 October 1951, the Unionist Party, after consulting with the crown, presented its views that there should be one assembly (in contrast to Ethiopia's parliamentary system) with a term of two to three years; that the assembly should choose an executive, with the emperor's approval, who could initiate legislation, for a two- or three-year term; and that once approved by the emperor, he should not be subject to dismissal by the assembly. Further, it suggested that the emperor be given representation but discretely avoided defining what his functions and powers might be; that the electoral system should be indirectly based on the customs and traditions of the territory; that only Tigrinya should be the official language; and that Eritrea should not have a distinct flag, as such public display would suggest two distinct political entities, an idea Ethiopia wished to suppress.

Formal consultations with the Ethiopian Government were held on 28 and 30 May in Addis Ababa, on 3 July in Asmara, and further meetings

were in Geneva on 6 and 7 December. The commissioner agreed with the crown that there should be only one legislative body and that the emperor should have a representative, but with only certain formal functions which would not in any way impinge on Eritrea's autonomy. He adamantly disagreed with the imperial notion that the executive should be chosen by the emperor. In regard to the identity of the Federal Government, the commissioner felt that the organs of the Ethiopian Government that dealt with federal matters would constitute the Federal Government. There was agreement that the constitution should enumerate those rights and liberties enshrined in the Federal Act, that there should be universal suffrage (which did not exist in Ethiopia), that a unicameral legislature be elected by a majority vote, without power to overthrow the government, that the chief executive be elected for a fixed term of office with normal powers and the right to appoint and dismiss heads of departments, and that the number and composition of executive departments be established by law.⁶⁹

Matienzo met with the administering authority for the first time on 27 June, at which time the BA accepted, after certain amendments, the commissioner's summary of the contents of the constitution. Both the commissioner and the BA agreed that if the question of an Eritrean flag could not be settled beforehand, it should be decided later by the Eritrean Government. Further, it was agreed, regarding the very controversial issue of languages, that the matter would have to be settled by the Eritrean assembly when it met to approve the final draft of the constitution. Regarding whether the emperor should have formal representation in the future government, the BA's view (Stafford's) suggested that, as a stabilizing force, Haile Sellassie should appoint a chief executive, a position that both the commissioner and especially

his secretariat opposed.⁷⁰ There was further disagreement regarding executive veto, which both the BA and the US supported.⁷¹

Before Matienzo retired to draft the constitution, there was still one issue, whether the emperor should have substantive powers over the Eritrean Government, that found the commissioner and the Ethiopian Government on opposite sides. Addis Ababa maintained that since Eritrea had been described as an autonomous "unit" and not a "state," the emperor, whose responsibility was to preserve the integrity of the federation, should have some control over the Eritrean Government. Matienzo, nevertheless, declared that since Eritrea's constitution was to be based on democratic principles, its authority should emanate from the Eritrean people and not the emperor. To resolve the issue, he requested the secretary-general of the UN to appoint a panel of legal consultants, whose opinions would form the basis for an answer; thus, on 7 November 1951, the commissioner left Asmara for Geneva to discuss the issue with three experts in constitutional and international law. On 25 December, after a thorough examination of the points of debate, including the questions of international law raised by the UN resolution, the panel stated its conclusions.⁷²

The first question considered was the very important issue concerning the legal obligations of UN members, signatory to the resolution. The panel concluded that the UNGA's recommendation was binding on the four powers which were parties to the Treaty of Peace with Italy, in which they had agreed to accept the UN's recommendation; that the nations which voted for the resolution were politically and morally, but not legally, bound to the resolution since it was a mere recommendation by the UNGA; and most importantly, that if Matienzo failed in his efforts to come to an agreement with the Ethiopian

Government, the whole matter would have to be resubmitted to the UNGA for reconsideration. Further, the panel stated that the UNGA would continue to be the guardian over the rights contained in the Federal Act, any violation of which would require the General Assembly's attention.

Although the federation would not create any new international legal entity, the panel judged that the separate jurisdictions of Eritrea and the Federal Government must not infringe upon each other.⁷³ Since the Federal Government was responsible for maintaining the unity of the federation, it could take any steps it deemed necessary within the confines of the Federal Act to maintain order in cases of revolution or secession, but only if the Eritrean Government were unable or unwilling to deal with the situation. The human rights and fundamental liberties enumerated in the Federal Act, which was to become an integral part of Eritrea's constitution, could not be changed without first amending the Federal Act.

The panel advised that because the commissioner had been charged to draft a constitution, he could add whatever other human rights he felt necessary to protect the institutions, traditions, languages, and religions of the Eritrean people. Regarding Ethiopia's desire to have certain powers over the Eritrean Government, the commissioner had some latitude of interpretation of what should constitute "democratic principles," since they were not defined in the resolution, although according to the panel's judgement it was universally recognized that "democracy is based on two foundations: respect for human rights and fundamental liberties and government of the people and by the people."⁷⁴ Matienzo, therefore, took the view of creating a document which would carefully protect Eritrea's and the Federal Government's

respective jurisdictions, thus not providing the emperor with any extraordinary powers other than those necessary to protect the unity of federation and the Federal Government's jurisdiction.

In January 1952, Matienzo communicated the report of the panel's remarks to the Ethiopian Government, which responded in March. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aklilou Habtewold indicated strongly that his government had many disagreements with the panel's arguments.⁷⁵ Addis Ababa considered the panel's interpretation of the relationship to be established between the UNGA and the parties of the federation tantamount to the perpetual servitude of the Ethiopian Government to the critical observation of the UNGA. Furthermore, there seemed to be a question of interfering with Ethiopia's sovereign independence, which Aklilou maintained was not the intent of the language of Resolution 390. In general, the imperial view was that once the federation had been executed, both the UN and the Four Powers would have no further jurisdiction in the matter.

After receiving the legal opinions of the first panel, Matienzo retired to Geneva from January through February 1952 to draw up the first draft of the constitution. It was his desire, considering the inexperience of Eritreans with democratic institutions and Eritrea's potential division based on religious, ethnic, and linguistic differences, to make the constitution simple, precise, and educative. To protect Eritrea's jurisdiction, he fashioned a document that would unite Eritrea's disparate elements and would be compatible with local customs.⁷⁶ Since the Eritrean people were strongly religious, the preamble included an invocation to God and a general statement that the future relationships of all concerned would be fruitful. Paragraph twelve of Resolution 390 demanded that the constitution contain

"provisions adopting and ratifying the Federal Act on behalf of the people of Eritrea,"⁷⁷ a requirement which became the substance of the first article. Next, Matienzo felt it was important explicitly to define Eritrea's status within the federation (articles two through nine in the final draft, hereafter f.d.), including an enumeration of matters coming within Eritrea's jurisdiction, although it was not explicit enough to prevent the BA from "interpreting" it in such a way as to give the Ethiopian Government control over Eritrea's railroads, the main arterials leading to the borders, and the ropeway between Asmara and Massawa. The rights and freedoms contained in article seven of Resolution 390, the last article of the Federal Act, were enumerated verbatim (article 22, f.d.) and expanded (articles 23 through 35, f.d.).

In regard to voting, Ethiopians, as federal nationals, could vote in Eritrean elections providing they met certain resident requirements (articles 8, 20, & 42, f.d.). The issue of the type of Eritrean flag was left to the new government to decide (article 21 (2), f.d.). A concession was made to Eritrean traditions with a dual voting system to be laid down by law after federation.⁷⁸ In general, wherever there were no accepted principles of democratic government at stake, the traditions of the Eritrean people were used as models in forming the text of the constitution. In addition, the second panel of legal experts and the commissioner consulted the constitutions of thirty-one countries, plus the constitutions of some of the United States and four West German States.⁷⁹

Upon submission of the third draft to the BA on 13 March 1952, and slightly later to the Ethiopian Government for consultation, there arose many objections.⁸⁰ Although the BA thought the document too

long and complicated,⁸¹ it was provisionally accepted with certain amendments, which were concerned with separation of powers and protection of the government's functions from political influence.⁸² The following suggestions by the BA were accepted by the commissioner and incorporated into the final draft: 1) an auditor-general, as there was in Ethiopia, but independent from the executive (article 64 (2-4), f.d.); 2) a civil service commission (article 82, f.d.); 3) a paragraph explicitly describing the independence of the judiciary and the same for the appointment of judges by a special committee (articles 86 & 87, f.d.); 4) and the recognition of an executive committee and its decisions (see above) to facilitate the transfer of power from the BA to the newly formed government (article 97 (2), f.d.). Regarding the latter point, the BA had first suggested the establishment of an interim provisional government to exist up to the transfer of powers on 15 September, but because a provisional government had not been mentioned in Resolution 390, the commissioner considered such a government illegal. After consultation with the second panel of legal experts, Matienzo agreed to permit the establishment of a committee/commission, but not a "provisional government," which was duly accomplished on 9 June 1952 by proclamation.

The Ethiopian Government's objections were numerous and of such nature that it was clear to the commissioner that Addis Ababa wanted to create a vague, weak document, easily circumvented by the emperor.⁸³ Matienzo was adamant that the constitution should comprise a clear statement of democratic principles with rights and liberties explicitly described. After full agreement had been reached between the BA and the Ethiopian Government, Matienzo prepared a final draft, which with minor changes was presented to the crown on 25 April.⁸⁴

On 3 May 1952, the commissioner submitted the revised draft to the Eritrean Assembly.⁸⁵ In his opening remarks to the assembly, he reminded the body that the constitution, as an outgrowth of Resolution 390, embodied two important principles: Eritrean autonomy and the sovereignty of the Ethiopian crown.⁸⁶ He told the assembly that having a representative of the emperor would be an advantage, which "in no way would imply intervention of any kind in the local government of the autonomous unit of Eritrea."⁸⁷ After the constitution's semi-presidential system and other major points were explained, on 12 May the assembly began an article by article discussion of the constitution. After forty meetings, it was unanimously adopted on 10 July.

Not part of the Eritrean constitution, but an integral part of the legal foundation of the Eritrean Government were seven organic laws, references to which were made in the constitution for later enactment. These were the Eritrean Electoral Act (articles 41 (2), 42 (c), 43 (2 & 3), 45 (4), & 48 (2)), the Budget Act (article 62), the Audit Act (article 64 (4)), the Eritrean Functions of Government Act (article 78 (2 & 4)), the Civil Service Act (article 83 (3)), the Advisory Council Act (article 84 (3)), and the Administration of Justice Act (article 89).⁸⁸ The last of these was drafted by the BA and issued as Proclamation 133 on 10 September 1952. It provided for the integration of the Italian judicial procedure, codes, and system of courts, indigenous customary and Islamic systems, and the British military and civil administrations' body of laws, codes, and courts into one consistent, new system. It established an independent judiciary under the supervision and administrative control of the president of the supreme court, which was recognized as the guardian of the

constitution. The other six were jointly drafted by the BA and the UN Commissioner and then submitted to the executive committee for approval prior to their consideration by the assembly. Only one of these, the Eritrean Functions of Government Act, was passed (4 September) before the termination of the BA. In addition to implementing articles 66, 69, & 74 of the constitution, it created four executive departments (interior, finance, economic affairs, and social services) and defined their relationships with the executive, the jurisdiction of each department, and matters concerning duties, remuneration, and rules of conduct.

Four of the five remaining drafted acts were taken up by the assembly after federation. The first of these, The Eritrean Budget Act, passed on 6 December 1952, provided that each executive department prepare an estimated budget to be submitted to the finance secretary, who would then submit a draft budget for the government based on estimates of revenue and expenditure to the chief executive. After the budget was reviewed and approved by the finance committee, the chief executive submitted it to the assembly. The latter body could vote only on the total amount of the estimated expenditure for each executive department, and the draft could not be increased without executive approval. Total allocations of expenditure voted by the assembly had to be balanced by approved estimates of revenue. If the assembly failed to act on the draft budget, it would automatically go into effect at the beginning of the financial year.

The second, The Eritrean Civil Service Act, passed on 19 January 1953, created, under the chairmanship of the chief executive, a civil service commission, which was responsible for the appointment, promotion, transfer, and discharge of officials. The third, The

Eritrean Audit Act, passed on 24 January 1953, provided for an audit department, independent from the executive, and solely responsible to the assembly, whose president nominated candidates for auditor-general on the recommendation of the finance committee,⁸⁹ for a period of not less than three years or permanently. The auditor-general's annual general account was to be published in The Eritrean Gazette. Also, there were to be annual audits of the accounts of municipalities and other public bodies. The last annual general account to appear in the gazette was for the September 1954/September 1955 fiscal year, published in February 1957.⁹⁰

The fourth, The Eritrean Advisory Council Act, passed on 24 January 1953, constituted a body to provide assistance to the chief executive and the assembly on matters of economic and social progress in Eritrea. The council was to consist of nine members, the financial adviser, the senior law officer of the government, five experts appointed by the chief executive, and two from the assembly named by its president. The last of the organic acts, The Eritrean Electoral Act, was never passed by the assembly. Although this lapse caused considerable controversy, authority for holding elections rested on BA proclamation 121 of 1952.

The assembly had one more important task to perform before federation could begin: electing a chief executive. On 28 August 1952, the assembly selected Ato Tedla Bairu as chief executive, with Sheik Ali Redai, who had been deputy chairman of the assembly, as president of the assembly. According to the Functions of Government Act, the chief executive had the responsibility of appointing the secretaries to the government's four departments: interior, finance, economic affairs, and social services. Ato Tedla notified the assembly on 8 September

that he intended to make the following appointments: Sheik Mohammed Said Feki Ali as secretary of interior;⁹¹ Ato Teclehaimanot Bocru, secretary of finance;⁹² Ato Fessahazion Haile, secretary of economic affairs;⁹³ and Sheik Mohammed Nur Hassan Naib, secretary of social services.⁹⁴ On 8 January 1954, a fifth department, law and justice, was created. Its first secretary was Haregot Abbai.⁹⁵ The chief executive and his secretaries, who were well received by all including Ibrahim Sultan and the Democratic Front, were formally invested in office on 12 September.

Before the assembly and Eritrean Government could assume complete authority, the BA, through consultations with the UN Commissioner and Ethiopia, had to come to an agreement regarding what would constitute Federal services and properties. Since the BA used government properties which it did not own, it was determined, despite Ethiopia's objections, that title would be decided later by the succeeding government.⁹⁶

The question of control of Eritrea's railway and ropeway was given special attention. The Ethiopian Government argued with the support of the UN Commissioner that both should come within federal jurisdiction since both (although the ropeway had been inoperative since 1943) were an integral part of the federal chain of communications, and their maintenance could not be supported by the Eritrean budget. The fact they were both entirely within Eritrea and constitutionally (article 5 (2) j) within its governmental jurisdiction received no notice. The throne also argued that since Eritrea's ports were to come under federal jurisdiction and the railway linked Ethiopia's trunk road system with the ports, the former should also fall under federal responsibility.

There was considerable objection by Eritreans to the properties to be handed over to federal authorities when the final list came out on 9 July 1952.⁹⁷ Although the BA did not allocate to federal authorities all the housing which they had requested,⁹⁸ it was liberal in its interpretation of what properties should come under federal jurisdiction. Included on this list were all naval, military, and air force installations; international airports at Asmara and Assab, emergency landing areas at Agordat, Gura, Barentu, and Massawa; all of Eritrea's trunk roads to its borders with Sudan and Ethiopia; and all existing postal, telegraphic, telephonic, services and all other telecommunications.⁹⁹ The former governor's palace in Asmara was to be given over for use by the imperial representative. In addition, federal jurisdiction was extended to control import/export licences and foreign exchange banks.

The final item of business for the BA was to repeal, amend, and interpret all existing laws, etc. which in some way would be in conflict with Eritrea's constitution and organic laws. Already in spring 1949, when the BMA became the BA, there had been such a revision of existing proclamations, etc. to coincide with the advent of civil administration. On 10 September 1952, The Revision, Amendment, and Interpretation of Laws Proclamation accomplished the final removal of any legal inconsistencies, aside from judicial matters which had already been reconciled by The Administration of Justice Proclamation.¹⁰⁰ Four days after the emperor's formal ratification of the Federal Act, on 15 September at midnight, The Termination of Powers Proclamation, No. 136 took effect. It had been signed earlier in the afternoon at a formal ceremony attended by a large crowd, including all who had been involved with the processes of bringing the federation

into being. The Union Jack was lowered and the federal (Ethiopian) flag raised, thus ending eleven and one half years (1 April 1941 - 15 September 1952) of British Administration in Eritrea. The following morning, in a very small unheralded ceremony in front of the Eritrean Government headquarters, the Eritrean flag was unfurled for the first time.¹⁰¹ The United Kingdom's final, official remarks on the subject were optimistic:

The future of Eritrea will rest upon a sympathetic and ready understanding of her economic and political weakness,¹⁰² and upon the provision of wise guidance and material assistance by her larger and more happily endowed partner in the federation. The future of the federation will be affected by the degree of mutual respect between them for the rights, jurisdiction and traditions of each other.¹⁰³

Eritrea was now federated with a feudal monarchy, whose 1931 constitution gave the emperor absolute power. Respect for Eritrea's fragile democratic institutions and rights guaranteed by a modern constitution based on principles that did not and had never existed in Ethiopia was immediately put to the test. The Ethiopian Government intended to send a large number of Amharas to Eritrea to assume jobs in the federal services, ignoring Eritreans who were qualified to fill these posts. After considerable protest led by the Executive Committee, half of whom were unionists,¹⁰⁴ the crown's list was revised.¹⁰⁵ The crown's intentions were made clear on the eve of federation through an article printed in the unionist organ, Ethiopia. In its note of congratulations to the Eritrean people, it stated that from 15 September, Eritrea was to be considered nothing more than one of the imperial provinces,¹⁰⁶ that Eritreans should avoid involving

themselves in politics, and that the formation of "linguistic academies [was] the exclusive right of the government, so the people [could] not organize them."¹⁰⁷

On 9 September, two days before this admonition, the Ethiopian Government moved two companies of soldiers, including administrative personnel, along with a detachment of about one hundred men, across the border near Senafe.¹⁰⁸ Within a week, an entire brigade (between 2 to 3,000) troops moved into Eritrea to replace a British battalion of seven hundred men.¹⁰⁹ Although the Ethiopian Government had the right to defend the realm, the hasty entrance into Eritrea of such a large number of imperial troops was viewed by many Eritreans as tantamount to annexation.¹¹⁰

If there were any Eritreans unsure of the Ethiopian Government's intentions, they would have had their doubts dispelled by listening to the speech of the emperor's representative on 27 April 1953, in which he declared that "the right to maintain or disrupt the Federation and choose its destiny rests with the Eritrean people themselves."¹¹¹ But, he added that the "Federation shall remain effective as long as the entire population of Eritrea is not inclined otherwise." Clearly, it was the crown's hope that, through its Asmara representative, feelings could be generated among the population to denounce the federation. Aware of this possibility, Matienzo admonished that it would be viewed as improper if any intervention by the imperial representative in Eritrea's domestic affairs should "in the slightest way destroy the democratic self-government of the country."¹¹²

Initially, the Eritrean Government was placed in a position that could be easily influenced by the Ethiopian Government. Approximately fifty British officers had signed contracts to stay on, forty with the

Eritrean Government and ten with the Federal Government. In the opinion of Edward Mulcahy, the American Consul in Asmara, at the time, it was the "general impression that the officers ...[were] not of the highest quality available."¹¹³ Despite British efforts to find qualified Eritreans, the new government could also not boast of the qualifications of its Eritrean contingent, which, for the most part, was unprepared to assume the responsibilities which had been thrust upon its shoulders. Traditional political systems were soon to override the western institutions that had been implanted in Eritrea's midst. The Eritrean constitution and the organs of democratic government were so largely misunderstood both by the ordinary Eritrean and by many officials, that the fledgling administration was easily undermined by the blandishments of the Ethiopian Government.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 YUN, 1948-1949, 259-260.
- 2 YUN, 1948-1949, 261.
- 3 YUN, 1948-1949, 264.
- 4 YUN, 1948-1949, 270a. In a climate of conciliation and compromise, Ethiopia's historical claims on Eritrea and the crown's purported need for additional access to the sea, aside from Djibouti, convinced the majority of the UN members that these demands should be met.
- 5 The crown might have feared the outcome of a plebiscite, but more important to the Ethiopian Government was the desire not to establish an unwanted precedent that would ultimately rob the throne of its centralized power.
- 6 YUN, 1948-1949, 274-275.
- 7 Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Denmark, Ecuador, Greece, Liberia, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Turkey, and the US. See YUN, 1950, 364.
- 8 UK, Trevaskis Papers, Bodleian Library, Mss., British Empire, s367, Box 2, Item 2, pamphlet: "A Study of the Development of the Present Shifta Problem and the Means Whereby It Can Be Remedied," Je 1950, 2, hereafter Trevaskis, "Study of...Shifta Problem."
- 9 An example of communal unrest was the continuing dispute between certain groups among the five Christian districts of Serai and the Muslim Assaorta who surrounded them. In 1946 and again in 1951, representing the BMA, Ras Tesemma Asberom conciliated an end to hostilities over grazing rights between the Catholicized Tzenadegle of the eastern edge of the Eritrean plateau in Serai and the Muslim Teroa, a nomadic group and one of the thirteen tribes belonging to the Assaorta, occupying the slopes immediately below the Tzenadegle. The settlement was basically a reconfirmation of one that had been made in 1914 by the Italian Administration. At the end of 1951, damages and losses among the Serai Christians and the Muslim Assaorta included 188 Christians killed, 89 Muslims dead, 39 persons wounded, more than 22,000 sheep or cattle stolen, more than 275 homes burned, 4 mosques incinerated, and more than 137,000 quintals of grain destroyed or raided. A collective fine of 100 cattle was imposed on both sides. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 1 My 51, D-133, 777.00/5-151, UK, BA, Asmara to FO, 18 Jy 51, FO 371/90323/1015, Annex 'A,' and Puglisi, 281b. A further tactic used by the BA to end the conflict between these two groups was the removal for almost one year of Dejatch Georgio Haptit, chief of the Damas district and a prime instigator of tribal

warfare, to Keren, where he was placed under police surveillance. In addition, he was fined 74,000 shillings. See USG, State, Billman, vice consul at Asmara, to SecSt, 25 Jy 51, D-18, 777.00/7-2551 and Mulcahy to SecSt, 26 Je 52, D-196, 777.00/6-2652.

10 To avoid bandits, vehicles drove from town to town in convoy. If vehicles became detached, shifta could launch an attack such as occurred on 22 No 44 near Adi Kaiye, resulting in the death of two, one of whom had been sexually mutilated. See UK, PRO, EMA, Report, 24 No 44, FO 371/46065/ 67.

11 Trevaskis, "Study of...Shifta Problem," 10.

12 See above in chapter one.

13 UK, BA, F. Stafford to R. Allen, Africa Dept., FO, 6 No 51, FO 371/90406/1517/17, 16. Hamasien Division, except for Asmara, was largely controlled by the Baraki clan, whose members, during Italian times, held the majority of district chief posts, but who were replaced by the EMA with others thought to be more loyal. As a result, two of the main shifta leaders of Hamasien were from the Baraki clan. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 2 Je 50, T-103, 777.00/6-250. Many British in Eritrea blamed London for the worsening situation because the administration was being thwarted in acting directly to deal effectively with the shifta problem. London not wanting to offend Ethiopia nor to appear unable to administer Eritrea remained too long indecisive in its policy, to the extent that many Eritreans were considering a return of Italian rule would be welcome. See USG, State, Collier to SecSt, 12 Je 51, T-188, 777.00/6-1251.

14 On 21 April 1951, the notorious Mussasghi brothers of the Tzenadegle ambushed a train from Asmara to Massawa and robbed all the passengers of their possessions and clothes. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 1 My 51, D-133, 777.00/5-151.

15 UK, PRO, BA, "Report," Stafford to Allen, FO, 6 No 51, FO 371/90406/1517/17, 16.

16 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 20 Sp 51, D-26, 777.00/9-2051. The First Battalion, The Royal Berkshire Regiment, left Eritrea in late August for Cyprus.

17 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 2 No 50, D-39, 777.00/11-250. In 1949, as a face saving effort, the emperor issued a proclamation denouncing shifta activity in Eritrea. See USG, State, Childs, A. A., 16 My 51, T-276, 777.00/5-1651.

18 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 9 My 51, D-142, 777.00/5-951. Shifta near Asmara were seen in semi-military khaki uniforms with a blaze of Ethiopian colors on their sleeves. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 10 Ag 50, T-31, 777.00/8-1050; and on the Asmara-Massawa road, see USG, State, letter from Mulcahy to chief administrator, 30 Ap 51,

in Mulcahy to SecSt, 21 My 51, A-148, 777.00/5-2151.

19 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 9 My 51, D-142, 777.00/5-951, 2.

20 The Beni Amer and Kunama periodically raided each other's settlements for animals. The nomadic Beni Amer crossed over Kunama lands during seasonal migrations. One of their leaders was Mohammed Idris Awate, later to become a leader of the Eritrean liberation movement. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 1 Ag 50, T-60, 777.00/8-150.

21 UNGA, Report of the Gov't of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the General Assembly Concerning the Administration of Eritrea (For the Period December 1950 - September 1952), hereafter Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, 8.

22 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 10 Ja 51, T-69, 777.00/1-1051.

23 USG, State, Asmara to SecSt, 15 My 51, T-169, 777.00/5-1551 and Collier, vice consul, Asmara, to SecSt, 11 Je 51, D-159, 777.00/6-1151.

24 USG, State, Bigelow, charge d'affaires ad interim, A. A., to SecSt, 23 Ap 51, A-282, 777.00/4-2351.

25 UK, PRO, BA, Report, Stafford to Allen, 6 No 51, FO 371/90406/1517/17, 19. The proces-verbale was initialed on 5 June, but not signed until 12 June. See USG, State, Childs, A. A., to SecSt, 5 Je 51, T-315, 777.00/6-551; 6 Je 51, T-321, 777.00/6-651; and 12 Je 51, T-339, 777.00/6-1251.

26 USG, State, Billman to SecSt, 27 Jy 51, D-21, 777.34/7-2751.

27 USG, State, Billman to SecSt, 27 Jy 51, A-22, 777.00/7-2751.

28 UK, PRO, BA, Stafford to FO, 18 Jy 51, "Notice of 6 July 1951," FO 371/90323/1015/19.

29 Although not "entirely satisfactory," aside from knives, spears, and swords, the following arms were surrendered: 320 rifles and guns, 21 pistols and revolvers, 3 machine guns, and 394 hand grenades. See UK, PRO, BA, Cumming to FO, 25 Jy 51, D-86, FO 371/90323/1015.

30 UK, PRO, BA, "Notice to the Eritrean People," 16 Jy 51, FO 371/90323/ 1015.

31 273 worked on public works sponsored by the BA. See UK, PRO, BA, Cumming to FO, 25 Jy 51, D-86, FO 371/90323/1015, 2.

32 UK, PRO, BA, Cumming to FO, 25 Jy 51, D-86, FO 371/90323/1015.

33 UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No

52, 10.

34 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 25 Ja 52, D-110, 777.00/1-2552.

35 UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, 10.

36 There were rumors in early December 1952, shortly after the beginning of federation, that as many as 100 members of the Field Force, fearful of losing their jobs after 33 had been dismissed because of their physical and intellectual incapacity, deserted and joined shifta bands with their weapons. See USG, State, Breaux to SecSt, 8 De 52, D-72, 775A.00/12-852.

37 The committee of ten members (half Muslim/half Christian and half unionist/half non-unionist), chosen by the newly created Eritrean assembly, came into existence on 16 July by proclamation no. 131, signed and promulgated on 12 July, but the committee did not start its work until 19 July and ceased to exist on 15 September. The committee was criticized by the Democratic Front for committing the future government to contractual obligations it perhaps would not have assumed upon federation. The UP criticized the committee because it held its meetings in secret and issued no statements of its proceedings. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 13 Ag 52, D-12, 777.00/8-1352. Its duties were to approve such matters as: contracts for oil, petrol, stores for medical, police and public works departments, and for supply of electric power and water; the organization of the district administration; approval of the Eritrean Functions of Government Act; the selection of British officers to be retained from a list drawn up by F. Stafford; future government transport; organization of the police and prisons; the future of newspapers published by the BA; education policy; formation of an excise department separate from customs which would come under federal control; private property agreements for government use; revision of the judicial system; and draft budget estimates for the first year of the new government. See UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, 36-38, 44, & Annex F.

38 In early 1951, when the BA was considering its approaches to fulfilling its responsibilities under UN Resolution 390, there was much discussion about establishing a 'consultative council' made up of 17 persons selected because of "personal attributes and prestige and without reference to political party adherence." The idea was rejected by the both the Unionist Party and the Ethiopian Government who thought it would be impossible for the BA to select members whose appointments the public would not construe as political in character. By mid-July, the notion was abandoned because such a selection, however impartial, would have been a potential cause of division among the people. See UK, PRO, BA, Report, Stafford to Allen, FO, 6 No 51, FO 371/90406/1517/17, 31-32.

39 Ali Redai, as the leader of the inactive Moslem League of the

Western Province remained strongly under the influence of F. Stafford, special adviser to the BA, up to and after the beginning of federation. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 29 Ag 52, D-22, 777.00/8-2952.

40 Half-castes were included in the definition of Eritrean. See UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, par. 127.

41 By September 1952, there were 100 elementary schools (13,500 pupils including 3,000 girls), 14 middle (1,200 pupils with 200 girls), 2 secondary (167 male pupils), and 1 teachers' training college (60 had been graduated at the date of federation). See UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, 11 & 25. It should be noted, however, the task of bringing education to all Eritreans on all levels was quite beyond both the means and purpose of the administration, whose main responsibility was to maintain the territory until its future had been decided.

42 UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, 25.

43 UNGA, Final Report, 68, par. 747.

44 UNGA, Final Report, 68, par. 748.

45 UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, Annex "E."

46 Section A, par. 11.

47 Following traditional methods, Eritreans had in the past chosen their local leaders and had elected representatives on the BA's district advisory councils. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 24 Ja 52, A-111, 777.00/1-2452.

48 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 24 Ja 52, A-111, 777.00/1-2452. For voting purposes, each constituency was sub-divided into wards, of which there were 238 in the entire territory.

49 About 2,500 to 3,000 Italo-Eritreans were disenfranchised because they held Italian nationality; however, for induction into the future Eritrean Government, Italo-Eritreans were not excluded due to their holding foreign nationality. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 24 Ja 52, A-111, 777.00/1-2452.

50 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 16 Ja 52, T-93, 777.00/1-1652.

51 The proclamation had been delayed several months from publication because of the Italo-Eritrean issue. It remained in force into federation.

52 One of the ties involved Ibrahim Sultan, disliked by Stafford and

generally a thorn in the side of the BA. Sultan said that five of the six electors for his tribal group, the Rugbat, had reported to the British supervising officer they wished to cast their votes for him, but that the officer had told them they would have to wait until 25 March, the date of the second part of the election process. Meanwhile, the place for casting ballots had been changed to another, less centralized town. On the day of the final election, two of the electoral representatives had changed their minds bringing a tie vote. It was clear that the BA had attempted, through hints of favors or intimidation and a realignment of the wards of Sultan's constituency, to keep him from the assembly; however, on 12 May, he won his seat but too late to vote for chairman and deputy chairman of the assembly. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 1 Ap 52, D-145, 777.00/4-152 and 29 Ap 52, D-163, 777.00/4-2952.

53 Although in Asmara, only 13,664 of an eligible 30 to 40,000 voters registered, more than 87% voted, while in Massawa, where registration had not been heavy, 89%, 2,767, voted. See UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, 29, par. 169; USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 21Fb 52, T-108, 777.00/2-2152; and UK, PRO, BA, "Report on the First Stages of Direct Elections For the Eritrean Representative Assembly," FO 371/96722/1016/9.

54 UNGA, Final Report, 1952, (A/2188), 36, par. 412 and UK, PRO, BA, "Report...on Elections For...Assembly," FO 371/96722/1016/12.

55 UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, 31, par. 185, and UK, PRO, BA, Assembly Minutes, FO 371/96740/10114/2G.

56 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 8 Ap 52, D-144, 777.00/4-852.

57 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 17 Ap 52, D-154, 777.00/4-1752.

58 Although Nadel in his Races and Tribes of Eritrea does not list the Bet Asghede but lists three of its four sub-groups, it cannot be discounted that the Bet Asghede comprised one large grouping. See map in L'Eritrea, Dalle Sue Origini A Tutto L'Anno 1901, B. Melli, Manuali Hoepli, Milano, 1902.

59 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 29 Ap 52, D-163, 777.00/4-2952.

60 See A. Arthur Schiller, professor of law at Columbia U. and a legal advisor to the UN Commissioner during summer 1951 and from April to August 1952, "Legislation," American Journal of Comparative Law, V-2, 1953, 375-83.

61 Mr. Eduardo Anze Matienzo, a lawyer from Bolivia, had been elected by the General Assembly on 14 December 1950. With a required simple majority, he edged out with 28 votes Justice Aung Khine (Burma), receiving 18 votes, and Mr. Victor Hoo (China), receiving 7 votes. See UNGA, (V), OR, Plenary Meetings (325th), 14 De 50, 674-75, par. 131.

- 62 UNGA, Final Report, 1952, (A/2188), 4, par. 39.
- 63 UNGA, Final Report, 1952, (A/2188), 12, par. 127.
- 64 UNGA, Final Report, par. 128.
- 65 UNGA, Final Report, par. 129.
- 66 It was submitted to the BA for amendment on 27 June. See UNGA, Final Report, 5, par. 51.
- 67 It should be noted that there were great difficulties in translating the complicated ideas of federation, autonomy, and sovereignty into local languages. It is quite likely that many Eritreans did not fully understand the document. See UNGA, Final Report, 12, par. 133.
- 68 UNGA, Final Report, 17, par. 180.
- 69 UNGA, Final Report, pars. 61-95.
- 70 UNGA, Final Report, 5, par. 58-59 and USG, State, Childs to SecSt, A. A., 26 Jy 51, D-31, 777.00/7-2651.
- 71 USG, State, Conversations in Childs to SecSt, 26 Jy 51, D-31, 777.00/7-2651.
- 72 UNGA, Final Report, 19.
- 73 It was advised that a federal court be created as a court of appeal in cases where there seemed to be some infringement; however, no such court was established.
- 74 UNGA, Final Report, 20, par. 210.
- 75 The crown's case was largely formulated by John H. Spencer, who was trained in international law at Harvard and in Paris and who acted as principal adviser to the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for periods between 1943 and 1974. See his book, Ethiopia at Bay: A Personal Account of the Haile Sellassie Years, Reference Publications, Algonac, Michigan, 1984.
- 76 UNGA, Final Report, 21-22, pars. 223-227.
- 77 UNGA, Final Report, Annexes, 75.
- 78 During Federation, all elective matters rested on old proclamation 121 of the BA.
- 79 Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Honduras,

Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Korea, Libya, Mexico, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Switzerland, Turkey, Uruguay, USA (Arizona, California, Georgia, Idaho, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, & Wyoming), USSR, Venezuela, and West Germany (Bavaria, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, & Saxony). For details of the constitution's legal basis, see UNGA, Final Report, Chapter VI, 48-58.

80 For details see UNGA, Final Report, 27-29.

81 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 21 Feb 52, T-108, 777.00/2-2152.

82 See UNGA, Final Report, 27-29.

83 UNGA, Final Report, 29-35.

84 UNGA, Final Report, 35, par. 404.

85 UNGA, Final Report, Chapter IV.

86 UNGA, Final Report, 38, par. 428.

87 UNGA, Final Report, 38, par. 429.

88 For details, see UNGA, Final Report, Chap. VII.

89 No person who had been a member of the assembly in the previous two years was eligible.

90 The Eritrean Gazette, hereafter EG, 1957:19, 2, p. 16 (ON-124).

91 He was from the Rugbat group, as was Ibrahim Sultan, a merchant, a member of the Moslem League of the Western Province, and a friend of Ali Redai. See UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 30 Oct 52, T-95, FO 371/96723/1016/20. After Tedla Bairu's fall in mid-1955, Asfaha Woldemicael, his successor, appointed Araia Wassie as interior secretary.

92 Member of the assembly from Decemhare in Akkele Guzai, educated in Italian schools, employee in the Italian Administration, recorder in the native court for Saganeiti from Dec 1942 to Oct 1947 and for Decemhare and Saganeiti from Nov 1947 to Mar 1952, collaborator on the Eritrean Weekly News, and a moderate unionist. See Puglisi, 280b. After Tedla Bairu's administration, Tesfaiyohannes Berhe became the new secretary of finance.

93 Member of the BA, studied at the Swedish Evangelical Mission, member of the Italian colonial staff from 1933-1938, employed by the Eritrean police from 1940-1944, attained the rank of 1st sergeant, employed in civil matters with the Eritrean police from 1944-1946, administrative assistant in the BA, from 1 May 1952 promoted to senior divisional officer for Hamasien, a protestant, and a friend of Tedla

Bairu with unionist leanings. See Puglisi, 128a and UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 30 Ot 52, T-95, FO 371/96723/1016/20. After the collapse of Tedla Bairu, Ghebreiohannes Tesfamariam was put in charge of economic affairs, but was ousted in mid-1960 with the return of Fessahazion Haile, although the latter was almost immediately replaced in fall 1960 by Ali Redai.

94 Descendant of the naibs of Massawa (whose family members had been leaders in the community since the coming of Sultan Selim I, who occupied Massawa in 1517), nazir of Massawa, president of the native court there, and a member of the BA. See UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, par. 234, 39. Although not well suited for his position in the cabinet, he brought support from Red Sea Muslims. See UK, PRO, 30 Ot 52, T-95, FO 371/96723/1016/20. With the fall of Tedla Bairu, Ali Redai became secretary of social services.

95 EG, "Eritrean Functions of Government Order No. 5," 1954:16,2, p. 24 (0-10). Haregot Abbai was a member of the assembly representing a district in Hamasien, educated at an agrarian school in Adi Ugri, employed by the Italian colonial regime from 1924-35, on the Italian colonial, military staff from 1936-31 Mr 41, a lower court judge from 1 Fb 1938-1941, a transportation industrialist during the BA, and one of the founders of the Unionist Party and vice president of the Asmara branch for two succeeding terms. See Puglisi, 161b. In mid-1955, Haregot Abbai was replaced by Fessahazion Haile, who had been economic secretary, who in turn was ousted in fall 1955 by Omar Mohammed Hassano from the Assaorta group. Omar Mohammed Ibrahim Hassano had attended an Italian trade school in Keren, had been employed by the Italian colonial government from 1930-41 in Agordat, during the BMA had been an interpreter in Agordat from 1941-46, Eritrean staff officer from 1952, and had aided in the termination of the Beni Amer rebellion of 1946-47, led by Muntaz. See Puglisi, 223ab.

96 UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, 41.

97 For full details, see UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, Annex H.

98 Of 66 sets of the best quarters in Asmara, only 30 were granted to the Ethiopian Government by the BA. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 9 Sp 52, D-30, 777.00/9-952.

99 For a complete list of properties given over to federal authorities, see UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, Annex K.

100 UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, 45.

101 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 19 Sp 52, D-33, 775A.00/9-1952.

102 Although compared to the western world, Eritrea was politically weak, it had had much more experience in democratic institutions than had been experienced by those, especially the federal services staff, in Ethiopia where such institutions had never existed.

103 UNGA, Report...The Ad. of Eritrea, De 1950-Sp 1952, (A/2233), 8 No 52, 47, par. 288.

104 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 6 Ag 52, D-9, 777.00/8-652.

105 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 9 Sp 52, D-30, 777.00/9-952.

106 In his statement upon the occasion of the ratification of Eritrea's constitution, the emperor referred to Eritreans as "our loyal subjects in Eritrea," indicating that Eritrea would be treated by the same manner as the rest of the empire. See UNGA, Final Report, 1952, (A/2188), 46. Also, the address of the official stationery of the State Bank of Ethiopia read, "Asmara, Ethiopia." See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 19 Sp 52, D-34, 775A.00/9-1952.

107 "Congratulations," Ethiopia, 11 Sp 52, in USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 25 Sp 52, D-38, 775A.00/9-2552.

108 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 19 Sp 52, D-33, 775A.00/9-1952.

109 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 19 Sp 52, D-34, 775A.00/9-1952.

110 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 5 Sp 52, D-28, 777.00/9-552.

111 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 17 Sp 54, D-39, 775A.00/9-1754.

112 UNGA, Progress Report, 1951, (A/1959), Appdx, par. 56.

113 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 9 Sp 52, D-30, 777.00/9-952.

ERITREA: SEPARATISM AND IRREDENTISM 1941 - 1985

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CHAPTER III

FEDERATION

1952 - 1962

PART I

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL

INFRINGEMENTS

On 15 September 1952, Chief Administrator (Sir) Duncan Cumming proclaimed Eritrea an "autonomous unit" federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian crown. Jurisdictional powers were shared by the Federal Government of Ethiopia and the Eritrean Government, which had been formed over a period of twenty-one months by the administering authority according to UN Resolution 390 A (V). Contained within the resolution was the federating act ratified by the emperor on 11 September 1952, as Ethiopian proclamation 124.

Two months before, on 10 July 1952, the constitution of Eritrea had been adopted by the recently formed Eritrean General Assembly and ratified by the emperor on 11 August 1952. The document contained a bill of rights lifted from the federating act, enumerating personal liberties not found in either Ethiopia's 1931 or its revised 1955 constitutions. All the provisions of the Federal Act, including the federal apparatus with its executive, legislative, and judicial branches as well as the Imperial Federal Council, were, in fact, to be found in the constitution either verbatim or retained in substance. The emperor appointed a limited number of Eritreans to all organs of the Federal Government and to the new services resulting from the application of the Federal Act, but for some local federal offices, qualified Eritreans were passed over in favor of Shoans.¹ Since the federal apparatus became indistinguishable from the crown, one of the most important clauses of the constitution was that which charged the Federal Government to "ensure to residents in Eritrea, without distinction of nationality, race, sex, language, or religion the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental liberties...."²

As the emperor's representative established himself in Asmara and each newly elected or appointed official took office, the problem of

translating the complicated and foreign (to the history and civilization of both Ethiopia and Eritrea) fabric of the federation into workable relationships began. Trends became quickly discernible. In order to cooperate with the throne, the Eritrean Government began to request advice and information from the Ethiopian Government through the latter's representative, but it found its inquiries ignored, and thus began a subservient relationship which the crown's advocate, after Tedla Bairu, the first chief executive, fostered to the extent that Asmara gradually lost its independence.³ Relations between Eritrean and Federal officials became quickly strained and combative. After 1955 and the resignation of Tedla Bairu, the office of the chief executive rarely acted without the approval and consent of the emperor's representative, Bitwoded (hereafter Bit.) Andargachew Messai.⁴

Immediately following the transfer of power from the BA to the newly formed Eritrean Government, living costs began to rise sharply, due in great part to the imposition of the Ethiopian import tariffs which increased on an average of thirty percent and caused a cost-of-living rise of nearly twenty percent.⁵ Attached to import duties was a nine percent tax for education and public health, in accordance with the practice in Ethiopia, which in Eritrea was not only unconstitutional but which benefited primarily Ethiopia.⁶ On 26 October 1952, a demonstration of about three hundred people, mostly disaffected unemployed, formed outside the chief executive's house, protesting rapidly rising prices for basic commodities.⁷ As a result, a price control committee, representing a wide spectrum of Eritrea's business community, was appointed to advise the secretary of economic affairs on policy in restraint of prices. The assembly vetoed

a proposal to form a second committee to investigate the causes of price increases.

In protest of the worsening economic condition, the assembly unsuccessfully attempted to debate the subject, even though it had no legal jurisdiction.⁸ Demonstrations and strikes, which had occurred as early as January 1952, continued through the first year of federation. Unemployment increased in part due to the departure of the British Administration, Italian companies and capital, a reduced budget, and generally an uncertain business community. Because of the reduced budget, some government employees, especially in the public works and transportation departments, found themselves unemployed.

As opposition to the empire increased so also did the crown's determination to combat it with the reorganization of the old Andinnet Party, the youth section of the former Unionist Party.⁹ Muslim merchants began to complain to the Sudanese liaison officer, resident in Asmara, that their businesses and lives were being threatened unless they actively supported a campaign for annexation.¹⁰ The resurrected Andinnet Party became an integral part of Addis Ababa's campaign to annex Eritrea.

The Ethiopian Government wasted no time in initiating its annexation program. On 30 September 1952, it published what was purported to be a federal judiciary proclamation, number 130 of 1952.¹¹ Issued by the emperor personally, it claimed to define federal judicial power as an act of sovereignty of supreme power. Sections four, seven, and eight of the proclamation were completely contrary to the Federal Act, since they would have made the crown the court of final appeal in Eritrea rather than its supreme court. Furthermore, in absence of any agreement between the Federal and the

Eritrean governments and any legislation of the Eritrean assembly, a federal court could not be a court of appeal from the Eritrean courts.

Another trend which worked to the advantage of the emperor was the immediate discord in the ranks of the unionist party, which began to appear in spring 1953. A great many members felt that the worsened economic situation in Eritrea was due to federal ties to Addis Ababa and that the crown's wish to retain expensive foreign advisers in positions which should rightly have gone to loyal party members was a denial of promises made to them prior to the departure of the British Administration.¹² They looked to the chief executive for guidance, but Dejatch Tedla Bairu, not wishing to offend the emperor, would do nothing. The rising tide of opposition had a potential leader in Dejatch Abraha Tessema, who, having lost the election for chief executiveship to Dejatch Tedla, was also resentful that he had not been appointed to a responsible position in the new government. In an attempt to quell internal unionist rivalries, in December 1952, Dejatch Tedla Bairu had transferred particular Tesemma sympathizers to positions in other parts of Eritrea where their influence would be neutralized.¹³ In early March 1953, Dejatch Abraha Tesemma was summoned to Addis Ababa, where he remained for two months, after which he dropped out of the political arena.¹⁴ The emperor had thus successfully thwarted any further division within the unionist movement and had placed Tedla Bairu in a position of gratitude to the crown for his political survival. In the initial stages of federation, the throne's strategy went unchallenged.

After the transfer of authority, the Eritrean treasury came immediately under the control of the emperor's representative. All revenues deposited in the branch bank of the Ethiopian state bank in

Asmara went directly to Addis Ababa, a procedure which, although normal, was viewed with suspicion. In other financial matters, the battle, begun in the first session of the assembly between the Eritrean Government and the Federal Government to determine the very important question of Eritrea's fair share of customs revenue, remained unresolved to the end of federation.

The passage of authority had caused some anxiety in business circles. Economic conditions worsened as foreign and local companies announced plans to close their doors in anticipation of what many Eritreans feared would be an unhappy marriage between the ex-colony and Ethiopia. The two billion Italian lire which had been set aside in May 1953 to pay arrears of pensions to former Eritrean colonial police had little effect in alleviating unemployment.¹⁵

There were other circumstances which more clearly presaged annexation. The only important opposition newspaper, Dintzi Ertra (The Voice of Eritrea), was closed by government order in March 1953. Opinions of the Eritrean members of the Federal Council were largely ignored by the Ethiopian Government.¹⁶ After the first several years of federation, it ceased to function.

The annulment of Woldeab Woldemariam's by-election¹⁷ to the assembly left Ibrahim Sultan and his following as the only major voice to protest the imperial government's increasingly autocratic and arbitrary disregard for Eritrea's constitutional rights and guarantees. As this disdain became more evident, most of the eighty percent of the assembly's Christian members, who were former unionists, became gradually disenchanted with Ethiopia's presence in Eritrea and in the following decade acted in concert with Eritrea's rebellious Muslim vanguard. Those who looked to the United Nations tribunal in Asmara as

a protection against Ethiopian encroachment were disappointed to find that it had only a very limited function of settling Italian claims against property which had been confiscated by the British Administration or later seized by the Eritrean Government.¹⁸ Between September 1952 and November 1962, the most important freedoms in the Eritrean constitution were in some way abridged, ignored, or violated.

Subversion was accomplished through a gradual and constitutionally illegal assumption of power and authority by the Ethiopian Government. Through Addis Ababa's discreet financial support of Eritreans loyal to the crown, including most members of the assembly, especially after the first four-year session, the throne was eventually able to quell opposition to annexation. Written into the Eritrean constitution was the first of many challenges by the Solomonic crown, namely the office of the emperor's representative.¹⁹ It was the idea of the panel of legal consultants, who redacted the constitution to establish an imperial agent who would have constitutional status without impairing internal autonomy. The representative would act as a legally constituted link between the crown, the head of the federation, and Eritrea's democratic institutions.

The emperor's representative had precedence at official ceremonies and was empowered (article 12) to administer the oath of office to the chief executive. The oath bound the chief executive "to respect the Federation under the sovereignty of the Imperial Crown, loyally to serve Eritrea, to defend its Constitution and its laws, to seek the welfare of the Eritrean people..., and to seek no personal advantage from office."²⁰ The emperor's representative symbolized the legitimacy of the highest and ultimate law of the land in accordance with the Federal Act and the Eritrean constitution; nevertheless, the

representative could not, by his abstention, prevent the chief executive and the secretaries of the executive departments, also sworn in by the emperor's representative (article 73), from taking office.

Article thirteen gave the crown's representative the right to deliver speeches "from the throne," before and after every session of the assembly, on matters of "common interest," to the federation and to Eritrea. His addresses were regularly delivered in Amharic, which few members of the assembly, especially Muslims, understood, and the words "our people" and "our subjects" were regularly used to refer to Eritreans, which caused considerable annoyance. He was not to deal with domestic affairs or internal Eritrean policies, and his address could not be followed by any discussion or vote of the assembly. The representative also had the power to recommend the reconsideration of legislation which might encroach upon federal jurisdiction or which might involve the international responsibility of the Addis Ababa government.

Further, the emperor's agent was responsible for promulgating legislation voted by the assembly.²¹ If he failed to act on any piece of adopted legislation within five days of receipt, it automatically became law, but he had twenty days to consider whether proposed legislation should be returned to the assembly for a further vote. Thereafter, the draft resolution in question went automatically to the chief executive, who also could return it to the assembly for reconsideration. Nevertheless, constitutional safeguards preventing interference in domestic affairs, or other matters not delegated to the emperor's representative, did not impede the quiet corruption of certain assembly members, who helped to pass legislation that violated Eritrean citizens' constitutional rights. Moreover, since ten to

fifteen percent of the assembly's members were nearly illiterate and many others failed to grasp the legal intricacies of the Eritrean constitution and the institutions it had created, nearly all legislation passed from 1952 through 1962 was introduced by the chief executive.

Although not the intention of Matienzo and the panel of legal experts, the language of the constitution's bill of rights (article 22) tended to nullify the effect of the freedoms contained therein.²² Four of the article's eleven rights were made subject to the "requirements of the law," as if the specifics of the rights were to be elaborated at a future date, which never occurred. Also, since the word 'law' had not been limited to Eritrea, it gave opportunity for the Ethiopian Government to presume federal laws were binding in Eritrea in all matters. These rights involved the owning and disposing of property, including the undertaking of contractual obligations; the inviolability of correspondence and domicile; the exercise of any profession; and the freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention. The tenth freedom, that of a fair trial, contained the rights of petition and of appeal in capital cases not to the chief executive, as one would have expected, but to the emperor, making the crown unconstitutionally the court of last resort rather than the Eritrean Supreme Court (article 90).²³ Tacked onto the end of the enumerated rights in Resolution 390 (V), which became the Federal Act, but omitted from article twenty-two, was the following statement which would have contented any authoritarian regime and which in spirit nullified every right or at least made them subject to the whim of the policing power: "The respect for the rights and freedom of others and the requirements

of public order and the general welfare alone will justify any limitation to the above rights."²⁴

Dejatch Tedla Bairu, Eritrea's first chief executive, had been secretary-general of the Unionist Party and thus favored a close relationship with the emperor.²⁵ His candidacy had been supported by the Ethiopian Government, and even F. Stafford²⁶ acknowledged him as the natural choice.²⁷ He was elected on 28 August 1952 as Eritrea's first chief executive, while Ali Redai became president of the assembly by a unanimous vote on 8 September and Blatta Demsas Woldemicael,²⁸ the body's vice president.²⁹ In defeating (42-21) his arch rival Dejatch Abraha Tesemma,³⁰ political favorite of non-unionists, Dejatch Tedla created a powerful enemy in Dejatch Abraha by failing to nominate him for any important government position.

On 24 October 1953, the police intercepted an armed attempt on Dejatch Tedla's life. The latter found in this event an opportunity to have his most important political foe, Dejatch Abraha, arrested along with his brother and son.³¹ On October 30, he decreed that Dejatch Abraha should be incarcerated indefinitely and that all family members should be dismissed from their posts in the government. He was forced, however, to retract this order and sign a release for Dejatch Abraha, his son, and his brother after an unfavorable court decision.

Because of his increasing unwillingness to answer questioning assemblymen, his contentious behaviour, and his general display of independence from consulting the palace on important decisions - an undesirable example to Ethiopian governor-generals, opposition to Dejatch Tedla began to emerge early in his second term. It was in the assembly on 4 July 1955 that Dejatch Tedla's resignation was precipitated. By his authority under article seventy-nine of the

Eritrean constitution (the suppression of brigandage clause), he enacted Public Security Proclamation No. 1, issued the day after his return from a two week visit to Addis Ababa.³² Dejatch Tedla ordered Ali Redai, president of the assembly, to suspend the body for twenty days (an unconstitutional act) to prevent discussion of the emergency order's legality. The measure had been motivated by an attack on 28 June 1955 on a police patrol, involving about sixty shifta.³³ The emperor's representative, who thought the chief executive too dictatorial and inexperienced, gained the consent and encouragement of ten leading members of the assembly, including Ibrahim Sultan, and the imperial representative to petition the emperor against Dejatch Tedla. The emperor, exceeding his jurisdictional authority, ruled the suspension of the assembly unconstitutional and forced Dejatch Tedla and Ali Redai to resign. Rather than a redress of grievances, the complaining assembly members gained a new chief executive, more firmly under the crown's influence than the former had been; thus, the quarrel between the assembly and Dejatch Tedla worked to the advantage of the emperor's design.

Before federation, Dejatch Tedla had supported complete union and had continued to support annexation through at least his first two terms as chief executive. At the ceremonies held on 11 September 1954 for the second anniversary of federation and the celebration of the Ethiopian new year, Dejatch Tedla delivered a pro-annexation speech which he ended by saying, "And [on] the day when the population of Mareb Mellash [Eritrea], having examined the situation, in lieu of a federative union, should choose complete union, my joy shall be great."³⁴

It was not, however, Dejatch Tedla's ambition to undermine the federation but to increase his own authority at the expense of the emperor's representative, with whom he continued to have frequent disagreements. He had periodically prevented the auditor general from routinely reporting executive affairs to the legislature, had reduced his cabinet secretaries to the role of mere clerks (never meeting with them as a cabinet), had occasionally obstructed the democratic processes of the constitution, had blocked persons opposed to him politically from taking their seats in the assembly after by-elections, had suppressed independent journalism, and had failed to settle the problem of Eritrea's share of customs receipts.³⁵

Also, he had surrounded himself with sycophants and had placed incompetents in some important positions, such as controller of the tobacco monopoly, which during the British Administration had been responsible for about ten percent of overall revenue,³⁶ but had during the first years of federation lost considerable money through corruption and black market activities. Furthermore, Dejatch Tedla had not been able to prevent the gradual loss of efficiency at the port of Massawa, causing valuable shipping to go to Assab, a distinct financial advantage to the Federal Government, since trucking goods from Assab to the capital was cheaper than from Massawa. Because of the incompetence of the port's director, who had been appointed by the crown and who had "never seen the sea before September 15 [1952] and [had] not the remotest idea how a port work[ed],"³⁷ valuable revenue was lost to an already diminished Eritrean budget. Tedla Bairu had further alienated some of his constituency by appointing Christians as senior divisional officers to Muslim dominated areas, such as Massawa and Keren, which invited immediate protest for their removal.³⁸

His resignation on 26 July 1955,³⁹ near the end of his third term, came as no surprise since he had managed to alienate a great number of people important to his political survival, not least of whom was Ras Tesemma and his family. Further, his antagonism to the crown's legate and his cooling toward annexation had placed him in disfavor with the throne, which had begun to consider him too headstrong to continue as chief executive.⁴⁰ Besides, Dejatch Tedla viewed the crown's growing infringement upon Eritrea's jurisdiction as a direct threat to his own authority.

Moreover, in September 1954, he had received opposition in the assembly over proposals for the expenditure of E\$1m in surplus revenue. Dejatch Tedla had suggested the money be used for an agricultural project at Zula, but a majority (44) of the assembly members, encouraged by the Federal Government and the finance committee, wanted to raise the salaries of the police and renovate police quarters. After entry visas for the Rumanian agricultural experts whom Dejatch Tedla had wished to bring to Eritrea had been denied by the Ethiopian Government, the proposal was rejected. As he did during the discussion in the assembly of Proclamation No. 1 of 1955, Dejatch Tedla persuaded the president of the assembly, Ali Redai, to adjourn the session. After the assembly attempted to remove the president, Dejatch Tedla closed the assembly.

Another example of federal interference in the domestic affairs of Eritrea occurred on the eve of Dejatch Tedla's resignation. With the support of the assembly, the chief executive had made a contract with SEDAO, a utilities company in Asmara, to build a dam at Durfo, but the Federal Government blocked the project by refusing entry permits for Italian experts and by denying import licenses for the materials; thus,

the scheme was defeated. In the first part of July 1955, a committee of ten prominent assemblymen, both Christian and Muslim, was formed, including Ibrahim Sultan, Kadi Ali Omar, Kadi Musa Adum, and Idris Mohammed Adum all from the Moslem League and Asmerom Woldeghiorghis from the Liberal Party. The group's spokesman, Dimetros Ghebremariam, petitioned the emperor to have both Ali Redai and Dejatch Tedla removed.

By the end of the month, both had resigned and had been replaced by men more cooperative with imperial designs.⁴¹ In July 1961, Dejatch Tedla explained his resignation by citing his refusal to accept Ethiopian encroachments over Eritrean autonomy, particularly the passage of palace-sponsored and basically undemocratic bills [see below].⁴² Later that same year, he confided to the American consul in Asmara that "the Shoans...could not care less what happened to Eritrea, providing it was fully integrated into the Empire."⁴³ What Dejatch Tedla had not acknowledged was his general failure to accept his subordinate position as the throne's man in Eritrea. He had shown himself too personally ambitious and quarrelsome with those whom he needed as friends. Dejatch Tedla was replaced by the emperor's personal vice representative in Eritrea, Fit. (later Dejatch) Asfaha Woldemicael,⁴⁴ who remained chief executive from August 1955 to the end of federation in November 1962, retaining, throughout, his position as the emperor's vice representative as well as member of the board which appointed government officials.

The period from 1952 to 1962 witnessed the Ethiopianization of the Eritrean Government. In subtle ways the democratic principles of the Eritrean constitution were gradually eroded and replaced by the autocratic dicta of the Federal Government. Local officials and

politicians, who did not want to lose their situations, did little to resist. Many were under the strong influence of the Imperial Government which had at its disposal its own well-paid following.⁴⁵

The first of a series of assembly legislative acts, which infringed upon Eritrean citizens' constituted rights and privileges, was the Eritrean Identity Card Act, passed on 8 July 1953. It required every male of federal nationality (i.e., an Eritrean citizen), over the age of sixteen years and resident in Asmara, Massawa, Decemhare, Adi Kaieh, Keren, Adi Ugri (Mendefera), or Agordat, to carry at all times an identity card which had to be produced upon demand by any member of the police force.⁴⁶ The second violation was the Eritrean Citizenship Act, passed at the same time (probably for electoral purposes), which dictated that all federal nationals who were citizens, as defined in UN Resolution 390 (V) of 2 December 1950, must register their names in order to be considered as citizens under the law.⁴⁷ No such law existed nor had been enacted in Ethiopia. Since registration should have provided sufficient evidence to prove citizenship, the identity card was not only an extraordinary burden on one segment (urban males) of the population,⁴⁸ but it also posed a threat to the right to security of person (article 22 (b)) and freedom of movement (article 25). Further, it was unlike anything required under the Ethiopian law and was thus incompatible with federal statutes.

On 22 September 1954, the assembly was quick to pass the Senafe Sub-Division Emergency Order which declared a state of emergency in the Senafe area, southeast of Asmara. It had been designed specifically to deal with disturbances that had been caused by a chronic land dispute which had come to a crisis on 20 September, when angry villagers opened fire on police who, retaliating, killed one person and arrested

about four hundred others.⁴⁹ Although the precise nature of the land dispute involved decisions made by the previous two administrations,⁵⁰ the local resentment against police interference increased substantially after implementation of the emergency order. Under Eritrea's constitution, it contravened basic liberties by imposing harsh curfews, non-compensatory billeting of troops,⁵¹ heavy fines accompanied by seizure of property, and arrest without warrant.

The unrest was exacerbated by the Eritrean Land Tenure Act of July 1953,⁵² which required the redistribution of land on a twenty-seven-year cycle rather than the traditional seven-year cycle and the payment of gebri, a "tribute"⁵³ to be exacted for the fiscal year 1953/1954. (In the following year, because of strong citizen protest, the gebri was halved by the emperor, acting outside his jurisdiction, and remained at the new level for the duration of federation.⁵⁴) The primary object of the act was to stimulate each farmer's responsibility toward his land through its improvement by the planting of long-range crops. The act's secondary purpose was to encourage young men, especially those from the highlands, to take up permanent residence on government owned lowlands, a movement strongly opposed by local Muslims who feared that lands which had been considered their own would be taken away.⁵⁵ Because of strong resistance from both the lowlands and highlands, the act was never put into effect.

A further act was announced on 4 July 1955. The Eritrean Public Security Proclamation No. 1 was passed following a resurgence of banditry beginning in March and culminating on 28 June with a fierce and bloody attack upon an Eritrean police patrol in Akkele Guzai district near the Ethiopian border.⁵⁶ The fact that the proclamation had been issued the day after the chief executive, Dejazach Tedla, had

returned from the capital and that, prior to federation, several of the shifta had been in the employ of the Ethiopian Government strongly suggested collusion between the crown and, at least, some of the shifta, in an attempt to embarrass the Eritrean Government because of its apparent inability to maintain order.⁵⁷ Further, the unconstitutional aspects of the proclamation [see below] not only caused rancor among the people and in the assembly but also served to embarrass the chief executive, providing an opportunity for the emperor's representative publicly to criticize his administration.

The proclamation stated that any two or more people travelling or meeting together might be classified as a "band" and that it would be an offence if one of them was armed and not a member of a duly constituted police force.⁵⁸ The proclamation's ostensible purpose was to suppress "organized brigandage" which, according to the first clause in the preamble, threatened "public order and the security of persons and property in Eritrea." Under the act, chiefs or headmen could be forced to enter into a bond on behalf of the community collectively to keep the peace for six-month periods. The measure also featured non-compensatory billeting of troops, the impressment of villagers as auxiliaries, and the arbitrary collection of fines from villages thought to be harboring shifta or to have been involved in shifta activity.⁵⁹ To ensure payment of fines the government was authorized to confiscate any moveable property in a village. Article ten of the proclamation permitted the chief executive to have anyone suspected of having caused public disorder to be detained for up to three months without trial and a further three months if the chief executive thought necessary, in direct violation of article twenty-two (j) of the Eritrean constitution which stated, inter alia, that

Eritreans shall have the right to a "fair and equitable trial." In addition, the proclamation could be used to detain individuals for ten days before formal charges were made.

The act thus became a potent weapon of the chief executive and the crown to suppress strikes and criticism of government policies. The most common practice was for the commissioner of police, the "competent authority," to charge a person with a crime which could never be proven in court but which permitted the accused to be held in jail pending a judicial proceeding. When the trial date approached, the prosecution officer could move for a postponement which assured the continued incarceration of the accused. After several months, the commissioner of police could drop the charges and release the accused.

Another imperial strategy to undermine Eritrea's internal autonomy became evident on 23 July 1955, when, despite having no constitutional authority, the emperor proclaimed an amnesty for all shifta in Eritrea for three months. The fact that the Eritrean assembly had granted the chief executive such powers in the Amnesty Act of 29 January 1953, further clarified the crown's stratagem of bringing Eritrea more closely under the tutelage of the Ethiopian Government by usurping authority.⁶⁰ On 23 October 1955, before the Eritrean attorney general had ruled on the amnesty's constitutionality, the emperor withdrew his decree but not before 324 shifta had voluntarily surrendered. The effort established a temporary hiatus in shifta activity and enhanced the monarch's prestige.⁶¹

Since the unlawful possession of arms and ammunition had become very common and the penalties were thought "grossly inadequate," the Penal Law (Amendment) Act was passed on 9 April 1956.⁶² Anyone in possession of unlicensed arms or weapons could be fined E\$2,500 and/or

imprisoned up to five years. Six weeks later, on 22 June, The Surrender of Weapons General Notice 365 came into effect, suspending all licenses for "certain types of weapons" which had to be surrendered within fifteen days of the date of the notice.⁶³ Before the passage of the surrender of weapons notice, the Eritrean police under the direction of the ardent unionist, Colonel Tedla Ogbit, had already managed over the past year and a half either to capture or to cause to have surrendered a large quantity of arms and ammunition.⁶⁴

Nevertheless, organized banditry continued, causing the assembly to pass the Banditry Act of 29 August 1957, which increased the penalties for highway robbery.⁶⁵ The death penalty could be exacted against anyone found guilty of three or more crimes of violence, other than extortion of food, or if the assailant had a prior conviction as a member of an "armed band" with the common intention of committing a crime of violence. Further, if any member of a community or group (enda) was thought to be guilty of a violent crime and in possession of arms, the community, without benefit of a court trial, was obliged to bear a collective fine of up to E\$ fifty for every head of family and for every month of the duration of the offense unless it could be proved that the community could not have prevented the crime and that it had made an effort to apprehend the alleged criminal. It was also presumed that any member of the group who might not have been present at the time the banditry had taken place was equally guilty. Within ten kilometers of the site of the original offense, every head of family was required to make a proportionate contribution to compensate the victim of the offense.

Over the next two years, however, what the government had termed "organized banditry and highway robbery" increased to such an extent⁶⁶

that further extra-constitutional measures were employed against the population. On 10 September 1959 came an amendment to the 1957 banditry act, stating that anyone suspected of having committed or about to commit a crime of violence would be obliged to appear in court to answer a formal charge and that his whole moveable property could be seized and retained by the police until the accused was brought into custody.⁶⁷ If the person or persons did not appear to answer a formal charge, the property would be forfeited to the government. If anyone was convicted, all the property would be automatically confiscated.

Shifta activity continued throughout federation, becoming quite common and even more political in nature in the final two years.⁶⁸ On 1 September 1961, at what has since become known as the Battle of Mt. Adal - a watershed in contemporary Eritrean history, the occasional, politically motivated, violence of the previous decade changed to permanent opposition. The man who initiated what became one of contemporary Africa's longest civil wars was a Muslim farmer in the Western Province by the name of Sheik Hamid Idris Awate, who had been asked by dissident, Eritrean, Muslim leaders, including Sheik Idris Mohammed Adum, former president of the Eritrean assembly, and Osman Saleh Sabbe, to become commander of what became known as the Eritrean Liberation Front.

Sheik Hamid Awate had had more than ten years experience in the Italian army as well as six to seven years as a guerrilla fighter countering Ethiopian shifta raids and avenging old, local, tribal disputes.⁶⁹ As a well-respected member of his community and a well-known fighter, he took up arms to stop the emperor's attempts to dominate the Eritrean Government. He was further motivated by government grants of agricultural concessions to Eritrean and Ethiopian

officials in the Western Province in traditionally Muslim, Beni Amer-inhabited areas near the fertile Barka River area. He began with about eleven men, ill-armed with old Italian guns, but before his death from fever in August 1962, his movement, which became known as the popular revolutionary command, had grown to several hundred, including Beni Amer nomads and former members of the Eritrean police force and of the Sudanese and Ethiopian armies.⁷⁰

While internal resistance to the Ethiopian Government was increasing during the latter stage of federation, Eritreans who had gone abroad and vocally opposed the throne's encroachments became the opposition movement's external leaders outside the country. Following seven attempts on his life, Woldeab Woldemariam fled to Cairo in August 1953 and was joined there in 1959 by Ibrahim Sultan and Sheik Idris Adum, both of whom were escaping government harassment. Together, they concluded that Eritrea had lost its chance for democratic government because of the crown's successful manipulations and that any further efforts toward regaining it would come through military action. Contacts between Cairo and Eritrea's budding guerrilla forces were gradually established.

The emperor's continuing, successful efforts in subverting Eritrea's autonomy, and Sheik Hamid Awate's attempts at reversing the subvention, were done without attracting much international attention. Once the United Nations had completed its task of creating Eritrea's federal relationship, it relinquished all further consideration of the matter. By mid-1955, the Federal (Ethiopian) Government had gained dominance in nearly every field of the Eritrean Government. It manipulated Eritrea's economy through its control of Eritrea's share of customs duties, its unconstitutional granting of concessions to foreign

interests, its handling of foreign exchange through the State Bank of Ethiopia, and in the latter part of federation, the stationing of Ethiopian army units in Eritrea. The emperor's representative manipulated every important aspect of Eritrean life to the crown's advantage. The Federal Government encroached upon Eritrea's constitutional right to administer and build its own schools and unconstitutionally extended its maritime jurisdiction one hundred meters inland from the high water mark along the Eritrean coast by Federal Maritime Order No. 12 of 1953. Moreover, it had successfully influenced the assembly to pass acts prejudicial to Eritrea's interests and eventually gained absolute dominance in the assembly through the crown's control of Eritrean elections.

In early 1956, it became clear to the assembly that a constitutional crisis was developing over the elections scheduled for August. The UN commissioner, with British cooperation, had decided that the constitution should be based on generally accepted democratic principles and that certain laws governing the specific organization and functioning of the Eritrean Government should be passed by the assembly immediately after its inception. Thus, the commissioner, with the administering authority doing most of the drafting, set forth seven organic laws essential for the smooth running of the fledgling government.⁷¹ These laws gave legal recognition to the already existing court system; established four executive departments; organized and specified in two separate acts the manner in which the assembly would deal with the budget and the annual audit; set down the specifics to the civil service commission; set up an advisory council to assist the chief executive and the assembly in matters of economic and social progress; and, most importantly, designated the procedures

for elections to the assembly to be carried out every four years by the electoral high commissioner as established by article forty-five of the constitution. Six of these laws were duly passed by the assembly, but the Eritrean Electoral Act was not.⁷²

As a result, the chief executive had absolute power in the electoral process, since without a comprehensive electoral code, Proclamation 121 of 28 January 1952, issued by the British as an 'ad hoc' measure to elect the first Eritrean assembly, was operative and gave wide powers to the administering authority to decide by what method Eritrea's first assemblymen would be reelected. Despite the fact that articles fifteen, twenty-nine, and thirty-nine of Proclamation 121 were ultra vires under article forty-five of Eritrea's constitution (which had established an electoral high commissioner to oversee assembly elections), the chief executive, Asfaha Woldemicael, and the emperor's representative, Bit. Andargachew Messai (from whom Asfaha Woldemicael constantly sought advice), took the view that Proclamation 121 should stand as the only law in existence to guide the electoral process.

Proclamation 121 had never been considered or passed by the Eritrean assembly, but because the assembly had failed to pass and adopt the Eritrean Electoral Act as written by Matienzo, the assembly became increasingly the tool of the palace. The act, if it had been passed, would have permitted direct election of all members of the assembly, a situation which the crown wanted to avoid as it would have curtailed its control of the assembly, through the indirect elections of the electoral college, whereby, in most cases, local chiefs and elders appointed those who were to be in the electoral college. Further, it would have been an unwanted example of a relatively

independent electorate that did not exist in Ethiopia. After the assembly's first term, those who had been uncooperative with the palace were not reelected and those who had not were further compromised by their acceptance of gifts and money from the crown and the receipt of valuable government contracts and land concessions, which they could dispense to their retainers.

The electoral act was first considered in the assembly on 21 May 1953, when it was decided that a formal census should be taken to determine more precisely how many representatives should be apportioned to each rural population group and to the towns and cities. Because Muslims believed they were in the majority (Muslims controlled about 70% of the land area of Eritrea, but by population were about equal to Christians), they did not want to consider the electoral act until a census had been taken. A committee was formed under the chairmanship of Dejatch Ghebresghi Guangul, who referred the matter to the government where it remained for two years and then was forgotten. On 29 March 1956, Sheik Idris Adum, president of the assembly, inspired and welcomed a motion to have the government, in view of the impending elections, again present the draft of the electoral act. Reference was made to article forty-three (3) of the Eritrean constitution which stated that the "roll of qualified voters shall be drawn up and revised from time to time" and that the "system for establishing electoral rolls shall be fixed by law." Since there was insufficient time for a census to be taken, the assembly defeated the motion by a large majority, thus paving the way for the Ethiopian Government, through its representative in Asmara, to influence both the elections and the chief executive, who, as administering authority, determined the electoral

process. It also permitted the crown eventually to control many of the assembly's members by assuring their continued reelection.

On 13 June, two weeks after the second session of the 1956 assembly had convened, a vote of "no confidence" (47 for, 3 against) was passed against the new president of the assembly, Sheik Idris Adum, a Beni Amer from the Western Province, who had become unpopular with the emperor's representative by failing to seek his advice in matters concerning the assembly.⁷³ Sheik Idris had been a member of Ali Redai's party, the Moslem League of the Western Province, and thus had supported partition, although later when it became clear that partition had been defeated, he compromised in favor of federation. His vacillation had caused distrust among his constituency and among members of the assembly. He had even entertained hopes of replacing Ali Redai through intrigues with the crown. But, it was his display of independence from the crown in other matters and his personal ambitions which led to his downfall.

Shortly before the debate of 29 March on the electoral law, he had distributed to Muslim leaders throughout Eritrea a thousand copies of a letter by Sir James Shearer, president of the Eritrean supreme court. Sir James felt strongly that article forty-five of the constitution, appointing an electoral high commissioner, should be implemented prior to the impending elections. These views were contained in a letter to the chief executive, with a courtesy copy to the president of the assembly. The palace had tried to use Sheik Idris to bring Ali Redai down, but he had become too personally ambitious. This inspired Bit. Andargachew to arrange his removal.

Some members, pressured by the public which had remained sympathetic to Sheik Idris' political sentiments, attempted to stop

the proceedings by boycotting the assembly when it opened on 31 May 1956; for without a quorum no vote could be taken. This strategy lasted for two weeks during which fifty members of the assembly were "invited" one by one to the palace in Asmara until by 13 June, a quorum had been reached. Kenyazmatch Osman Abdulrahman, nazir of the Al Mada, the largest of the Beni Amer peoples, introduced the motion which removed Sheik Idris from the presidency. The episode was characteristic of the tactics the Ethiopian Government used to undermine the federation. There was no reason to resort to violence if 'legal' means could be employed successfully. With Sheik Idris gone, the presidency passed to Sheik Hamid Farej Hamid. Although, as assistant nazir of the Beni Amer group, Walid Noah, Sheik Hamid had supported partition of the Western Province, he had decided, after four years of federation, it would be personally more advantageous to change his views.

Two further attempts were made by the Muslim opposition to implement constitutionally fair elections. On 1 June 1956, Blatta Mohammed Kadi filed a petition with the Eritrean supreme court contesting the constitutionality of the 'ad hoc' Proclamation 121.⁷⁴ He argued that Proclamation 121 was not only contrary to article forty-five of the constitution but also contravened article nineteen which stated that neither organs of government nor public officials, namely the chief executive, should exercise any powers not specifically conferred upon them by the constitution. Moreover, article ninety-six (2) stated that in any conflict between the constitution and those laws enacted prior to the existence of federation and not repealed by the present assembly, the constitution should prevail.

Article ninety (3) required submission of conflicts to the supreme court as the only competent jurisdiction to decide such questions. Under pressure from the palace, the court stated that, since the elections had not been held, it could not rule on the constitutionality of the elections, especially since neither the chief executive nor the assembly had directed the court to do so. The decision reached by the five-member-court on 30 June was unanimous, although Sir James Shearer and Justice Melles Fre, an Eritrean not easily intimidated by the crown,⁷⁵ commented that Blatta Mohammed Omar Kadi and those for whom he spoke must address themselves to the chief executive and the members of the legislature. Further, Sir James reminded the court that article thirteen of Proclamation 121 stated that the assembly should continue until the constitution had been duly ratified by the assembly itself (done on 10 July 1952) and by the emperor (done on 11 August 1952) and that article ninety-nine of the constitution had prolonged the life of the assembly for four years, at the end of which time, the assembly presumably would have enacted the electoral act. Lastly, Sir James surmised that in the absence of an electoral law, the high commission (article 45) could not function, and only the chief executive and the assembly could resolve the situation.

Directly following the court's decision, however, Sir James returned to England on leave for three and a half months, and thus was not present when Ibrahim Sultan, still general secretary of the Moslem League, filed a claim with the supreme court stating that the general notices which had been published announcing the coming elections to be held on 22 August were unconstitutional.⁷⁶ The court refused to entertain the petition on the grounds that Ibrahim Sultan could not

establish that he was a party of interest who was suffering an infringement of constitutional rights from the mere publication of the notices. He appealed and was granted a hearing on 11 August, where, among other things, he accused the majority of the assembly of having held government appointments coterminous to their tenure as members, contrary to article forty-two (d) of the Eritrean constitution.⁷⁷ In fact, contrary to the law, most of the assembly's members held traditional political positions, which netted holders incomes aside from their government salaries. This, Ibrahim declared, was one important reason why the electoral act had not been adopted, since, if democratic elections had been instituted, the titles of dignitaries would have lost meaning and their influence in the community would have been greatly decreased.

Dr. F. F. Russell, Attorney General for Eritrea, in his arguments on the validity and constitutionality of Proclamation 121, stated that it had "no further effectiveness" and that it was "dead," but since article eighteen of the constitution provided for periodic elections and article seventy-six charged the chief executive with the duty of enforcing the constitution and the laws; and since the assembly had failed to pass any electoral legislation, the chief executive must use available machinery to enable elections to take place before 11 September, the end of Eritrea's first constituted assembly. On 20 August, the supreme court handed down a judgement following the arguments of the prosecutor and added that if a new assembly was not elected before 11 September, the executive and legislative branches of the government would cease to exist. Of the five members of the court, only Justice Melles Fre dissented, maintaining in agreement with Sir James Shearer, who had previously stated that Proclamation 121 of 1952

had expired and "to hold the elections of 1956 in accordance with Proclamation 121 of 1952 would be contrary to the Constitution of Eritrea." It would be "also contrary to the said Constitution not to hold the Elections in object; however, the Elections must be held in accordance with a law."⁷⁸ Further, it was clear that the supreme court could not order the executive to send a law to the assembly, nor could it require the latter to pass a law; consequently, it was for the executive power to solve the matter. Since, by Proclamation 121, all returning officers, who were charged with counting votes and determining the eligibility of candidates, were appointed by the chief executive, Asfaha Woldemicael now had nearly absolute control over the composition of the assembly. Prior to 1956, both Tedla Bairu and Asfaha Woldemicael, in their capacity as chief executive, had already invoked Proclamation 121 as validation for the executive to appoint returning and registration officers and electoral committees in two by-elections.⁷⁹ Thus, Proclamation 121 continued to serve as the empowering authority for the executive in electoral matters despite the legal judgement that the proclamation had fulfilled its purpose and could no longer be considered valid.⁸⁰ During the two succeeding assemblies, attempts were made to introduce passage of the electoral act, but these requests were assiduously ignored by the new chief executive.

As the 1956 elections approached (they had been postponed from 22 August to 5 September pending the supreme court's decision on the constitutionality of Proclamation 121), large numbers of Eritrean police gathered in the predominantly Muslim Western Province, intimidating and even arresting those who spoke against the government's "chosen" candidates. Some chiefs and elders were

removed, and Ethiopians were brought into Eritrea under the guise of laborers to vote in the elections.⁸¹ To prevent Ibrahim Sultan from standing for election in the Keren district, he was brought to trial in July on an old charge of having "insulted" the Sudanese Foreign Minister.⁸² He was fined E\$600, but the court failed to find him guilty of "moral turpitude," which would have barred him from standing for election, the initial object of the charge.⁸³ Ibrahim escaped the full intent of the charge, since to have jailed him would have provided the people with a rallying point.

However, the Moslem League and other groups supporting federation did not escape the court's ruling on a local law requiring police permits for public meetings, a clear denial, according to Sir James Shearer, of the right of peaceful assembly as stated in article twenty-two (f) of the constitution.⁸⁴ In the test case before the supreme court, the one Eritrean judge, who had at first agreed with Sir James that the law was unconstitutional, changed his mind after a visit to the palace and sided with the third judge, an Italian, leaving Sir James to write the dissenting opinion.

As early as June 1956, a movement was initiated in the assembly to have Shearer, the champion of the constitution, removed or forced into resignation. The prime mover was the vice president of the assembly, Melake Selam Dimetros Ghebremariam (hereafter Abba Dimetros), an Orthodox priest and a staunch supporter of the emperor's representative.⁸⁵ While this move failed, a second plan was successfully put into effect by HIM's representative, Bit. Andargachew, who saw an opportunity to minimize Sir James' influence by packing the supreme court and increasing its size from a maximum of seven to nineteen (contrary to article eighty-nine (1) of the constitution, which stipulated not less than three nor more than seven).⁸⁶ The last

session of the assembly for 1956 was held until nearly the eve of Ethiopian Christmas, while the chief executive and the palace contingent scurried about garnering support to pass a bill introduced by the chief executive on 7 December, for amending article eighty-nine (1) to allow not more than nineteen, nor less than eleven judges to sit on the supreme court.⁸⁷

Finally, on 27 December 1956, following the constituted (article 90 (2)) twenty-day interim necessary between submission of a bill and its discussion, the small, pro-federation, mostly Muslim, minority of the assembly sat quietly while the bill was debated and adopted, thus ensuring the judiciary's absolute cooperation in matters concerning crown policy in Eritrea.⁸⁸ The emperor's representative delayed ratifying the amendment until 6 August 1957, in order to allow time for any adverse public reaction to be vented. There was none. Further limitation to the power of the president of the supreme court came on 28 August 1957 with the assembly's passage of a bill which stripped Sir James of the power to recommend judges to the chief executive for appointment.⁸⁹ It was not until November 1959, that Sir James was finally ousted from the supreme court, when his seven-year, renewable contract was terminated.⁹⁰

Next, the magistrate courts were packed. From April 1956 to March 1957, thirteen additional judges were appointed by Asfaha Woldemicael,⁹¹ and on 6 March 1957, the assembly passed a bill which reorganized the magistrate court.⁹² Of the original twenty-three magistrates appointed in December 1952, only seven were reappointed on 20 May 1958,⁹³ and the number of magistrates was more than doubled over the next two years. Such reorganization left the entire legal process more vulnerable to manipulation.

A further infringement upon the court structure, in particular that of the jurisdiction of the supreme court, was the creation on 18 March 1958 of a high court of up to twenty judges.⁹⁴ Sitting in Asmara, it would exercise civil appellate jurisdiction inferior to the supreme court but superior to courts of customary and sharia law (which included all courts inferior to the supreme court). In essence, the new organization made the supreme court less accessible since cases normally heard there would now go to the lesser jurisdiction. To those without means, the high court became the court of final appeal. Fitawrari Ghebremeschel Woldu, who had been president of the Unionist Party until November 1946, was appointed the high court's president.

To win over judges of the customary and sharia courts and to increase the jurisdiction of the executive branch, the assembly passed The Administration of Justice (District Chiefs - Meslanies and Nazirs - Shums, Quarter Chiefs, Market Chiefs, and Cultivation Chiefs Civil Customary Law Jurisdiction) Act on 21 April 1956.⁹⁵ It returned to these functionaries their traditional judicial powers in civil customary law, withdrawn by Proclamation 133 of 1952, thus reconferring judicial authority on members of the executive branch of government; whereby, some members of the assembly were now invested with legislative, executive, and judicial powers in violation of article forty-two (d) of the constitution regarding separation of powers. Since the chief executive appointed judges at all levels, he could now be well assured that his appointees would support candidates for the assembly who would be sympathetic to imperial policies. Furthermore, since judgeships were non-elective, those who sought judicial favor could be depended on to vote for government candidates. Although the act provided, contrary to tradition, that such functionaries, who were

also recipients of a government salary, should receive no fee, the provision was largely ignored, thus further enabling the chief executive to buy the services of prospective and sitting assembly members seeking these often lucrative appointments.

Abba Dimetros subsequently helped further to reduce Eritrea's independence by organizing in the second assembly, from 1956 to 1960, the necessary two-thirds majority (46 votes) to attempt to pass three constitutional amendments. Only the first of these failed to win approval. It provided for the emperor's direct appointment of the chief executive (contrary to article sixty-eight of the constitution which stipulated that he be elected by the assembly). The second, replacing the Eritrean flag with the Ethiopian, (contrary to article twenty-one (2) of the constitution and The Eritrean Flag, Seal, and Arms Act adopted on 15 September 1952), was finally accomplished after much bribery and coercion by an act of the assembly on 14 November 1958.⁹⁶ The third, making Amharic Eritrea's official language (contrary to article thirty-eight (1) of the constitution, which stipulated Tigrinya and Arabic as the only official languages), was established on 9 May 1960.⁹⁷

Predictably the elections of September 1956 returned three-fourths of the incumbents and a majority of palace-supported candidates, but Bit. Andargachew was dissatisfied with the election of Sheik Mohammed Omar Achito at Assab, who had served in the first general assembly. Sheik Mohammed had demonstrated independent thought on more than one occasion and, by speaking out in the assembly, had won the displeasure of the emperor's representative. By the late fifties, the assembly was divided into two groups, a bare two-thirds majority of 'cooperative' members, predominantly Christian, and a hapless Muslim minority. After

the new assembly had been in session for over a month, the chief executive conducted an investigation of Sheik Mohammed's election, the results of which were delivered in a letter to the assembly on 24 November.⁹⁸ Asfaha Woldemicael reported that certain "irregularities" had occurred and that the assembly must deal with the matter. The assembly, now controlled by the crown, declared the election invalid by a vote of forty-two to seven, with two abstentions. This action was taken without the assembly having undertaken any independent investigation, contrary to the intent of article forty-six of the constitution.

By the time the third general election approached in fall 1960, it was clear that it might be the last. The balloting had been slated for 5 September 1960 but, owing to a few last minute arrangements by the palace, it was moved up two days.⁹⁹ With the most important dissident voices silenced - Ibrahim Sultan had had his life threatened and finally moved permanently to Cairo in 1959 - and with liberal distribution of money to government sponsored candidates, an assembly was returned which would offer little, if any, resistance to the emperor's plans of annexation.¹⁰⁰

In the final two years of federation, five men worked tirelessly to end the arrangement, especially Bit. Andargachew Messai, the emperor's son-in-law, and his representative in Asmara from 1952 to 1959.¹⁰¹ Upon taking office, he had begun to bring about the incorporation of Eritrea into Ethiopia by taking every opportunity to secure recognition of Addis Ababa's right to the ex-colony. Bit. Andargachew insisted that all correspondence coming to his office from foreign consulates use the words "Empire of Ethiopia" on their letter heads and then the words "Government of Eritrea" until, under strong

protest from the diplomatic corps, he agreed to abide by accepted rules of protocol that no designation of the country or state in which consulates or embassies resided would appear.¹⁰² He further offended Eritrean sensibilities by insisting that Amharic be learned and used officially.¹⁰³ In John Spencer's judgement, "... the Emperor revealed a genuine concern for the welfare and sensibilities of the Eritrean population. Unfortunately, Bitwoded Andargatchew, ..., did not share that attitude."¹⁰⁴

The second most important anti-federationist was Dejatch Asfaha Woldemicael, the second chief executive, and a man of considerable influence in Eritrean political circles. With a charismatic personality and a diplomatic ability to be on friendly terms with both Europeans and Eritreans,¹⁰⁵ he was adept at public appearances, keeping the assembly in line, and "suppressing public gatherings."¹⁰⁶ He assumed the power of appointing the mayors and vice mayors of Asmara and Massawa and special commissioners for the towns of Decemhare, Adi Ugri, Keren, and Agordat, contrary to articles eighteen (1) and nineteen of Eritrea's constitution which stipulated that all organs of government were to be chosen by periodic and free elections.¹⁰⁷ Prior to becoming chief executive, Dejatch Asfaha had been the emperor's vice representative, and since he had not officially relinquished that position, he retained his palace connection in violation of article seventy of the constitution.¹⁰⁸

Another influential person, working against federation, was Brigadier General Abby Abebe, who succeeded Andargachew as the emperor's representative from 1960 until the federation's end in 1962.¹⁰⁹ As the former son-in-law to the emperor through the marriage to his daughter, Princess Tsahai, who died in 1942, General Abby had

considerable power which he used to bring Eritrea into the imperial fold. Also trying to subvert Eritrea's autonomy was Ato Kumellatchew, director general of the Federal Administration and later HIM's assistant representative in Eritrea. He telephoned the emperor every evening, especially in the final years, reporting recent developments and the activities of Eritrea's leaders. He had come to Eritrea with the Federal Administration in 1952 and slowly rose to become HIM's assistant representative in June 1960, gaining the title of blatta. With the frequent absences of Bit. Andargachew and then General Abby, he was often the top Amhara official in Eritrea. Never having learned Tigrinya, he remained aloof from most Eritrean officials and members of the assembly. He so gained the displeasure of some members of the assembly that, at the end of 1961, fifteen of them accused him of speculation in a signed, but unsuccessful petition to the emperor to have him removed.¹¹⁰

The fifth and perhaps the most active enemy of federation was the vice president of the assembly, Abba Dimetros Ghebremariam, who gained his position upon the resignation of Blatta Demsas Woldemicael on 6 October 1953. He also aided in bringing down Ali Redai, then president of the assembly, who was opposed by his own colleagues, when he supported the crown's plan of annexation and Dejatch Tedla's unpopular proposal for the expenditure of surplus revenue [see above]. Shortly afterwards, Ali Redai suffered further and stronger opposition during the crisis caused by the issuance of Dejatch Tedla's drastic and, in some clauses, unconstitutional anti-shifta proclamation [see above].

By helping to unseat Tedla Bairu and Ali Redai, Abba Dimetros had greatly increased his power.¹¹¹ Largely unknown in Eritrea in pre-

federation days, the vice president of the assembly had actively carried out the emperor's policies by tactics so ruthless that he stimulated fear and hatred in many Eritreans. On 29 October 1961, he was the object of an assassination attempt by Ghebremedhin Hailu, who had been defeated in the assembly elections in 1960 owing, he claimed, to Abba Dimetros, who had backed the winning candidate.¹¹² Further, he asserted that Abba Dimetros had succeeded in preventing Ghebremedhin from assuming his old position in the government's internal revenue service.

Ghebremedhin's accomplice was the cousin of Asmatch Meratch from the Serai, who had a long standing grudge against Abba Dimetros and who also maintained that his son had lost in the elections because of his interference. Both Asmatch Meratch and his son were arrested, but Ghebremedhin Hailu died of wounds suffered when the priest's guards shot him. Abba Dimetros' increasing unpopularity was shown by the great number of Eritreans who attended the funeral of his unsuccessful assassin. Within a few days, rumors began to circulate among the members of the assembly that Abba Dimetros was about to instigate a move in the assembly to bring Eritrea closer to annexation.¹¹³ Fearing this, the assembly abruptly adjourned the session until 18 November.

Seven months later on 12 July 1962, as federation was coming to a close, a second attempt was made not only on the life of Abba Dimetros but also on all major leaders in the crown's camp: the chief executive, the president of the assembly, and the emperor's representative and vice representative.¹¹⁴ The occasion was a good-will tour by General Abby Abebe, accompanied by Eritrean and federal officials, to the Western Province, where anti-Amhara sentiment was high because of heavy unemployment and the generally lower standard of living among the

predominantly Muslim population of the lowlands.¹¹⁵ The attempt was made in front of the senior divisional office at Agordat, while Dejatch Hamid, president of the assembly since June 1956, was giving a speech. Two grenades were thrown at the entourage, killing Fit. Omar Hassano (Eritrean secretary of law and justice), Bashi Ibrahim Mohammed (a member of the Federal Parliament), and six local dignitaries, including a very influential unionist, Sheik Saleh Saidina Mustafa.

Among the wounded were Dejatch Hamid, Abba Dimetros, Blatta Kumellatchew, Teweldeberhan Ghebremedhin (Eritrean director of public relations), the two senior divisional officers from Agordat and Keren, and Alemayehu Kidane (chief of the Federal Press Department). Approximately sixty others were wounded either by the grenade or by the fusillade of bullets from the police, who were only stopped from further slaughter by an order from General Abby. To minimize the psychological impact of the violence the tour was continued to Barentu and Tessenei, as scheduled. It returned to Asmara on 20 July. Those said to be principally responsible were Abdelrahman Mohammed Musa and Mohammed el Hassan Hassano, both members of influential merchant families in Agordat, the latter being the nephew of Fit. Omar Hassano. The two were tried and eventually hanged in Agordat in 1965.

The assembly - unchallenged on the constitutionality of legislation affecting the electoral process, the judiciary, public security, possession of weapons, and organized banditry - passed two acts in the fiscal year 1957/58 which further abridged constitutional rights. The Summary Recovery Act of 28 November 1957 stipulated that "since the government had been much inconvenienced by the failure of certain citizens to pay their taxes and to repay government loans," community or individual property would be seized to compensate the

government for the loss of taxes, including "tribute," or loans.¹¹⁶ Because refusal or, as it was in most cases, inability to pay taxes was due, largely, to crop failure, the act was an example of "cruel" and "inhuman" punishment which violated article twenty-four of the constitution.

A second unpopular act involved certain sections of the Employment Act passed on 8 March 1958.¹¹⁷ Chapter nine of the law required trade unions to obtain the chief executive's formal recognition, which could be rescinded at any time for whatever reason, contrary to article thirty-three of the constitution which explicitly stated "everyone resident in Eritrea shall have the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests."¹¹⁸ Consequently, the Eritrean General Union of Labour Syndicates, whose organization and first steps had been directed, beginning in January 1952, by Woldeab Woldemariam, was actively suppressed.¹¹⁹ After the spring strike of 1958, it was dissolved.

To keep a watchful eye on government officials, the chief executive created on 14 March 1957 the post of "inspector general," whose primary functions were "to be fully conversant with activities of every branch of every Executive Department of the government of Eritrea throughout Eritrea...to report regularly the result of his inspections to the Chief Executive and to the Secretary of the Executive Department concerned...[and] to carry out such other inspections as the Chief Executive may from time to time require of him."¹²⁰ Since the inspector general could not, as the order read, "perform any function reserved by law to the Auditor General" (some of whose functions were now to be duplicated by the inspector general), one could imagine that the new post was used for purposes other than ensuring that "office

hours are observed" and that "the day to day business of the Government is carried on with efficiency."

In 1960, several acts were promulgated which were not only unpopular but demonstrated the willingness of the assembly to pass legislation prejudicial to Eritrean interests and, indeed, unconstitutional in some parts. The first, The Pardon Act, passed on 23 February 1960, gave the emperor the power "to remit and forgive the whole or a part of any sentence imposed by the Eritrean Court against which no appeal lies or which has been confirmed on appeal [and] to remit any accessory penalty and any statutory or other disqualification."¹²¹ Although the emperor within federal/Ethiopian jurisdiction enjoyed such power and authority, the Eritrean constitution gave him no such extraordinary power. In essence, the act put the legal position of the emperor above all Eritrean courts. It exceeded the jurisdictional intent of the constitution, which, in article twenty-two (j), gave Eritrean citizens the "right of petition to the Emperor and the right of appeal to the Emperor for commutation of death sentences." Although the latter was written in as a compromise measure in favor of the crown during the negotiating process for federation and was in conflict with the supreme court's jurisdiction as outlined in article ninety, its intent was not to impinge upon the Eritrean court system.

The second, more subversive to the federation principle, The Flag, Seal and Arms (Amendment) Act of 17 May practically abolished the Eritrean seal, crest, and coat of arms.¹²² In November 1958, the assembly had already approved that the Ethiopian (Federal) flag should replace the Eritrean flag, contrary to the stipulation of article twenty-one of the constitution that there were to be two flags in

Eritrea: the federal, and a "flag, seal and arms of Eritrea, details of which shall be decided upon by law."¹²³ The assembly certainly had the right to work out the "details" as to the flag's appearance, but to make it conform to that of the federal flag was tantamount to dissolving the legal entity it signified. In addition, the name of the Eritrean Government was changed to the "Eritrean Administration" and "Chief Executive" was altered to "Chief of Administration."¹²⁴ The insignia of the Lion of Judah was adopted to represent the Eritrean administration, and the Eritrean seal was to read, "Eritrean Administration Under Haile Sellassie I, Emperor of Ethiopia."¹²⁵

There was little or no opposition from Muslims;¹²⁶ however, there arose considerable opposition from Christian deputies who were unwilling to accept either elimination of "Eritrean Government" on the seal or the title "Governor" in Tigrinya for chief executive. After several amendments were attached to the bill as a compromise, which would have left the words, "Government of Eritrea," on the seal, the bill passed forty-three in favor, none against, with one abstention. The amendments, however, were ignored by the crown, and ultimately the seal did not include these words. The imperial organ published the bill as originally requested by the chief executive and not as it was actually approved by the assembly.

The passage, on 13 July 1960, of the Collective-Liability Act made clear that resistance to authority was prevalent throughout Eritrea.¹²⁷ The introduction to the act stated that "much willful damage goes unpunished in rural areas by reason of the refusal of witnesses to inform the police." As a result, stiff fines of from E\$500 to E\$5,000 were imposed upon villages, any of whose members might have caused damage to "any house, animal, tree, grain, or straw," unless the

village could prove that the damage was not criminal. Although there was a legal tradition in both Eritrea and Ethiopia of collective fines, there had arisen a conflict between traditional practices and constitutional law, of which the act was in violation, regarding each citizen's right to "equality before the [written] law" and "life, liberty, and security of person."¹²⁸ Traditionally, collective fines were aimed at an individual family, if culpability could be proven, or at a whole village, if guilt could not be connected to a particular family but could to a village/villages; however, this legal process was variously enforced during the three administrations, prior to 1962 and requires more study for a complete statement of its operation.

With the passage of the Penal Code (Extension) Act of 10 September 1959, Ethiopia's penal code (Proclamation No. 158 of 1957), "except such parts as govern matters of federal jurisdiction," was given the effect of law throughout Eritrea.¹²⁹ The Ethiopianization of the Eritrean criminal code, a further inroad on the independence of the judiciary, was, nevertheless, a less important consideration than the constitutional question of Eritrea's status within the Ethiopian empire. The first clause of the act's preamble read, "Eritrea being an integral part of Ethiopia...as well as being united in Federation under the Crown of the same August Sovereign." For the first time within a legal framework the imperial government attempted to put into a written, legal context the fabrication that Eritrea was fully integrated within the empire. The juxtaposition of the two parts is also odd, as if the second phrase was an afterthought and something the crown would like to have suppressed. The language defining Eritrea's autonomous relationship with Ethiopia (article three of the former's constitution) has been distorted. Whereas inroads had already been made into Eritrea's autonomy with the passage of The Collective-

Liability Act, The Flag, Seal, and Arms (Amendment) Act, and The Penal Code (Extension) Act, in no previous legislation had the words, "Eritrea being an integral part of Ethiopia," appeared; neither did the phrase appear anywhere in the Eritrean constitution. The use of the word "integral" was an obvious attempt to suggest that Eritrea's relationship with Ethiopia was identical to those of the imperial provinces. The phrase "as well as being" appeared to distinguish two, separate, distinct, and incompatible relationships. Eritrea could not be simultaneously an integral part of Ethiopia, as if it were a mere province, and federally united under the crown in a special, constitutional relationship. None of Ethiopia's provinces had their own constitutions as did Eritrea, and it was this fact alone which set Eritrea apart from Ethiopia's other parts, which were, indeed, fully integrated into one imperial fold. In November 1962, this ambiguity was removed, however, when Eritrea's federal status was forcibly terminated in the Eritrean assembly by executive order without discussion or debate.

As early as 1955, the palace had begun preparing the way, in legal terms, for the eventual annexation of Eritrea. In November, the emperor promulgated a revised constitution for Ethiopia which left unmentioned the special federal status existing between Eritrea and Addis Ababa. Article one of the new constitution stated, "The Empire of Ethiopia comprises all the territories, including the islands and the territorial waters, under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown...[and] its sovereignty and territory are indivisible."¹³⁰ Moreover, on 20 March 1955, the emperor's representative had told the Eritrean assembly that there were "no internal or external affairs as far as the office of His Imperial Majesty's Representative is concerned

and there will be none in the future...[and that] the affairs of Eritrea concern Ethiopia as a whole...and the Emperor."¹³¹ The crown, thereafter, took every opportunity to emphasize that there was only Ethiopia and not a separate political entity called Eritrea. Following the elections of September 1960, the Eritrean assembly, more than ever pro-Ethiopian, duly returned the incumbent chief executive whose official title had been shortened to "Chief Executive of Eritrea" rather than "of the Eritrean Government," and The Ethiopian Herald began to refer to him as "Chief Administrator."¹³² In March 1961, an art exhibit, billed as "an exhibition of Ethiopian and Eritrean original landscapes," by a Czechoslovakian teacher at Haile Sellassie Secondary School, was cancelled on the direct instructions of the emperor's assistant representative because of the use of the word, "Eritrean."¹³³

FOOTNOTES

¹ Shoans were given general preference for federal positions. See Spencer, Ethiopia at Bay, 304.

² UNGA, Final Report, 1952, (A-2188), 75.

³ UK, PRO, Wardle-Smith, British Consulate General in Asmara, to FO, 2 Ap 53, FO 371/102634/1018/21.

⁴ After federation, Haile Sellassie's son-in-law, Bit. Andargachew Messai, was elevated to ras. In 1949, he had received an imperial grant of a 30 year concession, under the name of Dallol Potash and Sulphur Mines Ethiopian Co., located in the Danakil Depression and connected by railroad to the Eritrean coast. See USG, State, Simonson to SecSt, Am. Emb., A. A., 28 De 53, D-183, 875A.2561/12-2853.

⁵ UK, PRO, Wardle-Smith to FO, 19 No 52, D-8, FO 371/96723/1016/39 and 8 No 52, D-5, FO 371/96723/1016/38.

⁶ UK, PRO, Minutes, FO 371/96761/1102/30.

⁷ UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 27 Ot 52, T-80, FO 371/96723/1016/25 and Busk, A.A., to FO, 31 Ot 52, D-1011/52, FO 371/96723/1016/36.

⁸ Article 49 of Eritrea's Constitution stipulated that a special session could be called to discuss a particular matter, but only at the discretion of the chief executive. See Appendix C. The protest in the assembly was led by a leader of Red Sea Muslims, Saleh Pasha Kekia, a rival of the president of the assembly, Ali Redai, the recognized leader of Muslims from the Western Province. After the chief executive gave assurances for an investigation, Kekia withdrew his protest. See UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 28 Ot 52, T-82, FO 371/96723/1016/27.

⁹ Gheresellassie Gharza, one-time president of the Andinnet Party, resigned his appointment as controller of labor and began to reorganize the party into a group with the "object of terrorising the population into an acceptance of the Annexation of Eritrea by Ethiopia." After the emperor's visit to Eritrea in October 1952, he had been released, under amnesty, from a long prison term for possession of illegal arms and his connection with several bombings in Asmara. See UK, PRO, Wardle-Smith to FO, 23 Mr 53, D-1011, FO 371/102634/1018/17 and 6 De 52, D-1011/30/52, FO 371/96723/1016/41. He was joined by Sahle Andemicael, former headmaster of a girls' school in Asmara.

¹⁰ UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 21 Mr 53, T-83, FO 371/102634/1018/10.

¹¹ UK, PRO, Wardle-Smith to FO, 30 Ot 52, T-90, FO 371/96823/16410/3.

¹² In November 1952, the finance committee had recommended that

salaries of foreign personnel (British) be reduced and that employment of foreigners be suspended in favor of Eritreans with two exceptions, the auditor general and the financial adviser. This would have meant the loss of about 27 foreign officials in Eritrea. See UK, PRO, "Report On The Budget Submitted By The Finance Committee," 10 No 52, FO 371/96761/1102/30.

13 UK, PRO, Busk to FO, 19 De 52, D-12, FO 371/96723/1016/43.

14 UK, PRO, Wardle-Smith to FO, 10 Mr 53, T-44, FO 371/102634/1018/6 and USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 26 Ot 53, D-57, 775A.00/10-2653.

15 UK, PRO, Chancery to FO, 2 My 53, D-1520/36/53, FO 371/102635/1018/28.

16 The five members were Zeggai Seferi from Akkele Guzai, who had a knowledge of common law as a native pleader and was a member of the executive committee of the Unionist Party; Ghebremedhin Asihel from Hamasien, who, during the British occupation, had been a lieutenant in the Eritrean police force; Mohammed Omar Kadi, who was from the Massawa area with wide political experience as one of the founders of the Unionist Party and editor of its newspaper, Union and Progress, until 1948, when he joined the Moslem League and later formed the Independent Moslem League which aimed at conditional union with Ethiopia; Sheik Adum Abugudbay from the Keren division, who, as a member of the Moslem League, had been a delegate to Pakistan to plead for its support for Eritrean independence; and Blatta Ghebregghier Ghebrenkiel from Serai division, who had only an elementary education with some political experience. See FO 371/96723/1016/37.

17 See below.

18 UNGA, Resolution 530 (VI), 29 Ja 52, (A/2077). According to article XI, all Italian-Government-owned property reverted to the Eritrean Government, excluding legally recognized contracts, leases, and concessions. All claims had to be presented no later than 31 De 53 and would be settled no later than two years following; thus, after 1 Ja 56, it would cease to exist.

19 UNGA, Final Report, 80. Resolution 390 (V), passed on 2 December 1950 by the UNGA, made no provision for a representative of the emperor; the position was established only through pressure applied by the crown on Anze Matienzo, UN Commissioner in Eritrea, who had the dual responsibilities of forming a panel of legal consultants to draw up a constitution for Eritrea and of organizing Eritrea's new government. See UNGA, Final Report, 74-75. Indeed, the emperor's representative set the tone of the crown's adversarial relationship to the assembly in his opening speech to its meeting on 27 April 1953. See USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 19 Je 53, D-143, 775A.21/6-1953.

20 See Appdx C, Article 73.

21 See Appdx C, Articles 15 & 58. Matienzo's discussions with the Ethiopian Government made it clear that the the former wanted the imperial representative's right to promulgate legislation to be only a "formality" and not to be used "to obstruct the enactment of a law, and that the right to promulgate should not be considered a disguised right of veto." See UNGA, Final Report, 31, Par. 337.

22 None of the rights outlined in article 22 were contained in the Ethiopian constitution.

23 Article 90 of the Eritrean constitution explicitly outlined the jurisdiction of the Eritrean supreme court as the court of last resort and did not make any reference to the emperor having such jurisdiction as implied in article 22(j). The emperor, therefore, acquired an extra-constitutional "right" which established a legal precedent that enlarged his jurisdiction into areas not expressly within his constitutional province. See EG, 1960:22,14, p. 4.

24 UNGA, Final Report, Annex 1, 75; see also The International Law Quarterly, 4, Ap 51, Notes, 221-222. The provision is modified, however, by article 34, par. 2: "In applying the aforementioned provisions, the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms may be regulated by law provided that such regulation does not impede their normal enjoyment."

25 After Dejach Tedla's second official visit to Addis Ababa, the emperor provided him with a house in the capital city and 200 hectares of coffee land near Jimma. He became dejazmatch within his first term of office. See USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 12 Ot 53, D-52, 775A.00/10-1253. For election, see UNGA, Final Report, 37.

26 See Appdx D: Biographical Sketches.

27 Stafford admittedly had influence over Redai. From author's correspondence with F.E. Stafford.

28 Not a prominent figure in Eritrean politics although a reliable Christian unionist, he was from Hamasien district and the grandson of the prominent Ras Woldemicael, whom Ras Alula had out maneuvered in 1878. See Haggai Erlich, Biography of Ras Alula, 22-23.

29 Dejach Tedla was elected twice more but resigned in the middle of his third term.

30 He was the son of Ras Tesemma Asberom from Akkele Guzai district. Because he had not supported partition of the Western Province, he had thus alienated some members of the Moslem League of the Western Province, which controlled 17 seats in the assembly. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 3 Sp 52, D-25, 777.00/9-352. Also, author's conversations in Jeddah from 1983 - 84 with Grazmatch Saleh Jaber Gulai, former governor of Keren district from October 1972 through June 1976, senior divisional officer in Massawa during federation, and lesser posts throughout his

long government career beginning during the BA and continuing through federation and after. Not offered a post befitting his status, Dejatch Abraha retired to private life but by 1955 had embraced the cause of annexation. See USG, State, Memo in Clark to SecSt, 19 My 55, D-153, 775A.00/5-1955. In mid-1955, Dejatch Abraha brought suit in the Federal Court against Dejatch Tedla for false imprisonment and defamation of character. After Tedla's resignation, the case was postponed. See USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 12 Ag 55, D-6, 775A.2/8-1255.

31 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 26 Ot 53, D-57, 775A.00/10-2653 and UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 27 Ot 53, T-170, FO 371/102635/1018/47; 30 Ot 53, T-174, FO 371/102635/1018/50; and 21 De 53, T-195, FO 371/102635/1018/54.

32 EG, 1955:17, 8, pp. 36-40 and USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 1 Ap 58, D-71, 875A.50/4-158.

33 USG, State, Wahl, American Vice Consul, Asmara, 7 Jy 55, D-3, 775A.00/7-755. There had been a sharp increase during the previous four months of banditry, which had been practiced for centuries in both Ethiopia and Eritrea and had continued to plague the Eritrean Government, as it had periodically done in the previous two administrations. Evidence of its appeal appeared shortly after the inception of federation whether for gain or for political reasons. In January 1953, about 60 Eritrean police joined forces with shifta in the frontier area of Kassala. Such demonstrations continued to occur from time to time throughout federation. See UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 17 Ja 53, T-1, FO 371/102634/1018/1.

34 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 17 Sp 54, D-39, 775A.00/9-1754.

35 UK, PRO, Wilson-Heathcote, Memo, 6 My 53, FO 371/102635/1018/29.

36 UK, PRO, Memo, 6 My 52, FO 371/96761/1102/29.

37 UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 19 No 52, D-8, FO 371/96723/1016/39. The business community complained that, because often a customs official assessed the value of goods arbitrarily based on his own idea and not on the invoices, goods sometimes had to be sold at a loss. See also Busk to FO, 2 My 53, D-49, FO 371/102635/1018/29.

38 UK, PRO, Busk to FO, 6 De 52, D-1101/30/52, FO 371/96723/1016/41.

39 EG, 1955:17, 11, p. 54 (GN-345).

40 As a result of Dejatch Tedla's resignation, a second important figure, Teclehaimanot Booru, secretary of finance to the Eritrean Government, lost his office and subsequently became a bitter opponent of the government. Later, he helped organize an anti-Ethiopian group called The Young Federalists of Eritrea. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 30 Ap 59, D-46, 775A.00/4-3059.

41 Ali Redai, who became an adviser to the palace for eight months and

then secretary of social affairs to the end of federation, was replaced by Sheik Idris Mohammed Adum, a Beni Amer from the Western Province.

42 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 13 Jy 61, D-6, 775A.00/7-1361 and Clark to SecSt, 19 My 55, D-153, 775A.00/5-1955, Memo, 3. Dejach Tedla eventually became ambassador to Sweden, where, in time, he retired in exile.

43 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, Memo, 20 De 61 in D-48, 27 De 61, 775.00/12-2761, enc. 1, 1. Eventually, Dejach Tedla went to Damascus where he "lent his name to the independence movement...for a monthly stipend of 3,000 Syrian pounds." See Spencer, Ethiopia At Bay, 304.

44 Before federation, Dejach Asfaha had periodically been acting Ethiopian liaison officer in Asmara. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 2 No 50, D-39, 777.00/11-250. For details of his life, see Appdx D: Biographical Sketches.

45 The imperial armed forces as well as all salaried federal government employees owed their compensations indirectly to the crown. See Ryszard Kapuscinski, (William R. and Katarzyna M. Brand, trs.), The Emperor, Downfall of an Autocrat, Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich, Pubs., New York, 1983, passim.

46 EG, 1953:15,7, p. 58. Also, the fee of E\$10 was an extraordinary and thus unconstitutional burden.

47 EG, 1953:15,7, p. 58.

48 Contrary to the constitution's articles 22 (a) and 23 concerning every Eritrean's right to equality before the law and to article 24 stating: "No one shall be subject to...degrading treatment or punishment." See Appdx C: The Constitution of Eritrea.

49 EG, 1954:16,10, p. 90; and USG, State, Schneider, American Vice Consul, to SecSt, 24 Sp 54, T-21, 775A.00/9-2454.

50 The Italians followed a practice of granting additional land to cooperative groups while taking it away from opponents, a policy that was reversed by the BMA. The result was that those, who had received extra land during the Italian administration contrary to local land tenure traditions, stood to lose more land than they had originally gained. Some land/boundary disputes continued after the BMA and were not resolved by the Eritrean Government.

51 In direct violation of article 22 (c) of the Eritrean constitution, which states, "No one shall be deprived of property,...without payment of just and effective compensation." See Appdx C: The Constitution of Eritrea.

52 EG, 1953:15,7, p. 57.

53 Villages, endas, and other groups were required by the British Administration to pay an annual income tax (gebri), which was called "native tribute." It was levied on Eritrean communities for the use of land to which they had traditional rights and in accordance with the their economic wealth, in terms of numbers of animals and agricultural production. Assessed in the early 1930s by the Italians, it was made lighter during the BMA/BA, which continued the practice according to articles 184 and 189 of Italian Royal Decree, No. 845 of 30 De 1909. See Trevaskis Papers, 40; Eritrean Daily News, No. 898, 20 My 44, 4ac; and USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 28 Ja 59, T-53, 875A.00/1-2859, 24 Ap 59, D-43, 875A.00/4-2459 and 27 Ja 59, T-139, 875A.20/1-2759. The tribute for the fiscal years, 1940/41 was 5,740 pounds and for 1941/42, 15,200 pounds. See USG, State, "O.E.T.A., Eritrea, Half-Yearly Report, 1 Ja-30 Je 1942," 865D.01/607. For fiscal years, 1942/43 and 1943/44, was c. 602,000 EAS and 607,000 EAS (c. US\$110,000), respectively. See also EDN, No. 552, 9 Ap 43, 4ab. For fiscal year, 1944/45, 607,000 EAS. See EG, 15 No 45, 54-59, FO 371/46116/366. The practice was continued by the Eritrean Government. The tribute was increased from E\$455,600 for the 1952/53 fiscal year to E\$782,342 for the 1953/54 fiscal year, an increase of 71%. In the following fiscal year it was reduced under protest to half, E\$391,171 and remained at that level to the end of federation. The tribute for 1954, including the increase, was deferred by the emperor. See USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 7 Ag 54, D-21, 875A.10/8-754. During federation, especially in its final years, because of poor harvests, owing to lack of rain and locust infestations, in particular in the Western Province, the tribute was deferred by the emperor, who, in doing so, assumed authority not constitutionally delegated to the crown. See USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 29 Je 62, A-148, 775.11/6-2862.

54 EG, 1953:15,6, pp. 47-50 (General Notice 281, hereafter GN-281; 1955:17,3, pp. 12-15 (GN-333); 1955:17,11, pp. 56-58 (GN-349); 1956:18,12, pp. 81-83 (GN-398); 1957:19,10, pp. 57-60 (GN-421); 1958:20,11, pp. 102-104 (GN-467); 1959:21,11, pp. 82-84 (GN-501); and 1960:22,15, pp. 114-117 (GN-543).

55 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 2 Ot 53, D-45, 875A.16/10-253 and 9 Mr 55, D-121, 875A.16/3-955. The land in the plains to the east along the Red Sea and to the west adjacent to the Sudan was owned by the Eritrean Government as a result of an Italian decree of 1909, revised in 1926. It decreed that all lands below 350 meters in the eastern lowlands and below 850 meters in the western lowlands were state property. The BA continued to recognize the right of usufruct as belonging to the Eritrean communities. In 1947, of all agricultural land state lands amounted to nearly 40%, church lands - 0.6%, communal lands - 56%, and private lands - 3.4%. See FPC, 37. Some of the best land had been given in concession to Italians and remained in their hands after federation. Such government claims, by decree of dubious legality, to lands traditionally in Muslim control would have been difficult to enforce. See USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 12 Ap 60, D-81, 875A.16/4-1260.

56 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 5 Ap 55, D-139, 775A.00/4-555; 12 My 55, D-151, 775A.00/5-1255; 28 Je 55, D-174, 775A.00/6-2855; and 1 Jy 55, D-2,

775A.00/7-155. Many shifta, who had been encouraged by the ease of escape into Ethiopian territory, where they found security from arrest during the BA, continued their profitable business during federation still under the tacit agreement of Addis Ababa.

57 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 19 My 55, D-153, 775A.00/5-1955. Not all shifta activity was political. In the Akkele Guzai district, there had been periodic disturbances regarding land and grazing rights between the Muslim Assaorta who occupied the edge of the escarpment and the Orthodox Assaorta who occupied the plateau, surrounding the Muslim group on all sides. However, some Assaorta, who had been confined for life in the Adi Quala prison in Akkele Guzai, escaped in early 1954 and became shifta. It was they who, protesting payment for grazing rights to the Bizen Monastery, which had been granted a large concession by the Eritrean Government, shot and killed an Orthodox priest and six novices in August 1955. See USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 30 Ag 55, D-12, 775A.00/8-3055.

58 EG, 1955:17,8, p. 36; and Il Quotidiano Eritreo, 5 Jy 55, No. 5142.

59 In June 1956, a collective fine (practised in previous times) of E\$4,000 was imposed on a village adjacent to the Decemhare road, nearest to where a robbery had taken place, because of the village's "failure to cooperate with the police in apprehending the bandits." Similarly, a village near the scene of a hold-up near Keren on 28 May 1956 was assessed a large collective fine. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 8 Je 56, D-65, 775A.00/6-856. On 4 October 1956, the chief executive ordered the district chiefs of Liban and Habela, south of Asmara, to be removed from office for their inability to preserve order in territory within their jurisdiction; a police force to be billeted in the area without compensation to the villagers (in Ethiopia proper in pre-Haile Selassie days armies lived off the land, often pillaging villages); a fine of E\$10,000 to be imposed on the inhabitants of Liban; and the evacuation of all those living in the area of the disturbances. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 11 Ot 56, D-28, 775A.00/10-1156. Concerning the policy of non-compensatory billeting of troops and collective fines, the BA, during shifta disturbances in 1949 and 1950, imposed community fines on villages which had supported banditry. The fines were remitted in whole or in part when villagers, who had joined robber bands, had surrendered. See UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrea Annual Report For 1950," 10, FO 371/90314/31109.

60 EG, 1953:15,4, pp. 26-27.

61 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 8 Je 56, D-65, 775A.00/6-856.

62 EG, 1956:18,6, p. 36.

63 EG, 1956:18,7, p. 43.

64 Captured/surrendered: rifles - 41/122; pistols - 3/4; shotguns - 1/8; sten gun - 0/1; grenades - 11/35; detonators - 0/16; rounds of ammunition - 834/1765. In addition, eight shifta had been executed,

nineteen killed, and 148 captured. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 8 Je 56, D-65, 775A.00/6-856.

65 Shifta activity increased considerably from March through May 1957, declining sharply in June and July, just before the publication of the Banditry Act. In March alone, the commissioner of police officially reported six holdups on roads leading out from Asmara and ten holdups in villages by shifta demanding food, clothing, and weapons. Colonel Tedla Ogbit claimed unemployment as the main cause and further asserted that the decrease in shifta activity during the summer months was due primarily to the extreme heat in the lowlands and to the heavy rains in the highlands. Shifta were indiscriminate in their victims, choosing Eritreans as well as Europeans, including Americans and British, but almost never Amhara or government officials. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 15 Ap 57, D-60, 775A.00/4-1557; 16 My 57, D-64, 775A.00/5-1657; 13 Je 57, D-79, 775A.00/6-1357; 28 Je 57, D-85, 775A.00/6-2857; and 15 Ag 57, D-8, 775A.00/8-1557. EG, 1957:19,11, p. 64.

66 On 9 August 1959, Angelo Maiorani, Legal Advisor to the Italian Consulate General, secretary of the Rotary Club, and former employee of the American Consulate, Asmara, was killed. See USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 15 Ag 59, T-42, 775A.00/8-1559.

67 EG, 1959:21,11, p. 72. The amendment was clearly in violation of article 22 (c) of the Eritrean constitution. See Appdx C.

68 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 My 61, D-92, 775A.00/5-3161; 5 Jy 61, D-3, 775A.00/7-561; on 28 May 1961, near Adi Kwala, south of Asmara, near the Ethiopian border, "shiftas" attacked and killed one occupant of several cars occupied by Italians although there was no attempt to rob them: Looram to SecSt, 31 My 61, D-91, 665.75A/5-3161; 31 Ag 61, D-20, 775A.00/8-3161; 20 Ot 61, D-24, 775A.00/10-2061; 1 No 61, D-36, 775A.00/11-161; and Johnson to SecSt, 30 Ag 62, A-19, 775A.00/8-3062.

69 Idris Awate had been a warrant officer in the Italian colonial army. See Africa Confidential, hereafter AC, V-6, N-23, 26 No 65, 5. He attempted to settle disputes with the Kunama. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 1 Ag 50, T-20, 777.00/8-150, 2.

70 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 5 Jy 62, A-6, 775A.00/7-562. After the unsuccessful coup d'etat of December 1960, about 50 Eritrean members of the Ethiopian army deserted, who had had some connection with the coup. Being "well supplied with funds," they were able to buy their food and protection from the local people and to operate as political shifta on the north side of the Asmara-Massawa road. See USG, State, Campbell to SecSt, 3 Ag 62, A-14, 775A.52/8-362, 2.

71 UNGA, Final Report, 59-65.

72 Paragraph 662 of UNGA, Final Report states that the Eritrean Electoral Act was passed, but this was not the case. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 15 Je 56, D-69, 775A.00/6-1556.

73 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 15 Je 56, D-69, 775A.00/6-1556.

74 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 19 Jy 56, D-6, 775A.00/7-1956.

75 After the death of Empress Menen on 15 February 1962, all civil servants in Ethiopia and in Eritrea were ordered to wear a black tie for the requisite forty days of mourning, an edict Justice Fre chose to ignore.

76 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 10 Ag 56, D-14, 775A.00/8-1056.

77 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 10 Sp 56, D-22, 775A.00/9-1056. Ibrahim may have been referring to the fact that most of the assemblymen held positions as meslanie (a representative to the government of a district or sub-district, chosen by its people), nazir (hereditary chief among the Ad Sheik group in north central Eritrea, south of Nakfa), kantiba (mayor or elder), diglal (paramount chief among the Beni Amer), or shum (chief among the Bet Asghede in the Keren division).

78 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 10 Sp 56, D-22, 775A.00/9-1056, p. 5.

79 EG, 1953:15,1, pp. 9-10 and 15,2, pp. 16-18; 1954:16,12, pp. 99-100; and 1955:17,11, pp. 54-55.

80 EG, 1956:18,8, pp. 52-56 and 18,12, p. 80; 1957:19,8, p. 40; 1959:21,1, p. 8; and 1960:22,8, p. 67.

81 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 15 Ag 56, T-20, 775A.00/8-1556 and 15 Je 56, D-69, 775A.00/6-1556, p. 6.

82 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 19 My 55, D-153, 775A.00/5-1955 and Richey to SecSt, 14 My 56, D-61, 775A.00/5-1456.

83 In August 1956, he appealed the decision to an Ethiopian court which altered the verdict from a fine to one year in prison, which was commuted to a three-year probationary period. He appealed the decision unsuccessfully to the emperor. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 3 Ap 57, D-58, 775A.00/4-357.

84 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 15 Je 56, D-69, 775A.00/6-1556.

85 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 15 Je 56, D-69, 775A.00/6-1556, p. 4. 'Melake Selam' is a clerical title meaning 'messenger of peace.'

86 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 15 Je 56, D-69, 775A.00/6-1556.

87 In early June, twenty prominent Muslims, including Hadji Imam Musa, vice president of the Moslem League, calling themselves "Delegates of the People," sent a signed letter protesting the amendment of article 89 (1) to the chief executive, the president of the assembly and its members, the secretary of law and justice, the attorney general, and to Sir James

Shearer, threatening a demonstration if such a motion were adopted by the assembly. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 14 Je 56, D-68, 775A.00/6-1456.

88 The Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1957 in EG, 1957:19,10, p. 53.

89 The Administration of Justice (Amendment) Act, 1957, in EG, 1957:19, 11, p. 67.

90 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 15 Ot 59, D-34, 775A.00/10-1559. For renewal of contract, see article 89 (2) of the Eritrean constitution. See Appdx C.

91 EG, 1956:18,5, p. 24 (GN-358); 18,9, p. 65 (GN-375); 18,10, p. 70 (GN-382); and 18,10, p. 72 (GN-386); 1957:19,1, p. 3 (GN-395 and -396); and 19,4, p. 23 (GN-403).

92 EG, 1958:20,4, p. 28 (0-48).

93 EG, 1953:15,1, p. 6 (GN-252) and 1958:20,6, pp. 70-71 (GN-446).

94 The High Court Act, 1958, in EG, V-20, Suppl. to No. 5. It amended the Administration of Justice Proclamation 133 of 1952. According to article 45, not found in the principal act/proclamation, the president of the court could request any appeal, record, or proceeding pending in the supreme court or in any inferior court, regarding questions of jurisdiction of the courts or the unconstitutionality of laws, etc.

95 EG, 1956:18,6, pp. 33-34.

96 USG, State, Hugh K. Campbell, American Vice Consul, Asmara, to SecSt, 5 Jy 62, A-6, 775A.00/7-562 and 4 Ja 59, D-27, 775A.00/1-459 and The Eritrean Revolution, 16 Years of Armed Struggle, hereafter ER, ELF Foreign Information Center, Beirut, 1977, 31. If this act was in writing, it did not appear in the November issue of the body's official organ, The Eritrean Gazette. The Eritrean flag was seldom seen after the first few years of federation and, by 1956, not at all on public occasions. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 14 Je 56, D-68, 775A.00/6-1456 and Penfield to Murphy, 10 Sp 59, 775A.00/9-1059.

97 ER, 31.

98 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 14 De 56, D-36, 775A.00/12-1456.

99 EG, 1960:22,11, p. 100 (GN-537, 31 Ag 60).

100 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 6 Sp 60, D-28, 775A.00/9-660 and 15 No 61, D-40, 775A.00/11-1561.

101 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 6 Sp 60, D-28, 775A.00/9-660. Husband of Princess Tanagne Worq and former governor of Gondar Province, he was recalled to Addis Ababa in 1960 to become minister of interior from

January 1960 to 6 February 1961, at which time he was demoted to governor of Sidamo Province. See H. Marcus, Ethiopia, Great Britain, and the U.S., 1941-1974, University of California Press, 1983, 165.

102 UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 3 Oct 52, T-27, FO 371/96744/10117/1.

103 Spencer, Ethiopia At Bay, 303-4.

104 Spencer, Ethiopia at Bay, 303.

105 In correspondence with F.E. Stafford.

106 Spencer, Ethiopia At Bay, 304.

107 EG, 1956:18,3, p. 13 (O-24); 18,8, p. 57 (O-31 & -32); 1957:19,11, p. 74 (ON-148); 1958:20,4, p. 29 (ON-165, -166, & -167); 20,8, p. 83 (ON-178); 20,9, p. 91 (ON-184); 20,9, p. 92 (ON-185 & -186); 1960:22,5, pp. 24-25 (ON-299 through -304); 22,8, pp. 72-73 (ON-314 through -318).

108 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 14 My 56, D-61, 775A.00/5-1456, p. 2.

109 For his aid in bringing Eritrea closer to the crown, on 6 February 1961, he was promoted to lt.-gen. and designated minister of interior, replacing Andargachew Messai, while retaining his position as HIM's representative in Eritrea. See Marcus, Ethiopia, Great Britain, and the U.S., 165.

110 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 5 De 61, D-44, 775A.00/12-561.

111 After federation, the crown compensated Abba Dimetros by making him head of the Orthodox Church in Axum, with the ecclesiastic title of 'nebreid,' which held more respect than abun.

112 USG, State, Loorm to SecSt, 15 No 61, D-40, 775A.00/11-1561.

113 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 5 De 61, D-44, 775A.00/12-561.

114 USG, State, Campbell to SecSt, 18 Jy 62, A-12, 775A.00/7-1862. Despite the violent interruption, the tour continued to Barentu and Tessenei, returning to Asmara on 20 July. The Eritrean Liberation Front, hereafter ELF, has claimed this incident as one of its significant beginnings.

115 The emperor had planned and then cancelled a good-will trip to Agordat in June, but suggested that General Abby go in his place.

116 EG, 1958:20,2, p. 15.

117 EG, 1958:20,5, Supplement, p. 62.

118 See Appdx C, The Constitution of Eritrea: Art. 33.

119 J. Bowyer Bell, "Endemic Insurgency and International Order: The Eritrean Experience," Orbis, A Journal of World Affairs, XVIII, summer 1974, 2, p. 431. In early 1952, Ato Woldeab had formed a temporary committee of Christians and Muslims to establish an association to improve the working conditions of Eritrean laborers. He had criticized their low wage scales, especially with foreign employers, including not only Italian concerns, but also British and American. After Ato Woldeab's departure for Egypt, he was replaced by Mohammed Ahmed, a wealthy Eritrean merchant from Addis Ababa. See USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 25 Ja 52, D-110, 777.00/1-2552 and 31 Ja 52, D-115, 777.00/1-3152.

120 EG, 1957:19,4, pp. 23-24 (0-35).

121 EG, 1960:22,4, p. 14.

122 EG, 1960:22,6, p. 28.

123 Appdx C, Article 21, par. 2.

124 Africa: Rivista Bimestrale Di Studi E Documentazione, hereafter Africa: Rivista, V-15, N-4, Jy-Ag 1960, 201. The emperor had actually been displeased with the timing of the event as it occurred on the eve of the Conference of the Independent African States, held in Addis Ababa, and the crown feared criticism from Muslim quarters. See USG, State, Memo in Looram to SecSt, 18 Ag 60, D-18, 775A.00/8-1860. The Eritrean Gazette, official organ of the Eritrean Government, continued to use the phrase, "published by the Government of Eritrea."

125 The Ethiopian Herald, 20 My 60:1c; and USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 26 My 60, D-93, 775A.05/5-2660 and 20 My 60, T-274, 775A.05/5-2060.

126 One theory advanced was that the Arabic translation of "Chief Executive" had remained intact. See USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 26 My 60, D-93, 775A.05/5-2660 and 20 My 60, T-274, 775A.05/5-2060. It should also be considered that the president of the assembly was a prominent Muslim who was unwilling to risk disfavor with the Ethiopian Government and who, undoubtedly, suppressed criticism of the crown's policy to end federation.

127 EG, 1960:22,9, p. 76.

128 Appdx C, Article 22 (a) and (b) respectively.

129 EG, 1959:21,12, p. 90. During May 1953, the Ethiopian Government, by Proclamation 130, extended the laws of Ethiopia over Eritrea, which was never officially recognized by the Eritrean assembly. The Ethiopian Penal Code had been written and first submitted to the emperor for promulgation in the early 1940s by Judge Marein, advocate general of Ethiopia. The final passage of the code in Ethiopia in 1953 gave the crown opportunity to gain legal jurisdiction over a body of Eritrean law. See USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 19 Je 53, D-143, 775A.21/6-1953.

- 130 Margery Perham, The Government of Ethiopia, Appendix A, 433.
- 131 Godfrey Morrison, "The Southern Sudan And Eritrea: aspects of wider African problems," Minority Rights Group Report No. 5, London, Jy 1971, 27 and USG, State, Memo in Clark to SecSt, 19 My 55, D-153, 775A.00/5-1955.
- 132 USG, State, Loomer to SecSt, 29 Se 60, D-36, 775A.00/9-2960.
- 133 USG, State, Loomer to SecSt, 13 Mr 61, D-73, 775A.00/3-1361.

CHAPTER III

FEDERATION

1952 - 1962

PART II

SOCIAL AND

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

While Eritrea's constitutional independence was being challenged, its social and educational progress was being thwarted. During federation the government's emphasis, under the strong influence of Addis Ababa, was not on social progress. From 1953 through 1958, the public works department built ninety-two new structures, of which seventy-two (78%) were either prisons or police-related buildings (forty-two in Hamasien division and thirty in Massawa division).¹ The remaining twenty buildings comprised six new schools, seven hospitals, seven medical clinics, and seven government offices. Renovations were made on 1,289 already existing structures, 1,017 (79%) of which were government offices or accommodations. Of the remaining, sixty-three were schools, 144 clinics, and sixty-five prisons or police-related buildings. In the fiscal year 1954/55, the Eritrean Government's expenditure for agricultural and veterinary allocations amounted to less than six percent of the budget, for education eight percent, for medical services about sixteen percent, but for police and prisons nearly twenty-seven percent, more than one-fourth of the total year's ordinary expenditure.²

During the federative period, progress in education was not as rapid as both the real and potential revenues should have allowed and fell short of the rate of school building achieved under the British Administration. The British left Eritrea with two secondary, fourteen middle, and ninety-seven elementary schools, plus one teachers' training college, serving about 13,550 pupils, although private or community schools enrolled a further 9,000 students, many of whom were receiving financial help from the administration.³

The educational position for native Eritreans had been revolutionized since 1941.⁴ In 1960, there were only three academic

and three special (trade) secondary schools in all of Eritrea; whereas in Addis Ababa alone, there were eleven public, academic, secondary schools, sixteen trade secondary schools, and three colleges; and in the provinces there were fourteen academic and ten trade secondary schools, and two colleges.⁵ Addis Ababa allocated to Eritrea such an inordinately small share of its customs fees and other revenues - including the rental money received by the crown for Kagnaw Station - that Eritrea could ill afford to fulfill its educational needs.⁶ It should be noted, however, that in 1960 Eritreans comprised ten percent of the empire's total secondary/trade school enrollment, while Eritrea's nearest rival, Harar, the emperor's home province, comprised only eight percent, although its secondary school age population was about twice that of Eritrea's.⁷ To have continued the educational progress achieved in Eritrea under the previous two administrations would have required a much higher expenditure than was possible under the government's budgetary constraints.

On the eve of federation, Eritrea had enrolled twice (by percentage) as many eligible students as had Ethiopia.⁸ By 1952, Eritrea had 114 government schools, forty-three private schools, including mission schools, thirty-two Italian schools, and 125 Koranic schools, of which perhaps twenty-five were in Asmara.⁹ By 1960, the number of government schools had increased to 160, mission schools to sixty, and private to forty-one.¹⁰ In addition, by 1955, the American Point Four grant-in-aid program¹¹ had established in Asmara a trade school of about one hundred students, of whom about twenty-five were Muslim, and a nursing/midwifery school of about twenty-five students, of whom two were Muslim.¹² Although from 1952 through 1960, pupil enrollment in government schools had doubled and by 1965 had doubled

again, the number of schools and requisite teachers had not kept pace with demand, resulting in over-crowded classrooms with few, if any, books and supplies. Thus, since seventy-six percent (122) of Eritrea's government schools existed prior to federation, the demand for schools, teachers, and books might have been met, provided that the Eritrean Government had had control of all its finances and, after 9 May 1960, its educational system, which at that time came under the authority of Ethiopian authorities, contrary to Eritrea's constitution (article 5, 2-e).¹³

Because of an educational environment more favorable in Eritrea than in Ethiopia, Eritreans, especially students, tended to be more politically sophisticated than many of their Ethiopian counterparts and took a more active part in demonstrating their dissatisfaction with both the Federal and Eritrean Governments, especially as the latter came more under the influence of the crown. On 18 March 1957, students at Asmara's Haile Sellassie Secondary School (whose student body competed for admission and thus came from all parts of Eritrea) staged a strike, ostensibly against the Indian headmaster, but it developed into a movement demonstrating general dissatisfaction with the increasing encroachment of Addis Ababa in the internal affairs of Eritrea.¹⁴ After a two month impasse, on 9 May a riot resulted in the arrest of several hundred students and in the closure of the school for the remainder of the year. On 12 September 1960 and 22 May 1962,¹⁵ students demonstrated for respect of Eritrean autonomy by marching on the assembly, which further strained Eritrean-Ethiopian relationships.

As the Ethiopian Government gradually assumed control of Eritrea's internal affairs, political dissension developed within the discreet walls of social organizations. Because the political parties of the

pre-federation period generally had become inactive, some Muslims, 1955, organized the Muslim Youth Club, ostensibly a social and literary group of predominantly Muslim merchants of Asmara and Massawa, which in reality was a pro-independence pressure group.¹⁶ Its president and most active member was the former secretary of the Moslem League, Imam Musa, who, in 1957, began organizing active party groups in Keren, Massawa, Agordat, and Tessenei.¹⁷ Beginning in 1957 and continuing to the end of federation, the movement began to absorb disillusioned members of the former Unionist and Labor parties.¹⁸ By 1957, its strength (only those who had made some monetary contributions) was estimated at 172,000 in the Western Province, 15,000 in Asmara, and 7,000 in Massawa. Constant contact was maintained with its spokesman in Cairo, Woldeab Woldemariam, who attempted, through telegrams and delegations sent to the United Nations, to gain a hearing before the General Assembly, concerning what the group felt were violations of Eritrea's constitution.¹⁹

The members of the club were concerned not only about the gradual loss of Eritrean autonomy but also about Eritrea's weak economy, which had declined because of the rapid departure of foreign technology and administration; the inability of Eritrea to attract foreign capital; the failure of some large, established concerns in Eritrea to compete in an international, peacetime economy; the departure of other companies whose owners felt the economic atmosphere too uncertain, the tax burden too high, the shifta activity too disruptive, and with Italians leaving by the thousands the market too slender; rising unemployment;²⁰ the removal of foreign subsidies (both British and Italian); the sharp increase of tariffs by the Federal Government; the inability of officials from the Eritrean Government to agree on a

viable economic policy with the officials of the Federal Government; the Eritrean Government's inability to obtain its fair share of the Federal customs tariff; and the inexperience of both governments' officials in their new responsibilities. Also, the Eritrean Government had failed to put enough money into the development of agriculture and water supply.²¹ In addition, the crown attempted, whenever possible, to control Eritrea's economy often through extra-constitutional means. Also, there was an unwillingness, especially among educated Eritreans, to risk initiating businesses when a government job was available.

Dependent on imported coal and petroleum, Eritrea's economy was also hampered by a lack of sufficient domestic power to increase her industrial base.²² Local industries were further impeded by rising world prices for raw materials, and none would have survived against world competition if wages had not remained low, a factor which eventually led Eritrea's urban, labor force to strike.

A dwindling, technically oriented population also had an adverse effect on Eritrea's economy. In 1941, the Eritrean Italian population had numbered about 60,000. By the end of the British Administration, it had fallen to about 13,000 and by October 1961, to 8,500.²³ Despite the chief executive's public statement in April 1953 that "Italians [were] not foreigners but ... part of the country and a most important part,"²⁴ the exodus of Italians continued. The departure of Italians and, after 1952, of British had little effect on the nomadic groups of the Western Province but adversely affected many others, both Christian and Muslim alike, especially in the urban centers. Those who were unemployed or underemployed, had to remain idle in their villages.

To some degree, British and Italian administrative and technological expertise was replaced by that of Americans, Israelis, Indians, Yemanis, and a few eastern Europeans. Although there were new employers who came to Eritrea, the total number employed in industry and commerce declined from 1950 to 1961 by 17%, while the labor force (excluding farming and animal husbandry) increased by 28%.²⁵ By 1961, the number of commercial license holders fell to one-tenth of its 1950-high of about 5,000.²⁶ Government employment remained static throughout federation at about 10,500, with increasing numbers of Italians and British being replaced, under pressure from both the Eritrean and Federal governments, by Eritreans and Ethiopians. At the outset of federation, about 700 government employees, mostly Eritreans, were discharged for budgetary reasons.²⁷ Although in 1961 the Eritrean directorate of labor registered only about 14,000 unemployed (excluding farming and animal husbandry) - about five percent of the labor force, the figure did not reflect about 3,000 domestic servants discharged upon the departure of Italians and British.²⁸ Nor did the figure consider the large number of Eritreans who either were underemployed and had little opportunity for advancement or had left Eritrea and gone to Ethiopia or Saudi Arabia. The Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) began engaging Eritrean labor in January 1952 for work in Saudi Arabia.²⁹ In early 1952, this surge of employment, however, was abruptly suspended by ARAMCO because the trainees were considered unsuitable.³⁰

General employment in both the rural and urban sectors was worsened by the passage of the Employment Act adopted on 8 March 1958, which forced employers, faced with too many perquisites, to discharge many marginally useful employees.³¹ The employment situation was

further exacerbated in mid-to late 1957 by the discharge of about 1,200 Eritreans in Asmara (who had received considerably higher wages than they had under the Italians or British) by the American firm of Crow-Steers-Shepherd, the prime contractor in Asmara for the Kagnev station facilities which were finished in September for the US Army Signal Corps.³² By November 1957, unemployment in Asmara alone stood at 15,000,³³ precipitating general unrest and an abnormal increase in shifta activity in the environs of Asmara.³⁴ By June 1958, the labor directorate of Asmara declared that total employment in Eritrea in 1952 had been about 60,000, while in 1958 it had dropped to 35 -40,000.³⁵

On 10 March 1958, a strike occurred primarily in Asmara and Massawa.³⁶ The immediate cause was a conflict which had arisen between the Eritrean Government, under the advice and consent of the crown's representative, and Eritrean labor, over the failure to promulgate The Labor (Amendment) Act after its passage in 1956. The act was to replace the inadequate British proclamation 126; however, the emperor's representative failed to promulgate it primarily for two reasons: local employers had objected to the liberal employee provisions incorporated into the act, and the crown feared that the passage of a liberal labor law in Eritrea would stimulate Ethiopians to demand passage of similar legislation in Ethiopia.³⁷ In October 1957, Cavalier Mohammed Ahmed, president of the Syndicate of the Union of Free Workers of Eritrea, an unrecognized union and bargaining agent, threatened a strike to force implementation of the labor act. The Eritrean Government refused to permit the strike, but organized a committee of representatives from the government, employers, and labor to advise in drafting a revision.

The new draft was presented to the Eritrean assembly in the latter part of February 1958 and then referred to committee for discussion over the constitutionality of several articles. Meanwhile, Cav. Mohammed campaigned for passage and in the first week of March told the Eritrean Government that if the draft was not adopted by the assembly, he would call a general strike on Monday, 10 March. He also protested against article 84 of the proposed revision of the labor act, which stated, unconstitutionally, that the chief executive could withdraw recognition of any trade union, without appeal, if he found that the organization ceased to advance the object of the association. Its leaders would be expelled and new ones elected, who, in turn, would have to apply for recognition again.³⁸

On 8 March the assembly passed the new labor law, superseding The Labor (Amendment) Act of 1956, although the representative of the throne did not promulgate it until 13 May. Despite the assembly's action, the union continued its strike plans, and, on 10 March, an orderly crowd of some 3,000 people, mostly Christian, gathered in front of the Ethiopian Orthodox cathedral in Asmara to listen to the president of the union demand "their rights" and have article 84 of the new labor law changed. The organizers of the strike, who were primarily disaffected, local members of the former Unionist Party and members of the newly formed independence group of Iman Musa, sent squads of labor union members out, wearing distinctive arm bands, to intimidate workers from reporting to work, forcing many shops and businesses to close, including Kagnev station.³⁹

On the second day, the secretary for economic affairs ordered shops to be opened under threat of possible loss of their business licenses. On the third day, Asmara school teachers proclaimed a one

day sympathy strike. Muslim participation in the strike was slight except in Massawa, where, on the fourth and fifth days, Muslims joined the action, although the port area was not affected. During the strike, about two hundred people were arrested, including Cav. Mohammed and other strike leaders. Cav. Mohammed and two other strike leaders were released after six days, but twenty-four others, at least five of whom were strike organizers, were sentenced to three months in prison by order of the chief executive under the "anti-shifta" proclamation of 1955.⁴⁰ With the arrest of the strike's promoters, Omar Kadi, Sheik Suleiman, and other nominal leaders of former opposition parties, including one newly formed Christian group, the Young Federalist Party, attempted to keep the situation calm, but the Eritrean police roamed through the streets of Asmara arresting people and dispersing crowds with gun fire, leaving almost sixty wounded, but none dead.⁴¹

Although primarily a Christian effort, the strike brought attention to several factors. Dissident political groups, which had been denied their freedom of expression and organization through normal channels, were able to implement, within the framework of a strike, a much broader manifestation of discontent with both the imperial (federal) and Eritrean governments. Accusations of general police brutality, whether true or not, left a high degree of resentment among the people. Finally, the strike, more than any other event during the latter part of this period, marked the beginning of open political defiance by Eritreans against the crown's interpretation of federation.

To diminish the political unrest, the emperor pressed his representative in Asmara to implement the construction of a long considered cement plant in Massawa, to build a railroad extension from

Agordat to Tessenei, and to complete the Zula dam project in the eastern lowlands.⁴² Although the railroad had seldom shown a profit,⁴³ an extension from Agordat to Tessenei had been proposed to link up with an already existing line between Tessenei and Malwia, about twenty miles southwest of Kassala in the Sudan. This was to be done in conjunction with the building of two further extensions to link Malwia with the Sudan system and to link Gondar with Tessenei. If these extensions had been built, the entire system might have been more profitable, but from 1955 to the end of federation, discussions among the Eritrean, Ethiopian, and Sudanese governments brought no action on any of the railroad projects.⁴⁴ The extension proposal was hampered by several considerations: (1) the Sudan and Eritrean systems were of different gauges;⁴⁵ (2) capital for a project with a dubious profit margin was difficult to raise; and (3) the Sudan Government, fearing adverse competition for Port Sudan, initially showed little interest in the project although, later, after the Ethiopian Government had agreed to waive the one and one-half percent ad valorem transit tax on Sudanese freight, thus making Massawa a free port, it demonstrated greater interest.⁴⁶

On 3 May 1958, the crown's representative in Asmara, in an infrequent press communique, announced plans for extension of the rail system from Agordat to Tessenei, via Bisha, and thence southward to Gondar at a cost of an estimated E\$12-18 million.⁴⁷ With recently obtained loans to increase its Port Sudan facilities and construct new sidings on its railroad to Khartoum, the Sudan Government showed only mild interest in the project. The railway extension was to be integrated with an extensive agricultural development project in the Western Province; however, the Eritrean director of agriculture

asserted the railroad extension would be of little assistance in tapping the area's wealth, but that an extension and improvement of the road network in the Western Province would have a more positive effect.⁴⁸ In fall 1957, a Belgium group negotiated in Addis Ababa to build the extension, but failed to reach an agreement. In January 1959, the retired chief engineer of the Israeli railroad system, Avram Sella, made an extensive survey of the technical and financial aspects of the proposed project and was invited by the emperor to undertake its supervision should it be implemented.⁴⁹ Mr. Sella proposed that the Sudanese gauge be used from Tessenei to Agordat and that after the Tessenei-Gondar line had begun to show a profit, an entirely new line of standard gauge be used from Keren to Massawa, by-passing Asmara, which would be served by the existing, narrow gauge line. Neither this scheme nor one submitted by a Yugoslav group was ever accepted; nor was the extension from Barentu to Kassala by the Krupp Co.⁵⁰ The high hopes Eritreans may have shared for future development turned to anger and bitterness, particularly since railroad construction and consequent benefits should have been completely within the province of the Asmara government. Many Eritreans viewed the crown's control of the railroads and other aspects of their economy as a deliberate attempt by Addis Ababa to subvert Eritrea's economic progress by binding it inextricably to that of central Ethiopia.

During the latter years of federation, industry showed only marginal increases in gross value of production while both its net value and employee wages went down by at least ten percent.⁵¹ From 1952 to the end of federation, the cost of living index doubled, while wages remained largely static, and unemployment increased dramatically from its pre-federation levels.⁵² Because of international

competition and an inability to attract needed foreign capital, a number of major businesses in Eritrea failed, adding to the unemployed. From 1951 to 1959, the number of major industries decreased by nearly fifty percent.⁵³ What little foreign investment might have desired an Eritrean location was discouraged in preference to an Ethiopian site by the new director of economic affairs for the Eritrean Government, Ato Mebratu Berhe, under the advice of the crown.⁵⁴ Ato Mebratu opposed such projects as the railroad extension and the establishment at Decemhare, which had been an important transport center in the previous administrations, of a Volkswagen assembly plant, which might have revived the dying town.⁵⁵

The economic decline, however, was offset somewhat by the development in Asmara of the American communications facilities which contributed at their peak in 1960 US\$2.99 million and in 1961 US\$2.80 million to the general Ethiopian economy, at least two thirds of which entered the Eritrean economy.⁵⁶ From 1955 through 1957, about US\$4 million entered the Eritrean economy during the construction of the Kagnev facilities and the radio station outside Asmara.⁵⁷ Another slight boost to Eritrea's economy came with the Italian Government's payment of pensions to more than 10,200 Italians and Eritreans in the amount of E\$773,000 annually.⁵⁸

The economy, nonetheless, remained weak. In the final four years of federation, 1958-1962, the exchange control of the Asmara branch of the State Bank of Ethiopia revealed that the total export exchange was, for three of those four years, thirteen to twenty percent in deficit to imports.⁵⁹ This situation was in large part due to the new Ethiopian tariffs which were, for a few commodities, as much as five hundred to six hundred percent higher than they had been under the British

system.⁶⁰ Although high tariffs contributed to an imbalance of payments, the revenue surplus for fiscal year 1955 of E\$5.9 million, for example, was more apparent than real, since in March the emperor's representative announced that a "subsidy" of E\$8.1 million from the central treasury had been deposited in the Asmara branch of the state bank.⁶¹ However, in 1950, a general survey of customs for fifteen major items of import (from sources other than Ethiopian) showed that a weighted average tariff of seventeen percent had been imposed while a computed average for the same goods in 1958 indicated that the average tariff had doubled to thirty-five percent.⁶² Further, while tariffs under the British Administration had tended to protect local industries, federation tariffs had been established to safeguard Ethiopian products, such as coffee and grain, and tied the Eritrean economy to Ethiopia. For example, the tariff on coffee was 100%, which under the British had been free, while the tariffs on cereals and wheat flour, respectively thirty and fifty percent, had been seven and five percent during pre-federation.⁶³ Those items which had no tariffs attached, such as heavy machinery, drugs, fertilizers, etc., did not compete in either Ethiopian or Eritrean markets. Attached to the high tariffs was a nine percent road and education tax placed on all imported, taxed items. The higher customs duties following the departure of the British and of large numbers of urban consumers caused a corresponding decrease in the number of producers and in employment, especially among Eritreans. This situation in turn caused an exit of badly needed capital and discouraged the entry of fresh capital.

The declining economy also forced Eritreans to transfer their businesses to Ethiopia (where customs duties and taxes were more favorable), further integrating the two economies and making Eritrean

autonomy less feasible. However, since the income tax charges instituted by the British were continued, the Eritrean businessman suffered from a greater tax burden than his counterpart in Ethiopia.⁶⁴ Local and foreign business interests, particularly Italian, were further discouraged by the Ethiopian Customs Administration (which controlled all customs matters in Eritrea) because of its often capricious and arbitrary decisions regarding the amount of customs payments for the same product. There were often long delays, especially at the port of Massawa, due to the inexperience of its Ethiopian administrators, at higher levels, and of Eritreans, at lower levels.⁶⁵ Furthermore, on 28 January 1954, the Ethiopian Government imposed labor regulations that greatly slowed down the unloading of ships.⁶⁶ Whereas the port labor force was increased from 350 to 1750, so also was the port's bureaucracy and administrative inefficiency. It required five times as long to unload a ship as before the regulations had been imposed and the labor force had been increased. In addition, to pay for the added expense of the port's administration and labor, shipping rates were increased by nineteen percent from 1 January 1955.

From the outset of federation, the authority over customs duties and the amount which was to be annually designated as Eritrea's share was continually called into question, especially by Mohammed Osman Hassan Haiyouti, director of state lands and stores in the Eritrean Government from 1955 to 1962. Mohammed Haiyouti, a former leader in the Moslem League who left politics after 1950, was annually denied access to customs records in order to determine a fair share of Eritrea's customs receipts. The constitution had given Eritrea jurisdiction (article five, 2-h and 2-1) over "internal commerce, trades," and the "collection of taxes designed to meet the expenses of

Eritrean public functions and services." Article six (par.3) assigned the government its appropriate share of the revenues accrued from the collection of customs duties. The ascertainment of 'appropriate,' however, was never determined and each year's allotment was routinely contested by the Eritrean Government. Unfortunately for Eritrea, its constitution was unclear about the collection of the customs duties, although authority was expressly delegated to the Eritrean Government to levy and collect taxes "for the benefit of the whole federation." The authority, however, over the collection, distribution, and determination of customs duties was never allowed to come into question and was immediately, after the establishment of federation, assumed by the crown after the departure of the British Administration.⁶⁷ Spencer has acknowledged that the "Ethiopian government turned a deaf ear to complaints of withholding customs revenues from duties levied on imports destined for use in Eritrea,...."⁶⁸

It was not until very late in the federation, May 1962, after much complaining from the Eritrean business community that a federal customs committee was formed consisting of representatives of the federal department of finance and the customs administration, chaired by a member of the office of the crown's representative.⁶⁹ The purpose of the committee was to adjudicate questions regarding the application of customs regulations. The ultimate power of the committee lay with the crown's representative as its arbiter and the Eritrean representative of the federal minister of commerce and industry as its secretariat. The effect of the committee was to regularize further imperial control over customs matters which it had, from the outset of federation, controlled through its assumption of authority not explicitly granted in the constitution to either the Eritrean or Federal governments.

Although Eritrea had had a close economic relationship with Ethiopia, especially in regard to certain imported products such as coffee and spices, dependency on the Ethiopian Government and its economy eventually reached into every aspect of Eritrean life, whereas before federation its economic dependency had been more diverse. With the end of imports of cereals and grains, other than Ethiopian, at the beginning of federation, Eritreans became completely reliant upon their own uncertain harvests and those of Ethiopia. From 1959 through 1961, poor harvests due to drought and locust infestation, especially in Eritrea, found the Eritrean Government requesting aid, which came in the form of free grain shipments from the United States, arranged by the crown. The imperial representative in Asmara made it clear that Eritreans' survival was being assured through the emperor's generosity, who became involved, unconstitutionally, in matters of a purely domestic nature which were, therefore, outside the crown's jurisdiction.⁷⁰ In 1960, farmers, as well as consumers, were further distressed when the government in Asmara, taking advantage of the poor harvests, placed the price of dura, a staple crop, thirty-six percent higher than normal, which caused some farmers to smuggle grain from the Sudan where there had been a bumper crop.⁷¹

Eritrean farmers were not much helped by the establishment in mid-1960 of the Federal Government's Ethiopian Farm Loan Program. The emperor officially announced its creation in September 1959, raising the hopes of the Eritrean rural sector.⁷² Land development committees had been established in all the provinces of the empire, and a similar one was established in Asmara, called the Executive Committee for the Granting of Loans in Eritrea, composed of the emperor's representative in Eritrea as president, Ato Asseffa Ghebremariam, the federal director

of railways and the ropeway, as vice president, Ato Seifou Ghebreyohannes, the federal director of finance and customs, and twelve leading Eritreans "elected" several months before, who had no official status. Dr. Nastasi, The Eritrean Director of Agriculture, a leading authority, was neither a member of the committee nor was he ever consulted. Moreover, the committee's president and vice president had little experience in Eritrea and were not knowledgeable about its agricultural problems. The vice president, who was to be the committee's actual director, was not Eritrean and had been in the federation only a few months, and lastly Ato Seifou was under investigation for having absconded with a "large portion" of the local customs receipts "over the past few years."⁷³

The program's loans fell into three categories depending on the amount of the proposed loan. Applications in writing were to be sent to district offices whence they would be forwarded to the executive committee. The Ethiopian Government was to provide money for the loans, to be borrowed at two and one-half percent interest. The committee was authorized to make individual loans of not more than E\$1,000 although most loans were from E\$100-200. In its first year, E\$400,000 was provided for loans,⁷⁴ but the small size of each loan, the inexperience of the program's administrative staff, and the requirement that each farmer guarantee his loan with his land in a tenure system, in the highlands, where land was not strictly owned and was not farmed by the same farmer year after year, doomed the program from the start and added to Eritrean disillusionment with the Federal Government. The main accomplishment of the program was to bind yet another aspect of Eritrean life to Addis Ababa.

Eritrean farmers were also not much assisted by the American Point Four well-drilling program which was on too small a scale to alleviate drought conditions which periodically plagued Eritrea's rural sector.⁷⁵ In addition to unreliable rainfall, Eritrean farmers were hindered in agricultural production by periodic locust invasions, especially in the Western Province,⁷⁶ poor and rocky land, archaic agricultural techniques and equipment, frequent rotation of land ownership, and uneconomically small land holdings. Further, at the outset of federation, fees for annual cultivation of cereals on state lands were doubled in those areas under the altitude of eight hundred meters, where land was controlled by the Eritrean Government.⁷⁷

With the advent of federation, however, figures for agricultural production and the number of acres under cultivation showed a considerable increase in 1953, but declined to pre-federation levels by 1960. The increase was due, in large part, to a rise in private land holdings by both Eritrean and Ethiopian government officials, the reoccupation of the large Italian farming concessions, many of which before federation had been either inoperative or at minimum production, an increased flow of Eritrean products to Ethiopian markets, and a decrease in shifta activity. From 1945 to 1952, the average land area under cereal cultivation⁷⁸ was 519,000 acres, while the average for the period from 1953 to 1960, excluding the years 1955-56, rose to 724,000 acres, an increase of thirty-nine percent.⁷⁹ Yields, however, from 1945 through 1960 remained constant at .19 ton per acre. Tobacco production rose sharply in 1952, increased six-fold in 1954, and then plummeted to pre-federation levels in 1957 and continued to fall. Coffee production, on the other hand, increased from a pre-federation average of 56.5 tons to an average of 105 tons for the years 1953-54

and 1957-60. It was primarily the large concessions, both the old Italian plantations and the new land grants, that benefited.

The small Eritrean peasant farmer, especially in the southwest and east, was further disturbed when the Eritrean Government granted, under pressure from the crown, concessions to foreign, Eritrean, and federal interests. INCODE, as example, an Israeli owned meat packing company, with operations in Ethiopia, obtained a thirty year, 1,300 hectares (3,212 acres) concession from the government in the eastern lowlands on the Eilet Plain, between Asmara and Massawa.⁸⁰ Three months after the contract date, 3 August 1960, the Ethiopian Agricultural Industry Corporation, INCODE's concession name, allocated forty percent of its share capital to Ethiopian nationals, among whom were the chief executive of Eritrea, Dejatch Asfaha, and the now Ras Andargachew, Minister of Interior in the Ethiopian Government, formerly the crown's representative in Eritrea. As often happened when the Eritrean Government granted concessions for commercial exploitation of lowland areas, local inhabitants, who had farmed the area on a subsistence level for generations, complained to the government when their land was appropriated. In the case of INCODE's concession, a single block of 270 hectares (667 acres) was returned to local villages, but many Eritrean farmers lost their long held rights of cultivation to the concessionaire. More land would have been alienated from Eritrean villages, especially in the agriculturally rich region between the Gash and Setit Rivers in the southwest, had not poor roads, which remained unimproved throughout federation, prevented further exploitation by foreign interests and the crown, leaving this area in the hands of local inhabitants and the few Italians who had retained control of their large pre-war concessions.⁸¹

The government also attempted to grant concessions, as was its constitutional right, in oil. In March 1954, a concession for exploration along the Red Sea coast and on the Dahlak Islands was given to AGIP (Agenzia Generale Italiana Petroli), controlled by the Italian Government, without the consent of the Ethiopian Government, which had been negotiating with Sinclair Oil Company.⁸² The American company already had negotiated a fifty-year crown concession to explore for and develop oil reserves throughout "Ethiopia," which it had interpreted to have included Eritrea.⁸³ Yet, Sinclair's agreement had been signed before federation on 13 July 1945,⁸⁴ when the crown's jurisdiction had not extended to Eritrea. After federation, jurisdiction in such matters was constitutionally limited to the Eritrean Government.

The crown, wishing to avoid a jurisdictional clarification between the Federal and the Eritrean Governments, yielded when Asmara insisted on a strict interpretation of Maritime Proclamation 137, passed in November 1953, by Addis Ababa. The act had dubiously claimed exclusive jurisdiction, contrary to Eritrea's constitution (article five, 2-h), over the Red Sea coast inland one hundred meters. The jurisdiction, however, had been claimed only on the need for national defense, and had not included granting concessions, the sole right of the Eritrean Government.

The Ethiopian Government blocked the AGIP concession, negotiated in fall 1953, by refusing to issue visas to its employees within the four-month period during which the company had to begin operations.⁸⁵ The Eritrean Government gave AGIP a further four months in which to begin operations. The AGIP concession would have given the company the exclusive right of exploration for three years, and, if oil were discovered, the concession would be continued for thirty years. Addis

Ababa was anxious to eliminate AGIP from Eritrea and passed in late 1953 the Federal Crimes Proclamation, which limited economic activities in Ethiopia and, unconstitutionally, in Eritrea to firms in which foreign governments had no interest.

The Italian Government was convinced, however, on the basis of pre-war exploration, that oil existed along the Red Sea coast.⁸⁶ During the Italian occupation, AGIP had enjoyed exclusive oil distribution and mining rights.⁸⁷ In the 1930s, after drilling in the Dahlak Islands, a strike was reported, but it proved of limited quantity. Subsequently, the British confiscated AGIP's holdings and stripped the company of its exploratory rights on the grounds that AGIP was a government agency. After World War II, however, the British accepted an Italian court ruling that AGIP was not a state organization, and the company's property rights were restored. Shortly after federation, the firm entered negotiations with Bit. Andargachew, the emperor's representative, to regularize its status. A concession agreement was reached, but opposition in Addis Ababa immediately arose. The emperor believed that Andargachew had exceeded his powers and appointed a committee to investigate. Nothing conclusive came from the committee, and AGIP continued to seek the crown's approval.

While the AGIP proposal was being considered by the emperor's committee, the Yugoslavian Government requested a concession and, although not successful, continued for several more years to press its case.⁸⁸ At the same time, Sun Oil Company of Philadelphia also demonstrated interest and in early January 1959, Standard of Indiana expressed a desire to build a refinery in Ethiopia should oil be discovered.⁸⁹ In September 1960, the Ethiopian Government received AGIP's final proposal, offering the crown equal shares in all expenses

and profits. No agreement was reached. Finally in April 1961, under the advice of Mr. Olaf Sundt, an American oil consultant to the Ethiopian Government, who voted against AGIP because of its alleged state connections, the crown sought bids from companies which wanted an oil concession in Eritrea and elsewhere in the empire.

Nevertheless, the major factor which kept Eritrea's economy weak and wedded to the vicissitudes of Ethiopia's marketplace was, as already mentioned, Eritrea's unchanging share of the federal (Ethiopian) customs duties which remained at E\$4.63 million throughout federation.⁹⁰ Regarding its remittance, the crown from the beginning remained in contravention of the agreement. In the first budget year, the amount was to be paid in one lump sum, but, in fact, it was remitted in arbitrary amounts over the entire year. If the British ambassador had not admonished the emperor to pay the amount due and avoid having the matter referred to the UN, it might never have been paid.⁹¹ Throughout federation the Eritrean Government annually requested a reassessment of the customs revenue apportionment that it should receive according to the Eritrean constitution (article 7, par. 1).⁹²

Because Addis Ababa controlled the quarterly receipts from the Massawa and Assab customs, the Asmara government never knew exactly what its share should have been.⁹³ Since at least twenty-five to thirty percent of the total receipts assessed for goods passing through Massawa and an undetermined amount passing through Assab either originated in or was destined for Eritrea, its share should have been much greater than that agreed upon as a preliminary first annual payment by the BA and the crown.⁹⁴ The average annual import/export duties assessed for Ethiopia from 1955 to 1962 amounted to about E\$50.5

million.⁹⁵ Since the enlargement of the port of Assab was not completed until the eve of annexation,⁹⁶ the majority of Ethiopia's customs receipts, assessed in Eritrea, were processed at Massawa;⁹⁷ therefore, the Eritrean Government's proper share, in the latter half of federation, might have ranged from twelve to fifteen million Ethiopian dollars.

Without its fair share of the customs revenue, Eritrea could not afford financial reform and was forced to ask the Federal Government for assistance for every financial project beyond the bare costs of operating its own government departments.⁹⁸ Thus, during each year of federation, the Eritrean Government had to look to the Federal Government (the emperor), foreign governments, or private foreign investment for extra money to build schools, churches, mosques, to lighten the "tribute" burden of those rural groups required to pay the tax, to provide for grain allotments from the United States, and to develop Eritrea's economy.

In the first Eritrean budget, approved on 25 December 1952 for the period from 16 September 1952 to 31 December 1953, the customs payment allotted by the Ethiopian minister of finance, according to the Anglo-Ethiopian Agreement of 1952, was deemed insufficient by the chief executive.⁹⁹ He had written three letters, just prior to the assembly's approval, requesting a review of what should constitute the proper share, which, according to the Eritrean secretary of finance, should have been at least sixty percent more. Asmara's figure was based on the three years (1948-1950) of exports and imports, prior to federation. In its first report, an Eritrean finance committee recommended that an office be established for the purpose of

determining what the government's customs revenue share should be each year.¹⁰⁰ The office was never created.

The committee also recommended that the government's share of the salt tax, which was imposed and collected by the crown, should be remitted on the basis of what salt, produced at Massawa and Assab, was consumed in Eritrea as per legal jurisdiction. Also, the committee reminded the Federal Government that the income for Eritrea's participation in federal services, under article six, paragraph one of the constitution, had not yet been remitted. Further, the committee made two sound but unheeded recommendations: one, that the government's structure and organization, particularly with respect to positions held by high officials, imposed an undue burden on the limited financial resources of Eritrea; and two, that salaries of personnel making from E\$7,350 to E\$9,625 should be cut by fifteen percent and those from E\$3,815 to E\$7,350, by ten percent. The savings of nearly E\$100,000 should be used to increase salaries of personnel making from E\$420 to E\$1,365 p.a.¹⁰¹ In the first year's budget, the estimated expenditure for personnel salaries amounted to fifty-eight percent of the total expenditure.¹⁰² A large portion of this amount went to pay the salaries of foreign personnel, mostly former British officials necessary to maintain the continuity of the previous administration, which was left largely intact by the Eritrean Government. The suggestions were supported by the chief executive, Tedla Bairu, but were dropped by his successor, Dejazach Asfaha. As a gesture of appeasement to those critical of the government's economic policies and to show willingness to curb spending in an effort to reduce the cost-of-living, which had risen nineteen percent directly after federation,

Dejatch Tedla reduced his own salary by one-third and those of his cabinet by one-half.¹⁰³

The administration of the Eritrean Government, excluding salaries to members of the assembly, comprised about eleven percent of the total budgetary expenditure for its first year, while the largest item was for police and prisons at 34.7 percent. The latter was reduced slightly for the second year to thirty percent because of a reduction in "shifta" activity, and from the third year to the last, the figure stabilized at about twenty-eight percent.¹⁰⁴ The second largest expenditure, for public health, ranged from only thirteen and one-half to fifteen and one-half percent, and its largest line item was for the salaries paid to professional European personnel. The expenditure for education began in its first year at a low of six percent and rose to only eleven percent towards the end of federation, while the expenditure for agriculture, including forestry and veterinary, stayed at a very low three to four percent. There was never sufficient money budgeted for anything but maintenance of existing schools, clinics, etc. If the revenue from customs, which for the first two fiscal years comprised forty-three percent of Eritrea's total revenue, decreasing gradually to thirty-one percent in 1959/60, had been remitted to the extent the financial committee had calculated, the Eritrean Government may have had the funds to have developed the state's economic infrastructure and to have made it less dependent on Addis Ababa.

Since the financial committee's pleas and the chief executive's urgings to determine Eritrea's "fair" share of customs receipts had been ignored, a financial commission was formed in early 1953.¹⁰⁵ It consisted of Ato Fessahazion Haile, Secretary of Economic Affairs and deputy chief executive; Grazmatch Teclehaimanot Booru, Secretary of

Finance; Fit. Haregot Abbai, Secretary of Interior; Mr. E. Allen Smith, Financial Adviser; and Mr. F. Dahya, Private Secretary to the Chief Executive, who acted as the commission's secretary. Talks in Addis Ababa, initiated in May 1953, produced only one suggestion, that a check point be established on the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia, which was never put into effect. The second and last talks were held from 25 November to 16 December 1954.

By then, the crown had added an unwritten and illegal corollary to Eritrea's constitution to the effect that its share of the costs of the Federal Government be deducted from Asmara's portion of customs duties. The new items to be included in Eritrea's federal costs were the Ethiopian national defence, the conduct of foreign affairs, the conduct of the Ethiopian Government's federal administration, and the operation of the Eritrean railroad, which, constitutionally, should have been administered by Asmara.

The two main issues, that of establishing a method by which Eritrea's share of customs receipts could be accurately determined and that of reckoning Eritrea's federal expenses, were never resolved. Mr. Allen Smith estimated that only about twenty percent of the goods entering Massawa, for example, were shipped on to Ethiopia while Addis Ababa maintained that the percentage was close to fifty. No attempt was ever permitted to analyze the crown's expenses for federation, and when, in the following year, the new chief executive, Asfaha Woldemicael, took office, the crown successfully resisted any further discussion on the matter. As a result, Eritrea continued to receive the arbitrarily determined amount which the British Administration had presumed would be properly computed once federation had been in progress. The budget was always conveniently balanced without a

deficit or a surplus. If revenue decreased, government spending, except government salaries, decreased.

The second largest source of revenue, after customs duties, came from the Eritrean income tax, which only urban dwellers paid. The tax, primarily the burden of the Italian community, less than two percent of the population, was nearly two and a half times greater than the 'tribute' paid by the rural sector. Since businessmen in Ethiopia were taxed less than their Eritrean counterparts, many of the latter considered moving to Ethiopia.¹⁰⁶ During federation, business taxes did not change, and the assembly never considered an alternate tax as a substitute source of revenue to lighten the business community's tax burden. Moreover, after federation and the imposition of a customs union, Ethiopian businessmen did not pay a customs tax for goods transiting Eritrea as they had before federation, a further incentive for Eritreans and Italians to transfer their business interests to Ethiopia.

The Eritrean/Italian business community was further discouraged by the Ethiopian Government's border tax, as example, on Eritrean wine, a major local industry. Eritrean alcoholic beverages were taxed locally by excise authorities and then a second time (about twice as much as the local tax) by Ethiopian officials as they crossed the border. This double taxation had the effect of reducing income from a major Eritrean industry, which before federation had exported its products to Djibouti, Aden, Sudan, and Ethiopia, but which after federation could no longer compete with the Ethiopian industry.¹⁰⁷

In matters of tax collection, the Eritrean Government was further thwarted by the demand from Addis Ababa that all taxes paid by foreign companies should be deposited directly in the Ethiopian State Bank,

although Dejatch Hagos Ghebre, mayor of Asmara from 1952 to 1960, refused to allow municipal taxes to be transferred to the capital. As revenue accumulated from taxation, fees, and customs duties, a government reserve fund developed which never appeared in the budget. By the beginning of the 1959/60 fiscal year, it amounted to over E\$6 million, which was about forty percent of the total budget for that year.¹⁰⁸ In addition to using some of it for the purchase of grain from Ethiopia, the Eritrean Government periodically used large amounts to buy shares in the important Barattolo cotton factory, but about half of the fund remained uncommitted. Although the money might have been used to develop Eritrea's economic infrastructure, Ethiopian control precluded such a possibility.

The general policy of the crown was to avoid strengthening the Eritrean Government or its economy and to maintain as much control over both as possible. The conflict between the two governments for domination of Eritrea's economy continued to the end of federation. Eritrea had difficulty in competing in the international market, partly because of the emigration of large numbers of its businessmen and technicians, in particular Italians, with their capital and technical expertise. These factors were largely responsible for the drastic reduction in the number of factories in Eritrea from a high of about 400 in 1952 to 74 in 1958.¹⁰⁹

Although, the non-native population was encouraged by the four economic commissions - coordination and finance, agriculture, commerce, and industry - which had been formed in spring 1953 by the Eritrean Government to appease the Italian community, they failed to prevent the continuing departure of Italians.¹¹⁰ Under the advice and consent of the chamber of commerce, the commissions convened for the first time on

2 May 1953. Of thirty-three members, twenty were Italian, seven Eritrean, and one each from the Egyptian, Maltese, Greek, French, Arab, and Indian communities. The purpose of the coordination and finance commission was to promote and develop the Eritrean economy by trying to attract foreign capital from international bodies and credit from both foreign and local banks, to reorganize the fiscal system, and to plan public works. The agriculture commission was to study the possibilities of domestic and international consumption of agricultural products and cattle, water problems, and agricultural protective measures. The commerce commission's general purpose was to foster business and to encourage the government to sign commercial treaties. The industrial commission was to study the possibility of establishing new industries, protecting existing ones, training local labor, establishing limited protective tariffs, and trying to keep production costs low. In the end, the commissions accomplished little.

Shifta also hampered the economic growth of Eritrea by periodically interrupting the commercial use of Eritrea's roads. Just before the end of the British Administration, the shifta problem had been brought under control, but by 1955, a resurgence of banditry had become evident along the three main roads leading from Asmara, especially those to Massawa and to Decemhare. Following the issuance of the public security proclamation and the emperor's amnesty in July 1955, shifta activities once again appeared to decline, but by the beginning of the following year, banditry increased, affecting Eritreans and non-Eritreans alike.¹¹¹ The impetus appeared to be more economic than political. The vast majority of these attacks, occurring during the period of shifta resurgence, January 1955 through July 1957, seemed to have been perpetrated by semi-professional bandits for

economic gain.¹¹² The shifta operated from the sparsely populated area around the Setit River, south of Barentu in the Western Province, and worked primarily along the Asmara-Tessenei and Asmara-Addis Ababa roads as far as the border.¹¹³ Fearing that the renewed shifta activity would inspire politically motivated disturbances, the chief executive, in a speech on 30 May 1957 to heads of villages and other important persons in Hamasien sub-province, warned that the obstacle to Eritrea's economic progress was the shifta problem and he appealed to the people to cooperate with local authorities.¹¹⁴

It was the constant lack of security, especially off the main roads, which kept closed most of Eritrea's mines that had been abandoned during the shifta resurgence from 1947 through 1951.¹¹⁵ Mine closure was also prompted by the inability of mine operators to negotiate new contracts with local communities.¹¹⁶ By spring 1954, the only mines in operation in Eritrea were one iron ore mine in Ghedem and four gold mines in the Western Province, one of which, the mine at Ugaro, had been transferred along with other Italian state property to the Asmara Government.¹¹⁷

While the Eritrean economy felt the restraining hand of the Ethiopian Government and the uncontrollable effects of the international market, the press in Eritrea almost immediately became the effective tool of Addis Ababa through the direct influence of the palace. By May 1953, freedom of the press had been silenced. On 29 November 1952, the weekly Dimtzi Ertra (Voice of Eritrea),¹¹⁸ one of the few newspapers which had continued after the British departure and which largely served the Muslim community, published an article criticizing the Eritrean assembly and the chief executive and his associates.¹¹⁹ It had accused the government and assembly of not

defending Eritrean autonomy in regard to the Ethiopian Government's control, through Proclamation 130, of the federal supreme court, which was to have been an independent organ for resolving conflicts between the two members of the federation. Within a few months of the federation's inception, the federal supreme court had become the tool of the throne. It was presided over by a minister of the emperor, and one of its two other members was to be appointed by the crown after nomination by the minister of justice.¹²⁰

Further critical articles appeared in the following two months, one of which accused Addis Ababa of having bombed a rebellious village near Makalle, in Tigray Province, just south of Eritrea.¹²¹ On 7 February 1953, an article reported that a petition, signed by many Eritrean citizens, had been submitted to his majesty through the office of the chief executive. It requested the emperor to investigate abuses of Eritrea's autonomy in regard to domestic versus federal jurisdiction. In particular, it asked the emperor to "hand over to the Government of Eritrea all interior communications which include railways, airfields, interior postage stamps, transportations, telephones, telegraphs and customs."¹²² In addition, it requested non-interference from the crown in matters of a domestic nature regarding the collection of certain taxes (salt, housing, identity card, health, education, passport and visa, and shipping demurrage in Massawa and Assab). Further, it wanted control over the selection of officers, after issuance of the crown's orders, in matters of defence, currency, finance, and foreign affairs of the Federal Government. Moreover, the petition demanded that, according to the democratic principles set down in Eritrea's constitution, there be some provision for the assembly to state its opinion regarding drafts of federal proclamations and laws

which the throne intended to pass and which would have a direct effect on the internal affairs of Eritrea.

In the same issue, there also appeared an article asserting that the offices of the newspaper had come under police surveillance and that such operations were the beginning stages of a "dictatorship." On 28 February 1953, the Government of Eritrea brought court action against the newspaper, which it accused of seditious defamation, of vilifying constitutional institutions, and of fomenting disorder. The accusations were supported by the Italian Penal Code, which, for the most part, had become the Eritrean Penal Code.¹²³ On 14 March, the paper published a copy of a petition addressed to the United Nations Tribunal in Asmara. Copies were also sent to the chief executive and to the president of the assembly and its members. The petition, in Arabic, was very similar to that which had been sent in February to the emperor. Mr. Chapard, registrar of the UN tribunal, refused to receive it directly from representatives of the Moslem League, but mailed a newspaper copy to the United Nations secretariat. He told the Moslem League correctly that his authority extended only to settling claims pertaining to ex-Italian properties.

On the day the petition appeared, 14 March, the commissioner of police closed the newspaper down, although the order, based on Italian decrees still in force, was dated 20 March.¹²⁴ The director of the newspaper, Mohammed Saleh Mahmud, appealed to the chief executive and to the secretary of interior, Sheik Mohammed Saad Faki Ali, and was informed that the matter was under discussion. Finally, on 10 April, the secretary of interior was forced to revoke the newspaper's license. On 13 April, after having been remanded three times in the magistrate's court, the legal action brought against the paper by the Eritrean

Government was referred to the district court because, it was claimed, the magistrate's court lacked jurisdiction. Mr. Clarence Smith, who had served in the previous administration, was the presiding magistrate. After a thorough investigation, he dismissed the charges, but on 21 April 1953, a few days before sentence was to be passed, the commissioner of police and the secretary of interior - anticipating the verdict - issued separately and in great haste two brief, consecutive orders suppressing absolutely any further publication of the newspaper. Mr. Smith judged the orders illegal, arbitrary, and in complete contradiction to the Eritrean constitution. The matter was appealed to the Eritrean supreme court, whose collective opinion of 19 August, stated that the commissioner of police and the secretary of interior had lacked the authority to withdraw the newspaper's license and, thus, the orders were deemed null and void.¹²⁵ Despite the favorable decision, accompanied by protests to both the Eritrean assembly and to the emperor, the newspaper remained closed.

Other newspapers, critical of the government, shared the same fate. Hanty Ertra, 'Eritrean Unity', a weekly both in Tigrinya and Arabic, edited by Woldeab Woldemariam, was harrassed into suspension shortly after federation.¹²⁶ The newspaper, Mai Ertra Samunawi Gazeta, 'The Eritrean Weekly News,' continued publication in Tigrinya and Arabic after federation; however, with a reduced budget and format, it was forced to close its doors after one year. Blatta Mohammed Kadi, before his arrest and jailing in spring 1958, published in Asmara the weekly Unione e Progresso, begun in late spring 1952, which represented Muslims of Massawa and supported federation. It was, nonetheless, officially banned in Ethiopia by the government censor shortly before federation came into effect.¹²⁷

Among those newspapers which continued publication was the official Il Quotidiano Eritreo, which immediately upon federation, 16 September 1952, became the official newspaper of the Eritrean Government, with the same staff, published as before in Italian and English, and subsidized by the Ethiopian minister of finance, who was also minister of press and information.¹²⁸ The Asmara government also circulated a Tigrinya version of the Ethiopian newspaper, Zemen, 'The Times.'¹²⁹ The bi-weekly organ of the Unionist Party, Etniopia, continued to be issued in Tigrinya, Arabic, and Italian under the editorship of Tweldeberhan Ghebremedhin, whose pen name was Haddis Tewodros, and who also acted as the Eritrean director of public relations.¹³⁰ After federation, Ethiopia attacked the liberal unionists, led by Ras Tesemma Asberom's son, Dejatch Abraha Tesemma, who soon became disenchanted with Eritrea's close ties with the throne.

Four non-controversial Italian newspapers continued their publication: Giornale dell'Eritrea, Il Mattino del Lunedì, Il Lunedì del Medio Oriente, and Veritas et Vita, the bi-weekly organ of the Roman Catholic vicariate, but by the beginning of 1962, only the first, which was financed by the Italian Government with local Italian support, remained in print as the only non-governmental newspaper. In early 1962, the Italian Consul General, Dr. Uberto Bozzini, successfully revived Veritas et Vita by generating enough local interest and financial backing to replace the loss of the Italian Government's support.¹³¹ Its standard of publication and thus its circulation also improved. Il Lunedì del Medio Oriente was forced to close down after the editor, Alberto Favino di Santa Croce, was arrested in August 1961, and the paper was suspended for one month

following the publication of an article critical of the government's neglect in allowing Decemhare, a town rivaling Asmara with a six-thousand-foot airstrip, nearly to die.¹³²

As the crown's influence over the Eritrean press increased, Il Quotidiano Eritreo was used more and more to popularize the emperor as Eritrea's benefactor. In 1955, after the departure of Tedla Bairu and the subsequent increase of Addis Ababa's influence over Eritrean Government officials, the throne periodically used the press to suggest that Eritrea had benefited greatly, especially in economic matters, and would continue to improve from its association with Ethiopia. On 22 August 1957, a rare government press conference was held, during which

Ato Ghebreyohannes Tesfamariam, Secretary for Economic Affairs of the Asmara government, stated that due to the "gesture of generosity" of "our beloved" emperor, fuel would be provided to Eritrean industries at a "reduced" price or "free" from customs duties.¹³³ Further, the secretary reminded the people that Eritrean industries were being granted "all possible facilities and assistance." Continuing, Ato Ghebreyohannes brought attention to a "law" - unpublished in the government's gazette - although in force, that new industries and plants would be exempted for a period of ten years from the payment of taxes. In addition, he announced that the assembly had approved another E\$500,000 in loans for industries. Further, he stated the government "intended" to assign E\$52 million to create an agricultural bank for loans to farmers and for programs of long range agricultural development. Moreover, he related that the government had recently distributed thousands of tree saplings to fight soil erosion in the highlands. All these benefits to the Eritrean economy he implied were through the grace of the crown.

In fact, however, these measures had little effect on Eritrea's economy. Most highland farmers had small, non-contiguous plots of land which changed ownership every seven years (although in some cases, through political influence, they remained in the same hands for several decades). Size of plot and lack of ownership provided little incentive for the land's improvement. Furthermore, despite the presence of modern techniques of farming, they had had little impact on traditional agricultural activities. The unstable, political climate with its uncertain future, intimately tied to the vicissitudes of the throne, gave little encouragement for the establishment of new industries in Eritrea. Industries found greater stimulation in central Ethiopia where costs of labor and taxes were less and strikes were not permitted.

With nearly every aspect of Eritrean life and government tied to Addis Ababa, it was clear by the early sixties that Eritrea would soon be declared the fourteenth province of Ethiopia. By 1962, the emperor had placed his men in key positions in the Eritrean Government.¹³⁴

Those who had led the opposition to annexation were either in retirement or in exile. Ato Woldeab Woldemariam, who with Ibrahim Sultan, had been one of the most vocal critics of the unionists, had failed to win a seat in the first constituent assembly held on 15 March 1952.¹³⁵ From June 1947 to August 1951, Ato Woldeab had suffered six assassination attempts on account of his unrelenting opposition to union.¹³⁶ On 13 January 1953, he nearly died from the seventh attempt when two bullets put him in hospital for five months.¹³⁷ During this time his name was put forward by the Eritrean labor association, of which he was its director, in the by-election to the Caravanserraglio ward of Asmara against eight competitors. While convalescing from his

wounds, he won a large majority, but his victory was blocked by the chief executive.¹³⁸

On 15 April 1953, ten new members of the assembly were confirmed while three were challenged, one of whom was Ato Woldeab. After the assembly was adjourned until 27 April, the chief executive summoned the legal adviser to the government, Mr. Norman Methven, and instructed him to find a legal basis to declare Ato Woldeab's election invalid.¹³⁹ In accordance with the controversial British proclamation 121 of 1952 regarding registration of voters, it was claimed that certain registered voters in Ato Woldeab's ward were not entitled to ballot there. Thus, the unsubstantiated assertion gave opportunity to the chief executive to declare the by-election invalid, contravening article forty-six (2) of Eritrea's constitution, which provided that only the assembly, by a two-thirds vote, could make that decision. Ato Woldeab made no attempt to register himself a second time for reelection, supposing some pretext would be found to prevent his sitting in the assembly. Thereafter, until he departed for Cairo, the government kept him under constant surveillance, and police often arrested and interrogated anyone seen talking with him.¹⁴⁰

Unable to take part in Eritrean affairs and actively to oppose Ethiopian encroachment, Ato Woldeab decided to request from the crown's representative permission to leave Eritrea and travel to Sudan, Egypt, or Saudi Arabia. He was granted a visa to Sudan. After being thoroughly searched and denied permission to take any of his papers with him, he departed for Khartoum in August 1953, where he remained for six months, thereafter travelling to Cairo, where he asked for and received political asylum in April 1954. In early 1956, he received a thirty pound monthly stipend from the Egyptian Government to broadcast

in Tigrinya to Eritrea, though Nasser had the program stopped toward the end of 1956 as a concession to Ethiopia, a member of a five-country conciliation group, during the international peace negotiations between Israel and Egypt. Two further attempts at broadcasting were thwarted by the Egyptian Government. Finally, Ato Woldeab was appointed as linguistic supervisor of an Amharic radio program, in which capacity he remained until his departure from Cairo in 1982.¹⁴¹

With Ato Woldeab in exile, Ibrahim Sultan continued to oppose Eritrea's gradual loss of autonomy. On 3 January 1956, his Moslem League petitioned the emperor for a redress of Eritrean grievances, in particular the growing feeling, especially among Muslims of the Western Province, that the federation was being denied its full intent.¹⁴² Also included was a plea to pardon the newspaper, Dimtzi Ertra (Voice of Eritrea), and its editor, Elias Toclul. (A similar statement had been sent by telegram to the emperor on 12 October 1953, and had caused the arrest of its three signatories, Ibrahim, Blatta Mohammed Kadi, who was then leader of the Independent Moslem Party, and Ahmed Abdelkader Bescir, Secretary General of the Nationalist Party of Massawa.¹⁴³) Five months later in June, a group calling itself the Moslem Mosques' (El Wakuf) Committees and Delegates, the inspiration of Ibrahim, sent a further protest to the chief executive and to the members of the assembly. This included an admonition that the Eritrean constitution was being flagrantly abused, a plea for more Muslim participation in the government, and for instruction to be given to Muslim students in Arabic, one of the working languages of Eritrea under its constitution.¹⁴⁴ Further, in 1956, the group successfully sought the passage of a law which would fix the observance of hitherto undeclared public Islamic holidays: the Feast of Eid el Fitr, marking the end of

Ramadan;¹⁴⁵ the first days of Eid el Adha, marking the Feast of Abraham; the Muslim new year; and the Prophet's birthday.¹⁴⁶

Finally, there occurred in the first half of 1958 two incidents which convinced not only Ibrahim but also other prominent Muslims that it was no longer possible to voice opposition to government policy. On 5 March, Blatta Mohammed Omar Kadi, leader of the executive committee of the Independent Moslem League and of the largely inactive Eritrean Federal Council, was arrested upon returning to Eritrea and subsequently jailed two months later for having gone abroad without an exit permit.¹⁴⁷ He had travelled to Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon and then to the United Nations to plead Eritrea's case. After he returned to Ethiopia, he had had a short interview in Addis Ababa with the emperor, whose foreign minister, Aklilou Habtewold, received Omar's detailed memorandum of complaints regarding the implementation of federation.

The second incident occurred on 2 June 1958, when the Federal High Court sentenced the vice president of the Moslem League, Imam Musa, brother of the Mufti of Eritrea, Sheik Sulleiman, and two other prominent citizens, Sheik Mahmoud Omar and Elias Toolu, each to three years in prison for sending a telegram in October 1957 to the secretary general of the UN.¹⁴⁸ The telegram requested that the secretary general inform member states of the poor economic conditions in Eritrea, which reached their nadir in the following spring, and of the failure of the Imperial Ethiopian Government to implement the Federal Act.¹⁴⁹ The High Court deemed the latter accusation a conspiracy against the crown, and in the subsequent court proceedings, the defense lawyer, Ghebrelul Ghebreiesus, was also sentenced to six months in prison for contempt in having defended an "enemy" of the emperor. It became clear to Ibrahim Sultan and other Muslims and Christians alike

that it was no longer tenable to voice public opposition to the government.

Ibrahim Sultan's own position had become increasingly difficult. As of August 1956, an Ethiopian court had effectively precluded him from earning his living from farming and from engaging in any political activities. An Eritrean court had fined him E\$600 for allegedly insulting the Sudanese foreign minister. An Ethiopian court changed the fine to one year in prison, which was then commuted to three years on probation, during which time he was forbidden to operate his business or take part in political affairs. Under constant surveillance,¹⁵⁰ in fear of assassination, thwarted in both political and private life, he decided to join the growing numbers of Eritreans who had sought asylum in Cairo. At length, accompanied by Sheik Idris Mohammed Adum, former president of the assembly, he fled across the Sudan border north of Kassala sometime during the second week of March 1959.¹⁵¹ They proceeded to Egypt where they met with President Nasser, who refused to give them any direct assistance.¹⁵² The number of those Eritreans who had chosen to flee rather than to risk a sojourn in prison had now reached at least one hundred. Partly as a result of this growing exodus, Brigadier General Aman Andom, Major General Kebebe Ghebre, and Major General Merid Mengesha of the Imperial Ethiopian Army began reviewing troops in Eritrea, especially along the Sudanese border.

With many of the separatist leaders in exile, the Ethiopianization program, which had begun from the first days of federation and had brought Eritrea, by the end of the decade, very close to annexation, could now be completed. By 1961, the trappings of Eritrea's internal autonomy had been removed. In December 1961, Dejatch Asfaha

Woldemicael was called to Addis Ababa to attend a secret meeting to discuss the "unsettled situation" in Eritrea.¹⁵³ An assassination attempt had been made on Abba Dimetros Ghebremariam, vice president of the assembly; shifta activity, particularly in western Eritrea, had increased; and the Eritrean assembly, generally compliant, had become disturbed by the government's lack of expenditure to upgrade and increase the numbers of the Eritrean police force. Throughout federation, it had been unable, and perhaps somewhat unwilling, to control shifta activity, which was as often politically motivated as it was economically inspired. Also, the assembly continued to complain to the Federal Government that Eritrea had not been receiving its fair share of customs revenue.

In an attempt to reassure Eritreans of the benefits of unity, to ingratiate members of the assembly and other Eritrean Government officials, and more importantly, to prepare the way for Ethiopia's final disposition of Eritrea, the emperor made several visits in 1962. His first extended visit to Eritrea since 1960 came in January, when accompanied by the empress and the royal family, including the crown prince, he reportedly handed out over a million Ethiopian dollars.¹⁵⁴ He spent most of his time in Asmara, Massawa, and Assab, where he visited the nearly completed port expansion being done by a Yugoslavian group. In Massawa, the emperor commissioned naval cadets, and visited the Zula Dam project, sixty kilometers south of the city, which was virtually complete by spring 1961.¹⁵⁵ At the end of January, Lidj. Endalkatchew Makonnen, Ethiopian Minister of Commerce and Industry, made an official visit to Asmara, promising, both privately and publicly, to assist local business through customs and tax adjustments and expansion of the ministry's office in Asmara.¹⁵⁶ Directly

following his visit, the emperor's representative in Eritrea, Lt. General Abby Abebe, who had been authorized to absent himself from his duties as minister of interior (a post he had not been permitted to vacate since the aborted coup d'etat in 1960 in Addis Ababa), went to work to build confidence within the Eritrean community that complete union would be in its best interests.

The emperor's second sojourn to Eritrea occurred in June 1962.¹⁵⁷ He arrived at Massawa on 16 June on the new flagship of the Imperial Navy, The Ethiopia, met with American Ambassador Arthur Richards, whom he publicly thanked for United States' assistance, and immediately went on to Asmara where he toured several industrial establishments, the airport (built largely by the crown since it was within federal jurisdiction), and then drove to Keren. There, he announced the donation of two hospitals (never built), promised increased telecommunications in Muslim areas, and distributed money and titles.¹⁵⁸ On 27 June, the emperor made a parting speech at the palace in Asmara in which he emphasized the historical relations between Eritrea and Ethiopia, the advantages to be accrued from their close cooperation in thwarting "foreign invasion," the patriotic spirit of Ethiopian Muslims during the war and afterwards, the alleged absence of discrimination against Muslims in Ethiopia and Eritrea,¹⁵⁹ and the substantially inflated figure of E\$75 million which the emperor claimed had been spent on Eritrea's economic development over the past decade.¹⁶⁰ He also mentioned the progress on the Zula Valley Authority project which, in fact, had suffered numerous delays due to poor planning.

He made no mention of the Eritrean Government but spoke in terms of "Eritrea...part of Ethiopia," "our country and people" and "alien puppets" in Eritrea, those "hypocrites who are serving as instruments

for marring past history and betraying it to aliens."¹⁶¹ Those in opposition to the emperor were sternly warned "that Ethiopia's kindness and goodwill has not been acknowledged," that those who spread anti-Ethiopian propaganda should beware of "our ability to react to the full extent to any criticism" and that the effect of such propaganda would be "harmful to its instigators." Interspersed between the stern warnings and pleas that "unity is the most lasting foundation for progress and development, as well as for greatness and freedom," Haile Sellassie absolved the Eritrean rural sector from paying the annual tribute for the previous two years, which most farmers had been unable to meet because of the devastating, locust invasions. By so doing, the emperor usurped the Eritrean Government's constitutional authority, article five (1), in controlling the "collection of taxes."¹⁶² Further, he assumed unconstitutional authority reserved to the chief executive by passing "orders on to Lt. General Abby, Bit. Asfaha, and Brig. General Tedla Ogbit, Chief of Eritrean Police" to ensure the "maintenance of a more adequate order."¹⁶³ The emperor's remarkable speech, unchallenged in the assembly, met with no demonstration since numerous police were in evidence everywhere.

Meanwhile, Haile Sellassie promoted, unconstitutionally, twenty-three of the top officers of the Eritrean Police Force, including Tedla Ogbit, Chief of Police, who was raised from colonel to brigadier general and who was named along with Blatta Kumellatchew, Commander of the Order of the Star of Honor of Ethiopia.¹⁶⁴ Abebe Gemed, Commanding Officer of the Second Infantry Division in Eritrea, was promoted from brigadier to major general. All the cabinet secretaries of the Eritrean Government were named fitawrari, the president of the assembly, dejatch, and all but seventeen "obstructionist" members of

the assembly (nearly all Muslim) received titles and medals.¹⁶⁵ Similar favors were dispensed among other key people, especially district chiefs. That the emperor had the constitutional right to raise the grade of anyone in the Eritrean police, an entirely Eritrean internal force throughout federation, was doubtful, since matters concerning the force were exclusively within the jurisdiction of the Eritrean Government according to article 5 (c) of Eritrea's constitution. However, the granting of titles, medals, and the extension of largesse to individuals, whose appointed or elected responsibilities were unaltered, was arguably within the emperor's privilege, but not within the jurisdiction of the federal apparatus. Altogether, the emperor granted titles to 111 people, thirteen of whom became dejatch, seventeen, fitawrari, nineteen, kenyazmatch, and sixty-two, grazmatch, and an additional 134 people were decorated.¹⁶⁶

The effect of the emperor's visit was considerable. Although many felt that total integration of Eritrea into the empire was a foregone conclusion, the majority of Muslims and a growing number of Christians expressed their opposition, and angry letters were written to their respective legislators, warning that a vote for union with Ethiopia would be unpopular. Sufficient opposition had been generated to delay the end of autonomy until the next legislative session in the fall.

The assembly for the most part fell victim to the blandishments of the throne's program for incorporation. Contrary to article fifty-five (2) of Eritrea's constitution, which stated that salaries of its members could not be raised until the end of the four-year term in which they were voted, the assembly passed on 3 December 1953, less than a year after the salaries had been fixed by law on 29 January 1953, the first of three amendments to The Remuneration of the

Executive and Legislative Act, 1953,¹⁶⁷ by which the salary of the chief executive was doubled, while those of his secretaries and the president and vice president of the assembly were increased by half.¹⁶⁸ It was not until 28 June 1956, at the very end of the assembly's first term that the salaries of members were nearly doubled.¹⁶⁹ The third amendment, adopted at the beginning of the assembly's second term on 27 November 1956, increased, by two and one half times, the entertainment allowance of the chief executive, which had represented about ten percent of his salary. Further, this amendment provided for the first time an entertainment allowance for the president and vice president of the assembly and the executive secretaries, representing twenty-five percent of their salaries.¹⁷⁰

In the early years of the assembly's existence, it occasionally demonstrated, in particular in fiscal matters, a willingness not to be the docile tool the throne was trying to shape. On 22 May 1954, the assembly passed a resolution condemning the "action of federal authorities in their attempt to corrupt the faith of Eritrean members who represent the people and of Eritrean Government officials..."; and deploring the Federal Government's continuous interference in the strictly internal functions of the Eritrean Government.¹⁷¹ Although the resolution (33 in favor, 7 against, 10 abstentions) was primarily backed by Muslims, some Christians voted in its favor.

The assembly was also concerned about the constant danger of a budget deficit, but Dejazach Tesfaiyohannes, Secretary of Finance to the Eritrean Government from 1956, reminded the body that in 1961 the amount of the budget being spent for administrative salaries had risen to seventy percent.¹⁷² He had on several occasions recommended an austerity program and a reduction in the number of political

appointees. Another complaint of the assembly concerned the five percent "ad valorem" import tax and the four percent public health and education tax on imports, both of which were collected in Eritrea but were credited entirely to the Ethiopian Government; thus, the throne was collecting two taxes, both of which were not within the Federal Government's jurisdiction, according to article five (2-d & e) of Eritrea's constitution.¹⁷³ It also contravened article sixty-one, the taxing jurisdiction article, which was further violated by the crown's collection of the salt tax (E\$6.00/ton) which, as a matter of intrastate commerce, did not fall within federal jurisdiction. If the Eritrean Government had been allowed to collect, as was its constitutional right, according to article five (2-j), internal postal, telegraphic and telephone dues, its share of the airport tax, and its share of the E\$10 registration fee charged on visiting foreign travellers,¹⁷⁴ the Asmara government's budget would have been much more able to provide for long range economic projects. As it was, the government's budget permitted no economic development and only a little for public works, which gave the emperor constant opportunity to intervene, through his contributions to the construction of Eritrean public works.¹⁷⁵

In June 1961, the assembly again expressed dissatisfaction with the throne, when the Eritrean Government presented a budget with a deficit of E\$750,000. This brought into focus two important issues: that if the Asmara government had received its fair share of customs receipts, quite probably there would have been no deficit and that, since there was a deficit and the budget was always carefully balanced, it could have resulted only from misappropriated funds.¹⁷⁶ Since the Eritrean Gazette did not publish any government accounts after the

fiscal year 1954/1955, the assembly and the public remained uninformed about the cost of government. During the same fiscal year, the government, operating with a skeleton budget, reduced the police budget by one-third since the shifta problem had apparently been eliminated. The police force was thus placed in a position of being unable to cope with the resurgence of shifta activity which began in early spring 1955, thereby creating the public impression that Eritrea needed the Federal Government's assistance to maintain law and order. The budget deficit of 1954/1955 gave the emperor an opportunity to donate E\$1 million as part of his continual attempt to win popularity and to assume governmental responsibilities not constitutionally granted to him.

During the ten years of federation, the crown had skillfully guided Eritrea into the imperial camp through bribery, cajolery, deception, and constant vigilance of purpose, taking every opportunity to control Eritrea's purse strings and generally to thwart, often through extra-legal means, any internal independence. Finally, on 14 November 1962, after all preparations had been made (General Abby's troops had been posted both inside and outside the assembly building and in greater numbers than usual around the city), the chief executive, Asfaha Woldemicael, read a statement to the members of the assembly, in Amharic, which was not an official language under the constitution and was unfamiliar to the majority of the assembly, saying: "The statement that I am going to read to you is the final issue of the Eritrean case, and there is nothing you can do other than accepting it as it is. We have rendered the federation null and void and are henceforth completely united with our motherland...."177

Since the bombing of 12 July 1962 at Agordat, when Dejatch Hamid Feraj, then president of the assembly, was seriously wounded and several others killed, it must have been apparent that incorporation of Eritrea as a province would enable the Ethiopian Government to deal more effectively with the growing violence. It had been the responsibility of the Eritrean police force to maintain order, and this it had failed to accomplish. The Ethiopian army, however, could not act without the direct request of the chief executive or the commissioner of police. The imperial representative, then General Abby Abebe, ordered Colonel Assegai Araiya, chief of security for the Federal Government in Eritrea, to find ten people, both prominent and common citizens, from each administrative division, who would sign a petition saying that Eritrea had made little progress during federation and that since the federation scheme was not clearly understood by most citizens, union with Ethiopia would be preferred.

After the petitions were received, General Abby showed them to Bit. Asfaha and Abba Dimetros, who campaigned vigorously to convince the members of the assembly to vote for union. Through bribery and threats, all assembly members except three, including Dejatch Hamid, who, still in hospital, refused to cooperate, signed a letter indicating they would vote for union, for which, each would receive his salary for life. On the day on which Dejatch Asfaha read the speech ending federation there was perfunctory applause, although one member, Grazmatch Osman Ahmed Hindi, a representative from Massawa, attempted unsuccessfully to object.¹⁷⁸ It was officially reported that the Eritrean assembly through "unanimous acclamation" terminated itself, an act both illegal and unconstitutional. Illegal in the sense that the assembly had been threatened and the normal, legal procedures for

the passage of legislation had not been observed. Unconstitutional, since "principles of democratic government" (article 16) had not been invoked. The Ethiopian Government, however, had acted on the advice of its American senior adviser in international law to the Ethiopian foreign ministry from 1943-1961, Mr. John H. Spencer, who maintained that the Eritrean Government did have the constitutional right to terminate itself.¹⁷⁹ However, neither the assembly¹⁸⁰ nor the Eritrean Government challenged the act. The decision had been dictated to the assembly and enforced by the throne.

The first panel of legal consultants who drafted Eritrea's constitution at Geneva during November/December 1951, stated with regard to the period after implementation of the Federal Act and the constitution, that:

it is true that once the Federal Act and the Eritrean Constitution have come into force the mission entrusted to the General Assembly under the Peace Treaty with Italy will have been fulfilled and the future of Eritrea must be regarded as settled; but it does not follow that the United Nations will no longer have any right to deal with the question of Eritrea. The Federal Act and the Eritrean Constitution will still be based on the resolution of the United Nations and that international instrument will retain its full force. That being so, if it were necessary either to amend or to interpret the Federal Act, only the General Assembly, as the author of that instrument, would be competent to take a decision. Similarly, if the Federal Act were violated, the General Assembly could be seized of the matter.¹⁸¹

Moreover, the Eritrean constitution, article ninety-one, states that:

1. The Assembly may not, by means of an Amendment, introduce into the Constitution any provision which would not be in conformity with the federal act.
2. Article 16 of the Constitution, by the terms of which the Constitution of Eritrea is based on the principles of democratic government, shall not be amended.

Thus, a convincing argument might have been advanced in the United Nations that neither the Eritrean assembly nor the Federal Government had the constitutional right to alter the substance of or to terminate either the federating act or Eritrea's constitution. Unfortunately for Eritrea, however, there was no one in a position of authority in its government or community, sympathetic to the continuance of federation, who could have withstood the forces of the emperor. Neither did any Muslim nation choose to take up Eritrea's cause in the United Nations. The United States had actively supported federation but wanted to remain on friendly terms with Ethiopia. Washington was mainly interested in maintaining its important Middle East radio communications installations in Asmara and its environs.

The main facility, Kagnaw, was operated by the US Army Security Agency in Asmara as a listening station, one of four or five around the world.¹⁸² In addition, Washington wanted to continue its docking and refueling privileges at Massawa. To further this policy, the United States had signed on 22 May 1953 a Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement with Ethiopia, by which the Americans agreed to provide training for the Ethiopian Armed Forces and to make available to the imperial government "arms and other equipment, materials, services or other assistance,....consistent with the Charter of the United Nations,to maintain its [Ethiopia's] internal security ... or to permit it to participate in the defense of the area."¹⁸³ The agreement continued in effect with addenda¹⁸⁴ up through 1977. As early as 1949, an important aspect of US policy in the Middle East was in maintaining its military presence in Eritrea by making "every effort ... to assure the maintenance of essential U. S. military rights particularly in the Asmara-Massawa area."¹⁸⁵ Ethiopian sovereignty over Eritrea was, in

the US view, essential. Moreover, by 1956, Washington, because of increasing unrest in the Middle East and Africa, had considered it invaluable to "maintain close relations with an African state which has become a symbol of resistance to aggression and a champion of collective security."¹⁸⁶ One of the US' prime objectives was "to check and reduce Communist and Egyptian influence in Ethiopia and the rest of Africa."¹⁸⁷ This continued to be America's policy toward Ethiopia, the Horn, and the Red Sea basin, with the addition in 1960 of a new objective, curbing Chinese communist influence in the Horn.¹⁸⁸ Hence, the United States raised no questions in the United Nations, concerning Ethiopia's unilateral annexation of Eritrea. Nor did the Soviet Union, which in 1959 had agreed to provide Ethiopia US\$100 million in long-term credits.¹⁸⁹

On 15 November 1962, the federal status of Eritrea was officially "terminated," and Eritrea became an "integral part of the Empire of Ethiopia."¹⁹⁰ The Ethiopian Government's proclamation stated that the "Eritrean Assembly, by resolution unanimously adopted on 14th November, 1962,...[had] expressed the will of the people of Eritrea, [who were]...convinced that the pace of the economic and social development of the Empire of Ethiopia [had become] adversely affected by the application of the federal system of administration,...[and who] increasingly and repeatedly requested the abolition of this system." The revised Ethiopian constitution of 2 November 1955 was immediately applied to Eritrea, placing the Eritrean people under an absolute monarchy. All Eritrean laws, enactments, and regulations were to remain in effect until replaced or repealed, but the real power had passed to the emperor.

To celebrate Eritrea's entrance into the imperial fold, on 1 December 1962, forty leading Eritrean officials (governors of all sub-provinces, mayors of major cities, directors of government departments, and the police commissioner¹⁹¹ and four other police officers, including then Colonel Goitom Ghebrezghi, who later played an important role in the government's control of civil disturbances in Eritrea) were flown to Addis Ababa for five days. The festivities began with a reception at the Jubilee Palace where Kenyazmatch Woldeyohannes Ghebrezghi, Director of the Legal Department in Eritrea, delivered a speech in which he stated that the "dissolution of the federal system opens up a new and important chapter in the history of Ethiopia,...."¹⁹²

Federation had been an experiment with democratic institutions which had failed, not only through the "connivance," as Spencer puts it, of the Ethiopian Government¹⁹³ but also on account of politically unsophisticated Eritreans, who relied too heavily on their familiar political and social traditions, based on family, religious, and ethnic bonds, which tended to divide their loyalties rather than unify them. Although most members of the assembly were literate in either Arabic or Tigrinya or both, few had more than an elementary education and did not fully understand assembly procedures and functions; thus, it became easy for the crown's representative to manipulate the assembly. The emperor took full advantage of Eritreans' ignorance of democratic government and their willingness to be seduced by the imperial coffers. Also, the crown ably used the differences of language, religion, and tribal affiliation to divide Eritreans' sympathies. The last few years of federation were characterized by student strikes, both economic and political, assassinations,¹⁹⁴ and gun-running.¹⁹⁵ Sheik Awate,

considered by many Eritreans to be their first martyr and father of the revolution, led the way for the organized resistance that followed. Goliath had won the first round, but David was not yet defeated.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Ethiopia Observer, hereafter EO, 1959,III,6, p. 185.
- 2 EG, 1957:19,2, pp. 16-17 (ON-124).
- 3 UK, PRO, BA, "Eritrean Final Report," par. 69, FO 371/96719/1011/3.
- 4 During the Italian period, Eritreans were able to attend native schools only as far as the fourth level although a tiny number managed to continue in either private Italian or mission schools. See Sudanow, V-2, N-12, De 77, 23.
- 5 EO, 1961,V,1, p. 63a.
- 6 Dagens Nyheter, (Stockholm), hereafter DN, 6 Je 69, 4d, translated by Charlotte Power, as well as all other articles from this source.
- 7 EO, 1961,V,1, p. 67b and K. G. Brooks, "Literacy in Ethiopia," Ethiopian Journal of Education,4,1, De 70, p. 24.
- 8 Africa: Rivista, V-8, N-5, My 53, p. 147. In 1961, it was estimated that only 2.8% of Ethiopia's school-age children were in schools. See Marcus, Ethiopia, Great Britain, and the U.S., 176. Given an Eritrean population of between 1 million and 1.25 million, Eritrea probably had in the early 1960s no less than 15% of its school-age children enrolled.
- 9 In addition to the approximately 13,500 government students, there were c. 4,000 private, and c. 4,700 Italian pupils. Also, there were 52 Eritreans abroad on bursaries: British Ad. (24), American (3), and Egyptian (25). See USG, State, Maiorani to SecSt, 2 Ap 52, D-146, 877.00/4-252. Slightly different figures are given in Africa: Rivista, V-8, N-7/8, Jy-Ag 53, pp. 212-213, (122 government, 30 mission, and 28 Italian schools).
- 10 EO,V,1, pp. 63 & 71.
- 11 Point Four aid to underdeveloped countries began in Ethiopia in June 1951, with a total endowment of US\$2.32 million in its first fiscal year. It was primarily directed towards agricultural programs. See Glasgow Herald, 27 Ot 52, in FO 371/96749/10345/2 and in conversation with F.E. Stafford.
- 12 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 19 My 55, D-153, 775A.00/5-1955. The numbers for the nursing school quadrupled by 1959. See Richey to SecSt, 29 Je 59, D-59, 775A.00/6-2959.
- 13 EO, 1961,V,1, p. 63 and Statistical Abstract of Ethiopia, hereafter SAE, 1975, 217. Although the Ethiopian Government may have provided what seemed to some a disproportionate share of its budget to Eritrea, the

latter required considerably more than it received to maintain its rate of socio-economic progress that had been subsidized by the BA. For the transfer of Eritrea's educational system to the Ethiopian authorities, see ER, 31.

¹⁴ USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 13 Je 57, D-79, 775A.00/6-1357. The headmaster had been accused of "insulting students' religious beliefs".

¹⁵ USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 29 Sp 60, D-36, 775A.00/9-2960 and 25 My 62, D-83, 775A.00/5-2562. In May, there were troublesome student strikes throughout Eritrea.

¹⁶ USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 7 No 57, D-28, 775A.00/11-757. Those Muslims who called themselves "giberte" distinguished themselves from other Muslims of Eritrea by speaking Tigrinya as their mother tongue. The club was known also as the Giberte Club.

¹⁷ USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 7 No 57, D-28, 775A.00/11-757, enc. 1, 1. Musa claimed that none of his six sons had been able to obtain jobs with the government because of his political activities. One of its few Christian members was its secretary, Ato Mallas Tedla.

¹⁸ By 1958, the Unionist Party could count only about 25,000 active members, most of whom held government jobs. Since most Christians were from the highlands where schools were more readily available, they tended to be better educated than Muslims, which should not disguise the fact that popularly respected Muslims held very few positions of importance in the Eritrean Government; thus, Muslims in general felt that their interests were not being well served by those who had, traditionally, been their enemies. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 7 No 57, D-28, 775A.00/11-757, encl. 1, 1.

¹⁹ USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 10 Jy 58, D-2, 775A.00/7-1058. By June 1956, anti-unionist Eritreans in exile in Cairo were making anti-government broadcasts from Radio Cairo. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 9 Je 56, D-67, 775A.00/6-956. See also telegrams dated 15/12/62 and 02/11/63 in Kefah Ertra (Struggle of Eritrea), Eritrean Liberation Front, n.d., 56 & 81, tr., Saleh O. Gadi.

²⁰ USG, State, Breaux to SecSt, 16 Ja 53, D-89, 875A.00/1-1653.

²¹ The total estimated acreage of cultivated land, compared to Eritrea's total land area from 1950 through 1960, ranged from 2.1% to 2.9%. The total crop yields for the same period ranged from 0.09 tons per acre in 1958 (due to poor rains and locust infestations) to 0.25 tons per acre in 1954 (due to good rains). No dramatic increase in agricultural production was manifested because there were no great changes either in traditional methods of agriculture or in the land tenure system, which for most Eritrean farmers provided limited continuity in land use - usually no more than seven years. Also, there were never enacted any of several proposed agricultural development programs which would have increased the water supply. See USG, State,

Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162. In addition, the lengthy process of soil erosion and deforestation caused most of Eritrea's farm land, with rare exceptions - the well-managed Italian plantations - not to be suitable for extensive cultivation, especially in the absence of any water conservation scheme.

22 Due to a lack of rainfall and an absence of suitable rivers, hydroelectric power was not feasible.

23 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc 2.

24 Manchester Guardian, 11 Ap 53, quoted in FO 371/102634/1018/23.

25 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc 4.

26 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc. 4.

27 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 13 Ot 52, D-44, 875A.00/10-1352. Osman Saleh Sabbe, leader of the ELF-PLF, estimated that 90% of the officials of the administration during federation were Christian. Because of the greater emphasis placed on education in the highlands, there were many more Christians qualified for government employment than Muslims. See "Roots of the Eritrean Disagreements and How To Solve Them," hereafter "Roots...", Osman Saleh Sabbe, [publisher and place of publication not listed], spring 1978, 28.

28 J. Bowyer Bell, 31. For unemployment figure, see USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 7 No 57, D-28, 775A.00/11-757, encl. 1, 1 and Breaux to SecSt, 16 Ja 53, D-86, 875A.00/1-1653. In January 1953, the labor office reported 8,500 unemployed in Asmara out of a workforce of 30,000.

29 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 11 Ja 52, D-106, 877.00/1-1152.

30 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 7 Fb 52, D-117, 877.00/2-752.

31 EG, 1958:5, Supplement, pp. 44-68 and USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 10 Jy 58, D-58, 775A.00/7-1058.

32 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 4 Je 57, D-73, 711A.56375/6-457. Later after federation, Kagneu became one of Asmara's prime employers.

33 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 7 No 57, D-28, 775A.00/11-757.

34 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 4 Je 57, D-73, 711A.56375/6-457. During periods of unemployment, non-political shifta activity tended to increase. Labor unrest was further exacerbated by minor strikes for higher wages against employers who had never known labor unrest. To some extent, the American example of a generally higher wage encouraged these protests.

35 USG, State, Am. Emb., A.A., Bliss to SecSt, 4 Je 58, T-1058, 875A.00/6-458.

36 USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 19 Mr 58, D-63, 775A.00/3-1958. The event which sparked the strike was the arrest on 2 March of four youths in Keren for distributing pamphlets attacking officials of the Eritrean Government. The extraordinary high bail of E\$150, set for the release of each youth, angered parents into going to the market place where they marshalled support for a demonstration, whose leaders were promptly arrested. After a crowd gathered at the jail and refused to disperse, the police fired shots, wounding at least a dozen people. In retaliation, on the following day, the merchants of Keren, Agordat, and Tessenei closed their shops. The protest lasted less than a week but demonstrated how few democratic principles remained intact.

37 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 21 Mr 58, D-65, 875A.062/3-2158 and Richey to SecSt, 1 No 57, 875A.062/11-157.

38 EG, 1958:20, Supplement No. 5, "The Employment Act," pp. 44-68. Forty-eight decrees and proclamations of the Italian period and six from the British were repealed.

39 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 1 Ap 58, D-69, 875A.062/4-158, 2. Some ex-unionists had formed a Christian group, sister to the Muslim League, called the Partito Giovanile Federalisti Eritrei. Police warnings, sent to eight of its members, failed to deter the Muslim Youth Club from obtaining a number of small arms from the Sudan. A strike on a smaller scale had been planned for the previous fall, but had been postponed. See USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 10 Jy 58, D-2, 775A.00/7-1058 and Richey to SecSt, 7 No 57, D-28, 775A.00/11-757.

40 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 1 Ap 58, D-69, 875A.062/4-158.

41 USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 19 Mr 58, D-63, 775A.00/3-1958 and Richey to SecSt, 17 Ap 59, D-41, 775A.00/4-1759, 3.

42 USG, State, Am. Emb., A. A., Bliss to SecSt, 4 Je 58, T-1058, 875A.00/6-458.

43 The railroad had always been heavily subsidized by both the Italians and British, and, after federation, by the Ethiopian Government, which usurped jurisdiction over Eritrea's railroad system, contrary to article 5, 2-j of the Eritrean constitution. See Appdx C. For the 1955/56 fiscal year, the Eritrean railroad showed a profit margin of 1.8%. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 5 Sp 57, D-14, 975A.712/9-557.

44 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 6 Ja 55, D-92, 975A.712/1-655. The Tessenei/Malwia line had been built by the British during the war for strategic reasons. The tracks of the Kassala/Tessenei line had become inoperative by the early fifties. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 20 No 57, D-33, 975A.712/11-2057. The first rails were laid in Eritrea in 1868 by Lord Napier from Ras Mulcato to Zula, 5 1/2 miles, and abandoned after the expedition. In 1887, the Italians began construction of the present Massawa-Asmara-Agordat line, reaching Asmara in 1911, Keren in 1922,

Agordat in 1928, and its terminus at Bisha in 1932. The Italians had plans to extend the system from Tessenei south to Gondar. It was not until 1938, that the usefulness of the railroad had been diminished by the completion of Eritrea's macadamized road system. During the British period, the Agordat-Bisha extension had been dismantled and transferred, along with twelve steam locomotives and eight boxcars, to the Sudan, where it was to be used in the construction of a line from Kassala to Tessenei. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 5 Sp 57, D-14, 975A.712/9-557.

⁴⁵ Both gauges, the Eritrean being 95 cm and the Sudanese 107 cm, were narrower than the world standard of 4 ft 8 in (c. 143 cm). See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 5 Fb 59, D-33, 975A.712/2-559.

⁴⁶ USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 20 No 57, D-33, 975A.712/11-2057.

⁴⁷ USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 29 My 58, D-85, 975A.712/5-2958.

⁴⁸ USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 29 My 58, D-85, 975A.712/5-2958, 2.

⁴⁹ USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 5 Fb 59, D-33, 975A.712/2-559.

⁵⁰ USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 3 Sp 59, D-18, 775A.00/9-359.

⁵¹ USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc.3,2.

⁵² USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc.3,2.

⁵³ USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc.3,1.

⁵⁴ USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 3 Sp 59, D-18, 775A.00/9-359.

⁵⁵ USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 1 No 61, D-36, 775A.00/11-161.

⁵⁶ USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc.10.

⁵⁷ USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 13 Ot 58, D-15, 875A.00/10-1358.

⁵⁸ USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, 7 and Memo (3 Ag 59) in Looram to SecSt, 7 Ag 59, D-9, 775A.00/8-759.

⁵⁹ USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc.8.

⁶⁰ USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 16 Fb 54, D-96, 875A.00/2-1654, 10-11.

⁶¹ USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 22 Ap 55, D-148, 875A.00/4-2255.

⁶² USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 13 Ot 58, 875A.00/10-1358, 2.

⁶³ USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 16 Fb 54, D-96, 875A.00/2-1654, 11.

⁶⁴ USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 22 Ap 55, D-148, 875A.00/4-2255.

65 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, 6 and Moore to SecSt, 13 Ot 58, D-15, 875A.00/10-1358.

66 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 10 Fb 55, D-107, 875A.00/2-1055. Many of the newly created jobs at the port were the results of political favors.

67 See introduction of Ethiopian tariff schedule in USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 13 Ot 52, D-44, 875A.00/10-1352 and 28 Ot 52, D-54, 875A.00/10-2852.

68 Spencer, Ethiopia at Bay, 304.

69 USG, State, Campbell to SecSt, 22 My 62, D-81, 875A.00/5-2262.

70 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 2 Ot 59, D-38, 775A.00/10-259; 28 Fb 61, D-63, 775A.00/2-2861; and 3 My 61, D-85, 775A.00/5-361. While grain shortages were not uncommon, in 1960, grain production was 50% short of annual consumption. See USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 1 Fb 61, D-57, 775A.00/2-161.

71 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 18 Ag 60, D-18, 775A.00/8-1860.

72 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 7 Ap 60, D-80, 875.16/4-760.

73 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 7 Ap 60, D-80, 875.16/4-760, 2.

74 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 1 Jy 60, D-1, 775A.00/7-160.

75 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 1 Fb 61, D-57, 775A.00/2-161. In 1961, the Eritrean assembly authorized E\$50,800 for continuation of Point IV's well drilling program.

76 There were "heavy losses" in grains in western Eritrea in late 1958 due to locusts. See USG, State, Troxel to SecSt, Am. Emb., A. A., 16 De 58, D-182, 875A.20/12-1658. Again in fall 1959, locusts caused extensive losses in the Western Province. See Richey to SecSt, 24 Ap 59, D-43, 875A.00/4-2459.

77 USG, State, Dick to SecSt, 28 No 52, D-67, 875A.00/11-2852.

78 Wheat, barley, teff, dagussa (a type of millet), corn, dura, & millet.

79 Source: Eritrean Department of Agriculture. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 31 Ja 58, D-45, 875A.20/1-3158 and Looram to SecSt, 27 De 61, D-47, 875A.23/12-2761: figures for 1955-56 not shown.

80 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 19 Ag 60, D-20, 875A.20/8-1960.

81 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 9 My 61, D-87, 875A.20/5-961.

- 82 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 18 Mr 54, D-114, 875A.2553/3-1854.
- 83 USG, State, Memo, 13 Ap 54, 875A.2553/4-1354 in Dulles to SecSt, 19 Ap 54, CA-5923, 875A.2553/4-1954.
- 84 It was announced on 6 September. The concession gave the company exclusive rights "to explore, prospect, and drill for, extract, and render suitable for trade, petroleum and its derivatives as well as the exclusive right to dispose of any oil produced...." See UK, PRO, Washington to FO, T-6125, 8 Sp 45, FO 371/46088/2956.
- 85 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 8 Fb 54, D-86, 875A.2553/2-854.
- 86 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 25 Mr 58, T-92, 875A.2553/3-2558.
- 87 USG, State, Simonson to SecSt, Am. Emb., A. A., 29 De 55, D-161, 875A.2553/12-2955.
- 88 USG, State, Simonson to SecSt, 29 De 55, D-161, 875A.2553/12-2955 and Troxel to SecSt, Am. Emb., A. A., 10 Ap 58, D-341, 875A.2553/4-1058.
- 89 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 15 Ja 59, T-129, 875A.2553/1-1559.
- 90 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc. 9. No practical arrangements had ever been established between the two governments; however, the Federal Government consented to pay the amount of E\$1,156,895 quarterly to the Eritrean Government as the latter's share of customs dues. This annual figure of E\$4,627,580 was slightly more than the somewhat arbitrary figure of E\$4,264,000 agreed to by the departing British Administration. See USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 16 Fb 54, D-96, 875A.00/2-1654, 12 and 6 Ja 55, D-91, 875A.10/1-655. The actual figure agreed upon between the BA and the Ethiopian Government was 661,083 English pounds although the figure first proposed to Addis Ababa was 699,968 pounds. See UK, PRO, Report, 20 Ot 52, FO 371/96761/1102/29.
- 91 UK, PRO, Busk to FO, 2 My 53, D-49, FO 371/102635/1018/26, 29, & 30.
- 92 UNGA, Final Report, 1952, (A/2188), 74 (UNGA, Res. 390 A(V), 2 De 50) and 79; USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, 6; Clark to SecSt, 22 Ap 55, D-148, 875A.00/4-2255, 15; and Moore to SecSt, 13 Ot 58, D-15, 875A.00/10-1358, 2.
- 93 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 30 Ag 61, D-7, 775A.00/8-3061; Breaux to SecSt, 9 De 52, D-73, 775A.02/12-952; and Looram to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc. 9.
- 94 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 30 Ag 61, D-7, 775A.00/8-3061.
- 95 UN, Yearbook of International Trade Statistics, 1963, 222.

96 The expansion of Assab's port facilities was begun on 18 October 1957 by a Yugoslavian firm. See EH, 11 Sp 62:6a.

97 Approximately 32% more in value was processed at Massawa than Assab. See USG, State, Loomam to SecSt, 31 Ja 62, D-57, 875A.00/1-3162, enc. 7.

98 What that share may have been over and above what was received can not be determined precisely without an examination of Eritrean Government records, which may not still exist. However, former Eritrean government officials, living now in Jeddah and with whom the author spoke in 1983-84, maintain that that portion of the customs revenue not received would have been significant.

99 USG, State, Breaux to SecSt, 5 Ja 53, D-84, 875A.10/1-553. The budget for the second year and subsequent years of federation was made to conform with the Ethiopian fiscal year ending September 10.

100 USG, State, Breaux to SecSt, 5 Ja 53, D-84, 875A.10/1-553.

101 USG, State, Breaux to SecSt, 5 Ja 53, D-84, 875A.10/1-553, 3.

102 UK, PRO, Report, 20 Ot 52, FO 371/96761/1102/29, Annex B.

103 UK, PRO, Asmara to FO, 30 Ot 52, T-95, FO 371/96723/1016/31 & 39. In early December 1952, government posts were reshuffled. Mohammed Said Feki Ali was replaced with Fit. Haregot Abai as secretary of interior, Fessahazion Haile - who, as deputy chief executive during Dejatch Tedla's absence, had antagonized the assembly - with Azmatch Zerom Kifle as secretary of economic affairs, and Mohammed Nur Hassan Naib with Tesfajohannes Berha, a friend of Dejatch Abraha, as secretary of social affairs. The latter move took away from Dejatch Abraha's family province of Akkele Guzai a valuable friend who had been acting as the senior divisional officer. See UK, PRO, Busk to FO, 6 De 52, D-1101/30/52, FO 371/96723/1016/41.

104 USG, State, Breaux to SecSt, 5 Ja 53, D-84, 875A.10/1-553; Clark to SecSt, 7 Ag 54, D-21, 875A.10/8-754; Clark to SecSt, 27 Ja 55, D-100, 875A.10/1-2755; Richey to SecSt, 23 Ag 57, D-9, 875A.10/8-2357; and Moore to SecSt, 24 Jy 59, D-3, 875A.10/7-2459.

105 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 6 Ja 55, D-91, 875A.10/1-655.

106 In conversation with Graz. Saleh Jaber Gulai in Jeddah in 1983/84.

107 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 21 Sp 55, D-19, 875A.10/9-2155 and Graz. Saleh Jaber Gulai. Melotti in the late 60s and Senelli in the early 70s moved their plants to Addis Ababa.

108 USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 24 Jy 59, D-3, 875A.10/7-2459.

109 USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 13 Ot 58, D-15, 875A.00/10-1358. The Italian population dropped from a high of about 60,000 in 1941 to less

than 20,000 by the beginning of federation. See Report of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea, UNGA, 5th Session, Lake Success, 1950, Suppl. 8, A/1285 (hereafter UNGA, Report, 1950, (A/1285)), Annex 13, "Report of the Economic Sub-Commission," pars. 18 & 19.

110 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 12 My 53, D-124, 875A.00/5-1253. The commissions were in the beginning dominated by Italians, although the latter were gradually replaced by Eritreans. They continued to function until the mid-seventies, when the large maritime and import/export companies were nationalized by the Dergue. In conversation with Graz. Saleh Jaber Gulai.

111 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 3 Fb 56, D-42, 775A.00/2-356. As a warning, four shifta, sentenced in 1953, were executed on 31 January 1956.

112 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 5 Ap 55, D-139, 775A.00/4-555; 12 My 55, D-151, 775A.00/5-1255; 28 Je 55, D-174, 775A.00/6-2855; 1 Jy 55, D-2, 775A.00/7-155; 30 Ag 55, D-12, 775A.00/8-3055; 3 Fb 56, D-42, 775A.00/2-356; Richey to SecSt, 8 Je 56, D-65, 775A.00/6-856; 9 Ag 56, D-12, 775A.00/8-956; 11 Ot 56, D-28, 775A.00/10-1156; 25 Ja 57, D-44, 775A.00/1-2557; 15 Ap 57, D-60, 775A.00/4-1557; 16 My 57, D-64, 775A.00/5-1657; 13 Je 57, D-79, 775A.00/6-1357; 28 Je 57, D-85, 775A.00/6-2857; 15 Ag 57, D-8, 775A.00/8-1557.

113 USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 20 My 59, D-53, 775A.00/5-2059.

114 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 11 Je 57, D-76, 775A.00/6-1157. He used this opportunity to remind his constituents that the emperor had just given them a constitution (1955) [not applicable in Eritrea except as it may have affected federal matters] and that they should urge their followers to participate through voter registration in the general elections for parliament, which were being boycotted throughout Eritrea. However, under pressure from the throne, of the approximately 245,000 registered voters, 78% voted from 10 September to 11 October 1957, electing 8 Christian and 6 Muslim deputies [disproportionate to the Christian/Muslim population of Eritrea, being about 50% Christian and 50% Muslim] with the lowest voter turnout, 55%, in the Keren district. All of the deputies elected were both pro-Ethiopian and pro-federation. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 23 Ot 57, D-23, 775A.00/10-2357. For Christian/Muslim population proportion, see Mr. Aklilou Habtewold, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in UNGA, Progress Report, Annex 6: ("United Nations Commissioner in Eritrea, Summary Record of the Fourth Meeting," 3 Jy 51, No. A/AC.44/SR.4, par. 31) No 1951, (A/1959); FPC, ch. 2, "Population of the Country and Its Composition;" and UNGA, Final Report, 1952, (A/2188), 1, par. 3.

115 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 16 Fb 54, D-96, 875A.00/2-1654, p. 4.

116 During the BA, the mines had operated under temporary permits to prospect on lands belonging to local communities.

117 The Italian tenant of the Uguro mine had held the concession since 1949. The mine's profits, annually about US\$80,000, were shared equally with the Eritrean Government. USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 9 My 61, D-87, 875A.20/5-961. During most of the latter half of the BA, gold mines as well as most other mines remained closed, due mostly to the insecurity of their operation caused by shifta activity. Before the BA, there had been thirty-three gold mines in Eritrea. At the end of the war and after the arrival of the British, production was resumed on some concessions, but it remained retarded. Many mines closed down their operations because of renewed insecurity, lack of credit, and labor disputes. The BMA granted no new concessions after 1946. Newly negotiated concessions had to be approved by an agreement between the owners and laborers according to a 1946 proclamation. See United Nations Official Document, hereafter UNOD, A/AC.34/SR.26, 9-10 in UNGA, Report, A/1285, Appdx. B.

118 Published as Dimtzi Ertra in Tigrinya and Saut el Ertra in Arabic. Before federation, it was called The Voice of the Moslem League of Eritrea, written in Arabic and English.

119 Africa: Revista, V-8, N-10, Ot 53, pp. 269-270; USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 19 Sp 52, D-34, 777.00/9-1952 and Clark to SecSt, 25 Ap 53, D-119, 357.AH/4-2553; and J.A. Clarence Smith, "Human Rights in Eritrea," The Modern Law Review, 18, Sp 55, 484-86. It should be noted that the early conflict that developed between C. Smith, who as district judge of Eritrea was quick to protect civil liberties, and the commissioner of police and the secretary of interior largely ended with Mr. Smith's appointment on 10 De 56 as attorney general. See EG, 1957:18,1, pp. 4-5.

120 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 25 Ap 53, D-119, 357.AH/4-2553, enc. 1.

121 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 25 Ap 53, D-119, 357.AH/4-2553.

122 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 25 Ap 53, D-119, 357.AH/4-2553, enc. 2. A further protest was made in the assembly in May 1954, condemning Ethiopian interference in Eritrean affairs, specifically the collection of revenue from internal communications, the ropeway, the railroad, the salt tax, and customs. Source: In conversation in Jeddah on 28 October 1983 with a member of the assembly from 1952 to its demise in 1962, representing the Kunama district.

123 The Italian Penal Code which had undergone periodic revisions from the inception of the BMA in 1941 remained largely in force during federation.

124 On the same day, a notice appeared in the government newspaper, Il Quotidiano Eritreo, warning the populace against indulging in "false propaganda and allegations." See USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 25 Ap 53, D-119, 357.AH/4-2553, enc. 2, 6.

125 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 17 Sp 54, D-39, 775A.00/9-1754.

126 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 19 Sp 52, D-34, 775A.00/9-1952.

- 127 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 19 Sp 52, D-34, 775A.00/9-1952.
- 128 USG, State, R.D. Gatewood, Am. Emb., A.A., to SecSt, 23 Ja 53, D-312, 777.00/1-2353.
- 129 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 24 Ap 58, D-76, 775A.00/4-2458.
- 130 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 29 Jy 60, D-11, 775A.00/7-2960.
- 131 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 4 Ap 62, D-72, 775A.00/4-462.
- 132 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 5 Jy 61, D-3, 775A.00/7-561; 31 Ag 61, D-20, 775A.00/8-3161; and 4 Ja 62, D-49, 775A.00/1-462.
- 133 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 19 Sp 57, D-16, 875A.00/9-1957.
- 134 DN, 14 Jy 67:4b.
- 135 USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 28 Mr 52, T-125, 777.00/3-2852.
- 136 Attempts on Ato Woldeab's life were made in June 1947, when two bombs were hurled into his house without exploding; in July 1947, when a bomb was thrown at his house in the Swedish Mission outside Asmara and wounded him; in February 1950, when a bomb was thrown at his car; in April 1950, when an unnamed assailant attempted to shoot him while he was walking from a hotel, where he was staying for protection of his family, to a restaurant; in June 1950, when poison was tried; and in August 1951, when he was shot and wounded while he was walking in Asmara. During the investigation of the second attempt, in July 1947, the assailant was caught and confessed that he had been sent by the Ethiopian Government because of Ato Woldeab's separatist ideas. In conversation between Ato Woldeab and the author on 25 August 1984, he offered a further, possible reason for Addis Ababa's strong dislike of him. He suggested that the throne may have assumed that he had been behind Longrigg's suggestion in 1944 of combining the Christian parts of Tigre Province in a partition of Eritrea. This notion had appeared in the administration's weekly newspaper to which Ato Woldeab was a contributor.
- 137 The police investigation stated that there were "sufficient indications" to show that the attempt had been instigated by Ethiopians. Because of Ato Woldeab's separatist tendencies and his sympathy with a Tigray independence movement that had flourished under the direction of Ras Seyoum directly after the war, the Ethiopian Government considered him an enemy. Also, Ato Woldeab had antagonized Dejach Tedla Bairu and the Eritrean Government with his repeated attacks in the newspaper Dimtzi Ertra (Voice of Eritrea), in which there had recently appeared an article warning Eritreans that if they were not careful the "Shoans and Amharas" would absorb Eritrea into the empire. See UK, PRO, Wardle-Smith to FO, 17 Ja 53, T-1, FO 371/102634/1018/1.
- 138 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 19 My 55, D-153, 775A.00/5-1955.

139 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 23 Ap 53, D-118, 775A.00/4-2353.

140 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 23 Ap 53, D-118, 775A.00/4-2353 and 25 My 53, D-126, 775A.00/5-2553. Ato Woldeab Woldemariam, one of the main and most articulate leaders of anti-unionist opposition, was in the beginning opposed only to the unconditional union of Eritrea with Ethiopia, but after six unsuccessful assassination attempts (Je & Jy 1947; Fb, Ap, & Je 1950; and Ag 1951), he became an ardent supporter of complete independence for Eritrea. See his speeches in NESG, 1946:28 No, 4; 5 De, 2; 1947:17 Ap, 3d; 8 My, 4a; 22 My, 4a; and 29 My, 4a; and his biographical sketch in Appdx D. For attacks on other leaders of groups opposing union with Ethiopia, such as El Rabita, see NESG, 12 Je 47:1b; 31 Mr 49:2a; 16 Fb 50:3b; and 23 Fb 50:1b.

141 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 9 Je 56, D-67, 775A.00/6-956.

142 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 3 Fb 56, D-41, 775A.00/2-356.

143 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 3 Fb 56, D-41, 775A.00/2-356; 12 Ot 53, D-52, 775A.00/10-1253; 14 Ot 53, D-54, 775A.00/10-1453; and 26 Ot 53, D-59, 775A.00/10-2653.

144 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 14 Je 56, D-68, 775A.00/6-1456. An important organizing meeting of the Moslem League in Keren was banned by Colonel Tedla Ogbit, chief of police in Eritrea, on the pretext that since two other small, rival political groups had requested meetings on the same day in Keren, there would be violence. See USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 9 Je 56, D-67, 775A.00/6-956. 'El Wakuf' is the name of the administering authority of the Ramadan tithe of 2 1/2% of one's yearly income, to be distributed to the poor.

145 EG, 1956:18,6, p. 38 (GN-363).

146 EG, 1956:18,8, p. 51 (GN-368); 9, p. 66 (GN-376); and 11, p. 76 (GN-388). In a typical year, at least eight Ethiopian religious and six non-religious holidays were observed publicly in Eritrea in comparison to only four strictly Muslim holidays. The Christian holidays were: the Feasts of Lidet (Ethiopian Christmas) and Timket (Epiphany), Kana Zeghelila (day after Epiphany), Arbi Seclet (Good Friday), Madot (Easter Monday), Filseta (Easter), Maskal (Feast of the Cross), and Amat (New Year). The non-religious holidays were: Battle of Adowa, Liberation Day from Italian occupation, the emperor's birthday, Ethiopian Martyrs' Day, coronation anniversary of the emperor and empress, and the anniversary of ratification of the Federal Act, all of which, except the last, were not related to Eritrean history or sentiment. See EG, 1956 following, *passim*.

147 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 23 Je 53, D-145, 775A.00/6-2353. The Federal Council, designed as an advisory board on matters where there was mutual concern by Asmara and Addis Ababa, had 12 members, 6 of whom were appointed by the Eritrean chief executive and 6 by the throne. In its

first years, there were 2 to 3 meetings each year, but after the fall of Tedla Bairu, it ceased to convene.

148 In November 1952, immediately after federation, the crown proclaimed (Procl. 130) concurrent jurisdiction to the federal judiciary in all legal disputes in Eritrea without first consulting the imperial Federal Council, contrary to article five of UN resolution of 2 De 1952. See USG, State, Memo, Foot and Riccardi, 19 No 52, 775A.00/11-1952 and C.T. Breaux to SecSt, 23 De 52, D-78, 775A.00/12-2352. Further, it should be noted that, of the three judges of the Federal High Court, all appointed by the emperor, only one was an Eritrean, Sheik Soliman Aden, editor of the Arabic section of the bi-weekly organ of the Unionist Party, Ethiopia, and a staunch supporter of the crown. See USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 23 Je 53, D-145, 775A.00/6-2353. Mengistu Bairu, brother of Tedla Bairu, was also arrested for his involvement in the incident. On several further occasions he was imprisoned, eventually dying in an Asmara prison in April 1976. In conversation with Graz. Saleh Jaber Gulai.

149 USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 2 Je 58, T-118, 775A.00/6-258 HBS.

150 Government surveillance of anyone visiting foreign consulates in Asmara was almost immediate. See USG, State, Memo, 1 Jy 58, in D-2, 10 Jy 58, 775A.00/7-1058 and Richey to SecSt, 3 Ap 57, D-58, 775A.00/4-357.

151 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 17 Ap 59, D-41, 775A.00/4-1759.

152 USG, State, Richey to SecSt, 30 Ap 59, D-46, 775A.00/4-3059.

153 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, Memo, 20 De 61, in D-48, 27 De 61, 775A.00/12-2761, enc. 1, 1.

154 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, D-63, 14 Fb 62, 675.75A/2-1462 and The Ethiopian Herald, hereafter EH, 7 Ja 60:1c.

155 EH, 16 Ja 60:1a; 18 Ja 60:1a; 19 Ja 60:1a; 20 Ja 60:1a; 22 Ja 60:1a; and 23 Ja 60:1a. The capacity of the Zula Dam was 30 million cubic meters. The flow of water downstream was controlled by two conduits leading into canals running alongside the riverbed; however, no work had been done on an irrigation scheme downstream from the dam to make optimum use of the available water. See USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 17 Fb 61, D-60, 875A.00/2-1761. Although the majority of the dam was finished in 1961, the distribution channels were never completed. After the first few years of operation, the reservoir began to fill up with sediment, making it nearly useless after 1970. Later political disturbances caused the dam's operation to be abandoned altogether. The dam had been engineered by a Yugoslavian group from pre-war, Italian plans at a cost of from E\$2 to 3 million, financed from Italian war reparations and revenues from the hydroelectric dam outside Asmara. The agricultural areas it was to water were to be planted with cotton and sugar, but this was never accomplished. Source: Author's conversation in Jeddah in April 1984 with Alem Tewelde Woldeghebriel, engineer from the Public Works Department, Asmara from 1968 to 1978 and Said Mohammed Ahmed, civil

servant in Eritrea from 1957 to 1978.

156 He inspected several industrial enterprises and examined plans for the projected cement factory in Massawa. See EH, 28 Ja 62:1b.

157 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 29 Je 62, A-148, 775A.11/6-2862; 3 Jy 62, A-1, 775A.00/7-362; and 4 Jy 62, A-3, 775A.00/7-462.

158 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 3 Jy 62, A-1, 775A.00/7-362.

159 Muslim leaders in Eritrea have asserted that there was discrimination, pointing to the dominance of Christians in government offices, schools, training programs, and especially in any of the armed forces. Further evidence of discrimination may be found in the unconstitutional budgeting of E\$27,000 in the 1959/1960 fiscal year for payment of "Coptic Religious Councils" in all but two of the eight administrative districts in Eritrea. See USG, State, Moore to SecSt, 24 Jy 59, D-4, 875A.413/7-2459.

160 USG, State, Campbell to SecSt, 9 Jy 62, A-8, 775A.00/7-962 and EH, 30 Je 62:1a. During federation, the emperor donated funds for: mosques at Agordat (c.E\$.5m) and at Massawa (c.E\$.25m); hospitals at Agordat (c.E\$.1m) and at Massawa (c.E\$.1.5m); an Orthodox church in Massawa (c.E\$.25m); and secondary schools in Asmara (Haile Selassie, c.E\$.1m), in Massawa (Lul Makonnen, c.E\$.33m), and in Keren (Hatze Dawit, c.E\$.5m). In all, including the above, the emperor's contributions probably did not exceed E\$20m. In conversation in Jeddah in March 1984 with Graz. Saleh Jaber Gulai.

161 EH, 30 Je 62:1a.

162 Two types of tribute were exacted: from settled communities, an agricultural tax; and from nomadic groups, a tax per head of herded animals, primarily camels and goats. These were usually paid by nazirs, government appointed tax collectors assigned to villages and districts. Regarding locust problems, see USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 7 Ag 59, D-9, 775A.00/8-759; 2 Sp 60, D-25, 775A.00/9-260; and 16 Ap 62, D-76, 775A.00/4-1662. On the federal level, the Ethiopian Government had made relatively few preparations to cope with the annual menace. Supplies of insecticides sprayed by air were quickly exhausted preventing the British Desert Control Service and the Desert Locust Survey organization from adequately dealing with the problem.

163 EH, 30 Je 62:4a. See also Appdx C: articles 5 (2-c) and 76 (1).

164 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 4 Jy 62, A-3, 775A.00/7-462 and EH, 27 Je 62:1a and 3 Jy 62:1a.

165 EH, 29 Je 62:1a and 1 Jy 62:1a.

166 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 4 Jy 62, A-3, 775A.00/7-462, 3.

- 167 EG, 1953:15,4, pp. 31-32.
- 168 EG, 1954:16,2, p. 22.
- 169 EG, 1956:18,8, p. 48.
- 170 EG, 1957:19,2, p. 11.
- 171 USG, State, Clark to SecSt, 25 My 54, T-63, 775A.00/5-2554.
- 172 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 26 My 61, D-90, 775A.00/5-2661. During Tedla Bairu's administration, he had been director of social affairs and after Tedla's fall rose to become finance secretary and dejazmatch.
- 173 USG, State, Breaux to SecSt, 9 De 52, D-73, 775A.02/12-952. The Federal Act stipulated that the Federal Government, in reality the throne, had the "right to impose uniform taxes throughout the federation to meet the expenses of federal functions and services, it being understood that the assessment and collection of such taxes in Eritrea are to be delegated to the Eritrean Government...." See UNGA, Final Report, 1952, (A/2188), 74.
- 174 USG, State, Gatewood, Charge d'Affaires, Am. Emb., A. A., 23 Ja 53, D-312, 777.00/1-2353.
- 175 For a list, as stated by the crown, see HIM's speech, made on the tenth anniversary of federation, on 11 Sp 1962, in EH, 11 Sp 62:1c.
- 176 USG, State, Looram to SecSt, 30 Ag 61, D-19, 775A.00/8-3061.
- 177 Private, protected correspondence; DN, 14 Jy 67:4b; and USG, State, Johnson to SecSt, 4 De 62, A-34, 775A.00/12-462. For the unconstitutional aspects of the speech, read article 19 (2) of the Eritrean constitution in appendix C. The calming effect of the Eritrean Police Force and the intimidation of the Imperial Ethiopian Army had, in the final years of federation, continued to prevent mass demonstration and to keep political opposition in disarray. On 10 Fb 1962, the Ethiopian Army and Air Force held maneuvers at Agordat, in the heart of Muslim opposition, to quell, temporarily, recent "shifta" activity. See USG, State, Memo, 8 Ap 59, in Moore to SecSt, 14 Ap 59, D-40, 775A.00/4-1459; Richey to SecSt, 29 Je 59, D-59 775A.00/6-2959; and Looram to SecSt, 28 Fb 62, D-65, 775.00/2-2862. Amharic began to be used in official matters in 1959 contrary to article 38 of the constitution. See Bell, 431.
- 178 In conversation with Graz. Saleh Jaber Gulai. Following the adjournment of the assembly, there was a reception at the Asmara palace attended by the diplomatic corps with little or no reaction on the part of the citizenry since Ethiopian troops were in evidence throughout the city.
- 179 In conversation with John H. Spencer at his home on 22 October

1977.

180 Whether at this time the members of the assembly represented the will of the people shall remain moot, but it seemed to the author, who lived in Eritrea from 1963 to 1965, that a great many Eritreans were unhappy with the new arrangement.

181 UN, Final Report, 1952, (A/2188), 19-20.

182 The facility, most important to the United States, was Kagnev Station, established on 22 May 1953 in Asmara by a twenty-five-year agreement (which was terminated in 1977) with the Ethiopian Government. See US Treaties, TIAS 2964. A similar facility, next to the American Consulate in Asmara, had been a former Italian naval radio station which had been turned over to the US Army in January 1942, following the Italian defeat. It was not called Kagnev, named after Ethiopia's UN contingent in Korea, until the facility was moved to its new location in May 1953. Its purpose was to monitor radio communications within Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe and for linkage of this area to world-wide US communications. Operated by US army and navy personnel, Kagnev was located in Asmara because of its high altitude (c. 2,400 meters) and its proximity to the relatively interference-free equatorial belt. After 1953, the occupation of the original tracts of land was increased to 1,381 hectares, 1,200 of which were still used by local inhabitants for agricultural and grazing purposes. The annual rental fee was E\$283,029.

By the mid-sixties, Kagnev personnel numbered about 2,900 employees, of whom 1,700 were American, about 1,100 Eritreans and Ethiopians, and 100 other nationals. In addition, there were about 600 local Eritreans employed by American staff. All of the construction of Kagnev was done by local labor. The station also provided radio and voice communication for the emperor when flying in the area its facilities covered. It also participated in space communication projects. Its advantage to the local economy made the Asmara business community further dependent on the imperial government. In the decade following federation, the connections between the US and Addis Ababa became more interdependent with the US providing the throne over E\$200m in military equipment and advanced training to the Ethiopian armed forces. See "Kagnev Station: Its History, Mission and Characteristics," briefing paper, 16 No 64 and USG, State, Johnson to SecSt, 6 Sp 63, A-6, POL 2-2 ETH. By spring 1977, Kagnev had been reduced to 35 American personnel because of the deteriorating relations between the Dergue and Washington, DC and the growing Eritrean revolt. See Dan Connell, "Ethiopia, Eritrea, and US Policy," The Nation, V-224, N-11, 19 Mr 77, 338. In addition to Kagnev, a US mapping mission agreement was signed in June 1963, to use the airstrip at Gura, near Decemhare, for the purpose of mapping Ethiopia by air. See Johnson to SecSt, 2 My 63, A-65, POL 2 ETH. For US policy see "US Policy on the Horn of Africa," 30 De 60, NSC 6028, 1.

183 US Treaties, TIAS 2787. See also the exchange of notes, signed on 12/13 June 1952 at Addis Ababa, in US Treaties, TIAS 2751, which was still in force as of 1 January 1985.

184 See US Treaties, TIAS 3969 (26 De 57), 4013 (2 & 6 Ja 58), & 7872 (13 My & 26 Je 74). The addenda were still in force as of 1 January 1985.

185 USG, NSC, "A Report to the President by the National Security Council," 4 Ag 49, NSC 19/5, 14.

186 USG, NSC, "U. S. Policy Toward Ethiopia," 19 No 56, NSC 5615/1, 1.

187 USG, NSC 5615/1, 14.

188 USG, NSC, "U. S. Policy on the Horn of Africa," 30 De 60, NSC 6028, 13. For a full discussion of US-Ethiopian relations during this time, see Marcus, Ethiopia, Great Britain, and the United States 1941-1974, 79-114.

189 USG, NSC 6028, 5. In addition, Ethiopia received US\$10 million from Czechoslovakia.

190 Order No. 27 of 1962 in EH, 18 No 62:1c.

191 Tedla Ogbit, promoted to the position of commissioner in mid-1955, following the fall of Tedla Bairu, supported the unionist cause throughout federation, but, during the year following the termination of Eritrea's autonomy, he had become disillusioned with Ethiopia's presence. On 11 June 1963, he was murdered in his office, having been accused of plotting against the throne. That morning, he had told a minor official, Bertom Ghebrezghi, to instruct the governor of Agordat Province, Belai Ghebrezghi, to raise the Eritrean flag and to consider the federation revived. The latter informed Tesfaiyohannes Berhe, vice deputy governor-general of Eritrea, who told Belai not to comply. Almost immediately, as news of the potential insurrection reached those loyal to the emperor, the police headquarters was surrounded by soldiers from the Ethiopian army. Several hundred troops were flown in from Addis Ababa, and various leading Eritreans were placed under protective custody, including Fit. Tesfaiyohannes Berhe. Within hours of his death, his deputy, Colonel Zeremariam Azazzi, was elevated to the commissionership and within a few days was promoted to brigadier general. See USG, State, Johnson to SecSt, 5 Jy 63, A-1, POL 2-2 ETH. Also, in conversation with Graz. Saleh Jaber Gulai in Jeddah in spring 1984 and with Goitom Ghebrezghi in August 1984 in Washington, D.C.

192 EH, 4 De 62:1a.

193 See Spencer, Ethiopia At Bay, 304.

194 On 25 July 1962, Graz. Tesfai Zemicael, a member of the finance committee of the Eritrean assembly, was shot to death by a "group" who stopped his car as he was returning to Asmara. He was 295 kms south of Asmara, well inside Ethiopia. The other three occupants had been wounded. Although Graz. Tesfai had been an ardent unionist and active in

Eritrea's business community, he had become disabused with Ethiopia's increasing domination of Eritrea's economy, especially after his repeated, unsuccessful attempts in pushing Asmara's claims for additional Federal money in the assembly's finance committee. Also, he had begun to ally himself with those who had outspokenly deplored Ethiopian machinations in Eritrea. See USG, State, Campbell to SecSt, 3 Ag 62, A-14, 775A.52/8-362.

195 USG, State, Campbell to SecSt, 3 Ag 62, A-14, 775A.52/8-362. Tedla Bairu's brother, Menghistu Bairu, was arrested in July 1962 for gun-running.

EPILOGUE

REVOLUTION

1961 - 1985

The kernel of protest by Eritrea's opposition leaders began in Cairo in 1959. Together, they travelled through the Middle East seeking support, but without much success. Internal resistance began overtly in September 1961 in the Barka region in northwest Eritrea. Its leader, Sheik Idris Awate, with an initial following of not more than two hundred men began to raid minor government outposts to obtain guns and ammunition.¹ Continual raids in the western lowlands caused the government to withdraw to major towns in 1964.

In July 1965, the growing liberation army was divided into four military units, each occupying a particular zone in Eritrea. Initially the fighters moved freely between zones as needed, but as each zone became more autonomous, inter-zone movement became more restricted. A fifth zone in the highlands was created in late 1966. Cooperation among the zones soon became "virtually non-existent" as each commander recruited from his own territory with little or no coordination among the zones.² Primarily because of poor communications, but also because of personal ambitions, there developed a fierce competition, causing boundaries to become as important as international borders. As each zone commander created his own links with the supreme council, the revolutionary command in Kassala lost control over the five army divisions. The liberation movement became fractured into five groups, each with its own leadership and uncoordinated activities. The roots of division, along religious, regional, tribal, and political lines, had become firmly entrenched, a situation which was to characterize the movement for the next two decades.

As civil unrest increased and the international press began to take notice, Ethiopia had difficulty in hiding Eritrea's opposition to the government and its reasons for protest. In an Arabic pamphlet,

distributed in late June 1962, on the eve of the federation's demise, the revolutionary command summarized its reasons for taking up arms. It stated that "loathsome Ethiopian imperialism" had attempted to destroy Eritrea's "nature," had degraded the honor of its people, had blotted out its emblems and seals, and had abnegated basic freedoms.³

During the middle and late 1960s, while the Eritrean Liberation Front (hereafter ELF) was fighting a guerrilla war against the Ethiopian Government, it experienced changes that in the early 1970s led to internal strife. From 1964 to 1967, disagreements and criticisms between the supreme council (the exterior leadership) and the revolutionary command in Kassala (the intermediary authority between the field command and the supreme council) became so serious, with assassinations of both Muslim and Christian alike, that a split in the ranks became imminent. To avoid disintegration of the movement, a meeting was held in June 1967, resulting in an expansion of the supreme council. A continuing criticism of the council was its use of supplies and money which had been contributed by Eritreans both in and outside Eritrea. Another bone of contention was the fact that the liberation movement had been depicted as basically Islamic, ignoring the fact that about half the population of Eritrea was Christian, although in the beginning of the movement only a few Christians had joined.

Eventually, in June 1968, to encourage unity, representatives of the five military zones met at a small village in southwest Eritrea to discuss the progress of the revolution and possible remedies to internal problems. The only decision was to have a further meeting in a district north of Keren and to stop all fighting, against each other and the Ethiopian Government, until then. Due to differing loyalties, only the third, fourth and fifth zonal leaders met, and they

established a tripartite unity. Finally, in September 1968, the planned meeting took place to try to avert the widening division among the insurgents.⁴ A provisional, general command was created, to be headquartered in Eritrea, to replace the defunct revolutionary command in Kassala. The three united zones attempted to guide guerrilla loyalties away from those based on regional and religious sectarianism. The conferees also considered organizing a second convention to discuss not only bringing together the dissident elements within the two major groups (the three united zones and the first two zones) but, in particular, to inhibit the growing alienation of the Eritrean rural sector.

Eritrean villagers throughout the liberation struggle were caught in the middle between rebels and government. The ELF, frequently, would prevail upon the rural sector to provide them with food and temporary shelter and information about government troop movements. Any one of these actions, especially the latter, invariably caused villagers trouble from the government and, in some cases, cost them their lives. Often the guerrillas were unwilling or unable to compensate villagers for what they took.⁵ Villages well within a particular faction's field of operation were forced to support that group whether sympathetic or not.

In November 1968, the representatives of the three united zones and the first and second zones of the ELF met at village inside Sudan. A central committee was formed as a liaison between the leadership of the three united zones and the guerrillas in the field. Finally, between 10 to 25 August 1969, representatives from all five zones met at a village in the southwestern lowlands. At the second conference, the five army divisions, which had been based on sectarian and regional

criteria, were abolished and were to be progressively integrated, ignoring religious and ethnic ties.⁶ It was further decided that a third conference would be held within one year to deal with internal problems. A temporary committee of thirty-eight people was designated as the provisional, general command, while the revolutionary command of the Eritrean liberation army, headquartered at Kassala, was suspended until a national congress could be convened. In addition, the supreme council was to remain as it was until the national congress was held. Also, any financial aid received by the council from foreign sources was to be immediately given to the provisional, general command, but on 19 December 1969, the general command was suspended in order to thwart it from regaining its former authority. Almost immediately dissension broke out. Hundreds of rebel troops on both sides were killed, while many others fled from Eritrea into the Sudan. Essayas Afeworki, the power behind the present Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front, EPLF, broke off relations with the general command and fled to the Eritrean highlands.

In the ensuing struggle for control, two factions were formed out of the supreme council, Osman Sabbe's group and those who followed the former president of the council, Idris Mohammed Adem. Immediately, Osman began recruiting the hundreds of Eritrean rebels who had fled into the Sudan. In Aden, Osman and a former Christian leader who had opposed the throne's annexation of Eritrea, Woldeab Woldemariam, formed a new liberation group, called The People's Liberation Forces, PLF. Meanwhile, four dissenting leaders from the general command joined Osman. They became known as the Obelites, from the name of the river in Serai where they had met with Osman. On 30 December 1970, the ELF general command met near Kassala to discuss internal dissension, but

neither Osman, Essayas, nor the newly formed Obelites attended. Osman's international connections became useful in supplying the new group with guns and ammunition. By the end of 1971, there were four separate PLF groups all of whom had rejected ELF leadership. In January 1972 in Beirut, Osman united the factions under his leadership.

While Osman and Essayas were forming their own group, on 14 October 1971, the ELF finally held its national congress at a village along the Sudanese border. The congress decided to strengthen its ties with other liberation groups in other African countries, in Asia, and in Latin America. It vowed to support the Palaestinian liberation group and anti-government revolutionary groups within Ethiopia.⁷ Further, the congress officially dissolved the supreme council and warned that if the dissenting groups failed to return to the ELF, they would be eliminated.

By February 1972, the rift between the two groups had widened into a civil conflict which was to last periodically until November 1974. The most severe fighting took place between December 1973 and January 1974 with a loss of over 3,000 guerrillas.⁸ The fighting ended for two main reasons: one, the guerrillas' frustration and realization that independence would not be achieved by such internal strife and, two, the efforts of Major-General Aman Michael Andom, himself an Eritrean, whom the emperor in his final days had promoted to Lt.-Gen. and C.-in-C. of the Ethiopian Armed Forces. Andom represented a new government and the possibility that there would be a new policy toward Eritrea.

Several incidences had occurred during the summer 1974 that led Eritreans to be encouraged that their demands would be heeded. On 16 July, Lt.-Gen. Abiye Abebe, Minister of Defense, was detained by a

branch of the Armed Forces Committee, the Dergue, of which General Andom eventually became its chairman on 12 September.⁹ On the following day, the same committee arrested the mayor of Asmara, five other officials, and General Debebe Hailemariam, a former governor of Eritrea who had opposed dialogue between the rebels and government. On 4 September, Andom told Eritrean leaders that all grievances would be examined by the government.¹⁰ Eritreans were additionally heartened when Dejatch Zewde Gebresellassie, then deputy prime minister, during a visit to Khartoum on 7 September, stated that the government would give "favorable consideration to the idea of mediation on the Eritrean issue by the Sudan,"¹¹ although Addis Ababa had affirmed its resolve to maintain Ethiopia's unity. Each of the liberation groups, however, saw itself as the sole representative of the Eritrean people and wanted government recognition as such. Hopes for a reconciliation with the government were dashed, however, when, on 23 November 1974, General Andom was killed by the Dergue, ostensibly for favoring a conciliatory stance in regard to the Eritrean crisis and for his unwillingness to send 5,000 new troops to Eritrea at the request of the Dergue.¹²

Meanwhile, the continual fighting between the liberation fronts inspired two mass meetings between Eritrean leaders and the liberation groups in September and October 1974. Further meetings in early January 1975 succeeded in achieving a tentative agreement on 16 January to form a common front and to negotiate with the government if the latter consented to withdraw its forces from Eritrea, a point Addis Ababa refused to consider.

During the civil war and its aftermath, a rift began to develop between Osman and Essayas, which resulted in the former resigning on 23 March 1976.¹³ Essayas had initiated a campaign politically to

re-educate Eritrean villagers. Osman felt such a plan opposed Eritrean traditions and was anti-Islamic. Osman opposed the politicization of civilians and the dissemination of Marxist/Leninist revolutionary theory. Also, he realized that possibly his Middle East connections would be offended and shift their interest away from Eritrea. Further, Essayas had criticized Osman for his demonstrated willingness on several occasions to compromise with the Ethiopian Government in drawing up a peace treaty which would have given Ethiopia a "corridor to the sea." Another point of contention had been the Khartoum Agreement of 7 September 1975, by which the two groups, the ELF and the PLF, were to have merged within eight months of its signing. Such an action would have undoubtedly curtailed Essayas' power and politicizing program.¹⁴ Advised by Essayas, who had been looking for a reason to separate the fighting forces from Osman's influence, the PLF's field command resisted compliance with the agreement and, at a meeting held on 12 November, criticized Sabbe for signing it on the grounds that the agreement was "illegal" and "unprincipled."¹⁵ From 18 to 23 March, the external and internal leaders of the PLF, including Essayas, met in Khartoum but were unable to come to any agreement. Immediately, Essayas began to forge a new faction to be called the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, EPLF.

Rebuffed by the field command, Osman formed a third group, including members from the former PLF, the ELF and a few from the EPLF, which he called the Eritrean Liberation Front-People's Liberation Forces, ELF-PLF. In April 1977, the ELF-PLF's troop strength was estimated at about five thousand, with foreign support coming primarily from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the emirates, such as Abu Dhabi.¹⁶ The troop strength of the ELF was placed at 23,000, supported by Syria,

Iraq, and some of the Arabian Gulf states.¹⁷ By mid-1977, the EPLF had about 15,000 well-disciplined soldiers, about one fourth of whom were said to be women in combat, nursing, and other support positions.

The EPLF's first congress held in January 1977, was attended by representatives from six Middle Eastern governments and several foreign liberation movements. The name of the group was officially changed from EPL Forces to EPL Front. The front's organization was solidified with its own flag and insignia. Further, it decided that the two fronts, the ELF and the EPLF, should act as the legitimate representatives of the Eritrean people in any future negotiations. In addition, it stated that any treaty would have to be discussed within the authority of the UN, a situation tantamount to the organization's recognition of Eritrea as a separate nation since the UN could discuss disputes between but not within nations. The congress made no condemnation of the Soviet Union's support of the Dergue, but on the contrary saw the West as its cardinal enemy. One of the EPLF's controversial programs was that which desired the confiscation of land controlled by the government, by foreign interests, or by Eritreans who supported the government. Others included the elimination of all land tenure systems in Eritrea, the redistribution of all land throughout Eritrea with the creation of state farms, the nationalization of all industries, regulation of the exchange and pricing of domestic products, and the denial of practice of "counterrevolutionary faiths, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostalism, Bahaism, etc."¹⁸ In essence, the EPLF intended to fashion Eritrea in the same way as the Dergue had shaped Ethiopia.

In contrast to the EPLF's program, the ELF's had been less strictly Marxist, especially in its later stages of development. The

ELF's proposals, as outlined at the December 1982 conference, spoke of freedom of speech, religion, and in general the enjoyment of democratic rights. Further, they emphasized the preservation of Eritrea's heritage and traditions, in particular those from its Arab/Muslim roots.¹⁹ Their only resemblance to Marxist principles entailed the organization of agricultural cooperatives, but made no mention of confiscation of land.

Late in 1977, the EPLF began to suffer internal strife over strategy. Essayas began to argue for greater ties with the Tigray People's Liberation Front (hereafter TPLF) in the neighboring province to the south.²⁰ The practical advantage for the EPLF in supporting the TPLF was in the latter's ability to harrass government convoys along the roads in Tigray before they entered Eritrea. By spring 1980, a fragile alliance had been formed between the EPLF and the TPLF which began to weaken in 1983, after the TPLF had proposed a united military and political force of all the anti-government groups, a notion that the EPLF could not countenance.²¹ Also, the TPLF had bad relations with the two Afar liberation groups, whose right to self-determination the EPLF recognized.

In 1985, unity among the various liberation groups in Eritrea was still an elusive goal. From 1975 onward, periodic attempts, some of which succeeded, only to fall apart on the slightest pretext, were made to establish a unified liberation group. As each leader differed about the liberation effort for strategic, political, or ideological reasons, the movement became more fractured. Osman's forces underwent a split in January 1979, after they had been forced to leave Eritrea by the EPLF and ELF. The splinter group became known as the Popular Liberation Forces Revolutionary Committee, whose leader was a former

Obelite. After three or four months, it too had been chased off the field of battle.

The first of several splits within the ELF began in July 1977 with the formation of a group of about 1,000 guerrillas calling itself the ELF-Democratic Forces. The group had criticized the ELF for perpetuating the status quo, especially in regard to land reform. From July 1977 to March 1978, about two thousand ELF guerrillas joined the EPLF after internal disturbances culminating in the assassination of several members of its council.²² From June 1980 through August 1981, the ELF and the EPLF fought periodically for control of the field, with the EPLF driving the ELF to the Sudan border, about 4,000 of whom were either detained by the Sudanese Government or forced to surrender to government forces.²³ The EPLF remained preeminent, depending on its ability to capture weapons and ammunition from the Ethiopian army and on the cooperation of Eritrean villagers.

From the outset of the liberation movement up to January 1975, the ELF and EPLF had used tactics of assassination, kidnappings, air piracy, and brief attacks on outposts and convoys. Beginning in 1975, both groups had accumulated enough weapons and ammunition and the knowledge of how to use them to begin a new phase: the capture of key towns and cities. From its formation in late 1975 and early 1976, the EPLF had relied upon the capture of weapons, tanks, and ammunition, while the ELF continued to receive military aid from Arab countries, in particular Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and the Sudan. Both fronts received periodic shipments of medical and other supplies from various international organizations, such as the International Red Cross and the United Nations refugee services.²⁴ While it was true that from the early seventies forays into major urban centers had been kept up

with some regularity to steal food, medicines, and military supplies, the attack on Asmara on 31 January 1975 was the first major incursion into a city.²⁵ It lasted for about three weeks and ushered in the next phase of the movement's overall strategy.

By the end of February 1975, half of Ethiopia's regular army had been sent to Eritrea with a contingent of territorial guardsmen to protect the cities.²⁶ The government cleared a corridor eleven miles wide around the capital city, forcing many thousands of villagers to flee their homes to neighboring Sudan or other villages.²⁷ The attack on Asmara proved futile. The guerrillas did not have sufficient quantities of arms and ammunition nor numbers to sustain their attack. Meanwhile, during the siege of Asmara, Mengistu Hailemariam announced in Addis Ababa that Eritreans must choose between "'death and unity'" maintaining that he would raise an army of six million militia to resist Eritrea's secessionist plans.²⁸ It was not until the following year in May 1976, that contingents of the Dergue's "peasant" army were dispatched to Asmara despite warnings by the US on 19 May that its despatch would seriously affect Ethiopian-US relations.²⁹ The rag-tag "volunteers" were soundly defeated on 21 May 1976 south of the Eritrean-Tigraian border, a few days after the Dergue had declared its nine point peace proposal.³⁰

At about the same time, General Teferi Banti, then chairman of the Dergue, offered Eritreans amnesty and reaffirmed his earlier offer, made in April 1976, for regional autonomy.³¹ The offer of amnesty and other suggestions of compromise in regard to Eritrea led to his execution on 3 February 1977. He was immediately succeeded by the vice chairman, Mengistu Hailemariam.³²

After the Dergue's "peasant" army had been routed, the liberation movement spent the summer preparing for a major push to gain more territory. The calm was broken in September 1976, when the EPLF alone launched a major offensive to capture the whole of the northern hills north of Keren. Despite Addis Ababa's reinforcements, Nakfa, the first major town, was captured by the EPLF on 22 March 1977. Karora, on the Sudan border, had already fallen on 6 January 1977 and, on 2 April, Afabet was added to the control of the EPLF, bringing the whole of Sahel, the northern hills, under its command.³³ The capture of the Sahel, facing the sea, gave the rebels a secure advance from Port Sudan, one of the main ports of supplies for the rebel troops. After the Sahel, the guerrillas concentrated on taking Keren, which fell on 8 July 1977 after only a three-day battle.³⁴ Two days earlier, Decemhare was taken, a strategic town about twenty miles southeast of Asmara on the second and only other major road linking Asmara to Addis Ababa.³⁵ With the two major roads south of Asmara blocked, the Dergue's forces were unable to move supplies into Asmara except by plane. The guerrillas had surrounded Asmara, and on 15 July freed about one thousand prisoners from one of its major prisons. On 4 August, Saganeiti, another major town south of Decemhare, was captured by rebel soldiers.

As the EPLF was capturing towns in northern and central Eritrea, the ELF had managed, by late spring 1977, to take the towns of Um Hager in the southwest corner of the western lowlands and Tessenei, on the Kassala road near the Sudan border. In October 1977, Agordat fell in a combined ELF/EPLF operation.³⁶ By the end of January 1978, the EPLF had taken all the towns between Asmara and Massawa.³⁷ From November 1977 through March 1978, a battle raged in Massawa, which left three-

quarters of it in rebel hands. The attack on Massawa, a serious strategic error, had cost the guerrillas more than one thousand killed or wounded, the heaviest loss they had yet suffered.³⁸ Massawa might have fallen to the liberationists had not a contingent of Russian, Cuban, and South Yemeni troops landed from the sea, where Russian ships were anchored, and aided the beleaguered Ethiopian troops.³⁹ While the EPLF was battling to take Massawa, the siege of Asmara, surrounded since October 1977, began in January 1978 and lasted until the end of March without success. To a large degree, the failure to capture Asmara in spring 1978 had its roots in the liberation groups' failure to have formed a unified army and leadership, although the Somali's announced withdrawal from the Ogaden on 9 March allowed the Ethiopian army to concentrate its forces in Eritrea.⁴⁰

The ideological dissidence between the rural, conservative, largely Muslim ELF and the urban, liberal, largely Christian EPLF was compounded by the personal conflicts between, in particular, the EPLF field commander, Essayas Afeworki, and Osman Saleh Sabbe, later the external leader of the splinter group, ELF-PLF. Osman still had considerable influence with ELF members, many of whom from 1977 through 1978 defected to the EPLF and the ELF-PLF.⁴¹ Each feared the dominance of the other.

Beginning at the end of April 1978, the Dergue prepared an offensive to push the rebels back into the hills and valleys surrounding the towns and cities which they had captured. The government flew in several thousand of the more than 17,000 Cuban troops already in Ethiopia, who had recently been involved in pushing back the Somali incursion in the Ogaden.⁴² On 21 April, Mengistu travelled to Cuba to thank Castro for his government's assistance in

Ethiopia's effort to retain the Ogaden and succeeded in getting Cuba's troops transferred to Eritrea. Thereafter, on 23 April, Addis Ababa, aided by several hundred Russian advisers, began widespread air and land attacks on most areas controlled by the guerrillas.⁴³ Although Soviet advisers and Cuban troops played only a supportive role in military action, they provided the crucial military expertise and equipment necessary to dislodge the rebels. In the first half of 1978, Ethiopia received, primarily from the Soviet Union, more than sixty thousand tons of equipment.⁴⁴ With Massawa firmly in government hands by the first of December 1978 and with Russia's occupation of the Dahlak Archipelago and Perim Island, at the narrowest point of the Babel-Mandeb Straits, Moscow had preeminence over the straits and the southern Red Sea.⁴⁵

From mid-July to December 1978, the Ethiopian army advanced rapidly. The rebels' disunity and the government's superior numbers, accompanied by extensive Russian, Cuban, and South Yemeni support, gave the Dergue the advantage it needed. Beset by internal disagreement, reduced funds, and lack of military supplies and faced by an overwhelmingly superior force, the guerrillas were forced to withdraw from every major town except Nakfa, where the rebels remained firmly entrenched. The situation remained relatively unchanged up through 1983, during which time the Dergue maintained it would offer Eritrea only regional autonomy, but would not consider independence.

On 15 January 1984, the EPLF opened yet another offensive by capturing the town of Tessenei, on the road to Kassala.⁴⁶ The EPLF continued its attacks in various parts of the province, keeping the government under constant pressure to deplete its already overburdened budget to maintain its precarious hold on Eritrea.

After more than twenty-five years of insurrection and internal disagreement, Eritreans remained much divided, and the thought of an independent Eritrea was still only an idea without much immediate possibility of fulfillment. By 1981, the EPLF had defeated and chased out of Eritrea all other factions, although by 1983 the ELF and the ELF/PLF had returned to the western sections of Eritrea. By 1985, the countryside still remained largely under EPLF control as well as two important towns: Nakfa and Tessenei. More than 1,000 miles of dirt roads had been built by the EPLF, half of which the EPLF claimed in February 1983 were paved.⁴⁷ Villagers had willingly, or by force, fed, clothed, and acted as spies for the revolution. Despite public threats to curtail the rebels' activities by Nimeiri and his successor, the Sudanese border remained open and the line of supply from Port Sudan to Nakfa remained active.

The EPLF had begun in earnest the arduous process of radically changing Eritrean society, whether it wanted change or not. The Dergue had begun replacing those Eritreans, who had fled the towns and cities, with people from various other parts of the nation. In 1984 and 1985, once again the EPLF began a general attack on the many garrisons along the main roads and in the smaller towns, hoping to achieve what had been so narrowly lost in 1978: independence. However, without a genuine military and political unity of all Eritreans, there was grave doubt that it could be achieved against such a formidable Soviet/Ethiopian alliance. Russia had stated in late 1950 that "...all peoples have a right to self-determination and national independence," and further that "the only solution to the problem of the future of Eritrea is to grant it independence."⁴⁸ But, by the end of 1985, Russia's foreign policy dictated a different solution. Despite Cuba's

partial withdrawal in spring 1984,⁴⁹ unfulfilled promises of aid from Libya,⁵⁰ and Addis Ababa's economic and political underpinnings about to collapse,⁵¹ Ethiopia had successfully confined the Eritrean rebels to the town of Nakfa and the surrounding countryside with little hope for the dwindling revolution.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Osman Saleh Sabbe, "The Roots of the Eritrean Disagreements and How To Solve Them," hereafter "The Roots...", ELF-PLF Office, Jeddah, spring 1978, 41.

² Eritrea, The National Democratic Revolution Versus Ethiopian Expansion, hereafter Eritrea, NDRVEE, Eritrean Liberation Front, Beirut, 1979, 33.

³ USG, State, Campbell to SecSt, 5 Jy 62, A-6, 775A.00/7-562, enc.

⁴ Eritrea, NDRVEE, 37.

⁵ Godfrey Morrison, "The Southern Sudan And Eritrea: aspects of wider African problems," Minority Rights Group Report No. 5, Jy 1971, London, 30.

⁶ Eritrea, NDRVEE, 39.

⁷ Eritrea, NDRVEE, 55.

⁸ Edward Hoagland, "Into Eritrea: Africa's Red Sea War," Harper's, V-257, Jy 1978, 51 and New York Times, hereafter NYT, 4 No 75:14a (morning edition).

⁹ Keesings Contemporary Archives, hereafter KCA, V-20, 26639b.

¹⁰ In conversation with Saleh Abubeker Abdulrahim, former member of ELF.

¹¹ KCA, V-20, 26736a.

¹² KCA, V-21, 27030a. The 5,000 additional troops reached Eritrea in late November.

¹³ Eritrea in Struggle, hereafter EIS, V-1, N-10, My 1977, 3.

¹⁴ See "Khartoum Agreement," September 1975, ELF/PLF Information Office, Jeddah, KSA.

¹⁵ Eritrea, NDRVEE, 65-66.

¹⁶ The Economist, 30 Ap 77, 69.

¹⁷ Figures as of March 1978 placed the troop strength of the ELF at between 12,000 to 15,000 following a major internal upheaval and massive defection of ELF members to rival groups. See 'Pliny the Middle-Aged,' "Eclectic Notes On The Eritrean Liberation Movement: E Pluribus Unum?," Ethiopianist Notes, V-2, N-1, 1978, 43.

18 Richard Sherman, Eritrea, The Unfinished Revolution, Praeger, New York, 1980, Appdx B, "Objectives of the National Democratic Program of the EPLF," 166-174, (whose English translation has been checked with the author's original Tigrinya text).

19 "Resolutions and Recommendations Passed by the Third National Congress for the Eritrean Liberation Front," hereafter "Resolutions," from "The Political Platform from the Third National Congress Held at the Liberated Area of Eritrea," 9-13 De 82, translated by Said Mohammed, ELF Office, Jeddah, 18-29.

20 Africa Confidential, hereafter AC, V-18, N-23, 18 No 77, 31.

21 AC, V-26, N-14, 3 Jy 85, 4b.

22 In conversation with Saleh Abubeker Abdulrahim.

23 AC, V-22, N-18, 2 Sp 81, Notes and N-25, 9 De 81, 5.

24 Middle East Research and Information Project, hereafter MERIP, N-62, "Development of the Eritrean Revolution," V-7, No 1977, 22. For a lengthy discussion of the many thousands of refugees that poured across the Eritrean/Ethiopian borders during the 60s, 70s, and 80s and aid they received from international agencies, see Sudanow, "The Refugee Problem," V-2, N-7, Jy 1977, 7-14 and "Taking the Strain," V-9, N-4, Jy 1984, 9. Lutheran World Relief Stations, operating in the Sudan since the mid-1940s, had provided over US\$1m in food and clothing to the refugee camps in Sudan up to early 1985.

25 NYT, 1975: 5 Fb:12a and 7 Fb:3a (m).

26 Ethiopia's total army strength in 1975 was estimated at 41,000. Its territorial army, at 8,000. See The Military Balance, 1975-1976, The Institute For Strategic Studies, hereafter ISS, London, 1975, 42.

27 The Nation, V-224, N-11, 19 Mr 77, 338.

28 The Economist, 22 Fb 75, 36c.

29 KCA, V-22, 27 Ag 76, 27913b and The Financial Times, 26 My 76:8.

30 Dimtsi Hafash, V-2, N-1, 1 Ap 80, 3.

31 The Economist, 22 My 76, 58a and EIS, V-1, N-2, Jy 1976, 6.

32 The Economist, 12 Fb 77, 64 and KCA, V-23, 4 Mr 77, 28221a.

33 EIS, V-1, N-12, Ag-Sp 1977, 7a.

34 Sudanow, V-2, N-8, Ag 1977, 13--14.

35 EIS, V-1, N-12, Ag-Sp 1977, 7b and The Economist, 16 Jy 77, 71b.

- 36 The Christian Science Monitor, hereafter CSM, 30 Ot 77:15b.
- 37 EIS, V-2, N-5, Fb 1978, 1.
- 38 AC, V-19, N-14, 7 Jy 78, 5.
- 39 The Guardian, (internat. ed.), 29 Ja 78:7 and International Bulletin, V-5, N-5, 13 Mr 78, 1.
- 40 Steven David, "Realignment in the Horn: The Soviet Advantage," International Security, V-4, N-2, Fall 1979, 80.
- 41 Dan Connel, "The Cubans Move In," The Nation, V-226, 6 My 78, 533.
- 42 CSM, 17 My 78:1 & 42 and 6 Ag 79:9.
- 43 CSM, 25 Ap 78:3 and 27 Ap 78:6.
- 44 The Star (Johannesburg), 24 Jy 78.
- 45 To The Point (Johannesburg), 14 De 79, 19.
- 46 KCA, V-30, Ag 1984, 33015a.
- 47 The EPLF also claimed to have built over 100 secondary schools in those areas under its control and established 7 hospitals served by 22 doctors as well as midwives and nurses. See KCA, V-29, Jy 1983, 32238b.
- 48 UNGA, Official Record, Plenary Meetings (315th), Fifth Session, 536, pars. 81 & 83.
- 49 New African, N-198, Mr 1984, 32a. About half of Cuba's approximately 11-12,000 soldiers, advisers, and technicians were withdrawn from Ethiopia in September 1983, probably for economic (the Cuban presence was costing Ethiopia an estimated \$6m per year) and political reasons (Cuba had refused any further troop support in Eritrea).
- 50 New African, N-198, Mr 1984, 32c.
- 51 In addition to the battle in Eritrea, the Ethiopian Government had to contend with at least ten to a dozen liberation movements either inside or outside the country, which consumed about 46% of the national budget to maintain a total of more than 300,000 armed forces. Further, Ethiopia was suffering from, perhaps, the worst famine in its recorded history, while its Relief and Rehabilitation Commission had been accused of being "riddled with corruption." Moreover, a 10 year, \$30 billion economic plan unveiled in September 1984 had been based on political considerations rather than economic realities. It seemed the Dergue and the entire country was on the verge of collapse. See Sudanow, V-9, N-1, Ja 1984, 9; AC, V-24, N-19, 21 Sp 83, 5b and V-

26, N-1, 2 Ja 85, 1-4; The Seattle Times/Seattle Post Intelligencer, 18 No 84, A3b; and The Military Balance, 1984-85, ISS, London, 1984, 76.

C O N C L U S I O N S

Eritrea had come into existence as the artificial creation of international diplomacy following the Berlin conference in 1884-5. After a series of treaties and agreements between the Italian and Ethiopian governments and various local sultans, on 1 January 1890, Italy's possessions in Eritrea were consolidated by decree into an autonomous colony. Thus began the adversarial relationship between Eritrea and Ethiopia that continues to the present. Further agreements and protocols followed that established Eritrea's borders as they exist today.

As the Italian order became fixed, many Eritreans began to differentiate themselves from their southern neighbor. But despite this incipient feeling of national identity, a strong Muslim/Christian division continued to form the basis of social and business relationships. Highland Christians felt a pull toward their Christian cousins in the provinces immediately south of Eritrea's border, while Muslims felt drawn toward Islamic roots to the north and west. When the Big Four powers sought a political solution for Eritrea, partition along religious lines was rejected. Despite their differences, however, Eritreans wished to remain whole.

The Four Power Commission failed in its mission because in its investigations it tended to emphasize the differences among Eritrea's people rather than the characteristics that would have tended toward

unity. It was not the wishes and welfare of the Eritrean people that had primarily guided the commission but the Powers' individual foreign policies. Great Britain wanted to unite the Beja-speaking tribes on both sides of the Sudanese/Eritrean border, not for the sake of Beja speakers but for the purpose of making Sudan's access to the Red Sea easier. The United States, which had emerged from WWII as a preminent power, wanted to increase its influence with Ethiopia for military reasons. The Soviet Union desired to help break up western Europe's colonial hold in Africa and declared that Eritrea should become a temporary trust territory and then independent. And France wished to protect its trade interests in French Somaliland. Behind the scenes was Italy also trying to protect its economic interests.

After the failure of the Four Power Commission, the UN Commission was less influenced by the individual concerns of its members, but found itself in a difficult situation. Suspensions among Eritreans had been aroused. Political parties instead of uniting under one banner began to proliferate at a remarkable rate. The legacy of the Four Powers had left its mark. If numbers can be believed, it seemed clear that a majority of Eritreans were at least skeptical of being united under the Ethiopian flag. Federation had been suggested by no Eritrean. The UN solution was a compromise, and like all compromises, it left a majority displeased. Certainly, the Ethiopian Government was unhappy with the decision. Addis Ababa had viewed Eritrea as rightfully belonging to its empire, and thus the question of Eritrea's future was merely a case of unfinished business.

Once Eritrea had been federated, however, the crown had the difficult task of rationalizing the former's democratic institutions within a traditional monarchy. Such institutions threatened Ethiopia's

modus operandi. Eritrea had become a republic within a feudal empire. Major clashes were bound to occur. To continue Eritrea's material progress would require from Addis Ababa special attention, which it was willing to give not so much because it cared about the welfare of Eritreans but because the crown wanted to standardize Eritrea's government in line with Ethiopia's provinces. Eritrea, with its republican institutions, was incompatible with the rest of the country. It took the emperor ten years to transform Eritrea's status into that of a mere province.

As Eritrea entered federation, some Eritreans felt a close union with Ethiopia was the best policy, but by the end of the first four years, it had become obvious to many unionists sentiments that the closer Eritrea got to Ethiopia the further it was being removed from its democratic institutions. If, however, Ethiopia was to preserve the monarchy and the emperor his absolute powers, Eritrea could not be permitted its special status. Eventually, the crown gained control of every important aspect of Eritrea's government. When the end of federation finally came, and that was inevitable, it was accomplished with the appearance of Eritreans' willing acceptance, but overt rebellion on a small scale had already begun.

The consequent independence movement and the failure of the rebels to have unified themselves have demonstrated several facts: that Eritrean culture is diverse and religion has played a particularly important part in determining Eritrean relationships; that Muslim, historical suspicions of the Ethiopian Orthodox were and still are very much alive and uncompromising; and that traditional methods of government have tended to dominate the rebels' organizations.

Ethiopia's ability in preventing Eritrea from gaining its independence has been due to (1) the financial and military support Ethiopia has received from the USA and later Russia in return for permitting each of those countries to make use of Ethiopia for its own strategic advantages and (2) the inability of Eritreans to have developed a strong unified base of operation, to have gained international recognition of its "right to self-determination," and to have secured continual financial support. It seems doubtful that Eritrea will ever be independent. Although the Dergue in the mid-1980s talked about creating autonomous units within a greater Ethiopia, no clear definition was made of these units in Ethiopia's new constitution, unveiled in June 1986. It also seems likely that the Eritrean-Ethiopian antipathy will continue for some time in the future.

G L O S S A R Y

Abba	Ecclesiastical title, meaning 'father.'
Abuna	Title of the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Eritrea. (Abun - if not followed by a name)
Adi	Village, town.
Amba	Flat-topped mountain.
Ato	Title of respect; equivalent to 'Mr.'
Azmatch	Title of respect/rank in reference to district chiefs; also, military commander.
Balambaras	Title of respect/rank, equivalent to 'commander of the fortress.
Bey	Turkish title of rank, equivalent to governor of a province or district.
Bitwoded	Title of high respect; equivalent to 'beloved.'
Blatta(ngeta)	Title of respect, equivalent to counsellor, meaning 'valued, trusted.'
Dejazmatch	Title of respect/rank, equivalent to general, meaning 'commander of the door.'
Diglal	Title of paramount chief of the Beni Amer tribe.
Enda	Kinship group.
Fitarari	Title of respect/rank, meaning 'commander of the spear-head,' the vanguard.
Grazmatch	Title of respect/rank, meaning 'commander of the left wing.'
Kantiba	Title of respect/rank, equivalent to mayor/governor/elder.
Kenyazmatch	Title of respect/rank, meaning 'commander of the right wing.'
Lij	Title of high respect/rank, equivalent to prince.
Melake Selam	Term of respect meaning 'messenger of peace.'
Meslanie	Title of respect, equivalent to (sub)district chief.

Naib	Turkish title of administrator of the Semhar district around Massawa.
Nazir	Hereditary title of chief among Ad Sheik tribe in north central Eritrea.
Pasha(Basha)	Turkish title of high rank, equivalent to commander or governor of a province or district, meaning in Arabic 'head.'
Ras	Title of respect/rank, equivalent to duke, most senior rank just below 'negus,' meaning king/emperor.
Shum	Title of chief among Bet Asghede in Keren division.

A P P E N D I X A

REPRESENTATION OF ERITREAN POLITICAL PARTIES
(By district according to hearings of Four Power Commission held between 23 Nov. - 14 Dec. 1947)

FPC Appdx	District	Ia	Census ^b	IIC	Unionist	Moslem League	Erit.Lib. Progress.	New Erit. Pro-Italy	Italian Trusteeship	Italian Rule	Brit. Admin.	Mat. P. of Mass.
159	Zazega (S. Hamasien)	77 V	67,753 (188 Rs)	67,753 ^d (188 Rs)	66,587	366	800					
160	Gashnashim (N. Hamasien)	46 V	46,302 (139 Rs)	46,302 (139 Rs)	42,742	3,560						
161	Decembare (Sageneiti Sub-D)	103 V	50,813 (347 Rs)	75,340 ^e (347 Rs)	47,463	4,271	18,269 ^h		303	5,034		
162	Adi Kaleh (Adi Kaleh Sub-D)	189 V 85 TC	74,850 (274 Rs)	77,029 ^e (274 Rs)	22,299	32,305	8,517 ^h		3,734	10,174		
163	Senafe (Senafe Sub-D)	198 V 36 TC	53,891 (234 Rs)	63,752 ^e (234 Rs)	33,722	20,263	1,561		270	7,911	25	
164	Teremni (N. Serai)	156 V	75,367	114,592 ^f (236 Rs)	97,390	9,348	4,804	3,050				
165	Adi Kvala (Adi Kvala D)	246 V	49,991	142,876 ^f (393 Rs)	98,524	20,864	19,564 ^h	3,924				
166	Arressa (V. Serai)	113 V	44,445	80,818 ^e (273 Rs)	66,702	7,889		6,227				
167	Keren I (N. Keren D)	248 KG	102,501	114,277 ^{e,1} (255 Rs)	3,550	104,053		6,674				
168	Keren II (S. Keren D)	243 KG	102,591	119,447 ^{e,1} (286 Rs)	42,666	51,808		24,973				
169	Agordat (Agordat D)	262 KG	98,118	118,867 ^e (262 Rs)	4,400	95,867 ^j		18,600				
170	Barentu (Barentu & Tessa. D)	54 TC	54,337	57,981 (54 Rs)	1,000	55,891		1,090				
171	Masawa I (Sembar D)	44 TC	76,169	102,949 ^e (234 Rs)	17,600	62,179	270	8,942 ^k				13,958 ^l
172	Masawa II (N. Danakil D)	98 TC	22,134	27,505 (92 Rs)	2,309	24,596		600				
173	Asseb (S. Danakil D)	26 TC	11,585	12,734 (70 Rs)		1,780		10,954				
TOTAL:		2,224 units	930,847	1,222,222 (3,337 Rs)	546,954 (44.8%)	495,040 (40.5%)	52,985 (4.3%)	85,834 (7.0%)	4,307 (0.4%)	23,119 (1.9%)	25	13,958 (1.1%)

a - Number of (V)illages (1,128), (T)ribal (C)ommunities (343), or (K)inship (753) represented.
b - Origin is from BMA estimates; Trevasis gives a total estimated population of 1,031,000 from BA's estimate of 1952.

c - Total constituencies claimed by representatives; Rs = representatives.

d - Census used to determine numbers represented since representatives claimed to speak for whole villages.

e - Exaggerated figures given by some representatives (unspecified by FPC).

f - Exaggerated figures (2-4 times census) given by some representatives, specified as Unionist by FPC.

g - Some Muslims intimidated by threats of violence.

h - Disputed by Unionists.

i - In a few cases, minority views not represented.

j - Disputed by Pro-Italy Party.

k - Disputed by Moslem League.

l - Disputed by Unionists and Moslem League.

A P P E N D I X B

RESOLUTION 390 A (V)

**Adopted on 2 December 1950 by the UN General Assembly
(Paragraphs 1-7 inclusive constitute Federal Act)**

A

Whereas by paragraph 3 of Annex XI to the Treaty of Peace with Italy, 1947, the Powers concerned have agreed to accept the recommendation of the General Assembly on the disposal of the former Italian colonies in Africa and to take appropriate measures for giving effect to it,

Whereas by paragraph 2 of the aforesaid Annex XI such disposal is to be made in the light of the wishes and welfare of the inhabitants and the interests of peace and security, taking into consideration the views of interested governments,

Now therefore

The General Assembly, in the light of the reports of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea and of the Interim Committee, and

Taking into consideration

(a) The wishes and welfare of the inhabitants of Eritrea, including the views of the various racial, religious and political groups of the provinces of the territory and the capacity of the people for self-government,

(b) The interests of peace and security in East Africa,

(c) The rights and claims of Ethiopia based on geographical, historical, ethnic or economic reasons, including in particular Ethiopia's legitimate need for adequate access to the sea,

Taking into account the importance of assuring the continuing collaboration of the foreign communities in the economic development of Eritrea,

Recognizing that the disposal of Eritrea should be based on its close political and economic association with Ethiopia, and

Desiring that this association assure to the inhabitants of Eritrea the fullest respect and safeguards for their institutions, traditions, religions and languages, as well as the widest possible measure of self-government, while at the same time respecting the Constitution, institutions, traditions and the international status and identity of the Empire of Ethiopia,

A. Recommends that:

1. Eritrea shall constitute an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown.

2. The Eritrean Government shall possess legislative, executive and judicial powers in the field of domestic affairs.

3. The jurisdiction of the Federal Government shall extend to the following matters: defence, foreign affairs, currency and finance, foreign and interstate commerce and external and interstate communications, including ports. The Federal Government shall have the power to maintain the integrity of the Federation, and shall have the right to impose uniform taxes throughout the Federation to meet the expenses of federal functions and services, it being understood that the assessment and the collection of such taxes in Eritrea are to be delegated to the Eritrean Government, and provided that Eritrea shall bear only its just and equitable share of these expenses. The jurisdiction of the Eritrean Government shall extend to all matters not vested in the Federal Government, including the power to maintain the internal police, to levy taxes to meet the expenses of domestic functions and services, and to adopt its own budget.

4. The area of the Federation shall constitute a single area for customs purposes, and there shall be no barriers to the free movement of goods and persons within the area. Customs duties on goods entering or leaving the Federation which have their final destination or origin in Eritrea shall be assigned to Eritrea.

5. An Imperial Federal Council composed of equal numbers of Ethiopian and Eritrean representatives shall meet at least once a year and shall advise upon the common affairs of the Federation referred to in paragraph 3 above. The citizens of Eritrea shall participate in the executive and judicial branches, and shall be represented in the legislative branch, of the Federal Government, in accordance with law and in the proportion that the population of Eritrea bears to the population of the Federation.

6. A single nationality shall prevail throughout the Federation:

(a) All inhabitants of Eritrea, except persons possessing foreign nationality, shall be nationals of the Federation;

(b) All inhabitants born in Eritrea and having at least one indigenous parent or grandparent shall also be nationals of the Federation. Such persons, if in possession of a foreign nationality, shall, within six months of the coming into force of the Eritrean Constitution, be free to opt to renounce the nationality of the Federation and retain such foreign nationality. In the event that they do not so opt, they shall thereupon lose such foreign nationality;

(c) The qualifications of persons acquiring the nationality of the Federation under sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) above for exercising their rights as citizens of Eritrea shall be determined by the Constitution and laws of Eritrea;

(d) All persons possessing foreign nationality who have resided in Eritrea for ten years prior to the date of the adoption of the present resolution shall have the right, without further requirements of residence, to apply for the nationality of the Federation in accordance with federal laws. Such persons who do not thus acquire the

nationality of the Federation shall be permitted to reside in and engage in peaceful and lawful pursuits in Eritrea;

The rights and interests of foreign nationals resident in Eritrea shall be guaranteed in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 7.

7. The Federal Government, as well as Eritrea, shall ensure to residents in Eritrea, without distinction of nationality, race, sex, language or religion, the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental liberties, including the following:

(a) The right to equality before the law. No discrimination shall be made against foreign enterprises in existence in Eritrea engaged in industrial, commercial, agricultural, artisan, educational or charitable activities, nor against banking institutions and insurance companies operating in Eritrea;

(b) The right to life, liberty and security of person;

(c) The right to own and dispose of property. No one shall be deprived of property, including contractual rights, without due process of law and without payment of just and effective compensation;

(d) The right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right of adopting and practising any creed or religion;

(e) The right to education;

(f) The right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association;

(g) The right to inviolability of correspondence and domicile, subject to the requirements of the law;

(h) The right to exercise any profession subject to the requirements of the law;

(i) No one shall be subject to arrest or detention without an order of a competent authority, except in case of flagrant and serious violation of the law in force. No one shall be deported except in accordance with the law;

(j) The right to an equitable and fair trial, the right of petition to the Emperor and the right of appeal to the Emperor for commutation of death sentences;

(k) Retroactivity of penal law shall be excluded;

The respect for the rights and freedoms of others and the requirements of public order and the general welfare alone will justify any limitations to the above rights.

8. Paragraphs 1 to 7 inclusive of the present resolution shall constitute the Federal Act which shall be submitted to the Emperor of Ethiopia for ratification.

9. There shall be a transition period which shall not extend beyond 15 September 1952, during which the Eritrean Government will be organized and the Eritrean Constitution prepared and put into effect.

10. There shall be a United Nations Commissioner in Eritrea appointed by the General Assembly. The Commissioner will be assisted by experts appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

11. During the transition period, the present Administering Authority shall continue to conduct affairs of Eritrea. It shall, in consultation with the United Nations Commissioner, prepare as rapidly as possible the organization of an Eritrean administration, induct Eritreans into all levels of the administration, and make arrangements for and convoke a representative assembly of Eritreans chosen by the people. It may, in agreement with the Commissioner, negotiate on behalf of the Eritreans a temporary customs union with Ethiopia to be put into effect as soon as practicable.

12. The United Nations Commissioner shall, in consultation with the Administering Authority, the Government of Ethiopia, and the inhabitants of Eritrea, prepare a draft of the Eritrean Constitution to be submitted to the Eritrean Assembly and shall advise and assist the Eritrean Assembly in its consideration of the Constitution. The Constitution of Eritrea shall be based on the principles of democratic government, shall include the guarantees contained in paragraph 7 of the Federal Act, shall be consistent with the provisions of the Federal Act and shall contain provisions adopting and ratifying the Federal Act on behalf of the people of Eritrea.

13. The Federal Act and the Constitution of Eritrea shall enter into effect following ratification of the Federal Act by the Emperor of Ethiopia, and following approval by the Commissioner, adoption by the Eritrean Assembly and ratification by the Emperor of Ethiopia of the Eritrean Constitution.

14. Arrangements shall be made by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as the Administering Authority for the transfer of power to the appropriate authorities. The transfer of power shall take place as soon as the Eritrean Constitution and the Federal Act enter into effect, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 13 above.

15. The United Nations Commissioner shall maintain his headquarters in Eritrea until the transfer of power has been completed, and shall make appropriate reports to the General Assembly of the United Nations concerning the discharge of his functions. The Commissioner may consult with the Interim Committee of the General Assembly with respect to the discharge of his functions in the light of developments and within the terms of the present resolution. When the transfer of

authority has been completed, he shall so report to the General Assembly and submit to it the text of the Eritrean Constitution;

B. Authorizes the Secretary-General, in accordance with established practice:

1. To arrange for the payment of an appropriate remuneration to the United Nations Commissioner;

2. To provide the United Nations Commissioner with such experts, staff and facilities as the Secretary-General may consider necessary to carry out the terms of the present resolution.

¹ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Supplements, Nos. 8 and 14.

Source: UNGA, "Final Report of the United Nations Commissioner in Eritrea," Official Records, 7th Session, Supplement No. 15 (A/2188), 74-75.

A P P E N D I X C

THE CONSTITUTION OF ERITREA*

(As adopted by the Eritrean Assembly on 10 July 1952)

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* Source: UNGA, Final Report, 1952, (A/2188), 79-89.

CONSTITUTION OF ERITREA

Preamble

In the name of Almighty God,
Trusting that He may grant Eritrea peace, concord and prosperity,
And that the Federation of Eritrea and Ethiopia may be harmonious and fruitful,

We, the Eritrean Assembly, acting on behalf of the Eritrean people,
Grateful to the United Nations for recommending that Eritrea shall constitute an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown and that its Constitution be based on the principles of democratic government,

Desirous of satisfying the wishes and ensuring the welfare of the inhabitants of Eritrea by close and economic association with Ethiopia and by respecting the rights and safeguarding the institutions, traditions, religions and languages of all the elements of the population.

Resolved to prevent any discrimination and to ensure, under a regime of freedom and equality, the brotherly collaboration of the various races and religions in Eritrea, and to promote economic and social progress,

Trusting fully in God, the Master of the Universe.

Do hereby adopt this Constitution as the Constitution of Eritrea.

Part I. General

Article 1

Adoption and ratification of the Federal Act

1. The Eritrean people, through their representatives, hereby adopt and ratify the Federal Act approved on 2 December 1950 by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

2. They undertake to observe faithfully the provisions of the said Act.

Chapter I. Status of Eritrea

Article 2

Territory of Eritrea

The territory of Eritrea, including the islands, is that of the former Italian colony of Eritrea.

Article 3

Autonomy and federation

Eritrea shall constitute an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown.

Article 4

Legislative, executive, and judicial powers

The Government of Eritrea shall exercise legislative, executive, and judicial powers with respect to matters within its jurisdiction.

Article 5

Matters coming within the jurisdiction of Eritrea

1. The jurisdiction of the Government of Eritrea shall extend to all matters not vested in the Federal Government by the Federal Act.
2. This jurisdiction shall include:
 - (a) The various branches of law (criminal law, civil law, commercial law, etc.);
 - (b) The organization of the public services;
 - (c) Internal police;
 - (d) Health;
 - (e) Education;
 - (f) Public assistance and social security;
 - (g) Protection of labour;
 - (h) Exploration of natural resources and regulation of industry, internal commerce, trades and professions;
 - (i) Agriculture;
 - (j) Internal communications;
 - (k) The public utility services which are peculiar to Eritrea;
 - (l) The Eritrean budget and the establishment and collection of taxes designed to meet the expenses of Eritrean public functions and services.

Article 6

Contribution by Eritrea to the expenses of the Federal Government

1. Eritrea shall bear its just and equitable share of the expenses of Federal functions and services.

Assessment and levying of Federal taxes

2. The Government of Eritrea shall assess and levy in Eritrea, by delegation from the Federal Government, such taxes as are established to that end for the benefit of the whole of the Federation.

Revenue from customs duties

3. Within the revenue which accrues to Eritrea shall be included the customs duties on goods entering or leaving the Federation which have their final destination or origin in Eritrea, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 of the resolution of 2 December 1950 of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Article 7

Representation of Eritrea in the Imperial Federal Council

1. The Eritrean representatives in the Imperial Federal Council, composed of equal numbers of Ethiopians and Eritreans, shall be appointed by the Chief Executive with the approval of the Assembly. They shall be formally invested in office by the Emperor.

Participation of Eritreans in the Federal Government

2. Eritreans shall participate in the executive and judicial branches and shall be represented in the legislative branch, of the Federal Government, in accordance with law and in the proportion that the population of Eritrea bears to the population of the Federation.

Article 8

Eritrean citizenship

Persons who have acquired Federal nationality in Eritrea under the Federal Act (Section A, paragraph 6 of the General Assembly Resolution 390 A (V)) and have been granted Eritrean citizenship in accordance with the laws of Eritrea shall be citizens of Eritrea.

Article 9

Rights of Federal nationals who are not Eritrean citizens

1. On the basis of reciprocity, Federal nationals who are not Eritrean citizens shall enjoy the same rights as Eritreans.
2. Federal nationals shall enjoy political rights in accordance with the Eritrean Constitution and laws on the basis of reciprocity.

Chapter II. Representation of the Emperor in Eritrea

Article 10

The Emperor has a representative in Eritrea

There shall be a representative in Eritrea of His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Ethiopia, Sovereign of the Federation.

Article 11

Rank of the Representative of the Emperor

The Representative of the Emperor shall, on all occasions have the place of precedence at official ceremonies in Eritrea.

Article 12

Administering of the oath of office to the Chief Executive before the Representative of the Emperor. Formal investment of the Chief Executive in office

The Chief Executive, elected by the Assembly in accordance with Article 68, shall take the oath of office in accordance with the provisions of Article 72. The Representative of the Emperor, having noted that the Chief Executive has been elected by the Assembly, shall formally invest him in office in the name of the Emperor, Sovereign of the Federation.

Article 13

Opening and closing of sessions of the Assembly

At the opening and closing of sessions of the Assembly, the Representative of the Emperor may deliver the speech from the throne in which he will deal with affairs of common interest to the Federation and to Eritrea.

Article 14

Transmission of legislation to the representative of the Emperor

1. When draft legislation has been voted by the Assembly, the Chief Executive will transmit it immediately to the Representative of the Emperor.

2. If the Representative of the Emperor considers that draft legislation voted by the Assembly encroaches upon Federal jurisdiction, or that it involves the international responsibility of the Federation, he may transmit a request to the Chief Executive within twenty days after the vote by the Assembly for reconsideration of the draft legislation by the Assembly, indicating his reasons for doing so.

Article 15

Promulgation of legislation

The Representative of the Emperor will promulgate legislation in the manner laid down in Article 58.

Chapter III. Democratic Government in Eritrea

Article 16

The principles of democratic government

The Constitution of Eritrea is based on the principles of democratic government.

Article 17

Respect for human rights

The Constitution guarantees to all persons the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Article 18

Organs of government are provided for by the people and shall act in the interests of the people

1. All organs of government are provided for by the people. They are chosen by means of periodic, free and fair elections, directly and indirectly.
2. The organs of government shall act in the interests of the people.

Article 19

Rule of law

1. The organs of government and public officials shall have no further powers than those conferred on them by the Constitution and by the laws and regulations which give effect thereto.
2. Neither a group of the people nor an individual shall arbitrarily assume the exercise of any political power or of administrative functions.
3. Public officials shall perform their duties in strict conformity with the law and solely in the public interest.
4. Public officials shall be personally answerable for any unlawful acts or abuses they may commit.

Article 20

Franchise

The electorate shall consist of those persons possessing Eritrean citizenship who:

- (a) Are of male sex;
- (b) Have attained the age of twenty-one years;
- (c) Are under no legal disability as defined by the law; and
- (d) Have been resident for one year preceding the election in the constituency where they shall vote.

Article 21

Federal flag

1. The Federal flag shall be respected in Eritrea.

Flag, seal and arms of Eritrea

2. There shall be a flag, seal and arms of Eritrea, details of which shall be decided upon by law.

Chapter IV. Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

Section I. Provisions reproduced from the Federal Act

Article 22

Provisions reproduced from the Federal Act

The following provisions of paragraph 7 of the Federal Act shall be an integral part of the Constitution of Eritrea:

"The Federal Government, as well as Eritrea, shall ensure to residents in Eritrea, without distinction of nationality, race, sex, language or religion, the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental liberties, including the following:

- "(a) The right to equality before the law. No discrimination shall be made against foreign enterprises in existence in Eritrea engaged in industrial, commercial, agricultural, artisan, educational or charitable activities nor against banking institutions and insurance companies operating in Eritrea;
- "(b) The right to life, liberty and security of person;
- "(c) The right to own and dispose of property. No one shall be deprived of property, including contractual rights, without due process of law and without payment of just and effective compensation;
- "(d) The right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right of adopting and practising any creed or religion;
- "(e) The right to education;
- "(f) The right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association;
- "(g) The right to inviolability of correspondence and domicile subject to the requirements of the law;
- "(h) The right to exercise any profession subject to the requirements of the law;
- "(i) No one shall be subject to arrest or detention without an order of a competent authority, except in case of flagrant and serious violation of the law in force. No one shall be deported except in accordance with the law;
- "(j) The right to a fair and equitable trial, the right of petition to the Emperor and the right of appeal to the Emperor for commutation of death sentences;
- "(k) Retroactivity of penal law shall be excluded."

Section II. Other Provisions**Article 23**

Freedom and equality before the law. Everyone is a person before the law.

All persons are born free and are equal before the law without distinction of nationality, race, sex or religion and, as such shall enjoy civil rights and shall be subject to duties and obligations.

Article 24

Prohibition of torture and certain punishments

No one shall be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 25

Right to freedom of movement

Everyone resident in Eritrea has the right to freedom of movement and to the choice of place of residence in Eritrea subject to the provisions of Article 34.

Article 26

Freedom of conscience and religion

The right to freedom of conscience and religion shall include the right of everyone, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 27

No discrimination to the detriment of any religion

No economic, financial or political measure of a discriminatory nature shall be taken to the detriment of any religion practised in Eritrea.

Article 28

Recognition of religious bodies as persons before the law

Religious bodies of all kinds and religious orders shall be recognized as possessing juristic personality.

Consequently, any religious denomination or any group of citizens belonging to such denomination shall be entitled:

- (a) To establish and maintain institutions for religious, educational and charitable purposes;
- (b) To conduct its own affairs in matters of religion;
- (c) To possess and acquire movable and immovable property;
- (d) To administer its property and to enter into contracts.

Article 29

Religious instruction and worship in public schools

No pupil attending a public school shall be required to take part in any religious instruction at such school or attend any religious service at such school.

Article 30

Freedom to express opinions

Everyone resident in Eritrea shall have the right to express his opinion through any medium whatever (Press, speech, etc.) and to learn the opinions expressed by others.

Article 31

Right to education and freedom to teach

1. Everyone resident in Eritrea shall have the right to education. The Government shall make every effort to establish schools and to train teachers.

2. The Government shall encourage private persons and private associations and institutions, regardless of race, nationality, religion, sex or language, to open schools, provided that they give proof of the required standards of morality and competence.

3. The instruction in the schools shall conform to the spirit of the Constitution.

Article 32

Associations and companies

1. Everyone resident in Eritrea shall have the right to form associations or companies for lawful purposes.

2. Companies or associations shall enjoy fundamental freedoms in so far as their nature permits.

3. Such companies or associations shall be regarded as persons before the law.

Article 33

Protection of working conditions

1. Everyone resident in Eritrea, regardless of nationality, race, sex, or religion, shall have the right to opportunity of work, to equal pay for equal work, to regular holidays with pay, to payment of dependency allowances, to compensation for illness and accidents incurred through work and to a decent and healthy standard of life.

Trade unions

2. Everyone resident in Eritrea shall have the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 34

Control by law of the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

1. The provisions in the last sub-paragraph of paragraph 7 of the Federal Act apply to the whole of Chapter IV of Part I of the Constitution. This subparagraph reads as follows:

"The respect for the rights and freedoms of others and the requirements of public order and the general welfare alone will justify any limitations to the above rights."

2. In applying the aforementioned provisions, the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms may be regarded by law provided that such regulation does not impede their normal enjoyment.

Article 35

Duties of individuals

Everyone shall have the duty to respect the Constitution and the laws, and to serve the community.

Chapter V.

Special Rights of the Various Population Groups in Eritrea

Article 36

Personal status

Nationals of the Federation including those covered by sub-paragraphs (b) and (d) of paragraph 6 of the Federal Act, as well as foreign nationals, shall have the right to respect for their customs and their own legislation governing personal status and legal capacity, the law of the family and the law of successions.

Article 37

Property rights

Property rights and rights of real nature, including those on State lands, established by custom or law and exercised in Eritrea by the tribes, the various population groups and by natural or legal persons, shall not be impaired by any law of a discriminatory nature.

Article 38

Languages

1. Tigrinya and Arabic shall be the official languages of Eritrea.
2. In accordance with established practice in Eritrea, the languages spoken and written by the various population groups shall be permitted to be used in dealing with the public authorities, as well as for religious or educational purposes and for all forms of expression of ideas.

Part II. The Assembly

Chapter I.

Composition and Election of the Assembly

Article 39

Creation of an Assembly representing the Eritrean people

1. Legislative power shall be exercised by an Assembly representing the Eritrean people.
2. Members of the Assembly shall represent the Eritrean people as a whole, and not only the constituency in which they are elected.

Article 40

Number of members of the Assembly

1. The Assembly shall be composed of not less than fifty and not more than seventy members.
2. Within the limits prescribed in the preceding paragraph, the number of members shall be fixed by law.

Article 41

Constituencies

1. The territory of Eritrea shall be divided into electoral constituencies, each electing one representative.
2. These constituencies shall be established in such a way that they will be approximately equal in population. The boundaries of the constituencies shall be fixed by law.

Article 42

Eligibility

All members of the electorate shall be eligible for election to the Assembly provided that:

- (a) They have reached the age of thirty;
- (b) They have been resident in Eritrea for three years and have resided in the constituency for two years during the last ten years;
- (c) They are not disqualified for any reason laid down by law; and
- (d) They are not officials of the Eritrean or Federal Governments, unless they have resigned at the time of presenting their candidature.

Article 43

The two voting systems

1. The members of the Assembly shall be elected either by direct or indirect ballot.
2. The system of voting to be used in any given constituency shall be laid down by law.
3. Voting by direct ballot shall be personal, equal and secret. For this purpose, a roll of qualified voters shall be drawn up, and revised from time to time. The system for establishing electoral rolls shall be fixed by law.
4. The first stage of voting by indirect ballot shall be conducted in accordance with local custom. At the second stage, voting shall be personal, equal and secret.

Article 44

Election by direct ballot and election at second stage in the case of indirect ballot

1. If a candidate for the Assembly obtains an absolute majority of the votes cast he shall be declared elected.
2. If no candidate obtains an absolute majority, as defined in paragraph 1, a second ballot shall be held, and the candidate who then obtains the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected.

Article 45

Electoral High Commission

1. An electoral High Commission consisting of three persons appointed by the Supreme Court established under Article 85 shall be responsible for supervising all electoral proceedings (including the compiling of electoral rolls), and for preventing or putting a stop to irregularities.

2. The High Commission shall appoint, in each constituency, from among the electors of the constituency, a representative to act under its authority.

3. The said representative shall be assisted by an advisory election committee, consisting of members chosen by him from among the electors of that constituency. As soon as an election period has been declared open in accordance with the law every candidate shall be entitled to be represented on the committee.

4. The implementation of the present article shall be prescribed by law.

Article 46

Disputed elections to the Assembly

1. At the opening of the session following an election, the Assembly shall confirm its members. All members whose elections are unchallenged shall be confirmed simultaneously.

2. In any case where an election is challenged, the Assembly shall decide, by a two-thirds majority of the members present, whether the challenged election is valid, provided that such two-thirds majority shall be not less than one half of the members of the Assembly in office.

3. In the event of a member's election not being confirmed, he may, within three days following the adoption of the decision by the Assembly, appeal to the Supreme Court established under Article 85, but shall not take his seat until the Supreme Court has given its decision.

Article 47

Term of the Assembly

1. The Assembly shall be elected for a term of four years.

2. Members shall be eligible for re-election.

3. If there is a vacancy during the term of an Assembly, a by-election shall take place. No by-election can, however, take place within six months of the election of a new Assembly.

Chapter II. Sessions and Meetings

Article 48

Regular sessions

1. The Assembly shall hold two regular sessions each year.

2. The Assembly shall meet in regular session on a date to be specified by law. This session shall continue for at least one month.

3. The opening date of the second regular session shall be fixed by the Chief Executive after consulting the President of the Assembly. This second session shall be devoted primarily to voting the budget and the Assembly shall consider no other matter until the budget has been voted. The session shall not close until the budget has been voted as prescribed in Article 60.

4. The closing date of regular sessions shall be fixed by the Chief Executive after consulting the President of the Assembly.

5. With the consent of the President of the Assembly, the Chief Executive may suspend a session for a period not exceeding twenty days.

Article 49

Special sessions

1. The Chief Executive may convene the Assembly to a special session.
2. The Chief Executive shall convene the Assembly to a special session whenever a written request is submitted by not less than one-third of the members.
3. When the Assembly is convened to a special session by the Chief Executive on his own initiative, only the questions set forth in the notice convening the Assembly shall be discussed. The Chief Executive shall fix the closing date of the session.
4. When the Assembly is convened to a special session at the request of not less than one-third of its members, it shall determine its own agenda. The Chief Executive shall fix the closing date of the session in agreement with the President of the Assembly.

Article 50

Quorum

Two thirds of the members of the Assembly shall compose a quorum.

Article 51

Rules of procedure

The Assembly shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

Article 52

Officer of the Assembly

The Assembly shall elect its officers at the opening of the first regular session of each year or at the beginning of a new Legislature. The officers shall consist of a President, a Vice-President and, if the Assembly so desires, other officers.

Chapter III. Status of Members of the Assembly

Article 53

Swearing-in of members

Before taking up their duties, members of the Assembly who have not served in the previous Legislature shall take, in accordance with the faith and the customary practice of the individual concerned, the following oath before the President of the Assembly:

"I undertake before Almighty God" (or an invocation conforming to the faith and the customary practice of the member of the Assembly concerned) "to respect the Federation under the sovereignty of the Imperial Crown, loyally to serve Eritrea, to defend its Constitution and its laws, to seek no personal advantage from my office, and to perform all my duties conscientiously."

Article 54**Parliamentary immunity**

1. Members of the Assembly shall not be liable to prosecution for opinions expressed or votes cast by them in the performance of their duties.
2. Members of the Assembly shall not be arrested or prosecuted without the authorization of the Assembly; save that in case of flagrant delict they may be arrested, but the prosecution, even in this case, shall be authorized by the Assembly. When the Assembly is not in session, such authorization may be given by its officers. The Assembly may subsequently decide that proceedings shall be discontinued.

Article 55**Remuneration of members of the Assembly**

1. Members of the Assembly shall receive a remuneration fixed by law.
2. No increase of remuneration shall take effect until the term of office of the Assembly voting it has expired.

Chapter IV. Powers of the Assembly**Article 56****General powers of the Assembly**

The Assembly shall vote the laws and the budget, elect the Chief Executive and supervise the activities of the Executive.

Section I. Legislative Functions**Article 57****Drafting and adoption of legislation**

1. Draft legislation may be introduced into the Assembly by members of the Assembly or submitted to the Assembly by the Chief Executive.
2. Such legislation shall be considered, discussed and put to the vote as provided in the Assembly's rules of procedure.

Article 58**Request for a reconsideration**

1. Draft legislation adopted by the Assembly shall be immediately transmitted by the President of the Assembly to the Chief Executive.

Approval of legislation by the Chief Executive

2. The Chief Executive will transmit it as soon as received to the Representative of the Emperor who may request, in accordance with the provisions of Article 14, that it be reconsidered by the Assembly.

Publication

3. If the Representative of the Emperor, exercising the prerogatives for which provision is made under Article 14, has transmitted a request to the Chief Executive for reconsideration, giving his reasons for doing so, the Assembly must take a further vote. The draft legislation must obtain a two-thirds majority vote to be adopted.

4. If the draft legislation has been adopted after reconsideration, as provided in the preceding paragraph, or if the Representative of the Emperor has not exercised his prerogatives under Article 14, the Chief Executive must within twenty days after the vote taken by the Assembly, either approve the draft legislation and transmit it to the Representative of the Emperor for promulgation within five days of its receipt, or return it to the Assembly with his comments.

5. If the Chief Executive shall have returned the draft legislation to the Assembly, the Assembly shall reconsider the draft legislation and take a further vote on it. If the draft legislation is then adopted by a two-thirds majority, the Chief Executive shall transmit it to the Representative of the Emperor for promulgation within five days of its receipt.

6. All draft legislation adopted in accordance with the provisions of this article but not promulgated within the time laid down in paragraphs 4 and 5 of this Article, shall come into effect after publication by the Chief Executive.

Section II. Budget

Article 59

Submission of the draft budget by the Chief Executive

1. At least one month before the opening of the second regular session of the Assembly, the Chief Executive shall submit a draft for the next financial year.
2. The draft budget shall cover the whole of the revenue and expenditures of the Government of Eritrea for the next financial year.

Article 60

Examination and adoption of the budget by the Assembly

1. During the month preceding the second regular session of the Assembly, the Assembly Finance Committee shall examine the draft budget submitted by the Executive and report to the Assembly.
2. A general debate on the draft budget shall be held at the beginning of the second regular session of the Assembly. Within ten days following the closure of the debate, the Executive shall submit a revised draft budget including the amendments it may decide to make to its first draft as a result of the observations made by the Assembly.
3. The Assembly shall then proceed to examine the various items of the budget:
 - (a) It shall first adopt the expenditure estimates, with or without amendments, only the total estimate for each Executive Department being put to the vote. The Assembly may not increase the estimates proposed in the draft budget unless increase is balanced by corresponding estimates of revenue and has received the consent of the Executive.
 - (b) The Assembly shall then adopt, with or without amendments, the revenue estimates chapter by chapter, each of which shall be put to the vote separately.
4. The complete budget shall be adopted before the beginning of the financial year; otherwise, the amended draft budget submitted by the Executive as provided in paragraph 2 above shall be deemed to be adopted, provided the Executive has itself observed the time-limit laid down in Article 59 and in the present Article.

Article 61

All taxation and expenditure must be authorized by law

No tax shall be levied and no expenditure shall be incurred unless authorized by law.

Article 62

Form of the budget

A law shall be enacted governing the form in which the budget is to be submitted and voted on each year.

Article 63

Credit for urgent expenditure

1. When voting the budget, the Assembly shall include a credit for urgent expenditure.
2. The amount of this credit shall not exceed 10 percent of the expenditure estimates.
3. At the beginning of the following session of the Assembly, the Chief Executive shall report on the use he has made of this credit. The Assembly shall take a vote on this report.

Article 64

Accounts for past financial years

1. Within eighteen months following the close of each financial year, the Executive shall submit the accounts for that financial year to the Assembly for approval.
2. An Auditor-General, independent of the Executive, shall be elected by the Assembly.
3. The principal function of the Auditor-General shall be to examine the annual accounts, and to make a report to the Assembly containing his observations on them at the time of their presentation to the Assembly.
4. The method of election and the matters within the competence of the Auditor-General shall be established by law.

Section III. Election and supervision of the Executive

Article 65

Election of the Chief Executive

The Assembly shall elect the Chief Executive as provided in Art. 68.

Article 66

Supervision of the Executive by the Assembly

1. Members of the Assembly may submit questions in writing or short questions orally to the Executive, which shall reply.
2. At the request of ten members of the Assembly, a debate may be held on the Executive's policy. The Executive shall be entitled to intervene both in the course of the debate and before its closure.

Part III. The Executive**Chapter I. Composition and Appointment****Article 67****Composition of the Executive**

The Executive shall consist of a Chief Executive assisted by Secretaries of Executive Departments.

Article 68**Election of the Chief Executive**

1. The Chief Executive shall be elected by the Assembly by secret ballot; if a candidate obtains two thirds of the votes cast he shall be declared elected. If no candidate obtains the requisite number of votes the candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be removed from the list and the Assembly shall vote again on the remainder repeating the process if necessary until a candidate obtains the required number of votes.
2. Only Eritrean citizens having attained the age of thirty-five years and in possession of their political rights shall be eligible for the office of the Chief Executive.
3. The Assembly shall elect a Chief Executive at the opening of each new legislature.
4. In case of death or resignation of the Chief Executive, the Assembly shall elect a successor within fifteen days. If the Assembly is not in session, the President of the Assembly shall convene it to a special session. The newly elected Chief Executive shall remain in office until the expiry of his predecessor's term.
5. The Chief Executive shall be eligible for re-election.

Article 69**Appointment of Secretaries of Executive Departments**

1. The Chief Executive shall have power to appoint and dismiss Secretaries of Executive Departments, who shall be responsible to him.
2. Only persons qualified to be members of the Eritrean electorate shall be eligible to hold office as Secretaries of Executive Departments.
3. The Chief Executive shall select the Secretaries of Executive Departments in such a way as to ensure as far as possible a fair representation in his council of the principal groups of the population and the various geographical areas of the territory.
4. The number and the functions of Secretaries of Executive Departments shall be prescribed by law.

Article 70**Incompatibility**

The office of the Chief Executive or of Secretary of an Executive Department is incompatible with the holding of any other administrative or judicial office.

Article 71

Acting Chief Executive

The Chief Executive, on being elected, shall designate one of the Secretaries of Executive Departments to act for him if he is temporarily prevented from discharging his duties or, if his post fall vacant, until such time as a new Chief Executive is elected.

Article 72

Swearing-in of the Chief Executive

Before taking up his duties, the Chief Executive shall, according to his faith and customary practice, take the following oath in the Assembly before the Representative of the Emperor:

"I undertake before Almighty God" (or an invocation conforming to the faith and the customary practice of the Chief Executive) "to respect the Federation under the sovereignty of the Imperial Crown, loyally to serve Eritrea, to defend its Constitution and its laws, to seek the welfare of the Eritrean people in the unity of its inhabitants bound together by ties of brotherhood, whatever their race, religion or language, and to seek no personal advantage from office."

Article 73

Swearing-in of Secretaries of Executive Departments

Before taking up their duties, Secretaries of Executive Departments shall, according to their faith and their customary practices, take the following oath publicly in the Assembly before the Representative of the Emperor:

"I undertake before Almighty God" (or an invocation conforming to the faith and customary practice of the individual concerned) "loyally to respect the Federation under the sovereignty of the Imperial Crown, loyally to serve Eritrea, to respect its Constitution and its laws, to seek no personal advantage from my office and to perform all my duties conscientiously."

Article 74

Council of the Executive

The Chief Executive shall from time to time summon a council of the Secretaries of Executive Departments. This Council shall advise the Chief Executive on matters of general policy and on any questions he may submit to it.

Article 75

Removal from office of the Chief Executive

1. The Chief Executive shall not be answerable for any act performed by him in the course of his duties except for a grave violation of the Constitution. He shall be answerable for failure to dismiss any Secretary of an Executive Department committing a grave violation of the Constitution.

2. In such circumstances, the Chief Executive may be impeached by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Assembly in office, and tried by the Supreme Court established under Article 85.

3. If the Supreme Court finds the charge to be proved, it shall order the removal from office of the Chief Executive. It may, furthermore, disqualify him from performing any executive function or legislative duty.

4. Removal from office shall be without prejudice to any proceedings which may be instituted if the acts committed by the Chief Executive constitute offences under criminal law.

Chapter II. Powers of the Executive

Article 76

Enumeration of Powers

1. The Chief Executive shall ensure that the Constitution and the laws are enforced. He shall have responsibility for the direction of the Executive and Administrative Departments and public services. He shall be Chairman of the Civil Service Commission for which provision is made in Article 82, and shall make appointments in accordance with the Constitution and the laws.

2. He shall be responsible for the internal police of Eritrea and, to this end, he shall issue regulations conforming to the Constitution and the laws to ensure the maintenance of public order and security.

3. He shall convene the sessions of the Assembly as provided in Articles 48 and 49 of the Constitution.

4. Each year, at the opening of the first regular session, he shall give an account to the Assembly of his conduct of affairs and report on the general situation of Eritrea.

5. He shall have the power to propose legislation. He may request the Assembly to reconsider draft legislation. He shall publish the laws after their promulgation or under the provisions of Article 58.

6. He shall submit to the Assembly a draft annual budget and the accounts for the preceding financial year, as provided in Articles 59, 60, and 64.

7. He shall have access to and the right of addressing the Assembly. He may be represented in the Assembly and its Committees by the Secretaries of Executive Departments.

8. He shall issue the regulations required to implement the laws.

9. He shall issue orders as provided in Article 77.

10. He may temporarily limit certain provisions of the Constitution as provided in Article 78.

11. He shall take the necessary measures for the suppression of brigandage, as provided in Article 79.

12. Official documents issued by the Chief Executive must be countersigned by the Secretaries of the Executive Departments concerned.

Article 77

Power of the Chief Executive to issue orders when the Assembly is not in session.

1. In the interval between sessions of the Assembly, the Chief Executive shall have authority to issue, when necessary, orders governing any matter within the jurisdiction of the Government of

Eritrea except matters dealt with in Chapter IV of Part I of the Constitution, provided that such orders are compatible with the Constitution and the laws in force.

2. Such orders shall be submitted to the Assembly which must approve or repeal them within a period of two months from the opening of the session following their promulgation.

3. Failing a decision by the Assembly within the above-mentioned period, orders issued by the Chief Executive shall be deemed to be confirmed.

Article 78

Limitation in time of emergency of certain constitutional provisions

1. In the event of a serious emergency which endangers public order and security, the Assembly may, on the proposal of the Chief Executive, adopt a law authorizing him to impose, under the conditions provided for in Article 34, temporary limitations on the rights set forth in Chapter IV of Part I of this Constitution.

2. The authorization thus given by law shall be valid for a maximum period of two months. If necessary, it may be renewed under the same conditions.

3. During the interval between sessions, the Chief Executive may, if it is urgently necessary, issue an order prescribing the measures referred to in paragraph 1. In such cases, a special session of the Assembly shall be convened, as soon as possible and, at the latest, within twenty days following the promulgation of the order, to adopt a law approving, amending or repealing the said order.

Article 79

Suppression of brigandage

1. If public order and the security of persons and property in Eritrea are threatened by organized brigandage, the Chief Executive shall, after making a proclamation to the people, adopt the exceptional measures necessary to suppress such brigandage.

2. The Chief Executive shall inform the Assembly of the measures he has taken.

Chapter III. The Administration

Article 80

Conditions of appointment of officials

Officials shall be chosen for their ability and character; considerations of race, sex, religion or political opinion shall not influence the choice either to their advantage or to their disadvantage.

Article 81

Status of officials

1. The general status of administrative officials shall be fixed by law.

2. The special status of the various categories of administrative officials shall be fixed by regulations.

Article 82

Civil Service Commission

1. A Civil Service Commission, under the chairmanship of the Chief Executive or its representative, shall be created.
2. This Commission shall be responsible for the appointment, promotion, transfer and discharge of officials, and for taking disciplinary action against them.
3. The composition of this Commission, the procedure for the appointment of its members, and the conditions under which it will function will be determined by law.

Article 83

Local communities

1. The Constitution recognizes the existence of local communities.
2. Municipalities shall be accorded the management of their own affairs.
3. Officials responsible for the administration of village and tribal communities shall be selected from persons of those local communities.
4. The conditions for the application of the preceding provisions may be determined by law.

Part IV. The Advisory Council of Eritrea

Article 84

Advisory Council of Eritrea

1. An Advisory Council of Eritrea is hereby established.
2. The function of the Council shall be to assist the Chief Executive and the Assembly, with a view to achieving economic and social progress in Eritrea. To this end it may:
 - (a) Draw up plans for the development of the country's resources and for the improvement of public health and hygiene;
 - (b) Put forward proposals concerning finance and the budget and the organization of the administration and the public services;
 - (c) Give advice on draft laws submitted to the Assembly;
 - (d) On the request of the Chief Executive or of the Assembly, prepare drafts of laws, regulations or orders.
3. The composition and organization of the Council shall be fixed by law.

Part V. The Judiciary

Sole Chapter

Article 85

Judicial power

Judicial power shall be exercised by a Supreme Court and by other courts which will apply the various systems of law in force in Eritrea. The organization of these courts shall be established by law.

Article 86

Qualifications required of judges

1. Judges shall be chosen from persons of the highest moral reputation and known to be well versed in the customs and legislation peculiar to the various systems of law which they are required to apply.

Oath

2. Before taking up office, judges shall, according to their faith and their customary practice, take the following oath:

"I swear before Almighty God" (or an invocation conforming to the faith and the customary practice of the judge concerned)
 "to be a faithful guardian of the law and to administer it impartially and independently in order to ensure that justice shall reign supreme in Eritrea."

Independence of the judiciary

3. The judiciary shall be independent and must be free from all political influence. The Assembly and the Executive shall not give orders or injunctions to the judges, nor shall they bring any pressure to bear on them.

Status of judges

4. The status of judges shall be established by law.

Article 87

Appointment of judges

1. Judges shall be appointed by the Chief Executive on the recommendation of the President of the Assembly who shall be supplied with a list of candidates by a Committee composed of the President of the Supreme Court and two judges chosen by the members of the Supreme Court and of the court or courts immediately inferior thereto.

2. The President of the Assembly shall recommend to the Chief Executive two candidates for each appointment.

3. The list of candidates drawn up by the committee provided for in paragraph 1 must include at least three names for each appointment.

Article 88

Responsibility of judges

The Supreme Court provided for in Article 85 shall have jurisdiction in respect of criminal or disciplinary responsibility of judges for acts in connexion [sic] with the discharge of their duties.

Article 89

Composition of the Supreme Court

1. The Supreme Court shall consist of not less than three and not more than seven judges. On the proposal of the Court, the number of judges may be decreased or increased by law.

2. Judges shall be appointed for a period of seven years, which period may be renewed.

Article 90**Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court**

The Supreme Court shall have jurisdiction in the following matters:

- (1) As a court of last resort with respect to appeals from final judgments on points of law, and also to the extent provided by law with respect to appeals both on questions of law and fact.
- (2) Conflicts of jurisdiction between courts. In the event of a question involving conflicting jurisdiction, proceedings shall be suspended and the issue shall be presented to the Supreme Court, which shall determine the competent jurisdiction.
- (3) Disputes concerning the constitutionality of laws and orders. If the constitutionality of a law or order is challenged before a Court, proceedings shall be suspended and the issue shall be presented to the Supreme Court, which shall decide whether such act is constitutional.
- (4) Actions based on administrative acts brought against the Government of Eritrea or other public bodies, unless courts have been established by law to try such cases.
- (5) Criminal and disciplinary responsibility of judges as provided in Article 88.
- (6) Responsibility of the Chief Executive as provided in Article 75.

Part VI. Amendment of the Constitution**Sole Chapter****Article 91****Compliance with the Federal Act and the principles of democratic government**

1. The Assembly may not, by means of an amendment, introduce into the Constitution any provision which would not be in conformity with the Federal Act.
2. Article 16 of the Constitution, by the terms of which the Constitution of Eritrea is based on the principles of democratic government, shall not be amended.

Article 92**Amendments to the Constitution**

1. Any amendment to the Constitution must be submitted in writing either by the Chief Executive or by a number of members of the Assembly equal to one quarter of the actual number of members.
2. A period of twenty days must elapse between the submission of an amendment and the opening of the Assembly's discussion thereon.

Article 93**Conditions governing the adoption of amendments**

1. If an amendment is approved by a majority of three quarters of the members of the Assembly in office, the amendment shall be declared adopted.

2. If an amendment is approved by two successive legislatures by a majority of two thirds of the members present and voting or by a majority of the members in office, the amendment shall be declared adopted.

Entry into effect of amendments

3. Any amendments to the Constitution adopted by the Assembly according to the provisions of the foregoing paragraphs will enter into effect after ratification by the Emperor, Sovereign of the Federation.

Part VII. Transitional Provisions

Article 94

Entry into force of the Constitution

1. This Constitution shall enter into effect following ratification of the Federal Act by the Emperor of Ethiopia, and following approval by the United Nations Commissioner, adoption by the Eritrean Assembly and ratification by the Emperor of Ethiopia of the Eritrean Constitution.

2. The Administering Authority shall continue to conduct the affairs of Eritrea until the transfer of power to the Government of Eritrea has taken place.

Article 95

Laws giving effect to the Constitution

1. Any laws giving effect to the present Constitution, adopted by the Eritrean Assembly convened by the Administering Authority, shall enter into effect simultaneously with the Constitution.

2. Such laws shall conform strictly to the principles and provisions of the Constitution.

Article 96

Legislation remaining in force when the Constitution comes into effect

1. Laws and regulations which were in force on 1 April 1941, and have not since been repealed by the Administering Authority and the laws and regulations enacted by that Authority, shall remain in force so long as they have not been repealed and to the extent that they have not been amended.

2. In the event of conflict between such laws and regulations and this Constitution, the Constitution shall prevail in accordance with Article 90 (3).

Article 97

Respect for obligations contracted on behalf of Eritrea

1. Obligations of any kind regularly contracted by the authorities administering Eritrea up to the date on which the Constitution enters into force shall remain valid for the Government of Eritrea and must be respected provided that such obligations relate to matters within the jurisdiction of Eritrea.

2. As from the date of the entry into force of the Constitution any undertaking regularly concluded by the Executive Committee established

by the Administering Authority before the date of the entry into force of the Constitution shall remain valid and must be respected.

3. The provisions contained in paragraph 1 shall not apply to obligations terminated by the Peace Treaty with Italy of 10 February 1947 or by the Resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 29 January 1952.

Article 98

Retention of officials in office

Administrative officials and judicial officials whether Federal nationals or not, holding office when the Constitution enters into force, shall continue in office. They may be dismissed only on three month's notice.

Article 99

Term of the first Assembly

The Assembly responsible for adopting the Constitution shall exercise the powers of the Assembly as provided in the Constitution for a period of four years after the Constitution enters into force.

A P P E N D I X D

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

ABRAHA TESEMMÄ: dejatch (1937); born, Akkele Guzai (18 April 1901); son of Ras Tesemma Asberom; completed a course of study at the Scuola d' Agricoltura "San Giorgio" in Adi Ugri (1912-16); studied Geez and Amharic; district chief of the Haddegti (1918-29); counsellor for Native Affairs in Eritrea, retaining title of District Chief (1936-May 1940); after British occup., continued as Dist. Ch. (1941-No 1948); assist. to the Political Sec. for Pol. Affs. of the BMA/BA (De 1948-May 1950); counsellor for same office (Je 1950-Mr 1952); Sec. for Internal Affs. of the Dept. of Eritrean Affs. of the BA (Ap 1952-Sep 1952); member of the Native Court of Sageneiti and Decemhare (1942-1948); pres. of the Special Court of Conciliation between Orthodox of highlands and the Muslims of the western lowlands at Keren (Feb 1949-Sep 1952); won a bronze medal (1927) and a silver (1937) in agriculture; studied extensively Italian and traditional painting; Fitarari (1919); Azmatch (1935); member of colonial calvary order, Star of Italy (1938); member of the Order of the British Empire (1951). See Chi e ? dell' Eritrea, 3ab.

ALI MOHAMMED MUSA REDAI: born, Keren (1913); son of a merchant, Mohammed Musa; studied privately Arabic; educated at school of arts and crafts, Salvago Raggi, Keren, where he also taught carpentry; apprenticed as a goldsmith for 2 yrs in Keren; merchant of colonial goods (1928-32); wholesale merchant of colonial goods and cloth in Asmara (from 1934); attended Lake Success, (sp 1949); sec. of Keren sect. of Muslim League (to 1950); founder & pres. of the Muslim League of the Western Province (first months, 1950); elected repre. to the Assembly of Eritrea (26 Mr 52) by Asfada group of Sahel and Musel Kasim; elected vice-pres. of Eritrean Assembly (29 Ap 52). See Chi e ? dell' Eritrea, 12b.

ASFÄHA WOLDEMICAEL: born, Akkele Guzai (1914); educated at San Michele, Sageneiti; entered Ital. Colonial Forces (1932); employed at colonial ministry at Rome as interpreter (1934-37); interpreter in Addis Ababa (1937-41); employed by Eth. Min. of For. Affs. (fr. 1941); pres. of Ass. of the Union of Eth. with Erit. in Addis Ababa; Fitarari before federation; Dej. (1955); Bit. (1959). See Chi e ? dell' Eritrea, 24 & USG, State, Mulcahy to SecSt, 24 Ot 52, D-52, 775A.00/10-2452.

BEIENE BERAKI: dejatch; born, Amba Dero (1887); son of Ras Beraki Bechit; completed course of study at Swedish Evangelical School of Asmara; received title of 'Chief of the Rione' of Asmara from Ital. Govt., a position held until 1947, at which time he became pres. of Unionist P. See Chi e ? dell' Eritrea, 40.

IBRAHIM SULTAN: born, Keren (23 Mr 09); son of Sultan Ali; studied at Koranic school of Keren; received diploma from sch. of arts & crafts, Salvago Raggi, Keren; served as head of sect. on Muslim Affs. under Dir. of Pol. Affs. in Ital. Ad. (15 Fb 26-31 Mr 41); served in Native Affs. branch (to Ap 1943); founded cheese factory in Tessenei, which he directed up to 1945; among principal founders of Mahabar Feqri Hagar Ertra, which he left to found Moslem League (1 De 46); elected sec. gen. of Democratic Front (Ja 1951); elected rep. to Erit. Assembly (15 My 52) for Rugbat Tribe, of which he had been former chief (Je 48-Je 50). See Chi e ? dell' Eritrea, 168.

STAFFORD, Frank Edmund: commissioned in Brit. Army (lt.-col.) for service with OETA (1941); financial adviser to Eth. Govt. (1942); demobilized brig. (1946); seconded to For. Off. (1946); member of UK Delg. at Ital. Peace Conference & Council of For. Ministers; head of UK Delg. to FPC (1947); member of UK Delg. to UN Commission (1948-50 & 52); For. Off. adviser (minister) to chief administrator, Eritrea (1951-53); & adviser to Eth. Govt. (1953-60). Who's Who, St. Martins Press, N.Y., 1985, 2153.

TEDLA BAIKU OGBIT: born, Gheremi (27 Mr 14); studied at Swedish Evangelical School of Asmara (until 1926) & at diplomatic training college in Florence, Italy (until 1933); taught privately in Asmara (1933-34); taught in Ital. Govt. schools (Agordat, Keren, Adi Teclesan, Adwa) from (end of 1934 to 1940); employed in OETA (from My 1941); asst. civil affs. off. (end of 1941-Ag 1946); founding member of Eritrean Weekly News; founder and director of weekly, Ethiopia (5 My 47); among principal founders of Mahabar Feqri Hagar Ertra; sec. gen. of Unionist P. (from 1 Ja 47); attended 3rd, 4th, & 5th sessions of UNGA (sp & f 1949 & w 1950); elected rep. to Erit. Assembly (26 Mr 52); elected pres. of Erit. Assembly (29 Ap 52). See Chi e ? dell' Eritrea, 280.

TESEMMÄ ASBEROM: ras (17 Fb 44); born, Maaraba, Akkele Guzai (1870); descendant of Dekki Akkele; fought at Adwa (1896); chief of districts of Egghela Hames, Robra & Dekki Admocom (from 1930); conciliator between Christians & Muslims in his districts (judge in conciliation between 5 Christian dists. of Serai and 13 Muslim tribes of Assaorta, 1951); pres., Native Court, Akkele Guzai (from 1947); pres. of Erit. Bloc for Ind. & later of Democratic Front; elected rep. in Erit. Assembly for Tzanadegle, Haddegti, Dekki Digna, & Sageneiti (26 Mr 52); visited Italy (1925 & 31); named azmatch (1900), dejatch (1903), dejatch baal negarit (1940); resigned from Erit. Assembly (1952). See Chi e ? dell' Eritrea, 281.

WOLDEAB WOLDEMARIAM: born, Serai (27 Ap 08); received teaching diploma from Swedish Evangelical School of Asmara (1931); taught at S.E. School at Barentu (1931-35); director of same school (1936-42); sub-editor, Eritrean Weekly News (1942-48); organized convocation of irredentist & separatist leaders, Asmara (6-22 No 46); suffered 7 assassination attempts (from Je 1947-Ja 1953); founder & pres., Independent Erit. P. (1949); one of principal organizers, Erit. Dem. Front (1950); vice-sec.

gen., Erit. Dem. Front (from 1951); founder & director, One Eritrea, organ of Erit. Dem. Front; delegate of Ind. Bloc, 4th sess., UNGA (sp. 1949); published: (1) manual, "Fidel Tigrinya," (1932), used to study Tigrinya language in all schools of Erit. and some in Tigrai P.; (2) manual on soil erosion for Agric Dept., BMA (1948); & (3) manual for protestant Sunday school; translator, Eritrean Constitution; See Chi e ? dell' Eritrea, 291a.

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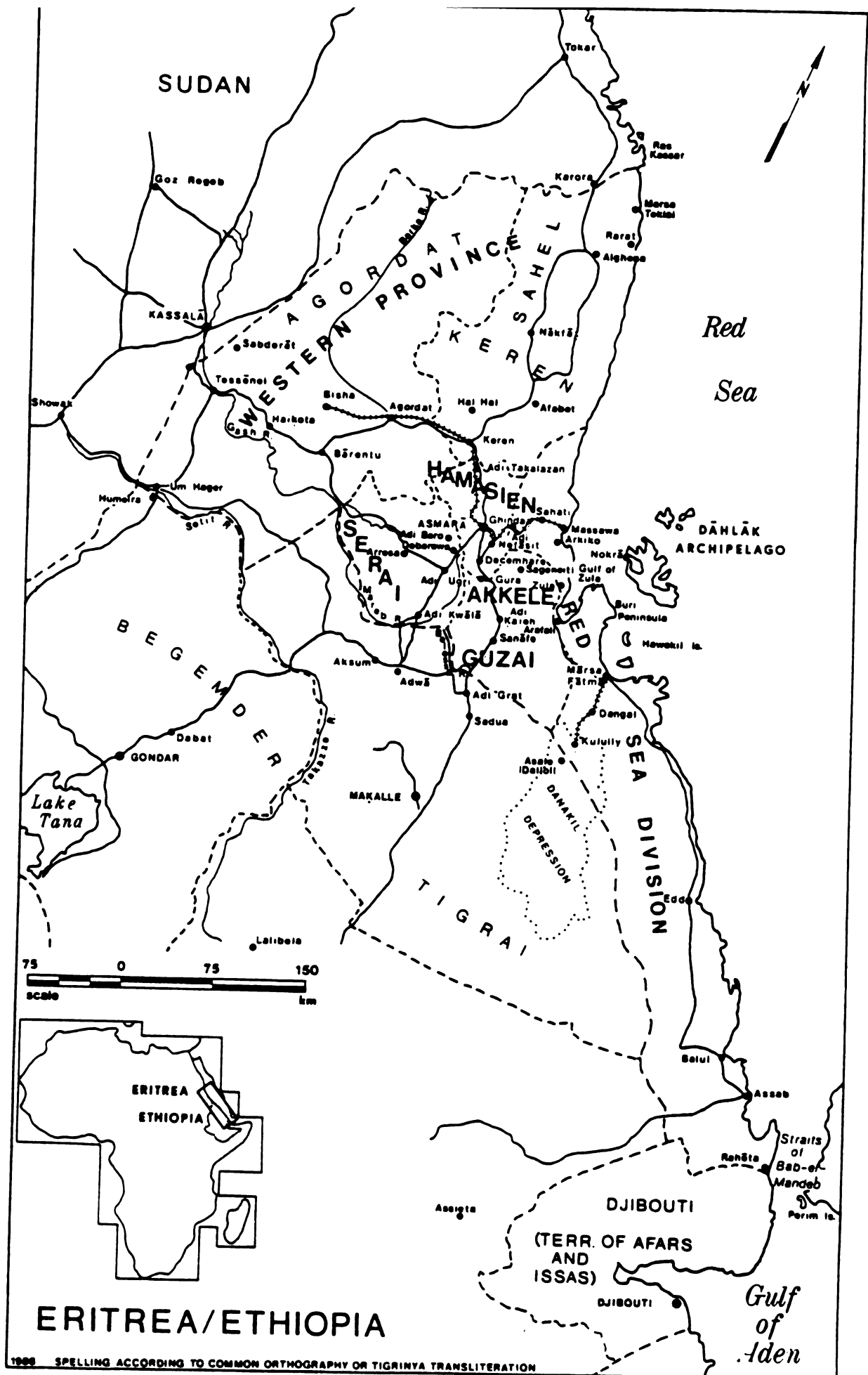
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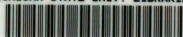
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