

■■■■ EDITORIAL ■■■■

REAL PROBLEMS AND FAKE SOLUTIONS

Famine in Ethiopia has again been making the headlines in the western mass media over the last months. At least 3 million people are affected by the current disaster. Their survival depends once again on the mobilisation of the International Community. This has been the regular pattern since 1978. As we have repeatedly stated, there will be no end to the ordeals of the Ethiopian people as long as the military dictatorship continues to misrule our country.

That Ethiopia still finds itself at grips with a deadly famine, almost 10 years after the revolution which did away with the feudal autocracy, speaks volumes to the "achievements" of the ruling clique. Although this tragedy is the most obvious testimony to the regime's failures and a glaring refutation of its extraordinary claims, it is only one aspect of the general crisis of Ethiopian society.

In 1983, many "attempts" were made by the regime to tackle these overwhelming problems. But all were at best as many subterfuges and temporising devices intended to deceive national and international opinion. In March, the regime set out to "reorganise" the country's economy by a cabinet reshuffle which was the biggest shift of personnel for years. As the drive of militarisation continued, military commissars were appointed for all the administrative regions and the capital.

This was followed by a decree establishing an "Institute of Nationalities" to work out a solution for the nationalities problem in the country. This measure did not, however, produce all the propaganda effects that the regime had expected. It's apologists had hardly enough time to peddle the image of a regime in search of "a democratic solution" to the problem. Barely one month after this decree, the government's real intentions were unmasked when it issued another proclamation on the establishment of a compulsory "NATIONAL MILITARY SERVICE", allowing for all 18-30 year-old Ethiopians to serve in the Armed Forces for at least two and a half years. But as fresh troops were urgently needed for the various war fronts in Eritrea, Tigray, Hararge, Bale and Sidamo, the government had no time to organise this costly escalation against the

democratic opposition. By late September, it was forced to resort to the old practice of rounding up young people and forcibly dispatching them to military camps in Shoa, Hararge and Kaffa...

As should have been expected, none of the palliatuues improvised by the dictatorship got the country any nearer to the solution of its problems. These are not only fake solutions. They are counter productive, as their net result will be a further widening of the gap between the regime and the peoples of Ethiopia. But caught as it is in a vicious circle, the ruling clique cannot simply do otehrwise. All our country's problems stem from the anti-democratic and anti-national nature of the regime itself. As such, the solutions to the fundamental problems facing our country can only be resolved with the success of the struggle being waged to do away with the chauvinist military dictatorship and its foreign masters.

"NEW ETHIOPIA"