

STATEMENT BY THE FOREIGN SECTION OF ME'ISONE ON THE NEW  
WAVE OF REPRESSION IN ETHIOPIA (15/2/80)

A new wave of repression and arrests, particularly directed against personalities and the youth belonging to the OROMO nationality is raging over Ethiopia since the beginning of February 1980.

Those arrested include prominent figures like Mr. ZEGEYE ASFAWE who as minister of land reform from 1974 to 1979 played a crucial role in the initiation and implementation of the land reform proclamation of March 1975. At the time of his arrest he was the minister of justice and a prominent member of the newly established "Commission to Organize the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia" others arrested include Mr. ABYU GELETTA and Mr. ABABIYA ABAJOBIR who were governors of the WOLLEGA and KAFFA regions respectively. Mr. IBSSA GUTEMA the permanent secretary of the ministry of communications and dozens of students of the Addis Abeba University have also been victim of this latest wave of arrests in the country.

This manifestation of crude chauvinism is the logical result of the growing counter-revolution in Ethiopia and follows the long series of arrests, summary executions and persecution that has developed in the country after 1977. It is part and parcel of the general policy of repression directed against all democratic and patriotic forces on the Ethiopian political scene. It is yet another manifestation of the inherent incapacity of the counter-revolutionary and chauvinist Derg, to appease or contain the democratic opposition that is developing in practically all the regions of the country.

The fact that some of those arrested include prominent members of the newly established "Commission to Organize the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia" goes to show that the creation of this counter-revolutionary body did not bring the stability desired by the Derg.

It goes without saying that ME'ISONE which has always stood on the side of the Ethiopian people and the oppressed nationalities in their fight for democracy, equality and national independence condemns this new wave of repression which it considers to be detrimental to the revolution and the democratic unity of the peoples of Ethiopia. Convinced that only a united struggle would create the necessary conditions to solve the problem of nationalities in a democratic way, it calls upon all progressives and patriotic forces in the country to stand united in this common struggle for a democratic and independent Ethiopia.

\* \* \*