

bouring provinces, in support of the Democratic Union in its struggle against the central power.

Though the second movement, the EPLF, does not have extensive financial resources, it is by far the best organized of the liberation movements. This is largely because of its well-defined structure and its great ideological cohesion. Moreover, the People's Front has set up an internal infrastructure that the other movements lack. The EPLF does not wish merely to liberate Eritrea - it is constructing roads and setting up schools and hospitals. The movement claims to be nationalist and non-discriminatory; its members include Christians (who were its founders), Moslems and minority groups.

The hostility of the ELPF, which claims non-alignment and no particular allegiance, to the conservative Arab countries, which it accuses of being pro-West and strongly anti-Communist, has deprived it of considerable financial support. Its funds come mainly from Somalia, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Iraq and Syria.

Although these two liberation movements, with the support of armed forces and the people, now control almost all of Eritrea, there is a third movement, which does not yet have any military importance but could, in the near future, become a force to be reckoned with. Its strength lies mainly in the generosity of its foreign allies, Saudi Arabia and Libya, which, while they do not get along with each other, actively support the movement. It is possible that, under pressure from Saudi Arabia, this group of scattered forces might ally itself with the Eritrean Liberation Front. Thus united, the groups would have sufficient men, weapons and financial means to launch a campaign against the EPLF for control of the entire province. Although the two armed liberation movements are practising unity in order to advance their common cause, the alliance is undoubtedly only temporary - which is why each movement has a well-defined territory. In spite of this alliance of convenience, clashes sometimes occur between troops of the ELF and the EPLF. As independence seems to draw nearer and the prospect becomes more real, it is inevitable that the rivalry between the two will flare up again and that there will be another civil war like that of 1972-74. For the time being, however, the principles of solidarity and unity are being respected in order to confront the Cuban mercenaries, their country's new invaders.

Ogaden

Near the end of the nineteenth century, the Ethiopian Empire expanded under the lead-

ership of King Menelik. When the Somali Empire was partitioned by France, Britain and Italy, Menelik succeeded in imposing his designs on the colonial powers. As a result, Ethiopia was granted the Ogaden District - that is, the provinces of Harar and Bale and most of Sidamo. This boldness on Ethiopia's part was beneficial in the short run but was to prove a threat in the long run, for, though the provinces of the Somali Empire were separated, the spirit of unity remained strong. Now that the Republic has replaced the Empire and yesterday's weakness has given way to modern strength, the memory of partition has renewed hostility between revolutionary Ethiopia and socialist Somalia.

A number of years ago, the Soviet Union became interested in the small desert country of Somalia - especially on account of its strategic location. In an effort to establish an alliance that would assure it a foothold in this important part of the continent, Moscow gave Somalia every assistance in becoming a military power.

This new strength gave Somalia an opportunity to realize its dream of reviving the Somali Empire that had existed before partition and is now represented on Somalia's national flag by a white star with five points. Three of the points represent the Ogaden, Djibouti and the northern part of Kenya, which were claimed by the English when the Empire was split up.

The plan to reunite Somalia's lost provinces was historically and ethnically sound. Were not the three territories claimed part of the Somali Empire before partition? Were not most of the inhabitants of these areas Somalis, and were not their language and culture similar in every respect to those of the inhabitants of the existing Republic? All these pretexts were overridden, however, by one fundamental principle respected by all the African countries, which is written into the charter of the Organization of African Unity - the requirement that all the borders established in colonial times be respected when a country becomes independent. There is undoubtedly a certain amount of wisdom in this view of Africa's political, ethnic and cultural history. Nevertheless, the contradiction between respect for the old colonial borders and the legitimate desire to reunite divided ethnic groups has been the main source of instability throughout the continent since most African countries achieved independence.

However, once Somalia had the resources and capacity to rebuild the Empire, and circumstances permitted, it proceeded with this plan. The Somali government lent direct support to the guerilla forces of the