

## The Establishment Of People's Liberation Forces And The Elimination Attempts (Part III)

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Due to previous experiences and the ideology of some of the leaders of People's Liberation Forces-2 still dwelling on the ethnic and religious differences the process of unification was stagnated. In the beginning, the process of unification between the two forces was slow. Although it didn't last long, there was disagreement between the members of the two forces which resulted in the shift of some fighters from the Tigrinya ethnic group to the People's Liberation Forces-1 in Ala. After this incident this force held a meeting in the Northern Red Sea area from 12-15, August 1971 and declared the objectives of the movement. Some of those objectives ratified during this meeting were:-

- To oppose "Qeyada Al-Ama" and its objectives
- To oppose all kinds of ethnic and religion based oppressions and segregations
- To have a working plan that helps establish relationships with other national forces
- To oppose colonial Ethiopia through an armed struggle

Those objectives were similar to the objectives of People's Liberation Forces-2. In this meeting a committee of five members was also elected; Isaias Afwerki, Mesfun Hagos, Asmerom Gebregziabeher, Tewolde Eyob and Solomon Weldemariam were the members of the leadership committee. Though the name of the force was also ratified to be changed to "Eritrean Liberation Party", to unite all the forces working against "Qeyeda Al-Ama" and not to create hindrance in establishing one independent movement the name was not officially announced.

### Establishment of the United People's Liberation Forces

After the Adobha Congress, members of "Qeyeda Al-Ama" divide the forces into three and assigned the units to three regions. The first and second units were assigned to the regions that used to be under the former first and second regions while the third region was controlling the rest of the country, this area was later controlled by the United People's Liberation Forces. Though there was one ruling force, divisions persisted among the members of the forces. Majority of the fighters especially in the first and second units returned to their former regions, which continued the religious and ethnic differences and power-competition among the fighters.

There was fierce competition in the leadership of "Qeyeda Al-Ama", the primary competition being between Adem Saleh, head of military affairs and Saleh Hayoti, head of security. Saleh Hayoti had the higher hand in the power competition, which led Adem Saleh to instigate opposition dominated by the fighters from Barka in cooperation with Ahmed Adem Omer, Osman Ajib, and Mohammed Idris. All of these collaborators of the conspiracy by Adem Saleh were also members of the leadership committee. Many opposed the assassinations and imprisonment of fighters under the covert of security by Hayoti while others like Adem Saleh used the opportunity to organize the fighters with origins from Barka. To secure their power and dominance they even went to the extent of recruiting new members. After propagating and campaigning against the other members of "Qeyeda Al-Ama", in December 5, 1970 they held a meeting in Obel where they declared that they would not be governed by the rules of "Qeyada

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Al-Ama". They released the five members imprisoned by "Qeyada Al-Ama" and declared their separation from the leadership and began working under the name of Obel.

The leaders of this movement tried to participate in the military congress held in 1971 but the aim was to get position, which ended as a failed attempt. As a result, in the meeting held by the Obeél movement in 21-28, 1970 in Gash Barka, they officially declared the formation of united People's Liberation Force separated from ELF and continued to be called Obel.