

## The Development of the People's Liberation Forces and the Assassination Attempts (Part II)

Written by Winta Woldeyesus

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The committed and hardworking fighters and leaders of the People's Liberation Front 1 and 2 working to establish a democratic front proposed for the unification of the two units. A meeting was held where fighters from both units participated and the proposal was ratified; the two units united in September 1973.

After unification the units agreed to carry out the programs of both forces and have a combination of leaders to lead the united force until a congress is held and a united leadership is elected. As for Obel, although unity was not possible: cooperation among the two fronts was established, and various efforts were made in an attempt to make the fighters understand the benefits of unity.

To trick the fighters, leaders of Obel began spreading lies about the People's Liberation Front saying: "The People's Liberation Front refused us weaponry and other materials, and refused to recruit fighters from Sudan." As a result, they had began to loot the property and money from the public under various pretexts. In order to strengthen their power, they moved half of their man power to Barka to establish a new force. They convinced the fighters that they had reached an agreement with the leaders of ELF. The reality was the contrary and the assassins of the ELF destroyed Obel forces in Barka including its leaders, Abu Selab and Musa Ibrahim, very few escaped the assassination attempts through Sudan and later arrived in Sahel.

After this incident fighters from Obel rejected all the excuses and reasons of their leaders and joined the united force the PLF. Leaders of Obel couldn't obstruct the unification, and as a result succumbed to unity with the People's Liberation Front on 13 June, 1974. The leadership of Obel joined the joint leadership of the two united forces until a united leadership is established. The correctional force separated from ELF was finally able to unite all opposition forces struggling for liberation of the country: after long and hard struggle. The ties with Osman Saleh Sabe which were based on material support were severed leaving him without a force that he can maneuver and manipulate.

During this time, the People's Liberation Front was working against the ploys of the leaders of Obel and the envoys in the Diaspora, while at the same time striving to strengthen the unity. And many youngsters were joining the struggle from inside the country and Ethiopia. The manpower of the front increased double-fold which threatened the Ethiopian colonizers. As a result, a large force was deployed to Sahel to destroy the liberation front. Emperor Haileselassie launched a huge attack against the united force but lost. The united force destroyed a number of airplanes, and a special unit attacked various organizations owned

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by the enemy. By the end of 1969 and beginning of 1970 there were various successful attacks on Ethiopian cargo planes in the cities of Roma, Frankfurt and Karachi.

On the other hand, in November 1970, units of ELF blocked and destroyed trains around Hagaz where foreign reporters witnessed the incident. The ELF also attacked the unit of General Teshome Ergetu and killed the general.

Those incidents were broadcasted to the entire world, which proved that there was no peace and stability in the country and exposed Emperor Haileslasie's lies. After these incidents the Emperor was forced to admit that there were problems in Eritrea, and begun to challenge the struggle through deployment of huge forces and atrocities over civilians.