

Ethiopia Denounces CIA

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ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia, Oct. 7—The Ethiopian military government has publicly accused the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency of supporting "anarchists and reactionaries" seeking to disrupt its socialist course, and the state-run press has detailed in a recent series of highly critical articles how the agency has allegedly worked to subvert "progressive" governments around the world.

The public allegations cast further doubt on the viability

of the long-standing American-Ethiopian relationship, which has been undergoing increasing strains ever since the overthrow of the late Emperor Haile Selassie two years ago.

The United States has been Ethiopia's main supplier of heavy arms for the past 24 years, and even now is planning to provide through sales and credits more than \$200 million in new weapons to modernize its armed forces.

But an influential pro-Soviet faction within the military government seems determined to sever Ethio-

pia's traditional ties to Washington even at the risk of undermining this country's military strength in the immediate future.

There are now doubts, in fact, that Ethiopia still intends to go ahead with all its planned arms purchases from the United States following its refusal this summer to accept new American credit terms.

Western diplomats here say there is no evidence so far that the Soviet Union—the major arms provider to Ethiopia's No. 1 foreign ene-

See CIA, A21, Col. 1

CIA, From A1

my, neighboring Somalia—is about to step in and fill the American role here. This assessment has left observers somewhat baffled as to why the Ethiopians are turning against the United States, particularly when they themselves seem to believe that a major confrontation is in the offing with Somalia over the future of the French territory of the Afars and the Issas.

The attacks and allegations against the CIA have visibly irked the U.S. government, and this week the American embassy here let it be known that a protest has been lodged with the Ethiopians about the anti-American campaign in the state-controlled media.

"We are disturbed and we have made our views known that we are disturbed and continue to do so" said an embassy official. "There is no foundation to any such charges linking the CIA to the [Marxist opposition] Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Part" in this country.

Attempts by The Washington Post to obtain details from the government on the alleged CIA involvement in the activities of the People's Revolutionary Party met with no success.

This leaves open the possibility that the military government is simply making use of the CIA bogey to discredit its opposition, a tactic that has

been used in other Third World countries.

The CIA specter has been raised in official statements of the Military Council and in the media ever since an attempted counter coup in mid-July in which the third-ranking officer, Maj. Sisay Habte, was implicated. He was subsequently executed.

In announcing his execution together with several of his alleged accomplices, the council drew a long parallel between Chile under President Salvador Allende and Ethiopia today. In Chile, its statement said, enemies sought to sabotage the Allende socialist government by creating artificial food shortages, spreading panic about land reform, provoking strikes, frightening the middle class and fomenting trouble in the cities.

"Chile's experience is a warning and lesson for the oppressed masses of Ethiopia now engaged in advancing the cause of the ongoing revolution," it said. "In any country at any given time history can repeat itself."

While the council's statement made no direct reference to the CIA, Maj. Sisay was accused of making contacts with unnamed "agents of imperialists" and of refusing to lead a high-level delegation to the Soviet Union.

On Sept. 15, however, the military

did openly link the CIA and the People's Revolutionary party, saying that the Marxist party's members were "offsprings of the former nobility and paid CIA tools posing as revolutionaries . . . in their futile attempt to reverse the course of the revolution."

Since then, the CIA has repeatedly been castigated in the press and by demonstrators in pro-government rallies as the principal foreign culprit behind the clandestine opposition party, whose main quarrel with the military is over its demand for immediate civilian rule.

For example, signs waved at one such rally in late September said "Ethiopia Will Never Be Another Chile", "Away With CIA Agents Disguised as Tourists" "Yankees Go Home" and "EPRP Is a CIA Organization." The rally was in support of Maj. Mengistu Haile Mariam, who escaped an assassination attempt Sept. 23.

Approximately 1,500 Americans, officials and non-officials, now live in Ethiopia, according to U.S. estimates.

The showdown between the military government and the Marxist civilian opposition began about three weeks ago with an attempt by the People's Revolutionary Party to organize a boycott of celebrations marking the second anniversary of the revolution and a general strike. The military's reaction has been to crack down on the party with no show of mercy.

On Sept. 21, the government issued a statement blasting the party as an anarchist group aligned with feudalists, imperialists and former landlords" and warned that security forces had been ordered to take "appropriate revolutionary measures on the spot" against anyone instigating strikes or otherwise obstructing the revolution.

Estimates of the number persons who have died as a result of these "measures" and also of slayings of pro-government figures by People's Revolutionary Party "assassination squads" range between 100 and 200—primarily students, intellectuals, professionals and union leaders.

Only last spring, the military was openly courting the same Marxist opposition group it is today out to crush. It was allowing the party to present its views in the media and to debate government spokesmen in twice-weekly workers' forums held in all factories and offices.

Now, however, the government is blaming the party for all the economic and political difficulties the revolution is currently experiencing. A Sept. 15 statement blamed "anarchists" for an estimated \$40 mil-

lion worth of economic sabotage—damaged farm machinery, uncollected crops left to rot or deliberately burned, livestock allowed to die of starvation and state farms paralyzed by undelivered or misused fertilizer and pest control chemicals.

Whatever the precise damage and its causes, the military has clearly decided to place all the blame for its woes on the civilian Marxist opposition as part of its campaign to suppress it. It is still too early to say, however, whether the government's latest attempt to break the back of its opposition has succeeded or whether the party has simply gone deeper underground.