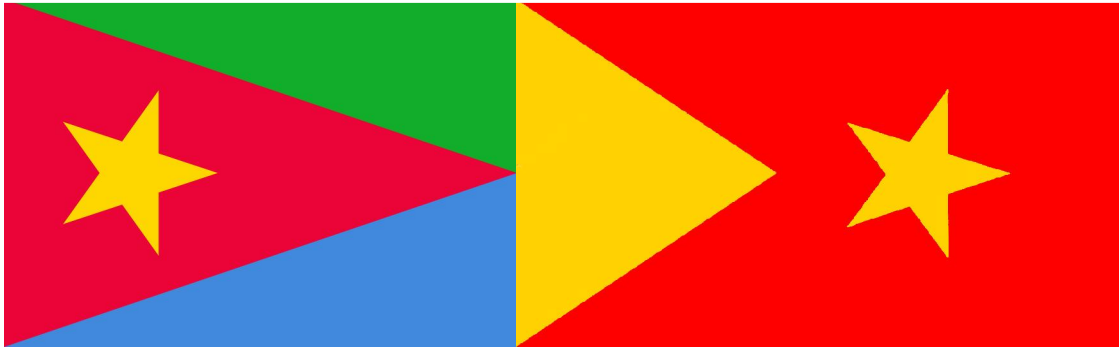


ISAYAS AND TPLF

CAUSE & EFFECTS OF HOSTILITY



Part - 1

**Haile Menegsha Okbe
Toronto, Canada**

December 12, 2018



TPLF combatants,

who fought alongside EPLF in Sahel and Barka against Derg's military offensives in the early 1980s.

FEBRUARY 15 - JUNE, 1982

RED STAR CAMPAIGN

ቀይ ኮከብ ዘመቻ (ሻዱሻይ ወራር)

Location: Sahel

Level of TPLF Combatants

- 5,000 TPLF combatants from Tigray
- 1,000 TPLF recruits from the drill camps of EPLF in Sahel

MARCH 26 - JUNE, 1983

STEALTH OFFENSIVE

ሹሉክታ ውግያ (ሰላሕታ ወራር)

Location: Barka

Level of TPLF Combatants

- Brigade 55 of TPLF (1,200 TPLF combatants)

Since 1974, the inception of TPLF in the boardrooms of Haile Selassie I University in Addis Ababa by a few zealous Tigrayan university students, TPLF has survived several calamities incurred as a result of Isayas Afewerki's hostility against them.

In 1984, just few years into the cordial relationship and cooperation between EPLF and TPLF, an influential book was published by TPLF and made public to all Eritrean and Tigrayan communities around the world.

RED STAR CAMPAIGN



1982: RED STAR CAMPAIGN

Ethiopia's leader Lieutenant Colonel Menghistu Hailemariam (inset) personally commanded Red Star Campaign. Red Star was an all out mega offensive to annihilate EPLF.



EPLF COMBATANTS in counter-offensive motions against the mega offensive. EPLF dubbed the mega offensive "6th Offensive".



EPLF COMBATANTS with chemical gas protector gears.



DEBRETSION GEBEREMICHAEL
Current TPLF Boss



ABAY WELDU
High-ranking TPLF official

The 1984 TPLF book was titled “QALSI HZBI ERITREA KABEY NABEY” (ቃልሰ ህዝቢ ኤርትራ ካበይ፣ ናበይ). In the book, TPLF officially denounced the leadership of EPLF by exposing the dictatorial and the anti-democracy characters of the leadership.

The book also alerted the Eritrean people of the ill-fate awaiting them. It concluded the Eritrean people would never realize their national aspiration for democracy unless EPLF leadership is replaced.

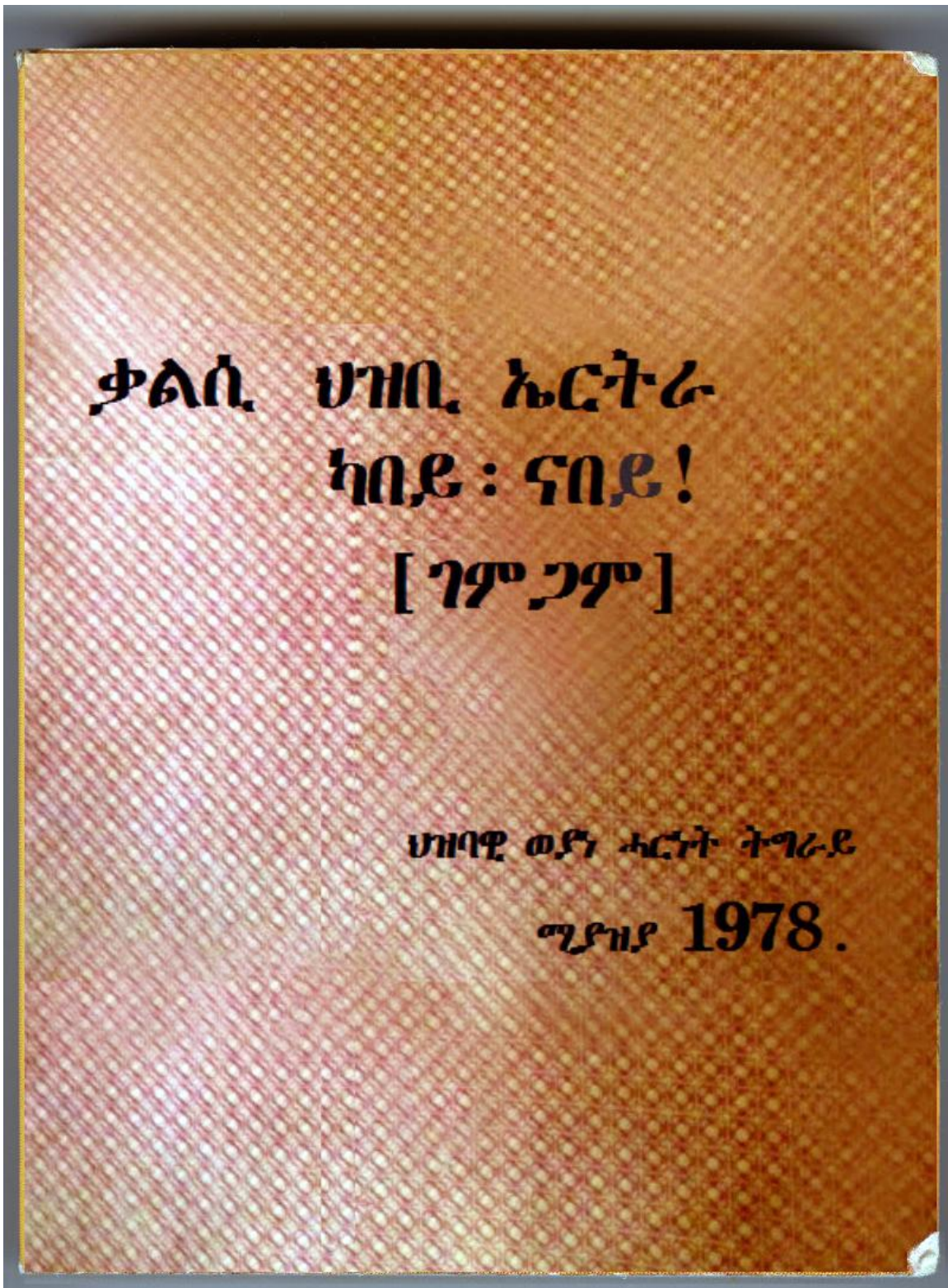
The moment the book saw the light of the day, Isayas was raged with anger and he registered in his heart, rock hard hostility against TPLF. He never soundly slept over them.



[EPLF COMBATANTS](#) with custom-made gas mask made from charcoal and clothes.



EPLF COMBATANTS fiercely defending their fortifications during 6th Offensive.

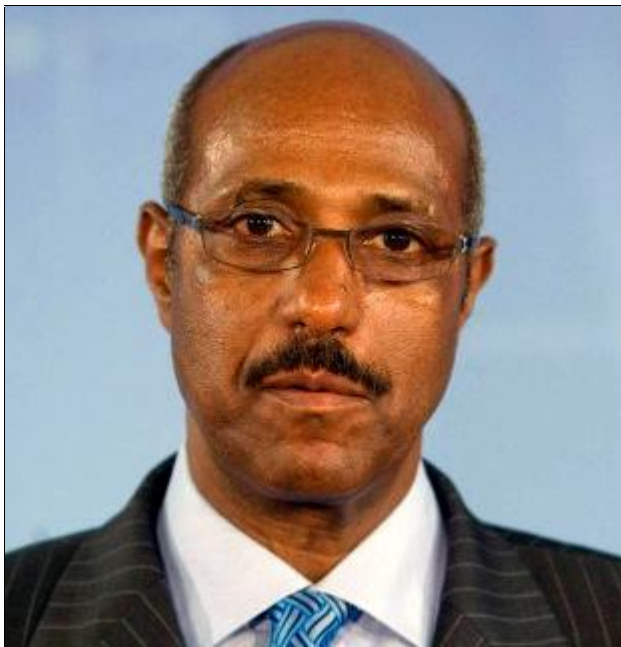


QALSI HZBI ERITREA KABEY NABEY

EMBRYO OF HOSTILITY, on April 1984 TPLF released their book to the public. In it, TPLF denounced EPLF leadership by exposing the dictatorial and anti-democracy characters of the leadership. The book triggered a marathon of years of hostility by Isayas against TPLF.



SEBHAT NEGA
High-ranking TPLF official



EMBAYE SEYOUM
Codename "MESFIN"
Graduate of Bahiri Bara Drill Camp in
Semenawi Bahri, Eritrea, 1975.

Prior the publication of the book, TPLF considered EPLF as their mentor and their ultimate guidance light in their revolutionary endeavour.

However, the deep-seated respects TPLF had on their mentor quickly changed in 1982. That year, TPLF sent 5,000 combatants to Sahel to assist EPLF in Red Star Campaign or 6th Offensive launched by the ruling military committee of Ethiopia known as "Derg".

Strangely, Red Star assisted TPLF to see EPLF at close proximity in Sahel and explore previously unknown ill characters of their mentor.



[EPLF COMBATANTS](#) in counter-offensive engagements.



5,000 TPLF COMBATANTS were dispatched from Tigray to Sahel to assist EPLF in the defence against Derg's mega offensive known as 6th Offensive.



1,000 TPLF RECRUITEES from the drill camps of EPLF in Sahel were hurriedly graduated, armed and deployed in 6th Offensive by their masters in Sahel.

ETHIOPIAN FORCES

1. **Wuqaw Command (ወቃወ እዝ)**
North-eastern Sahel Frontline
Division: 15TH, 23RD
2. **Nadew Command (ናደወ እዝ)**
Nakfa/Afabet Frontline
Division: 3RD, 17TH, 22ND, 19TH, 24TH, 27TH
2ND Mechanized Brigade
3. **Mebreq Command (መብረቅ እዝ)**
Barka Frontline
21ST Terara (ተራራ) Division
29TH Mechanized Brigade
4. **Mentir Command (መንጥር እዝ)**
Halhal Frontline
Division: 2ND, 18TH
5. **Mekit Command (መካት እዝ)**
Rear Guard
Division: 6TH Nebelbal (ነበልባል)
& 14TH Infantry
4TH Militia Division
15TH Abat Tor (አባት ጦር) Brigade
6. **Tank and Artillery Regiments**
Tank Regiment:
26TH, 36TH, 66TH, 146TH, 156TH, 176TH, 236TH
Artillery Regiment:
4TH, 27TH, 37TH, 67TH, 147TH, 157TH, 177TH, 237TH
BM-21: 8TH Brigade

Estimated 120,000

14 Divisions, 2 Mechanized Brigades, 1 BM-21 Brigade, 15 Tank and Artillery Regiments, 1 Militia Division, 1 Abat Tor Brigade

EPLF /TPLF Combatants

EPLF Combatants

Brigades:

16TH, 44TH, 23RD, 31ST, 51ST, 58TH, 70TH, 77TH, 80TH

Tank and Artillery

3 Battalions

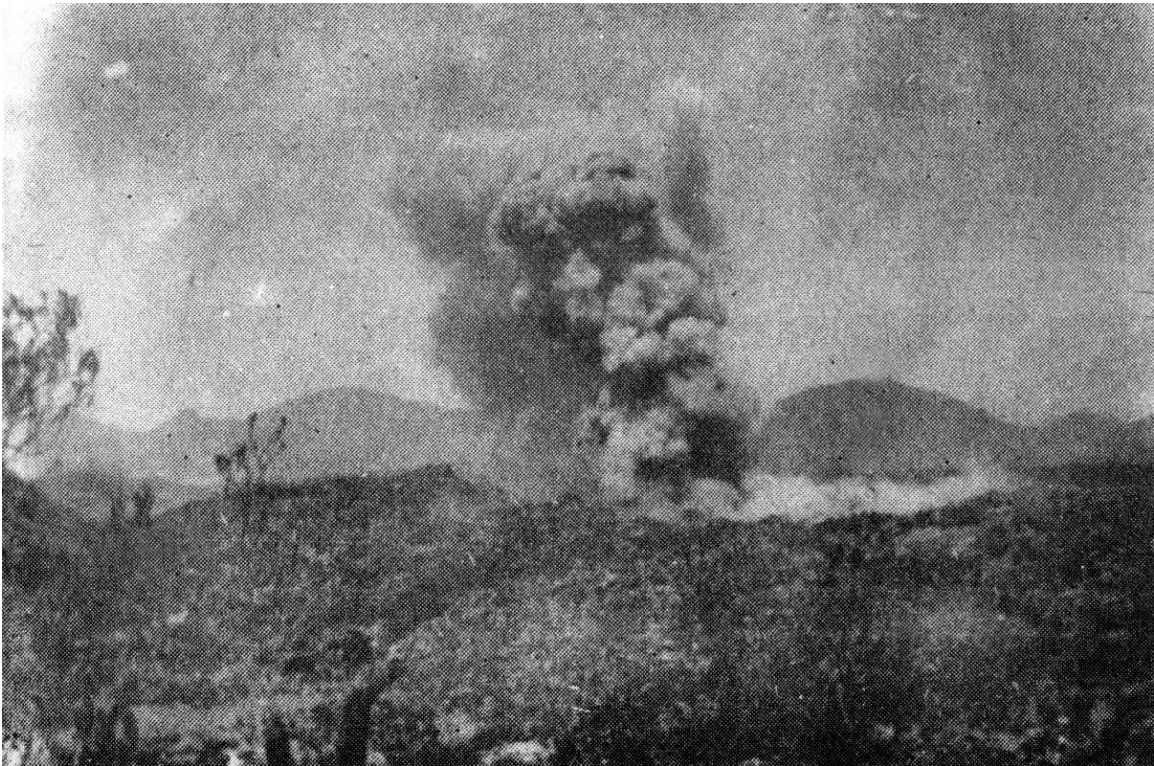
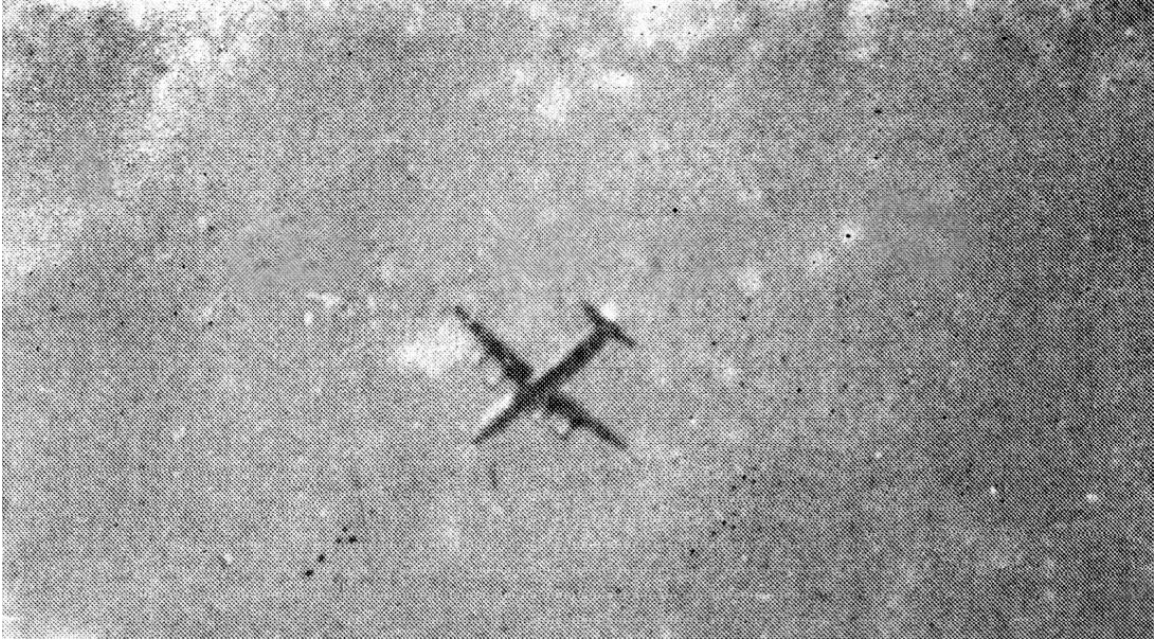
TPLF Combatants:

4 Brigades from Tigray

1 Brigade of recruits from Sahel drill camps of EPLF

Estimated 20,000

14 Brigades, 3 Battalions of Tank & Artillery



ANTONOV AN-12

Soviet made four-engine transport aircraft, dubbed "NINE" by EPLF in bombing mission during 6th Offensive. The name "NINE" was derived from the strange noise by the aircraft's turboprop engines during aerial surveillance and bombing missions over Sahel.

RED STAR CAMPAIGN

ሻዱሻይ ወራር

In 1982, Derg launched mega offensive designed to annihilate EPLF. The campaign was officially known as “Red Star Multi Faceted Revolutionary Campaign” (“ቀይ ኮከብ ሁለ ገብ አብዮታዊ ዘመቻ”). EPLF dubbed it “6th Offensive” (ሻዱሻይ ወራር).

Red Star Campaign took place in the period, February 15 to the end of June 1982. TPLF sent 5,000 combatants from Tigray to Sahel to assist EPLF in the defence against Derg’s mega offensive.

Just prior 6th Offensive, 1,000 Tigrayan recruits were already in the drill camps of EPLF in Sahel to be trained as guerrilla fighters. The half baked TPLF recruits were hurriedly graduated, armed and deployed in “6th Offensive” by their masters in Sahel.

After the first artillery shells and bullets of Red Star Campaign were fired on February 15, ferocious battles raged on for months along all fronts: North-eastern Sahel Frontline, Nakfa/Afabet Frontline, Halhal Frontline and Barka Frontline.

During Red Star Campaign, Ethiopia’s leader Lieutenant Colonel Menghistu Hailemariam moved his cabinet from Addis Ababa to Asmara and he personally managed the war theatre on site from Asmara.

For months, EPLF and TPLF combatants heroically defended their fortifications in the successive offensives. Finally after

five months of attacks, Lieutenant Colonel Menghistu was forced to accept defeat after his grand military campaign failed to breach the fortifications of the defenders. By the end of June Red Star was halted.

By the time the sunset of Red Star Campaign, EPLF and TPLF rejoiced victory and Derg was slapped with shameful defeat in front of the world spectators.

Victory was for EPLF and TPLF defenders, however the battles of Red Star did inflict heavy tolls on the combatants of EPLF and TPLF as did on the Ethiopian army.

After Red Star was over, the defeated Colonel unceremoniously returned to Addis Ababa. Then after, the much-reduced TPLF combatants returned to Tigray.

In January, TPLF combatants journeyed from Tigray to Sahel to assist their mentor in the counter-offensive with eagerness, enthusiasm and love.

In July, the combatants of TPLF returned to Tigray totally disappointed. During their stay in Sahel, the combatants didn't find a real mentor and God of all revolutions. Instead they found a devil and dictatorship.

GOODBYE MENTOR!

After TPLF combatants returned to Tigray, the leadership of TPLF assembled a huge meeting to assess EPLF and the experiences in Sahel.

In the assessment, one by one the returnees recounted all the ugly experiences they witnessed in EPLF. They unveiled that EPLF was an organization composed of two classes, the dictatorial class and the subordinate class. They exposed that upper class indulged on power, privileges and predatory sex.

TPLF leadership recorded all the negative experiences of the returnees. Quietly, they dislodged the mentorship, they believed in for many years. Goodbye mentor!

[Shall continue on Part - 2](#)

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