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THE I963 REBELLION IN THE OGADEN

Though of recent vintage, the events related in this report are already part of Somali nationalist lore and, as such, tend to be perceived at home in epic dimensions. Abroad, on the other hand, the issue seems to be a contest over territory between Ethiopia and Somalia; a common squabble between African neighbours over untidy borders. Both perspectives involve a measure of distortion as far as the role of the people of the Ogaden in these events is concerned. That story has yet to be told. What follows is a sketch of the main features of local participation in the I963 rebellion.[I]

The sequence of events that led to the rebellion commences in the second half of the I950s. The situation confronting the Somali subjects of the Ethiopian empire at that time had, after two decades of dramatic reversals, taken an ominous and seemingly durable pattern. The withdrawal of European imperialism from the Horn of Africa left Ethiopia the strongest regional power. In recognition of its importance, Ethiopia was able to make good its claims to the Ogaden in I948, Eritrea in I952, the Haud and Reserved Area in I955. Somali appeals to the world to prevent the first and last of these dispositions had been in vain. Ethiopia itself was not inclined to make any concessions to the need of the pastoralists for freedom of movement across state boundaries, nor to the desire of the Ogaden people for closer links with their ethnic kinsmen who were to gain independence in I960. In his first postwar visit to the area, Haile Selassie dispelled all illusions on that score in a speech delivered at Gabredare on August 25, I956. He told his Somali audience

that they were "by race, colour, blood and custom members of the great Ethiopian family". He advised the Ogaden to accept cultural assimilation by learning the Amharic language. "Lack of knowledge of the national language," he warned, "will be a barrier for the education we have in mind for you", and promised to provide schools, clinics and development projects. Finally, he dismissed the prospect of an independent Somali state, and invited all the Somali people to join Ethiopia.[2]

Anticipating the political problems that were to follow the emergence of the Somali Republic, the Ethiopian government moved to make its presence felt in the region, which had been until now the unprofitable and neglected appendage to the Harar governorate. During the early period of restored Ethiopian rule, the Ogaden comprised a single district in the province of Harar. The latter had been vastly enlarged through the incorporation of the Bale region west of the Webi Shabelle river, in order to form an adequate fief for the emperor's favourite son Makonnen, the Duke of Harar. Later, Bale was reinstated as a separate province, which included the El Kere district west of the Webi Shabelle; this district had been part of the Ogaden under the British military administration in the 1940s. Now the Ogaden was divided into four awraja (districts) - Dagabur, Gabredare, Kelafo, Warder - which were grouped together into the so-called Ogaden Administration. This was a distinct unit headed by its own administrator, whose headquarters were at Gabredare, deep in the heart of the Ogaden. The new scheme was designed to improve administrative and security control in an area notoriously difficult to govern. Administration was brought at once closer to its subjects and to the imperial centre in Addis Ababa. While the Ogaden Administrator was nominally subordinate to the Governor-General of Harar, he served as a direct link with the capital; he was, in fact, called

the 'Emperor's Representative'. He was also charged with coordination of the work of all government agencies in the region, in the belief that this would promote the implementation of development projects promised by the emperor in his speech at Gabredare.

Such promises were regularly reiterated in the meetings Haile Selassie had periodically with the Ogaden chiefs. Staple items in these meetings were demands for schools, clinics, water holes, etc., and plead for the release of Ogaden notables detained by the Ethiopian government. Of course, personal requests also abounded. As the decade drew to a close, the Ogaden chiefs added a demand for the appointment of local people to administrative posts in their region. There was nothing novel in this request. Ethiopia's rulers had had considerable success in ruling the various ethnic groups they had incorporated at the turn of the century by integrating their traditional leadership into the provincial administration of the imperial state. This had worked well among the agricultural communities in the southern half of the empire, not least because it was possible in that setting to offer the local notables real inducement for their collaboration. This included a share of land, exemption from taxation, a share of the tax they collected from their people, and other perquisites. In the pastoral setting, where land is neither a market nor a tax factor, such inducements were not available. Moreover, given the difusion and consensual nature of political authority among the pastoralists, their chiefs could not be depended upon even to collect animal taxes. It was not possible, therefore, to pass the cost of administration on to the people. As a result, pastoral regions were left to themselves, and the occasional handouts provided for their chiefs were not enough to secure their collaboration.

The Ethiopian government now deemed it politics to appoint

natives of the Ogaden to local posts, thus making a new effort to win the Ogaden chiefs to its side by providing them with regular salaries. A series of appointments were made in the Ogaden Administration at the end of the decade. Three of the four awraja were placed under Somali governors.[3] The exception was Warder awraja, which remained under an Ethiopian governor, presumably because of its exposed position in the corner formed by the frontier with the Somali Republic. Approximately twenty of the twenty three woreda (subdistricts) were also placed under local men. At the same time, several Somali notables were appointed advisors to the Ogaden Administrator.[4] Nearly all the appointees were from leading Ogaden families. Some of the younger ones had studied at the 'Balabat School' in Addis Ababa and spoke Amharic.[5] Naturally the government endeavoured to chose those whom it regarded loyal, on the evidence of past service and their behaviour during the Italian occupation. Even so, there were several who had dubious records in this respect and had, in fact, suffered for it at the hands of the Ethiopian government.[6] Titles and medals were also given to some of the newly-appointed officials, and the government expressed the hope that they "would help eliminate misunderstandings that arise from ethnic differences and disrupt unity".[7]

This hope was soon to be frustrated. Not only did the new officials fail to curb the seditious activity which preceded the rebellion, but many of them participated actively in it. The government's effort to suborn the Ogaden notables failed, and this was not simply because the inducements it offered were inadequate. Rather it was both too little and too late. The time tested method of controlling the populace through their customary leaders was proving less effective at at time when secular ideology and new social strata were supplanting traditional authority. Across the border

in Somaliland, younger, educated men were rising to political preeminence on a wave of nationalism. Traditional chiefs and religious notables had to contend with this group. This trend was inevitably reflected in the Ogaden, albeit in a muted form, given the backwardness of this province.

The Ogaden shared the common fate of pastoral regions throughout East Africa; it had gained little from its subjection to alien rule - colonial and post-colonial - during the past one hundred years. Like all pastoralists in the region, the Ogaden tribesmen were hostile to state authority in which they had no share. Such hostility had been the cause of frequent violence in the past, which was directed not only against the state, but also against neighbours and fellow Somali. Such conflict was limited in its scope by clan and territorial boundaries, and had as its usual goal the restoration of the status quo ante. In the postwar period however, the prospect of integration into an independent state with a homogeneous culture, ethnic unity, and a pastoral economic base, changed both the level of political consciousness and the goal of political activity among the Somali tribesmen of the Horn of Africa, the Ogaden not excepted. Most affected were the few young people who had some education and contact with nationalist circles in what was to become the Somali Republic in I960. Since there were no schools at all in the Ogaden until I957, youngsters went to the British or Italian ruled parts of Somaliland, and to Jigjiga and Harar in the Ethiopian side. Those who went across the border came into immediate contact with Somali nationalist activity.

Nationalist efforts were first felt in the Ogaden with the formation of Somali Youth League branches at Harar and Jigjiga in the I940s, when the region was under British military administration. The Ethiopians proscribed the League

immediately upon resuming control in I948, and afterwards kept a close watch for signs of renewed nationalist activity. Consequently, any effort in this direction had to take a clandestine form. Two such efforts were made simultaneously in the late I950s. The first was a loosely joined association known at Nasser Allah (God's Grace), the second a commercial enterprise called the Ogaden Company for Trade and Industry. Since they had overlapping membership, one aim, and were fused during the rebellion, the distinction between them has become blurred even in the memories of the participants.

The founders of Nasser Allah were allegedly inspired by the example of Hadj Yasin Handuleh, a religious leader of the Habr Yunis (Issaq) tribe in the Haud. The Habr Yunis are the vanguard of an Issaq drive into the Haud, and have been locked into a bloody conflict with the Ogaden tribes in that region which continues to this day. The Habr Yunis were often also at odds with fellow Issaq tribes, and such intercine conflict played into the hands of the alien rulers of the Somali. Seeking an end to it, Hadj Yasin sought to create an organization that transcended tribal loyalities, as the nationalist parties claimed to do, but still focused on Islam as the essence of Somali identity and unity. He called it Hizb Allah (Party of God).

A group of young Ogaden students and traders who came to know Hadj Yasin were prompted to follow his example. In the late I950s they formed an association they called Nasser Allah. The fact that they chose to establish a separate organization for the Ogaden indicates the imperative of maintaining tribal distinctions even at the level of nationalist mobilization. Similarly, the choice of religious symbolism is indicative of the strength of tradition among the Ogaden at the time. Among the founders of Nasser Allah were Osman Hasan 'Gab', Abdi Nasser (not to be confused

with the acting Secretary General of the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) in I982), Siad Hadj Mohammed, Ahmed Nur Hussein and Sherif Mohammed; all of whom are described as 'students' at the time. They formed branches in the four district capitals of the Ogaden, and sent people to contact Ogaden notables in Hargeysa and Mogadishu where they had taken refuge since I948. In Mogadishu they found Dr. Ibrahim Hashi, a native of Warder, who had lived in Egypt and had a degree in theology. In June I960, the same month the Somali Republic attained its independence, a meeting was held in Mogadishu, which is known as the Nasser Allah Congress. Its main concern was to elect a leadership for the association. It elected Dr. Ibrahim Hashi as president; Sheikh Abdulkani, a native of Gabredare, who also had had religious education in Egypt, became vice president, and Mohammed Hadj Ahmed, a teacher, became the secreatry general.

Little is known about the activities of Nasser Allah in subsequent years. Efforts were made to send Ogaden youngsters abroad for education, primarily to Egypt. The leadership in Mogadishu had little contact and no control over events inside the Ogaden, and it played no significant part in the I963 rebellion. The association's official did try to raise support for it, however, and delegations were sent to the United Nations at the end of I963 and to some Arab countries in I964. Inside the Ogaden, Nasser Allah activists devoted themselves to recruitment and indoctrination of young tribesmen. They talked incessantly of rebellion and sought to convince their elders of the necessity for it. They made plans and discussed ways of procuring weapons. Although these activities became a common secret, they were only talk, and the Ethiopians were slow to react. When they did, they provided the spark for the uprising.

The Ogaden Company had its origins in four trading concerns

which were established separately in the four district capitals of the Ogaden in the mid-I950s. Whether or not this was the reason for their founding initially, these ostensibly commercial ventures soon became vehicles for clandestine nationalist activity. Their membership included many leading figures in every district, including several woreda governors. Business transactions were entrusted to persons with experience in trade who appeared as company officials.[8] In I958, the four companies were merged to form the Ogaden Company for Trade and Industry with headquarters in Kelafo. Sheikh Ahmed Mahmud became its first president, to be succeeded after one year by Yusuf Ahmed Gas. Abdi Nasser was the Company's vice president throughout its existence.[9] In order to allay suspicion the Company applied for bank credit and petitioned the emperor for financial support; neither were granted.

Company meetings and premises provided a venue for meetings that would have aroused suspicions otherwise. Trading across the border afforded continuous contact with nationalist groups in other parts of Somaliland, particularly in the northern region, where the Somali National League kept in touch with events in the Ogaden. The Company's lorries ferried activists and publications across the border. On the commercial side there was brisk trade in livestock, hides and skins, gum and ghee, mainly through export to northern Somalia. The Ogaden Company also cultivated land near Kelafo, where maize, bananas and grapes were planted. It also took a contract to provide food for students at some of the newly founded schools in the Ogaden. Profits from these activities were intended for the purchase of weapons and supplies for the inevitable confrontation with the Ethiopians. Plans were made to store these in various parts of the Ogaden in anticipation of that event. However, these were long range plans, and those involved in the Company

neither foresaw nor desired an imminent clash. When it did occur, it was unanticipated, and the Company was caught quite unprepared. As a result, the Ogaden rebels went to war woefully short of weapons and supplies.

The precipitating event was a classic causus belli in this context; i.e., an attempt to impose taxation on the pastoralists. In Ethiopia the peasant sector was subject to multiple taxation that weighted heavily on the cultivator. The pastoralists were assessed only an animal tax, and that had proved nearly impossible to collect; in the Ogaden no effort had been made to collect it in the postwar years. A market tax to which they were also liable was easily evaded; simply by carrying out transactions in the bush. This state of affairs seemed only fair, since the government provided no services for the pastoralists. In I957, an allocation of eight million Ethiopian dollars was made for development in the Ogaden. A five-grade school was founded in Gabredare that year, and more were established in other district centres later. It seemed proper now to raise revenue in the Ogaden, and it was decided to impose a head tax. In February I963, the Ogaden Administrator summoned the chiefs and officials to acquaint them with that decision. Each chief was allocated a sum according to the size of his group and was instructed to collect it from the people. The chiefs departed in absolute certainty that the tax would be violently resisted by the tribesmen. This feeling was shared by the militants of the Nasser Allah, who saw an opportunity to rally the populace to the nationalist cause. A wave of excitement swept through the Ogaden, as it became obvious that a major clash was in the offing. Some officials abandoned their posts and fled to the Somali Republic. The Ethiopian authorities became perturbed and moved to warn the Ogaden leaders. Two of them were summoned to Addis Ababa and thence deported to northern Ethiopia.[9] This act further inflamed

Somali opinion.

Soon afterwards, a meeting of some two dozen men of the Nasser Allah was held outside Gabredare. The question of procuring weapons dominated the discussions, and it was argued by some that the Ethiopian police, whose forces were thinly spread throughout the vast region, was a likely source. The meeting was betrayed, and most of the participants were arrested when they returned to town. A few avoided capture and made their way to Kelafo determined to find arms. Two of them, armed with handguns, attacked the police guarding the bridge on the Webi Shabelle river. They killed three policemen and obtained two rifles; the third fell in the river with its owner.[IO] This was the first blood drawn in yet another round of the age-old Ethiopian-Somali conflict. It precipitated a general flight of activists, elders and Somali officials before the expected reprisals. The woreda governors of Gabredare and Kelafo received an ultimatum from the Ogaden Administrator, ordering them to produce the killers. Both fled to Hargeysa, and were followed by the majority of the Somali officials.[II] Those involved in the Ogaden Company followed suit. The Company was dissolved by decree in August I963 and its property confiscated.

The leaders of the Ogaden gathered in Mogadishu, where they took counsel with others who had fled from that region earlier. A decision was reached to launch the struggle for secession and plans were made accordingly. The government of the nascent Somali Republic was approached for assistance. As far as the latter was concerned, this was an inopportune time for such a venture. In mid-I963, the fate of the Somali inhabited Northern Frontier District of Kenya hung in the balance. The Somali Republic was involved in a diplomatic tug of war with Britain and the Kenyan nationalists to prevent the incorporation of the NFD into Kenya, which

was scheduled to become independent at the end of the year. In the course of this contest, the Somali Republic broke off relations with Britain, made an enemy of Kenya, and caused the Western powers, who supported Kenya and Ethiopia, to reduce their offer of economic and military aid to level the Somali deemed unacceptable. An approach to the Soviet Union for aid had met with success, but the impact of military aid from that side was not to become felt until mid-I964. In these circumstances, hostilities in the Ogaden against vastly superior Ethiopian forces hardly seemed advisable. Besides the risk of regional isolation, the material support the Somali Republic could offer the Ogaden was quite limited. Nevertheless, given the nature of Somali politics, the government could not refuse its support.[I2]

The rebellion was launched on June I6, I963, at Hodayo, a watering place north of Warder. About 300 people made their way there, and spent a week making plans and choosing their leaders. They anticipated a long guerrilla campaign, the aim of which was to make the Ogaden ungovernable, thereby forcing the Ethiopians to rethink their position. Overall leadership was entrusted to Makhtal Garad Dahir, a red-bearded giant with a reputation to match. Born in I907 near Dagabur, the son of the chief of the Rer Issa, he became chief himself in I928, after his father and an older brother died successively in tribal clashes. His career subsequently was a stormy one. Trouble with the Ethiopians and the European colonial powers earned him tours of imprisonment in all parts of Somaliland. Makhtal redeemed himself with the Ethiopians by fighting on their side against the Italians, being wounded in the process. He fell out with them again when he joined the Somali Youth League in the early I940s, and then signed the petition presented to the Four Power Investigating Commission in I948 which asked for the unification of all Somali lands. During the same year he was

arrested by the British and handed over to the Ethiopians, who promptly sentenced him to death in Jigjiga in I949. Appeals by Somali elders won him a reprieve at the emperor's court, and he was shut up in the infamous Alem Baka (World's End) prison in Addis Ababa. In line with the new policy applied in the Ogaden Makhtal was freed in I958, but was not permitted to return to the Ogaden until I962. He was then appointed woreda governor of Dagabur, awarded the title dejazmatch, and recovered property that had been confiscated earlier. In the spring of I963 he fled to the Somali Republic.[I3] Makhtal's reputation made him the natural choice for the leadership. It also made him the prime target of the Ethiopians, whose relentless pursuit in the months ahead denied him the opportunity to exercise effective leadership.

Several others were also selected to positions of leadership at Hodayo. Ali Yasin, a chief from the Nogub who had fled to Mogadishu in I948, was put in charge of foreign relations.[I4] Sultan Behi, chief of the Rer Ali, became responsible for internal affairs.[I5] Mohammed Gagni, former woreda governor, was entrusted with responsibility for economic affairs, and Abdulahi Hasan Sheikh with defence. The Ogaden region was divided into four operational sectors commanded by natives of each area. Adan Mohammed Hadis, former woreda governor of Tsekak, commanded the northwest sector. Hersi Hasan Bide, former woreda governor of Gabredare, commanded the southwest sector. Shirat Hadj Mohammed, former director of Post and Telecommunications in Dagabur, commanded the southeast sector, and Olat Abdulahi, former officer in the Ethiopian police, the northeast sector.

The group gathered at Hodayo comprised mostly chiefs, religious notables, former officials on the Ethiopian local administration and young activists. Their number was small, their weapons few and ancient. They had not yet received

material support in any quantity from the Somali Republic government. Consequently they were ill-prepared to confront the Ethiopian forces at this time. Their intention was to avoid military confrontation while they recruited fighters among the tribesmen, procured weapons for them, deployed their forces in the four sectors, and established an organizational structure to coordinate their activities. When they left Hodayo, however, they moved in one body towards Ime to the far west; a move that was inevitably detected and intercepted by the Ethiopians. As a result, the first clash occured three days later at Garasburg, southwest of Dagabur. The rebel force managed to disengage itself, and then decided to disperse with the sectoral commands heading for their regions. Makhtal Dahir, with a group of about 50 men, headed for the Nogub region in the far west, where he intended to set up his headquarters. Fully alerted by now, the Ethiopians stayed in close pursuit of this group, forcing Makhtal to keep moving and thus preventing him from establishing a base.

During the next three months isolated clashes occured throughout the Ogaden. The rebels attacked outlying posts manned by few policemen, who were armed with antique Enfield 303 rifles, and succeeded in forcing the government to abandon them, thereby yielding control over large sections of the disputed region. The Third Division of the Ethiopian army, headquartered in Harar, then pushed some of its units forward to garrison the administrative centres, putting them out of rebel reach.[I6] From these centres the army ventured out on lorries during the day and returned by nightfall. Engagements did not last longer than a day, and the rebels were able to move about freely under cover of darkness. Ambushing army convoys became their favourite tactic, and a means of obtaining American M I rifles used by the Ethiopian military.

According to an agreement reached at Hodayo, the rebel leadership reassembled three months later at Hilale, a watering place between Gabredare and Kelafo. With the Ethiopians stalking him, Makhtal Dahir was unable to come and made his way to Mogadishu instead. Those assembled at Hilale reviewed the experience of the previous three months and took stock of the resources at their disposal. The rebel ranks had mutliplied tenfold, and their number now was estimated at about 3500. The need for arms had become acute, and a delegation headed by Yusuf Ahmed Gas was despatched to Mogadishu to obtain them. It returned with I80 rifles of prewar Italian vintage, which belonged to the Somali army, and were obtained through the good offices of its commander, General Daud Abdulahi Hersi, and his deputy, General Mohammed Siad Barre. This was the first instalment of a total I500 rifles obtained from this source by the Ogaden. It fell far short of their requirements. However, the resources of the Somali government prior to the arrival of Soviet military aid were meagre. In addition to abandoned Italian stock, it had received only 5000 rifles from Egypt for its own needs. Besides the Ogaden, the Somali were also supplying weapons to a growing rebellion in Bale and Sidamo provinces of southern Ethiopia and to the insurgents in northern Kenya. Despite their own dire need, the Ogaden sent 60 rifles at this time to their kinsmen fighting in the El Kere district across the Webi Shabelle river. The rebellion there centred among the Rer Afgab of the Aulihan, whose leader, Mohammed Abdi Nur Takani, was killed in February I964.

During the fall of I963, the Ogaden rebels stepped up their attacks. Ethiopian forces were ambushed on many occasions at various parts of the region. Their reliance on motor transport and the absence of alternative routes made them vulnerable to this tactic.[I7] However, the rebels were lacking

an adequate supply of the basic weapon required for it, i.e., mines. Consequently their effectiveness was limited. Most of the engagements took place in the northern sectors where the Ethiopian presence was greatest. The action throughout was sporadic, localized, and without overal co-ordination and leadership. An organizational structure was never established, and Makhtal Dahir was never able to exercise command.

The effect of the rebellion was to disrupt Ethiopian rule by obliging the government to withdraw its forces from a large part of the Ogaden and to concentrate them in the few administrative centres. Contact between these centres, and between them and the provincial capital of Harar became increasingly difficult. Nevertheless, Ethiopian control of the region was not seriously threatened. The rebels had neither the organizational nor the material resources to wrest control of the Ogaden from the Ethiopian army. Supplied by the United States, the latter was on its way to become the largest military force in sub-Saharan Africa with an establishment of 40.000 men. Ethiopian rule could be threatened only if the Somali Republic chose to commit its own forces to the battle. The likelihood of this happening appeared to increase as the year ended with the announcement of a pact between the Somali Republic and the Soviet Union. The former had rejected earlier an offer from the West to support an army of 6000 to 8000 men that would pose no threat to its neighbours. The Soviet Union topped this with an offer to equip an army of 20.000 and an agreement to this effect was announced in November I963.

The Ethiopian government decided to move before the Somali had the chance to build up their army which, at the time, was less than one-fifth the size of the Ethiopian forces. The Third Division moved its units to various strategic points of the IOOO mile long border and, in mid-January I964,

launched ground and air attacks on Somali border posts and nearby towns.[18] The Somali Republic moved its own army to the border and proclaimed a state of emergency. During the first three months of 1964 heavy fighting occured at several points along the border, particularly Tug Wajale in the north, Ferfer and Dolo in the south. Ethiopia made intimidating use of its superiority in the air with bombing raids against Somali towns, including Hargeysa. Strenuous propaganda and diplomatic activity accompanied the action on the ground. The two states accused each other in international forums, and made exaggerated claims about damages inflicted and sustained in the conflict. The Organization of African Unity held emergency sessions and became involved in mediation efforts. The Soviet Union appealed for moderation and sent its deputy foreign minister to Addis Ababa and Mogadishu at the beginning of March. The United States reiterated its opposition to Somali claims in the Ogaden, and put pressure on the government of the Somali Republic to halt its support of the rebellion there.

March 1964 was election month in the Somali Republic. Despite the defiant slogan of the time - 'With one hand we fight, with the other we vote' - it was obvious that the Somali could not continue the confrontation. In addition to its military weakness and strategic vulnerability, the Somali Republic found no support among the African states for its challenge of the colonial frontiers. The outgoing government of Abdirashid Ali Shermake entered negotiations with the Ethiopians and a cease fire was agreed upon on March 6, 1963. At the end of the same month the foreign ministers of the two countries negotiated an accord in Khartoum, agreeing to withdraw their troops from the border, to cease hostile propaganda, and to resume negotiations for a lasting peace.

It fell to the new government of Abdirazak Hadj Hussein to persuade the Ogaden to give up the struggle. When the

Ethiopian army invested the borders of the Somali Republic, the Ogaden rebel leadership and many of the fighters came to bolster the defence of the border; activity inside the Ogaden was suspended. Aware of the existing relationship between the rebels and the Somali army command, the government assigned the commander of the police, General Abshir, to this task. When the disengagement of the armies was achieved in the spring of 1964, General Abshir instructed the Ogaden chiefs not to resume hostilities in their homeland. They asked to meet the Prime Minister, who told them bluntly the security of the Somali state was at stake, and warned that no further help would be forthcoming for the Ogaden struggle.[19]

There was some opposition to this denuement, particularly among the younger elements who wanted to continue fighting. Makhtal Dahir shared this sentiment and later expressed it publicly.[20] The government used conventional methods to divide the Ogaden and to difuse the opposition. The chiefs, who faced destitution away from their homeland, were offered pensions and houses. Makhtal himself acquired a house in Mogadishu. Younger men were offered employment in the state service, or a chance for education. The militants were consoled with promises of a resumption of the struggle at a later and more opportune time, and were advised to concentrate on preparation for that eventuality. In fact, a training camp was set up at Gereyo in northern Somalia, and some 1200 fighters were brought to it from the Ogaden. A Ministry of Somali Affairs was created to take charge of the Ogaden and other unredeemed Somali lands. From then on, the Ogaden leadership was drawn deeply into the faction ridden political life of the Somali state, and their cause became a hostage to its vagaries.

FOOTNOTES

I Data for this report was collected at the beginning of I983 in Somalia through interview with persons who had taken part in the events described, or had first hand knowledge of them. The research for this report is part of a larger study of national and class conflicts in the Horn of Africa. The study is supported by a research grant from the Joint Committee for African Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council.

2 The speech was published in: Ethiopia Observer, no. 2, vol. 2, I958

3 They were: Ahmed Farah Daud in Dagabur, Duluneh Sultan Rafleh in Gabredare, and Bashir Sheikh Abdi in Kelafo.

4 He was Demissie Tefera, an Amhara who spoke Somali.

5 This was the Medhani Alem School, where the government sent children of non-Amhara notables at its own expense.

6 Most prominent among them was Makhtal Garad Dahir, whose story is related below. Another was Duluneh Sultan Rafleh, who had committed virtual treason by signing a petition presented to the Four Power Investigating Commission in January I948, in Mogadishu, asking for the unification of all Somali lands.

7 Ye Agar G zat Minister Mashet (Ministry of Interior Journal), no. I, vol. 5, I962, p. 2I

8 They were: Abdi Ali Agole in Dagabur, Yusuf Ahmed Gas in Gabredare, Sheikh Ahmed Mahmud in Kelafo, and Abdi Nasser in Warder. The last named was acting Secretary General of the Western Somali Liberation Front in I982.

9 One of them was Duluneh Sultan Rafleh. They were released in I974.

I0 The attackers were two young traders named Mohammed Ahmed Mayle and Abdi Ahmed Nasser. Mayle was wounded in the attack and was taken to a hideout near Chilabo to recover.

II Not all Somali officials fled. Prominent among those who chose to stay was Bashir Abdi Sheikh, a nephew of the Sayyid Mohammed Abdille Hassan. In the early I980s, Bashir was deputy administrator of Harar province.

I2 The abortive military coup d'etat of I960 in Ethiopia may have created the impression of disarray within that country, thereby encouraging the Somali government.

I3 Makhtal's biography is sketched in Abdi Nasser Sheikh Omer's B.A. thesis "The Story of the Hero Makhtal Dahir", written in Arabic (Faculty of Education, Somali National University, I98I).

I4 He accompanied Dr. Ibrahim Hashi in a tour of Arab countries in I964.

I5 He had fled the Ogaden in I948, and had accompanied Michael Mariano in a fruitless mission to Britain and the United Nations in I956.

I6 The only garrisoned town the rebels were able to capture and hold briefly was Ime.

I7 There was only a single unsurfaced road connecting the district capitals to each other and to Jigjiga in the north.

I8 In December I963, Ethiopia concluded a defence pact with Kenya clearly aimed at the Somali Republic.

I9 Nevertheless, the Somali government continued to supply the insurgents in southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya until I967.

[20] See: interview published in Newsweek, April I3, I964.