

Western Print Media Coverage in Eritrean War of Independence 1960-1991 ;(A Study on English Print Media)

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Abstract- Eritrea is an independent African state which is found in the horn Africa. Eritrea is located in very strategic position that attracted foreign colonizers. Red sea long distance helps to have good trade relations with other neighbors, European and Asian countries through the red sea, since ancient times. Italian rule lasted till 1941. After the defeat of the Italians by the allied powers in World War II British military administration hold the territory that lasted from 1941 up to 1952. Afterwards the United Nations decided Eritrea to be federate with Ethiopia as concession between Ethiopian claims for annexation and Eritrea demand for independence. Finally the Ethiopian emperor,HaileSellasie ended Eritrean autonomy in 1962and Eritrea become Ethiopian fourteenth province.

The disbanding of federation called forth a militant nationalist resistance from the Eritreans. As a result the Eritrean armed struggle launched in September1, 1961 by ELF (Eritrean liberation front) aimed to achieve Eritrean independence. Through time organizational and ideological differences appeared within the ELF. As a result of this new splinter group was formed that called EPLF (Eritrean people liberation front) that leads the Eritrean masses towards independence in 1991.Eritrean war of independence takes thirty years.Within these years many ups and downs as well as challenges were faced to the Eritreans. The war for independence is not affected only inside the country but also outside. However Eritrean war of independence was mentioned and given coverage in several world newspapers and profiles. Western print media was describing the condition of Eritrea in its main printed media. This paper will be focus only in print media especially in newspapers, of English print media. We choose English printed media in order to narrow the scope of the study and to give clear and specific information.

Objectives

To analyze the different contents of newspapers periodically which produced by westerners in the case of English media.

To identify how the western printed media viewed Eritrean armed struggle and how they looked as struggle for independence

Index Terms- EPLF,Derg regime,Paris Times,London Times,New York Times

I. INTRODUCTION

Generally the western newspapers in the first half of Eritrean armed struggle were not giving that much coverage and it was not even though as armed struggle .The writers had many reasons to intended to do that because Ethiopia was one of the largest country in Africa and never been colonized unlike the other African countries and this make her to be well known in the world. In those times Ethiopia was considered as dignity of African's that shock the colonizers which is the battle of Adwa in 1896. Italians defeated by Ethiopian in which this made Ethiopia as the first black state to defeat or surrender whites; this helps to have good relationship with the western countries and to be acknowledged as powerful Christian country in the horn Africa. Thus Ethiopian look deemed Eritrean armed struggle as Islamic movement that sponsored by Arab and Islamic states.

Ethiopian emperor Hailesselasie relations with the western rulers, was tight. Being a dominant figure hepraised in the Guardian, "the lion has still has his teeth" (The Guardian Dec9, 1961) through this phrase they exposed his power to the world as an outstanding king and the Eritrean revolution was considered as civil war existing in northern Ethiopia.The writers were not giving any much attention to the Eritrean revolution. They wrote about good side of that government, as. **John F.Kennedy American president**hailedHailesselasie as a man "whose place in history is already assured".(The Times, Dec1, 1963).The westerners considered him as a charismatic leader. The first black president that welcomed in white house," emperor Hailselasse of Ethiopia with President Johnson at the white house after arriving in Washington for a two day visit" .(The Newyork Times, feb15, 1967). He met with Johnson family and this makes him different from other leaders.

The newspapers were giving more coverage about the emperor's diplomatic relations with many countries. "Final negotiations between Russia and Ethiopia for the construction of a big oil refinery near the red sea port of Assab ended today with the signing of contract at the ministry of public works here." (The Times,Aug30, 1962).Haileslasie was not having diplomatic relation with Russia only but he was having strong thigs with America, Jamaica and with almost all African countries in every aspect economically and politically. Ethiopian economic relation with many countries was highly covered by newspapers. They covered in this way "the development of Ethiopia is being international trade increased from 316million to 453million Ethiopian economy is in progress". (the new york

times dec 7,1963).American Economic and Technical assistance with Ethiopia to set air craft purchase constructing high way by loans amounting to almost 51 million. Ethiopian relation was not only with western and also with all African countries as the main figure in Africa. (Sunday Times, Nov11, 1964). "Zambia waits for emperor president Kaunda of Zambia has ordered maximum festivity for the state visit this week of emperor Haileselassie of Ethiopia "emperor will be the first head of state to visit the country since the independence celebration in October.

Certain newspapers were trying to give little coverage about Eritrean armed struggle. They used to call it as Ethiopian coup d'état rather than self-determination struggle. In 1960 when the emperor was in his visit to Brazil the emperor bodyguards stand for coup under the slogan of "three thousand years of injustice to be ended" this coup was a failure but in relation to that Eritrean armed struggle considered as a continuation of the coup, "there are also plenty or minority and regional trouble in Ethiopia and from Cairo radio a stream of propaganda has been directed against the emperors government as black imperialism." (London Times, Dec15, 1960).Eritrean armed struggle to some extent got coverage in an incoherent organization and frequency. Especially after 1965, labeled as few guerillas lead" by IdrisHamedAwateon on the Sudan's as the country has always been notorious for its *shifta* or robbers but the situation has deteriorated and the whole of Eritrea now seems to be swarming with Muslim shifts or its better to called pure bandits".(Paris Times, Nov8, 1963). Ethiopia always blame the bandits were assisted by the Arabs against their Christian country.

In the early years ,Eritrean armed struggle was not progressive and only kept within lowlands mass participation was also very little, at the initial stage the struggle's main leaders and fighters were mainly Muslims but this merely indicate the absence of Christians inside the field rather they were few in number and were not entitled to leadership. The absence of coherent organization and clear program lead to have loose relationship between the fighters and leaders in abroad.

"Arabs countries were generally sympathize with the Eritrean revolution. Arab leaders like the Egyptian president Jamal Abdel Nasser supported the Eritrean case covered as Muslim minority that rises against the Christian Ethiopia.(NewYork Times, Oct16, 1966).The western countries and one becomes the main enemy of the bandits it was the time of cold war and in Middle East all the Arabs were stand against Israel as Eritrean war of independence considered as Muslim movement. Israel extensively helps to Ethiopia "Israel began to train Ethiopian police officers in counterinsurgency command tactics designed to end the guerrilla (*shifta*) actions of the Eritrean liberation front. The struggle was seen by Ethiopia Israel and the United States as an Arab backed. Muslim extremists and separatist in relation to cold war if successfully win independence for Eritrea, the liberation movement would be hostile to Israel and enforce a blockade of the *Bab El Mendeb* straits at the southern end of the Red sea: Israel's position was partially based on the belief that Eritreans population had Muslim majority".

"The movement called the ELF (Eritrean liberation front) concern in African and Middle East because the Algerian civil war has shown the perils of African secessionism and because it is linked ideologically with the Palestinian Arab commandos and

Ethiopian officials here in the capital of Eritrea asserted and the rest had growth markedly less active in the last two years. They said this was because the Ethiopian army and police had cracked down with the severity and Arab aid to the movement had dwindled since the Arab –Israeli war of 1967." (The Guardian, Sep26,1968).Ethiopia was used the Arab –Israel war as an opportunity to weaken the ELF in other hand ELF was not supported only by Arabs. "Chinese Communist Weapons have reached the mountain strong holds of the Eritrean independence movement who's Commandos attacked an Ethiopian airline coupled with increasing hands from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The two shiploads of arms served to blaster the confidence of the rebels who are fighting to throw off Ethiopian rule over Eritrea." (The Observer, Jun27, 1969):

In armedstruggle weapons and military tactics were not enough.So, the Arabs as their continuations support they offer free radio station, "Open support for the Eritrean secessionist is given by Syria leftist Baath government and a twice a week they receive time a Damascus radio to make provocative broadcasts for Eritrea's in their native tongue." (Daily Telegraph, Apr10, 1969).

In late 1960s the ELF was advanced and unlike in the first decade the western newspapers begun to cover but not in the matter of Eritrean war for independence just a Muslim movement fought for their Muslim province as they advanced better they start to get attention. "From 1961 began the guerrilla were terrorist activity, in Eritrea four years later and has attacked Ethiopian airlines at several European airports. After splits in the political and military leadership earlier this year, the ELF later regrouped and the movement launched a wave of attacks and sabotage operations and killing major generals TeshomeErghetu, the Ethiopian third arm division." (International Herald Tribune, Dec20,1970):

"The freedom fighters attacked and hijacked planes of Ethiopia, airlines to call attention to their cause in the world. A few months ago they kidnapped and later release the USA counselor general in Asmara for the same reason and can to say it is a clear dangerous to Ethiopia and can be expected to become even more so as the arms follows increase from more radical government in neighboring country". (Jan 1970) As the ELF advanced effectively over Ethiopia government in return the government attacked over women and children, villages were damaged. "Several areas of Ethiopian northern provinces of Eritrea have been placed under a state of emergency because of banditry and rebellion which the government said. Where begin investigate by the foreign government

II. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE SECOND DECADE

The second decade of the armed struggle was extended from 1971 to 1980. In Thisdecade important events interns of internal organizational changes takes place in the Eritrean armed struggle. What differs this decade from the first decade is because the Eritrean war for independence was flourishing in quality and quantity and the coverage it was given by westerners was drastically changed. Due to internal disagreement of the front civil war between the ELF and the splinter groups of latter EPLF (Eritrean people's liberation front) happened from 1972 till 1974. After the Emperor overthrew by military coup in 1974

a new regime naming itself as *Dergue* came to power only in this time both the ELF and EPLF agree to stop fighting among each other. This agreement was short lived and the second civil war broke out in 1978 till 1981. Inside the Eritrean fields they fought to each other and also to their common enemy Ethiopian. Henceforth they didn't succeed in achieving the Eritrean independence early.

The Eritrean independence movements were led by two fronts: - the mother organization of ELF and EPLF. The ELF convened two congresses for development and changes but in the second congress totally they separate from EPLF. This period was also marked massive flow of Eritreans joining to the armed struggle and many towns was liberated. The flow of the youth to the field was impressive and were joining either ELF or EPLF. Women's perception towards the liberation was grew at this times and like their brothers start to join the movements.

Both ELF and EPLF prime objective was Eritrean independence and development their main difference was their leadership and programs. The ELF's organizational leadership was basis of ethnic and religious affiliation. Whereas the EPLF were free from such ethnic and religious as well as regional differences at the end of the 1970s the follow was increased to EPLF rather than to ELF even many fighters of ELF left their own organization because they were not satisfied organizational system and join to EPLF to narrow their differences and others were left and exiled to different country to live their lives. (Ruth Iyob 1995, p.130). Many attempts had been done to narrow their difference as an example between 1977 to 1980 more than twenty meeting between the EPLF and ELF to bring about a harmony between the two fronts, however the ultimate goal of organizational unity failed due to their conflicting respective. (Ruth Iyob, 1995 p.130).

In 12th September 1974 movement of young officers of the Ethiopian army known as the coordinating committee of the Ethiopian armed forces, police and territorial army which is *Dergue* terminated the 44 years rule of 82 years old the greater emperor Haile Selassie. (Zdenek Carvenka 2009). (Eristruggle article) The Eritrean liberation movements followed the changes in Addis Ababa with greater caution but with no real hopes for change to the better. General Aman Michael Andom, Eritrean born chairman of the provisional military administration council as the Ethiopian governing body. He spoke about Eritrea to the press on September "I have heard of injustice and suffrages that befell Eritrea and I have realized the extent of in human deeds perpetrated in the governorate" (p 44, Herald 1974 sep 8) he seeks for an agreement with the fighters in field and he announced eighteen points program calling for the reform of the administrative authority, amnesty for the political prisoner, promotion of economic development, guaranty of freedom of expression and the abolishment of discredit system of divide and rule along the religion and ethnic lines. Eritreans were not impressed at all and as result representative of EPLF Yohannes Gebremeskel he reject the possibility that the new Ethiopian leaders may be studying a system of confederation in which local administration was to be given back to the people but the sovereign powers were to remain in Addis Ababa this programs were failure they didn't accept what Gebremeskel said "we want our old flag." The ELF rejected too any idea of

negotiations with the *Dergue* unless the Addis Ababa recognized before the negotiation the principle of Eritrean independence.

The policy of the new Ethiopian regime toward the Eritrean question got no difference from the old regime. So the only choice they had was to continue what they begun. The two organizations were received mass support and mobilizations. Inside the field they didn't only concentrated in the war but they fought against the illiteracy, health problem and through political education given to the fighters as well as to the people in the villages that are free from the enemies or called the liberated areas and briefly explain their aim as result the Eritrean people became aware of that and start to and dedicate to the Eritrean armed struggle. The two organizations were reached an agreement in January 1975 to fight for their common enemy and to create a united front and start full scale military operations bringing the war from the countryside to towns. Asmara was one of the beautiful cities of Africa with palm lined and intense business and social life has become a ghost city with the Ethiopian army fortified in the center. In 1970 most of the west and north Eritrea and part of the coast controlled by ELF and large scale of the military offensives were appeared they attempted to pacify the coast and also the second largest city of Keren, but at first they were failed (Roy Pateman 1990, p.120).

The Eritrean armed struggle in 1970's was progressive comparing to the first decade of the armed struggle. The main development was liberation of towns that was under the Ethiopian control especially after the second half of the 1970s many towns and villages were liberated from the Ethiopian control. As a result of this the fighters and the people get a chance to meet and the political concessions become at the pick, and all the peoples participation become in follow not only in the fields but also supports inside the Ethiopian controlled area. Both the fronts' were developed in their number of soldiers and equipments. The EPLA (Eritrean people's liberation army) including twelve infantry brigade, each with three battalions having 450 fighters at full strength. There are a number of semi-regularly regional armies and some 20,000 fighters in militant unities. There was a heavy weapons brigade artillery unites, the EPLA can mobilize over 200 tanks and armored vehicles, and all captured from the Ethiopian, there are also two tank battalions. In naval operations are carried out by a fleet of fast attack speedboats. The EPLA ranks eleventh in size among African armies. (ibid, p.121).

The Ethiopian new leadership was a continuation of the emperor regime but they follow pro socialist ideology. The cold war was going on at that time which is the east and west block the two camps and the new Ethiopian regime unlike the emperor started to follow socialist ideology by being on the side of east camp and immediately they nationalize everything Even though Ethiopia change their ideology the help from the westerners was still continued, Israel is also helping Ethiopia claiming that black Christian state and thus with the help of great powers Ethiopian army were flourished Ethiopia was able to be ranked first in size among Africa.

The EPLF focused on its internal organizational structure and the first organizational congress held on January 31 1977 this was based on the reassessment of the first seven years of its existence. National democratic programmer adopted by the congress represented distillation of the ideological conceptions

that had led the founders of the EPLF earlier to leave the ELF their experience with the realities of Eritrean society and the nationalist struggle EPLF also follow the idea of Marxist. In 1977 EPLF officially announced NDP (National Development Program) with eleven objectives. Some of the main points were to establish a people's democratic states, building an independent self-reliant and planned national economy, building strong people's army, safeguard social rights (workers and women). (Ruth Iyob 1995, p.129). Both fronts were advanced in liberation of towns, in 1977 almost 90 percent of the towns and villages were liberated by both fronts; this development brought with it's a new phenomenon and a new challenge to both fronts to administer the liberated towns. On January 5 1977 the Eritrean border garrison town of Karora was captured by the EPLF. The Ethiopians had been overwhelmed for several months but had not mined the defenses. In February 840 Ethiopian were killed during the EPLF blockade of Nakfa and April Afabet was liberated and Elabered. Nakfa was finally overrun by the EPLF on march 23. Followed by the ELF capture of Tessenai and the strategic hill overlooking the airstrip at Barentu and the fall of Keren and Agordat (ibid p.135). By the end of 1977 almost all the main towns were liberated up to Decemhare (Tekeste Fukadu 2011, p.60). For many Eritreans it was the first time seeing their flag in addition the fears and insecurities, night curfew the threat of languishing in prison or the possibility of being executed for minor offences such as singing the nationalist song possessing a pamphlet. It was a revolutionary change and its sustainability required revolutionary ways. One of the methods used to nurture national identity was to glorify and commemorate the victories through music pomes and songs. Many popular songs rehearsed in those days reflected the changes that were taking place, in particular the liberation of towns and went like "Eritrea, Eritrea towns become our comp." (Radie Bereketeab 2000, p.198). The EPLF needed to strengthen its links with the countryside and still push through reforms while fighting the Ethiopian occupation army.

While this was continued and the people as well as the fighters expected to liberate the capital Asmara but unlike the wishes of the people the fronts start to retreat from the liberated towns. This strategic retreat was shocked the people behind that there were many reasons. The main reason was the Soviet Union bloc intervention, Ethiopia acquires help from different soviet countries and also America and Israel offered extensive aid in 1977. United States \$109.4 million was denoted and other in the form of arms. However soviet assistance became far more significant. Starting from May 1977 soviet supplies were valued \$1 million these included sixty MIG-21 and twelve MIG-23 planes and other heavy military equipment and also aided gave lessons in military tactics how to attack the guerilla. (Ruth iyob 1995, p.129). The ELF and EPLF withdrew from the captured area that was the only option. The other reasons that lead to retreat back were the failure of unity efforts in the rank of the national liberation movement. Subsequently an internecine war erupted between the two organizations that eventually led to the demise of the ELF. Finally they retreated to their base which was Sahel and *Dergue* recaptured the liberated area. (Redie Bereketeab 2000, p.201). And the organizations were limited for years in the main front of Sahel. The *Dergue* was suppressed harder and somehow the people of Eritrea morally

depressed. In January 1 1979 *Demsi Hafash* which is radio of the fighters aired their voice from Sahel in Fahi the people of Eritrea raise their hopes once again.

Western print media coverage in the second decade (1971-1980)

Western print media coverage in the first three years of second decade of Eritrean armed struggle was continued just like in the first decade but relatively changed with advancement of the fronts. Foreign support to Ethiopian continued in all sectors. Emperor Haile Selassie was given much privilege and whatever he did was highly covered in the newspapers of the west as he was a senior African state man and his good relation with the western countries. "The times news" interviewed under the title of the "we want to live in peace" "this was a personal interview in relation to the Ethiopian politics and he explained the relations with the western countries he said" Ethiopia only asks for assistance to be able to defend itself we must have the capability to defend our homeland, we merely want to develop as fast as possible and live in peace in our own land." (The Times Dec 3, 1973). Until the end Haile Selassie regime his relation was always smooth. Even though the Eritrean fighters were advanced but they couldn't get much coverage rather they only concentrate on Ethiopian relation.

In many western newspapers the Emperors Biography was available and his special personal event like "the year Haile Selassie 80th birthday. To his own people almost he seen as a god, when his car appears on the side of the streets traffic pulls in to the side of the road and pedestrian fall on the knee." (The Daily Telegraph, Sep 2, 1972). Rapidly similar articles written in relation to recognition of his 80th birthday anniversary celebrate throughout the continent of Africa special postage stamp was issued to OAU members. Haile Selassie described as "sage of African wise counselor to eminent heads of the state government and one of the outstanding architects of African unity and solidarity, exponent of world peace and human understanding." In the newspapers emperors covered highly and mostly posted in the first page of the papers as father of African unity.

The Eritrean armed struggle articulated in their pages of western newspapers in the beginning of 1970s as "the Eritrean war fought by a tiny secessionist Muslim minority against the black Christian state of Ethiopia suddenly exploded threatening to jet for greater outside forces in to motion." (New York Times, Jan, 2, 1971) In the first years of second decade of Eritrean war of independence were getting coverage only if there happened any breaking issues like hijacking or attempted to hijack Ethiopian airplanes as exclusive news "two members of the Eritrean liberation front were shot dead by security guards during an abortive attempt to hijack an Ethiopia airline on a flight from Madrid to Addis Ababa." (Daily Telegraph, Jan 23, 1971) Other many hijackings was done to Ethiopian air planes and this incidents were highly covered by the westerners, in December 1972 Boeing 707 Ethiopian airline was hijacked by the fighters but unfortunately they failed and killed seven hijackers including a woman. Inside the field the first civil war started between two fronts ELF and EPLF from 1972 till the *Dergue* regime came to exist. This was a big issue to be discussed or to be published.

Even though the coverage of the Eritrean armed struggle by the western relatively increases comparing to that of 1960's but still they described as Muslim separatist movement.

The advancement of the struggle expressed as “Eritrea road to another Vietnam.” (the times, dec 15, 1972) After eleven years of the armed struggle the movement has extended embrace the entire countryside of Eritrea in fact the movement was so strong, the ELF start the movement with three rifles and few guerillas after eleven years they equipped with relatively modern weapons from different socialist and Arab sources. (New York Times, May 1, 1971)

The two fronts of the armed struggle where protecting their natural resources besides their struggle and through the kidnapping of foreigners that work for Ethiopia. Those were getting coverage as the foreigners were from the west and was posted in many newspapers as “five westerner seeking oil are captured in Ethiopia, guerrilla seeking independence for the northern most Ethiopian province of Eritrean have captured three American and two Canadian exploring for oil informed source.” They exposed in different newspapers until the agreement has reached to release the foreigners which had been kidnapped “Eritrean liberation front promised to release the five captives American and agreed to close the oil company in Eritrea around Massawa and the general manager of the company said Ethiopian authority to cooperating fully to win the release of the captives.” (Sunday Times, Apr 1, 1974) Eritrean rebel leaders on the Eritrean front free two American kidnapped in Asmara July 14, Osman salih sabbe secretary general of the rival ELF said “it is the principle of the Eritrean front not to hurt any foreigner residents of Eritrean who have caused the revolution no harm” he added that the kidnapping reflected Eritrean displeasure with alleged America military support for Eritrean sons killed by American bombs and guns (Daily Telegraph, Aug 7, 1975).

New regime's role in changing nature and frequency of coverage

The year 1974 was a significant year for the Eritrean and Ethiopian people because the Ethiopian emperor was collapsed. Obviously that all newspapers were engaged in work to address the event as emperor Haileselas was well-known leader in the world. Under the title of the end of the lion of Judah less than a year ago he was one of the last absolute monarchs on earth he appointed government made laws and held life and death power over his 26 million subjected. (The Guardian, Sep 23, 1974) The same content in different western newspapers highly covered like “the lion caged” and “lion of Judah out like a lamp” “farewell to the lion” and in other many as exclusive news.

In relation to the decline of the old monarchical government and the raise of the new socialist government there was hope to settle the disagreement between Ethiopian government and the Eritrean fighters this was given coverage because it was a different event in the history of the both countries. When the coup was done the leadership was under general Amanemicheal Andom and he stand to change the existed situation. He invited to talk with both the fronts This came to be printed almost in every newspaper with different articulation as “Eritrean rebels declared today that they are willing to negotiate a peaceful settlement with Ethiopian new military rule in a neutral country but the Ethiopian must first make a public recognition that the Eritrean liberation front is the sole legitimate in representative of the Eritrean people”. (International Herald, Aug 27, 1974).

In Washington post describe as “Ethiopian plan to talks with rebels” in their front pages as follows Ethiopian government indicated today for the first time its readiness to open a “peaceful dialogue with the Eritrean liberation front.” The guerrilla movement secession of the country's strategic Northern Province. “General Aman Michel Andom said in the Washington post “we seek peaceful dialogue and negotiations but not with force and a new era has begun and we should go forward together, we as a nationals seek the cooperation of the Eritrea.” (Washington Post, Aug 21, 1974).

General Aman who flew to Asmara in Monday morning in air force plane also expressed his conviction that peace and security would be restored in the governorate of Eritrea. During his stay in Eritrea he intended to meet as many people as possible to exchange views that may help to restore peace and security in the area, even though he stand for peace negotiation he didn't agree Eritrea to be independent, he express his felling in financial times London “he said such oppression and injustices which existed in Eritrea had also occurred in other fourteen provinces of Ethiopia and Eritrea was a necessary and vital part of Ethiopian” (International Herald, Apr 29, 1974). The pattern and frequency of the western print media on Eritrean armed struggle was seen with the coming of new Ethiopian regime *Dergue* the Eritrean war for independence was highly covered in a few newspapers as the Ethiopian question to negotiate with Eritrean fighters was a fear of Eritrean powers to support this in New York Times “the guerrilla are everywhere around and they have infiltrated Asmara as well if the military movement doesn't manage to appease the rebels now they simply will move to Asmara one day very soon and take over.” (thenewyork times, aug 8, 1974).

The western newspapers for long time covered the “Ethiopian and Eritrean talks” which means the *Dergue* regime with the Eritrean fighters a peace negotiation at the last reported as “Eritrean guerilla rejected Ethiopian talk” the Eritrean liberation through a spokesman in Cairo reject all independence talks with the Ethiopian government and warned that it plans to extend its urban war. In addition ELF foreign affairs spokesman said talks could begin only when the Ethiopian governments recognize the provinces right to independence. Ethiopian government after attempting failed peace talks with Eritrean fighters the guardian posted it “Ethiopia declared all-out war on Eritrea rebels “they announced today that it had abandoned its policy of restraint and would eliminate the separates guerilla operation in northern province of Eritrea .In addition to that “from now on Ethiopia will demand the hands of her true and vigilant sons to suppress bandits elements” (The Times, Feb 2, 1975).

Many foreigners moving out with the coming of the *Dergue* regime many of them were living in Asmara for long years, those families left during the last few months and others are preparing to leave selling their houses and business moving to AddisAbaba or Europe this events were highly covered besides that the Eritrean armed struggle also covered because the foreigners were living claiming that a fear of attacks from the guerillas because Asmara was attacked several times by the them so they moved out from Asmara in relation to that they describe and covered the advancement of Eritrean armed struggle begun to prosper and start to liberate towns in this situation the

insecurity worsened the foreigners start to evacuate from Eritrea this describe by the newspapers in relation to the advancement of the armed struggle “90 years Italian link cut by Eritrean airlift” more than two thousand Italian colonial origin who consider themselves as Eritrean rather than Italians”.(Daily Telegraph, Feb6, 1975).InNew York Times also posted more than hundred American with their women and children flew out from Asmara to AddisAbaba for the sake of safety. (The NewYork Times, Feb5, 1973).The evacuation was continuous with shortage of food and water supply in Eritrea.

After some time officially announced that the two Eritrean rebel forces united in Daily Telegraph “the two fronts which had been divided along religious and ideological lines for years now agreed to form a common front”. After uniting they progressed and extensively attack Ethiopian troops and armed station exclusive they covered rebels attack on the new government mainly in capital of Asmara “rebels attack bases in northern Eritrea using weapons supplied by Libya Iraq, Syria and other Arab states.” Similar articles were posted highly in the west “Eritrean secessionist guerillas last night launch three attacked on military target in Asmara.” As they advanced they attack Ethiopian convey this including tanks, troops heavy artillery as this was getting coverage respectively Ethiopian government try to limit the reporters that had been flowed to Eritrea. Even though they try to reduce, the reporters continued to posted the clashes between government troops and combined forces of Eritrean fighters raged for over ten hours around the city immediately Ethiopian to control the situation they call for “curfew clamped on Eritrea capital” (The Times Paris, Feb6, 1975)..After the clashes broke out the military authorizes clamped a strict 6pm to 6am to restore law and order. Ethiopia was then asking for help from United States to handle the condition. The Eritrea leader propagated in the papers Osman SalihSabbe said “our forces are now in full control around Asmara and the declaration independence will come in a matter of weeks” In support of the progress on the Eritrean armed struggle Eritrean guerrilla release a thousand political prisoners from two jails this made them to realize the Ethiopians how much the guerrillas were advanced toward independence as are result of this Ethiopian government oppressed the people under the title of” Ethiopian declared emergency to stop a wave of walkout” (International Herald, Jan10, 1975)..the emergency actions gave policy and armed force the right to search and arrest suspected dissidents, and all elementary schools were ordered to closed except those operated by foreigners high schools and colleges had been closed before. Starting from 1975 Eritrean army struggle begun many operations like the Umhager, Assab, Tesseney and Adi- keih in short days, even the coverage was high almost all was similar.

Ethiopia asking for military aid for long time finally united states decided to help modernizing the 40,000 Ethiopian army force believing that more effective Ethiopian military can be a frustrate against soviet influence in neighboring Somalia despite the new input of weapons and resultant need for more technical assistant. In the second half of the decade reporters were flowing to see the truth but Ethiopian government was not allowed few was interred to Eritrea like an American free-lance journalist and photographer of Washington post Mr. Don Connell. He has been traveling for several weeks with the

Eritrean fighters under the title of “peasants learn truth about Eritrea” to change the perspectives of the west and he described his tour in the field “we were taken by rebel’s forces to see two quite different Ethiopian prisoners captured during the peasants’ campaign. The first group was from Wollo and Tigray provinces taken in raids and clashes and second was regular Ethiopian soldiers they were deeply depressed “Don Connell said Ethiopian government was notpermitted journals to visit Eritrea but now we were touring with EPLF, we travel by Toyota, Landcurser taken from the enemy. I met with prisoners and had interview asked them how they coming? And they answered that forcefully we are taken to raid in Eritrea but unfortunately EPLF captured us but we find unexpected thing Eritrean fighters had been good to us they provided our food water even they teach us in our native language”.(WashingtonPost, Feb8, 1971).

As a continuation of his writings don Connell briefly described the activity of the fighters in Washington post he write “behind rebels line in Eritrea” they were not only active in warfare inside the field many activity has been done like political education, repairing different staffs and cultural activity they have a special unit for 8-15 years old children organized touring to different liberated areas as group of entertaining. (Washington Post, Sep10, 1976). “Ethiopian losing in Eritrea “ the Ethiopian army in the strategic red sea province of Eritrea is being slowly driven out by secessionist and heavy fighting is reported around bases at Nakfa and Afabet and some 500 Ethiopian soldiers surrendered. The Dergue regime was radical socialist that came to power by coup d’état inside them there was power struggle as a result many execution have been done “nine men including major SisayHabte the third ruling consular had been executed for plotting to overthrow” (The NewYork Times, July27, 1976).

As the Eritrean advanced in the field they also seek for help. In Kuwait they participate at the Arab conference the representatives coated that “that only a minor part of Eritrea is still un liberated and predicated that the Ethiopian troops will collapsed” (The Times, Apr24, 1973).and they explain the aim of asking for help to seek moral humanitarian and financial support for Eritrean refugee and displaced Eritrean citizen who fled from the country because of the Ethiopian massacres and tyranny. They tour to almost all Arab countries was aimed for aid. The year 1977 is reported mainly as the fighters success in liberated important towns like Keren and Nakfa they massively attack toward the capital Asmara on the way their attacked and captured 100 prisoners from Ethiopian troops and some 50 military captives including number of tanks and cotton bales worth one million and Ethiopian bank in Tesseney The Times” Eritrean guerrilla claim capture of important towns” and financial times reported “the greater part of both the northern and southern territories had been liberated while more than 95% of the Eritrean lands had been regained from the Ethiopian forces”(The Times, Apr17, 1977)..In this war Ethiopian army faced a huge lost some 300 were killed and some 200 were surrendered including two colonels. Eritrean liberation advancement coverage by the westerners highly as Eritrean victorious against heavy fortified Ethiopian bases and built a momentum in Eritrean liberation that has carried them to the brink what they called final assault.

As a result of the socialist ideology Ethiopia was losing its western friends and ordered the evacuation of more than 300 Americans by the military junta that was reported as “American

ousted by Ethiopia". accompanied by mutual cooperation between Ethiopia and Russia that the Marxist regime in Ethiopia was closing American military communication center and other installation has been given further evidence it's switch to the Russian camp .big consignment of Russian tanks and armored troops (Daily Telegraph, Apr25,1977)..In relation to that Ethiopia was not only breaking its ties with America rather with all western countries like Britain, Italy, Belgium France and others those were ordered to close their councils in Ethiopia. (ibid,apr26,1977)....After 17 years the separatist forces virtually control the entire territory Ethiopian hold only three cities in Ethiopia "the guerrilla leaders said to reporter about the victory of towns "the real strength of Eritrean war for independence lays in the broad support by the civilian population but foreign assistance is little"(International Herald,Jan2,1978). The balance of forces within the Eritrea liberation movements had shifted dramatically in few months with the EPLF's growing in size, strength and the nationalist ELF apparently falling to confusion this reported as "Eritrean unhappy in victory" the reflecting on the increasing out spoken hostility among the Eritrean nationalist one leader said "our prime problems is not Ethiopia but our division"(The Guardian ,Aug10,1977).Thousands of Cuban puppet troops several of them worshippers of the soviet social imperialist ideology came to Eritrea and large quantities of the sophisticated soviet weapons brought and this massive help was highly reported "the junta has been busy preparing for dangerous large scale operations in Eritrea" other many newspapers articulated the support of Marxist similarly in the guardian "Cuban puppets troops have also arrived in Asmara to activate and take part in the jaunts counter revolutionary genocide war against the Eritrean people"(The Times, Apr2,1978).. The Ethiopian troops assisted by Cuban troops and by soviet advisors have recaptured all major Eritrean cites"(The Guardian, Apr4,1978). "The latest estimated is that 16,000 -17,000 Cubans are in the country with some of them based in Eritrea where the central government is trying to suppress a rebellion. This Cubans were assisted by about 1.000 soviet advisers". (The Guardian, Apr5,1978). This western support includes navy assistance in the red sea.

Ethiopian army was not only supported by Cubans and soviet but also other countries. "Like Israel, Cuba, south Yemen, East Germany, and USSR make strange bedfellows. It did not appear to face Zionist policymakers, who cite their national interest in the red sea region as more decisive than ideological differences with the Dergue's other allies". In the following year 1978 war was continued with more sophisticated military weapons of Ethiopian military government aided by westerners and other organizations. "World Bank funds and non-military aid from Western Europe are still flowing in to Ethiopia and there is increasing of renewing direct aid programs to Ethiopia"(Washington Post, Apr5,1978)..

As the Ethiopian military government and Cuban forces allied they try to destroy the Eritrean fighters they bombed over civil people. "Ethiopian fighter bombers have been dropping cluster and napalm bombs for most of this month on towns held by the separatist guerrillas in the strategic red sea province of Eritrea". (Daily America, Apr20,1978). "Due to ongoing battles and for strategic military reasons we resolved to make a tactical withdrawal from our eastern front and started from their

positions on the Asmara Massawa road". "massive foreign assistance changes nature of Ethiopian war "after the fall of Kerenon the hands of Ethiopian army the Eritrean forces totally retreat to Sahel and they explained their withdrawal according to EPLF "we opened a new phase in a long and bitter struggle and it was large scale direct soviet perception in Keren campaign and Ethiopia retaking the major towns "the assistant secretary general Issyasaforki said "we are not fighting the Dergue any more" we fought with the Cuba and soviet.(The Guardian, Feb20, 1978). the Eritrean fronts explain to their people about the withdrawal that Ethiopia accompanied by Russian advisors we strategically retreat to avoid heavy losses and due to our ambush and retreat tactics the losses was minor and we will recapture the towns and start to work raising slogans "self-reliance" and "today's small factories are tomorrow big industries"(The Guardian ,Jan31,1979).

Even though the Eritrean fronts retreated back to their base they continued their programs in the fields mainly they protect the people who fled fearing from Ethiopian attack during the retaking the liberated towns because Ethiopia was attacking the people of Eritrea "100,000 Eritreans flee to the mountains to protect from Ethiopian heavy artilleries bombard and military air" Ethiopian damaged around 40 villages was wiped out and 120 badly damaged crops and animals had been burned .Eritrean forces still continued educating 2000 orphan pupils was continuing their school normally in area where class rooms were in the cave in order to hide from Ethiopian air attacks. The Ethiopian bombing attack in the ordinary people estimated to have displaced more than 140,000 people but it has failed to deprive the EPLF's popular support according to the Red Cross official report "the overwhelming majority of these displaced people chose to stay in EPLF controlled or semi controlled area flee to neighboring Sudan."(The Guardian, Aug4, 1980).

The main objective of the Ethiopian government was to reach Sahel which is the center of the Eritrean fronts and to demise the fighters totally the war was characterized by the introduction of an increasing sophisticated military technology with large scale of soviet involvement. At the end of second decade colonel MengistuHailemariam seekfor diplomatic relation with Sudan to cut the relationship between the Eritrean liberation front's and Sudan as it was the base for Eritrean supply like food Medicine and other logistics. That was highly covered in the west and "colonel Mengistu failed to maintain the relations with Sudan".

III. DECADE THAT ENDS THE ERITREAN ARMED STRUGGLE (1981-1991)

The last decade of Eritrean armed struggle extends from 1981 up to Eritrean Independence Day 1991. This decade was characterized by many events and incidents and also Eritrean independence was achieved in this decade. In those years the EPLF became the sole political and military dominant over its rival ELF. After ten years of competition between the two liberation front's and the culmination of the national liberation movement in the independence of Eritrea. The circumstances leading to the ELF demise was first the military defeat by EPLF in the civil war and the flow of the Eritreans joining to fronts grew the proportion of this increase coming from the highland

part of Eritrea was particularly large thereby the socio political composition of the front dramatically change in particular of ELF begun dramatically shift. EPLF belief that ELF had not changed from the behavior of 1960s and that was not conducive to unity under this conditions once again they engaged in second civil war broke by 1981 the ELF had been pushed to Sudan which put an end to its military existence inside Eritrea. This marked the end of civil war and paved the way for the domination of EPLF. The victory of EPLF widely attributed to its organizational strength, centralization and unity of the leadership.

After the strategically withdrawal had been taken place by the Eritrean fronts the Dergue regime was propagate as the Eritrean fronts will collapsed soon. Unlike the Dergue wishes at the end of second decade five offensives had been taken place and in almost all the offensive Eritrean fronts had upper hands. By the mid 1980 the EPLF could boast of an impressive record of mobilizing the various ethnic groups and classes including Eritrean women in to a single goal "liberation" and they gave priority to the idea of a secular nationalism and emphasized education and culture as a vehicle for political organization. Immediately after ELF driven out from the field the only remained front was EPLF. Dergue highly advertised and meticulously designed military campaign was launched by February 15 1982 called as Red Star campaign. They intended to crush the front once forever and for all EPLF frustrated the Dergue plan thereby asserting its determination and capacity to survive. The Dergue regime preparing for about six months and the war continued for 95 days .the Red Star was launched on four major fronts and 90,000 Ethiopian troops involved with advanced soviet helicopter, gunship were used for first time in this way the soviet support was continued and 400 advisers in the front lines .soviet become the responsible for the war strategy under the direction of field Marshal Dimitrov. The red star campaign end with the EPLF victory over Dergue and lost many troops and surrendered even the soviet advisors. The victory of the sixth offensive was highly covered by the Eritrean radio broad cast that was opened in the last 1979 at the field this encouraged the Eritrean fighters and the people under the Dergue regime. The "radio voice of mass" plays a great role in giving information about the condition of the fields generally and the offensives. The radio was very influential in the Eritrean armed struggle and in initiating Eritrean youngsters as a result many students and workers flowed to the fields to fight beside their brothers and sisters.

In this decade the advantage seemed to be in the hands of the EPLF a year after the red star campaign in August 1983 EPLF pushed the Ethiopian troops out of karora after they had held for two years. The Ethiopian were also forced out of Kerkebet and Barka valley area. At the last August the Ethiopian lost key position on the roads from Agurdet- keren-Afabet and lost so many men. Later the EPLF continued the counter offensives in 1984 which resulted liberation of Tessenai and the rich farming settlement of Ali Ghidir. In May 1984 successful EPLF command operation in Asmara international airport 33 fighting jets were destroyed in the mission this was shock to the Ethiopian government. At the second half of the third decade the flow of people to the fields rapidly changed especially women. In the field the women's equality was ensured, they participate as

equally as man in every offensive. Their role was not only limited in military but also in each and every works that has been done in the field like making trench and other staffs. The EPLF was progressed and liberation of towns was their main aim .They recaptured the towns this was done with the massive help of the masses, after the EPLF recapture the towns the fighter and the masses moral was at the highest stage they believe that their victory would be very soon.

A number of meeting aimed at finding a peaceful solution to a conflict succeeded one another, undertaking by US president Jimmy Carter. However during the peace conference in London in 1991, the negotiations collapsed due to the breakdown of the first largest army in Africa and capture of Asmara and Addis Ababa the negotiation showing no sign of a solution. The EPLF successfully entered Asmara in May 1991, the war was over and Eritrea was liberated.

IV. COVERAGE OF THE WESTERN NEWSPAPER (1980-1991)

The last decade of Eritrean armed struggle was a decade of victory, which came to get highly coverage by the westerners and this help to get attention world widely. After the strategically withdrawal of the two fronts in the second decade they concentrate only inside the field to developed their internal power for the next attack which comes from Ethiopia and its backer soviet union . Suddenly the Dergue prepared to launch the sixth offensive they called as the "Red Star campaign" they prepared for about six months with the help of the soviet and Cuba and they seek to totally damage the EPLF it's obvious the coverage was huge as the propaganda of the Mengstu regime, he also called "the end of guerilla war" . The western newspapers describe this situation "the Eritrean war Africa's longest battle seems to be heading toward a bloody climaxe" and added operation Red Star is what Mengustu hopes will be his trump cards in tragic and death strewn Eritrean situation. The operation expressed in other newspapers mainly the propaganda of the dergue regime in the Guardian post as "Eritrea the next assault" and MengustuHailemariam has launched his biggest offensive against the EPLF and promising to crush the guerrilla forces and Mengustu said "Dergue has mobilized an estimate 130,000 troops to concentrate attack in Eritrea "the military offensives has been accomplished by Red Star describe as by some Ethiopian as "an all-purpose revolution any complain."

The Ethiopian head of state colonel Mengstu was in Asmara taking charge of planning the red star campaign with four Russians generals and 2000 Russian military experts. While EPLF attack unexpectedly by entering to the enemy lines in Asmara this was done by the Eritrean commando that has been trained for long time to attack the international airport this get coverage in relation to the red star campaign. This was posted as "guerilla go on the offensive in Eritrea" In this red star campaign against guerilla fighters "Ethiopian force have launched a massive offensive against Eritrea liberation fighters and have used deadly nerve gas .A spokesman for the Eritrea reported" the age when EPLF clams the world come to look after "a telegraph sent a to Mr. perezUN secretary general by SalimAzzam secretary general of the Islam council of Europe, said that supplies of Lethal gas were being held by the Ethiopian at Afabet .In Asmara and "in the south" the number of casualties

was not known, but survivors were suffering from acute poisoning. The western print media briefly describe the propaganda that has been given by the dergue regime .when the war ends with the victory of EPLF the coverage was not as much as the Dergue propagated it.

V. CONCLUSION

Eritrean armed struggle was started with few and ill-equipped youngsters. Western print media coverage in the Eritrean war for independence was very limited in the first stage of the armed struggle this is because Ethiopian domination in the region and throughout Africa. At the beginning of armed struggle western print media was not given coverage. Because the struggle was not well known in the world. In the first half of the first decade the westerners didn't covered about the struggle, dominantly they were covered about emperor Haileseless as charismatic African leader and his diplomatic relationship almost with all countries especially with western countries and his invitation to visit many countries in the world even they covered about his detail personal life. At the end of the first decade Eritrean armed struggle started to get little coverage.

In the second decade of the armed struggle the western print media was coverage relatively increased in relation to the first decade especially with the collapse of emperor haileseless by coup diet and the coming of dergue regime they covered mainly about the charismatic leader haileslasie. Western printed media start to give concern about Eritrean armed struggle when the new regime asked for peace negotiation with Eritrean fighter but still they covered them as separatist' Muslims and they struggled to separate from their mother country Ethiopia. In the western newspapers the call for peace negotiation was highly covered. At the end of the second decade the Eritrean armed struggle started to liberate towns and advanced toward Asmara .The strategically withdrawal of the fronts this was getting highly coverage in relation with the soviet support to Ethiopia. Western reporters begun to flow, even though the coverage was increased they didn't consider them as freedom fighters. In the second decade the coverage was generally about the new regime. Most of the newspapers didn't cover what was going on inside the field.

In the third decade the coverage was increased in quality and quantity. The sixth offensive highly covered in the west because this offensive was done with great soviet help and Ethiopian leaders exposed or propagate in international arena. Almost in every newspaper in the west posted about the Red Star campaign and described as the soviet and Cuba help to Ethiopia, the guerrilla will suffer. Through time the Eritrean war for independence get coverage from different western newspapers especially in 1988 the operation of Afabet and liberation of towns in Eritrea covered a lot. fenkile Operation covered as the huge Ethiopian naval base was destroyed by Eritrean fighters .many reporters covered about the Eritrean development in the field outside the military success and programs that launched by

EPLF and the support of the Eritrean people to the fighters and the women's role in the struggle.

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