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WAR

on

ETHIOPIA



An Interview

with

Tecle Hawariate

Ethiopian Ambassador

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Ethiopia Invaded!

World War Imminent!

Unite Your Ranks Against War! Defend Ethiopia!

Defeat Fascism!

Our tasks and duties to humanity are plain! Rally for the quickest defeat of Italian Fascism! Assist Ethiopia by every means to defend itself! Encourage and inspire the Italian toiling masses to turn the imperialist war into a civil war for the end of capitalist rule in Italy.

Labor, unite your ranks against the war!

Labor and all enemies of Fascism, unite your forces for the defeat of Fascism!

Picket every ship leaving for Italian ports!

Demonstrate before every Italian consulate!

Block the production of munitions destined for Italy!

Demand the lifting of the blockade on arms to independent Ethiopia!

Collect funds and medical supplies for Ethiopian defense!

Call immediate united front conferences!

Unite against War and Fascism!

Defeat Italian Fascism! Defend Ethiopia!

*Minister Tecte Hawariate, Ethiopian Delegate at Geneva, Sees
Aid of Americans, Particularly Negroes, as
"FAR-REACHING, POTENT AND POWERFUL"*

COINCIDENT with the opening of the dramatic sixteenth session of the League of Nations at Geneva, Switzerland, on September 9th, where the Ethiopian Delegation began a political and diplomatic struggle in defense of the independence of its country, a conference of far-reaching significance was held between an American delegation and the Ethiopian representatives.

The conference was held with the Ethiopian Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary, *Bedjironde Tecte Hawariate*, and Charge D'Affaires of the Paris Legation of Ethiopia, *Ephrem Tewolde Medhen*. The Ethiopian representatives received the American delegation with the utmost cordiality and hospitality.

They left the morning session of the League and met with the delegation at their hotel, Hotel De Russe. Although in the midst of the busiest and perhaps most important diplomatic session of the League of Nations since the world war, the Ethiopian Ambassador let it be known that the conference was of such importance that he would give whatever time necessary to send a message to the American people.

The American Delegation consisted of William N. Jones, staff correspondent of the Baltimore *Afro-American*, James W. Ford, Communist leader, representing the Provisional Committee for the Defense of Ethiopia and who was on his way to meet with a group of well-known liberals in Paris in connection with a world movement for the defense of Ethiopia, and Benjamin Careathers of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, of Pittsburgh, Pa.

U. S. Delegation Reports on Ethiopian Defense

Following formal introductions, Mr. William N. Jones opened the conference by presenting a prepared list of questions and introducing James W. Ford, who outlined the aims of the visit of the American Delegation and the protest actions which had already been carried through in the United States and other parts of the world, particularly the actions of the Negroes in

Harlem, Chicago, Cleveland and other parts of the U.S.A. He told of the splendid support which had been given by the Negro press in the U.S.A. He also told of sympathetic actions in behalf of Ethiopia, which were taking place among Negro people in South Africa, Paris, London, West Indies, etc.

Mr. Ford, appropriately analyzing the national aspects of the Ethiopian situation,—its struggle to maintain its national independence; pointing out that the Ethiopian question is not a separate, isolated, "African" question, but has world-wide importance, opened his remarks as follows:

"The struggle of the Ethiopian people to maintain their independence has aroused the sympathy of the whole world. The ideals which motivate the Negro masses to stand solidly behind Ethiopia are those of racial ties and the desire to aid a small nation whose independence, and national and economic existence is threatened by big powers and megalomaniac fascism, and this is seen not only in the case of Liberia and Ethiopia but in the case of a great nation like China, nations like Czecho-Slovakia and the Central and Latin American countries, Cuba, Haiti, etc.

"Our racial ties are remote but our mutual fight for national existence in a world of big bandit nations is clear and tangible and we stand ready to defend the long history of fine cultural and national growth of the Ethiopian people. So that Ethiopia, by maintaining its freedom, may have the possibility of progressive growth unhampered by the destructive forces of the so-called civilized nations. That is why, the Negro people in the United States pledge to defend Ethiopia against Italian fascism."

"We aim to arouse not only the Negro people but liberty-and-justice-loving people of all races to support this struggle."

Hawariate Replies

Mr. Hawariate is a small, dark-brown-skinned man who speaks with cool deliberation but with astute and penetrating decision. He is well-groomed and is an excellent representative of the Ethiopian people, measuring up with the best diplomats of Europe. Mr. Hawariate has a tremendous reserve of emotional energy which he uses effectively when necessary.

He plunged into the general statement showing that he was thoroughly familiar with American thought and opinion on his country's situation. Throughout he seemed to want to advise as to the broad scope of the Ethiopian question.

Calmly and deliberately he said: "It is not necessary for me to comment on our racial ties and the fact that we originate from the same land. Our common sympathies arise not only from

racial ties but from our mutual desire to see justice and fair-play for small nations. I am happy to agree with our friend, Mr. Ford, on this question. We can well appreciate the mutual feeling of interest American Negroes have in the crisis which faces us. We are thankful for what already has been done which has been powerful and effective.

"There is an unsolved question," he said, and after a pause went on: "The case of Ethiopia and Italy brings before the whole world the question of a big nation against a small nation: it is a question of *justice* or *might*. The hour has come when it must be known once for all: Ethiopia has the right to maintain its independence; or is she to be condemned for being colored?"

What Is the World Going to Do?

"The world has passed its sentiment morally, but it remains to be seen whether it is to be put into practice," he said. "In Africa there are only left Liberia and Ethiopia. The only specimen of an independent country remaining is Ethiopia; it remains expressive of the right of colored nations to independence."

At this tense and dramatic moment (and everyone in that room was tense and filled with emotion) Mr. Hawariate said emphatically:

"THAT IS THE QUESTION! All People must see the outcome of this question as the rights of ALL human beings, or, is it to be limited by the color of one's skin!"

Then Mr. Hawariate said calmly and deliberately: "I understand your sympathies from both viewpoints. Our sympathies are naturally spontaneous. But let alone your sentiments, some who are alien (in race) feel for us."

Compliments Our Activities in U.S.A.

"Your activities in the United States in our behalf are highly appreciated and I want to thank the American people not only for myself but for my people. I feel that it has been useful, beneficial and POWERFUL!

"There are many factors," he said, "and we expect great sacrifices, but we have full faith in the outcome. This solidarity in the U.S.A. assures me of our final success."

What More Can Be Done?

Considerable time was taken by Mr. Hawariate in discussion of practical methods of support to Ethiopia. He said: "You

must now carefully study future methods to be undertaken to help Ethiopia. We have had propaganda, which is useful. We have had sympathizers to offer themselves as medical, military and technical units. We have had offers from all colors—white, brown, yellow and black

“But what Ethiopia lacks is not men, we have sufficient for fighting purposes. In this regard we have never yet acceded in any way to Italy. What is really our problem? Ethiopia needs war materials and munitions, and medical and flying assistance is useful. If we are in need of finance it is only for that purpose and no other. We are limited in the money required for that purpose, compared to Italy. We are handicapped in the sense that Italy has unlimited access to war materials as she wishes.

“It is a question of armaments: here finance plays the whole role. The greatest help or contribution which American Negroes can render is on the financial side. There is not one American Negro that would not give his last penny for Ethiopia’s cause. His motive for so doing is because he feels that Ethiopia symbolizes independence and national life. His benefit is not of a material but of an idealistic nature: to show that colored people are just as much human beings as white people.”

Warns Against Profiteers and Self-Seekers

This question of finances, however, Mr. Hawariate stated, is one which should be handled with extreme care and caution.

“There is something which I am afraid of,” he said, “if American Negroes contribute money **IT SHOULD GO FOR WHAT IT IS INTENDED**,—to save the independence and national life of Ethiopia, and for no other purpose. But as you know, in the ordinary run of life such things look simple yet in the carrying out of them difficulties are encountered not only of a purely technical character, but in the handling of money, of a speculative kind.

“Therefore I want to warn that if the American Negro population gives, you must never forget that there are profiteers and speculators. It must be seen to it that the money is utilized to help those intended. If this practical point is kept in mind, the plan will be beneficial. If the money, however, goes into the hands of speculators there will be regret on both sides.” With these suggestions, Mr. Hawariate closed his remarks.

Mr. William N. Jones then put several questions to Mr. Hawariate.

Question: "Has the Ethiopian government, or any group with authority to do so, made connection with any group in the U.S.A. to raise funds for Ethiopian defense?"

Answer: Mr. Hawariate replied that to his knowledge, "No! My proposals are personal suggestions."

Question: "What is the attitude of the Ethiopian government to the recent declaration of Mussolini that nothing would satisfy him except domination of Ethiopia?"

Answer: "Ethiopia is a member of the League of Nations," he replied, "signatory to the League Covenant, which has been signed by every nation affiliated to the League. We only ask that this pact be put to work. But if the League proves itself powerless, we are prepared to defend ourselves. The Ethiopians have the same desire for independence other people have, and they also have the will to fight for it."

Praises Litvinoff

Question: "What do you have to say to the support given Ethiopia by the Soviet representative? You should be informed that certain people in the U.S.A. claim that Mr. Litvinoff (at the time that he was presiding as chairman of the League Council at a previous session) and the Soviet government betray the interest of Ethiopia and that of colored people in general."

Answer: (Interjection by Mr. Medhen, Ethiopian Charge D'Affaires: "They are mistaken".) "I think that he (Litvinoff) spoke and acted right; not only Mr. Litvinoff but other representatives, such as those of Denmark, Argentina and Spain have openly expressed their favorable stand. Mr. Litvinoff did not offend Ethiopia. What he speaks and does is sincere. I find him GENUINE!"

Question: "Is not the national interest of small nations like Czecho-Slovakia involved in the Ethiopian situation to such an extent that it is to the interest of all small nations to stand solidly behind Ethiopia?"

Answer: "The fact that Czecho-Slovakia and certain Balkan states sympathize with us (and others have expressed their sup-

port privately) shows that they feel themselves and their national independence involved." End of interview.

* * * * *

Now is the time for more action. All men and women of African descent and all sympathizers for Ethiopian independence and fighters against imperialist war and fascism, of whatever nationality, should redouble their efforts in behalf of the Ethiopian people and for peace.

Every effort should be made to unify all the forces aiding Ethiopia, bringing together sincere fighters of whatever political opinion, religious faith or organization, on the issue of the defense of Ethiopia.

We should immediately have in view the building up of a broad committee of reliable men and women to handle the raising of funds for medical and other supplies for Ethiopia.

LET NOBODY PROVE FALSE OR LAX TO ETHIOPIA AND THE CAUSE OF PEACE AT THIS MOMENT WHEN WAR CLOUDS EVERY DAY THREATEN THE PEACE OF THE WORLD, WHEN ITALIAN FASCISM IS BOMBARDING ETHIOPIAN TOWNS, KILLING WOMEN, CHILDREN AND OLD PEOPLE, DESTROYING HOSPITALS; WHILE FASCIST FORCES ARE INVADING ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY TO DISMEMBER THE NATIONAL LIFE OF ITS PEOPLE!

ANSWER THE APPEAL OF MR. HAWARIATE,
RENDER MATERIAL SUPPORT TO ETHIOPIA!

Harlem Section, Communist Party
415 Lenox Ave., New York City