

# ROUND THE WORLD

ERITREAN GUERRILLAS

## Soviet Naval Bombardment

Soviet warships anchored off the Red Sea coast pounded Eritrean guerrilla positions in northern Eritrea on December 2. The Soviet attempt to land men and material was repulsed by the guerrillas. Once more the nature of Soviet social-imperialism is exposed.

In the war between Eritrean guerrillas and Ethiopian government troops, two high-ranking Soviet generals, one air force and the other infantry, 200 high-ranking Soviet officers and over 2,000 Cubans were engaged in directing and coordinating the war at all levels. An Eritrean People's Liberation Front spokesman at its Paris office said: "We are at war with the Soviet Union." An AFP dispatch quoted observers as saying that the latest Soviet-backed Ethiopian offensive coincided with the signing of a "treaty of friendship and co-operation" in Moscow between the Soviet Union and Ethiopia.

During fierce fighting with Ethiopian government troops, Eritrean guerrillas destroyed 20 and captured five Soviet-made tanks manned by Soviet personnel. The guerrillas also shot down a helicopter with a senior Russian army officer on board. The intervention of Soviet and Cuban military personnel in the offensive against the Eritrean guerrillas has enabled Ethiopian government troops to occupy the important city of Keren in

Eritrea, the last important city to fall into government hands.

The offensive to capture Keren was the second launched this year by Ethiopian government troops against the guerrillas. In June, the Ethiopian Government had hurled 200,000 troops and militiamen into the biggest offensive in that region and occupied most of the cities controlled by the guerrillas.

Eritrea is in northern Ethiopia. According to the December 2, 1950 decision by the U.N. General Assembly, Eritrea is an autonomous community forming a "union" with Ethiopia. In November 1962, the Congress of Eritrea adopted a decision to turn Eritrea into an Ethiopian province, which has now become an administrative region. The armed struggle for independence waged by the Eritrean people since 1961 developed rapidly and by 1977 more than 90 per cent of the territory was in the hands of the Eritrean guerrillas.

U.S.S.R.-AFGHANISTAN

## Military Co-operation

The Soviet Union and Afghanistan will "continue to develop co-operation in the military field" and facilitate "the creation of an effective security system in Asia," says the "treaty of friendship, good-neighbourliness and co-operation" signed by the two countries in Moscow on December 5.

The treaty is the third of its kind signed by the Soviet Union since the beginning of November.

Article four of the treaty stipulates that "in the interests of strengthening the defence capacity of the high contracting parties they shall continue to develop co-operation in the military field on the basis of appropriate agreements concluded between them." Article ten states, "The high contracting parties shall consult each other on all major international issues affecting the interests of the two countries." Article eight says, "The high contracting parties shall facilitate the development of co-operation among Asian states and the establishment of relations of peace, good-neighbourliness and mutual confidence among them and the creation of an effective security system in Asia on the basis of joint efforts by all countries of the continent."

Speaking at a December 5 dinner given by the Soviet side in honour of Taraki, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and Prime Minister of Afghanistan, Brezhnev said, "The treaty is an outstanding political act." "The Soviet Union stands for the deepening and expansion of international detente, for its extension also to the most populated continent of the planet — Asia," he added.

In reply, Taraki said, "The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan strives to have relations of good-neighbourliness and friendship with its neighbouring countries and other countries of that area."