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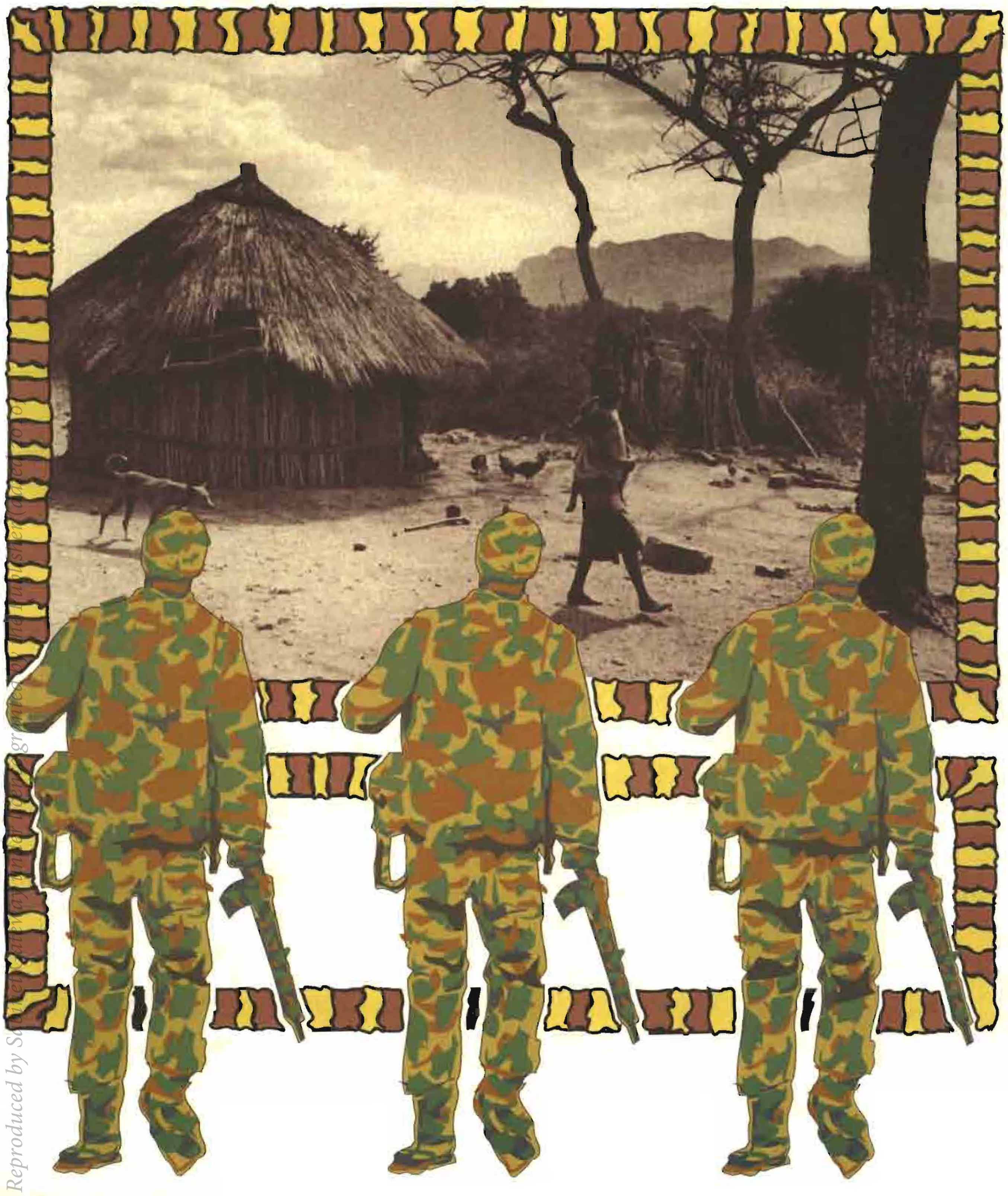

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Cover by William Steyn

The coconut palms are swaying

"The winds from Eastern Europe are swaying the coconut palms" observed Jacques Pelletier, French Minister for Cooperation and Development. Erich Leistner, Director of the Africa Institute, looks at the prospects for the introduction of multi-party democratic systems in a number of African states.

The winds of change blowing through South and Southern Africa, no less than those through Eastern Europe, have also reached black Africa. Both the ignominious collapse of seemingly unshakable Communist regimes and South Africa's progression towards a fully democratic order have awakened hope among the suffering peoples of Africa: the hope that their lot, too, would be improved if multi-party democracies were to replace their present autocratic regimes.

Worsening food shortages, decaying educational and health services, lack of accommodation, rampant inflation, and generally increasing destitution are driving many to desperation. These are the principal reasons behind the demand for changes not only in leadership but in the very political systems concerned. When governments attempt to reduce budgetary deficits by cutting subsidies on basic foodstuffs, putting them beyond the reach of ordinary people, or by paring salaries and employment in the public sector, latent dissatisfaction often erupts into demonstrations or bloody violence.

The Zambian food riots and the coup attempt against President Kaunda in June/July this year are but the latest instance of a pattern all too familiar since the late 1970s, when grave economic difficulties overwhelmed ever more African states. Notwithstanding his country's progressive economic decay, until a few years ago Kaunda had always been above criticism. But Zambians now want to be rid of him and are calling for a multi-party democracy.

The spectre of democracy

Popular insistence on a multi-party system to replace Unip's monopoly has been so strong that Kaunda, much against his will, agreed to hold a referendum on the issue (on 17 October this year). In company with other anglophone leaders, such as Mugabe, Banda, Mwinyi and Moi, Kaunda is much more obstinately opposed to multi-partyism than are most francophone leaders. Kaunda regards the prospect as a "national disaster", saying that it would promote tribalism. Beset by growing dissatisfaction and violence, President Moi of Kenya has called multi-party government "garbage" and expects "chaotic situations difficult to reverse" because the system would "lead to alliances of tribal groups expressing tribal sentiments, not public opinion". Moi had two former Kenyan ministers, Messrs Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia, arrested recently for daring to advocate multi-party rule.

Astonishingly, ex-President Nyerere, who elevated the principle of single-party rule to almost divine law, has recently come out in favour of multi-party democracy: "One party has the tendency of slumbering. It has the habit of wronging the people." His successor, President Mwinyi, expressed diametrically opposed views but subsequently felt obliged to say that the idea was not to be rejected.

Although there is strong opposition to a single-party state, even within the ranks of his own government, Mr Mugabe is still determined to turn Zimbabwe into one, and has claimed that his Zanu (PF) party's majority in the March 1990 general election was a public endorsement of that objective. In fact, however, the Zimbabwe electorate had shown its disapproval, in that only 54 per cent of those entitled to vote did so, (besides there being a high percentage of spoiled ballots), compared with the 90 per cent who had cast a vote only one year previously.

Major demonstrations and, in some places, serious rioting have recently occurred in most francophone sub-Saharan African countries, that is, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Madagascar, Niger, Senegal, Togo and Zaire. In all instances commotion was triggered off by economic crisis. In contrast to the anglophone countries, remarkable changes have resulted in francophone Africa from popular pressure — combined with some prodding from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the European Community and other outside agencies.

President Mathieu Kérékou of Benin has officially abandoned Marxism-Leninism; has unbanned formerly prohibited political parties; and has held a major conference to plan a new constitution. In Burkina Faso, a commission is investigating, among other matters, the advantages of introducing a multi-party system. In April 1990, President Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire announced the establishment of a multi-party system and promised to stand down before elections due to be held by the end of 1990. (This did not prevent a strike by the police and a mutiny by young army conscripts the following month.)

In Gabon, the country with the second highest per capita income in Africa ($2 970), the government-controlled press predicted as late as February 1990 that the country would not be affected by the political events in Eastern Europe. Only weeks later, however, President Bongo, under pressure from striking bank clerks, civil servants, sailors and airline workers, announced a return to the form of multi-party government he had abolished in 1968. President Ratsiraka of Madagascar has promised a multi-party system. President Eyadéma of Togo has for the first time permitted a discussion panel organized by *Radio France Internationale* in which intellectuals discussed the idea of introducing a multi-party system. In April 1990, President Mobutu promised to hold multi-party elections within a year and has lifted the 20-year old prohibition of political parties.

Outside pressures

The economic crises triggering these changes have not been sudden or random events but the inevitable culmination of years of maladministration, high population growth rates, adverse climatic conditions, outside interference and world market conditions. At the same time, the dramatic changes in Central and Eastern Europe have greatly lessened the superpowers' interest in Africa — as well as that of the former colonial powers. After about three decades of outside tutelage and interference, the continent is increasingly being left to its own devices.

Naturally, for the time being, the "aid industry" will continue to operate in Africa, though probably at a declining rate. Outside investors, however, are holding off; the exodus of foreign capital from Africa continues. Even France is withdrawing, increasingly loath to prop up its client states financially and militarily. The ending of superpower rivalry has deprived African states of opportunities to play off East and West against each other. In short, the people of Africa are being increasingly constrained to work out their own salvation. More concretely, they themselves must discover patterns of social and economic behaviour that allow them to enjoy rising levels of living, and simultaneously develop forms of government that guarantee both stability and individual freedom.

Colin Legum has called the campaign against single-party states Africa's "second liberation": liberation, that is, from post-colonial regimes that have legalized only a single ruling party. Today's upheavals mark a distinct advance along the African peoples' arduous road of emancipation from autocracy towards true freedom. But the experience of, let us say, India and Latin America or, in Europe, the Weimar Republic and France's Fourth Republic should remind us that a multi-party system *per se* can by no means guarantee stability and good government. After all, most, if not all, African states arrived at independence with multi-party constitutions.

The simple truth is that a democratic order is rooted as much in the attitudes and value systems of the people concerned as in visible, legal institutions. It is an open question as to what extent Africa can still draw on indigenous democratic traditions, and how thoroughly it has assimilated imported democratic ideas. It is equally uncertain whether democracy can thrive in Africa's present deplorable economic and social conditions. Nor can the arguments of Kaunda and Moi concerning the dangers of tribalism in a multi-party system be dismissed out of hand.

As the March 1990 issue of *Africa Confidential* says, "The problem is a profound one, for even if pressure from demonstrators in the streets leads governments to concede reforms, it is not clear that many African countries have either the cultural or the material base to support a multi-party system that would offer genuine checks and balances. Nor, if such a system did function well, would it necessarily bring prosperity."

The absence of government responsive to the public's needs is certainly one of the foremost causes of Africa's economic decline, but economic freedom is at least as important as political freedom for lasting material progress on the continent.

Violence in Mozambique: The case of Renamo

Glenda Morgan, Junior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Industrial Sociology at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, begins a series of contributions by different authors on current conflicts in Africa.

Recent developments on the South African political scene have raised some hopes of bringing the war in Mozambique to an end.[1] The apparent change of direction on the part of the Pretoria government, its unbanning of the African National Congress and other previously proscribed organizations, and the progress it has made towards negotiations all point to a possible change of heart and a relaxation of a previously hostile regional policy. There can be little doubt, given the importance of South Africa's role in the region and the history of its involvement in the Mozambican crisis, that changes within South Africa will be felt beyond its borders. However, it would be unwise to ignore the part played by internal factors in explaining the growth in both scale and severity of the Mozambican conflict over the past decade.

Until recently this has been the trend in much of the literature. We have had either journalistic accounts of the fighting or analyses of only the external sources of support for the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (Renamo).[2] Little attention was given to the internal dynamics of the conflict or to Renamo itself. This emphasis has changed with the appearance of a number of publications focusing critically on conditions within Mozambique and constituting a new approach to its politics.[3] These have recently been supplemented by two important studies on different aspects of Renamo. An account by Robert Gersony of the experiences of Mozambican refugees offers a broad description of Renamo's *modus operandi*, how it procures food, services, recruits and information from the local populace and how it wages war against the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (Frelimo).[4] William Minter's report of his interviews with ex-participants provides evidence of Renamo's methods of training, discipline, recruitment and supply, and reveals the existence of a well organized and hierarchical structure, based largely on forced recruitment and deriving significant logistical support from outside the country.[5]

The revisionist literature, which these reports supplement, provides information about the problems that have emerged during the fifteen years since Frelimo came to power on independence in 1975. They focus, in particular, on Frelimo's agricultural policies, and on the popular resurgence of traditional beliefs and practices, on regional and ethnic tensions within Mozambique, on the inadequacy of state and political structures, and on the inability of the army to defeat the guerillas. In doing so, these publications are at last beginning to recognize that Renamo does not operate in a vacuum, but in a particular social, political and economic context — as indeed was acknowledged by Frelimo itself as early as 1983, at its Fourth Party Congress.[6]

There has been debate between revisionist authors who give primacy to internal factors in explaining the rise and growth of Renamo and those who still see it as an externally funded body with few local roots.[7] The present article synthesizes existing literature on Mozambique to argue that this debate is fundamentally flawed when it tries to translate dissatisfaction with Frelimo's policies into direct support for Renamo. Given Gersony's and Minter's evidence of the brutality with which Renamo operates, this seems unlikely. Internal reasons are crucial to an understanding of how Renamo has come to flourish, but rather in the sense that they provide the context of a complete social, political and economic breakdown upon which Renamo feeds. This breakdown has its roots in the colonial period, but has also been exacerbated by Frelimo policies and the continuing dislocation caused by the war. Against the background of a brief history of Renamo and an outline of its structure and guiding principles, this article highlights the most significant aspects of the breakdown in Mozambique and how it has contributed to Renamo's growth.

Origins of Renamo

Although Renamo has for many years constituted something of an enigma, its origins are reasonably well documented.[8] Most sources agree that the organization was founded in 1976 by the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organization (CIO), which hoped to direct it against both the exiled Zimbabwe African National Union

* This article will also appear in the *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 28, no 4, 1990.

(Zanu), which at that time was based mainly in Mozambique, and against economic and political targets within that country. Renamo was fashioned by the CIO mostly from the crack anti-insurgency units, the *"flechas"* or "arrows", which had been formed and controlled by the *Policia Internaçional e de Defesa do Estado* (PIDE). On independence, many members of the *flechas* fled to neighbouring Rhodesia, including Orlando Cristina (who later became secretary-general of Renamo). The confidential files taken by this PIDE agent were later used to blackmail the *flechas* who had remained in Mozambique into joining Renamo by threatening to expose their past employment to the authorities in Maputo.[9]

Two other sources helped swell the ranks of Renamo. In those early days, the majority were Frelimo dissidents who had fallen out of favour with the new regime and/or had found it difficult to adjust to prevailing conditions. Many of those who had been assigned to undergo "re-education" escaped across the border, and a number joined Renamo after Rhodesian troops had attacked and liberated their camps.[10] In addition, further recruits joined the rebels particularly at what must be called the "leadership level", from the numerous splinter groups which had broken away from Frelimo during the crises of the 1960s.[11]

After the guerillas were trained in Rhodesia they began their activities inside Mozambique and soon established permanent base camps there. Concurrently a radio station *"Voz da Africa Livre"* began to broadcast anti-Frelimo programmes from Rhodesia. Renamo was initially under the command of André Matsangaiza, who had been dismissed as a quartermaster by Frelimo, and sent for re-education after stealing a Mercedes-Benz car.[12]

Following a violent leadership struggle in 1979, Matsangaiza was replaced by his deputy, Afonso Dhlakama,[13] and Renamo was probably then at its lowest level in terms of morale and strength. The organization had only some 500 armed rebels and had little independence, being tightly controlled by the Rhodesian CIO, which kept the political wing separate from the military wing and almost completely in the hands of white Portuguese-speaking Mozambicans.[14] Things changed radically in 1980, however, when Zimbabwe elected a Zanu government led by Robert Mugabe, friendly to Frelimo. Most sources agree that it was from this point that South Africa took over as mentor and major force behind Renamo.[15]

In early 1980 the head of the British monitoring force supervising the independence process in Zimbabwe reported the wholesale removal by the South African Defence Force of Renamo personnel and supplies from an airstrip in eastern Zimbabwe.[16] There is evidence that they were taken to the Transvaal, and that South Africa then provided Renamo with improved training and logistical support, as well as advice about changes in strategy — specifically an increased focus on economic destabilization, emphasizing the disruption of the country's transport network, so vital to the region.[17] These changes helped Renamo to expand its limited operations until it was active in ten of Mozambique's twelve provinces.[18]

Pretoria is also said to have encouraged important changes on the political front.[19] Certainly offices were opened in the West, a newspaper, *A Luta Continua*, began publication and broadcasts from *Voz da Africa Livre* resumed.[20] In 1981 Renamo's previously vague objectives were elaborated in a manifesto and programme setting out its goals in broad terms. Apart from being opposed to communist systems of government and in favour of free market economic policies, Renamo committed itself to an extensive social programme.[21] Since then, however, there has been no further political statement of any substance, which has deepened the mystery surrounding the movement.

Although the South African government admitted in 1985 to having supported Renamo,[22] evidence about the nature and extent of its assistance since then has been scanty.[23] What is certain is that Renamo has very complex relationships with South Africa and that its sources of external support have become greatly diversified, funding coming from groups in Portugal and West Germany, as well as from conservative organizations in the United States.[24] Financial help and *matériel*, though their exact origin is not clear, have also come through the Comoros and Oman.[25] Malawi has also at times been implicated in providing support and safe bases for Renamo.[26]

Structure and operations of Renamo

Like its sources of funding and political aims, Renamo's structure for many years remained unclear. However William Minter's recent work, based on interviews with ex-Renamo members, sheds considerable light on how the rebels are organized.[27] Although Renamo is directed in theory by a national council headed by a secretary-general, there is little doubt that the real power lies with its president and commander-in-chief, Afonso Dhlakama, who controls a conventional military hierarchy. Renamo's northern, central and southern regions have been divided into provinces, each under the control of a provincial commander. The latter are in overall charge of sectors with two or more battalions of 450 men each, these being composed of companies of up to 150 men, with their own secret locations. Great importance is attached to communication between different levels in the field and the national headquarters at Gorongosa in the central province.[28]

Although many of the rank-and-file may have been recruited initially by force, particularly by abduction and kidnapping, most of the senior officers would appear to be volunteers.[29] Renamo units obviously have to rely heavily upon local people for support, and the way they do this has been described by Gersony in terms of three "models". In what Gersony labels "tax areas", where the population is widely distributed, Renamo forcibly extracts food, clothing and services (particularly labour for porterage) on a regular basis. In what he calls the "control areas", which normally exist in close proximity to a large but secret base, the local inhabitants are permanently engaged in helping the rebels, often in extremely brutal conditions. They have to work in the fields to provide the base with its food requirements, and are also heavily engaged in porterage duties, often over long distances and suffering very harsh treatment. Finally in the "destruction areas" Renamo does not distinguish between civilian and military targets,[30] and its attacks are characterized by violent, indiscriminate and thoroughgoing destruction.[31]

Against this background it seems difficult to understand why Renamo has continued to thrive, as it has undoubtedly, from relatively small beginnings in 1976. Now estimated to comprise approximately 20 000 men,[32] and operating throughout almost all of Mozambique, except in the largest cities, the rebels cause an enormous amount of damage, and virtually hold the government to ransom. This growth in Renamo's strength cannot be adequately explained by "external changes" since, from the mid-1980s, these have generally been detrimental to the organization. The Nkomati Accord between the South African and Mozambican heads of state in 1984,[33] Pretoria's efforts to improve its international image, and the erosion of Renamo's reputation (particularly in the United States)[34] will serve as examples. Furthermore there is little evidence pointing to a really significant improvement in Renamo's sources of funding since the mid-1980s. We must therefore look closely at the internal situation to determine the elements either indirectly benefiting Renamo or directly giving rise to its activities.

The Mozambican economy

Although Frelimo's Fourth Party Congress in 1983 did not identify the country's economic policies as a reason for the spread of Renamo,[35] it decided that important changes had to be made, and a number of commentators have drawn a link.[36]

The economic crisis in Mozambique can be attributed, at least in part, to the poor economy inherited by Frelimo at independence, weakened not only by the civil war which brought the party to power, but also by decades of mismanagement under the Portuguese. Colonial rule itself had only been fully established centuries after foreign economic exploitation of Mozambique had begun. Arab traders plying the Mozambican coast had traded consumer goods for the gold, ivory and slaves that constituted the hinterland's wealth. They had been replaced by the Portuguese, who eventually saw Mozambique as an integral part of their "Third Empire". The full implications of this did not emerge until the mid-1920s under the Salazar regime in Lisbon, which emphasized the economic contribution that the colonies had to make to the metropole. In Mozambique's case this contribution took two principal forms: the supply of cheap raw materials, chiefly cotton, and the supply of labour.[37]

Mozambican peasants were forced to grow cotton, which they then had to sell to the Portuguese at artificially low prices in order to support the metropole's fledgling textile industry. The result was widespread rural dislocation and impoverishment as people devoted their energies from food crops to a cash crop offering poor returns. This situation was exacerbated by the official encouragement of forced labour and labour migrancy, particularly in the central and southern regions, although labour migrancy did have the beneficial effect of channelling some money back to the otherwise neglected rural areas, in the form of remittances. Portugal paid minimal attention to the development of Mozambique or its people; at independence the country had little by way of infrastructure or trained manpower.[38]

Conditions in the transition and immediate post-independence periods did not ease this situation. By deciding to enforce United Nations' sanctions against Rhodesia, Frelimo effectively launched Mozambique into a war with her neighbour. This war was not only damaging in direct terms, costing some US$50 million, but, more significantly, it caused indirect losses calculated at around US$550 million in the form of lost trade, tariff and tourist income.[39] The treasury and the rural areas also lost income shortly after independence when the South African government reduced considerably the number of migrants allowed to seek jobs on the Transvaal mines.[40] Against this background, the strategies adopted by Frelimo at this time look spectacularly misguided.

With agriculture supporting more than 80 per cent of the population, Frelimo naturally took the view that this sector constituted the country's economic "base". What is astonishing is, firstly, government's subsequent neglect of agriculture relative to other sectors and, secondly, what proved to be an excessive emphasis on state involvement. Virtually all its resources were poured into large state farms and, to a lesser extent, rural cooperatives established in communal villages, to the neglect of small family owned operations.[41]

These policies have been attributed both to the legacy of centralized administration inherited from the Portuguese and to Frelimo's desire to modernize the countryside, often seen as being overly traditional and backward.[42] The leaders were undoubtedly influenced by Soviet-style centrist planning inherent in the Marxist-Leninist ideology Frelimo adopted at the Third Party Congress in 1977,[43] and by the severe crises the country has faced since 1975. Many Portuguese simply abandoned the land they had farmed in the colonial era, almost forcing the central authorities to step in and take charge.[44] This tendency to look to the state for remedial action was reinforced by a severe drought and the deteriorating situation in the rural areas.

Whatever their antecedents, government policies have given rise to disastrous results. Although the state farms absorbed as much as 90 per cent of the government's expenditure on agriculture, they produced on average a mere 20 per cent of the country's overall output and, in absolute terms, usually ran at a loss.[45] Apart from being far too big[46] and inappropriately mechanized, they experienced severe problems in obtaining labour, principally because many peasants were unenthusiastic about such a completely different way of life and work.

Rural cooperatives have been equally unsuccessful, despite a great deal of assistance from Scandinavia. These were based in communal villages, some of which were already in existence at independence as a result of the Portuguese policy of creating strategic hamlets or *aldeamentos*. Many more were created by the Frelimo government. Many of these cooperatives have been mismanaged, and have often proved unpopular with the rural populace. Apart from the problem of insufficient funding, too little thought was given to the planning, organization and running of the communal villages and their institutions.[47]

As a result of this emphasis on state farms and cooperatives, small-scale family-based holdings were seriously neglected by government despite the fact that they continued to provide the bulk of the country's agricultural produce. The peasants suffered not only as a direct consequence of this mistaken strategy but also indirectly. Producer pricing policies, biased in favour of the urban centres, implied very low returns for all crops; the roads and lorries needed to move goods in and out of the rural areas were in very poor condition; and both farm supplies and consumer goods were scarce as a result of the breakdown of the network of state-run "people's shops", the only retail outlets.[48]

These agricultural policies have had two major consequences. Firstly, they have resulted, since 1981, in a marked decline in production. The adverse effects have been manifold. Industries relying on this sector have suffered, and Mozambique's general balance of payments situation has deteriorated.[49] Agricultural decline has also brought about a food crisis — of near famine proportions — described as among the most severe in Africa.[50] Secondly, widespread resentment has been caused not only by Frelimo's unwillingness to recognize and expand the contribution made by the small-scale peasant farmers to the economy,[51] but also by the pressure it often applied in an effort to implement its chosen course of action. This seems to have been what happened with the communal villages, where overall policy has at times been extended and rushed owing to the need to deal with natural disasters and the security situation. The nett result appears to have been to alienate the rural population, thus fuelling Renamo.[52]

It is unclear how, exactly, this resentment has been translated into general support (and especially recruits) for Renamo, given the brutality of its *modus operandi*. A correlation has been suggested between areas which have undergone most villagization and those of greatest Renamo presence or success.[53] What is perhaps less open to debate is the connection between the crisis in the rural areas and the incidence of support for Renamo. The destruction of social structures and the process of impoverishment which the rural areas have experienced for decades and which have been worsened by Frelimo policies have led to a situation in which an organization operating after the fashion of Renamo is allowed to flourish. In a situation where day-to-day survival is so uncertain, the option of obtaining a living by violent means must seem persuasive, while the ability to resist is inevitably weakened. Hence, not surprisingly, in many districts the inhabitants either flee from Renamo, or give in almost without a struggle.

Unfortunately there seems little that the authorities in Maputo can do to alleviate or rectify the situation. In 1983, against the background of economic decline, external economic pressure and an increasing intensity of Renamo activity, Frelimo's Fourth Party Congress acknowledged need to change some of its policies and proposed some reforms.[54] However, as a result of the continuing fighting and destruction in the rural areas, few of these improvements could be implemented.[55] It is very much a Catch-22 situation.

Nevertheless, in this area Mozambique's problems are identifiable and potentially remediable and the government is constantly seeking to address them. Holding out less hope of progress are some of the other internal concerns contributing to the growth of Renamo.

The role of "traditional" practices and beliefs

For some time it has been recognized that a continuation (in some instances, a resurgence) of interest in both Christianity and traditional structures, practices and beliefs has been used by Renamo in what few publicized efforts it has made to rally support within Mozambique.[56] In doing so it would appear to be building upon a base of popular resentment, for Frelimo policies are in general opposed to traditional practices, and Frelimo power structures, especially in the rural areas, have replaced older power structures or are in active competition with them.

Frelimo's opposition to all types of religion, to polygyny and to chiefs, stems partly from its commitment to the "modernization" of what it saw as a backward and "uncaptured" peasantry, and partly from its desire to rid Mozambique of customs, beliefs and institutions closely associated with the colonial regime.[57]

In the process it has aroused considerable resentment, particularly in the rural areas, and its efforts have quite often been unsuccessful. Many traditional practices have quietly flourished despite the opposition of the central authorities, and the chieftaincies continue to exist either in direct opposition to official Frelimo structures or under their very guise.[58]

Renamo has clearly hoped to capitalize on Frelimo's assault upon religion and tradition and the consequent flowering of popular resentment. Respect for both freedom of religion and tradition — and promises of a return thereto — feature strongly in Renamo propaganda.[59] But the extent to which these promises have been used by Renamo as a means of rallying support in the rural areas must be in some doubt, given the absence of a coherent political programme and the apparent lack of any real desire to win support on ideological grounds.

What is more convincing is the way the rebels have reacted to, and made practical use of, age-old customs. There are also some documented cases of the use of spirit-mediums in the field.[60] But more examples will have to come to light of Renamo's involvement in, and exploitation of, traditional structures and institutions for its own benefit, before we can draw any firm conclusions about the contribution made to Renamo's growth by this tension between the "modernizing" tendencies of Frelimo, and the attachment of rural people to their past heritage. Although such factors have been mentioned so often by commentators with reference to Renamo, their importance is likely to vary from place to place according to the local importance of traditional and ethnic considerations.

Regional influences on the growth of Renamo

Regional considerations have always been important in Mozambique, not least because the north, central and southern regions all differ so markedly from each other, geographically, economically and culturally. To some extent, Frelimo was able to bring together a truly national movement opposed to Portuguese colonial rule, but this unity was tenuous.[61] When the war against the Portuguese ended, Frelimo was still relatively unknown in the rural areas of the south;[62] and the new government, busily occupied as it was with one crisis after another, had little opportunity to knit the country together.

Ethnic and regional tensions appeared within Frelimo from its inception, there existing much resentment at the dominance within the organization of southerners, particularly those of mestizo origin. On occasion these tensions translated themselves into open conflict, as in the leadership struggles of the late 1960s.[63]

There can be little doubt that regional and ethnic tensions and imbalances are important in explaining the Renamo phenomenon. The rebels accuse Frelimo of not being truly representative of all the groups in Mozambican society and argue that as a result the government's policies are ethnically biased.[64] However, although some disparities seem to exist between the levels of Renamo activity in different regions, these may at times be explained in other ways. Some areas, for example, may contain more important targets, others may be more accessible operationally, for either Renamo or government forces.

Although there appear to be few significant ethnic imbalances within the rank and file of Renamo itself, the leadership comprises mostly Shona speakers from central Mozambique. This is probably the long-term consequence of the organization's early history and the patronage it then received. Rhodesia's major use for Renamo was in central Mozambique, and its original external controllers would have found it easiest to work with Shona speakers.[65] This point has attracted a lot of curiosity; it is often raised in discussions of Renamo's bases of support.

The absence of democracy and the weakness of the state

The political alienation of so many Mozambicans and the weakness of the post-independence state have also been advanced to explain the growth of Renamo.[66]

Popular participation in government is limited, particularly in the rural areas. To an extent this results from a decision taken by Frelimo at its Third Congress in 1977, to transform itself from a mass-based organization into a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party.[67] The party, which constitutes the main political force in society, thus became limited in size, excluding many would-be members. Other mechanisms for securing popular involvement and consultation — the women's, youth and workers' movements organized by Frelimo, for example — have had limited success in this regard.[68]

Local government structures operate sporadically, if at all, in most areas of Mozambique, particularly where these lie clear of the major towns. Where they do operate, it is mostly in an executive capacity, implementing orders from the central authorities in Maputo, in whose hands power has become increasingly concentrated. This has led to feelings of alienation and exclusion, particularly among the rural younger people who have come to form an important component of Renamo's forces.[69]

Poor government policy serves often to exacerbate the situation. An example of this was "Operation Production" in 1983. The government forcibly removed thousands of "surplus" people — the unemployed, the homeless, vagabonds, and so on — from towns and cities and dumped them in rural areas. There is plenty of evidence that people who were victims of such policies joined Renamo as recruits, or at the very least gave them passive support.[70]

Further, the weakness of state structures has meant that Frelimo finds itself unable to deal with the crises it faces, particularly in the countryside. The state structures it inherited at independence were particularly weak, and for a number of reasons, including an illiteracy rate of 70 per cent, Frelimo was unable to devise an effective and participatory system of decision making and implementation. The government thus finds itself in a situation where it is itself one of the problems; and is simply unable to deal with some of the others. Although the leadership has committed itself since 1983 to making reforms, it has lacked the fundamental capacity to carry them out.[71]

In this light, the rise of Renamo may be seen as connected to widespread political alienation and a virtual absence on the part of the state, especially in the rural areas. However, from what we know of the ways in which Renamo itself engages the population, it would seem that it is only in isolated cases — such as "Operation Production" — that resentment of the authorities is channelled directly into support for the rebels. What appears more significant is the gradually increasing lack of identification with, and involvement in, the central state. This situation could be compounded were state structures to decline further in the face of the deteriorating economic and security situation.

The role of the military

For some time now, commentators have linked the persistence of Renamo with the inability of the Mozambican state to find a military solution to the rebels' activities.[72] This inability stems partly from the type of approach taken by the Mozambican armed forces (FPLM) and partly from financial and practical constraints. Since the early 1980s, however, Maputo has made serious efforts to improve the situation by seeking internally-oriented and external solutions.[73]

Following Mozambican independence in 1975, Frelimo's mass-based guerilla movement was transformed into a conventional army with a rigid, hierarchical rank structure and making extensive use of conventional strategy and heavy artillery. Hence the government found itself, at least initially, in the curious position of being ill-equipped to deal with the low-intensity and wide-ranging guerilla war being waged against it. Frelimo does not appear to have done much about this, although it has started to place more emphasis on the formation of village militias.[74]

Morale is the second problem, not least because of the army's inability to get supplies through to the operational areas. Another reason is that the concentration of troops on the ground is low — except for in the large towns and vital strategic areas such as the Beira Corridor — giving rise to feelings of isolation and vulnerability.[75] Apart from logistical and transportation problems, there is a dire shortage of funds — despite the fact that defence regularly consumes over 40 per cent of Mozambique's annual budget.[76]

The government has increasingly looked outside the country for help. The number of Zimbabwean troops engaged has varied, but since 1984 there have been more than 10 000 in Mozambique at any one time, mainly protecting vital installations, especially in the Beira Corridor. Tanzania and Malawi (later) have also sent armed units to assist Frelimo, though on a far smaller scale.[77] In addition, Britain has been concerned in the training of troops and a number of multinationals have formed their own militias in an effort to protect their Mozambican interests.

These patchy solutions no doubt have some efficacy in the short-term. But it is clear that fundamental changes will have to be made both within the army itself and at the broader level of strategy. Clearly, given the broader context as described here, there will never be a purely military or diplomatic solution to the crisis in Mozambique. It is an important truism, however, that before law and order can be fully re-established the government will have to achieve an effective military and police presence throughout the country. This is necessary particularly in view of the continuing cycle of destruction and the widespread social banditry Renamo appears to have generated.[78]

Conclusion

It is clear that Renamo has acquired a dynamic of its own, and that it is a long way from being the puppet of foreign interests that it once was. Obviously many internal problems and issues have helped breed resentment against Frelimo and have encouraged potential support for the rebels. What remains at issue, however, is why and how this has translated into the growth that Renamo has enjoyed over the last ten years. The violence and brutality with which it acts against the local population, and the overwhelming extent to which it is compelled to rely upon forced recruitment, indicate that the relationship between Renamo and internal problems in Mozambique is a complex and indirect one: one in which the wholesale breakdown of infrastructure and of law and order in rural areas plays an integral part.

But the relationship is an important one to address, especially given the current peace initiatives in the region.[79] The Frelimo government's acceptance of the need to negotiate a settlement with Renamo, the opening of talks between the two parties in Rome on 8-10 July,[80] and President Chissano's announcement of the probable introduction of a multi-party system are all hopeful signs. Unless some of the structural problems mentioned here are addressed, however, it is unlikely that peace and stability will come soon to Mozambique

Notes and references

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4 Robert Gersony, *Summary of Mozambican refugee accounts of principally conflict-related experience in Mozambique*, Washington DC: US Department of State, Bureau for Refugee Programs, 1988.

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10 Paul Fauvet, *op cit*, p 114.

11 André E Thomashausen, "The National Resistance of Mozambique", *Africa Insight*, vol 13, no 2, 1983, pp 125-126. For an account of the internal conflict in Frelimo in the 1960s, see Walter Opello, "Pluralism and elite conflict in an independence movement: Frelimo in the 1960s", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol 2, no 1, 1975, pp 66-82.

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13 Steven Metz, *op cit*, p 494.

14 Paul Fauvet, *op cit*, p 116.

15 Steven Metz, *op cit*; Colin Legum, *op cit*.

16 *Ibid*.

17 Paul Fauvet, *op cit*, pp 116-117.

18 Steven Metz, *op cit*, p 495.

19 *Ibid*, p 496.

20 Paul Fauvet, *op cit*, pp 117-120.

21 André E Thomashausen, op cit, pp 125-126.

22 Joseph Hanlon, *Beggar your neighbours: Apartheid power in Southern Africa*, London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1986, p 149.

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24 Gillian Gunn, "Post-Nkomati Mozambique", *CSIS Africa Notes*, no 38, 1985, pp 3-4.

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26 Allen Isaacman, "Mozambique", *Survival*, vol 30, no 1, 1988, pp 27-31.

27 Although his description has been criticized as "over the top".

28 William Minter, *op cit*, pp 11-13.

29 *Ibid*, pp 3-5.

30 Robert Gersony, *op cit*, pp 8-15.

31 *Africa Report*, March-April 1989, p 20.

32 William Minter, *op cit*, p 11.

33 Most sources agree that South Africa did not honour the agreement in full. See Steven Metz, *op cit*, p 498 and John Saul, *op cit*, pp 21-22.

34 See, for example, *Africa Confidential*, vol 30, no 13, 23 June 1989, pp 1-3, and vol 30, no 3, 3 February 1989, pp 1-2.

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Seychelles: An interview with Finance Minister James Michel

Dr Denis Venter, Chief Researcher in Politics and International Relations at the Africa Institute, recently visited Seychelles. He talked to Minister Michel in his spacious office on the third floor of the impressive Central Bank of Seychelles building on Independence Avenue in the capital Victoria, on the main island of Mahé. In a wide-ranging interview, Minister Michel covered issues relating to the economy, politics and foreign affairs, including relations with South Africa.

The economy

Venter: *Tourism and fishing are the main foreign-currency earners for the Seychelles economy. Could you provide some details about these sectors, which are generally regarded as the strong points in the economy?*

Michel: Naturally, tourism being our main money-earner, it is the policy of the government to maximize our tourist potential. Tourism tapered off in the early 1980s, but picked up again during the latter half of the decade with a total of around 79 000 visitors in 1988 alone. Last year, the total number of tourists reached 87 000 and for the current year it is expected to exceed 92 000. For this year, as at June 17, 1990, some 48 500 tourists visited these shores — an increase of 28 per cent over the same period last year, top markets being France (around 12 800), Italy (nearly 9 190), the United Kingdom (almost 8 300), and West Germany trailing somewhat behind with 4 300 visitors. However, a limit of 100 000 tourists per annum has been set to protect the environment and to ensure that societal strains are kept to a minimum.

We also see our marine resources as very important to the economy. In order to protect and excercise the necessary control over these resources, we have declared a 320 kilometre exclusive economic maritime zone which gives us exclusive rights and sovereignty over some 1 million square kilometres of the Indian Ocean. We have been licensing fishing trawlers from the European Community (EC), mainly from France (20) and Spain (20), to fish within this maritime zone. At present, there are about 47 fishing vessels operating in Seychelles waters. And in an attempt to work towards self-sufficiency in this sector, three trawlers are currently being built in France — which should begin a process of making us less dependent on foreign fishing vessels to satisfy our tuna cannery's production requirements. The government accepts that private investment will be needed to further develop the fishing industry and to help it realize its full potential, without, however, over-exploiting our marine resources.

Venter: *What would you regard as a weakness in the economy? And how would you describe the current state of the Seychelles economy?*

Michel: One potential weakness in the economy is the strong dependence of our external accounts on tourism. That is why we are intensifying our efforts to enhance the gains in other sectors. Another point worth noting is that the agricultural potential of the islands is rather limited because of the hilly terrain and low soil fertility. Our two main export crops, copra and cinnamon, have performed rather badly over the last few years. Efforts to revive the tea industry have met with some success; fruit, vegetable and meat production have made impressive advances in recent years, partly under the impetus of the tourist industry; and we are self-sufficient in pork and poultry products. However, most of our beef has to be imported, together with some dairy products.

Nevertheless, the economy is performing reasonably well. In fact, we have been experiencing a period of steady economic growth since 1986, and the stable political climate prevailing has contributed to a significant rise in economic confidence. Furthermore, the government prefers to maintain a mixed and open economy. As one example of encouraging private initiative and private investment, the government plans to sell off some of its shares in the hotel industry and travel agency business.

Venter: *Most developing countries, including South Africa, seem to suffer from rising inflation, high population growth, escalating unemployment, low or even negative economic growth, declining productivity, large foreign debt liabilities, crippling debt repayment schedules, and so forth. How does Seychelles figure in this equation? And to pin something else onto this: what role, if any, do the structural adjustment programmes of the World Bank play in the economy of Seychelles?*

"South Africa provides the Seychelles with large proportions of its imports and is an enormous potential market for tourists .... The government has tried to encourage imports from India, Singapore, Australia, and Europe, but thus far no one can compete with the South Africans, except in the fields of automobile manufacturing and electronics, where the Japanese have cornered the Seychelles market. The quality of Indian goods tends to be inferior to that of South African products, and Indian shipping to the Seychelles is sporadic at best. Singapore, Australia, and European countries find it difficult to undersell the South Africans or to supply goods as frequently and as dependably. Ships from elsewhere are infrequent and irregular; in contrast, the South Africans send a ship to Seychelles every week " — Marcus Franda in *The Seychelles: Unquiet islands,* Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982.

"We like to do business with South Africa. The quality of your products are uniformly good and deliveries are made on schedule" — Community Development Minister Esme Jumeau, in an interview on 9 May, 1990 in the Maison du Peuple, Victoria.

Michel: To address the second part of your question first — in short, no World Bank structural adjustment programme has been proposed or implemented for Seychelles and, frankly, we don't believe that we need one.

Naturally, Seychelles experiences some of the same problems as other developing countries, although on a much smaller scale. Our current inflation rate is of the order of 2 to 2,5 per cent, and we have managed to maintain an annual growth rate in GDP of around 6 per cent (in nominal terms) over the past 5 years. A situation of full employment being our target, we realize that job creation needs our constant attention. On the other hand, population growth has been far below the African average of 2,9 per cent, at an annual figure of around 1,8 per cent — but, then, actual growth has been even lower, at about 0,6 per cent per year, owing to an annual net emigration of roughly 600.

In terms of public management, the current financial year of 1990/91 will be difficult but not insurmountable. Debt-servicing is expected to be at a peak during this period and will then start declining in subsequent years. Up to now we have had to devote some 11 per cent of our foreign exchange earnings to debt-servicing. However, Seychelles has a high credit rating and a good track record for the repayment of its loans, in spite of these difficult times. In the face of a heavy debt-repayment schedule, the Seychelles rupee has managed, to a reasonable extent, to hold its own against other currencies (SR5,45 equals US-$1,00), being linked to an SDR basket of currencies.

Venter: *Presumably, the local economy relies heavily on foreign funding or aid of all types; but, at the same time this makes Seychelles overly dependent on outside agencies for its economic well-being — from bilateral programmes with the United Kingdom, France, Japan and the US, to multilateral assistance through the EC, the OECD, the African Development Bank, BADEA, and the IMF. Are there any means of escaping this dependency dilemma?*

Michel: Seychelles has a good image among donor countries. Loans for viable projects are still forthcoming, because donors can see where their money goes. But to answer your question directly: the government is aiming, through long-term economic planning, to move our country to a position where we are able to rely more on our own human and natural resources, small as these might be. Although we suffer from a manpower shortage, not only in skilled but also in unskilled labour, our ultimate goal is a healthy and stable balance-of-payments situation based on small-scale, capital-intensive, export-oriented industries.

We will just have to diversify and develop other sectors of our economy so as to lessen our dependence on tourism and fishing. In this regard we are very much encouraged by the results of oil exploration on the shelf south-east of Mahé, which includes the Topaze, Constant, Coetivy, and Fortune banks. Three oil companies have already shown interest and one will start test-drilling later this year. So we hope that during the next ten years or so the oil exploration project will eventually produce an industry strong enough to counterbalance the dependence on the fragile tourist trade. Oil could make all the difference, if there's enough of it; but in the meantime we have to carry on as best we can, trying to find viable alternatives. One such alternative is the development of our own prawn industry on Coetivy island at a cost of some SR70 million (US$12,85 million). When fully operational, the prawn farm will be capable of producing 800 tonnes of prawns annually, the bulk of the output being destined for export to Europe. This will be of significant help in our efforts to expand the base of our export earnings.

Venter: *What are your views on the economic interdependence of Seychelles and the other Indian Ocean island territories (Mauritius, Madagascar, Comoros, Réunion), especially within the context of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)?*

Michel: There is the necessary political will amongst the member countries of the IOC to forge ahead with strengthening and further developing this regional grouping. The Commission's main aim is to develop inter-island trade, and to establish maritime transport and shipping services; in addition, it is also concerned with tuna fishing, new and renewable energy sources, regional agreements on cottage industries, and the development of tourism. But to be more specific: relations between ourselves and Mauritius are now at an all-time high following the various air service, trade and other agreements signed last year, and even closer collaboration will be attained later this year

Seychelles: Basic physical,demographic and social data

Land area and location: 453 km^2 (of which Mahé, 153 km^2; Praslin, 38 km^2; and La Dique, 12 km^2), comprising 41 granitic islands and 74 coralline islands set in the western Indian Ocean off the east coast of Africa, north of Madagascar.

Sea Area: 115 islands widely scattered over a vast area of more than 400 000 km^2; exclusive economic maritime zone covers some 1 mn km^2

Climate: Tropical (Mahé situated 4^o south of the equator). Temperature at sea level: 26-31^{o}C, April (hottest); 24-29^{o}C, July/August (coldest). Average rainfall: 54 mm, June (driest); 405 mm, January (wettest).

Population: 66 745 (1989 est) of which 90 per cent on main island of Mahé, 5 per cent on Praslin, 3 per cent on La Dique, and 2 per cent on some of the outer islands.

Population growth rate: 1,8 per cent (1988); actual growth rate only 0,6 per cent because of annual net emigration of around 600.

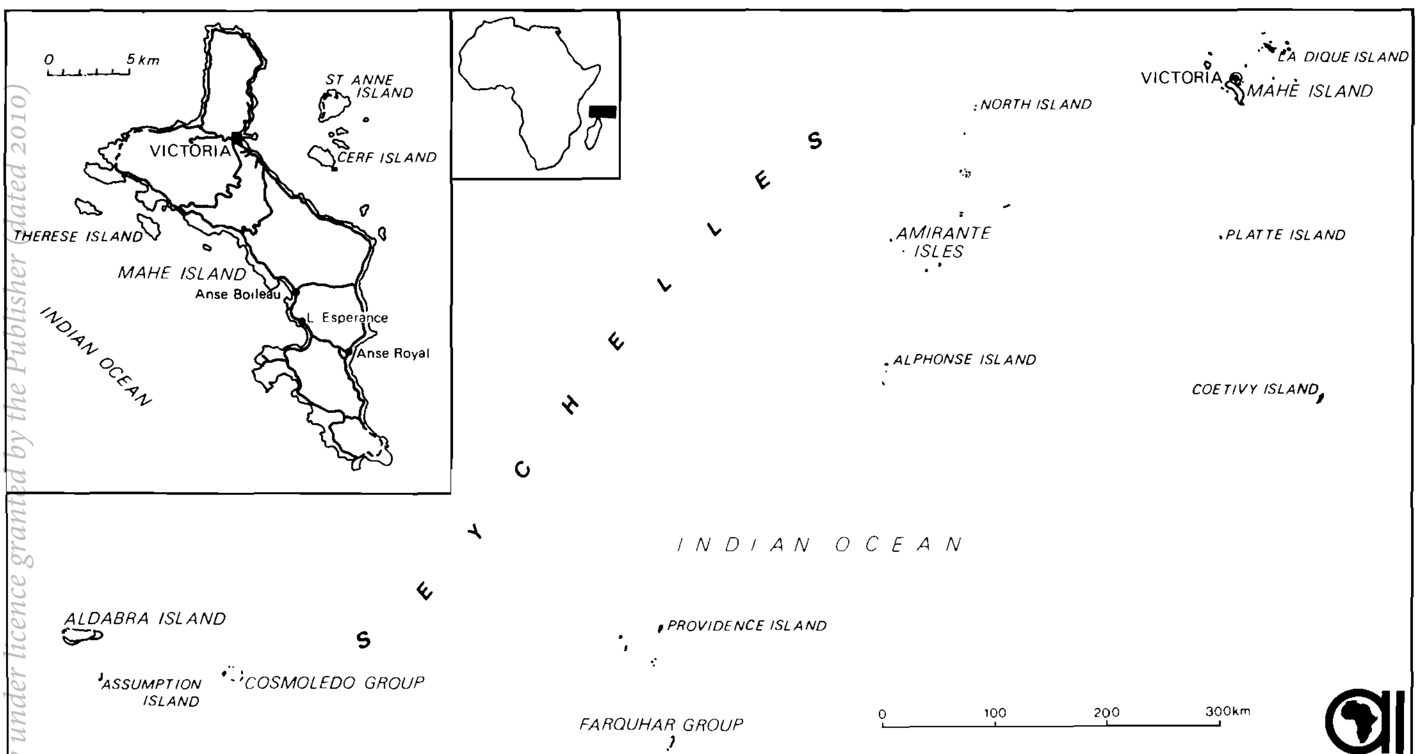
Life expectancy: 66,2 years for men; 73,5 years for women. Infant mortality: 18 per 1000 (1986).

School attendance: Compulsory free education between ages 6 and 15. Pupil/teacher ratio: 20 to 1.

Languages: Kreol (Creole), English and French.

Literacy: 85 per cent (1989).

Religion: Predominantly Christian (Roman Catholic), estimated at over 90 per cent of the total population; complete freedom of religion.



with the setting up of the joint Seychelles-Mauritius economic commission. Currently, there are already a few joint venture corporations operating in Seychelles, such as a paint manufacturing company and a television assembly plant — Seychellois partners holding 60 per cent of the shares and their Mauritian counterparts the balance of 40 per cent. Another example is cooperation between ourselves and Réunion in the production of coconut cream from local raw materials for the export market. So, within the IOC, we look towards mutually beneficial and co-operative economic relations in order to strengthen our respective economies.

Seychelles: Basic economic data

Capital/main port: Victoria on Mahé (population, 1989 est 22 500). Handled 305 000 tonnes of freight cargo in 1988.

Currency: Seychelles Rupee (SR) = 100 cents. Average exchange rate: SR5,45 = US$1,00 (May 1990).

National budget: 1988, (Budget estimates) Total revenue SR770,0 mn (US$143,02 mn); Total expenditure SR889,2 mn (US$165,16 mn). Current account deficit SR119,2 mn (US$22,14mn) or 7,5 per cent of GDP.
1989, Total revenue SR865,8 mn (US$152,97 mn); Total expenditure SR990,6 mn (US$175,02 mn). Current account deficit SR124,8 mn (US$22,05mn) or 7,2 per cent of GDP.

Foreign trade: 1987, Exports SR124,3 mn (US$22,20 mn); Imports SR635,7 mn (US$113,52 mn). Trade deficit SR511,4 mn (US$91,32 mn).
1988, Exports SR169,2 mn (US$31,43 mn); Imports SR823,2 mn (US$152,90 mn). Trade deficit SR654,0 mn (US$121,50 mn).

Main destinations: 1987, Exports 62,7 per cent — France
11,6 per cent — Pakistan
10,2 per cent — Réunion
6,8 per cent — United Kingdom

Main origins: 1987, Imports 20,2 per cent — United Kingdom
14,3 per cent — France
13,0 per cent — South Africa
12,8 per cent — South Yemen

Balance of payments: 1986, SR191,58 mn (US$31,02 mn) deficit

Foreign debt: 1987, SR899,4 mn (US$160,61 mn)
1988, SR856,6 mn (US$159,10 mn)

Debt repayment: 1988, SR133,9 mn (US$24,87 mn)
1989, SR147,0 mn (US$25,97 mn)

Debt service ratio: 1988 — 19,6 per cent of current expenditure (SR683,3 mn or US$126,91 mn)
1989 — 20,6 per cent of current expenditure (SR713,8 mn or US$126,11 mn)

Foreign reserves: 1987, SR76,72 mn (US$13,7 mn)

GDP: 1988, SR1 589 mn (US$295,13 mn)
1989, SR1 733 mn (US$306,20 mn)

Real GDP growth: 1988 — 6 per cent
1989 — 7 per cent

Inflation: 1987 — 2,6 per cent
1988 — 2,2 per cent

Direct foreign investment: 1987, SR78,4 mn (US$14,0 mn)
1988, SR84,0 mn (US$15,6 mn)

Average monthly earnings: 1987, SR2 208 or US$394 (guaranteed minimum monthly wage, SR1 200 or US$214)

Sources: Economist Intelligence Unit: *Mauritius, Seychelles: Country profile, 1989-90*, London: EIU, 1990. Economist Intelligence Unit, *Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Comoros: Country report*, no 1, 1990.

Politics and foreign affairs

Venter: *The Seychelles government under President France Albert René has an impressive record in social welfare programmes. Is this a victory for socialism and for a one-party state? If these benefits are long-lasting, have they occurred at the expense of plural democracy?*

Michel: Our aim in Seychelles is to create a new society, based on social justice and equal opportunity for all. We have established what we would like to call "Seychellois socialism" and we regard it as a misconception to compare our system with the forms of socialism that were, until recently, prevalent in Eastern Europe.

Seychelles officially became a one-party state in June 1979 when a new constitution was adopted after a referendum. In a small community of 66 000 people a multi-party system is almost bound to create unnecessary divisions which could be extremely detrimental to overall stability. We feel that the goals of national unity and national development cannot be achieved in an unstable political and economic climate. Under a one-party system we have made tremendous progress. In fact, we have achieved what no other African country has been able to do: single-digit inflation, high growth rates, free health and education, pensions for the aged and disabled, state-guaranteed housing loans for all employees, and much more.

Furthermore, there is a process of heightened democratization within our society. Through strengthened party organization at the community level, we provide structures and create the appropriate forums for discussion to encourage full participation of people in all walks of life right down to the grass-roots level. Through these structures there are built-in checks on the party and the government to galvanize ideas, openly subject policy to critical analysis, suggest reform measures, and even to prevent corruption and other forms of malpractice.

Venter: *Has not the legal status accorded to just one political party encouraged exiled opponents of the regime to resort to rather desperate measures? Do any of the Seychellois dissident groups abroad, such as the Seychelles National Movement (SNM), pose a threat to the Seychelles government?*

"... the present [socialist] party and government contain large numbers of people who are enthusiastic about the experimental enterprises in which they are engaged, are open about their plans and methods of proceeding, and have been candid ... about their failings. Because of these people, Seychelles does not yet have a government like so many others in Africa and Asia that have been lost entirely in machinations to stay in power. It is still possible for a foreign journalist or scholar to move about in society and discuss important issues .... [hopefully] the government will shift further in the direction of greater openness, while maintaining the dedication and hard work that have been exhibited by its ... members and adapting its programmes to realities when it recognizes clear failures" — Marcus Franda in the Preface to *The Seychelles: Unquiet islands,* Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982).

Michel: As the sole legal political party, the Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF) has managed to gain the confidence of the overwhelming majority of the population by establishing a climate of political stability and economic prosperity.
Although Seychellois exiles living in Britain, Australia and South Africa have access to the local population, they have not been able to muster any significant local support, and I believe that the London-based SNM has virtually collapsed. So, it does not pose any real threat to the government.

***Venter:** Your government renegotiated the use of satellite tracking station facilities with the US government? Are you satisfied with the deal struck? And what is your government's position on foreign bases on your territory?*

Michel: Yes, we have recently signed a new five-year lease agreement with Washington for its use of the satellite tracking station outside Victoria on Mahé island. But we feel that a lease payment of around US$13 to 14 million (SR70 to 75 million) per year would have been more realistic than the US$4,5 million (SR24,5 million) per year we finally had to agree upon. So, clearly we are not satisfied with the financial side of the agreement, but being a small country in the international system, we accept there's not much we can do about it.

On the question of foreign bases in Seychelles: in short, we will not allow bases of any kind to be established on our territory. We set great store by our independence and freedom of action, and wish to keep it that way.

***Venter:** Would you describe the foreign policy of Seychelles as truly non-aligned? Is your government still championing the idea of a nuclear-free zone in the Indian Ocean? And what support can be mustered for this stance*

Seychelles: Basic political data

Official name	:Republic of Seychelles
Independence	:June 29, 1976 (former British colony)
Form of state	:Unitary Republic
Legal system	:Based on English common law, Code Napoléon, and the 1979 Constitution
National legislature	:People's Assembly (23 members elected on a constituency basis by universal adult suffrage and two presidential nominees who represent the outer islands; all serve a four-year term)
Last elections	:June 1989 (Presidential); December 1987 (Legislative)
Next elections due	:June 1994 (Presidential); December 1991 (Legislative)
Head of state	:President elected by universal suffrage (empowered under the Constitution to rule by decree; serves a five year term)
National government	:The President and his appointed Council of Ministers
Main political parties	:Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF); sole legal party since June 1979
Council of Ministers	:(Last major reshuffle, June 1989)
President and Minister of Defence, Legal Affairs, the Environment, and Industry	:France Albert René
Minister of	
Administration and Manpower	:Joseph Belmont
Agriculture and Fisheries	:Jeremie Bonnelame
Community Development	:Esme Jumeau
Education	:Simone Testa
Employment and Social Affairs	:William Herminie
Finance	:James Michel
Health	:Ralph Adam
Information, Culture and Sports	:Sylvette Frichot
Planning and External Relations	:Danielle de St Jorre
Tourism and Transport	:Jacques Hodoul

in the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and the United Nations (UN)?

Michel: We have all along followed a non-aligned foreign policy. We are dependent on good relations with the West for the bulk of our development aid and for most of our tourist trade. But over the years we have also maintained ties with the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, as well as a host of Third World states. We therefore like to emphasize the "non-aligned" nature of our foreign policy and want to deal equally with Moscow and Washington.

In the past, our strategic position in the Indian Ocean has laid us open to the competing regional ambitions of the superpowers. With the worldwide scaling-down of regional conflicts, however, the possibility of confrontation between the superpowers seems to be receding. Yet, we feel as strongly as ever about the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean. We want this vast maritime region to be declared a nuclear-free zone, a "zone of peace". Indeed, we believe that there is a lot of latent support for such a stance within the international community, and especially among the island and littoral states of the Indian Ocean region.

***Venter:** It was reported in the Seychelles Nation of 3 May, and I quote: "Madagascar has announced it will restore air links and economic ties with South Africa to encourage President F W de Klerk's move away from apartheid .... The President [Didier Ratsiraka] urged all countries in the region to help negotiations between the South African President and the African National Congress ... [in order to prevent] the ANC from being overwhelmed by pressure from the left and Mr de Klerk by pressure from the right". This is a very realistic assessment of the South African situation — in fact, it can be described as a significant "sea-change" in Madagascar's policy towards South Africa. In the light of the long-standing Mauritian and Comoran relationships with South Africa — and your own co-operative relationships within the Indian Ocean Commission — what are the prospects for "more normal" relations between Seychelles and South Africa in view of recent political developments inside South Africa? If talks with the ANC get off the ground, will Seychelles consider similar steps as those now about to be taken by Madagascar?*

Michel: We regard recent events in South Africa as a very positive and healthy development. President de Klerk should be congratulated for his initiatives and his undoubted courage. It seems that reason has finally taken over and that a process of change has started. Naturally, we in Seychelles welcome moves towards a situation in South Africa where there will be equal opportunities for all — a situation in which the human rights of every citizen will be safeguarded. Progress along this road should be encouraged, and may eventually lead to freer trade flows between our countries and the re-establishment of direct air links with the South African carrier broken off years ago. As you know, Luxair is already providing a direct link between Victoria and Johannesburg. In the field of tourism, we would like to see a healthy growth in South African visitors. And even in the area of co-operation, we see a possible future regional grouping which, in one form or another, could include South Africa and other African littoral states such as Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya, and Somalia.

***Venter:** Perhaps we should end our discussion on this rather positive note. Thank you for your time and for responding so extensively to most of my questions.*

Partnership contracts as an alternative to falling agricultural credit? Sudan's rural credit experience

Dr P J van Dooren, formerly Director of the Department of Social and Economic Research of the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam and now Emeritus Professor in Agricultural Credit and Cooperative Organization, discusses the successful use of partnership contracts in Sudan as an alternative to more conventional forms of agricultural credit. He draws on a wealth of experience gleaned from visits over the years to more than thirty developing countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean as a consultant and research supervisor for bilateral, international and non-governmental development cooperation organizations. In 1988 he undertook research and provided advice in Sudan.

Problems of institutional agricultural credit in developing countries.

Systems of formal, institutional agricultural credit have met with disappointment and failure in many developing countries; and one of their goals, providing credit to small farmers, has only infrequently been achieved.

The causes and effects of this state of affairs can be identified:

— inadequate correspondence with customs, perceptions and socio-economic relationships within the rural community being served;

— the credit institution's requirement for some form of security, such as the ownership of land. Many small farmers are tenants or share croppers, or may have rights to the use of communally-owned land but no individual, alienable property;

— misallocation of credit funds by artificially keeping the rate of interest low, by which policy the larger farmers profit more than do the smaller;

— high, and frequently concealed, additional costs for the borrower which cancel out the benefits of the official low interest rate;

— administrative red tape, loss of time for the farmer and delays in the allocation of credit (in comparison with informal credit). Even though credit may be provided totally or partially in kind, the necessary assistance or material help agreed are not always immediately on hand or fail to arrive in time;

— insufficient range of credit funds in the institutional pool, so that, at times, only 10 per cent of small farmers demands can be satisfied;

— mistaken use of credit funds by the borrower, either through ignorance or lack of ability, or through his having requested what was labelled a production-credit, whereas what he actually needed credit for was an advance to cover daily consumption or social expenses;

— economizing by the farmer on the use and quality of fertilizer and seed, or on the cost of cultivating the soil in order to reduce production costs (and thus the credit necessary). This can often lead to a very poor harvest (penny wise is pound foolish);

— the problem of repaying the debt (the loan), either through poor marketing, which gives the farmer insufficient income to cover repayment; or through disappointing harvests, which influence the expenses of the farmer and his family and therefore his ability to meet his debt obligations;

— refusal of further credit provision — either for the borrower himself or for the whole group to which the borrower belongs — after an unsatisfactory repayment. The frequently discussed "joint liability" of all the group members for the repayment of their total credit often works, naturally enough, to the detriment of those group members who fulfil their obligations. (In India for example, whole land development banks find themselves excluded from refinancing facilities because more than 15 per cent of their credits were not paid off on time by their own debtors. The remaining 85 per cent of their farmers (those who did repay their credit on time) could then secure no new credit;

- further acquired indebtedness — sometimes even multiple — both to other institutions and to informal creditors;
- some credit programmes seem primarily oriented to increasing, improving or restoring production potential (for instance in certain agricultural settlement or irrigation projects); but, for the greater part, institutional credit is still being given for mere survival: it is used for direct or indirect consumption financing, using traditional production methods and traditional inputs. To safeguard consumption, in other words, production is kept ticking over by using the old, traditional methods — the entire operation frequently being conducted at subsistence level and without improving the farmer's position in the least. Most of these small farmers just cannot afford the risk of using new methods or inputs to increase production; their survival margin is often too narrow. Debtors will thus never be able to break loose from their traditional credit habits: they can never accumulate produce and income or save money for re-investment;
- finally a general complaint: cooperation between agricultural counselling organizations and credit institutions is frequently not optimal — indeed, it is sometimes completely absent.

Attempts at improvement

Many approaches have been tried in attempting to improve the situation illustrated above, to prevent the misuse of credit and reduce repayment deficits, and for the better alignment of credit provision with credit requirements — these were sometimes found to be effective, either temporarily, or partially, or in certain projects. Among these we may mention the following: supervised credit, group loans, crop loans, integrated agricultural extension/credit programmes, the linking of credit with marketing, total credit (for the production needs as well as the consumption needs of the borrower), debt consolidation and debt write-offs followed by integrated or concomitant credit provision, credit provision combined with production planning and organized service during the production process (sometimes for the individual farmer, mostly for groups of farmers, in the group-approach or area-approach), and so on and so forth.

Yet, with the exception of a few local results, these new approaches have not brought about the success that was hoped for.

Bottlenecks frequently remain:

- sometimes intolerable risks for the farmer (we are talking about production risks and price risks);
- the provision, as needed, of the necessary inputs — material and personnel — which requires planning or advance ordering. The same difficulty also frequently arises in the provision of transport and storage capacity and in advance financing;
- the requirement that the borrower have essential title to his property;
- the persistent lack of a provision for the sort of credit that could bring about a dynamic rise in productivity (instead of mere "credit for survival");
- the absolutely necessary coordination of the granting of credit with regular counsel, advice and hand-holding;
- the processing, storage, transport and marketing of the harvest (remember: the farmer must not only pay back his advance, but also push up his standard of living and reinvest).

Islamic bankers

A blessing in disguise — a side-effect of the reintroduction of *shari'a* in some Islamic countries — is that credit provision is again under discussion. This is principally due to the reintroduction of the ban on lending at interest. To this the increasing number of "Islamic banks" had to find a solution. Some of them simply manoeuvred (in interesting ways) to circumvent the ban.

They substituted high "administrative costs" for their loans in place of interest. Generally these administrative costs tend to be proportionately higher for short-term credit (the 15 per cent administrative charge for a single seasonal loan of 6 to 9 months, for example, is higher than it would be for medium-term credit of 3 to 5 years). At some banks the calculated administrative costs rise according to the length of the credit term (there is thus still a concealed interest calculation). Examples:

a 15 per cent cost for credit up to 9 months
a 25 " " " " " " " 2 years
a 35 " " " " " " " 3 years
a 42 " " " " " " " 4 years
a 50 " " " " " " " 5 years

Here the costs of short-term loans are still proportionately higher.

They offered credit in kind. The borrower must hand in his order for a tractor, fertilizer, or whatever it may be, at the bank; whereupon the latter — acting as agent or dealer — adds a charge of 25 or 30 per cent to the article's price. This "dealer-charge" is to make up for the bank's loss of income from interest.

They offered concealed buy-and-sell contracts: the borrower sells to the bank a part of his property — distinctly below market price — with the guarantee that he can (and indeed must) buy it back in due course at a higher price — this of course to "settle his credit". The creditor bank here is really acting as a pawnshop as it were, not making interest or administrative charges but giving the transaction the form of a sell-cum-buy-back contract in their stead.

As contributions to the search for improvements upon the unsatisfactory agricultural credit systems in developing countries, however, these "Islamic" methods offer no real solution. As we shall see later, however, the case of "partnership contracts" is somewhat different, as was realized by the Sudanese Islamic Bank in Khartoum. This approach is not necessarily bound to "Islamic bankers", but is indeed stimulated by the Islamic interest ban.

Informal and institutional agricultural credit in Sudan

The small-farmer sector in the rural areas of Sudan plays an important role in that country's agricultural economy. Yet this sector, though it includes the poorest sections of Sudanese society, receives very little attention from organizations providing either assistance or credit. These are geared to assisting large-scale government and private sector enterprise and mechanized farming. As a consequence, informal rural financial markets are dominant in the supply of credit and services for agriculture. Indeed, before the 1930s informal loans were the only source of credit known in the Sudan.

Traditionally, small farmers in Sudan secure their finance from private and family sources, or from merchants (using the *sheil* system). Large-scale mechanized farming also obtains, or supplements, its credit needs from informal sources when formal credit institutions cannot meet its demands; or sometimes for other reasons (one example: there may be religious obstacles).

Interest rates in the informal credit circuit in Sudan can vary from 60 to more than 200 per cent per annum. It is very common to find this informal credit linked to general marketing services. This makes it difficult to sort out the financial detail of such transactions. In unorganized markets, such as we find in Sudan, the flow of funds to finance agriculture is stimulated by the farmers' need for liquidity and the informal lenders' willingness to accept agricultural products as a form of repayment, as happens here in the *sheil* system.

The *sheil* system[1]

This is a type of informal credit unique to Sudan. It has been inherited in traditional rural society and continues from one generation to another. The practice came into being as a special relationship between small traditional producers and the well-off, relatively wealthy, personages in their villages. These people are sometimes local village heads, sometimes larger farmers, landowners, village traders, shopkeepers — even religious leaders. Such people have easier access to local authorities and outside sources of finance — from larger merchants in nearby towns, for example. They not only extend credit but are also active in marketing the farmers' produce and in supplying his seed, fertilizer and so forth. In return for these services traditional farmers sell or dispose of their produce through these moneylenders; and they are willing to work for them — at low wage-rates — when needed at times of peak labour demand or are available to help when needed for other work. In this way the *sheil* merchant — who is often also a large farmer — secures cheap farm labour. Sometimes working on the *sheil* merchant's farm is a condition for getting a loan. Looked at from another point of view, the borrower is at least able in this way to earn some of the money needed to repay his loan.

In the early stages, the cost of getting *sheil* credit was low, the interest charges were nominal, and the moneylenders were highly regarded by the village community. Everybody was satisfied with his role in village life, and there was a certain degree of stability in agricultural production.

With time, however, the *sheil* system developed into more or less of a business practice, and the lenders started to extract as much profit as possible from their activities. The merchants started to pay more attention to the borrower's creditworthiness, to his indebtedness to other lenders, to his previous repayment and yield records, and to his reputation in the village.

Consequently the *sheil* merchants lent less and less to risky farmers.Their position gives them a monopoly; those customers who have no other option than recourse to the *sheil* merchant have to pay a high interest rate; those who can justify greater loans have more freedom to manoeuvre and are charged lower rates. The *sheil* merchants can also manipulate the *sheil* prices for crops accepted as repayment for the loan.

In the traditional rainfed sector in Sudan several types of *sheil* contract (or *sheil* practice) are in existence today. The most prevalent type is seen when a local merchant or moneylender advances loans in cash or kind to a grower who undertakes to deliver a specified amount of produce at harvest to make up the value of the loan. Produce prices at harvest are usually low, but they are even more depressed when negotiated within the *sheil* system. Sometimes, farmers who may not need a loan enter into a *sheil* agreement with a village merchant, in order to free themselves from the trouble of transport and marketing at harvest; occasionally they can negotiate better conditions. Another type of *sheil* is practised by pledging animals as collateral. When strapped for cash, a small farmer may sell his cow to a village merchant within the *sheil* system, its being agreed that the lender will sell the cow back to the borrower at harvest — but, of course, at a higher price. In the meantime, the *sheil* merchant leaves the cow with the farmer to look after and make use of. Usually, when the small farmer buys the cow back, he has to pay 50 per cent more than the price paid for it by the *sheil* merchant (that is 50 per cent more than the amount "borrowed"). Labour obligations on the part of the borrower can also be incorporated into the system.

If we consider that there are very few traditional Sudanese farmers who can secure access to institutional credit, we cannot deny the important role played by the *sheil* merchant in providing for the financial needs of the majority. We must note, too, that the entire *sheil* system has features which we can trace back to Islamic banking approaches and which have made it easier to introduce the system ofpartnership contracts (in order to avoid the charging of interest) which we will consider later.

The *sheil* system is even found among larger mechanized farmers with greater financial resources. Here, the transaction is always effected by legal contract. It guarantees the borrower the supply of badly needed materials and equipment and an outlet for his production. The contract also indicates that in the case of failure to repay, a specified tractor or building will be mortgaged. The high and increasing costs of production in mechanized farming, and the repeated failure of crops through extreme droughts will make these mechanized farmers ever more dependent on such outside finance. It is therefore expected that the *sheil* system will flourish in the mechanized sector too. (For the same reason the "partnership-contracts" offered by the Sudanese Islamic Bank can also meet a real need for financing in this sector.)

Institutional credit

The present formal financial system in the Sudan consists of the Bank of Sudan, some 20 national, foreign and joint commercial banks, two savings institutions (the Sudanese Savings Bank and the Post Office Saving Bank), a few development-financing institutions (for example, the Sudanese Rural Development Corporation), and three specialized banks (The Agricultural

Bank of Sudan, the Industrial Bank of Sudan and the Estate Bank of Sudan). The 20-plus commercial banks include the newly established "Islamic banks" with their non-interest operations.

The Agricultural Bank of Sudan (ABS) is the only specialized financial institution advancing loans to private agricultural producers. The ABS is also the main source of credit to, and through, agricultural cooperatives. The commercial banks play no part in financing agricultural cooperatives. The one exception here is the Sudanese Islamic Bank, which, through its partnership contracts with these agricultural cooperatives, plays a limited but important role in agricultural finance.

The main activities of the ABS are:
— the procurement and sale of farm inputs and machinery;
— financing producers in the fields of arable farming, dairy farming, fisheries, the construction of wells and canals for irrigation, rural buildings and agro-industries;
— lending to individual farmers, mainly organized in cooperative groups.

Due to its limited capital and other financial resources, the ABS is unable to meet more than 3 per cent of the needs of potential borrowers, or 10 per cent of the credit needs of Sudan's cooperatives. The ABS classifies loans by duration, sector and purpose. Short-term credit to cover seasonal inputs is the only type of finance available to traditional dry-land farmers entirely dependent upon rainfall, provided they are organized in cooperatives. Medium-term loans are extended to the mechanized and irrigation sectors, usually for capital investments necessary to agricultural production. For these investment loans collateral is required.

Recovery of short-term loans in the 1985/86 season was about 86 percent.

Besides the limited volume of loans available, the small farmers face many other problems in getting finance from the ABS:
— the ABS does not provide comprehensive financing;
— the ABS requires guarantees that small farmers cannot provide;
— ABS dealings involve very slow procedures and high costs.

Some farmers reject loans for reasons of religion; as they regard the charging of interest as being contrary to the obligations set out in *shari'a*.

The cooperative credit programme

The agricultural cooperative credit and marketing system, initiated by the ABS in 1977, was intended to provide farmers with two basic services: production credit (crop financing) and marketing. The total number of cooperatives benefiting from this cooperative credit programme decreased, however, from 48 in 1981/82 to 27 in 1985/86. (Owing to heavy rainfall and flooding in 1987/88, and later to a military coup, no more recent figures are available.) The cooperative credit programme has been of only limited benefit to agricultural production:
— the volume of credit available was unsatisfactory;
— the cooperative credit programme itself was not specifically designed to increase agricultural production;
— as traditional farmers' principal concern is survival, credit under the existing programme is primarily used to finance labour and more traditional factors of production, and to prevent able-bodied men of the farm household seeking employment elsewhere (in order to earn cash, but often at the expense of the household's subsistence needs and its cash crop production).

The joint liability system in cooperatives, meant as a guarantee of repayment to the ABS, has the unfortunate and discouraging effect of penalizing good borrowers who pay in time but are refused new loans through the default of others who do not. So it is that the sword of joint liability keeps many good farmers nowadays from participating in any such scheme. The only solution is the limiting of liability to small homogeneous groups within each cooperative — these smaller groups to be voluntarily formed by members themselves of neighbours, relatives or friends with mutual responsibility for timely repayment.

The "partnership contracts" of the Sudanese Islamic Bank

One of the principal objects of this article is to argue that the application of the system of partnership contracts should be seriously considered in other developing countries as an alternativeto the "normal" institutional agricultural credit, albeit in amended or adapted form.

The Sudanese Islamic Bank's approach is true participation in the financing of projects instead of mere credit provision. Small farmers are encouraged to organize themselves into cooperatives, farmers' associations or other similar groups, through which the bank's operations — which provide for the inputs, financing and other services needed in advance — can be well organized. As there is no credit, in the true sense of the word, the bank being indeed a full partner in the production process, there is no question of security being demanded or proof of property ownership being required from the farmer. The contributions of the bank and the farmer are specified in the partnership contract. Some conditions may depend upon the crop to be grown. The bank remains the owner of the tractors, agricultural implements, water pumps and so forth acquired in order to go into production. The bank provides the associated services too (the cultivating of the land, the irrigation water, and so on) at cost price, and so enters into a true partnership with the farmer: the bank shares in the risk and shares in the profit — also in any loss.

The contribution of the Sudanese Islamic Bank in these contracts consists mostly of: cultivation (mechanical), material inputs (sowing-seed, fertilizer, pesticides, and so forth), usage and maintenance of irrigation pumps, often transport and storage and, lastly, co-management. This last is very important, encompassing as it does intensive and effective guidance and counselling for the farmer on agricultural matters and conditions specific to Sudan. The farmer benefits principally from this. The bank benefits too, of course, since it shares in the risks, profits and losses.

The farmer's contribution consists of the land, his labour in the form of sowing, weeding, harvesting, and so forth, a part of the necessary capital (if he has any) and the day-to-day management. The farming operations are thus effected by the small farmers, but with the assistance of the bank.

After the harvest, the *zakat* (religious tax) and production costs are deducted from the yield. The bank is repaid for the use of the tractors, implements, fuel costs, maintenance, the cost of the seed and fertilizers, sacks for milling, storage, transport and co-management. The farmer is compensated for his land, labour and any capital of his own employed.

Of the remaining net amount, if any, 30 per cent is paid to the farmer as reward for his conduct of the business. The remaining 70 per cent of the net business surplus is shared between the bank and the farmer in proportion to the value of their total contributions to the farming operation as a whole.

These partnership contracts, as practised by the Sudanese Islamic Bank are known as *musharaka* (participation): bank and customer agree to join in a temporary partnership to conduct a business operation within an agreed period of time. Both parties contribute to the production costs of the operation and agree to divide the net profit in proportions agreed upon in advance.

Other forms of contract exist too:[2]

— *Mudharaba:* the farmer contributes only his labour and management skills, while the bank contributes all the finance for everything else required. Here again bank and client divide the net profit in agreed proportions.

— *Murabaha:* here the customer approaches the bank and requests finance for a nominated item — a commodity or a piece of equipment or machinery — and agrees with the bank to repay, in return, a certain percentage of his profit.

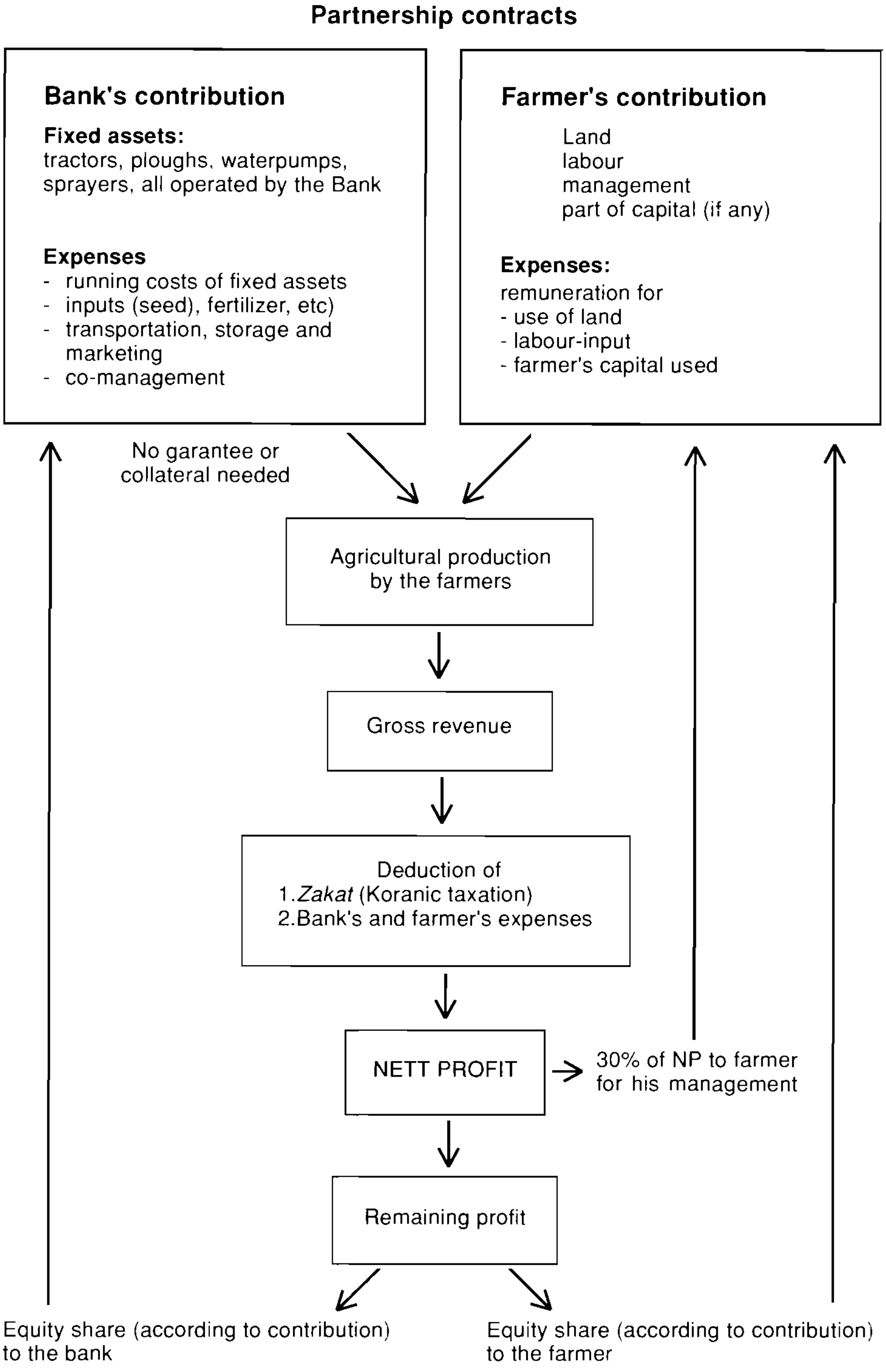
In all three contract types mentioned the risk element, under Islamic *shari'a*, justifies the taking of profit since the bank shares in both losses and gains. The first type of contract (*musharaka*) is by far the most popular.

A fourth type of contract is the *kard hasan*, a beneficial loan: no profit is expected on such loans; they are granted in special circumstances only.

Continued partnership for marketing.

Unless laid down in advance by the state or a marketing board, the price of most agricultural products is at its lowest directly after harvesting — just when the farmer is short of money. Through lack ofmoney, storage facilities and information on markets and prices, the farmer is thus often forced to sell his crop at a very low price, while a few weeks later the price for the same agricultural product will rise without the farmer's being in a position to profit by it.

Agricultural financing model[3]



Because of the Sudanese Islamic Bank's interest in the matter (with its high yield from profit-sharing), and because the bank has better access to price information, it is prepared to extend its contract with the farmer until the marketing stage. The bank then takes care of transport and storage for a maximum period of three months after harvest.

As the farmer needs cash immediately, the bank pays him 50 per cent of the price, at prevailing rates, as an advance. Note that the bank runs a continued risk at this stage. If at any time later (maximum 13 weeks), the stored harvest is sold at a higher price, the advance that the farmer has already received plus storage costs is deducted from the proceeds. Of the rest, 50 per cent is paid to the farmer (he had as it were, taken half the value of the harvest out of the partnership directly after harvesting) and the remaining profit is evenly split between the bank and the farmer.

Both parties thus profit, through temporary storage and later marketing, from the higher price. In the case of a fall in the price, or in the event of a bad harvest, for example, the bank will also run risks and might even have to put in extra money. For the farmer the risk will still be smaller than it would have been without the partnership contract.

The biggest advantage for the farmer is, however, that he cannot land in serious debt, and thus will not be excluded from securing credit the next year. (Compare this with the farmer's situation with a normal credit or loan, when, whatever the harvest or prices, the money must be repaid.)

Additional advantages of the partnership method are:

- the day-to-day encouragement and counselling of the farmer by the bank;
- the farmer's not having to economize on inputs such as cheaper seed; his not having to use poor quality fertilizer; or his using lesser quantities than optimal. These are put at the disposal of the farmer by the bank and, because there is no credit in kind, the fertilizer will not be resold or otherwise disposed of by the farmer to obtain money.

Through this kind of risk-sharing and co-financing by the bank, the farming operation can grow into a more dynamic business; the farmer can apply new methods, make new inputs, grow crops with a higher yield or plant new varieties. The farmer can also use part of his improved income to secure a higher degree of self-financing or investment in his business. The following year he will then be in a better position when negotiating a new partnership contract with the bank and will thus get a larger share in the trading-surplus.

Lastly it becomes possible for the farmer to put part of his income for a shorter or longer term into a deposit account at the same bank, or even to invest his money. And because the bank may not pay out any interest, the farmer will, in return for his savings, share once again in the results, profits and losses of the bank.

Applicability elsewhere in Africa

Experience gained with this method of production financing in small-scale agriculture in Sudan is still recent and limited. The system, however, is well worth the monitoring. If results continue good, similar partnership contracts can be applied in other developing countries as an alternative to, or as complementing, existing agricultural credit systems.

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2 Ahmed A Humeida, "Finance and credit", in A B Zahlan and W Y Magar (eds), *The agricultural sector of Sudan*, London: Ithaca Press, 1986, p 342.

3 B B Osman, *Note on the role of the Sudanese Islamic Bank in rural development in Sudan*, Khartoum: Sudanese Islamic Bank, Rural Development Department, August 1987. This model, as explained above, can vary according to type of land tenure, method of irrigation or not, cropping pattern and type of crops. The system, however, remains the same.

Ten years of workers' participation in a South African producer co-operative

*M Hickson and G Oldham of the Department of Economics, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, look at the lessons to be learned from the experience of a South African producer co-operative .**

Introduction

A number of non-governmental organizations in South Africa have attempted to tackle the problem of rural development by assisting community "self-help" projects in various forms. The commonly accepted principles underlying the concept of self-help are that the development of self-reliance is a precondition for the successful upliftment of communities and that the community itself should be involved in making decisions about its priorities and the means of attaining them. As a result a large number of urban and rural co-operatives were established throughout South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s by various self-help orientated organizations. Additional impetus was provided by the decision on the part of trades unions to move into this type of activity, and this has spawned a growing literature on the subject of co-operative organizations in South Africa.

This article attempts to describe and evaluate the participation in management of the membership of an important and relatively long-surviving producer co-operative over a period of ten years. It is based on visits by the authors in 1980 and 1990 when questionnaires were administered to the membership, interviews held and the records perused. The Co-operative in question was registered in 1980 as a producer co-operative society in terms of the Co-operative Societies Act, No 29 of 1939. The primary objective of the Co-operative is to "carry on the business of manufacture of printed materials under a co-operative system". The workshop is situated in a rural homeland area about 50 kilometres from a medium-sized white town.

Management

In terms of the Constitution of the Co-operative a Board of Directors would be responsible for the management of the workshop; the fixed assets remained under the control of a Steering Committee which had initiated the project. The Co-operative was organized in 1980 into design, cutting and sewing, printing, despatch and administration departments. Departmental meetings were held each week, and Supervisors elected annually by the members in each Department. The Supervisors spent up to 50 per cent of their time on productive activities, with their "supervisory" activities consisting mainly of training and the overcoming of various problems in production. As far as the implementation of decisions was concerned, the emphasis was clearly placed upon co-operative effort rather than a formal chain of command. What was striking during the 1980 visit to the workshop was the absence of the giving and taking of orders.

At the inception of the project an outside Organizer acted as an advisor on all aspects of the project's operations. His intention, however, was to gradually divorce himself from involvement in day-to-day operational decision-making, and to concentrate more or purchasing, marketing and forward planning. Since 1980 there have been some changes, with the Organizer leaving in the early 1980s, and many of his functions being taken over by a member standing out in terms of ability and understanding of the operations of the Co-operative, who was appointed as Manager. As the most versatile member, she played an obviously leading role in Co-ordinating the various aspects of the operation. With the Supervisors she made up a committee known as the Production Planning Committee. The Co-operative has also started to use outside firms and agencies to provide accounting, training, marketing and technology services.

The Board of Directors only began functioning properly in 1988, and since then some confusion has arisen over

* The authors express their thanks to Sipho Mashinini of Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre for help in conducting the interviews with the members of the Co-operative. They also acknowledge with gratitude financial support received from the Economics Research Fund, University of Natal.

the respective responsibilities of the Manager, the Supervisors and the Board of Directors. It appears that the members elected a first Board of Directors which failed to provide the leadership needed by the Co-operative since the Manager was not elected to the Board. This was resolved by the members themselves at a Special General Meeting in April 1990, when a new Board, containing the necessary leadership and skills, was elected. The Special General Meeting also resolved that in future the Board itself would appoint Supervisors, rather than have them elected by the members in each Department.

It appears, therefore, that problems arising from democratic decision-making led to the introduction by the members themselves of a more bureaucratic command structure. An important point to note here is that this process was in all likelihood facilitated by the fact that the Co-operative was bound by the Co-operative Societies Act. The organizational structure and procedures prescribed appear to have lent themselves well to the successful resolution of a problem which, in that it involved allegations of witchcraft, was in all probability not anticipated by the architects of the Act.

The situation in 1990 with regard to the implementation of decisions appeared to be similar to that in 1980, with the chain of command remaining unobtrusive. The function of maintaining work discipline now falls to a Disciplinary Committee of five which was first formed at the 1989 Annual General Meeting. This had yet to meet at the time of the 1990 visit, but the fact that it had been found necessary to form such a committee suggests that some problems had arisen — or were anticipated — in connection with discipline.

The procedure to be followed with "shirkers" is, firstly that the Supervisor has the initial responsibility for maintaining discipline. If the Supervisor is unsuccessful in this, the member should be reported to the Board of Directors. The Board will then move the member to another Department and, if this is unsuccessful, the member will be fired.

Membership

At the time of the first visit the membership comprised 16 women, mainly over 30 years of age, with Standard 4, 5 or 6 education and no formal vocational training. Their previous job histories were largely confined to housework and traditional crafts — that is, they had previously been technically unemployed. Membership of the Co-operative is obtained by the purchase of 10 shares of R10 each. There is no limit on the number of shareholders, but they have to be employed by the Co-operative.

Membership of the Co-operative in 1990 was 21 (mainly married) women, all of whom were fully paid-up, having contributed their share of R100. There were only two men — one being the maintenance man, who had been there virtually since the venture's inception (and was the highest paid member), and the other a young man with a relatively high level of education who was brought in during 1989 as the Marketing Manager. Two-thirds of the membership was over 40 years of age and the average standard of education was Standard 4. Seventy per cent of the membership is functionally illiterate.

With regard to labour turnover, the project has lost only four members since 1981 — 25 per cent of the 1981 membership. Two of these, however, were designers, and this is seen by the Manager as a severe loss for the workshop. The creation of new designs is perceived as being crucial if the turnover of the Co-operative's products in the urban craft-shops is to be increased. Accordingly, these designers have been replaced by two new members, who were attending design courses at a Technikon at the time of the 1990 visit.

The situation in 1990 with regard to the allocation of the Supervisors' time shows little change from that in 1980, with 50 per cent or less of their time being spent on supervisory activities. The remainder or their time was spent on directly productive or ancillary operations. Table 1 illustrates the proportions allocated to different tasks by the total membership of the Co-operative.

Table 1

	%	%
Total production		51
Sewing	30	
Cutting	4	
Printing	17	
Total ancillary		49
Supervising/Training	10	
Purchasing	7	
Selling	8	
Book-keeping	9	
Designing	9	
Maintenance/Quality control	6	

Selection of personnel

Because of the co-operative nature of the project, the selection of personnel is obviously crucial. The surrounding population is severely underemployed, so membership of the Co-operative represents a major improvement in a person's welfare. The criteria adopted for personnel selection seemed, at the inception of the project, to be based on need, constrained by the individual's ability or adaptability. (As the workshop concentrates on traditional designs, however, ability had to be the predominant criteria in the selection of designers.)

Selection on grounds of need appears to have been de-emphasized over the years, with the accent shifting from what the project could do for the individual to what the prospective member could offer the Co-operative. More detail is given in Table 2 which illustrates the three periods in which recruitment took place.

A clear pattern appears to emerge from the above — that, while the project was initiated to serve the needs of older, unemployed and uneducated rural people, the members have been successively recruiting new members who are younger, more educated and have greater job experience. The reasons for this surely have something to do with a recognition of the need to attract more skills as the project lost the services of the Organizer. The members appear more interested in recruiting personnel who can contribute to the survival of their enterprise than in providing opportunities for those who are most in need.

Training

At the time of the first visit it was clear, as mentioned earlier, that one of the three senior workers was by far the most experienced. She was the first person to be recruited to the project and had received the widest range of training in both production and administration. The training received by the

Table 2

Number of Members	Year arrived at Co-operative	Average age	Average education	Number unemployed prior to joining
11	1978 - 1980	49	Std 3	3
6	1981 - 1982	42	Std 5	1
4	1987 - 1989	28	Std 7	1

rest of the personnel in the printing department had not progressed beyond the specific functions in which they were engaged. A questionnaire was administered containing a section designed to determine what further training was desired by these workers. It was apparent that they wanted training in a wider range of the operations involved in the process of printing. Only 20 per cent expressed a wish to receive training in administrative functions.

By 1990 the level of training received by members had increased somewhat. Thirteen members had attended training courses run by external agencies, including six who had been on at least two. These included "Advanced", "Supervisors" and "Marketing" courses. As was the case in 1980, most of the members had received in-house training in design, printing, administration or co-operative education. In response to a question asking if further training was desired by members, sixteen replied in the affirmative, with pattern-cutting, design and marketing being the most popular. Thus, as can be expected with a less educated rural population, the desire and need for training is almost insatiable.

Participation

A major aim of the project, a with any co-operative, has been to devolve successive levels of decision-making to the workers themselves. The division of labour necessitates the constant co-ordination of the various steps of the production process. In a privately owned enterprise this function is performed by the owner, the managerial staff and other supervisory personnel such as foremen.

The scientific analysis and control of the work process has come to be known as Taylorism, after its founder F W Taylor. The classic study of his methods, and of the control of the capitalist work process generally, is by Braverman.[1] Braverman enumerates the three principles upon which Taylorism is based as follows.

The first involves the detailed study of the component parts of the work process. This is commonly known as time-and-motion study, and involves the "dissociation of the labour process from the skills of the workers."[2]

The second involves the separation of the conception of the work process from its execution, so that knowledge of the entire labour process is monopolized by management. This allows management "...to enforce upon (the workers)...the methodological efficiency (and) the working pace desired by capital."[3] Braverman states also that this would be "...purposeless and unthinkable in the case of the self-organized and self-motivated social labor of a community of producers, (but) becomes crucial for the management of purchased labor."[4]

The third principle is the systematic application of this monopolized scientific knowledge "to control each step of the labor process and its mode of execution."[5]

With a co-operative, the ownership structure and aims of the enterprise are different. Wright states that a co-operative "...redefines the worker's job by including him in the policy-making and work co-ordination tasks of management, as well as the productive processes. Co-operatives do not abolish division of labour but they do remove division of responsibility, which becomes a part of each worker's job."[6]

Thus, while the first and third principles of Taylorism can be applicable to co-operatives (and probably should be, so that the enterprise's efficiency levels are sufficiently high to enable it to compete against capitalist firms), the second is decidedly not. An important motive underlying this type of decentralization of decision-making is the empowerment of the individual so as to release economic creativity. If the people implementing decisions have participated in making them, then it is hoped that their motivation levels will be higher and that greater efficiency will result. Gelb, for instance, cites a number of studies providing empirical support for a positive relationship between the participation of co-operative membership in management and productivity levels.[7]

In fact members' participation in decision-making is common to all co-operatives, although in different forms. These vary from a relatively minimalist participation limited to the annual election of a controlling body which is responsible for hiring professional managers, to a more intensive and regular involvement by members in day-to-day management decisions. These involve differing levels of participation in management. While participation in the control of actual work processes is important, a worker will remain alienated "... if he has no involvement in the overall decision making of the enterprise which will influence his work task, the organisation of work and the work community."[8] Thus, in evaluating participation, one must look beyond members' control over their particular work tasks to the co-ordination of the productive process as a whole and the relations of the enterprise with the wider economy.

An additional aspect to participation is the training received by the members. An untrained membership will be forced to rely on bureaucratic decision-making by skilled managers and supervisors. Members can only truly participate if they have knowledge — of production methods, sources of supply and markets. In addition, they should be able to understand the financial statements which indicate the viability or otherwise of the enterprise at a particular point in time.

In the early stages of the projects' development, interaction between the members of the Co-operative and the Organizer occurred informally on a day-to-day basis as he helped with the various crises that cropped up from time to time. Formal weekly meetings were held between the Organizer and the Supervisors in which production and staffing policies were decided. The Constitution provides for an annual general meeting to be held for the purpose of considering the annual financial report, a Director's report, election of Directors and an Auditor and general business including complaints by members.

From the questionnaire administered during the first visit, it appeared that all of those members of more than five months' standing were aware that complaints and suggestions could be voiced at meetings where they would be dealt with or brought to the attention of the advisor. In addition those members appeared to understand that the success of the venture depended largely upon themselves, as did their eventual financial rewards. Most of the longer-serving members considered their existing wages as "good" or "fair". This group was satisfied with their wages in the light of the co-operative nature of the venture, the training received and the realization that their alternative earning potential was relatively low. Since, with the exception of two, they all considered working conditions to be good, it was perhaps surprising that a number said they would accept another job away from the Co-operative if they could earn a higher wage.

All of this group had a positive attitude towards increased responsibility, and felt that they would, in future, be able to run the project without the help of an advisor. That this was a real possibility was born out by the fact that most felt that they were already involved in certain levels of decision-making. Seventy-eight per cent felt that they participated in decision-making regarding the selection of both new members and Supervisors. Sixty-seven per cent felt that they participated in decisions regarding product design and choice, production methods and targets and the setting of wage levels. Crucial areas in management, however, such as raw-material purchases, marketing and finance did seem at that stage to be beyond their capabilities. As mentioned earlier, the rest of the workers had less than one month's service in the newly established Cutting and Sewing Department. Consequently they had not at that stage been fully inducted into the project, and did not seem to appreciate the co-operative organization of the workshop.

By 1990 the membership had received a significantly higher level of in-house training in co-operative management and were very aware of the fact that control rested in their own hands.

Percentage answering in affirmative	Managerial decision	Comments
95%	Setting of wage levels every year.	Members indicated this was done at the Annual General Meeting
95%	Selection of new members	This appears to contradict what was learned in interviews with the Manager with regard to managerial procedures. The Manager indicated that when word spread around the local area that there was a vacancy, people came to the workshop to apply. The Board of Directors then conducted interviews, and made a choice. For the last vacancy that arose, one new member was chosen out of six applicants. It is difficult to understand in what sense, then, members felt that they were involved in these decisions. It is probable, however, that members knew all applicants personally, anyway, and perhaps lobbied for the people of their choice.
81%	Purchasing and sales	One of the decisions and sales make at the Annual General Meeting is what the overall level of purchases should be. In this sense they do participate, but it should be emphasized that this participation does not extend to a decision as to who the supplier should be, nor whether a different type of material should be purchased. Thus, there is full participation but within a narrow range of options. The same is true of participation in decisions regarding sales. Members can become involved in deciding when to have a sale of slow-moving stock, whether to get involved in a mail-order scheme and so on, but the level of orders from the craft-shop (their major market) is completely out of their control.
81%	Selection of Supervisors	This occurs at annual departmental meetings, and appears not to be a contentious issue. The Design, Despatch and Sewing Departments have had the same Supervisors for the last eight years, however, and the Printing Department had the same one until 1989 when the Departmental Supervisor became the Workshop Manager. This lack of rotation with regard to Supervisors' posts was in the past generally indicative of a high level of personal satisfaction on the part of the members. As mentioned before, the members themselves have recently decided that the Board of Directors should appoint Supervisors.
71%	Production methods	As can be expected, members who methods do not participate in these decisions are those involved in book-keeping, administration, design and maintenance.
66%	Production targets	These decisions are for the most targets part out of the members' hands, and are determined by what lines the craft-shops are selling. Thus the decisions made by the craft-shops as to what lines to promote, and what mark-ups to apply to different items are really the decisive issues. The fact remains, however, that the Co-operative has displayed a degree of inertia in not bringing out new designs over a relatively long period.

With regard to questions designed to ascertain members' participation in specific areas of management, it appears that they are involved at more levels than in 1980. The following were some of the areas of managerial decision-making in which members were asked if they played any part, arranged in descending order of percentage of members answering in the affirmative.

In 1990, members still appeared to be generally satisfied with their lot. In response to a question as to how they regarded the wage they received, 2 replied "good", 15 replied "fair" and 4 replied "bad". To a question on working conditions, 11 replied "good" and 10 replied "fair". In response to a question attempting to establish what wage offered by an urban employer would persuade them to leave the Co-operative, all except one said that no wage was high enough to succeed in doing so. This was a surprising result, indicating a significant change from the attitudes expressed in the 1980 survey. It is not possible to infer that this indicates a higher level of satisfaction in 1990 than existed in 1980 (although this is certainly possible, with the long-term viability of the project a greater reality than before), as it is possible that members felt that their loyalty was being tested.

A question designed to ascertain members' awareness and understanding of the position of the Co-operative with regard to profitability indicated that the overwhelming majority could trace quite clearly its changing fortunes over the past ten years. This reflects the diligence with which the Treasurer has given a monthly financial report to the General Assembly and an explanation of the annual financial statements when they have been prepared. However, although the members appear to understand the general downward trend in the project's financial position, they do not seem to appreciate the severity of the setback experienced in the last two years.

A final question asked how members thought the position of the Co-operative could be improved. Forty-eight per cent of the responses cited "more commitment by members" or "harder work by members", while 43 per cent looked to increased sales. This is a somewhat puzzling result, given the lack of any major indications that the Co-operative has had any difficulty fulfilling orders.

Financial performance

Although the Co-operative has been relatively successful in promoting participation in management and production, certain problems occur when financial decisions are made. There is, at times, a conflict between the short-term welfare of individual members and the long-term objective of promoting growth and employment.

Conflicts arise over the questions of individual rights to the collective capital of the organization and the distribution of any surplus income. Expressed in its starkest form, should the objective of the Co-operative be the maximization of the surplus or income per head?

The successful Co-operative received fairly large financial grants to cover the initial investment and training costs. Membership of the organization could, however, be purchased for only R100 per member. Thus for a nominal stake members acquired access to a share of the returns from a far greater amount of employed funds. Herein lies the crucial difference between a co-operative and a privately owned firm. If loans are interest free, or subsidized, or if outright grants are received, the return from capital employed goes to the workers and not the owners of capital.

The Co-operative does not have any entrenched constitutional clause which restricts the distribution of income to members or requires that a certain proportion of income be set aside in the form of retained earnings before wage levels are determined. Wages are determined at the Annual General Meeting. It appears that, from the beginning, members were more concerned to draw as much income as possible from the Co-operative in the form of wages than to build up retained earnings. Accumulated losses were carried forward in the financial accounts, when a 10 to 15 per cent reduction in wage levels could have restored profitability.

Wages increased on average by over 20 per cent per year as members' participation in the setting of wage levels increased (from 78 per cent in 1980 to 95 per cent in 1990). Production wages as a proportion of the cost of production rose from 30 to 50 per cent. In making decisions about wages members were aware of the financial position of the Co-operative. Not only was nothing set aside in the form of retained earnings but value added was increased despite stagnant or falling production. There appears to be considerable concern that everyone should earn a "fair" wage and too little understanding that in the longer term, if the Co-operative is to become fully independent and self-sufficient, a proportion of income needs to be saved and set aside as retained earnings.

Apart from the trade-off between retained earnings and income per head the greatest weakness of the Co-operative has been a failure to maintain existing markets and to open up new outlets. While members have participated strongly in management and production their involvement in marketing has been minimal. The Co-operative depends almost entirely on outside agents and organizations for the marketing of its products. It is difficult to see how, apart from one individual, a relatively poorly educated group of rural producers some five hundred kilometres from the nearest important markets could be involved in decision-making of this nature.

There is the possibility that an attempt could be made to recruit a person with a suitable sales background into the Co-operative but this would almost certainly give rise to another problem. Such a person would probably require a level of remuneration three to four times that of the present workers, which may not be easily accepted in an organization making decisions collectively.

A possible solution may come from the National Crafts Association, which is a coalition of self-help groups and co-operative organizations involved in a common marketing effort. Part of this effort is the provision of retail and other marketing outlets. Thus the Co-operative would continue to concentrate on production, but for marketing it would depend on the efforts of an association which attempts to overcome the problems at a national level of all the producers of African Crafts.

Conclusions

Wright enumerates three principles of management for co-operatives — that every worker should be a manager, that labour should hire management and that the control of the workers over the administration should be institutionalized.[9] We will evaluate the participation of the membership in the management of the Co-operative in terms of each of these in turn.

Every worker should be a manager

The Co-operative under consideration has performed well in terms of members' participation in management. From a position of initial dependence on external advisers, the members have over the years moved into a more autonomous position with regard to successively higher levels of control over the enterprise.

By 1990, the overwhelming majority of the membership felt that they participated in such crucial managerial decisions as wage levels and selection of Supervisors and new members. A smaller, though significant, majority felt that they were part of the decision-making process with regard to production methods and targets. In addition, the membership exhibited a high level of awareness of the project's financial position over the years. This view that participation levels have remained high, and have probably increased (although it is extremely difficult to construct an index that could be used to measure this), was strengthened by observations made and informal discussions held during our visit to the Co-operative in 1990. A relaxed and contented atmosphere still prevails at the workshop, and indicates a lack of any significant tensions among the membership. The members still go about their various tasks without any apparent supervision or cajoling by Supervisors.

An interesting illustration of the fact that the membership does in fact manage the project is given by the changing composition of new recruits to the Co-operative. While at its inception the project served to provide employment to those most in need, the membership has increasingly brought in younger and more skilled and experienced members. This, of course, is a rational decision from the point of view of a membership looking to secure those recruits who might contribute most to the project. It also fits with Gelb's findings on the famed Mondragon Co-operative in the Basque region of Spain, where "...(r)elative to other firms, Mondragon has provided jobs for those not needing them...(and)...far fewer co-operateurs ... were unemployed immediately prior to joining their present firm than were control workers (in private firms)."[10] More generally our findings therefore also support Gelb's statement that "co-operatives don't forsake pecuniary goals".[11]

Labour should hire management

The basic choice here is between electing managers from the ranks of the members or appointing them from outside.

In the initial stages the Steering Committee (and then the registered Co-operative) hired the services of the Organizer to oversee all aspects of the setting up of the project. As a first step in extending members' participation in decision-making, some members were partly freed from directly productive activities in order to allow them to perform work co-ordination tasks. The election of Supervisors to co-ordinate the tasks of members working in each Department economized on the higher salaries that would have had to be paid for managers brought in from outside, as the opportunity cost of internal supervision was equal only to the production lost in the portion of their time spent away from productive tasks. The Supervisors thus managed intra-departmental affairs from early in the life of the project. The responsibility for the co-ordination of inter-departmental flows fell to a Production Planning Committee made up of the Supervisors and the Manager, and is now the responsibility of the Board of Directors.

With the production process itself being organized by the membership, the Organizer was enabled to devote himself to those aspects of management relating to the outside economy (purchasing and marketing), while helping with production crises only when necessary. After the departure of the Organizer, the Co-operative has continued to hire new members specifically to perform these tasks, although the purchasing function has been successfully absorbed into the operations of the internally elected management.

Wright suggests that co-operatives "...buy in the technical services of management from an outside agency. Such services could include accountancy marketing and research."[12] The Co-operative has hired the services of outside accountants for some years now, and makes extensive use of a self-help service organization for training and advisory purposes. The latter organization also provides some assistance with marketing, although it is now clearly necessary for some organization to be set up to provide more systematic and comprehensive marketing services for co-operatives such as this.

The Co-operative appears thus to have fallen in line with management recommendations made in much of the literature. Gelb, for instance, writes that "...like other firms, co-operatives also require managers with a reasonably long-term mandate. There are advantages in restricting managers to members only but it then may be difficult to absorb management talents from outside. Internal procedures for selecting and training managers are then doubly important, as is provision for obtaining access to consulting services without undermining solidarity."[13] The annual election of Supervisors appears to have been performed with an eye towards long-term stability — and towards democratic practice, if the apparently successful resolution of the dispute over the respective roles of the Manager, the Supervisors and the Board of Directors is anything to go by.

Control of workers over management should be institutionalized

This condition has clearly been met. This was ensured by early training by the Organizer on co-operative ownership and management, and further attendance by many of the members at external courses. The training received by members was important in that it provided the knowledge of production, management and finance is necessary for the institutionalization of members' control over their enterprise.

It is our view that registration in terms of The Co-operatives Act of 1939 was an important step in the institutionalization of members' control over the project. The constitution of the Co-operative (as required by the Act) stipulates that the financial statements be audited, that elections be held, and lays down the format of Annual General and Special General Meetings. These procedures provide a level of protection to members and ensure that basic levels of financial, secretarial (and therefore democratic) discipline are adhered to. As mentioned earlier, the constitution was sufficient to provide a framework for the satisfactory resolution to the potentially disastrous dispute between the membership and various levels of the leadership.

It is important to note, however, that members' control over their enterprise does not extend to full and unfettered ownership of the assets of the Co-operative.

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Rail transport and the political economy of Southern Africa, 1965-1980.

*Markus Reichardt and David Duncan argue that the widely-held opinion that the Southern African region's economic and transport dependence upon South Africa is the result of a colonialist conspiracy is refuted by the historical evidence.**

Introduction

On 1 April 1980, the heads of South Africa's nine black-ruled neighbours met in Lusaka, Zambia to set up the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC). Together they signed the Lusaka Declaration, which described the SADCC's objectives as reducing their economic dependence upon South Africa and paving the way for their true independence and economic development. For "dependence on South Africa", the Lusaka Declaration stated,

> is not a natural phenomenon, nor is it simply the result of the free market economy. The nine states... were, in varying degrees, deliberately incorporated by the metropolitan powers, colonial rulers and large corporations into the colonial and sub-colonial structures centering in general in the Republic of South Africa. The development of national economies as balanced units, let alone the welfare of the people of Southern Africa, played no part in the economic integration strategy. It is necessary to liberate South Africa to overcome the imposed economic fragmentation and to coordinate our efforts towards regional and national economic development.[1]

The SADCC's claim that the region's economic dependence is the result of a capitalist/colonialist conspiracy has been accepted readily and uncritically by outside observers. Ann Seidman, for example, argued in 1985 that "the colonial governments erected institutional structures which impoverished the people and still today render the independent states critically dependent on South Africa". Their pervasive poverty, she contended, "has been caused largely by inherited colonial institutions which denied the majority of the African population control over the rich resources of the region".[2]

Likewise, Joseph Hanlon and Amin, Chitala and Mandaza argue that the region's economic dependence upon South Africa is inherited from the colonial era.[3] Such a reiteration of the SADCC dependency claim by many radical and sympathetic observers is in itself not surprising. But there has been enough of this repetition to turn a sweeping assertion into a sample of "conventional wisdom" to which even moderate commentators such as Kenneth Grundy and Peter Vale subscribe.[4] For the SADCC, this provides a convenient explanation of present politico-economic relations; and it has been left largely unchallenged, partly because political considerations discourage any careful analysis of certain important topics.

This article examines one element of the dependency argument, rail transport in twentieth century Southern Africa, looking particularly closely at the period 1965-1980. It seeks to challenge the depiction of Southern African states as largely powerless to prevent first, the imposition of economic domination, and later, regional destabilization by South Africa. Instead, it points to the interdependent nature of events in the region and the need to recognize the Frontline States' abilities to influence relationships within their subcontinent.

Development of the regional railway network

According to those who see the region's history as a conspiracy between colonial administrators and capitalist speculators, the subcontinental railway network was deliberately designed to ensure that South Africa would dominate the hinterland. In reality, it grew out of competition between different settler groups and colonial powers for a share of the Witwatersrand trade and of the economic benefits of railways in general.

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The construction of railways in Southern Africa began in the 1860s, but did not take off until the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley and gold on the Witwatersrand. This "mineral revolution" made railways to the interior economically viable; and as railway lines came to be regarded as crucial to economic development, the two Boer republics, the Cape Colony, Natal and the Portuguese competed for control over access to the Witwatersrand between the 1870s and 1894. With the exception of the Portuguese and the Orange Free State, each of these administrations incurred significant expenditure and public debt in pursuit of this goal.[5] To avoid being excluded, the Free State even sided with the Cape against the Transvaal, whose line bypassed it totally. History thus saw the simultaneous establishment of three rail links running to the goldfields, initiated by the Transvaal, Natal and the Cape. Created in 1892, 1894 and 1895, these three lines linked the Transvaal to the ports of Cape Town and Port Elizabeth in the Cape Province, Durban in Natal, and Lourenço Marques (as it was then). There was soon an excess of rail capacity, fierce competition for traffic and revenue persisting right down to Union in 1910. In that year, a centralized railway authority, South African Railways and Harbours (SAR&H), came into being, pooling resources, expenses and income.[6]

Looking further afield, relations among Africa's colonial powers were never sufficiently harmonious to allow for concerted, co-ordinated action in the manner suggested by the SADCC — certainly not in railway management, the principal means of interstate commerce. New railway construction, driven by Rhodes's dream of Imperial expansion, linked the Mozambican port of Beira in 1902 with the Rhodesian capital of Salisbury. But although this provided the shortest route at the time into the new territory, continued African rebellions persuaded Rhodes in 1896 of the need to improve communications with the Cape Province. A line from Kimberley via Bechuanaland to Salisbury was begun in that very year and completed in 1903. Right up to 1974, this line remained the only link between the South African system and that of the wider region to the north.[7]

After 1906, when the wealth of the Katangan copper fields was ascertained, the railway to Salisbury was carried northwards to secure a share of the Katangan trade. Their interest in the success of this line, which connected the copper fields to Beira, caused the Rhodesians to obstruct the shorter, British-owned Benguela line through Angola. The latter, begun just before the First World War, was plagued by financial difficulties and not completed until 1928. And although it was undeniably the cheapest route to the sea for Rhodesian trade, Rhodesian traffic manipulation ensured that it was not utilized to full capacity for the next thirty years. Meanwhile, Rhodesian Railways, profits from the Katangan trade allowed them to provide the territory with transport facilities it could not otherwise have afforded. In the early 1920s, the Belgians, for their part, constructed their own internal line from their copper mines to the port of Matadi. But in return for coal and coke from Wankie, the Belgians had perforce to agree that one third of Katanga's total traffic would be shipped via Rhodesian Railways.[8]

Rhodesia's position was further strengthened by her 1928 purchase of the Rhodesia-Katanga Junction Railway between Broken Hill and Sakania, over which all Katangan traffic had to move to Angolan or Mozambican ports. The Portuguese administration in Mozambique, for which rail charges were a crucial source of revenue, also played the railway manipulation game; it secured guarantees from Rhodesia that she would use the Beira route to full capacity and not cause any diversion of traffic by discriminatory levies. As a result, only a very small share of Katangan traffic found its way to South African harbours.[9]

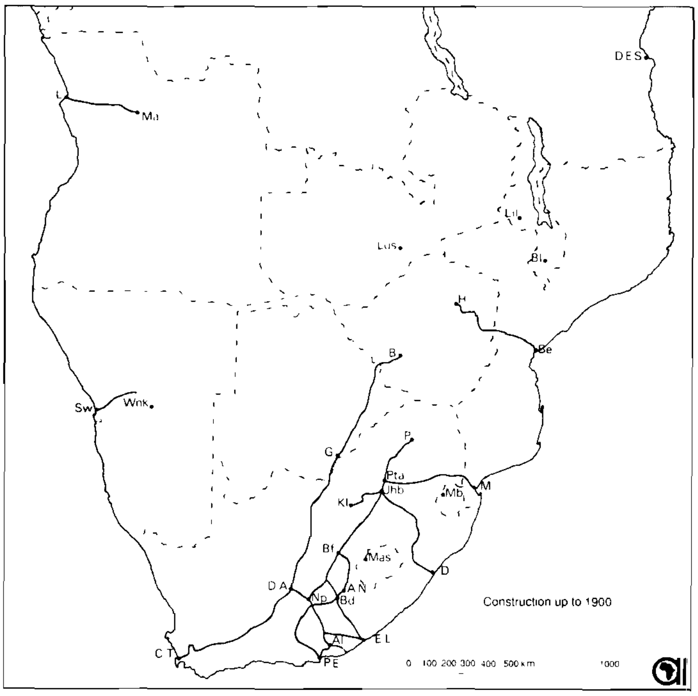
South Africa's railway policies at this period were governed by domestic concerns. First among these were agricultural interests, which wielded political power considerable enough to ensure their access to the public purse. Consecutive South African governments were pressured into providing rural branch lines, uneconomical though these often were. Through taxation and exorbitant freight rates, it was the mines that generated the bulk of the money for South African agricultural development. It was only in the 1920s that the proliferation of motor transport allowed the SAR&H to reduce the number of their uneconomic branch lines.

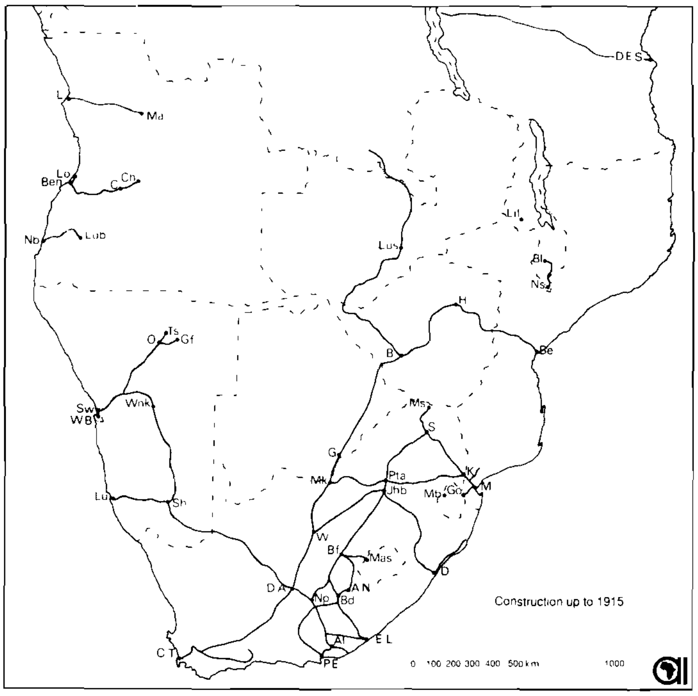
The Second World War led to a boom in regional railway traffic. By the early 1950s, continued economic expansion was causing traffic congestion on the Rhodesian Railways. The Rhodesian government, however, was loath to alleviate this by diverting freight to South African ports, fearing that this would draw it more closely into the Union's orbit. Instead, a railway link to Lourenço Marques, bypassing the South African network, was begun in 1951. The Rhodesians preferred this solution to Pretoria's offer to finance and construct a line between Gwelo and Beit Bridge in the Northern Transvaal, believing as they did that "too much of the revenue would accrue to South Africa".[10]

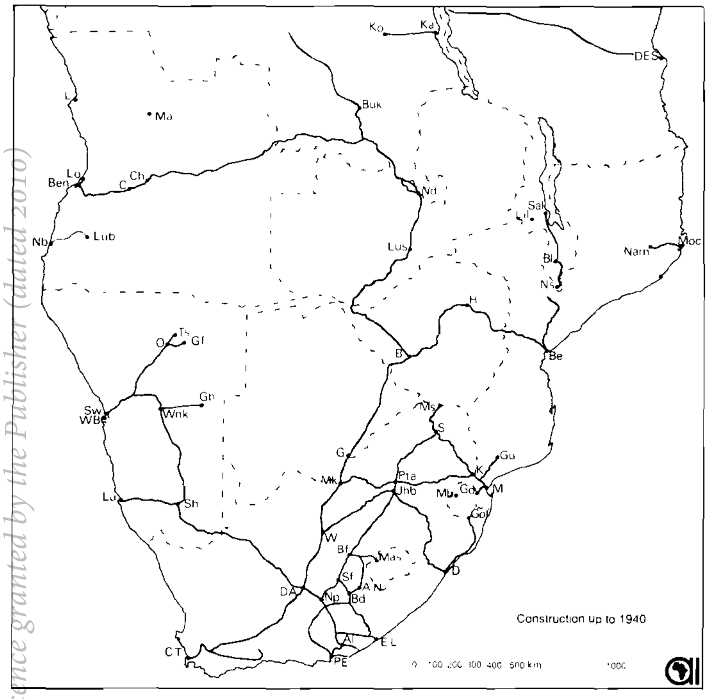
The establishment of the Central African Federation in 1953 further strengthened Rhodesia's position in the regional economy. Prior to Federation, a manufacturer in any one of the three territories did not have automatic access to the others. In 1955, a unified federal schedule of tariff duties announced a common policy of industrial protection for local industries. In the same year, 1955, the Federation and South Africa negotiated a trade agreement which ended the latter's duty-free access to Federation markets and thus its competitive advantage. By threatening to use only non-South African ports, the Federation forced South African compliance. There was little South Africa could do: she was hampered by the distance of her ports from central African markets, and by the political need to subsidize domestic transport infrastructure for the benefit of white agriculture. In contrast to Rhodesia's aggressive policy of capturing as much of the regional rail traffic as possible, South Africa's attention, therefore, remained primarily focused on internal developments. Although the SAR&H had carried a portion of this regional traffic since the 1920s, the disappearance of Hertzog and Smuts from the scene in the 1940s removed a significant force for political and economic aggrandizement. Yet South Africa retained enough interest in the regional trade to support Rhodesia's restrictions on the Benguela traffic, both through discriminatory tariffs and diplomatic pressure on the Portuguese, until the early 1950s.[11]

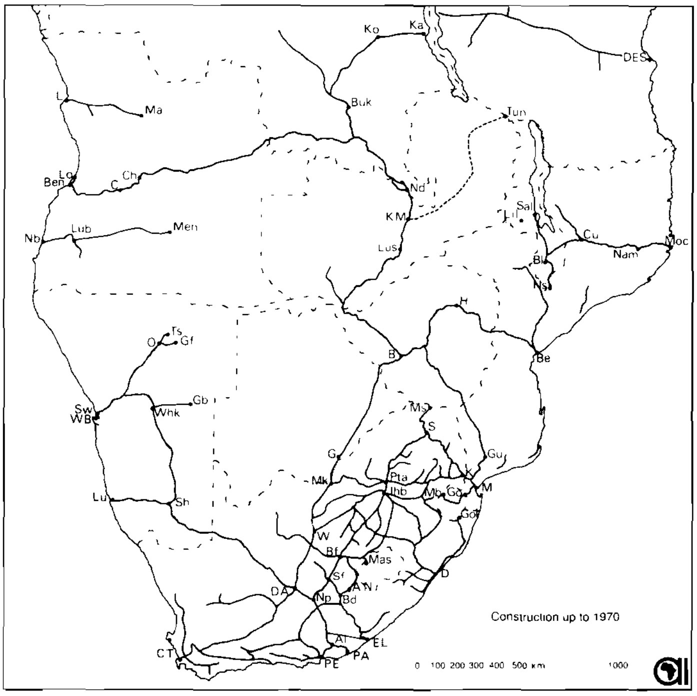
In 1956-57 the allocation of Katanga's copper shipments was renegotiated. Rhodesia had to accept an

increase in the Benguela line's share, but used Katanga's continued need for cheap Wankie coal to enforce an equalization of freight rates for copper. When this failed, Rhodesia offered a discount on copper shipments, and used its control of the Junction Railway (over which all Benguela traffic had to pass) to fix shipments at half the amount Benguela had been accorded in 1957.[12] With her position secured by the Federation's tariffs against South African goods, Rhodesia also expanded her stake in the Central African economy and by the early 1960s had become "the main supplier for both Zambia and Malawi".[13] South Africa's role in regional transport had been further reduced by a road link constructed in the 1950s between the Copperbelt and the Tanzanian port of Dar es Salaam. It is plain, so far, that the twentieth century workings of Southern Africa's colonial economies, rather than making the region more dependent upon South Africa, had steadily eroded her dominant position in transport. It is true that the South African economy developed much more rapidly over this period than did those of its neighbours, and in the process influenced them through labour recruitment and trade. But the charge that colonial administrators slavishly subordinated the region's economic well-being to the needs of South African capital is untenable. Transportation links and trade agreements, generally claimed to be the mechanism by which dependency upon South









Africa was achieved, did not increase the Union's role in the region — they reduced it. Economic considerations initially led to the construction of a number of lateral routes; thereafter, political considerations, in particular the Rhodesian desire to avoid closer ties with Pretoria, reinforced this development through tariff manipulation and the opening up of new, non-South African outlets to the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

1965-1980: The reversal of the colonial pattern

In the mid 1960s, when the Federation was breaking up and British colonial rule coming to an end, the main ports used by the landlocked countries of Southern Africa were as follows:

Zambia	— Beira, Lourenço Marques, Lobito, Dar es Salaam
Malawi	— Beira
Rhodesia	— Beira, Lourenço Marques
Swaziland	— Lourenço Marques

Eighty per cent by volume of the region's trade (excluding South Africa itself) was shipped via Angola and Mozambique, only 20 per cent going through South African ports. Only Botswana and Lesotho relied upon South African harbours, the latter because it was totally surrounded by

South Africa and had no option but to do so. Botswana's closest port was Lourenço Marques, but trade from the Witwatersrand, Rhodesia and Zambia saturated the Mozambican port's capacity. Botswana traditionally relied upon Cape Town, which provided better facilities for its perishable exports.[14]

By the end of the 1970s, that is only fifteen years later, most of the countries which came together to form the SADCC in 1980 had indeed become dependent upon South Africa's railways and harbours. Seventy per cent by volume of the regional trade (again excluding South Africa) was now shipped through South African ports.[15] At first glance, this would appear to support SADCC claims of a conscious policy by South Africa to reinforce her economic dominance over the region. Yet the evidence shows that the major impetus for the events that, between the early 1960s and 1979-80, led to a re-routing of trade away from the old "colonial" pattern, came primarily from the Frontline States. In each case, factors beyond South Africa's control contributed to her neighbouring states' declining power over the carriage and direction to their trade. Only later, and to a lesser degree, was South Africa responsible for enforcing the use of her own rail facilities.

The extension of South Africa's role in regional transport and trade concerns the history of three major routes — the Benguela, Tazara and Beit Bridge lines; and two border closures — that on the frontier between Rhodesia and Zambia from 1973-78, and that on the frontier between Rhodesia and Mozambique from 1976-80. The history of Malawi's rail link to the Mozambican seaport of Nacala is also pertinent to our argument.

The Rhodesian-Zambian border closure, 1973-78

Zambia and Rhodesia clashed frequently over their joint ownership of Rhodesian Railways in the run-up to UDI. In the late 1960s, Lusaka sought other routes through Mozambique, Angola, and Zaire for its copper exports. UDI and the United Nations call for sanctions encouraged Zambia to take drastic measures. In late 1965 she began to use exchange controls to restrict the flow of money to the Rhodesian regime. In 1966, she made use of the fact that the accounting centre for Rhodesian Railways was located in her territory to cut off all payments from railway accounts to Salisbury. Zambia's intention here was two-fold: to pressure the Smith regime, by depriving it of an important source of foreign currency; and indirectly to push Britain into more decisive action against Rhodesia by blocking the 40 per cent of Britain's copper imports traditionally handled by Rhodesian Railways. The down-side for Zambia was that fifty per cent of her exports — and so her entire development programme — were placed in jeopardy.[16]

When Rhodesia responded with restrictions of her own, Zambia, lacking alternative routes for her trade, was forced to relent. Although this episode was a failure for Zambia, it had far-reaching consequences, for it led her to cancel agreements obliging her to use Rhodesian Railways at the expense of other outlets. Zambia was thus free to disengage the Katangan copper trade from its traditional routes.[17]

The early 1970s drove Zambia and Rhodesia further apart, as Rhodesia, exploiting Lusaka's inability to find alternative routes and her dependence on Wankie coal, demanded both a guaranteed percentage of Zambian traffic and increased freight rates. Relations also suffered through Zambia's support of Zimbabwean nationalists fighting the Smith regime. Rhodesia's unwillingness to tolerate Lusaka's protection of guerilla bases peaked in 1973, when, without consulting the governments of South Africa or Portugal (on whom she depended for trade and transport routes), Salisbury closed the Rhodesian-Zambian border. Within a day, Smith bowed to the need for foreign exchange and exempted the lucrative copper trade from his ban. But President Kaunda of Zambia had other ideas. Believing his country's alternative routes to have improved considerably since the mid-1960s, he seized the opportunity to cut all transport ties with the white minority regime.[18]

For Rhodesia, Smith's border closure thus backfired badly. Revenue lost as a result of reduced transit traffic amounted to as much as one million Rhodesian dollars a month.[19] In addition, the closure had an unfavourable impact on Rhodesia's manufacturing industry, which sacrificed the Zambian market where, despite sanctions, business had been brisk. From Zambia's point of view, her counter-measure was successful only in so far as it enabled Kaunda's government to feel good about jettisoning Rhodesian Railways. Within months, Lusaka found that the alternative routes at her disposal could not easily compensate for the loss of Rhodesian Railways. The carrying capacity of the lines running through Zaire and Angola was severely restricted by the political instability of these countries. The damage inflicted on Zaire's transport infrastructure during the mercenary revolt, for example, was so extensive that until 1974 the route to Matadi could carry only very small amounts of Zambian exports. The Benguela route had already been operating close to capacity prior to 1973, and was now increasingly disrupted by Angolan insurgents. Zambia was thus compelled to export copper by the Great North Road to Dar es Salaam. Here too she found constraints because, in anticipation of the opening of the Tazara line to Dar es Salaam, she had begun to run down her fleet of road transport vehicles. The road itself had been bituminized (by a South African company) in 1972. But transport costs and pilferage had meanwhile increased sharply.[20]

The Rhodesian-Zambian border closure also drew the SAR&H more actively into the politics of southern African transport manipulation. From 1970, the SAR&H had been under the general managership of Dr Jacobus Loubser. As the head of a parastatal organization, Loubser was well aware of the need for South Africa to export in order to be able to afford the continued import of foreign capital and technology. As it overcame domestic capacity problems arising from the expansion of the South African economy in the early 1970s, the SAR&H therefore saw a two-fold interest in expanding its share of regional transport: to make a profit on freight from neighbouring countries, and to enhance the flow of South African exports for both political and economic reasons.[21] Rhodesia's unilateral border closure with Zambia jeopardized these interests. It threatened to restrict the SAR&H's business area, cutting it off from the lucrative transit trade with the Katanga copperbelt.

In response to the Rhodesian move, and to the forthcoming opening of the Tazara line, the SAR&H how developed a comprehensive policy providing a framework for its regional activities. This policy, known as "transport diplomacy", was the brainchild of Loubser. Far from being aggressive or domineering, it meant providing assistance to neighbouring countries in the form of repair and maintenance services, management personnel and technicians, technical information and research. This new regional role for the SAR&H was to be further increased through Loubser's personal contact and communication with other general managers. To the SAR&H general manager this was "the visualization of business principles in a broader long term context".[22]

The Tazara and Benguela lines

The threat posed by the Rhodesian border closure to South African trade encouraged Pretoria to change her policy towards Rhodesia. On the other side of the fence, Zambia's upper and middle classes found life increasingly uncomfortable without the flow of manufactured and luxury imports from the south. The dissatisfaction of these classes represented a long-term threat to Zambian political stability and provided a major incentive for Lusaka to respond to South Africa's 1974-75 detente initiative.[23]

The first SAR&H sortie into railway diplomacy was tied to Prime Minister Vorster's wider efforts at detente with Africa in the early 1970s. At the Victoria Falls talks in August 1975, Vorster and Loubser tried to persuade Kaunda to reopen the border and disburden himself of threatening economic calamity. They even cajoled Prime Minister Smith of Rhodesia into guaranteeing safe passage for Zambian goods. But the talks collapsed because, in spite of past failures, Kaunda believed that prospects for Zambia's alternative routes looked better than ever they had done before. July 1975 saw the first successful trial-run on the Tazara line. In addition, the Benguela railway was still in operation despite the escalating civil war in Angola. Zambia seemed to have freed herself of economic links to the white south.

At independence, President Kaunda had revived plans for a rail link to Dar es Salaam. Surveys carried out in the 1950s and 1960s differed, however, on the feasibility of such a route, a certain pessimism informing their conclusions generally.[24] In 1967, the Chinese agreed to finance and build a line from Kaprivi-Mposhu in Zambia to Dar es Salaam. The Tazara, or Uhuru (Freedom) line came into operation in 1975. Its theoretical carrying capacity was 200 000 tons per month, well in excess of Zambia's total export volume. Yet the situation very quickly turned against Zambia. On August 10, 1975 warring factions in the Angolan civil war cut the Benguela line. This necessitated re-routing 60 000 tons of relief food aid for Zambia via Dar es Salaam. But Dar es Salaam was soon congested. The Chinese planners had failed to match the port's handling capacity to that of the railway; they had badly overestimated the productivity of Tanzanian harbour workers.[25] In the euphoria of the opening of the Freedom Railway, however, few gave serious thought to such matters.

Soon after the Chinese construction engineers and operators had departed, freight figures on the Tazara line dropped to about 50 000 tons per month. This could be attributed, partly, to a lack of locomotives and rolling stock; but primarily it was due to managerial inefficiency and the inability of the Dar es Salaam port authorities to increase the volume of goods they could handle. Railway authorities also criticized the inappropriately weak locomotives sold them by the Chinese. These difficulties were compounded by a number of local influences which together served to ensure that after 1976 the Tazara line never carried more than 15 to 20 per cent of its potential capacity. Maintenance of track, signal equipment and rolling stock was exceptionally poor. Skilled manpower was ill-trained and, since poorly paid, tended to be unreliable. Furthermore, the sheer cost of construction, and the failure of the Zambian government to reduce the country's dependence upon copper exports, meant that after the Chinese left it could not afford to inject new capital into the venture.[26]

The Tanzanians also sabotaged Zambia's de-linkage strategy by refusing to participate in joint schemes to improve facilities at Dar es Salaam. The Tanzanian government also frustrated Zambian attempts to utilize alternative ports (such as Mombasa in Kenya) linked indirectly to the Tazara line, by imposing severe weight restrictions on vehicles between Zambia and Kenya and making that route uneconomic.[27] Tanzania's motives were entirely selfish: she desperately needed the revenue from transit traffic to Dar es Salaam. By the mid-1970s, her rigid economic policies had frightened investors away and discouraged local entrepreneurs. Rural impoverishment worsened as the economy ground to a standstill. Rates of pilferage on the Tazara route reached impossible levels, unpaid local officials stopping trains to demand bribes.[28] Zambia, whose food production had failed to meet domestic demand since the early 1970s, was forced to turn to South Africa to keep her people from starving and acquire basic engineering and industrial spares to sustain her crisis-ridden economy.[29] The safe passage of such goods via Tanzania could not be guaranteed.

Zambian trade routes were further hit in rather a different manner by events in Angola. Following the Portuguese coup in April 1974, rival liberation movements clashed in anticipation of their country's independence. In August 1975 the Benguela line was cut in several places.[30] Throughout 1975 and 1976 fighting raged between the Marxist MPLA (backed by Cuba), the pro-Western FNLA (and its mercenaries), and the nationalist Unita of Jonas Savimbi (backed by South Africa).

When South Africa withdrew from the conflict, Cuban and MPLA forces occupied most of the country. By February 1976 Unita had reverted to guerilla warfare and declared the Benguela line a target in its fight against the new MPLA government. Between March and May 1976 Unita guerillas made several attacks on bridges, cutting the line in a number of places and pinning down a significant amount of copper intended for export.[31]

Unita's decision to cut the Benguela line has been interpreted as the first instance of South Africa's destabilization of the region's transport economy. It has thus been slotted into the same category as the surrogate military forces run in a number of places by South Africa in the 1980s. Such pigeonholing tends to ignore Unita's decade-long struggle against Portuguese rule and shifts the entire responsibility for the movement's decisions to Pretoria. Unita, however, has demonstrated over the years that, in spite of relying heavily on South African support, it sets its own objectives and policies: Savimbi's decision to cut the

Benguela line arose from strategic planning, and not from orders originating in Pretoria. South Africa had reduced its support for Unita just weeks before the attacks; and Savimbi was well aware that cutting the line would harm his one remaining ally, Kaunda of Zambia. The move was, however, the only effective option in his economic war upon the MPLA.

The Angolan government, assisted by Cuban engineers, began repairing the railway in June 1976 and scheduled the reopening for 10 August 1976 — a year after it had closed. Although 5 000 Cubans were deployed to guard the route, an exodus of skilled railway workers and repeated Unita attacks left the line out of commission.

By early 1977 Unita was no longer in a position to challenge repair attempts. Nevertheless, the reopening was again postponed in March 1977, when the MPLA supported the invasion of southern Zaire by a group of Katangan separatists called the *Front de Libération Nationale Congolaise* (FLNC). The FLNC had grown out of the "Katanga gendarmes", who had fought for Katangan independence in the 1960s and after their defeat had fought as mercenaries for the Portuguese and, later, the MPLA. Following Unita's near-collapse, the MPLA government, in retaliation for Zaire's support for the FNLA and Cabindan separatists, encouraged the FLNC dream of Katangan independence, from which it potentially stood to gain.[32]

Unable to repel the FLNC alone, Zaire called on Moroccan and French assistance. By April 1977 they had forced the Katangans back into Angola. With Angolan and Cuban help, the FLNC regrouped and, in May 1978, slipped back into Katanga once more, coming within striking range of the copper-producing areas. Again, Kinshasa requested French, as well as Belgian, assistance and by August 1978 the FLNC was finally crushed. While the first invasion had only briefly disrupted Katanga's economy, the second caused extensive damage to the infrastructure of southern Zaire.[33] And as the Katangan separatists had relied upon the Benguela line for their logistic and general transport needs, the Zairean government did little to repair damage to it. The Katangan section of the line remained inoperative in fact for the remainder of the 1970s, forcing Zambia to look southwards once more; by the time normal traffic could be resumed in the early 1980s, Unita was receiving South African support and again ready to attack the line — this time in Angola.

The Mozambican-Rhodesian border closure, 1976

Although Mozambique's transition to independence was far smoother than Angola's, the impact of the new government's actions upon regional transport was highly significant. As in Angola, independence was followed by an exodus of skilled manpower which led to a deterioration in railway services.[34] But Mozambique, largely free of the internal warfare which incapacitated Angola in the mid-1970s, was determined to pursue an aggressive foreign policy.[35]

In February 1976, President Machel of Mozambique stated his intention of applying UN sanctions and closing the border with Rhodesia. In addition, Maputo provided guerillas of the Zimbabwean African National Union (Zanu) with bases from which to operate against Rhodesia. A few weeks later, a cross-border Rhodesian attack against Zanu led Machel to announce the closure of the frontier and the seizure of Rhodesian property in Mozambique. Wishing to show support for the liberation struggle, and apply greater pressure on Rhodesia in order to end UDI, Machel was confident of the success of his frontier closure tactics for, in the mid-1970s, some three-quarters of Rhodesia's external trade passed by rail through Mozambique. Maputo's action certainly strengthened UN sanctions — Rhodesia lost approximately one-sixth of its rolling stock (2 300 wagons worth about US$46 million), and Rhodesian exports were henceforth compelled to use the SAR&H, since every lateral route created during the colonial era was now closed.[36]

For her part, Mozambique found herself in a position very similar to that of Zambia in 1973. She lost about US$60 million per year in railroad and port revenues, up to US$80-110 million in other losses, and approximately 16 000 jobs. The expected international aid, which Machel had hoped would partly compensate for these losses, did not materialize as quickly as he had expected or in the amounts he had hoped for.[37]

Militarily, Machel's initiative rebounded since it removed his only major political deterrent against Rhodesian cross-border raids on Zanu guerrillas. More important, it gave the Rhodesians an incentive to extend their attacks to Mozambique's infrastructure in an effort to compel Machel to abandon his support for Zanu altogether. To add to the pressure upon him, the Rhodesians helped to bring into existence the anti-Frelimo guerilla movement (MNR), which soon extended its operations from central into northern Mozambique. The damage caused by the MNR to Mozambique's infrastructure was so extensive that, by 1979, Machel was pressing Zanu to accept the settlement negotiated by the British.[38]

The Beit Bridge connection

The Mozambican border closure in March 1976 put South Africa in control of the economic life and strategic future of Rhodesia. Denied access to her traditional ports of Beira and Lourenço Marques (now Maputo), Rhodesia could now only export her goods through Bulawayo and Botswana to the South African ports of Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London, or to the Natal ports via the Rutenga-Beit Bridge line. In one sense, it was ironic that in the three years following the Mozambican border closure, Rhodesia should find herself routing 60 per cent of her exports via Beit Bridge — a line whose construction pre-UDI governments had opposed on the very grounds that it would increase Rhodesia's dependence upon South Africa. Only during 1970-71, with the Rhodesian economy booming in spite of sanctions, had the Rhodesian government, seeking to diversify and increase the carrying capacity of its routes, approached the SAR&H to build this line. The track had been completed in 1974.[39]

With the re-routing of Rhodesian trade away from its traditional ports, Pretoria possessed a powerful lever to pressure the Smith regime into resolving its political crisis. South Africa still very much desired to break into the African market, and was aware that any such efforts would be severely hampered by being identified internationally as the underwriter of UDI. At the same time, Pretoria continued to face strong domestic pressure that made it impossible openly to support majority rule in Rhodesia.[40] South Africa therefore moved cautiously, applying pressure on the Smith government only by stealth.

By July 1976, "heavy rail congestion" on certain South African lines began to hamper the movement of a number of vital Rhodesian imports. Similar difficulties also affected Rhodesian foreign exchange earnings by limiting her exports. Things reached a point at which Rhodesia's biggest citrus exporter, Hippo Valley Estates, had to dump 16 000 tons of grapefruit which it could not get through. Pretoria's claims that rail delays were technical and unavoidable were extremely thin — but impossible to disprove.[41]

The Soweto uprising of 1976 permitted the South African government to apply even more pressure. It made its claims of SAR&H network disruption more credible; it distracted white public opinion from Rhodesia; and it also brought about a slump in the South African economy which led to a draconian deposit scheme on imports, by which the government sought to improve the balance of payments. This deposit scheme hit Rhodesian exports to South Africa very hard, though it can hardly be said to have been specifically aimed at Salisbury. By August 1976, "rail congestion" had created a pile-up of Rhodesian goods worth 50 million Rhodesian dollars inside South Africa, causing Rhodesian business groups to petition their government for an urgent political settlement. In addition, South Africa began to withdraw military assistance from Rhodesia. The official pretence that congestion was technical was exposed later that year when Loubser announced his willingness to help Zaire and Zambia move their blocked exports through South Africa. There was, he said, "plenty of spare rail capacity to handle such freight".[42]

Confronted with South African pressure and a growing guerilla movement, the Rhodesian government began to cave in. In September 1976 South African Prime Minister John Vorster and US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger persuaded Smith to accept, publicly, the principle of majority rule.[43] His new position marked the beginning of the end of white minority rule in Rhodesia. In view of her reduced defence capacity, brought about by the withdrawal of South African helicopters and personnel, and the mounting guerilla war, she had no choice but to negotiate. After a last attempt to turn the tide of war during 1977-78, Smith opened talks with "moderate", internal, black leaders. There was little Rhodesia could do about the strangulation of her exports. In April 1978, nine black ministers were sworn into the Transitional Government of Rhodesia.[44]

South Africa and Zambia

By early 1978, domestic discontent and unrest threatened the unity of Zambia's ruling party. With elections only two months away, and serious political rivals campaigning for the opening of the southern border, Kaunda felt compelled to take a decision that would alleviate local shortages of goods readily available in South Africa. The Zambians put through a request for assistance to South Africa by telephone. There followed a meeting between the two railways' general managers to identify specific needs. Within hours, according to Loubser, ships carrying maize to the still congested docks of Dar es Salaam changed course for South African ports. Within days, urgently needed food and fertilizer were moving north to Zambia. To speed the process, the SAR&H also loaned Zambia four locomotives and a number of wagons. Soon, thousands of tons of copper which had been piling up in Zambia were sent south.[45] Loubser's policy of keeping his channels of communication open had proved its value.

Zambia originally intended to use the South African route only in the short term, but continued problems with the Tazara line and Tanzanian intransigence forced her increasingly to rely upon South African ports.[46] This tendency was reinforced by Rhodesian attacks on the Zambian infrastructure in 1979. Salisbury had profited considerably from the reopening of the Zambian border in 1978. But the following year, the Zimbabwe-Rhodesian government, running out of bargaining counters at the negotiating table, believed it stood to gain much from making Zambia more dependent upon trade with the south.[47] Its main objective in this was to persuade Kaunda to force Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African People's Union (Zapu) — which was almost entirely dependent upon Zambia for sanctuary — to settle for less at the forthcoming Lancaster House talks in London.

For Rhodesia, these attacks were successful. Not only did Zambia exert the expected pressure on Zapu, but President Machel of Mozambique, whose economy had also been the target of Rhodesian attacks, took the hint and forced Zanu, which operated from Mozambique, to abandon its attempts to sabotage the Lancaster House talks. In this way, the Rhodesian crisis was largely resolved through economic pressure applied to all parties: by South Africa on Rhodesia's lifelines, and by Rhodesia on the guerillas' host countries of Zambia and Mozambique. A ceasefire followed in December 1979. In April 1980, Robert Mugabe, leader of Zanu, became Prime Minister of an independent Zimbabwe.

The Nacala line

Clearly, the regional pattern of rail transport links was not the long-standing, irreversible series of ties to South Africa which the SADCC claimed to have inherited from the colonial era. Nor, for that matter, with the ironic exception of compelling Rhodesia to recognize the need for black majority rule, could South Africa be said to have forced its will on its neighbours from 1965 to 1980 by manipulating the rail transport system. Indeed, the only other important South African intervention in the regional rail transport network was through the funding and construction of Malawi's Nacala line — a move which in the long run would reduce that country's dependence upon South African ports.

Unlike Zambia or Zaire, Malawi exported agricultural products, and traditionally relied for 95 per cent of its trade on its rail link to the Mozambican port of Beira. Her almost complete dependence upon this route forced her, in order to maintain economic growth and political stability, to seek an accommodation with the Portuguese colonial authorities in Mozambique.[48] But the disruption caused in Beira and its port by the imposition of economic sanctions against Rhodesia increased Malawi's interest in finding an alternative outlet.

Nacala, to which a trickle of Malawian exports already found its way by road, was one of the few deepwater harbours in the region. Until 1967, a plan to build a railway from

Blantyre to Nacala, approved by the governments of both Malawi and Portugal, had stagnated for lack of capital. Malawi's inability to acquire the necessary funds stemmed in part from Britain's refusal to invest fresh money its former colony for fear it would be used for the Malawian President Hastings Banda's pet project, the building of a new capital at Lilongwe. However, Banda was determined to acquire a rail link to Nacala; the expected reduction in transport costs would make Malawi's agricultural exports more competitive.[49]

When South Africa, as part of her first effort at an "outward-looking policy" towards Africa, offered to finance the Nacala link, Banda seized the opportunity in spite of the obvious political controversy involved. He was encouraged by the domestic political situation in Malawi at that time. Banda's Malawi Congress Party lacked organization, a clearly defined power base and ideology, and his leadership of the party had been challenged after independence. His personal power depended on patronage, so economic growth was a major priority for him. Pretoria, seeking political acceptance in black Africa, was quite willing to pay for Banda's friendship. In return for diplomatic relations, South Africa also provided loans for the construction of the new, more centrally-located capital of Lilongwe. The aid, loans and rail link gave Banda the economic substance he needed to transform key political supporters into agricultural estate owners whose prosperity depended upon their loyalty to the president.[50] The railway to Nacala was completed in 1970, and remained in operation throughout the decade.

Conclusion

The establishment of the SADCC was widely regarded as a turning point, and the optimism it generated was not restricted to SADCC leaders. Foreign observers believed it could provide a framework within which the regional states could unite to challenge South Africa's hegemony. In spite of the lack of donor enthusiasm for Africa in the 1980s, therefore, the SADCC managed to attract substantial resources for its many development projects.[51] Indeed, the establishment of the organization in itself was a significant success, as it thwarted South Africa's "Constellation of Southern African States" (Consas) initiative. Consas was to have taken the form of collaborative efforts among the regional states to promote political, military and economic stability. Its failure was a blow to the Botha regime, which had hoped to formalize and capitalize on the expansion of South Africa's role in the regional economy during the 1970s.

Several observers have attributed South Africa's adoption of more aggressive military tactics to the failure of Consas. Her shifting perceptions of her own internal and external security situations also played a role. During the early 1980s, the "hawks" held the upper hand in Pretoria. SADF commandos attacked ANC bases in Mozambique and Lesotho and supported dissidents and rebels in Angola, Mozambique, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe, following a policy which became known as regional destabilization. As a result of the SAR&H's strong presence in the region, rail transport became a tool of destabilization and a direct means for South Africa to put pressure on her neighbours.

Notable examples of these tactics include the withdrawal of South African technicians and rolling stock from Zimbabwe in 1982 and the total blockade of Lesotho for harbouring ANC guerillas in 1986. In the first instance, the ploy produced few concrete results; in the second, it overthrew the government in a matter of weeks. But aggressive transport diplomacy was soon discredited for good reasons: among others, the cost in terms of international criticism (especially from the USA and the UK) was too high. With the realization in the late 1980s that consent could not be won by force alone, and that isolation was not an option, South Africa sought to establish better relations by offering economic incentives too.

On the SADCC side, although donor assistance reduced transport problems on the main railway lines in the short term, little was done by either foreign governments or Frontline States to alleviate structural difficulties. Large sums of money went into rebuilding and expanding the region's transport infrastructure in spite of there already being considerable port and rail capacity.[52] Mozambique and Zimbabwe put much effort into reopening and defending the Beira corridor. But the Tazara route continued to decline through inadequate maintenance and the poor training of railwaymen. The Tazara example is no isolated case: only 19 of the 192 transport-related SADCC projects are directed at improving the skills shortage, claimed to be one of the most crippling legacies of colonialism.[53]

Neither has the SADCC undertaken the restructuring of regional trade. None of its members have eliminated tariffs with other members, for as producers of primary mineral and agricultural products they have often found themselves in competition.[54] Only Zimbabwe possessed a relatively sophisticated manufacturing sector. Most SADCC members, however, were not interested in simply replacing dependence upon South African products with reliance upon an uncertain supply from Zimbabwe. The position has been rendered more complex by the fact that, as the evidence shows, economic links with Pretoria have not been uniformly destabilizing for other countries in the region. Malawi, Zambia and, to some degree, Mozambique have utilized their economic ties with South Africa to bolster the stability of their regimes. SADCC-member Botswana has built her economic miracle on links with South Africa.[55]

While the diamond and gold fields provided the wealth by which South Africa became the region's strongest economy — and the one with the most sophisticated transport network — the claim that colonialism systematically shackled the region in a position of dependence upon South Africa is untenable. South Africa, by virtue of her being the leading economic power in the region, profoundly affected the latter's political economy in many ways; but the notion of a conspiracy or capitalist master plan has little validity. Both rivalry among the colonial powers and natural economic considerations produced a number of lateral rail links, in whose success the sponsoring colonial administrations took an immediate interest. In the 1950s this tendency was reinforced by the protectionism of the Central African Federation.

The crucial period for extension of South African control over the regional railway network was from 1965 to 1980. But this did not arise as much from manipulation by Pretoria as from internal political crises, the dearth of overseas capital investment, the lack of regional co-ordination and, in certain instances, economic mismanagement north of the Limpopo. In the early 1980s, South African destabilization strategy and support for rebel movements in Angola and Mozambique certainly kept traditional routes closed. But the limited nature of the achievements of the SADCC's disengagement initiative is the result, equally, of conflicts and contradictions among member countries. Whether the countries of the region can yet bury the hatchet, and equip themselves with a transport infrastructure to take them into the twenty-first century, remains to be seen.[56]

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Dismantling bus apartheid in South Africa, 1975-1990

*G H Pirie, Lecturer in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand describes the desegregation of bus transport in South Africa's cities.**

Racial segregation on urban public transport has a long history in South Africa, going back as it does to the turn of the century in Durban and Johannesburg.[1] Elsewhere, as in Cape Town, enforced racial segregation on public transport is a more recent phenomenon; it dates from the 1950s, when apartheid was applied more vigorously to all forms of transport throughout the country.[2] The 1960s and early 1970s were indeed the heyday of racial segregation on buses in metropolitan South Africa. Thereafter, as bus apartheid became increasingly unaffordable, and as the political climate changed, the practice began to crumble. Desegregation did not take place everywhere, however, nor did it happen overnight. It was gradual, and it varied from place to place. This article sets out the background to bus desegregation, explores the geographical diversity in the pace, price and process of change, and charts public attitudes to the prospect, and the reality, of racially integrated buses. It complements a review of the concurrent dismantling of railway apartheid.[3]

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The background to desegregation

Literally and figuratively, there were small signs of a changing attitude towards racially segregated bus transport in the early 1970s when the new *South African road traffic signs manual* prescribed that bus stops for blacks should no longer be signposted "second-class".[4] This gesture made segregation less crude but did not eliminate it. Indicative of a more profound shift in attitude was the landmark address to the South African Road Federation in 1975, in which the influential transport economist, C Verburgh, observed that urban road transport would increasingly have to be racially integrated.[5] This point of view was slow to diffuse and take root among public officials. But when there was a hint that the entire question of bus apartheid was being reconsidered, there was no mistaking its authority. None other than the government's adviser on urban transport, J Driessen, suggested to the 1976 congress of the Road Federation that desegregation could relieve traffic congestion, keep fares down, and reduce the need for expensive bus subsidies.[6]

The hope Driessen gave of a breakthrough in bus apartheid was swiftly clarified by the Minister of Transport, S L Muller, who made it plain that the government would not amend the Road Transportation Act with a view to outlawing racial segregation on buses. Nevertheless, Muller indicated that the government would consider relaxing bus apartheid as political and economic circumstances altered, and that it even accepted that racial segregation would eventually disappear. Displaying a deference to public opinion that had been absent when racial segregation was first imposed, Muller told Parliament in May 1977 that the way was open for communities to request the desegregation of public transport in their cities or towns. The only stipulations were that integration was not to create racial conflict, and that it was not to be imposed in places where it was not wanted by whites.[7] Later, in December 1978, the Secretary for Transport, A Ecksteen, confirmed that his department would consider abandoning bus apartheid if it received sufficient requests from bus operators.[8]

Consistent with the government's supposedly more relaxed attitude to bus apartheid, the 1977 Road Transport Act did not make racial segregation compulsory. It did specify, however, that the race of users and operators would be taken into account when application was made for a passenger bus licence, and that permits for multiracial services might require the provision of racially distinctive seating inside buses. All licences had to specify which race(s) could use a bus, and the Act provided that both operators and users would be guilty of an offence if buses were used in violation of this condition. In time, operators discovered that bus operating permits were issued more readily if the application was for restricted racial mixing, especially if whites were to be carried.[9]

The pace of desegregation

Despite these promising moves, bus desegregation in South Africa was slow, except in the bantustans, where it was abolished immediately on the attainment of independence in the late 1970s. Between March 1977 and March 1980, 26 bus operators applied for multiracial bus permits. Twenty of these applications were successful.[10] But the actual number of buses desegregated as a result was small. A survey undertaken by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research in 1986 showed that in 53 organizations which operated 12 406 buses (an estimated 75 per cent of the national fleet), only 16 per cent of vehicles were licensed to carry passengers of all races. The remaining 84 per cent were restricted to transporting passengers of specified race or races. Desegregation was furthest advanced on long-distance, privately-operated coaches; and segregation was most deeply entrenched on municipal bus services in the Transvaal and Orange Free State. Only 23 of the organizations surveyed had already requested (or were soon to request) permission to relax the racial restrictions on their licences. Fourteen of these organizations sought completely multiracial permits, largely to rationalize uneconomic services.[11] In several instances, however, especially on routes where there was a high degree of residential segregation and where passengers were only black or only white, any "desegregation" would have been but an empty gesture.

The price of desegregation

Late in 1986 the Department of Transport commissioned an inquiry into the financial consequences of bus desegregation. In this study it was found that the issue was unusually complex and that desegregation's financial consequences would vary widely and depend primarily on the attitude of local bus operators and users. Secondary considerations were the imminent deregulation in public transport (including especially the development of alternatives such as minibuses), the relaxation of racial residential zoning, and black urbanization. The greatest diversion of white passengers from desegregated services was forecast for municipal bus operators in highly segregated metropolitan areas: Pretoria, Bloemfontein and the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg, Roodepoort, Germiston, Boksburg, Benoni and Brakpan). Very rough estimates were that if services were desegregated immediately in these eight centres, there would be within three months a 23 per cent decline in monthly passenger journeys and a commensurate loss in revenue. The maximum losses forecast were R7 million for 1987/88 and R5 million for 1988/89. These dismal losses, it was thought, would be short term and localized. They did not deter those conducting the inquiry from expressing the strong recommendation that racial stipulations in passenger transport permits should be eliminated without further ado.[12]

Attitudes to desegregation

In the 1980s, well-founded sociological enquiries into white attitudes to the prospect of desegregated public transport in South Africa revealed that in the country as a whole (especially in the larger cities and among English speakers) a majority were inclined to approve desegregation — or at least would not denounce it emphatically. This level of support for desegregation needs to be understood in the light of the fact that most whites use public transport seldom, if at all, and that except for the poorer among them (most of whom are politically conservative) they are not therefore directly affected by desegregation. Similarly, any expressed approval of racially segregated public transport should be interpreted in the light of the fact that less than a third of white South Africans have ever used multiracial transport.[13]

A nationwide survey conducted in 1984 among 1 204 adult urban whites showed that just under half (45 per cent) favoured the desegregation of transport, while a small proportion (7 per cent) were uncertain. The remaining 48 per cent declared that apartheid should never be abandoned on public transport.[14] A follow-up study conducted in 1986 disclosed that a higher proportion (62 per cent) now approved of desegregation, a majority of these favouring an immediate end to racial restrictions.[15] Based on a countrywide sample of 1 062 university students, another study (conducted in 1985) found that a majority (70 per cent) welcomed, or would accept, racially desegregated municipal transport.[16] A 1986 opinion survey of a national sample of 1 455 whites revealed that even though a high proportion of respondents (13 per cent) felt uncertain about racially desegregated transport, more favoured desegregation (48 per cent) than favoured the retention of apartheid (40 per cent). Among those who approved of desegregation, 17 per cent were willing to share transport with coloured or Indian passengers only. Regular users of public transport showed less resistance to desegregation than those who travelled rarely or not at all.[17]

Findings in more localized investigations of public attitudes to desegregated transport include those of a 1987 survey which established that 66 per cent of the 1 495 whites surveyed in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban were in favour of desegregated transport.[18] The existence of this majority preference for desegregation was corroborated in a still more localized study in Randburg, a middle-income white town on the perimeter of Johannesburg. There, in 1983, just over half (54 per cent) of a sample of 743 white households said that they favoured the desegregation of buses in the immediate or near future. In Randburg again, 89 per cent of a sample of 656 black lodgers approved the desegregation of buses in the near or immediate future.[19] Contrariwise, a shade more than half (53 per cent) of the 191 low-income (mostly Afrikaans speaking and politically conservative) white households in Mayfair, a racially mixed inner-city suburb of Johannesburg, objected to the prospect of integrated buses.[20]

The processes and experiences of desegregation

It will be many years before the full and finer details of confidential desegregation debates, decisions and correspondence are open for public scrutiny. In the meantime, commentary, reports and letters appearing in the press are an invaluable (albeit incomplete) record of the steps taken toward eradicating apartheid on buses in the recent past — and of the public response. In the following paragraphs the spotlight falls on the racial desegregation of buses in the major urban areas of South Africa. Note that the desegregation which took place in Cape town, East London, Port Elizabeth and Durban contrasts with the tentative steps taken in Johannesburg, and with the absence (until very recently) of any official initiative in Pretoria.

Cape Town

Cape Town's encounter with bus apartheid was by South African standards very brief. Lasting from 1956 to 1979, buses in the Mother City were the last to be segregated and the first to be desegregated. Public criticism played its part in desegregation,[21] but it was the economics of Cape Town's private enterprise bus operations that finally killed bus apartheid. Neither the financial exemptions given annually to City Tramways nor the savings made by a conversion to buses crewed only by a driver were large enough to cover the increasing cost of operating racially segregated services. From 1973, a soaring fuel bill contradicted the government's own pleas for fuel conservation.[22] Against a backdrop of flagrant waste and continued passenger humiliation, City Tramways slowly began desegregating its buses in mid-1977. It did so with the blessing of the City Council which, in February 1977, voted 22-3 to abolish apartheid on buses in the interests of fuel economy.[23] By August 1978 all services reserved for passengers who were not white had been terminated, and a mere 74 weekday services were being operated exclusively for whites. Nine months later, in May 1979, the last "whites only" bus was withdrawn from service. Desegregation had taken place with the minimum of fuss and without significant public protest.

East London

From 1960 the East London municipality had been restricted to carrying five black passengers on its single-deck vehicles and eight on its double-deck vehicles — and this only during off-peak periods. By the mid-1970s this prescription was beginning to hurt the bus service financially. Faced with a decline in white passengers and with services which were in general very poorly patronized indeed, the City Council found itself, willy-nilly, compelled to turn away prospective black passengers.

In 1975, in response to the Council's request that it be allowed to carry up to 25 black people on its buses, the Local Road Transportation Board (LRTB) (the licensing authority) authorized only that the buses could carry 13 black passengers at off-peak times. Despite the competitive threat desegregation posed to the Xhosa Development Corporation, which owned and operated all the "black" buses in East London the increasingly hamstrung municipality applied again for relaxation of the racial quotas in 1976. In the following year the municipality applied for removal of all racial restrictions.[24] Having had no success, the financially embarrassed city fathers appealed once more for desegregation in 1979. In support of their case, they cited figures showing that even though the fuel price had rocketed between 1972 and 1978, bus patronage had dropped by over 20 per cent. Desegregation was not only morally desirable, it had also become an economic imperative. Permission was finally granted to East London to desegregate its buses late in 1979. In February 1980 the last traces of bus apartheid were erased.[25]

Port Elizabeth

By the late 1970s the private bus company in Port Elizabeth was operating buses with as many as six types of permit relating to racial segregation. There were buses only for whites, buses confined to blacks, buses open to all races, buses in which the lower deck was reserved for whites and the upper deck open to all races, buses in which there were ten seats set aside for blacks, and buses in which ten seats were reserved for whites.[26] Both the bus company itself and the coloured Management Committee publicly voiced their wish that these complex arrangements would end.[27] No doubt many black people too would have welcomed an end to the confusion and an end to travelling at the discretion of bus crews.

Illustrative of the difficulties, in January 1979 the two daughters of the Transkei labour and trade representative in Port Elizabeth were ordered upstairs on a bus after two elderly white people had complained of the girls' presence downstairs. This instance of racism took no account of the fact that the two girls were neatly and cleanly dressed in school uniforms and travelling in the company of their white schoolfriends.[28] Shortly after this incident, the girls' mother was herself told by a bus conductor to sit upstairs or get off the bus she was on. In the conductor's view, her diplomatic identity document was no indemnity against the colour bar. This incident elicited several sympathetic telephone calls from those present, and was firmly denounced by black civic organizations and by the city's Coloured and Indian Management Committees. The affair attracted a lot of unwelcome publicity and drove the general manager of the bus company to say that the sooner buses were desegregated the better.[29]

Racial segregation on Port Elizabeth's buses was terminated in November 1980. The step would not have pleased the white pensioner who, earlier that very year, had protested to the bus driver when he found himself sitting among three black women. his action in alerting the driver to this racial mixing, he said simply: "I do not hate blacks. But ... regulations are regulations".[30]

Desegregation certainly did not have the approval of whites in Port Elizabeth's politically conservative, working-class suburb of Algoa Park. The location of this suburb adjacent to black townships and squatter areas meant that buses previously patronized exclusively by whites might, with desegregation, be used by blacks. The overcrowding which ensued was one objection. Algoa Park residents were also quick to associate desegregation with dirtier vehicles and acrimonious exchanges between passengers. At protest meetings in the suburb in 1981, people also spoke out about the intimidation of elderly whites. Among young whites, fears for personal safety so escalated that some working women took to commuting by taxi.[31]

Durban

The first tentative gestures of racial reform in Durban's city transport were undertaken, gingerly, in 1972. They involved the replacement of offensive wording on seats at bus stops by scarcely less offensive colour-coding: passengers of darker skin pigmentation were only to have the use of benches painted green.[32] Three years later, in 1975, the Durban Transport Management Board (DTMB) was among the very first bus operators to apply for permission to desegregate its fleet. Some white opinion in the city strongly favoured the move. Three white ratepayers' associations and the Natal Rail and Road Passenger Association had earlier called for desegregation. But the chairman of the city's Civic Vigilance Association, C Koekemoer, reacted quite differently and drew up a petition on behalf of white people opposed to desegregation. Within months he had assembled 10 000 signatures.[33] The grounds for Koekemoer's protest betrayed in all probability the same anxieties about racial intermingling which had been voiced elsewhere. Explicitly, however, Koekemoer argued that as black people only contributed 12 per cent of Durban's income from rates, white people had an "unassailable right" to decide among whom their wives and children should travel.[34]

The DTMB was particularly attracted to bus desegregation because of the financial relief it promised. As a commission into city finances had noted, desegregation was one way of pruning the transport account deficit, which in 1975 reached R4,2 million.[35] Opinion on the economics of desegregation was divided, however. In 1977, by which time 30 000 people were reported to have petitioned against desegregation, Koekemoer argued that although an increase in black passengers would compensate for the loss of white passengers, the patronage of black buses would fall, government subsidies would decline correspondingly, and the frequency, area served and efficiency of the black bus service would be undermined.[36]

Turning from economic speculation for the moment, a survey conducted by a women's organization in Durban showed that 73 per cent of respondents were in favour of racially integrated buses.[37]

By 1980 the estimated annual cost of operating apartheid buses in Durban was R470 000, excluding fuel costs.[38] In view of this unnecessary expense, the City Council began a new and vigorous round of applications to the LRTB for desegregation. When applications failed, the council appealed. Permission was sought only for limited desegregation: the dual fare structure on city buses was to be retained. The City Council's reasoning here was that any adoption of a common (lower rated) fare structure would have increased their annual financial loss to R1,2 million. Institutionalized racial segregation was thus to be replaced by economic segregation — only whites and wealthier blacks would use the more expensive buses, and most blacks (and a few whites travelling at night and weekends) would use the cheaper service.[39]

On several occasions the DTMB's application for bus desegregation was blocked by conservative white opinion. In 1981 it was the turn of the ominously named National Front and the White Rhino Club. Then, in 1983, when the price of bus apartheid in Durban was calculated at R1,7 million annually, the Conservative Civic Action League responded to the DTMB's threat that it might desegregate its buses even without official permission by warning that it would monitor any racial mixing carefully. As it was to show later, the League's concern was not only the different standards and customs of black passengers, but also their "different smells" and the prospect of petty theft on buses.[40]

The DTMB's persistent requests for desegregation finally succeeded. Early in 1986 permission was granted for the desegregation of certain of what were known as Green Line buses. These were formerly reserved for blacks, who paid fares equivalent to about one third of those paid by whites on Blue Line buses. Later in 1986 the turning point in the desegregation programme — racial restrictions were lifted from all "white" service (Blue Line) buses, the number of which had declined by then from 240 in 1979 to 120. By early 1987, when application was made to desegregate the remaining Green Line buses, institutionalized bus apartheid was to all intents and purposes dead. But as critics noted, buses remained *de facto* segregated because of the dual fare structure. Blacks did not desert the lower-fare buses in droves: indeed it was only Green Line buses that showed an operating profit.[41] Black passengers continued to use "their" Green Line buses not merely because of the fare discrepancy and the more convenient routes, but also because of their more sociable atmosphere.[42]

Johannesburg

In the second half of the 1970s, the government's signs of relenting in the matter of bus apartheid enjoyed a mixed reception in the country's largest city. In the city council the official opposition gave notice that it would try to terminate bus apartheid when it was elected to power. Conversely, the chairman of Johannesburg's Management Committee was implacably opposed to the elimination of the duplication of bus services currently found on ten routes, even though their desegregation would have eased the parlous financial circumstances of bus transport in the city.[43] The abolition of racial discrimination on buses would also have earned some welcome plaudits for the city transport authorities, who had been axing services and trimming schedules. In addition, bus desegregation would have ended hurtful incidents such as those involving a blind white woman (seated downstairs) whose black nurse was instructed to seat herself upstairs, and a dark-skinned foreign dancer who was simply ejected.[44] Even in the new climate of reform, the only concession to desegregation made in Johannesburg was the granting of permission in 1980 to Chinese, coloured and Indian people to travel aboard "white" buses.[45]

By 1985 the finances of municipal bus operation in Johannesburg had considerably worsened. In 1984, losses incurred on the 376 "white" buses serving 100 routes had amounted to R10 million. On the 70 "black" buses which the municipality operated on 12 routes, losses in the same year had reached R1,5 million.[46] Even against this threatening background, the chairman of the City Council's Transport Committee remained reluctant to desegregate buses, arguing that whites would reject desegregation because 70 per cent of white passengers were women. Nonetheless, in a promising development, he indicated that he was willing to desegregate the buses on three routes on a trial basis.

By the mid-1980s, bus apartheid in Johannesburg was not only unaffordable but reflected poorly on a city which considered itself modern and progressive. Instead, the city found itself keeping company with conservative Witwatersrand municipalities such as Roodepoort, whose segregated bus services also attracted adverse publicity.[47] Bus travel in Johannesburg was certainly out of step with Sandton, its young and affluent neighbour. Following an independent survey which established that 50 per cent of users favoured desegregation whereas 37 per cent opposed it, racial restrictions were removed midway through 1985 from the 17 privately operated buses linking Johannesburg and Sandton. The same operating company also discontinued apartheid on its inter-city buses between Pretoria and Johannesburg.[48]

The reluctance of the Johannesburg City Council to embrace multiracial public transport meant that it was lagging behind the political reform initiatives of central government. It was easy to chide the civic authorities for ignoring Foreign Minister R F Botha's general plea that "all laws affecting human dignity must be scrapped". Moreover, it was ironic that after the scrapping of the law prohibiting inter-racial marriage it was "legal to share a bed with a black, but not a bus".[49]

Late in 1986, a year after Johannesburg's trial project was first announced, bus desegregation was introduced experimentally on three services to the city's middle-class, politically-liberal white suburbs; two of these bus services had previously been "white" and one had previously been "black". The racial restriction notice on "white" buses was replaced by a blue painted board which signified that the fare remained exactly what it had been when the bus was reserved for whites. A yellow marker on previously "black" buses indicated that a lower fare applied, again as before.

The ingenious, but confusing, colour-coding on those Johannesburg bus services which operated with a dual fare structure marked only a token desegregation. Although signs containing offensive racial wording were removed from the buses themselves, other traces of apartheid remained. "Blue" buses were scheduled to draw up for passengers at stops marked "white"; "yellow" buses were to halt at stops labelled "non-white". Moreover, the higher fares on "blue" buses ensured that few black people boarded them: desegregation had taken place in name only. The experiment was condemned as silly and half-hearted by many, although one apartheid apologist claimed in an offensive letter to the press that frail and elderly whites were "traumatized" by being squashed up beside black passengers, their overpowering smell, their fleas and their bugs.[50] All bus-stops on the three experimental routes remained segregated until September 1987, after which only those stops unique to the three suburban services were desegregated. Stops on desegregated routes in the inner city remained segregated because they were also boarding points for users of racially segregated buses on other routes.[51]

Although the introduction of bus desegregation in Johannesburg was slow, geographically limited, and somewhat farcical when looked at closely, it contributed nevertheless to the atmosphere of change. Bus crews on other routes were told to admit black passengers at their discretion. Thanks to this concession, many black people felt more inclined than before to risk boarding "white" buses. But their hope that bus crews and passengers would turn a blind eye to their presence was not always met, and in the closing years of the 1980s the local press was spattered with accounts of racial incidents aboard city buses. For example, well-dressed professional people including an artist of national repute, a medical assistant, a business consultant, a salesman and a television producer had to face eviction from buses.[52]

Another instance: several years after coloured people were officially allowed aboard Johannesburg's "white" buses, a driver mistakenly tried to prevent a coloured student from boarding and asked her to prove her racial classification.[53] His request was out of keeping with management's instructions that drivers might not harass the public or demand proof of their race grouping. The driver's action underscored the claim that boarding buses in Johannesburg had changed from "an innocent act into a humiliating identity parade."[54] Sometimes black people refused to disembark, drawing courage from white passengers who spoke up on their behalf either on the bus or later in letters to the press.[55] Observing the confusion, the irritation and the pettiness, 15 major commercial organizations petitioned the city council in 1988 for desegregated buses. In the following year the Witwatersrand Chamber of Commerce and Industry called upon the council to clarify its confusing transport policy which made it difficult for black passengers to plan their trips.[56]

The trial desegregation programme on three of the city's suburban routes had originally been intended to last three months. It was only after the "experiment" had been in operation for almost two years, however, that the city authorities showed signs that they would be willing to extend desegregation — after first consulting the white public. A year later, in April 1989, a leading Johannesburg newspaper gave great prominence to the promising announcement by the chairman of the city's Management Committee that "soon the wheels would turn for everyone". No bold action was taken, however. Instead, it was announced that the question of dismantling bus apartheid would be decided by a referendum in which the opinion of white voters only would be solicited. Still the City Council refused to do away with racialism at a stroke. Still it refused to consider the needs and wishes of the tens of thousands of black people who in recent years had settled illegally in the inner city, contributing increasingly to the coffers of the Golden City's transport department.[57]

In a 32 per cent poll, 48 000 white voters approved racially unrestricted buses, 37 000 whites disapproving.[58] Rumours circulated that the bus service might be privatized (as happened to the bus service for blacks operated by the ultra-conservative Boksburg municipality) so that the City Council itself would not have to take the thorny decision on desegregation. Then, after the general election in September 1989, at a time when the pace of political reform accelerated and the scrapping of the Separate Amenities legislation was imminent, it was announced that both the City Council and the privately-owned "blacks-only" bus company had applied to the LRTB for multiracial permits for all their buses. Like some safety net, a fare-differentiated service was to remain in force. Since 53 per cent of the costs of operating buses consisted of the drivers' wages, desegregation in itself was not expected to make a major dent in the anticipated 1989 financial loss of R28 million.[59] Continuing into January 1990, when between 3 000 and 4 000 blacks travelled daily on "white" municipal buses, speculation continued about the advent of desegregation. In the interim, bus drivers set their own race policies. White bus drivers with racist tendencies revelled in their last chance to flaunt their authority — although this could lead to disciplinary action as at least two drivers discovered. One particularly repugnant episode in which a driver insulted an African nurse ended on a more cheerful note when a bus inspector took the nurse to her destination in his own car. Coinciding with the (official) final desegregation of all municipal buses in Johannesburg early in February 1990, the offending driver was dismissed. A snap survey — it covered a mere handful of bus users — showed general satisfaction with desegregation.[60]

Pretoria

In the late 1970s, at roughly the moment when buses in Cape Town were slowly being desegregated, city councillors in Pretoria predicted that the removal of racial barriers on municipal buses would scare away many white passengers, if not directly, then because it would aggravate overcrowding on "white" buses. Ticket sales would decline as a result. In addition, the authorities argued that desegregation would not ease traffic problems, because black and white commuters used different routes and travelled at different times.[61] Although it was not expressed explicitly, it is likely that segregation was also regarded as a way of maintaining barriers around the "identity and sovereignty" of whites who would otherwise be swamped by a tide of black passengers whose customs and manners were different and did not always meet with white approval.[62]

The desegregation of buses all but disappeared from discussion in Pretoria until 1980, when the press reported an incident in which two coloured students registered at the local university were not allowed aboard a vehicle. Six years later, in 1986, the parliamentary delegate for the Indian residential quarter of Laudium criticized the Pretoria City Council for still operating a colour bar on its nationally public vehicles. He regarded it as a small concession that the racially restrictive signs painted on some benches at bus stops had been deleted. Conversely, the politically conservative white community in Pretoria took fright at the prospect that the new metropolitan authority, the Regional Services Council, might impose desegregation on the city's buses as a way of minimizing subsidies for uneconomic, racially exclusive buses.[63] Racial friction continued to raise its head sporadically on Pretoria's buses late into the 1980s. In 1987 for instance, a uniformed Indian doing national military service was not permitted to board a vehicle. His two white soldier-companions disembarked in protest at such blatant discrimination against a man who had volunteered to fight for his country.[64]

The attention of all South Africans (and many more people elsewhere) was riveted on the persistence of bus apartheid in the capital city during the week immediately preceding the September 1989 general election. Coincidentally, in a landmark judgement which threatened all racially segregated urban public transport, that very week saw the Transvaal Supreme Court rule against instances of petty apartheid not in the interests of all the residents of a town. Motivating the campaign to defy racial restrictions on Pretoria's "whites only" buses, an organizer argued that racial exclusion was "abnormal, a waste of money, immoral and evil". In an effort to normalize public transport in the city, handbills were printed urging black people to board "white" buses. Several attempts were made, few of them successful. The authorities stepped in quickly, rerouting buses and waving them past bus stops where blacks (and whites) queued for transport. Arrests were followed by court appearances and releases on bail. For a time, municipal workers resolved not to clean "whites-only" buses. Sadly, the bus apartheid defiance campaign also sparked a wave of death threats, shootings and bombings.[65] Within a matter of months the boot was on the other foot and certain white bus drivers were talking of resistance by striking or defying regulations. This was their response to the City Council's announcement late in January 1990 that it too would embrace political reform and apply to the authorities for desegregation of its buses.[66]

Conclusion

Efforts to eliminate enforced racial segregation from buses in South Africa have differed in their nature and from place to place. Cape Town rid itself of bus apartheid rapidly once the government gave some latitude to local authorities and bus operators towards the close of the 1970s. Elsewhere, as the record shows in East London, Port Elizabeth and Durban, local licensing authorities could and did obstruct applications for desegregation, being swayed, in part at least, by conservative white opinion. By the mid-1980s there were signs that a majority of whites had come to accept the inevitability, if not the desirability, of desegregated buses. Even so, the municipal bus authority in Johannesburg regarded racially mixed bus travel as a delicate matter and, with extreme caution, experimented with a hybrid. As in Durban, fare differentiation was relied upon to perpetuate a measure of racial separation and desegregation was limited to routes where it would be least objectionable to whites. In Pretoria, by contrast, the desegregation of municipal buses scarcely appeared on the agenda of public debate until the issue was forcibly brought to everyone's attention by a dramatic and unusual expression of black protest late in 1989. Prior to this, most objections to bus apartheid had been aired passively, racial incidents aboard buses being given considerable publicity and angry bus users of all colours giving vent to their frustration and shame through the medium of the press.

To date, the desegregation diary has shown no instance in which a bus operator has been ordered to eradicate racial restrictions either by a central government authority or by a court. In urban areas where bus desegregation has not yet been contemplated, that day is not far off: President de Klerk announced in November 1989 that the 1953 "Separate Amenities" statute (in terms of which public facilities were segregated) would be scrapped. Before bus desegregation is brought about by decree, however, it may be expected to erode steadily because of its growing incompatibility with the desegregation of other public facilities (including trains), and under the weight of increasing economic pressure. Not least important is the pressure that will emanate from black minibus organizations and operators who see a niche opening for them in the white travel market.

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Towards a National Defence Force in South Africa: Problems and prospects

Dr Simon Baynham, Chief Researcher at the Africa Institute, presented the following paper at the IDASA conference "The future of security and defence in South Africa", held in Lusaka between 23 and 27 May this year.

I will begin this paper by discussing the current "balance of power" between the South African administration and the ANC. I will then make a number of generalized assumptions governing a future defence force's deployment and role during the coming decade. The bulk of my presentation focuses on four key areas of debate — manpower policy, the creation of a National Defence Force, military structures in the homelands, and internal security/accountability — which will constitute the core issues for discussion in a number of commissions to be convened later today.

I have been asked to say a few words about national security forces in a future South Africa. I do not have a comprehensive model or personal blueprint to offer, nor was I requested to provide one. Rather, my aim is to open up a number of policy issues and options which will confront the reconstituted political authorities and armed services in the months and years ahead. Before doing so, however, it is my intention to preface my address with some observations concerning the contemporary politico-military power equation in the Republic of South Africa.

My first point is that the South African state retains a near monopoly of military and police power within the Republic's borders. As I have argued elsewhere,[1] this dominance has been weakened — but not yet fundamentally threatened — by the mass action and political protest of the 1980s and 1990. Thus, while this virtual monopoly of organized force has been challenged by the supporters of the African National Congress and other opposition groups inside South Africa, the Republic's military might has not been significantly eroded by the activities of the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Relative to Pretoria's powers, therefore, the ANC's capability in the military sphere is limited and its armed struggle has been confined largely to sporadic hit-and-run operations that can be regarded as merely pin-pricks in the wider military scheme of things.

It should also be noted that reductions and rationalization in the South African Defence Force — which have been concentrated in the smaller fighting services (navy and air force) and which were made possible by the 22 December 1988 New York accords and the end of the war in Namibia/Angola — are in no sense inconsistent with a *strengthening* of Pretoria's security capabilities inside South Africa itself.

In the third place, and at first glance, this means that we are addressing a situation that is qualitatively different from the balance of power prevailing when a negotiated settlement occurred in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe eleven years ago. At that time, the opposition forces and their armed wings, Zanla and Zipra, had a physical and military presence in 50 per cent of the country. They also had sufficient internal bases, cover and weaponry to mount major attacks in the other half of Zimbabwe. In short, a military stalemate had been achieved; that *modus operandi* is patently not the case with regard to South Africa. Nor is there much prospect of such a deadlock coming into being in the immediate or foreseeable future. From the perspective of the South African security establishment, therefore, the conclusion is inescapable: the government and its armed forces are in a much stronger position to dictate terms about a future Defence Force than is the ANC and its military leadership. On the other hand, it requires little insight or imagination to realize that Pretoria cannot sustain indefinitely the political/constitutional *status quo* on the strength of its armed might alone. For whilst it is clear that the administration is paramount militarily, it certainly wields no monopoly in political terms. Or as Professor Willie Breytenbach put it recently: "[the] ...weakness of the revolutionary forces in South Africa is counter-balanced somewhat by another ideological phenomenon: the relative weakness of the state and its governmental apparatus in legitimacy."[2] And it is in this respect — and not in the strictly military sense —

that MK has been instrumental in fostering and fuelling a spirit of resistance against the *de jure* authority of the South African state. This is one reason, of course, why the process of negotiations has now begun.

With the foregoing thoughts in mind — and before making any introductory comments on the subject matter of the commissions — I would like to venture a number of general assumptions (or perhaps even forecasts) which I believe will help to shape the Defence Force's development and deployment in the coming decade and beyond.

- The Defence Force will be home-based and it will continue to have a limited internal security role.
- It will, nevertheless, continue to possess a capability to operate in the subcontinent.
- It will become increasingly defensive and reactive, rather than offensive and pro-active.
- It will become less white and much more black.
- Mainly for political and not military reasons, it will continue to rely on conscripts for some time to come; however, it will eventually become an all-volunteer force.
- Finally, against a backdrop of reduced regional tensions and the requirement for massive expenditure on socio-economic upliftment, it will be a target for financial saving. For these reasons, its size will be reduced.

We move now to the first aspect of military policy and planning — the crucial question of recruitment and personnel.

Manpower policy

In societies deeply divided by race, ethnicity or other primordial affiliations, the composition of the security forces is of vital importance to the state and its inhabitants. Minorities — and indeed majorities — who regard themselves as under-represented in the armed services invariably view such imbalances as inimicable to their political power and safety.

This is clearly so in the case of South Africa today. But in addition to the social make-up of such forces, the issue of military manpower also refers to the mechanism by which armies can be raised and organized. In fragmented polities such as South Africa's, these dual determinants are invariably intimately connected. This is because the system of recruitment in the Republic (the selective conscription of only one racial group) results in a Defence Force largely populated and dominated by whites. The commission on manpower will, therefore, be looking at two twin issues: the type of manpower policy to be utilized for a future National Defence Force and the associated question relating to its racial profile.

Basically speaking, there are three manpower permutations: (i) the all-volunteer system, as currently applies in Canada, Nigeria and the United Kingdom; (ii) the militia system, as exists in South Africa and (iii) the mixed system. Very briefly — and without subjecting this gathering to an exhaustive analysis now — the pros and cons of each permutation are as follows.

(i) The all-volunteer model, which appears to be the preferred option of the ANC, has a number of advantages, the main ones being that one has personnel serving as soldiers out of choice and the system engenders highly efficient professional forces — both of which are good for defence and good for morale. The disadvantages are that you have to pay a competitive salary; and if manpower fails to come forward on a voluntary basis, then the system falls down. At the same time, it may not be representative of society at large and its members may, therefore, become isolated and even alienated from society. This has implications for, and may pose a threat to, civilian political control.

(ii) The militia model, as currently utilized by South Africa, is the one favoured by both the National Party (NP) and the Conservative Party (CP). Its main advantage is that, since it is usually representative of society as a whole, it is seen as equitable and democratic. But in South Africa, the selective basis of national service negates this advantage. Of all recruiting systems, it is the one that provides the fairest sharing of burdens round the population and the most level start for everyone in the race for promotion.[3] On the other hand, the system is based on compulsion; it is highly disruptive to careers, family life and the national economy; and because of the shortage of professional officers, it is vulnerable to surprise attack.

(iii) The mixed system, which involves quite a large professional force but which relies on conscripts to strengthen the full-time force in times of national crisis, is one option that has been considered by the Democratic Party (although the party now appears to favour a professional standing army, backed by a well-trained volunteer reserve). Because the system falls half-way between the other two models, it exhibits a mix of advantages and disadvantages from both.[4]

Given that some form of conscription is still very much on the cards in South Africa (at least in the immediate future), the relevant commission might also want to discuss the much-debated option of alternative non-military service. It is possible to anticipate the extension of compulsory service — including during a process of transition from a militia to an all-volunteer system (which in any case could never be adopted overnight) so that it embraced a national security element and a social responsibility component, perhaps also including women. Indeed, the concept of widening national service to reflect both the Republic's defence and development needs was advanced by David Shandler at a conference on national service at Cape Town last year.[5]

It would be remiss to ignore the economic costs of competing manpower systems. I am not an expert in this field (in fact the experts all offer conflicting advice!) but from the evidence I have examined, and in purely financial terms, it seems to me that the real current cost of manning the SADF — with all its hidden bills in lost taxes, skill shortages and the graduate "brain drain" — is higher than it would be if South Africa had a smaller, but equally effective, standing army backed up by a volunteer reserve.

But one problem with this proposal is that many in the NP and SADF (and certainly a majority of CP supporters) see the establishment of an all-volunteer non-racial Defence Force as leading inevitably to a *black* Defence Force — as has virtually happened in Zimbabwe. At the moment, such an arrangement is unacceptable to the military chiefs. The SADF argues that a future army should remain conscript-based with selective national service across the racial spectrum. This, they feel, would help to address the security concerns of minorities, whilst simultaneously helping to break down racial barriers and suspicions.

As I see it today — and as eloquently explained by Professor Heribert Adam:

> ...the likelihood of a settlement in South Africa is very low unless the security anxieties of whites are met by some form of guaranteed participation in a future post-apartheid army. In return for relinquishing exclusive political control, Afrikaner nationalists would most likely insist on a security fallback in case the constitutional guarantees are violated. There is as yet no evidence as to what kind of compromise in this area would be acceptable to the ANC.[6]

Perhaps some answers to this thorny dilemma will emerge in the appropriate commission.

Creation of a National Defence Force

In this part of my talk, I will focus on the mechanics which might set the ball in motion towards the creation of a National Defence Force. Some of the more serious obstacles to that process will also be addressed.

When the Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan, announces — as he did in Parliament in mid-May — that the integration of the ANC's military wing with the SADF is out of the question, then a peaceful resolution of the issue does not look promising. Privately, of course, General Malan and his senior advisers know that, sooner or later, integration of some sort is inevitable.

The most obvious route to the integration of military forces would follow what some have called a "ceasefire" — a suspension of hostilities between the South African security forces and the ANC. It has to be recognized, however, that the process of integration is not just about terms but also about the implementation of the terms to an agreement. In any power-sharing arrangement you need conditions, an agreed procedure for executing those terms and — very importantly — a spirit of reconciliation. There must also be a willingness to compromise so that there are no obvious victors and vanquished.

In my view, the first step in the process is to accept the recent comment of the Minister of Constitutional Development, Dr Gerrit Viljoen, that responsibility for dealing with the Republic's endemic violence does not rest with the South African government alone. Dr Viljoen argued that it included those "who in the past considered themselves justified in resorting to violence." More tangibly, this could be followed by a suspension, or the renunciation, of the armed struggle by the ANC, a declaration which could be matched by a simultaneous statement from Pretoria on political prisoners and the State of Emergency.* Finally, ANC and possibly other opposition personnel could be appointed to work with the SADF/SAP in a peace-keeping role to combat violence and crime in the townships and elsewhere — as suggested by Professor Willie Esterhuyse in a recent newspaper article.[7]

For the sceptical, the formula is not as far-fetched as it might seem. Indeed, elements of this scenario have already been set tentatively in place:

- Firstly, ANC leaders have become increasingly equivocal about the status of the armed struggle. For instance, Mr Joe Modise has lately stated that the suspension of hostilities is open to negotiation.
- Secondly, government sources have suggested that President de Klerk may be on the verge of lifting the State of Emergency, with the possible exception of Natal.**
- In the third place, earlier this month the SAP and the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) announced that they have established liaison structures to handle complaints against the police. This followed Minister Adriaan Vlok's meeting with seventeen senior SAP officers and an equivalent number of MDM leaders in Uitenhage. A similar breakthrough was reached between Vlok and community leaders in Thabong near Welkom in the Orange Free State.
- Fourthly, and most significant, Umkhonto we Sizwe and the SAP's security branch are *already* working together through a joint steering committee; and combined security teams have been set up to protect ANC leaders inside the country. According to all reports, the working relationship is a very good one.

All these developments — together with the very presence of senior SADF personnel here in Lusaka, which Pretoria could have prevented had it so chosen — point to a process that is not only hypothetical but which has, in fact, already begun.

Beyond this, it goes without saying that there are a number of very real obstacles to integration which will, no doubt, be addressed by the second commission. These include:

- One, past bitterness and conflicting political loyalties, together with the continued likelihood of racial prejudice.
- Two, scepticism about the ANC's apparent inability to contribute towards calming South Africa's violent unrest. Does the ANC have the necessary structures and authority, it is asked, to contain and neutralize violence? On the other hand, it is also asked if the government has full control over its own security apparatus.
- Three, demands by political bodies other than the ANC to be represented in a National Defence Force. Here I am referring not only to the PAC and Inkatha and so on, but also to the homeland armies (see below) and military formations of the far right such as those of the AWB. Would MK and others simply be absorbed into existing structures? If not, what type of adaptations would be necessary?
- Four, SADF objections that professional standards will be drastically eroded if Africanization of the officer corps is imposed too quickly. In this regard, what would be the reaction of the current cohort of colonels, for instance, to the prospect of MK officers being promoted over their heads? My guess is: not favourable!
- Five, the SADF and MK represent totally different military traditions, one is a highly sophisticated conventional army, the other a small guerrilla-type body with limited training and experience.

*Such a declaration, and an announcement by the ANC that it was suspending all armed action with immediate effect, were made in a joint statement following the 6 August meeting between the government and the ANC.
**As in fact occurred in early June.

- This brings me to the sixth point, namely to the gaping technical and technological gap between the SADF and Umkhonto. This is especially the case in the naval and air forces — services in which MK has no experience or expertise but ones which require highly trained manpower at *all* levels of command.
- Finally, there are likely to be special problems in integrating the intelligence structures of the separate forces who may be more anxious to keep an eye on each other's activities then on those of a common foe!

I will end this part of my talk with reference not so much to a potential obstacle as to a question which could eventually assume some importance: is there a possible role for an outside body (or bodies) to help in the process of integration — an Untag or a training team such as the British ones operating in Zimbabwe and Namibia? My feeling is no, but there may be those amongst us with an alternative perspective on this issue.

Military structures in the self-governing and independent states

The racial profile of a future National Defence Force has already been touched on earlier in my talk. However, I have not discussed the question of the ethnically recruited battalions of the SADF — nor of the future of these units and the armed forces of the TBVC states.

At the moment, most of the black soldiers who are employed by the SADF are members of the Cape Corps or of the Defence Force's ethnic battalions: 111 Battalion (which is Swazi), 113 Battalion (Shangaan), 115 Battalion (North Sotho), 116 Battalion (Venda), 117 Battalion (located in the northern Transvaal), 121 Battalion (Zulu) and 151 Battalion (South Sotho, based in Qwa Qwa). There is also a multi-ethnic black training unit (21 Battalion at Lenz) and the war-hardened 32 "Buffalo" Battalion, barracked at Pomfret in the northern Cape. Many of 32 Battalion's personnel are currently deployed in law and order operations in Natal. Black servicemen also serve in the elite Recce Commandos and in the three smaller services of the SADF. In addition, more than 500 former SWATF "Bushmen" have been relocated into the Republic.

The four nominally independent TBVC states also have relatively sizeable military and police forces whose future status in a post-apartheid South Africa will form the basis of our special interest discussion on security structures in the "homelands". As I see it, there are a number of core questions and issues that need to be raised by the appropriate commission.

First of all, what constitutional permutations concerning the homelands are on the cards? A highly centralized South Africa in a future non-federated state would affect the homeland forces in quite a different manner than it would in say a highly decentralized polity. Are aspects of the Swiss military variant a possibility? On the one hand, the unambiguous integration of the ten homelands into a new South Africa suggests a parallel process of reintegrated defence forces. On the other hand, however, a case can be made for the absorption of these units into a single Defence (or Police) Force while retaining the local character of the battalions and regiments — as exists, for example, inside the British Army where many regiments retain an exclusively Scottish or other regional flavour. But given the ANC's stated opposition to any form of institutionalized segregation on the basis of race and tribe, would it be politically possible to tolerate ethnic units in practice? One way out of the conundrum might be to recruit on a *geographical* rather than ethnic basis.

Then there is also the question of where these units would be deployed if they were to be used internally. Different arguments apply depending on whether one is discussing military or police forces. For instance, would police personnel be recruited from the communities they work in? And if the army was deployed in aid to the civil power (in support of the police), should these military units be drawn from outside the areas of unrest or from within them?

In both the police and army cases, outsiders may be perceived as less partial; but under such circumstances, the security forces would then have the difficulties associated with *terra incognita*: little understanding of local peoples and custom that is of such vital importance in both conventional police work and in the field of anti-subversion intelligence-gathering.

Finally, in my short list at least, there is the crucial question of language. What tongue would be employed at the local level? The question applies whether there are ethnic units, or mixed units or both; and it has relevance not only in wider political terms but also where it impacts on internal military communications and command and control. In a word, what would be the lingua franca of a National Defence Force?

Internal security and accountability

In the penultimate part of my paper I will focus on two issues as background material for the internal security commission. The first relates to the domestic law and order problem, the second to the related question of political control and accountability. I have already touched on some aspects of internal security and it is quite clear that South Africa is experiencing nothing less than a major security crisis inside its borders.

The deployment of 7 000 troops in Sebokeng in 1984 marked a watershed in law and order operations. Until then, the SAP was the principal agent of internal security; but the scale and intensity of domestic violence has pulled the SADF into a major and controversial internal role. These developments have had two major repercussions: first, they have blurred the traditional (but never totally discrete) tasks of the Defence Force and the SAP; secondly, police operations against political dissidents have left little time for "normal" SAP activity in the field of conventional or ordinary crime. As a consequence, not only has the SADF been sucked into the domestic political maelstrom, but also common crime is at an all-time high with, for instance, 11 750 murders in 1989 — one every forty-five minutes. Most of the victims were blacks.

There is also a crisis of unprecedented proportions inside the SAP and its auxiliaries. This is the result of decades of political neglect which has rendered the force understaffed, underpaid and overstretched. Compounding the crisis is the widely-held, but not always fair, perception that the police are the ideological watchdogs of the NP; that they protect whites but not blacks; that they are partial, provocative and unrestrained by proper political control; and that they do not adhere to the cardinal principle of minimum force. One catastrophic result of this last point has been frequent over-reaction on the part of (very often) young, undertrained and frightened men who simply do not have the numbers, means or disposition to tackle protest marches and rioters through the phased or incremental use of force. If you accept, as I do, that policing is a litmus test of any society's health, then it invites the question of what is to be done. How can the task of adapting the police to South Africa's changing political landscape be addressed? Might I make a number of recommendations — some new and some old — that the commission may care to take up.

In the first instance, the commission should examine how the standing strength of the SAP can be doubled as quickly as possible (this is, in fact, a stated aim of the government) so that the SADF can concentrate on its proper role of securing the territorial integrity of the state. The division of labour as between the police and the military needs to be redressed and redrawn. It takes time to train and deploy new police personnel, but the need to fight crime and make all South Africa's people feel safe is of vital importance — especially as the country plunges into the political unknown.

Secondly, a great deal of imaginative work needs to be done to ensure that the SAP — which is currently alienated from many of the communities it works in — is identified with the *process* of reform. After all, the present complement of police personnel will constitute the core of a future SAP. For this to get off the ground, a much clearer distinction must be demarcated between, on the one hand, legal political activity and opposition and, on the other, criminal behaviour and intent. In this regard, ways and means will have to be examined so as to depoliticize the police and sensitize the service to the requirements and rights of all South Africa's citizens.

Third, and related to the first two points, the imperative is not only to attract recruits of the right attitude and calibre, but also to reduce wastage. Many more blacks and whites who currently would not contemplate a career in the police need to be drawn into a reconstructed force; education and training standards must be raised; there is a major requirement for many more graduates; and promotion should turn a blind eye to colour and must be based on merit and ability. Or should it? Is there a case for positive discrimination and affirmative action to advance men and women previously disadvantaged by discriminatory practices and institutionalized inequalities of the past?

Fourth, and finally under this heading, effective mechanisms need to be found for rewarding or reprimanding police personnel, with the purpose of ensuring that the SAP's reputation becomes synonymous with its motto: *Servamus et servimus* (to protect and to serve).

Another issue that I believe merits some attention at least (even if the idea is ultimately jettisoned) is the possibility of establishing an entirely new paramilitary force for riot control duties, one independent of both the military and the police. Such bodies are commonplace in the democracies of Western Europe (for instance, the French *Compagnies républicaines de sécurité* (CRS), the *Dutch Koninklijke Marchaussee* and West Germany's *Bereitschaftspolizei*, permitting the regular police to cultivate an image of serving all members of the community, thus divorcing them from those duties that have given the SAP a stigma as enforcers of internal order. On the other hand, paramilitary bodies such as the French CRS, unmellowed by daily contact with the public, tend to develop an aggressive character of their own. They are only deployed under conditions when disorder has reached an advanced stage, and so enter a hostile situation whereupon their very appearance often escalates the levels of violence.

Clearly there are no simple solutions to the issues confronted here; however, one appropriate course of action might be to adopt and adapt the London Metropolitan Police model. There, riot reserves are made up of constables, each with at least three years' regular service and each returning to conventional duties after three years in the riot squad. This procedure ensures that riot policemen do not become insulated from conventional police duties and public contact, a syndrome that appears to affect the special reaction units of the SAP.

Finally, the commission will want to devote considerable time and attention to the issue of political control and accountability. Allegations — and indeed clear evidence — of SADF, SAP and ANC irregularities and non-accountability with regard to the deployment and/or treatment of their personnel must be cleared up at the earliest possible opportunity.

In essence, there are two formats for exercising civilian political control over the security forces of the state: the Western liberal tradition, in which the officer corps is disciplined by its own professionalism (as in Italy, Canada and the UK); and what is often referred to as the "*apparat*" model (as in Nazi Germany, Cuba and the USSR), where internal military power was or is checked by breaking up the armed forces into competing and counterweight groups; by the establishment of special units; and by the widespread use of party commissars, political indoctrination and covert surveillance.[8]

At the moment, and in this respect, the SADF is more a reflection (but not an exact replica) of the Western system, while ANC political superordination over its military wing approximates to the traditional East European model of control. The question is, therefore, will a future National Defence Force be formally neutral and apolitical or will it be a politicized security apparatus? And how can these divergent traditions be accommodated in a future constitutional dispensation? To my mind at least, the requirement for a neutral Defence Force, strictly subordinate to Parliament and to the political authority of the day is incontestable.

Conclusion

To sum up, the security services of every state are determined by two overlapping imperatives: a functional one flowing from actual or perceived threats to the country's safety; and a societal one stemming from the dominant ideologies, structures and institutions prevailing within the state. As we cast our collective eye forward to the future of a National Defence Force, it is crucial to keep these two considerations in mind. In my view, none of the commissions will get very far unless their deliberations take these twin imperatives into account. What will be the nature of the threats facing this country and what kind of political society will a post-apartheid South Africa resemble? Two hundred years ago (in 1776), Adam Smith wrote that "Defence is the first duty of the sovereign." Smith was making the persuasive argument that the primary role of government is the maintenance of genuine peace and stability. If this is accepted, then in the South African context this means that every avenue should be explored to ensure that life in the Republic is not permitted to become — in Hobbes's immortal words — "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short." Tragically, parts of South Africa currently epitomize Hobbes's brutal state of nature. Our talks, therefore, must be guided by a determination to offer processes and solutions that will bring security to all the peoples of South Africa, irrespective of affiliations concerning creed, race, position and colour.

At the same time — and given the horrendous demographic and employment prospects faced by the Republic even under the most favourable financial circumstances — we should not become ensnared by the security Cassandras who would over-spend on defence to the detriment of social and welfare programmes. For as Lord Salisbury noted, "If you believe the doctors, nothing is wholesome; if you believe the theologians, nothing is innocent; [and] if you believe the soldiers, nothing is safe."

And finally, as we break up into our respective working commissions, I believe it might be apposite to dwell upon the thoughts of that celebrated soldier-scholar, General Sir John Hackett, who asserted at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1962: "What a country gets in its armed services is exactly what it asks for, no more and no less. What it asks for tends to be a reflection of what it is. When a country looks at its fighting forces, it is looking in a mirror: if the mirror is a true one, the face that it sees there will be its own."

Notes and references

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3 M R D Foot, *Men in uniform: Military manpower in modern industrial societies*, London: International Institute of Strategic Studies/Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1961, p 60.

4 For more details, see M R D Foot, *op cit*, and Marlene A van der Merwe, "Military manpower: A system typology and determinants", *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, vol XI, no 2, November 1989, pp 63-64.

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7 *The Sunday Star*, (Johannesburg), 22 April 1990.

8 For a much more comprehensive analysis of these control mechanisms, see my own essay, "Armed forces in Africa", in Simon Baynham (ed), *Military power and politics in black Africa*, London: Croom Helm, 1986, especially pp 11-16.

AFRICA MONITOR

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Jenny Macgregor and Marita Snyman

NORTH AFRICA

Algeria

The government announced that the first **multi-party elections** to be held since independence in 1962 would take place on 12 June. At least 23 legalized political parties are expected to contest the municipal and provincial elections, which were postponed for six months to give the newly formed opposition parties more time to prepare. The *Islamique du Salut*, the Maghreb's only legal fundamentalist party, was expected to make the biggest gains. One of the most recent parties legalized was that of exiled **Ahmed Ben Bella**, president of the country for three years immediately after independence in 1962. He heads the Movement for Democracy (MDA) (KT 8/3; DT 9/3, 16/3; JA 12/3; ARB 15/3; AA 16/3; AED 19/3; AE 4/90).

Algeria's plans to double sales of **natural gas** and liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the 1990s resulted in the signing of three contracts between Sonatrech and the American companies Bechtel and Kellogg, and the French companies Gaz de France and Sofregas, for the modernization of its natural gas liquefaction complexes. In 1989 Sonatrech exported a record 17,2 bn m^3 of LNG, up 20 per cent on 1988, making it the world's second largest exporter after Indonesia. (Proven natural gas reserves of nearly 3 000 bn m^3 are the largest in Africa and the seventh largest in the world.) Initial plans are to restore its full export capacity of 30,5 bn m^3; by the year 2000 it aims to reach an annual export capacity of between 60 bn and 80 bn m^3 a year. There is a growing demand for gas in the US, western and central Europe and in neighbouring Maghrebian states (AE&M 1/2; DT 6/2; AA 16/2; AED 26/2; ARB 28/2).

Chad

Amnesty International alleged that since 1982 — the year Pres Habré came to power — the government had been guilty of carrying out summary executions, arbitrary arrests, secret detention and torture (AED 26/2, 19/3; WA 19/3).

The ministers of commerce and industry and of public works were dismissed on 20 February without explanation. Shortly afterwards, five former members of the Popular Armed Forces and the Revolutionary Democratic Council opposition movements joined the government party, the National Union of Independence and Revolution (SWB 26/2; ARB 15/3).

Chad and **Libya** held further talks aimed at settling their territorial dispute over the **Aouzou Strip** at the end of March. They had six months in which to reach agreement before the dispute is referred to the International Court of Justice in terms of the Algiers accord. Chad has accused Libya of periodically violating the ceasefire agreement reached in July 1989 (SWB 26/2; AED 12/3; JA 26/3; SWB 21/3, 29/3).

Egypt

On 12 January Pres Mubarak dismissed his outspoken and unpopular interior minister, Zaki Badr. Appointed in 1986, the latter has been criticized in particular for his hardline tactics in dealing with the opposition. Mohammed Abdel-Halim Moussa, the more conciliatory new incumbent, has promised to review the detentions of some 2 400 people under the emergency laws. Most of the detainees are Moslem militants and leftist activists rounded up by Badr (DT 24/1; AED 12/2; ARB 15/2; C 16/2).

Arab unity was strengthened with the further rapprochement between Egypt and its former critics. **Tunisia's Pres Ben Ali** arrived in Cairo on 6 March at the start of a three-day official visit, the first to Egypt by a Tunisian head of state in 25 years. The two presidents discussed Arab cooperation, bilateral ties and recent Middle East peace moves. During February and March Mubarak met with **Libya's Pres Gaddafi** in continued discussions about economic cooperation and the removal of trade barriers. At the end of March, in a strong show of Arab unity, Mubarak held talks with the leaders of **Syria, Libya and Sudan** (AED 26/2, 12/3; SWB 7/3; C 7/3, 30/3; ARB 15/3; DN 26/3).

The Arab League announced that it was to move its headquarters back to Cairo in September 1990 after ten years in Tunis (S 12/3).

The granting of legal status to the Egyptian "Greens", the Arab world's first "Green" party, brought to nine the total of Egypt's recognized political parties. The government refused to legalize the Nasserite Party, which espouses the ideas of the late socialist leader Gen Nasser and opposes Cairo's 1979 peace accord with Israel (DT 19/4).

(*Expatriate workers — see Libya.*)

Libya

One week after the USA appealed for international support to help stop Libyan production of **chemical weapons**, Libyan authorities claimed that the controversial **Rabta** plant had been extensively damaged by fire. Tripoli maintained that the factory had been producing pharmaceuticals, and threatened economic reprisals if the West German government, which was investigating the involvement of German companies in the plant, was involved in its sabotage. In 1989 West German exports to Libya totalled $765 mn and its imports from Libya — mainly crude oil — totalled $1,76 bn (S 8/3, 16/3; C 8/3, 16/3; AC 23/3; AED 26/3; AE&M 29/3; AA 30/3; ARB 31/3).

Libya agreed to transfer $2 mn to Egypt as the first instalment of compensation owed to expatriate **Egyptian workers** expelled from Libya two years ago. Libya had confiscated the property of the estimated 100 000 workers, denying them compensation, citing adverse economic conditions,. The agreement was the latest sign of improving relations between Cairo and Tripoli (AED 12/2; DT 22/3).

(*Sudanese-Libyan merger — see Sudan; Chadian-Libyan meeting on Aouzou Strip — see Chad.*)

Morocco

On the 21 February the **Polisario Front** declared a unilateral suspension of major military operations until the end of March. The goodwill announcement coincided with the preparatory visit of the UN's special envoy, Johannes Manz. The UN was trying to strike a balance between Polisario's demands that Morocco withdraw its troops, administration and settlers from the disputed territory prior to the holding of a free and fair **referendum**, and Morocco's insistence that this preparatory move was not necessary. After holding talks with King Hassan and Polisario Front leaders at the end of March, UN Sec-Gen, Perez du Cuellar announced that progress had been made towards solving the Western Sahara dispute (ZN 2/90; ARB 15/2, 15/3; SWB 27/2; WA 5/3; AED 5/3, 26/3; AA 16/3; C 27/3; DT 30/3).

Sudan

Sudan and **Libya** signed an agreement in March paving the way for a **merger** of the two countries within four years. Sudanese leader Gen al-Bashir, who proposed the integration during his two-day visit to Tripoli in early March, said the agreement would achieve political, economic and security integration. Observers believe that Sudan may have been encouraged by the prospect of Libyan economic and military aid. The secretariat organizing the merger is to be sited in Libya, while the secretary-general will be a Sudanese. The rebel SPLA denounced the agreement as an artificial union doomed to failure (C 8/3; ION 10/3; DT 12/3, 28/3, 30/3, 2/4; AED 19/3; AN 26/3).

The **SPLA**, engaging in what observers believe to be its fiercest offensive in nearly seven years, captured 11 communities south and west of Juba during January. The increase in fighting around the border area resulted in an estimated 20 000 Sudanese and Ugandan **refugees** from southern Sudan fleeing to neighbouring Uganda and Zaire. The government's easing of the ban on most relief flights to the besieged town of Juba was counteracted by repeated SPLA shellings of the town, aimed at the airport. Since September 1988, the city has relied on airlifts of maize and beans from Kenya and Uganda because, apart from the International Red Cross, all foreign aid personnel have been withdrawn from Juba. The town's population had swollen to nearly 300 000, two-thirds of whom were refugees. The rebel group has appealed to aid officials to abandon their relief operations in the remaining government-controlled towns. Heavy fighting continued throughout February and March (KT 6/1; SWB 12/1, 13/1, 22/1, 22/3; WR 12/1; AN 15/1; ION 20/1, 27/1, 3/2; S 23/1; AED 29/1; C 31/1; ARB 15/2, 15/3; DN 22/3).

Several parties initiated intense diplomatic exchanges during March in an effort to arrange a resumption of **peace talks** between the government and the SPLA. The rebels **rejected** an offer by Pres Mubarak of Egypt to host talks in Cairo, favouring instead talks in Kinshasa, Zaire. In late March however, SPLA sources announced that they had agreed instead to talks in Nairobi, sponsored by Pres Moi of Kenya (SWB 15/1, 14/3; ARB 15/3; AA 16/3; ION 17/3, 31/3; AE 4/90).

Rumours of an **attempted coup** at the end of March prompted the arrest of 25 army officers and former politicians (S 29/3; AA 30/3; TWR 4/4).

In early March the IMF issued a further ultimatum to the government that it begin repaying loans of nearly $900 mn and undertake IMF-prescribed austerity measures, or face "non-cooperation" from the international body. Simultaneously the USA announced the suspension of all but humanitarian assistance to Khartoum under a law prohibiting assistance to coup governments that have not moved toward democracy within eight months. Sudan has received little foreign aid since the Nimieri regime was toppled in 1985, and practically none since the overthrow of Sadiq el-Mahdi in 1989 (DT 27/2; AED 12/3; 26/3; AE 4/90).

Tunisia

After two years of calm there was a resurgence of **unrest at schools and universities**. At the end of February, police detained 583 students following clashes with the Tunisian General Union of Students at several universities. The students, with whom the fundamentalist En-nahda group has expressed solidarity, called for the abolition of police stations within the confines of university campuses, the reinstatement of students suspended earlier in the year, and the dropping of plans to move an Islamic law institute. Official sources blamed the country's Islamic movement for the unrest (ARB 15/1, 15/2, 15/3; SWB 28/2; C 1/3).

(*Pres Ben Ali's visit to Cairo — see Egypt*).

WEST AFRICA

Benin

Faced with a worsening economic crisis that had paralysed the functioning of the state for more than a year, Pres Kérékou embarked on a sort of perestroika to try to save his military regime. On 21 February the president, who has been in power since October 1972 and was re-elected for five years in August 1989, convened a **national conference** to prepare a **new constitution** and **general elections** which could lead to his removal. Although he rejected calls for his resignation, he nevertheless said he would reshuffle his government in preparation for a transition period and agree to accept all decisions made by the conference on constitutional reform.

Of the 488 delegates, who represented a wide range of political opinion except for the Communists, 360 voted on 26 February to suspend Benin's fundamental law and set up a **transitional government** under Pres Kérékou to rule until general elections scheduled for January 1991.

On 24 February the government announced the return to former political exiles of property seized by government since 1975. Following the first meeting of the Interim Council of Ministers on 2 March, an **amnesty** was granted to all those detained for their involvement in the coup plots of 1981 and 1988. An interim prime minister, Nicephore Soglo, who is a former World Bank official, assumed office on 12 March. He immediately appointed a 15-strong civilian cabinet to replace Pres Kérékou's cabinet. Pres Kérékou retained the leadership of the armed forces. Three days earlier, a 27-member legislative council, to which the cabinet is accountable until elections in 1991, was appointed to replace the dissolved national assembly. It included four former presidents and others who played a prominent role in the conference. Although some progress was made in devising a new constitution, no finality was reached. The constitution was to be submitted to a **referendum** in July (ARB 15/1, 15/2, 15/3, 31/3; WA 22/1, 29/1, 5/3, 26/3; AC 26/1; AED 5/2, 5/3, 19/3; SWB 22/2, 2/3, 14/3; JA 26/2, 12/3; WM 23/3; TWR 4/4).

Schools and universities reopened at the end of March after Benin's new government had paid **public sector salaries** for January and February. The teachers, on strike for more than a year, still demanded payment of outstanding salaries for the last three months of 1988, regular payment of salaries in future, and reinstatement of all teachers suspended for strike action (AED 26/3; SWB 27/3).

Burkina Faso

In the aftermath of the **attempted coup** in late December, between 30 and 50 people (including "foreign mercenaries") were arrested and two senior officers executed. Amnesty International expressed concern for the lives of the political prisoners. Following the abolition of the posts of vice-president, whose incumbents were executed for their part in the attempted September coup, the party's effective number two, Clement Oumarou Ouedraogo is now the secretary in charge of political affairs (SWB 15/1; ARB 15/1; WA 22/1).

During February the government deported several hundred Ghanaians in retaliation for the alleged involvement of **Ghana** in the December coup attempt. Ghana's foreign minister strongly denied the allegations (SWB 1/1, 31/1, 1/2; AA 5/1).

In late February Pres Campaoré, apparently seeking to "legitimize" his government after the two recent coup attempts, announced the ruling Popular Front's support for **constitutional reform** aimed at democratizing the country. He said that the draft of a new constitution would be submitted to a **referendum** within six months. Before the congress, two new political organizations joined the Popular Front — the National Convention of Progressive Patriots and the Union of Patriotic Democrats of Burkina. A total of seven organizations has now joined the ruling party in what appeared to be a move by Pres Campaoré to broaden his support base (SWB 1/3, 6/3; WA 12/3; JA 19/3; AED 19/3).

Cape Verde

At its national council meeting held in February to discuss reforms, Cape Verde's single ruling party PAIVC (African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde) endorsed the establishment of a **multi-party system** and plans to amend the constitution. The forthcoming elections to be held in December will be the first in which candidates not sponsored by the ruling party participated, although political parties will only be legalized after the revision of the constitution in 1991. Observers perceive the move as aimed at appeasing the growing opposition among intellectuals, the emigré population and particularly the Roman Catholic community. In response to the changes, an estimated 600 opposition members signed a document on 30 March criticizing the undemocratic basis upon which the ruling PAICV intended to organize the coming legislative elections. The group, most of whom are technocrats, also drew up a manifesto for the creation of a "movement for democracy," which they hoped could take part "on an equal footing with the PAICV" in the December elections (C 19/2; ARB 15/3; SWB 9/4).

Pres Pereira invited **Pres FW de Klerk** of South Africa to visit the country with a view to establishing formal diplomatic relations. South Africa would benefit from improved ties because of Cape Verde's strategic location and its membership of both the OAU and Palop (which consists of the five Portuguese-speaking African countries) (SWB 6/3; BD 7/3).

Côte d'Ivoire

Unprecedented unrest rocked the country during February when **student protests**, which began with demands for university reforms, quickly spread to workers and civil servants. The police force responded heavy-handedly to the calls for political and economic reforms and the resignation of Houphouët-Boigny, arresting 137 students. All were later released. Student calls for the resignation of higher education minister Balla Keïta were appeased with his dismissal.

On 14 March the finance minister announced tough new **austerity measures** to reinforce the IMF recovery programme begun in 1989. The measures, which were necessitated by the continuing decline of world commodity prices, involve an 8-17 per cent **salary cut for civil servants**, a 25-40 per cent cut for parliamentarians, and a "solidarity tax" (based on earnings on the private sector) on a sliding scale of between 5 and 10 per cent. Although troops were sent to Abidjan to prevent protests and deter would-be strikers, the cuts sparked off the worst **unrest** ever seen in the country. Doctors went on a 48-hour strike (in defiance of a nationwide ban on demonstrations), and about 120 teachers were arrested following an anti-government demonstration in the capital on 26 March. The president closed the university and schools, and dismissed calls for multi-party democracy, saying that national unity had to be achieved first (C 22/2, 26/2, 3/3, S 23/2; SWB 26/2, 27/2, 2/4; AA 2/3; WA 5/3, 26/3, 2/4; AED 5/3, 12/3, 26/3, 2/4; AC 9/3, 23/3; ARB 15/3; JA 19/3).

Pres Felix Houphouët-Boigny announced on 13 March that the ruling *Parti Democratique de Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI) would name his successor before the end of 1990. The 85-year old president, whose sixth consecutive five-year term ends in October, gave no indication as to when he was prepared to retire. He had previously refused to name a successor because to do so would run counter to the traditions of his Baoule tribe (C 14/3; SWB 15/3; AED 19/3; WA 26/3).

(Allegations of involvement in attempted coup — see Liberia.)

The Gambia

The government agreed to liberalize, with immediate effect, the **groundnut industry**. The produce marketing board monopoly was ended and private sector companies were permitted to purchase from farmers, process and export. It was unclear whether the decision was made at the insistence of donors. Groundnuts are the main export crop — 104 000 tonnes were produced in 1988, of which 19 000 tonnes were exported (ARB 15/3; WA 19/3).

Nine prisoners, including four sentenced for high-treason, were freed on 5 January. The four were jailed in 1981 for their part in the abortive July 1981 coup against Pres Jawara (SWB 9/1; AED 15/2).

Pres Babangida of Nigeria spent three days in The Gambia from 17 to 19 February attending the 25-year independence celebrations. Agreements confirming future cooperation were signed, reaffirming cordial relations (WA 19/2, 5/3; SWB 19/2, 22/2).

(Liberian refugees flee renewed fighting — see Liberia.)

Ghana

At least nine people were arrested on suspicion of being implicated in the alleged **coup attempt** in September 1989 by Maj **Quarshigah**. Four were detained last year, the others, all of whom are connected with the security services, were arrested in February. Some local and foreign businessmen are believed to have financed the group (SWB 3/2; AA 2/3).

On a radio address to the nation on 1 January, head of state Jerry Rawlings admitted that the **economic recovery programme** (launched in 1983 and since acclaimed internationally as a success) had failed to make a real impact on the lives of ordinary people, despite the 7 per cent growth rate in 1989 and the drastic reduction in inflation to 12 per cent. Announcing the 1990 budget a few days later, the finance minster said that government policy would be adjusted to shift the burden of structural adjustment, the full impact of which had yet to effect many Ghanaians, away from the poor. The austerity budget saw sales tax on several luxury items dramatically increased and the price of petrol raised by 31 per cent (C 12/1; WA 22/1; AC 26/1; AA 2/2; ARB 28/2; AB 3/90).

Ghana delivered a consignment of 13 000 tonnes of white maize to Angola in February, the first major **export of food** for nearly 10 years. Although the total consignment of 17 000 tonnes is worth only $3 mn, the event marks a significant turning point in Ghana's food crisis since the early 1980s. The 50 000 tonne 1989 maize surplus was attributed to improved seed varieties, good rains, availability of farm inputs and farmers' easy access to credit (KT 15/1; AED 5/3).

(Expulsions of Ghanaians from Burkina Faso — see Burkina Faso.)

Guinea

In recent months more than 80 000 Liberians, mostly children, women and old men, took refuge in the south-east of Guinea. The **refugees** were fleeing Liberia's Nimba county since December because of fighting between the Liberian army and rebel groups. Strategies to repatriate the refugees were being examined following Pres Doe's visit to Guinea on 29 March (SWB 24/1, 8/2, 2/4; DT 9/2; AED 26/2; WA 22/1, 12/3).

Pres Conté granted an **amnesty** to all Guineans convicted of political offences in line with the need to create a climate conducive to the introduction of a **multi-party system** in 1996. The main beneficiaries were an estimated 107 Guineans implicated in the coup attempt of July 1985. The amnesty also allowed for the restoration of property confiscated from the alleged plotters (SWB 22/2, 23/2; AED 26/2; WA 5/3).

On 9 March **schoolteachers** went on **strike** demanding better salaries and working conditions. After Pres Conté met teachers' representatives on 13 March to resolve the dispute, the government agreed to increase teachers' salaries. The minister of education was also replaced (SWB 17/3; AED 19/3; WA 26/3).

On 20 March the World Bank approved a $40 mn IDA loan to support **rural infrastructure** to improve access to markets and increase farmers' production and incomes. The scheme was expected to stimulate economic growth, reduce transport costs, expand commercial services and trade, and improve sanitary conditions. More than 70 per cent of the population are dependent upon a rural income. The World Bank also gave a $57 mn IDA credit for an **urban development** project designed to upgrade infrastructure, build up urban agencies, and improve mobilization of local resources. Guinea's urban population has grown from 450 000 in 1960 to 1,7 mn in 1989, and is projected to reach 4,5 mn by 2010 (WBN 22/3, 29/3; AED 9/4).

(Alleged assistance to Liberian government — see Liberia.)

Guinea-Bissau

The government granted an **amnesty** to 22 people detained for their part in the 1985 attempted coup d'état. Sixteen were freed and the other six, who had their death sentence commuted to 15 years imprisonment, would remain under house arrest. The amnesty, which coincided with the visit of Pope Jean-Paul II in February, meant that all 52 of those convicted of involvement were now freed (WA 12/2; ARB 15/2).

Pres Vieira asked the OAU, Portugal and France to assist in the search for a peaceful solution to the **conflict with Senegal** over their maritime border. Guinea-Bissau rejected the 1998 ruling of the Geneva arbitration court because of a "flaw in its proceedings" (SWB 9/1; ARB 15/2).

Liberia

On 21 March, bowing to mounting diplomatic and political pressure, Pres Doe lifted the ban on several newspapers and ordered the immediate **release of all political prisoners**. Among those released were Gabriel Kpolleh, leader of the banned Liberia Unification Party, who was jailed in 1988 for plotting to overthrow the government. Doe also announced across-the-board 25 per cent **salary increases** for civil servants. Said by the president to be in line with inflation, the increases came barely six months after an earlier 25 per cent rise (WA 26/3, 2/4; AED 26/3, 2/4).

Eleven people, two of them Liberian army battalion commanders, were arrested on 11 January in connection with a **plot to topple Pres Doe**. Three of the men alleged at a press conference that they had been recruited in Côte d'Ivoire and trained in Libya, where they had met several opposition leaders.

At the end of January fierce fighting broke out in the north-eastern **Nimba county** between government troops and **rebels** attempting to overthrow Pres Doe. The rebels were led by **Charles Taylor**, a former junior minister who left the country in 1984 to avoid being tried on corruption charges. Since the 1985 coup attempt led by Thomas Quiwonkpa, a former military officer from Nimba county, relations between the government and the Mano and Gio communities of Nimba have been strained.

Initial estimates by officials claimed that the fighting had claimed 200 lives, but independent sources such as the UN's World Food Programme believed that between 500 and 1 000 people died. Côte d'Ivoire denounced the fighting as **genocide**. More than 150 000 people fled to neighbouring Guinea (where the population of the frontier region more than doubled) and to Côte d'Ivoire, and a further 135 000 abandoned their towns and villages. In response to appeals by the host countries for refugee aid, the USA, UNHCR, and EC gave assistance.

On 17 January the opposition umbrella group, the Association for Constitutional Democracy in Liberia (ACDL), announced in response to the fighting that it would not participate in the elections scheduled for 1991, but instead **called on Pres Doe to resign immediately**. It claimed the support of 75 per cent of the electorate (KT 13/1; C 19/1; AED 29/1; 12/2, 26/2; AB 2/90; SWB 7/2, 19/2, 15/3, 13/4; ARB 15/2, 15/3; WA 12/3, 9/4; AED 9/4).

On 31 March the **IMF** took the unusual step of issuing a public statement threatening to expel Liberia if it did not pay arrears before 31 August. The country owed about $396 mn to the fund and $65 mn to the African Development Bank. Interest to the fund was accruing at the rate of about $1 mn per week (AED 9/4).

Liberia's **timber exports**, which have been increasing since 1983, rose by 11 per cent in 1989 to reach $104,4 mn. Careful forest management, however, has ensured that the rate of extraction of logs from Liberia's forests is well below 50 per cent of the annual yield (WA 12/3; ARB 15/3).

(*Refugees to Guinea — see Guinea.*)

Mali

At a National Council meeting of the Mali People's Democratic Union in January, Pres Traoré **rejected** the possibility of establishing a **multi-party system** in the near future (SWB 1/1).

The IMF announced on 19 January that it was awarding Mali a loan of $20 mn special drawing rights to support progress made under the **economic reform programme**. Mali achieved a marked turnaround in its economic and financial performance in 1989 with 9,9 per cent growth in real GDP, a fall in inflation over two years from 6,6 per cent to 1 per cent, and a reduction in the budgetary deficit to 9,5 per cent of GDP (AED 5/2; ARB 28/2).

(*Refugees in Guinea — see Guinea.*)

Mauritania

Tension continued to mount over the **border dispute** between **Senegal** and Mauritania, with at least two deaths in January caused during an exchange of artillery fire between the armies.

Following brief visits to Senegal and Mauritania in mid-March, Pres Jawara of The Gambia and Pres Conté of Guinea called on the Senegalese and Mauritanian governments to attend a preliminary summit to the OAU attempt to broker a lasting solution to the border conflict. The three-point plan submitted by Pres Mubarak of Egypt was not agreed upon by the parties to the conflict and no substantive progress was made at an Egyptian-chaired meeting of the Senegalese and Mauritanian foreign ministers in February (JA 1/1, 5/2; SWB 13/1, 16/1, 16/3; 19/3; ARB 15/1, 15/3; WA 22/1, 19/3, 2/4; C 20/3).

Niger

On 9 February **police opened fire on students** in Niamey protesting against the civil service's decision to suspend recruitment and against cutbacks in scholarships and benefits. Official sources said three people were killed, but students claimed that the death-toll was 14. Three days later there was a **general strike** and a further demonstration by more than 1 000 students and pupils against the "severe police repression". In response the authorities closed all schools and universities indefinitely. Nevertheless, Pres Saibou, who claimed that he was determined to govern the country by dialogue (unlike his predecessor), apologized for the strong-arm tactics of the police and ordered the immediate replacement of the director of state security and the head of national security. In a further move designed to disarm political opposition, on 2 March Saibou announced a significant **cabinet reshuffle**, the second in two months. Both the interior minister and the minister of education lost their posts. Observers see the appointment of Aliou Mahammidou to the reinstated position of prime minister as aimed at appeasing criticism that the government is dominated by the Songhai-Zerma ethnic group. Three days later, Col Hamadou Seyni Maiga, the political secretary of the ruling party's national executive bureau and effectively Pres Saibou's number two, resigned "...to help restore calm." During the 9 February riots, the students had demanded the resignation of these three senior officials.

In late February teachers and students returned to classes on condition that the government reconsider its austerity measures and punish those responsible for the student casualities (SWB 14/2, 16/2, 19/2, 2/3, 6/3, 7/3, 9/3, 12/3; AED 19/2, 12/3, 19/3; WA 19/2, 12/3; ARB 15/3; JA 19/3).

Nigeria

On 29 December Pres Babangida announced the most significant annual **cabinet reshuffle** since he assumed office in 1985, assuring him of increased control over all the major arms of government. He sacked or reassigned many of his closest colleagues, a move seen by political observers as designed to prevent a possible "derailment" of the **transition plan** during the final stages of the president's rule. Most significant was the removal to the ministery of internal affairs of the minister of defence, **Lt-Gen Domkat Bali**, from a position which made him the number three man in the ruling hierarchy. Gen Bali said that to accept the job offered him would be a personal humiliation and resigned, accusing the president of having become a dictator. Bali had been called in to provide stability and credibility in two military regimes in Nigeria since 1983, but is not known to have participated in the coups that brought them to power. Babangida, now minister of defence and commander-in-chief of the armed forces, has both ceremonial and technical control of the three armed forces, while the important intelligence and security agencies — the State Security Service and National Intelligence Agency — report directly to him, making him one of the most powerful rulers Nigeria has ever had. The promotion of Opec president Rilwanu Lukman from the petroleum ministry to the post of minster of foreign affairs, in the face of criticism over his handling of the industry, was seen by Christians to reflect Lukman's strong power base among northern Muslims.

Thousands of **Christians** in four of Nigeria's northern states — Plateau, Kaduna, Bauchi and Gongola — staged **demonstrations** on 11 January against the cabinet reshuffle of 29 December. They were protesting against the reshuffles, which they considered as favouring the country's Muslim majority, and as ill-disguised moves to "Islamize" Nigeria. In particular they expressed their chagrin at the loss of the Christian Gen Bali, the man seen to be their government representative. Authorities and Muslims alike turned a blind eye to the demonstrations (SWB 1/1, 15/1; KT 4/1; AA 5/1; WA 8/1, 22/1; AC 15/1; WR 19/1; DN 24/1; ARB 15/2; CI 16/2; NA 2/90).

Gani Fawehinmi, a lawyer who has frequently been critical of Nigeria's military government, was sentenced to a year's imprisonment for contempt of court in January. Political observers have viewed the charge as a carry-over from his attempt to prosecute Col Halilu Akilu and Col Kunle Togun for allegedly killing Dele Giwa, the founding editor of *Newswatch* (SWB 9/1; C 9/1; AC 15/1).

Budget minister Alhaji Abubukar Alhaji was installed as the new **Sardauna of Sokoto** in March. This important position had been vacant since its last holder, the late Sir Ahmadu Bello, Premier of the defunct Northern Region, was killed in Nigeria's first military coup 24 years ago. During the same week, Alhaji's uncle, Ibrahim Dasuki, was installed as **Sultan of Sokoto** and therefore as leader of Nigeria's Muslim populace. Christians have expressed concern that the appointment of Alhaji will further consolidate the growing power of the president. Among the dignitaries to attend the celebrations were the Prince and Princess of Wales (AA 16/3; C 16/3; WA 19/3, 26/3).

On 26 March **registration** opened for the **two political parties**, the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP). In a move condemned by the Nigeria Labour Congress, government workers were banned from registering as members of either party (C 26/3; WA 2/4; NA 4/90).

Pres Babangida paid his first official visit to **France** from 26-28 February. He met Pres Mitterand and Prime Minister Rocard, as well as businessmen and industrialists, for talks that amounted to a reappraisal of political advantages on both sides. Babangida could not to persuade France to write off its share in Nigeria's huge $33 bn debt, however, although France did agree to a $25 mn loan to support the structural adjustment programme. France is Nigeria's third largest customer, after the USA and West Germany, and French investment in Nigeria is reputed to stand at $23 bn, although it has declined with the uncertainty over Nigeria's future following the fall in oil prices (AA 16/2; SWB 3/3; WA 5/3; AED 12/3; ARB 31/3).

An **austerity budget** of N39 763 mn was announced on 1 January. Containing no striking new measures, the budget was consistent with the objectives of the structural adjustment plan and is likely to pave the way to a new agreement with the IMF and further rescheduling of the country's external debt (ARB 31/1; AB 2/90).

On 19 January **Japan** signed a $460 mn bilateral **debt rescheduling** agreement. With budgetary commitments to external debts having taken more than 30 per cent of export revenues in the past four years, officials are pressing harder for debt cancellation. Despite the country's commitment to reduce external debt obligations, the debt stock is continuing to rise instead of fall (AED 29/1, 19/2; ARB 28/2).

In terms of a new **industrial policy**, foreign investors are now allowed 100 per cent ownership in new companies. Despite intensive lobbying by existing foreign-associated companies, the decree does not allow those registered under the old decrees to increase their levels of foreign holdings. In most cases these were fixed at 40 per cent (AED 19/2).

Senegal

During March a number of **opposition rallies** were held at which calls for the removal of the president and the holding of fresh elections were made. Around 2 000 people attended a public meeting organized by opposition leaders in Dakar on 10 March. Riot police arrested 19 people, including the secretaries-general of six opposition parties, at a demonstration held on 14 March; the following day another demonstration to demand the release of the arrested opponents was held. All those detained have been released, 11 opposition activists receiving suspended sentences of one month, and eight being released unconditionally. Political observers have linked the rallies to the return on 10 February of **Abdoulaye Wade** after a six month absence (SWB 2/3, 7/3, 17/3; WA 26/3, 2/4).

Pres Diouf carried out a **major government reshuffle** on 27 March, reducing the cabinet from 27 to 21 members. The **retirement** of Sec-Gen **Jean Collin**, a controversial figure whose departure was welcomed by the opposition, was regarded as marking the end of an era. He was replaced by the former minister of the interior, André Sonko. Eleven ministers and secretaries of state left the government, including the foreign minister and the ministers of commerce and of state (SWB 31/3; JA 2/4; WA 9/4).

(Conflict with Mauritania — see Mauritania; Maritime border dispute — see Guinea-Bissau.)

Sierra Leone

In line with IMF demands, the leone was **devalued** on January 14 by nearly 100 per cent to US$1=SL120, bringing it in line with the unofficial parallel rate. Finance minister Taylor-Morgan said however, that the leone was still over-valued, reflecting the poor state of the economy. It was hoped that devaluation would bring an end to black market speculation.

Presenting the mini-budget on 20 February, the minister of finance announced that as part of a "blueprint for economic recovery", **public servants' wages** had been **increased** by between 100 and 125 per cent, while those of members of parliament went up by 125 per cent. Other key policies include a freeze on civil service recruitment, and the abolition of import licences so as to liberalize trade. The changes came five days after the government increased petrol prices by 100 per cent (ARB 28/2, 31/3; AED 12/3; WA 12/3).

Togo

On 11 January Pres Eyadéma announced that the twenty-year old Togolese Peoples Assembly (RPT), the **country's single party, was to be restructured** "to meet the challenges of the third decade." To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the RPT, the president announced a 5 per cent rise in the salaries of private and public sector workers and cut prison sentences by one quarter (AED 12/2; ARB 15/2).

Pres Eyadéma reshuffled and expanded his cabinet on 13 February. Joining the expanded cabinet of 19 are six new ministers, including one woman. Observers expressed surprise that Eyadéma did not wait until after the legislative elections due to be held in March (AED 26/2; ARB 15/3).

CENTRAL AFRICA

Cameroon

The Cameroonian minister of defence, Michel Meva'a M'Eboutou, arrived in Israel on 1 February on an official visit. Cameroon reestablished diplomatic relations with Israel in July 1986, and became the first black African country to host an **Israeli** state visit when the then prime minister, Shimon Peres, visited Cameroon in August 1986 (AED 19/2; WA 19/2).

A free trade zone was created in January to promote new investment facilitate export development, and create new jobs in Cameroon. One US organization, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, assisted by USAID had already carried out a feasibility study on the tax-free zone at Douala, the port that deals with 80 per cent of the country's exports and imports (WA 19/2; ARB 28/2).

Central African Republic

After a visit to the CAR on 12 February, the leader of the Sudanese military junta, **Gen al-Bashir**, announced the resumption of diplomatic relations. He placed the blame for the May 1989 breakdown in relations on the former Sudanese Prime Minister, Sadiq el-Mahdi. The reason for the breakdown was Bangui's resumed relations with Israel in January 1989 (AEM 3/2, 17/2; ARB 15/2; ION 17/2).

On 15 February the National Assembly approved the 1990 **budget**. It amounted to CFAFr103,3 bn, and the deficit was expected to be CFAFr56,5 bn. Priority was given to health, education and road infrastructure. The budgetary deficit would be covered by loans and debt cancellation (ARB 31/1; AED 26/2).

Congo

On 12 February Pres Sassou-Nguesso met Pres Bush in **Washington** where the two leaders discussed the events in Angola. Pres Bush honoured Pres Sassou-Nguesso for his role in the peace-process in the region, and saluted "the growing health of free markets and free ideas in the Congo". On 13 March Pres Sassou-Nguesso received the **Angolan** foreign minister, Alfonso van Dunem (AED 12/2; ARB 15/3; SWB 15/3).

The Congolese national airline, Lina Congo, set up in 1965, incurred a deficit of around $20 mn over the last three years and was said to be in danger of liquidation. The government appointed a judicial administrator to run the company and search for partners in the "partly privately-owned company that would be established" (AED 26/2; ARB 31/3).

Equatorial Guinea

The government authorized a 50 per cent **salary increase** for all private sector employees in January, and the minimum monthly salary was fixed at CFAFr55 000 ($193,4). The move was aimed at bringing salaries into line with those of other members of the Central African Customs Union, the (UDEAC). Concerned foreign companies in Equatorial Guinea said they might have to lay off workers because of the new measures (AED 29/1).

Gabon

During January and February there were periodic **waves of strikes**, which at one stage left Gabon isolated from the outside world as air links and telephone and telex services were cut. In January week-long demonstrations by students erupted into looting of shops, and resulted in army intervention. The **civil unrest**, the most serious challenge in years to Pres Bongo's 23-year rule, was sparked by **austerity measures** introduced because of Gabon's economic slump. The strikers' demands included the creation of a "free trade union", higher wages and pensions, better housing, a policy of "effective Gabonization", and even the resignation of Bongo. Shaken by the civil strife, the government announced a series of measures on 4 March to ease the financial squeeze on workers. These included an immediate refund by the state of a 3 per cent tax on all wages, plus cheaper health services and lower water tariffs (SWB 26/1, 19/2, 27/2; AED 29/1; ARB 15/2; C 28/2; S 28/2, 5/3).

In the face of the continuing social unrest Pres Bongo announced on 23 February his intention to **dissolve the ruling and sole legal party**, the *Parti Démocratique Gabonais* (PDG). This would be replaced by a new party, the *Rassemblement Social Démocrate Gabonais* (RSDG) representing all national political currents. However, under pressure from conservative elements within the PDG, Bongo later **reversed his decision** to dissolve the party, saying it would continue as one element within the umbrella RSDG.

A minor cabinet reshuffle, marked by the removal of the four deputy prime minister portfolios, took place on 27 February. The ministers of national education and of public health and population were also dismissed, to appease teachers and medical staff striking for better pay and working conditions, and the number of ministries was reduced from 32 to 28.

At a 10-day **national party conference** aimed at preparing for **multi-party democracy** that opened on 27 March, Pres Omar Bongo confirmed that he wanted to continue democratizing the country, and to provide it with a multi-party system after a "learning period" of up to five years. The statement was of particular significance because in January when Pres Bongo set up a committee to study ways of "democratizing" national institutions, he had reaffirmed one-party rule. The conference was attended by some 120 political movements and associations, with the notable exception of the banned Morena opposition, which rejected an invitation. In February the movement dismissed one of its leaders, Paul Mba Abessolo, for switching his allegiance to Pres Bongo when he returned to Gabon after 13 years in exile. Following another wave of strikes (calling in the main for a review of salaries that have been frozen since 1986), by workers in the oil industry, bank employees and civil servants in mid-March, all strikes and demonstrations were banned for the duration of the conference (DT 29/1; SWB 1/2, 26/2, 29/2, 1/3, 6/3, 12/3, 14/3, 23/3, 29/3, 3/4; AED 19/2, 5/3, 19/3, 2/4; S 5/3; WA 5/3, 12/3, 19/3, 26/3, 2/4; DN 7/3; JA 12/3; ARB 15/3; C 26/3; AE 3/90; DN 3/4).

Sao Tomé and Principe

Civil servants' wages were increased by 25 per cent from 1 January in terms of a ministerial decree. Furthermore, within the framework of the **structural adjustment programme** financed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, the duty exacted by customs on the export of cocoa was reduced from 9,9 to 6,9 per cent, while customs duties on imports of wheat flour and milk were abolished (ARB 31/1).

Zaire

Pres Mobutu replaced one-third of his cabinet and announced new changes in state institutions on 11 January. (C 12/1; BD 12/1; SWB 13/1; AA 19/2; ARB 15/2).

On 30 January Pres Mobutu began a tour of Zaire, aimed, he said, at "listening to his people". The campaign was referred to by the Zairean press as "a Zairean *perestroika*". The tour was to end in March after which the National Board for Popular Consultation would draw up a list of recommendations. On 27 March, during the signing of new **debt relief** and **cooperation accords** between Zaire and **Belgium**, Pres Mobutu said he would step down if Zaireans wanted him to, but added that the consultations under way suggested they wanted to keep him as their leader (SWB 11/1, 12/2, 2/2, 23/2; AED 12/2; WA 19/2; NA 3/90; C 29/3).

Sudanese troops who fled to Zaire to escape the civil war in southern Sudan were airlifted back from 5 February. The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) said that by repatriating the soldiers, Zaire was actively helping Sudan's military government, however, the SPLA would still accept an offer by Pres Mobutu to mediate in the country's conflict. Meanwhile, the Sudanese leader Gen al-Bashir visited Pres Mobutu on 11 March and also appealed to the Zairean leader to **mediate** his country's conflict situation. Pres Mobutu accepted and started campaigning for a ceasefire in Sudan. He also held talks with the SPLA leader, Col John Garang on 20 March when the ceasefire was discussed (DT 9/2; SWB 12/3, 14/3, 23/3; ION 17/3).

Pres Mobutu **postponed** at short notice a "**mini-summit**" in Zaire that was to have been held between himself, Pres F W de Klerk of South Africa, Pres Habre of Chad, Pres Habyarimana of Rwanda, Pres Buyoya of Burundi and Pres Kolingba of the Central African Republic. Pres Mobutu claimed that "the time wasn't right" for talks of that nature. Mobutu initiated the meeting in an effort to "normalize" relations with **South Africa** following De Klerk's major reform initiatives announced on 2 February (BD 20/1; S 22/2, 23/2; SWB 23/2).

EAST AFRICA

Burundi

The International Development Association announced a credit of $43,2 mn to support a four-year programme to upgrade, rehabilitate and maintain paved and rural roads (DT 13/3; WBN 22/3; AED 26/3, 9/4).

France agreed to write-off about CFAFr625 mn, or 12 per cent, of Burundi's **external debt** (AED 26/2; ARB 15/3).

An estimated 86 tonnes of **ivory** stockpiled in Burundi since November 1987 was sold privately in January at $150 per kilo. The sale took place before to enforcement of the Cites convention (AC 26/1).

Comoros

(*Mauritius seeks to increase trade — see Mauritius.*)

Djibouti

For the first time in Djibouti's history, opposition movements from the two main ethnic groups, the Afars and the Issas, formed a common front — the *Union des Mouvements Démocratiques* (UMD). It brings together the two main underground opposition groups: Mohamed Adoyta's *Front Démocratique de Libération de Djibouti*, an Afar movement with Marxist sympathies, and the *Mouvement National Djiboutien pour l'Instauration de la Démocratie*, headed by Aden Robleh Awaleh, former commerce minister and once a leader of the pre-independence *Front de Libération de la Côte des Somalis*. The unification was an expression of their common concern about the unstable position in the far north of **Somalia**, and their desire "to fight together". The Somalian civil war, which is again threatening to spill into Djibouti, has caused trade in the country to **slump** by 40 per cent since the border was closed two years ago (ION 6/1, 3/2, 24/2, 17/3; AC 9/3).

Ethiopia

There were growing fears at the beginning of the year that northern Ethiopia was facing a repeat of the 1984/5 **famine** which saw up to one million people die of stavation. In the war-torn areas of Eritrea and Tigray, where rainfall was the poorest for six years and only one-third of the 1984 level, harvests were cut by 80 per cent and 50 per cent respectively. The UN estimated that about 5 mn people were at risk of starvation, raising the need for more than one million tonnes of food aid to avert a new famine. Initially the government tried to play down reports of an impending food crisis in the north, but in January doubled its estimate of the number of drought victims to 3,4 mn, and announced plans to sponsor a **major relief operation** to enable supplies to reach even rebel-held territory. The state's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission said it would work together with international donors and relief agencies.

However, by mid-March there were reports of long **delays** in the delivery of food supplies, with international relief efforts having been paralysed by the **capture of Massawa** port in February by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, which cut off the main route used to distribute relief food to government-held areas. Despite heavy bombing by government forces, the EPLF offered the UN the use of the port, but the government said it was opposed to aid passing through Massawa. Relief officials also reported that food shipped in by western donors several months earlier had been stranded at the port of Assab. Supplies were only released after a peace corridor was opened in the south following an accord between the Tigrean People's Liberation Front and Addis Ababa. It allowed for the movement of aid from Assab to Dese, but made **no provision for Eritrea**, which can only be reached by aid transited from Sudan.

Among the contributors of **Western aid** were the USA, which donated 165 000 tonnes of food, and Britain which agreed to provide an extra £8,5 mn in emergency and food aid, bringing the amount of assistance in 1990 to almost £13 mn (DT 29/12, 8/3; ARB 31/12, 31/1; C 27/1, 22/2, 28/2, 3/3, 24/3; WR 2/2; AED 5/2, 26/2, 19/3; TWR 7/2, 14/2; DN 16/2; ION 24/2, 3/3, 7/4; JA 26/2; S 1/3; AE 3/90; NA 4/90).

Problems of delivering emergency supplies were further aggravated by a **resumption of hostilities** in February on all major fronts after a nine month unofficial truce. The upsurge in fighting resulted in the government suffering several major setbacks in the war against Eritrean and Tigrean insurgents. Coupled with the loss of the vital Red Sea port of Massawa, the Mengistu government found itself under severe pressure. On 5 March **Pres Mengistu** announced **sweeping political and economic reforms**, which commentators saw as a last desperate effort to prop up his regime. Citing international changes to explain why he was announcing the **virtual abandonment of socialism** — "Ethiopia must adapt or perish" — Mengistu proposed economic reforms which would undo much of the revolution and were aimed at creating a mixed economy. Unprofitable government organizations were to be sold and all constraints on private investment removed. On the political front, Mengistu proposed that the ruling Workers' Party be renamed the Democratic Union Party of Ethiopia, and announced his intention of **abandoning Marxism-Leninism** as the basis of the new party. He extended an invitation to all opposition groups to join the new party. With the exception of a few "diehards", the news was generally well received in Addis Ababa. The EPLF, however rejected the reforms as "irrelevant". The TPLF and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) were also dismissive in their response (C 15/2, 16/3; AA 16/2, 30/3; ION 17/2, 10/3, 24/3, 31/3; AED 19/2, 12/3; SWB 6/3, 9/3; DT 7/3, 22/3; AN 12/3; WA 19/3; AC 23/3, TS 27/3; AE 4/90).

On 24 March a high level delegation from the ruling Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) flew to Washington to meet with representatives from the World Bank, the IMF and USAID. Two days later foreign affairs representatives of the WPE left Addis Ababa to visit the USA, Canada and Israel for talks explaining the government's new political and economic liberalization measures. Ethiopian officials revealed that hundreds of the country's Jews were emigrating to **Israel** each month. There were unconfirmed reports that Israel (which opened its embassy in Addis Ababa on 22 January, marking the formal resumption of ties broken 17 years ago), sent modern munitions to the Ethiopian government (C 17/1, 22/1; DN 22/1; DT 24/1, 29/3; S 1/4; AED 2/4).

Under increasing pressure to find a political settlement for the country's crisis, the government opened **peace talks** with the **TPLF** on 20 March. Talks broke down after nine days after the government refused to agree to rebel conditions. These included involving all national groups in talks, as well as a call for Pres Mengistu to step down and appoint a transitional coalition government to draw up a new constitution. Having failed to dislodge the **EPLF** from Massawa, one of the country's only two ports, the government opened peace talks on 1 April with the EPLF in Nairobi under the chairmanship of former US president Carter, and former Tanzanian president Nyerere (AED 5/3, 16/4; SWB 21/3, 26/3, 31/3, 3/4, 4/4, 6/4; C 3/4; AE 4/90).

In March the **Soviet Union** announced that it had withdrawn all its military advisors from the battle zones, but confirmed that **military assistance** to Ethiopia would continue until its security had been "re-established". Western diplomats estimate that until the end of 1989, about 1 000 Soviet advisers were helping the Ethiopian government. Both the USSR and the USA began discussing a joint role in helping to end the war in Ethiopia (C 16/3; TWR 21/3; S 22/3; DT 26/3).

Kenya

The **death of Dr Robert Ouko**, the minister of foreign affairs and international cooperation, whose charred remains were found in a sugar-cane plantation on 16 February, sent shock waves throughout the country. He was widely considered one of the most able, articulate and trusted members of Pres Moi's government. Anti-government **riots** erupted in Nairobi and in Kisumu after his funeral, demonstrators accusing the government of trying to protect his murderers by making out his death to be suicide. There had not been such massive popular unrest since the murder of Tom Mboya, then minister of planning and development, in 1969. Mboya, like Ouko, was a member of the Luo ethnic group. Despite government promises of a full inquiry and the assistance of British detectives, no arrests were made. Speculation surrounding his death included accusations of government involvement, but no motive was identified (AED 26/2; ION 24/2, 3/3; DT 27/2; WR 2/3, 9/3; AC 9/3; AC 5/3; WA 5/3; SWB 19/3; ARB 15/3; NA 4/90).

Pres Moi has **ruled out multi-partyism** for Kenya. Such systems, he said, were inappropriate to Africa because the ethnic nature of conflicts would result in party/tribal alliances. Some members of parliament, in contradiction, privately expressed support for the legalization of an opposition party (DT 28/3; AED 2/4).

Following his visit to Kenya from 14-16 February, the French minister of finance announced that his government had agreed to cancel Kenya's debt to France of approximately $200 mn. This measure was in line with the policy announced by Pres Mitterand last year of the cancelling debts of Africa's low-income nations, and was also seen as reflecting **France's growing interest** in anglophone Africa. Kenya also had its debt of $178 mn to the USA cancelled. Kenya's total debt reprieve over the last year amounted to over $460 mn (KT 10/1; ARB 28/2, 31/3).

Japan pledged a $196 mn concessionary loan to help to finance infrastructure such as airports and roads. Japan recently boosted aid to Kenya, which it regards as one of the soundest economies in sub-Saharan Africa, making it Kenya's leading donor country (KT 9/3; AED 12/3).

Madagascar

Madagascar announced that it would launch an **Environmental Action Plan** (EAP), the first of its kind in Africa, aimed at curbing — and potentially reversing — the **environmental degradation** threatening the country's economic development. More than 80 per cent of the island was once covered in rain-forest which now accounts for as little as 15 per cent. Key elements of the 15-year programme are modernization of agriculture, the curbing of damaging cultivation techniques, and the conservation of threatened sites famous for their wildlife. Aid donors meeting in Paris on 14-15 February pledged $85 mn over five years for the EAP. The authors of the programme pointed out that although the estimate of $300-400 mn for the overall cost of the programme is high, it is about the same as the yearly bill Madagascar has to foot because of the decline of its forests and wildlife (WBN 22/2; TS 23/2; ION 24/2; AED 26/2; IMF 2/4).

A new law allowing for **multi-party politics** was instituted on 9 March. Since 1975, the only legally recognized parties have been those belonging to the *Front National pour la Defense de la Revolution Socialiste Malgache* — the coalition formed to support the government. The coalition fell apart after Pres Ratsiraka abandoned orthodox socialism in the mid-1980s to adopt free market policies advocated by the World Bank.

Three political parties, the *Union Nationale pour la Développement et la Démocratie*, the *Parti Socio-Démocrate* and the *Parti luttant pour l'Egalité Sociale*, were legalized only a few days after the law was passed. None are new to the political scene, being extensions of existing political trends (ION 3/3, 31/3; AED 12/3; C 12/3; SWB 15/3, 31/3).

(*Mauritius seeks to increase trade — see Mauritius.*)

Mauritius

Economic growth in Mauritius has proved to be double-edged. The **trade balance deficit** in 1989 grew to $300 mn, a consequence of the marked increase in demand for consumer goods and the rising cost of imported goods, coupled with a fall in exports. Output from the agricultural sector, which suffers from a chronic shortage of labour, continued its steady decline. On the other hand the tourist industry grew by 12,8 per cent in 1989, an increase expected to consolidate during 1990. Foreign exchange reserves have risen to $533 mn, but with production costs having doubled in the past five years, imports expected to rise fourfold, and inflation topping 16 per cent in June 1989, the government has called for an increase in exports.

A significant 15 per cent increase in Mauritian trade with **Madagascar, Comoros** and **Seychelles** was recorded in 1989. But faced with full employment (which is driving up wage rates and production costs), and keen to share its experience in setting up its successful industrial free zone, Mauritius wants to forge additional trade links with fellow members of the Indian Ocean Commission. In January the Mauritian finance minister announced an agreement to help establish export industries in a tax-free **export processing zone** in its poorer neighbour **Madagascar**, and called on Mauritians to consider investing in neighbouring Madagascar and Comoros. Mauritian businessmen, attracted by Madagascar's plentiful supply of cheap labour, have already begun investing in textiles manufacturing. (ION 20/1; S 22/1; C 26/1; AED 12/3; MSE 3/90; ARB 15/3).

Donors meeting in Geneva on 21 March pledged $60 mn toward the government's $121 mn "Human Resources Development Plan" for 1990-93. The programme aims to convert a heavily labour-intensive industrial sector toward strongly capital-intensive activities, based on more highly skilled labour and the use of technology appropriate to high quality production (BD 27/3; ION 31/3; AED 2/4).

Seychelles

(*Mauritius seeks to increase trade — see Mauritius.*)

Somalia

On 9 January Pres Siad Barre **dismissed** his entire **cabinet** on the grounds that they had not only failed to solve the political, social and economic problems of the country, but were responsible for them. Two weeks later he reappointed prime minister Mohamed Ali Samantar and asked him to form a government. It was the first time in 20 years that the president had allowed his prime minister to choose his own cabinet. The new cabinet, sworn in on 17 February, included seven reappointed members, including Samantar himself. The newly delegated powers given to the widely respected Samantar were considered to be an attempt by the president to achieve **reconciliation** with the many rebel groups that have sprung up throughout the country. Samantar, who had been prime minister since February 1987, comes from a small ethnic group outside the power struggle being waged between the different Somali clans.

On 21 February Pres Barre reiterated his decision to allow a **multi-party system** to replace the single ruling party and called on political opponents and dissidents to return home (DN 10/1; SWB 11/1, 28/2; AC 26/1; ION 27/1, 10/2; AED 29/1, 26/2, 12/3; ARB 15/2, 15/3; AE 3/90, 4/90).

In January the human rights organization, Africa Watch, estimated that some 50 000 people had been killed in Somalia's **civil war** in the previous 19 months. More than 400 000 **refugees** had fled to Ethiopia and a further 400 000 had been displaced inside Somalia (S 19/1).

Tanzania

During his visit to Tanzania in March, the recently released deputy-leader of the (South African) African National Congress (ANC), **Nelson Mandela**, addressed a rally in Dar es Salaam at which he was awarded the Order of the Torch of Kilimanjaro. He was cautioned by the influential former president, **Julius Nyerere**, to be wary of the South African government's promises of reform. Mandela also visited ANC cadres undergoing training at secret camps in southern Tanzania. An estimated 31 000 ANC members are living and undergoing military training in Tanzania, more than in any other African country. Mandela's visit was preceded in January by that of eight veteran leaders of the ANC, led by Walter Sisulu (S 24/1; DT 25/1; C 8/3; SWB 9/3).

In February Pres Mwinyi made his second call in less than five years for a major **drive against corruption**. Backed by the powerful National Executive Committee of the CCM and by his ministers, he announced that top ministers and executives would be summoned before the committee to give an account of the conduct of their departments. On 12 March Pres Mwinyi sacked his entire cabinet in preparation for the most **sweeping reshuffle** since he took power in 1985. He then reappointed vice-president and prime minister Joseph Warioba two days later. Mwinyi explained his actions as part of the anti-corruption drive, but diplomatic sources were of the opinion that the reshuffle resulted from an argument between Mwinyi and socialist hardliners in the ruling CCM party over new investment regulations. The hardliners were headed by Nyerere, who remained party chairman and has often clashed with Mwinyi over economic policy. In the new cabinet, several members were reshuffled and seven ministers dropped. Mwinyi insisted that those dismissed were "honest and hardworking", but must shoulder the blame for the corruption rife in their ministries. Prime minster Joseph Warioba's position was strengthened, as he was given control of the justice ministry (SWB 28/2, 15/3, 17/3, 19/3; C 13/3; S 16/3; AED 19/3, 26/3; ION 24/3; AE 4/90; NA 4/90).

In a startling about-turn, the leader of the CCM, **Julius Nyerere**, told a mass media meeting in March that the country should seriously consider the introduction of a multiparty system. While stating that such parties would have to be national in character, he said alternative parties would help overcome the problem of complacency in a **single party system** (C 23/3; WR 2/3).

Uganda

Forty-three Ugandan politicians and soldiers, detained for more than a year, appeared in court in January on **charges of plotting to overthrow the government** in November 1987. All but one were **Baganda**, the group campaigning for restoration of their monarchy which former Pres Obote abolished in 1966 (AED 5/2; ARB 15/2; SWB 23/3).

On 1 February the World Bank approved a $125 mn soft loan to aid Uganda's **economic recovery**. Improvements were aimed at reducing inflation (currently running at 80 per cent annually), increasing the prices paid to farmers to encourage them to grow more export crops, and stimulating job-creation in the urban areas. The fact that real growth in 1989 was 7,2 per cent and that maize production doubled over the previous year to 1,2 mn tonnes, were seen as signs that the Uganda's economic strategy was paying off (WBN 8/2; DT 9/2; AED 12/2; ARB 28/2).

On 13 February the government-owned **Uganda Airlines Corporation** closed down its operations for an estimated period of two to three months. With its fleet in disrepair and the corporation in debt by over $6 mn, it would undergo a restructuring with the help of international aviation consultants. The skeleton staff of about 100 remaining after the retrenchment of some 450 people would maintain flights to London only (AED 31/3; MSE 3/90; AB 4/90).

Speaking on the 4th anniversary of his coming to power, Pres Museveni announced on 26 January a series of new economic policies aimed at **liberalizing** the Ugandan **economy**. The main feature would be the creation of an Investment Centre to provide guidance to prospective investors. It was only after the visit of Britain's overseas development minister, Lynda Chalker, on 23 March that the government agreed to embark on its first privatization exercise — a project that would give existing majority shareholders or previous owners of eight Ugandan companies the opportunity to reassume control (MSE 3/90; AA 30/3).

Gen Basilio **Okello**, who controlled the Ugandan government for six months in 1985, died in exile in January in Sudan aged 72 (SN 13/1).

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Angola

Earnings from the export of **coffee** dropped in 1989 by $5 mn to $10,797 mn (a 14-year low), providing Angola with less than 5 per cent of its export earnings compared with more than 20 per cent in 1974 when more than 215 000 tonnes were shipped. Infrastructural breakdown caused by the civil war was the main reason for the drop in quality and quantity. Angola, once the world's fourth largest producer, agreed to open the coffee sector to foreign and private investment. In contrast, the **oil** industry has continued to flourish despite 15 years of war and fluctuating prices. Output rose from 358 000 barrels per day in 1987 to 450 000 in 1988 and stabilized at around the same level in 1989. By encouraging investment from foreign companies the Angolan government hoped that production would be boosted further in 1990 (C 4/1; DT 14/3; AED 19/3; WA 26/3).

Official estimates in mid-February put the number of people suffering serious food shortages as a result of the current drought in southern Angola at 1,5 mn (MSE 3/90).

Following the visit of a delegation of Namibian businessmen to Luanda in January, it was stated that the two countries were set to establish direct trade links. It seemed likely that **Namibia** would act as a conduit for indirect trade between **South Africa** and Angola (C 31/1; BD 31/1).

The withdrawal of **Cuban troops** from Angola was halted at the end of January in protest over the killing of four Cuban soldiers by Unita on 21 January. After subsequent talks between Cuban and Angola delegations, the troop withdrawal was resumed on 25 February. Unita apologized for the incident and said it would not recur. The scheduled withdrawal of 33 000 Cuban troops by the end of March was expected to be completed in October (C 26/1, 20/2, 8/3; SWB 27/1, 22/2, 23/2, 3/4; ARB 15/2, 15/3; AED 26/2).

Two days before the start in Luanda of a fourth summit meeting of eight African nations seeking to negotiate en end to the war, **Unita rejected** the eight-point **peace plan** proposed by Pres dos Santos on 1 January, but pledged to seek a negotiated settlement to the war. Unita reiterated its demand for a multi-party system, something specifically ruled out by Pres dos Santos. The regional summit, delayed several times last year, was postponed indefinitely after Pres Mobutu, the mediator, said he was too busy to attend.

At the end of January a major battle for government control of the strategic town of **Mavinga** in south-eastern Angola took place. In the biggest attack of its kind in the 14-year war, heavy casualities on both sides were reported, government forces claiming to have killed more than 600 Unita rebels. Government claims that it had succeeded in taking control of the town were denied by Unita, whose leader Jonas Savimbi, had been in Portugal on his first visit in 14 years at the time of the offensive. The government attack on Mavinga was interpreted by political observers as an attempt by Dos Santos to gain the upper hand in peace talks.

On 1 March the faltering **peace initiatiave** was boosted when the government publicly agreed for the first time to direct talks with Unita. Rebel leader Savimbi responded by calling for a ceasefire on condition that government forces abandon military gains of the past two months, giving credence to government claims that it had captured Mavinga (C 9/1; WA 22/1; AED 29/1, 5/2; S 6/2, 7/2, 12/2, 14/2, 12/3; BD 31/1, 1/2, 8/2, 2/3, 6/3, 7/3; C 2/2, 6/3, 7/3; WM 2/2; SWB 8/2, 10/2, 23/2, 9/3, 22/3; FM 9/2; DT 9/2; WA 12/2; ARB 15/2, 15/3; AE 2/90; AC 9/3; DN 22/3).

Party director of information and propaganda, Joao Miranda, announced at the end of March after an MPLA central committee meeting that the government was examining ways of introducing **democratic reforms**. The mooted changes involved the introduction of a multi-party political system, possibly before the end of the present electoral period, which ends in 1992, the separation of government functions from those of the ruling party, the appointment of a prime minister by the president, and a time limit on the holding of public posts (SWB 21/3; NM - 23/3; BD 23/3; S 26/3).

(*Consignment of maize from Ghana — see Ghana.*)

Botswana

Presenting the 1990/91 budget in February, finance minister Festus Mogae warned that income from **diamonds** — the main fuel for the economic growth during the past decade — was likely to fall in future. He called for productivity to be improved in other sectors of the economy to compensate for the expected revenue losses. The state again expected to draw on mineral revenues to fund nearly 20 per cent of the projected recurrent expenditure of more than P1,3 bn in 1990/91.

Revenues and grants in the new **budget** were expected to increase by 24 per cent to more than P3,3 bn ($1,75 bn). Income from mineral exports would account for 63 per cent of the total. An overall surplus of P491 mn was budgeted. However, the minister cautioned that the country's ability to show a continued budget surplus owed much to the unexpected 15 per cent increase in diamond prices last year. Botswana's economic growth rate in 1989/90 was 9,7 per cent, with foreign exchange earnings from the three main commodities — diamonds, copper and beef — rising by 32 per cent (TS 23/2; AED 26/2; ARB 31/3; AB 4/90).

Because of the **environmental threat** posed by the growth of Botswana's well-managed **elephant population** during the past 9 years from 40 000 to 67 000, an estimated 3 000 elephants would have to be culled annually (S 1/2; BD 1/2; AED 19/2).

Fourteen members of the South African liberation movements, the **ANC** and **PAC**, who had been serving jail sentences in Botswana were handed over to their respective organizations in late February. Their release followed the unbanning of these organizations in South Africa on 2 February (SWB 22/2).

Lesotho

An estimated 3 000ha of arable land and 15 800 ha of grazing land was expected to be lost, and a total of 273 households displaced, as a result of flooding from the **Lesotho Highlands Water Project** (LWHP). Alternative housing and financial compensation would be given to displaced families and development projects and training for alternative employment provided. About 20 000 people live in the immediate area of the Katyse dam (BD 25/2).

South Africa's gold mines paid out more than R400 mn in deferred pay, remittance and other payments to Basuto workers employed on the gold mines in 1989. This is about R60 mn more than in the previous year, and is attributable to increases in deferred pay and remittance payments and to annual wage increases (S 16/2).

Military ruler **Maj-Gen Metsing Lekhanya** renewed his grip on political power with the sudden sacking and arrest of four government members and the **exile of King Moshoeshoe**. Those arrested on 19 February, and stripped of their rank, were three members of the six-man ruling Military Council, Col Thaabe Letsie and his brother Col Sekhobe Letsie (both of whom are close relatives and supporters of the king), Col Aloysius Mosoeunyane, and a military member of the civilian cabinet, Col Philip Mokhantso. They were charged with sowing disunity and dissension within the Lesotho army and with interfering with judicial investigations. Lekhanya later alleged that the Letsie brothers had been arrested for taking part in an **abortive coup**. The following day, the conflict between the military government and King Moshoeshoe II came to a head when the Military Council stripped the king of his administrative and legislative powers, because he had refused to endorse the dismissal of the three Military Council members.

On the 22 February Gen Lekhanya announced a **major cabinet reshuffle**, his biggest since taking power four years ago. Nine ministers were dismissed and four cabinet posts scrapped. While Lekhanya said the dismissals were for reasons of "administrative restructuring", all the ministers were known supporters of the king. Gen Lekhanya also announced the creation of two task forces, headed by foreign minister Tom Thabane and finance minister Retselisitsoe Sekhonyama, to return Lesotho to **civilian rule** by 1992 and to carry out wide-ranging social and economic reforms. In a far reaching statement he committed himself to stamping out widespread corruption and to privatization.

Meanwhile, long-standing tensions between the king and Lekhanya over who was the real authority in the kingdom finally resulted on 10 March in the king being sent into exile for a "brief sabbatical". The crisis arose after the king had refused to attend the traditional annual celebrations to mark the founding of the Basotho nation. King Moshoeshoe II, who never exercised real political power, was briefly exiled to the

Netherlands in 1970 by the then prime minister, Chief Leabua Jonathan.

Genl Lekhanya defended his crackdown on the royal family as a response to their opposition to the moves toward civilian rule, but the king denied any opposition to the planned changes. Political commentators speculated that Lekhanya's purges were part of a plan to discredit his enemies through the courts. Lekhanya's position was somewhat weakened last year after he was implicated in the murder of a student.

On 21 March Sekhobe Letsie and his former bodyguard (also a relative of the king) appeared in court on four counts of **murder** in connection with the killing of two former cabinet ministers and their wives in 1986. Three other former bodyguards were also arrested in connection with the murders. Thabe Letsie was placed under house arrest after his brief detention (WM 23/1, 9/3; BD 21/2, 26/2; C 21/2, 27/2, 9/3, 12/3; S 22-26/2, 22/3; FM 23/2; AED 26/2, 5/3, 12/3; ST 25/2, 11/3; SWB 3/3, 7/3; LT 8/3; AA 30/3).

Malawi

Pres Kamuzu Banda appointed a **new cabinet** on 23 February, more than three weeks after the dissolution of the previous cabinet, appointed in January 1988. Banda remained minister of four of the eleven ministries, namely agriculture, justice, works and supplies and external affairs (SWB 1/2, 26/2; S 24/2; AED 5/3; ARB 15/3).

In March it was reported that there were more than 820 000 **Mozambican refugees** in Malawi (AA 16/3).

The northern Livingstone coal fields produced 36 644 tonnes of coal in 1989, meeting 83 per cent of domestic needs, a 65 per cent increase over the previous year (ARB 28/2).

Mozambique

On 9 January Pres Chissano introduced a **draft constitution** providing for universal suffrage, direct election of the president and parliament, greater respect for individual rights and freedom, independence of the judiciary, and greater separation of the ruling Frelimo party and the state. Although the country would remain a one-party state, Chissano invited open discussion about the introduction of a multiple party political system. The new constitution, which would be subject to a nation-wide debate before a final vote in the People's Assembly, would also scrap the death penalty, outlaw torture, enshrine the right to strike and reintroduce the private ownership of land that ended in 1975. A major change, paving the way for separating the posts of party president and head of state, is that any Mozambican between the ages of 40 and 70 would be eligible for the presidency, the term of office being for five years. No incumbent would be allowed to serve more than three terms (C 10/1; DN 11/1; DT 11/1; SWB 12/1, 15/1, 16/1, 26/1; MF 2/90; AE 2/90; M 2/90; ARB 15/2; AN 26/2; NA 4/90).

US Pres George Bush signed a decree on 26 January removing Mozambique from the list of Marxist-Leninist countries banned from receiving funds from the US Export-Import Bank. Mozambique had been on the list since October 1986. The decision still did not allow military aid (ION 2/2; AED 12/2; ARB 28/2).

A wave of **strikes** spread across the country in January, the first since independence in 1975, an apparent consequence of the constitutional reforms. Railway, textile and construction workers as well as nursing staff who were protesting for 100 per cent wage increases, back payment of end-of-year bonuses and overtime pay, returned to work after some of their demands had been met and a 16 per cent wage rise promised to every worker in the country. Some 2 000 teachers in Nampula went on strike in mid-February to demand a 100 per cent pay rise, overtime, and service bonuses. The strike quickly spread to five of the 10 provincial capitals and the government closed all schools on 21 February. On 6 March teachers returned to work without having secured any of their main demands (C 5/1, 10/1, 12/1; AA 5/1; SWB 6/1, 8/1, 12/1, 26/1, 31/1, 3/3; S 9/1, 12/1, 19/1, 22/1, 23/1, 21/2; DN 11/1, 5/3; ION 13/1; BD 23/1, 20/2; AED 29/1, 5/3, 12/3; MF 2/90).

There was a sharp increase in the number of attacks by **Renamo rebels** during the first three months of the year. Seventy-seven passengers were killed on a train carrying Mozambican mine workers from South Africa to Maputo on 14 February, and on 19 February a South African professor and a Zimbabwean businessman on route to Beira were abducted by Renamo. They were in Mozambique to examine a road rehabilitation and a housing project (C 16/2, 21/2; WM 2/3; AED 5/3; S 9/3; ION 10/3, 31/3; ARB 15/3).

In late February the government admitted for the first time that **direct talks with Renamo rebels** were a possibility. The upsurge in Renamo attacks were taken to be typical of a pre-negotiation stage.

Pres Chissano paid his first official visit to the US on 13-15 March. While there he confirmed his desire to begin direct talks with Renamo. Pres Bush affirmed his strong support for the political and economic reform programmes, saying they enhanced the chances of achieving a peaceful settlement with Renamo, and offered to play a more direct role in the peace process. He confirmed that a seven-point peace plan prepared by the US has been accepted by Renamo. The US government also pledged continued aid for development and national reconstruction. With the subsequent agreement by Renamo to recognize the legitimacy of the government, a key stumbling block to peace talks was removed. Pres Chissano in turn dropped his insistence on a formal ceasefire as a precondition, and on 3 April Renamo rebels accepted an offer made by Pres Chissano to hold peace talks (S 5/1, 26/2, 14/3, 2/4; WR 2/2; AED 5/2, 19/3, 26/3; DN 27/2; SWB 2/3, 16/3, 4/4; C 14/3, 2/4, 3/4; BD 16/3; DN 16/3; ION 17/3).

Namibia

On 9 February the Constituent Assembly unanimously accepted the **new constitution**, clearing the way for **independence**. On 21 March Namibia, colonized for more than a century, became independent as a multi-party, unitary state, with Sam Nujoma as its first president and Hage Geingob as prime minister. The 72-member Constituent Assembly, which wrote the new constitution, automatically became the lower house of the country's parliament, known as the National Assembly. A proposed upper house, elected from regional leaders, is to be installed in two years time.

Among the more than 20 000 people who attended the week of ceremonies in Windhoek were 5 000 foreign guests from 147 countries, among whom them African heads of state and the foreign ministers of the UK, USA, and USSR. Nelson Mandela was one of the guests of honour. Notable by his absence was Zimbabwean Pres Robert Mugabe, the only Frontline State president not to attend.

In his first policy speech, Pres Nujoma outlined plans for a **mixed economy** which would limit government intervention to the water, energy and infrastructure sectors. Noting the budgetary deficit of R500 mn, he appealed for **foreign investment** to develop the economy. The government was formulating an investment code to encourage essential private investment from abroad.

Namibia's economic dependence on **South Africa** was expected to continue. Claiming ownership under treaties signed by Britain, South Africa refused to renounce its sovereignty over **Walvis Bay** but assured Namibia of the accessibility and use of the enclave port. Namibia could lose an estimated $100 mn a year in foreign exchange as a result. The harbour is the key to Namibia's future economic independence as it is the heart of the fishing industry, as well as being the only port equipped and deep enough for international traffic (NT 14/2, 24/3; AED 26/2, 5/3, 26/3; C 10/3, 17/3, 21/3, 22/3; TWR 14/3; SWB 15/3, 22/3, 23/3; ARB 15/3; S 16/3, 20-22/3; BD 21/3, 26/3; WA 26/3, 2/4; FF 4/90).

Namibia's independence paved the way for the **lifting of sanctions** against the territory and opened the door to membership of the Commonwealth, the UN, the OAU and the SADCC. On the 14 March the **Commonwealth** welcomed Namibia as it 50th member, and on achieving independence Namibia became a member of the nine-member **SADCC** and of the **OAU**. At the same time the United States, Japan and the Soviet Union agreed to the establishment of full diplomatic relations. In mid-April Namibia was admitted as the **UN's 160th member state** (AED 5/3; C 12/3, 23/3, 12/4; NT 14/3; WA 2/4; SWB 3/4; S 18/4; FF 4/90).

Fearing that the withdrawal in April of the 4 400 UN Transitional Assistance Group (Untag) could create a **security vacuum**, Pres Nujoma asked several countries to leave behind members of the peacekeeping force which oversaw the independence process. Training started in February of a 500-member force consisting of former Swapo fighters and members of the official South West Africa Territory Force. At the request of Pres Nujoma, 50 **British** army officers and NCOs would train a 9 000 member integrated army (AED 5/3, 26/3; ARB 15/3; C 24/3; FF 4/90).

Between 40 000 and 100 000 **refugees** from drought and famine in Angola have flocked into the northern regions of Ovambo and Kanango, joining some 30 000 returned exiles who had settled on the overcrowded farms of the area (WA 2/4).

(Harms Commission of Inquiry into "hit-squads" — see South Africa.)

South Africa

In an historic speech at the opening of Parliament on 2 February, Pres de Klerk announced the immediate **unbanning** of the African National Congress (**ANC**), the South African Communist Party (**SACP**) and the Pan Africanist Congress (**PAC**), as well as the impending, unconditional **release of Nelson Mandela**. He also lifted some of the restictions imposed on media reporting and personal freedoms under the state of emergency regulations, and said that the 1953 Reservation of Separate Amenities Act would be repealed during the current session of parliament.

The release of Nelson Mandela on 11 February after 27 years in prison was greeted with widespread local and international jubilation. His release was seen as an acknowledgement by the government of the urgent need to open **negotiations** with legitimate black leaders. Mandela declared his continued support for the armed struggle and called for intensified sanctions. Nevertheless, on 16 February the ANC confirmed that a high-level delegation was expected to meet the government soon, in order to discuss the ANC's preconditions for formal negotiations. On 16 March the government announced that it would hold its first official meeting on 11 April with an ANC delegation which would include members of both its internal and external leadership. However, on 31 March the ANC suspended talks with the government in protest at the shootings in Sebokeng.

On 27 February Mandela began a 17-day foreign tour. His first visit was to the headquarters of the ANC in Lusaka, Zambia, where he met with the exiled ANC National Executive Committee (NEC), all six Frontline State leaders and Commonwealth representatives. During his visit the ANC announced the election of Mandela to the post of vice-president of the ANC, in effect reaffirming his position as effective leader of the organization. Other ANC leaders Walter Sisulu and Govan Mbeki, released from prison in late 1989, resumed their former positions. Chairman of the six-nation African block, Zambian Pres Kaunda, called for a **suspension of the armed struggle** in South Africa.

On the second leg of his African tour, Mandela visited Pres Mugabe in Zimbabwe on 5 March before spending 5 days in Tanzania and one day in Ethiopia. On 12 March he met, for the first time in 28 years, the ANC president Oliver Tambo, convalescing in Sweden after a stroke.

On 23 February **Britain** formally lifted its voluntary ban on new investment in South Africa and the promotion of tourism, unilaterally breaking EC agreements on sanctions, on the grounds that this would encourage further internal reforms in South Africa. The OAU's Ad-hoc Committee on Southern Africa agreed in Lusaka on 19 March to begin direct **contacts** with South Africa in an effort to promote a peaceful end to apartheid. The meeting, involving 13 African heads of state, called for the continued isolation of South Africa.

Subsequent to the release of Mandela and the lifting of certain restrictions on black political activity there was a sharp increase in general **unrest** in the country. Political observers attributed this to heightened expectations. Mandela's release also focused renewed attention on the deep divisions within the black communities in the self-governing state of KwaZulu and the province of Natal. By late March **intense fighting** between rival political groups competing for control of townships had resulted in the deaths of more than 250 people since Mandela's release. The upsurge in violence was attributed partly to the unbanning of the ANC, and its implications for the ANC's rival, the predominantly Zulu movement **Inkatha**. In the self-governing state of Gazankulu, demonstrators called for the resignation of the chief minister, Hudson Ntsanwisi. Some 30 people were killed, and there were large numbers of arrests. A stay-away by civil servants and other workers from 19 February forced the postponement of the official opening of the **Gazankulu** legislature in mid-March. By the end of March the schools boycott, in operation since the start of the year, had not ended. Unrest broke out in the Vaal township of **Sebokeng** on 7-8 March when police opened fire, without warning, on a crowd of about 100 000 who were marching to present a list of demands — which included reductions in rent and an end to racially segregated schools — to police. Seventeen people were killed and 447 injured.

The activities of a secret body, the Civil Cooperation Bureau (**CCB**), became public in January during investigations into the murders in 1989 of **David Webster**, a human rights campaigner, and **Anton Lubowski** a Namibian lawyer and top Swapo official. On 31 January Pres de Klerk appointed Justice **Harms** to head a **commission of inquiry** into the activities of the CCB. The minister of defence, Gen Magnus Malan denied newspaper allegations that the SADF was implicated in the activities of a "hit-squad", or that it had assassinated Lubowski, claiming that Lubowski was a paid military intelligence agent. On 1 March Pres de Klerk announced plans to bring covert operations by government agents under cabinet control and extended the brief of the Harms Commission of inquiry to investigate the SADF claims about Lubowski. Evidence was led on 22 March to the effect that Lubowski received payments from the SADF as an agent and had delivered "certain returns". Lubowski's family continued to deny these allegations.

Soviet foreign affairs minister **Eduard Shevardnadze** held an unprecedented meeting with Pres de Klerk on 21 March during Namibia's independence celebrations. For De Klerk the meeting, which he described as "positive and constructive", was the culmination of a series of diplomatic coups. Apart from meeting Namibia's new president Sam Nujoma for talks on two occasions, Pres de Klerk also held talks with other African statesmen, notably: OAU chairman and Egyptian **Pres Mubarak**, Angolan **Pres dos Santos**, Zambian Pres **Kenneth Kaunda**, **Pres Chissano** of Mozambique, Cape Verdian **Prime Minister Pirez** as well as meeting informally with Nigerian **Pres Babangida**.

Pres de Klerk announced on 16 March plans to use proceeds from **privatization** to fund **black social advancement**. He said the government would sell assets to raise R1 bn this year to improve black education and housing. This would be added to a R2 bn fund announced in the recent budget (KR 1/90, 2/90, 3/90; AED 29/1, 5/2, 12/2, 26/2, 5/3, 12/3, 19/3, 26/3; SAB 2/2, 16/2, 2/3, 16/3, 30/3, 13/4; E 10/3; AC 23/3).

(Mandela's African tour — see also Tanzania, Zimbabwe.)

TBVC States

Transkei – On 7 February Maj-Gen Holomisa became the first homeland leader to follow the lead of the South African government with the **unbanning** of political organizations, among them the ANC, PAC and South African Communist Party. Holomisa also announced the release of all political prisoners. Two days later the government confirmed that a **referendum** would be held to determine the opinion of its citizens on **integration**, in view of the recent political changes in South Africa (SWB 8/2, 9/2, 13/2; WM 9/2; AR 5/90).

Bophuthatswana – Two people were killed and about 17 injured on 24 February when Bophuthatswana police opened fire on a crowd of 8 000 residents who were demanding that the homeland be reincorporated into South Africa. South African troops helped to quell the unrest. A week earlier Pres Mangope vowed that reincorporation would never take place. On 14 March the entire homeland area was placed under a state of emergency as the biggest stay-away since the uprisings of 1986 took place. A month-long consumer boycott was called, and widespread calls made for the immediate resignation of Pres Mangope and his government. On 23 March the National Assembly unanimously rejected a call for reincorporation (S 15/2, 19/2, 25/2, 7/3, 8/3; WM 9/3, 16/3; AC 23/3; BD 8/3, 15/3; SWB 8/3, 16/3, 27/3; KR 3/90).

Venda – On 11 March the government **lifted its ban** on the ANC, PAC, SACP and other political organizations (C 12/3; SWB 12/3; SAB 30/3).

Following a special session of the assembly on 13 March, Pres Ravele announced that a referendum would be held on reintegration into South Africa and that the constitution would be revised to allow for a multi-party system. The announcement came after weeks of demonstrations in favour of the reincorporation of Venda into South Africa, backed by a civil service strike, which included the police force and Venda's normally neutral traders (ST 4/3; S 9/3, 14/3; C 10/3, 15/3; SWB 15/3; AC 23/3; KR 3/90).

Ciskei – Pres Lennox Sebe was overthrown in a **bloodless coup** on 4 March by the chief of military intelligence, **Brig Joshua Oupa Gqozo**. Citing corruption, police brutality, detentions without trial and nepotism as characterizing the Sebe regime, Gqozo said that the army had acted in response to repeated requests by the people of the homeland. Jubilant **celebrations became violent** as property belonging to people connected with the Sebe's regime was attacked and looted by the crowds. An estimated 18 000 people lost their jobs as a result of R110 mn damage to property. Twenty-seven people were killed. A state of emergency was declared and the South African Defence Force called in to help restore order.

The constitution was suspended and the cabinet placed under house arrest. Brig Gqozo announced the formation of a four-member military committee, including himself, to run the country in conjunction with an eight-member council of state. The new military regime declared itself in favour of **reincorporation** into South Africa; it also announced that trades unions were no longer banned. South African government officials appeared to give tacit approval to the coup (SWB 7/3, 10/3, 12/3; WM 9/3; S 12/3; AED 13/3; BD 14/3; SAB 16/3; AC 23/3; KR 3/90).

Swaziland

Prime Minister Obed Dlamini announced on 1 January that the traditionally-based ***Tinkhundla*** system, which was responsible for organizing general elections and for the "preservation of Swazi culture", was **to be reformed** during 1990. The news was greeted with relief because of the controversy over the manner in which general elections have been organized and the vagueness of the system's areas of responsibility (NA 1/90; TS 2/1, 16/2; 22/2, 7/3, 9/3; SN 10/3; AA 16/3).

The prime minister announced a 16 per cent **pay rise for civil servants and teachers** as part of the new budget for 1990/91, in addition to a 15 per cent cut in individual tax (BD 23/2; TS 23/2).

A South African paper and pulp industries company (Sappi), which recently acquired a 49 per cent share in the Usutu Forest pulp company for R135 mn, announced that it was to pump R30 mn into expanding the paper mill. The mill is one Swaziland's most important revenue earners, accounting for 12 per cent of the country's export earnings (S 2/3; AA 16/3).

Zambia

The ruling United National Independence Party (Unip) **rejected** proposals to create a **multi-party system**. The decision was taken at the 14-17 March national convention attended by representatives from the private sector, trade unions and army as well as Unip members (C 15/3, 19/3; AED 26/3).

On 3 February an agreement was reached with the IMF and the World Bank on a **new economic austerity programme**. The accord included further devaluation, cuts in public spending and food subsidies, and a tightening of the money supply. Zambia's crippling $7 bn foreign debt, including $1 bn owed to the Bank and the IMF, needed the support of the Washington-based agencies in order to win the backing of other donors. This was given, shortly after the agreement was announced, by the EC, which agreed to $24,2 mn in quick disbursing aid to finance imports.

As part of the accord, the government introduced a **two-tier foreign exchange rate** on 13 February to encourage exports and to increase hard currency earnings. The market rate for buying and selling was initially fixed at ZK40 to the dollar, the official rate being ZK23 to the dollar. Two weeks later officials reported that because of the positive results, complementary measures to encourage investment were being examined (AB 1/90; SAE 2/90; S 5/2; C 6/2; AED 12/2, 19/2, 12/3; BD 15/2; ARB 28/2, 30/3).

Zimbabwe

Pres Mugabe announced significant changes to the **cabinet structure** on 20 January in what is seen as the start of a scaling down of the top-heavy government organization. The industry and technology ministry was merged with the trade and commerce industry, the parastatals commission was restructured, while the ministries of youth, sports and culture and of community and cooperative development and women's affairs, had some of their functions absorbed by other ministries (AED 29/1).

In the **presidential** and **parliamentary elections** held on 28-30 March Pres Robert Mugabe's Zanu-PF party won 116 of the 120 seats in the new single chamber National Assembly. Three seats went to Manicaland-based parties — two to Edgar Tekere's Zimbabwe Unity Movement (Zum), and one to Rev Sithole's Zanu (Ndonga) party. A by-election is to be held for the remaining seat. Political observers saw the particularly low 54 per cent turnout as a **protest vote** by those disappointed in the government's performance, but not prepared to risk voting for the new Zum party. (In the two previous elections there was a 95 per cent turnout.) Mugabe in contrast claimed that the results gave him a clear mandate for a **one-party state** and a "social transformation". The elections were marred by **violence** between Zanu-PF and Zum, the latter accusing Mugabe's party of acts of intimidation. Mugabe was sworn in as president on 2 April for a six-year term of office (S 16/2, 1/3, 5/3, 26/3, 29/3, 1/4, 2/4, 3/4; BD 16/2, 30/3, 2/4, 3/4; C 3/3, 5/3, 19/3, 29/3, 30/3, 2/4, 3/4; AA 2/3, 16/3; SWB 6/3, 23/3, 2/4, 3/4; ARB 15/3; ST 18/3; AED 26/3, 9/4; DT 30/3; ZN 3/90; WA 2/4; H 2/4, 3/4; E 7/4; NA 4/90; FF 4/90).

Just prior to the elections, the government announced plans for a new **land reform policy** that would give the state wider powers to acquire land, when the land provisions of the **Lancaster House agreement** expire in April. Land ownership, a central theme in the election campaign, is a controversial issue in Zimbabwe. An estimated 4 000 white farmers own more than half of the most fertile land, while over eight million blacks live in crowded conditions on mostly arid land. At the time of independence in 1980, Pres Mugabe targeted 162 000 families for resettlement over the next three years. Only 52 000 peasant families have so far been resettled (KT 22/1; AC 5/3; S 7/3; C 16/3).

(*Pres Mugabe fails to attend Namibian independence celebrations — See Namibia.*)

References:

A — *Afrika*; AA — *Africa Analysis*; AB — *African Business*; AC — *Africa Confidential*; A Con — *Africa Concord*; AED — *Africa Economic Digest*; AE&M — *Africa Energy & Mining*; AIB — *Africa Institute Bulletin*; AN — *Africa Newsfile*; AP — *African Preview*; ARB — *Africa Research Bulletin*; B — *Beeld*; BD — *Business Day*; BDN — *Botswana Daily News*; C — *Citizen*; CI — *Crescent International*; Cr — *Crescent*; D — *Drum*; DN — *Daily News*; DT — *Daily Times*; E — *The Economist*; FF — *Frontfile*; FM — *Financial Mail*; F&T — *Finansies & Tegniek*; G — *The Guardian*; H — *The Herald*; IMF S — *IMF Survey*; I — *The Independent*; ION — *Indian Ocean Newsletter*; JA — *Jeune Afrique*; K — *Keesing's Record of World Events*; KT — *Kenya Times*; KN — *Kwacha News*; LT — *Lesotho Today*; M — *The Mail*; MF — *Mozambiquefile*; MIO — *Mozambique Information Office*; MNR — *Mozambique News Review*; MSE — *Market South East*; N — *Namibian*; NA — *New African*; NM — *Natal Mercury*; NN — *New Nation*; R — *Rapport*; Rep — *Republikein*; S — *Star*; SAB — *SA Barometer*; SAD — *South African Digest*; SAE — *Southern African Economist*; SAN — *South African Newsletter*; SAT — *Southern Africa Today*; So — *South*; SN — *Swazi News*; SS — *Sunday Star*; ST — *Sunday Times*; SWB — *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*; T — *Transvaler*; TS — *Times of Swaziland*; TWR — *Third World Reports*; U — *Uniform*; WA — *West Africa*; WBN — *World Bank News*; WM — *Weekly Mail*; WR — *Weekly Review*; ZN — *Zimbabwe News*.

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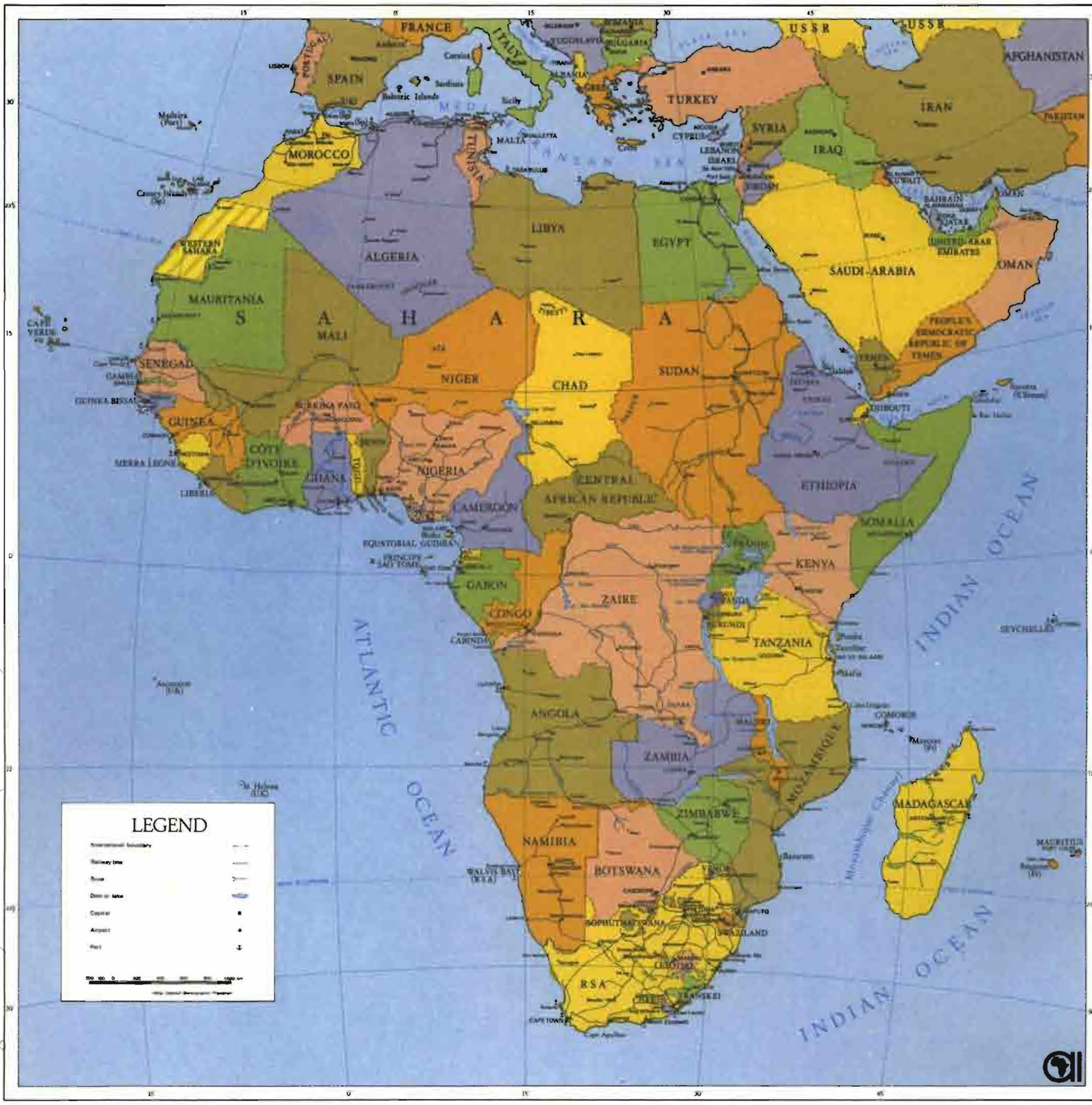

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