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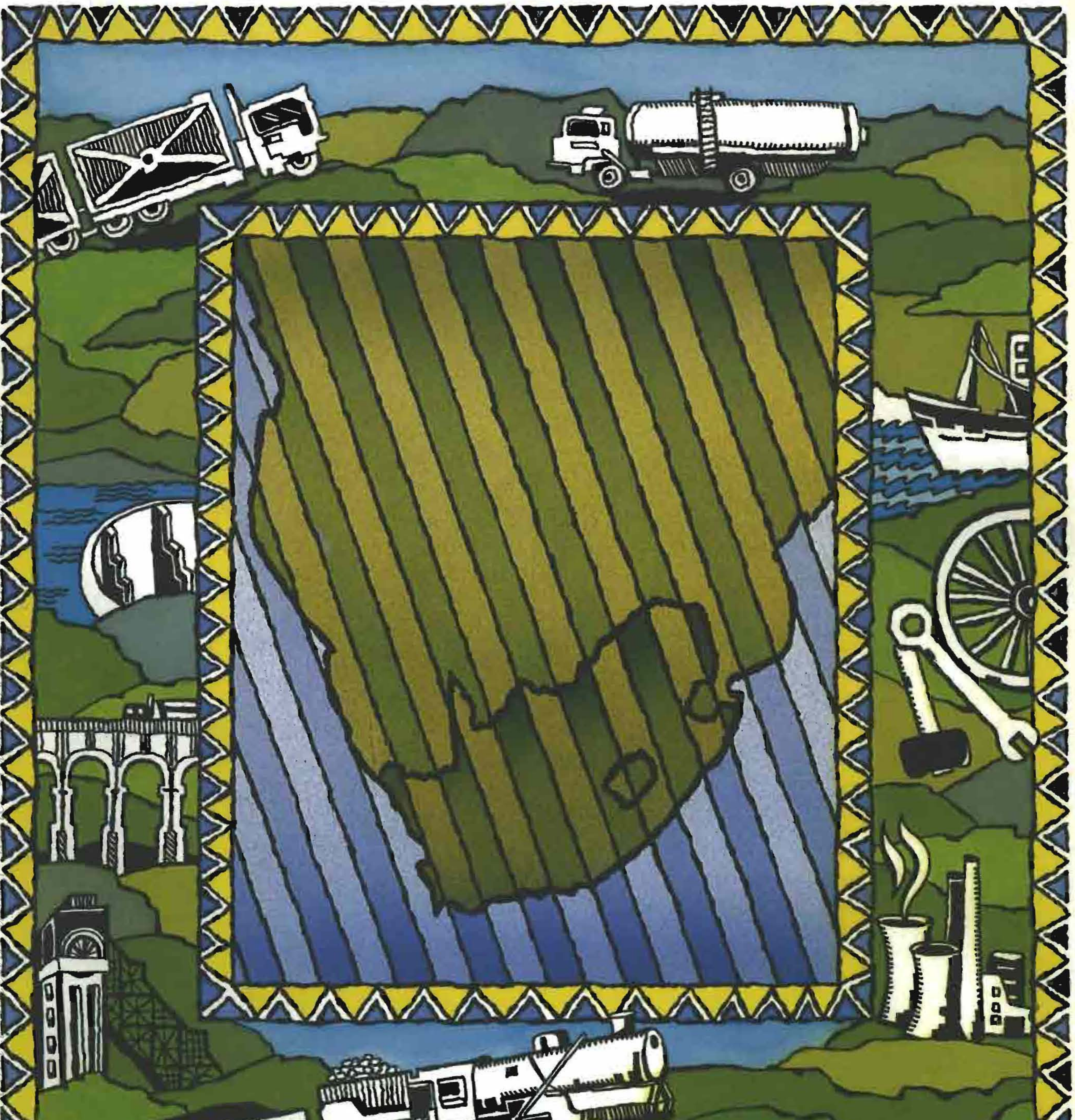

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AFRICA INSIGHT

Cover by William Steyn

Towards democracy?

Last year we commented in this journal (vol 20, no 2) on the causes and prospects of the movement towards democracy in Africa. At the time, presidents throughout Africa were responding to uprisings flowering from a popular desire for political freedom by lifting restrictions on opposition parties and ordering constitutional reviews. Some had gone as far as to promise a return to a multiparty system, though a few had been trying to dissuade their compatriots from such a reversal, calling the spectre of democracy a "national disaster". Pieter Esterhuysen, Assistant Director of the Africa Institute, takes stock of what has happened since then.

With the present surge towards multiparty systems of government, Africa's political wheel threatens to come full circle and arrive at the point at which it stood in those early post-independence years when multiparty politics in most states had yet to be abolished in favour of authoritarian systems. Heralded by the break-up of Madagascar's Marxist-Leninist governing coalition in March 1990 and the defeat, three months later, of Algeria's ruling National Liberation Front in that country's first multiparty local government elections, the winds of democracy have since blown across the continent ever more strongly.

During the latter half of 1990 and the first quarter of 1991 the number of multiparty states in and around the continent doubled from 10 to 20; and roughly an equal number are either planning or seriously contemplating the opening-up of their political systems (see map). It seems certain that by the end of 1992 most of the 52 independent African countries will have introduced competitive party politics.

The remaining single-party and non-party states are all vulnerable to the pressures for change. Although an embattled President Moi in Kenya has rejected the quest for democracy in Africa as merely the result of Western interference, Tanzania's ex-President Nyerere, a leading advocate of "single-party democracy", has expressed the view that Tanzanians should not believe that "a one-party state is God's wish". Nyerere, known for his candid utterances, had become concerned about the complacency of single-party rulers and their habit of "doing the wrong thing". Presumably taking the cue, President Mwinyi (Nyerere's successor) recently set up a commission to investigate Tanzania's political system. Another interesting about-turn, and one which could have a positive effect on the cause of democracy, has been provided by the leader of an established multiparty state. Having encountered strong opposition among party colleagues to his intention of turning Zimbabwe into a single-party state, President Mugabe has publicly abandoned the idea.

Political change has indeed been the order of the day in Southern Africa. The emergence of vibrant multiparty democracy in newly-independent Namibia and South Africans' endeavours to achieve all-inclusive democracy and the dismantling of apartheid have undoubtedly done their bit to stimulate the mounting opposition to political power monopolies in neighbouring countries — and elsewhere on the continent.

As 1991 dawned, Zambia and Mozambique had already made constitutional provision for opposition parties; elections are due in Zambia later this year and in Mozambique in 1992. The formation of opposition parties in Zambia commenced despite President Kaunda's warning that political pluralism "would only bring chaos to the nation". In Mozambique the Renamo insurgents rejected the new constitution which, although it avoided Marxist-Leninist rhetoric, nonetheless embodied measures to perpetuate a politically and economically regulated society. At its party congress in April 1991 the MPLA government in Angola renounced Marxism-Leninism — a necessary move in view of its subsequent settlement with the Unita movement which provided for multiparty elections 18 months after a cease-fire.

In most countries, especially in francophone Africa, popular pressures for reform have been marked by serious public unrest; and this has prompted governments to defuse the situation by removing restrictions on opposition parties, thereby paving the way for constitutional changes. In states such as Gabon and Zaire power monopolies were broken by co-opting opposition leaders to serve at top government levels and by the voluntary transformation of single-party administrations into interim governments or governments of national unity. Where electoral democracy had already been introduced at least three governments have already been swept away, while in other countries, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon, rulers have managed to hold on to office.

Towards the end of 1990 both President Houphouët-Boigny (Africa's

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longest-ruling leader) and his party retained power in Côte d'Ivoire with a large majority. The elections were characterized by a low turnout of voters, probably owing to their reservations concerning the fairness of the electoral process. At the same time, President Bongo's party in Gabon scraped home with a rather slender majority after a general election followed by re-elections. The latter were held as a result of disputes over irregularities that threatened to destabilize the country. Peace was eventually restored by appointing opposition leaders to the cabinet. Bongo's own position will probably remain intact, at least until the presidential election of 1993.

In the early months of 1991 the voters in the tiny island republics of Cape Verde and Sao Tomé made history by voting their parliamentary representatives out of office — the first of the Marxist-oriented African countries to do so. Reading the writing on the wall, President Manuel da Costa withdrew from the presidential election to make way for a new leader — Miguel Trovoada, a former prime minister, who was elected unopposed. The vote was to triumph again, this time in Cape Verde where President Aristides Pereira became the first African head of state to be voted out of office. The victor was a former supreme court judge, Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro.

Even more significant was the outcome of the final round in mainland Benin's presidential election on 24 March 1991. The swing away from Marxism-Leninism and the introduction of multiparty politics during the previous year culminated here in President Matthieu Kérékou's election defeat. He was the first of the many military dictators who had seized power in Africa over the past quarter of a century to suffer this fate. Kérékou was succeeded by a technocrat turned politician, Nicéphore Soglo.

By contrast, violence in the form of a military coup was employed in Mali to get rid of President Moussa Traoré who had seized power as long ago as 1968. Refusing to yield to demands for democracy, Traoré's downfall at the end of March was preceded by violent unrest, hundreds being killed or wounded when the army tried to halt the rioting. The new military rulers of Mali apparently look upon themselves as an interim authority until a civilian government can be elected through democratic processes.

Reeling under the impact of the winds of change, on Marxist-Leninist governments in particular, the formerly Marxist-Leninist rulers of Congo and Guinea-Bissau lifted the ban on opposition parties and allowed public debate on the merits of political pluralism.

Soon after the upheaval in Mali the Central African Republic's rather conservative President Kolingba announced his government's willingness to consider some multiparty system. In Guinea a referendum endorsed the end of military rule and the establishment of a two-party system. In Rwanda President Habyarimana has declared himself in favour of a multiparty system. In neighbouring Burundi the military government under President Buyoya has established a commission to draft a new constitution providing for multiparty politics. And despite the antipathy of Togo's President Eyadéma and President Momoh of Sierra Leone to politically pluralist tendencies, they are already considering the recommendations of commissions of inquiry on that very matter. There is no doubt that the persuasive powers of the Mitterrand government in France have also contributed to these changes of heart among African rulers, especially those in francophone Africa.

In addition to Zambia, multiparty general elections in the second half of 1991 have been promised to the voters of Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Zaire. Nigeria and Niger are preparing for electoral democracy at the national level in 1992. Algeria and Nigeria have already held multiparty elections at local government level. A fascinating footnote: whereas Nigeria allows only two political parties — both conceived and set up by the present military government — the lifting of restrictions in Zaire in January 1991 has seen the emergence of a multitude of parties. Of the 66 parties granted official recognition, 58 at the time of writing had accepted President Mobutu's invitation to participate in a national conference that is to draft a new constitution preceding elections.

Countries where democratization has up to now been coming along slowly or where rulers are resisting change are Kenya, Uganda and Djibouti in East Africa; the military regimes in the Sahelian states of Sudan and Chad; Libya in North Africa; Malawi and Swaziland in Southern Africa; and Equatorial Guinea and Seychelles among the island states. Having experienced prolonged periods of internal disorder, Ethiopia, Liberia and Somalia are countries in transition and aiming at a multiparty dispensation.

A different way to achieve public participation in government has been attempted in Ghana. Having long since been disillusioned by the performance of politicians in civilian government, the Ghanaian military in power are not only discrediting party politics as oreign and unsuitable to the African political environment, but have set in motion a process designed to develop non-party political systems before they hand back the reigns of power to civilians. This was originally to have been a long-term exercise because the system was first introduced at grassroots or local government levels. But it appears as if the demand for competitive party politics elsewhere in Africa has been overtaking these developments: multiparty democracy is at present the topic of lively public debate in Ghana. The military rulers of Uganda and Lesotho long indicated a preference for the Ghanaian model. Those in Lesotho, however, have said that the kingdom will return to civilian rule in 1992 and a new constitution is being debated by a constituent assembly.

Now to consider non-party dispensations. Different versions of the non-party civilian dispensation were long ago established, of course, in Libya and Swaziland. Needless to say, political parties regard such arrangements as a pretext on the part of the rulers — whether military or civilian — to hang on to real power as long as possible and reduce any challenges to their authority to a minimum. The notion of non-party democracy may, however, become a more attractive option in Africa should multiparty politics fail to deliver the goods. Much will indeed depend upon the parliamentary strength and performance of today's opposition parties as well as the competence of their leadership — all the more so when parties now in opposition become parties in power.

Post-independence experience in Africa has shown that rulers have in general felt themselves threatened by the inability of their countries' economies to meet the demands — often unrealistic demands — of rapidly-increasing populations. And in multicultural societies these difficulties have usually been compounded by ethnic rivalry. Realizing that to relinquish power would spell the end to their privileged access to state resources and to their power of patronage, many African rulers have chosen to entrench themselves in office, resorting in the process to authoritarian practices — notably the single-party system and military rule.

Even in the handful of multiparty states opposition parties have generally remained weak and ineffective; the dominant ruling parties have had a variety of means at their disposal to reward loyal followers and stifle dissident voices. Moreover, governments' handling of multiparty elections has often been marked by such incompetence and accusations of fraud as to have given rise to unrest among opposition supporters. It was the alleged rigging of elections in recent years that brought Senegal, a multiparty state for more than a decade, to the brink of civil war.

So it is that the enforcement of order and stability facilitated by highly centralized government, rather than the development of political institutions and democratic culture, has become the common feature of governance throughout the continent. But whereas orderly and stable societies (not necessarily democratic) in other parts of the world have demonstrated a tendency to generate economic growth, Africa's controlled and regulated "developmental dictatorships" have experienced diminishing economic capacity. The question then arises: would new, popularly elected governments do better than their authoritarian predecessors?

Returning from economic to strictly political considerations, it would be a mistake to assume that Africa's present trend will soon lead to liberal democracy and a concomitant respect for the Rule of Law. Africa is still struggling to reach consensus on the rules of the political game, a precondition for progress in the direction of institutionalized politics and real democracy. Yet the removal, through elections, of authoritarian rulers will be a giant step forward on this road. Elections have certainly been institutionalized in as much as they take place regularly; but public disenchantment at their lack of real significance where governments try to regulate and manipulate the electoral process might jeopardize the stability of what multiparty systems Africa presently boasts. Breaking the hold of the dominant ruling parties in these existing multiparty states might, however, prove to be an even more difficult proposition than the transformation of single-party monopolies into multiparty systems. The danger also exists that history may repeat itself as newly-elected governments, compelled to introduce unpopular austerity measures in order to rehabilitate their economies, are tempted to resort to authoritarianism in order to avoid being voted out of office.

While the principle of organized political dissent has thus taken root in Africa, rulers are only reluctantly accepting the concept of their opposition as alternative governments. Governments in dominant-party states, including the single-party systems, tend to prefer "African democracy", apparently striving for the maximum degree of public participation in politics and the recruitment of broad popular support for those in power, while paying only lip-service to the principle of any accountability to the electorate. The result of the current phase in Africa's political evolution appears then to be the spread of limited or minimalist democracy with rulers continuing to control, regulate and manipulate, perhaps to the extent of seriously handicapping opposition forces: an eventuality likely to incite renewed public protest.

Bearing in mind that it is still very early days in what has been described as Africa's second era of liberation, there is nevertheless no doubt that as vital as rain to the seeds of democracy now being sown will be economic revival. And this poses a dilemma. For to bring about a reversal in Africa's economic fortune the continent's leaders will have to come to terms with the fact that there are limits to the ability of the state — especially that in developing countries — to provide a better life for its citizens. Apart from good management and the creation of an attractive investment climate, this means a reorganization and substantial reduction of the state's economic role and the pooling of resources with neighbours for the collective enhancement of each state's economic viability. In the political field it implies a meaningful devolution of power to local communities and the sacrifice of national sovereignty in some degree in order to ensure successful economic co-operation among certain groups of countries.

The requirements we have just touched upon can only be described as daunting, the more so when seen in the light of the traditional tendency of the African state to exert an all-pervasive influence, the insistence of its rulers on gathering maximum power into their hands at executive level, and their preoccupation with the upholding of national sovereignty, fly though this may in the face of economic realities and their dictates. The continent's economic and political future nevertheless depends upon the political determination of its leaders (and their followers) to face these challenges.

On 29 and 30 October 1990 the Africa Institute held a major conference at the University of Pretoria on the theme "Southern Africa towards the year 2000". In this and the previous issue of Africa Insight a number of the papers delivered are reproduced.

A strategy for rail and road transportation in Southern Africa

Professor Gavin Maasdorp, Director, Economic Research Unit, University of Natal, Durban.

The brief from the conference organizers was to concentrate on the problems, needs and challenges of the future rather than to dwell on the past and present. A brief summary of developments in the transport sector over the past quarter-century, however, would help in identifying the challenges that face the region today and the main aims around which a strategy for the future should be devised. This paper is concerned with international rather than with purely national transport issues.

Recent developments

The major features of the past 25 years have been the dislocation of the traditional transport routes of most of the landlocked countries, a decline in operating and maintenance standards, and the growing competition between rail and road transport for long distance international traffic.

Dislocation of routes

South African ports are not the natural ones for the landlocked countries except in the case of Lesotho, yet they have been increasingly used by these countries because of route dislocation.[1]

The immediate cause of this situation was *political*, beginning with the Rhodesian UDI of 1965 which prompted Zambia to look eastwards to Tanzania as a substitute for its southern route through Rhodesia. The Tazara Railway was ultimately opened in 1975. The Portuguese coup of 1974 was the forerunner of a second round of distortions; Angola was soon engulfed in civil war and the Benguela Railway from Lobito (serving the copper mines of southern Zaire and northern Zambia) was cut in 1975, thereby preventing the country from playing any further role in the subcontinental system, while the Mozambican government imposed sanctions on Rhodesia in 1976 by closing the Beira and Maputo lines. Rhodesia then made greater use of its direct line from Rutenga to the South African system at Beit Bridge which had been completed in 1974. Since the early 1980s, guerrillas in Mozambique have been able to close or severely disrupt railway lines (including the Nacala line built by Malawi and Portugal with South African financial assistance in 1970) and roads linking the landlocked countries with their natural ports. The political aspect of transport dislocation is included in the term "destabilization".

However, it is not only political events that lie behind transport dislocation. A second cause is *infrastructural deficiency*, especially in the key maritime countries of Mozambique and Tanzania. Among the deficiencies noted at various times during the 1980s are: inadequate port installations and equipment for the handling of ships; inadequate track standards, line capacity and motive power on a number of railways; poor telecommunications links between ports and landlocked countries; and gaps in the railway and road networks which rule out the easy use of alternative ports for landlocked countries.

A third cause is *inefficiency* at managerial, operational and technical levels. Again, this applies particularly to Mozambique and Tanzania. In the former, the mass exodus of the Portuguese segment of the population just before and after independence meant the loss of almost all top and middle management as well as technical staff. Shortages of skilled personnel have also resulted in growing inefficiency in port and rail services in Tanzania.

It was in an effort to reduce the perceived dependence of neighbouring countries on South Africa that the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) was formed in 1980. One of its major thrusts has been in the field of transport, a special sectoral agency — the Southern African Transport and Communications Commission (SATCC) — having been established in Maputo for the purpose of co-ordinating projects.

Decline in operational and maintenance standards

The effect of the shortage of skilled personnel on the operational efficiency of the port and rail systems in Mozambique and Tanzania has already been mentioned above. Suffice it to say that this problem is not confined to these two countries. There is a causal link between declining operational efficiency and the marked fall-off in the standard of maintenance of equipment and infrastructure, especially roads, that has characterized so much of Southern Africa; there is a shortage of engineers and other skilled staff to design and implement maintenance programmes. In addition, however, the construction of new roads has more political appeal than has the maintenance of existing roads, while the deteriorating economy of the region has imposed a severe constraint on the availability of public funds for maintenance.

Growing inter-modal competition

During the last few decades road haulage has been able increasingly to compete with railways in the region for long-distance international traffic. But Southern Africa is not unique in this regard: it is a worldwide phenomenon which has been the result of improvements in heavy vehicles, transport technology, and road design and construction. The dislocation of traditional railway corridors between the landlocked countries and Mozambique entailed the diversion of traffic to the south, and much of this, especially from Malawi, has been conveyed by road rather than railway, thereby giving an added impetus to inter-modal competition.

The region's transport challenges

Against this background, the major transport challenges facing Southern Africa may be formulated as follows:

- *The restoration of the traditional transport routes of landlocked countries*: A *sine qua non* for this would be the resolution of the armed conflicts in Angola and Mozambique as well as of South Africa's political future in such a way that peace and stability return to the region. In addition, it would entail the rehabilitation of infrastructure destroyed or damaged, and the upgrading of port facilities as well as of some railway track and motive power.
- *Adequate maintenance of infrastructure especially roads*: In view of the financial constraints, this is an issue that should receive far more stress than hitherto, especially in relation to the construction of new routes.
- *The optimal division of traffic between the modes*: This should be based on a number of factors including full cost recovery from users.
- *Adequate standards of operational and administrative efficiency*: This is a factor that underpins each of the above three points. Increased efficiency is necessary if the investment required in infrastructural rehabilitation and improvement is to yield the optimal results; if infrastructure is to be adequately maintained; and if the various modes of transport are to be able to compete with one another in such a way as to facilitate an optimal division of traffic.

Suggested policies

The transport sector has an important role to play in economic growth. Although Southern Africa as a whole has not experienced quite as severe an economic decline as sub-Saharan Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, its performance leaves much to be desired. The dislocation of natural routes to ports, and the substantially higher transport costs incurred as a consequence, have been major causes of the economic problems experienced by countries such as Malawi and Mozambique. In the case of Malawi, net earnings from export crops were down and net costs of imports up, while Mozambique for some years was unable to supply transport services to landlocked countries and thus lost its main source of foreign exchange.

In post-apartheid Southern Africa, the transport sector is likely to be a key determinant of economic recovery — enabling the region to conduct its foreign trade (and especially its vital export trade) efficiently, facilitating interregional trade, promoting government policies such as pricing and deregulation, and providing a training ground for local (African) entrepreneurs. This requires a development strategy built around:

— ensuring that shippers are able to use the most economic route and mode for any particular consignment;

— promoting the better utilization and maintenance of existing facilities; and

— improving regional co-operation

Choice of route

Once there is a normalization of political relations between South Africa and the SADCC countries, and a solution to the conflicts in Angola and Mozambique, the natural routes for the landlocked countries should be reopened. This will make it possible for shippers to choose the most economic route for any particular consignment rather than having to use a route either forced upon them for security reasons or that was expeditious for political reasons. The freedom to select the most economic route would lead to a considerable saving in transport costs for the landlocked countries north of the Limpopo, and to greatly increased foreign-exchange earnings for Angola and Mozambique. For example, it has been conservatively estimated that the net income of the Mozambican Railways (CFM) would rise by at least $18 million per annum merely from the normal operation of the ports in that country.[2]

It is a well-known argument in transport economics that the criterion for route selection is the minimization of total distribution costs. These include the cost of time in transit (usually taken to be interest paid on capital used to purchase the goods and tied up in increased inventories together with the storage costs of those stocks). Thus, routes will compete on the basis not only of rates but of service, reliability and efficiency. Shippers need to know that their consignments will reach their destinations within a certain time and that they will be intact: that they will not be damaged, lost or stolen.

Although the restoration of natural routes would mean that traffic on the South African system to and from SADCC countries would be a reflection largely of South Africa/SADCC trade, it is likely that certain southern routes would be able to compete with SADCC ports on the basis of these criteria for some of the overseas traffic of the landlocked countries north of the Limpopo. For example, shippers suffer considerable losses through pilferage at Dar es Salaam, Beira and Maputo, and are reluctant to use these ports for high-volume goods. Moreover, landlocked countries prefer to have many options regarding ports. Of course, Lesotho's overseas trade has no option but to use the South African system, and some Botswana and Swaziland trade will continue to do so as well.

If the most economic routes are to be used, however, a considerable investment in rehabilitation will be required.

Much of the railway infrastructure in Mozambique and Angola requires reconstruction — of track and bridges on the Beira-Malawi line and of bridges in particular on the Benguela Railway — while improved motive power is required on the Tazara Railway. It is important that the rehabilitation and reconstruction of existing facilities receive priority over the construction of new lines. Once these routes are again functioning normally, attention could be devoted to an examination of new routes. But all new projects should be subjected to careful cost-benefit and sensitivity analyses.

In advocating that priority be given to rehabilitation of existing facilities, two caveats are necessary. First, this will have to be accompanied by investment at ports, and second, without sound management (both administrative and technical) the investments will not yield the maximum returns. As Kennedy points out in a recent paper, one of the great weaknesses in transport policy in Southern Africa has been that the benefits of infrastructural projects are often not reaped because of poor management and security problems.[3]

One problem which will have to be resolved is that there could be a conflict between the route preferred by a shipper and that preferred by a particular railway administration. For example, now that the Botswana Railway is independent, the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) favours the Beit Bridge route rather than the Botswana route for traffic to and from South Africa, since this provides a longer haul for the NRZ. For similar reasons the Swaziland Railway favours the Natal route as opposed to the line to the country's natural port, Maputo. Should natural routes be used, therefore, the financial position of the railways of Botswana and Swaziland, which depend largely on transit traffic for their revenue, would be prejudiced.

Choice of mode

The trend in many parts of the world is to deregulate the transport industry so as to allow users a choice of mode. Indeed, this is an important corollary to the choice of route.

Principles of inter-model competition

The growth of road-rail competition has already been mentioned. For an economic allocation of transport resources to be achieved, competing modes ought to be treated on the same basis. This is not the case in Southern Africa at present, and there are a number of inequities between railways and road hauliers. First, only railways are required (by statute) to cover their total costs (including the capital costs of providing infrastructure). This should also apply in the case of roads. Second, railways and parastatal haulage enterprises receive rebates — on fuel, vehicles, tyres and so on — which are not enjoyed by private-sector hauliers. This causes a misallocation of resources and should be withdrawn.

An economically efficient transport system requires that cost-based tariffs be charged on road and rail, that subsidies for socially desirable services be based not on cross-subsidization but on direct payments from the State, and that full costs be recovered from users.

Road-user costs

Transport economists generally agree that the costs of the road system are a legitimate charge to road users. These include capital costs of construction, maintenance costs, interest, and costs of administration, research, police, accidents and congestion.

The total *charges* paid by motor-vehicle owners may be divided into two categories: general taxes and levies on all types of goods and services; and special taxes for vehicle operators. It is only the second category that should be included in the comparison of road-user charges and expenditure on roads. Such special taxes could include an impost on the fuel price, vehicle and drivers' licence fees, and road toll fees. It is an important principle of public finance, however, that fuel levies should be paid into a dedicated road fund and not be subsumed in general government revenue.

Kennedy argues that there is no significant under-recovery of costs from road users in Southern Africa.[4] However, in Swaziland it was found that charges levied on road users should be increased by a factor of at least three,[5] and there is no doubt that there is some under-recovery that needs to be addressed throughout the region.

All vehicle categories should pay full user charges. In the case of heavy vehicles (HVs), this would include covering both the *costs of road maintenance* attributable to them and the *incremental construction costs* incurred in making the roads strong enough for their use. This incremental cost varies according to terrain and volume of traffic. Studies in Britain and New Zealand have allocated 15-23 per cent of capital costs to HVs because of additional costs incurred in road and bridge design, while in South Africa 17,5 per cent is ascribed to HVs. In average rolling terrain, an additional cost of up to 30 per cent would be required to accommodate HVs. A small proportion of capital costs — 5 per cent in Britain and 2,5 per cent in South Africa — is incurred to cater for the special needs of light vehicles. The balance — say, 70-80 per cent — remains to be divided among all vehicle classes.[6]

It is especially important for transit countries such as Botswana, whose roads are used more by foreign than by locally-based heavy vehicles, to recover full user costs from such traffic. This has also recently been an issue in Germany where only 69 per cent of the total cost of the damage caused by trucks to roads and motorways is recovered (in the form of vehicle taxes) from local hauliers, nothing is recovered from the increasing proportion of heavy vehicle traffic that is foreign and a toll for all trucks thus was proposed.[7]

There is abundant evidence in many countries that *overloaded heavy vehicles* inflict severe damage on road surfaces. In South Africa, for example, surveys on urban and rural roads found that, on average, 16 per cent of all rear axles were loaded beyond the legal limit and that the additional damage to road surfaces caused by overloading amounted to R120 million per annum at 1987 prices. The study also found that the fines imposed by the courts for overloading offences were negligible in comparison to the damage to roads, and were ineffective in discouraging the practice.[8]

Although provision has been made for installing weighbridges in the SADCC countries, the facilities provided are not used intensively and the policing of vehicle overloading is inadequate. It is imperative, therefore, that a system of weighbridges (both stationary and portable) be instituted, and that fines for infringement be set at realistic levels. The capital and running costs of the system should be a charge on road users.

Another factor to be considered in structuring licence fees is the space effect of heavy vehicles. Their physical presence in traffic on a road influences the design of road widths, shoulders, radii on curves and so on. HVs do not have a significant effect on the total flow of traffic in flat terrain, but they cause severe *traffic dislocation* in hilly terrain.

Many roads in the region, including South Africa, have not been built to standards suitable to accommodate the volume of heavy vehicles presently using them. Statistics reveal that a fair proportion of *road accidents* (10 per cent in Swaziland)[9] involve heavy vehicles. But what these statistics do not show is the number of accidents caused by heavy vehicles but which do not actually involve them, for example, through drivers of cars overtaking dangerously because of frustration and impatience as a result of being caught in a queue of vehicles behind a slow-moving truck. Accident costs can be quantified, but the only components which represent costs incurred by government and which should be recovered from road users are those of policing and repair to Roads Department property. External diseconomies from accidents, however, are borne largely by the private motorist.

Social costs arising from road traffic concern pollution and noise. Southern Africa will be expected to play its part in global environmental campaigns, and stricter vehicle-emission standards will have to be laid down and enforced. In Europe articulated heavy-vehicle combinations have caused considerable damage to historic old towns, and in South Africa residents of small towns complain of the noise caused by such vehicles. There is no doubt that there are social costs that are not recovered from users, and that these costs could be reduced were traffic to use railways and — although it is not the subject of this paper — coastwise shipping. If environmental conditions continue to deteriorate, international action might have to be taken against the main offenders. Certain modes of transport might be in this category, for instance, a recent *Bundestag* Commission in Germany called for improved technology for vehicles and for the transfer of domestic air traffic, covering distances of under 400 km, to rail.[10]

Railways

If railways are to prove able to compete on a basis of equal rules, they will have to improve regional co-ordination and pay attention to trip and turn-around times as well as to handling and delivery times. One study in Southern Africa revealed that the use of rail transport led to stocks having to be increased by two weeks on average,[11] while another found that the quality of railway services on SADCC corridors was falling as a result of operating as well as rail-port co-ordination problems. Because of the consequent shortage of hauling capacity, railways were losing part of their long-distance container traffic and even some low-value freight to road transport.[12]

Kennedy quotes a World Bank study of SADCC railways that identified the following actions as necessary for increasing efficiency: long-distance blocking and unit train operation, specialization of carriages, improved tracking of carriages and better information for shippers, standardization of axle loads and operations, improved functioning of terminals, installation of air brakes, facilitating border crossings, and improved signalling and communications.

One way in which railways could improve their competitive position is through the use of negotiated contract rates for long-distance bulk transport on unit trains. Contract rates have become common worldwide and are now increasingly being used in Southern Africa. It would be advantageous, though, if these contract notes could be quoted on a through basis, from point of origin to point of destination; in fact, efforts should be made to devise an easy system of quoting notes for the entire haul for all consignments. Nonetheless, railways are not suitable for all long-distance traffic.

Utilization and maintenance of existing facilities

There are competing demands for public investment throughout the region. The social sectors — education, health, housing — require massive investments but so too does physical infrastructure. Because of the high opportunity costs, therefore, the transport sector should not absorb more public investment than is necessary. This means that:

- rehabilitation and reconstruction of existing facilities should receive priority over construction of new facilities
- maintenance of facilities should be a high priority
- rail, sea and air transport, which use existing facilities, might have advantages over road transport for which construction and maintenance costs are high.

Existing versus new

A Canadian study of SADCC transport found that there would be an over-capacity in the port and rail systems if they were able to operate efficiently: this presupposes rehabilitation, efficient management and security. In theory, then, there should be no particular need for further port and rail expansion, especially if proposed projects are subjected to thorough economic analysis. Of course, there is always the question of national pride, but projects undertaken for political reasons have high economic opportunity costs, and it is important that they be avoided.

Among the SATCC's proposed new projects are railway links from Zambia to Malawi, Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia. These will need careful appraisal. Some Zambian copper is being trucked to Walvis Bay because of problems in the SADCC transport corridors, but the cost of constructing a rail link from Livingstone to Namibia would be high in relation to the traffic that would use the route once existing SADCC routes were rehabilitated. Moreover, almost all the construction, and hence the bulk of the costs, would be on the Namibian side while the benefits would accrue mainly to Zambia. It is unlikely that Walvis Bay will become a major regional port in post-apartheid Southern Africa;[14] whatever competitive advantages it might enjoy would be in the transport of high-value goods to Zambia, but the tonnages would be too low to justify a rail link. Another project which has been shown not to be viable in the past (except with very high volumes of mineral traffic) is a trans-Kalahari line linking Botswana and Namibia. Clearly, however, Namibia does require good surface links with its neighbours, but road transport would be the appropriate mode to handle future freight traffic given the volume likely to materialize.[15]

Although new infrastructure projects naturally will be required, their timing will be a key point: it is also important not to overemphasize them at the expense of maintenance and management as has been the tendency in the past. As a SADCC document put it:

> The economic difficulties faced by member countries have been particularly felt in the recurrent budgets, where financial pressure has forced governments to allocate inadequate funds for the operation and maintenance of transport and communications facilities. This situation has caused deterioration of facilities and infrastructure; and hence a growing need for investment in reconstruction and rehabilitation.[16]

The World Bank therefore recommended that aid agencies should finance projects concerned with maintenance and also include components contributing to the development of maintenance capacity in projects involving new construction. In the past it has been easier to obtain aid funds for new construction since most agencies have been reluctant to finance the maintenance of infrastructure or the purchase of spare parts.[17] But poor maintenance means high transport costs: vehicle operating costs could rise by 50 per cent[18] and the lifetime of locomotives could be shortened.[19]

South Africa's contribution

Because conditions laid down by aid donors and funding agencies often stipulated that South African construction firms could not tender for contracts and South African materials could not be used, the costs of many SADCC projects have been inflated. Thus, the SADCC has had to pay a heavy price for South Africa's isolation; more expensive foreign consultants have had to be hired, and these have often not been familiar with Southern African requirements and conditions. Facilities have been designed to inappropriately high standards, and more expensive overseas equipment and materials have had to be used. In the case of one railway rehabilitation project, it was calculated that the cost could be halved by using South African contractors and materials. There is no doubt that South African participation in infrastructure projects would reduce costs substantially and, as a corollary, increase project rates of return and efficiency. The post-apartheid period should provide SADCC countries with a "dividend": the South African transport industry as a whole will be able to supply consultancy services, technical and managerial expertise, and repair and maintenance facilities to SADCC countries. However, the technical and managerial assistance might be limited by the shortage of skilled personnel in South Africa itself.

Staffing

A major policy weakness that needs to be remedied is in the training of managerial, administrative and technical staff. Although they have been independent for over two decades, most countries in the region still rely on expatriates in key operating positions. In the transport sector, for example, a lack of competent line managers is a weakness on SADCC railways.[20] It is clearly preferable to employ expatriates on contract and have the facilities operate efficiently than to employ local personnel who do not have the necessary skills and experience, but a high priority must now be placed on training local citizens. One of the contributory factors to the continued dependence on expatriates is that local staff are moved too frequently, often from one ministry to another. It often happens that, just when a local is on the point of gaining sufficient experience to justify relieving the expatriate, he is transferred to another position, and the cycle of training has to begin *ab initio*.

The lack of skilled manpower is a serious constraint to Southern African transport in the short and medium term. Even if the political problems of the region are resolved and the natural routes are rehabilitated, it will require efficient staff if the systems are to function satisfactorily.

Regional co-operation

Regional co-operation is important in Southern Africa where the majority of countries are landlocked. Such countries often have relatively high transport costs. Sea transport is the cheapest form of intercontinental transport, except in the case of some low-bulk, high-value commodities, in which case air transport may be the most economic mode. Landlocked countries thus lack direct access to the major mode of transport for overseas trade; for their access to the sea, they depend on the transport facility of transit countries (which are usually maritime but could also be a neighbouring landlocked country). This dependence relates to various aspects including foreign vessels, efficient port operation, efficient loading of export traffic, efficient clearing and forwarding of import traffic, adequate storage and warehouse facilities at ports, efficient railway and road systems, investment in transport and telecommunications links, investment in rolling stock and harbour equipment, political stability, and political goodwill.

Co-operation arrangements in transport should be among the easiest international agreements to work out. They confer benefits to all parties, the value of these benefits is known, and the costs of co-operation are low.[21] Yet, despite the existence of the SATCC, there are examples within the Southern African region of the failure of countries to co-operate, for example, Zimbabwe and Mozambique have found it difficult to establish a system for the smooth running of joint operations on their railways.[22]

The World Bank recently recommended that regional co-operation in sub-Saharan Africa be improved in three areas: the preparation of investment projects for international links, international land transport, and the standardization of railway and other transport equipment.[23]

Investment projects

In road and rail projects linking two or more countries, a feasibility study of the entire project is required, as is a joint submission to funding agencies. This activity is by now routine within the SATCC, and it is a strength that should be built upon in future.

International transport

In Southern Africa a number of policies and activities require co-ordination if the efficiency of road and rail transport between countries is to be improved. These include pricing policies, joint operations on railways and at ports, the collection and division of road-user charges, heavy-vehicle licensing, the use of equipment such as railway rolling-stock, payments mechanisms, and vehicle standards.

Among the policies on which international agreements should be sought in the region are those relating to the *pricing of transport services*. As mentioned above, economic efficiency requires that rates on rail and road transport should be cost-based, and subsidies should be in the form of direct payments from government where socially desirable but loss-making services have to be provided.

The present system of *interchanges at borders* means that railways are unable to operate a co-ordinated service. It would save considerable time if trains did not have to stop at borders to change locomotives and crews as at, for instance, Komatipoort and on the Beira line where Spoornet and the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) operate bigger trains than the CFM. It would enhance efficiency and the competitiveness of rail transport if, in such cases, the two railways were to operate as a unit, pooling locomotives and crews. This would also require the acceptance by the two railway administrations of only one (joint) inspection at the border. It is likely that a considerable amount of technical assistance (probably from South Africa) would be required if these operations were to be co-ordinated.

In order to facilitate *rail-port co-ordination*, the present system common in parts of the region whereby the landlocked and maritime country form a joint venture, or the landlocked country purchases and owns equipment at the port, should be expanded and strengthened.

It will be necessary to redesign the *cost-recovery structure* in the road transport sector. Road damage, and hence maintenance costs, increase exponentially with axle load but fuel consumption does not. The fuel tax (although easy to administer, cheap to collect and difficult to evade) thus is not appropriate on its own for all vehicle classes, and needs to be supplemented by appropriate licence fees or axle-load taxes.[24] Generally, an increase in the fuel levy combined with a substantial rise in licence fees should result in a satisfactory cost recovery per vehicle class. Toll roads are another possibility but are not always possible in small countries such as Swaziland and Lesotho. The World Bank recommends that tolls be used only in exceptional cases; collection costs are high and they tend to divert traffic to roads on which user costs are high.[25] On most international routes in the region, however, it should be possible to devise a toll system that would not give rise to such diversion.

One way of effecting an *equitable distribution of road-user charges* among the Southern African countries could be on the basis of ton-km covered by international hauliers in each country.[26] A common fund could be established and operated by means of a computerized system. Weighbridges should be established at border posts and data regarding ton-km in each country could then be obtained. The common fund probably would have to be operated by one country on behalf of all (as, for example, in the case of the common revenue pool of the Southern African Customs Union which is operated by the South African Reserve Bank) or by a separate body (an "Authority") specially established for the purpose. The formula for dividing revenue among the countries could be based on ton-km travelled in each country and the level of road-user charges in each country. In this way the formula would recognize the amount of damage inflicted on each country's road system as well as the costs of road construction and maintenance that each needs to recover from users. These costs naturally vary between countries. Hauliers could be billed direct by the Authority for each international trip. A haulier would be debited only in respect of distance travelled outside his country of registration. Let us take the case, for instance, of a South African firm transiting Zimbabwe and Mozambique with a consignment for Malawi. The driver would complete forms at all borders, and the forms would be forwarded to the Authority for computerizing. The firm would pay the Authority which in turn would effect settlement to each country on a monthly or quarterly basis.

The completion of forms at border posts would have the additional benefit of filling an important gap in the statistics concerning the volume of cross-border freight traffic in Southern Africa.

Another facet of co-ordination — albeit more for political than for economic reasons — pertains to a *more equitable apportionment* of road transport *among the haulage industries* of the various countries.[27] This would seem at first glance to contradict the principle of freedom of shippers' choice enunciated earlier. But this is only partially so; while it is true that shippers would not always be able to engage the haulier of their choice, they would retain their choice of mode. Nevertheless, the infringement of shippers' choice would be serious if some hauliers were to charge higher tariffs or be less efficient than others.

There is substantial evidence of the inability of foreign hauliers to match the rates quoted by South African carriers. At present, South African hauliers dominate international road transport because they possess a number of important advantages over firms in the other countries. These include:

- economies of large size — own servicing facilities, for example;
- lower price of new vehicles;
- lower price of fuel, tyres and spare parts; and
- better-trained drivers.

These advantages provide them with lower costs/vehicle-km and enable them to quote lower rates than their competitors.

Other countries would like their firms to receive a larger share of the market. However, only large firms could compete on long-distance international runs; they need to be able to purchase appropriate vehicle combinations, keep accurate costing records, and repair and/or replace vehicles *en route*.

Precisely how a division could best be enforced is another matter. There does not appear be any precedent for such an arrangement, even in the European Community. However, the question of permits for foreign carriers, which has for long been a bone of contention within the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu), has now been addressed in the form of a new road transportation agreement which comes into effect from the beginning of 1991. This will apply to all cross-border carriers (freight as well as passenger vehicles), the aim being to share the number of journeys between, for instance, South Africa and Swaziland, on an equal basis within two years. The agreement provides for backloading: no vehicle need return empty, but internal haulage in neighbouring countries is not allowed and neither may vehicles from one country collect goods in another for transport to a third.[28] Note, though, that the agreement applies to the number of trips, not to tonnages, so that larger South African firms could still corner the lion's share of freight tonnages.

The Sacu transportation agreement might provide a basis for the region as a whole. This is an issue that needs to be pursued, but it might be fraught with problems of implementation (one would not wish a large bureaucracy to be created for the purpose), and care should be taken that it did not adversely affect shippers' choice or lead to governments subsidizing national carriers.

One problem that has been experienced on railways in the region is that the *rolling-stock* from one country, notably South Africa, often tends to build up on other systems, and return times have sometimes been lengthy. This is an aspect of the use of equipment that requires better co-ordination, and is basically a function of the efficiency of technical management.

A problem which urgently needs attention in the region is the question of a *payments mechanism* for rail services. On the Tazara Railway, for example, no satisfactory agreement has yet emerged regarding payment by Zambia and Tanzania for the use of each other's wagons. However, they are able to effect payment in local currency, which overcomes one of the main obstacles: the shortage of foreign exchange in many SADCC countries. Payments mechanisms are important because they may affect the use of certain routes. For example, Kennedy has doubts as to whether Zaire and Zambia would use the Benguela Railway in future. Both these countries are able to pay in local currency, Zaire on its more costly internal route (the *Voie Nationale*) and Zambia on the Tazara Railway.[29] A financial clearing house might be an appropriate mechanism for the settlement of these interregional payments.

Standardization of transport equipment

The Southern African rail network has a common gauge and thus it is possible to standardize rolling-stock, except in the case of the Tazara Railway where the braking system is different. But this is a technical problem that can be overcome.[30] A more difficult problem is that, where countries are purchasing locomotives and rolling-stock under foreign aid agreements, it might be necessary for them to accept the lowest tender, which might not necessarily be best for the railway concerned. This aspect requires attention if motive power and rolling-stock are to be standardized. The benefits from standardization are that the cost of spare parts and maintenance is reduced, and that it is easier to train maintenance staff.

Institutional structure

The institutional structure for transport co-operation in Southern Africa at present rests mainly on the SATCC (for the SADCC countries), the General Managers' Conference of Railway Administrations in Southern Africa, and the Southern African Liaison Meeting on Roads. Although South Africa participates in the railway and road discussions, the institutional framework needs to be revamped to bring a post-apartheid South Africa into an all-embracing regional body which should devote more attention to achieving uniformity in transport policy than has the SATCC in the past.

Conclusion

There are formidable problems in the way of the emergence of an efficient transport system for Southern Africa as a whole. The mere solution of the present political and security problems in South Africa, Angola and Mozambique will not ensure an easy future for the region, and transport will be no exception. Problems of co-operation will have to be surmounted, especially in formulation and implementation of a common transport policy, and the human resource factor will remain a major constraint for some time to come. It will be necessary to persuade aid donors to pay greater attention to the problems of efficient and reliable operation as well as maintenance of transport infrastructure and facilities which they have financed. Without efficient management and operation, the best-designed policies will be to no avail.

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A strategy for power and water transfers in Southern Africa

Dr Ian McRae, Executive Director, Eskom

It is a great pleasure for me to be invited to speak at this conference on "Southern Africa towards the year 2000" because at Eskom we have a programme called Eskom 2000 which addresses similar issues. Consequently, it could be said that I have a vested interest in this conference!

Eskom, I would point out, is Southern Africa's largest supplier of electrical energy. It supplies nearly 97 per cent of the electricity used in South Africa and more than half of that used on the entire African continent. By transferring this energy where it is needed most we at Eskom believe that not only can we help boost the Southern African economy but at the same time immeasurably improve the quality of life of all peoples on the subcontinent.

There is no doubt that the lack of electricity constitutes a serious obstacle to a country's industrial development. The basis of industrial development is electrical energy, which is used to drive machinery, thus releasing men and women for the performing of more skilled tasks. As a step towards achieving this goal Eskom has already embarked on an accelerated electrification programme designed to bring electricity to all within a Southern African context.

Perhaps at this point I should enumerate some of the socio-economic advantages that electrification can bring to a community. When electrical energy is made available it has the immediate effect of creating job and wealth opportunities on a large scale. This phenomenon is known as the multiplier effect of electrification. One of its spin-offs is that it gives a powerful boost to such sectors as the electrical construction and equipment supply industries. In addition, the market for domestic electrical appliances will be stimulated and opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurship will quickly emerge.

Education is another area to benefit directly from electrification. Thanks to improved lighting, studying and reading will become easier and television and other electronic media will help improve the quality of teaching.

Public health will also be improved by the availability of electricity. Modern medicine depends on electronic equipment for diagnosis and treatment, while sterilizing and refrigerating facilities are essential for surgery and drug stocks.

These are just a few of the many areas where Eskom can play a leading role as a facilitator of socio-economic change, not only in South Africa but in the wider context of Southern Africa. By appealing to common needs, Eskom has been able to build bridges across political divides.

Although primarily a supplier to South Africa, Eskom already supplies electricity to Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The Cahora Bassa power station is in good working condition and the damaged transmission line is being repaired with the help of international funds, including a loan from the Italian government. The Maputo power station is being repaired with World Bank funds. An agreement has been reached with Zimbabwe to link grids and assist with technical problems. At Kariba Dam on the Zambesi, potential exists to generate thousands of megawatts more for transmission over long distances. Connection to Malawi is only a matter of time.

Eskom believes that the establishment of a Southern Africa power grid would enable the subcontinent to realize its full potential in a relatively short space of time. Southern African countries such as Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zaire all possess unexploited water resources and Eskom's technology and know-how could help develop clean and renewable hydroelectric power.

Hydroelectric power schemes can be divided into two categories: conventional hydro schemes and pumped storage schemes. The former produce primary energy, while the latter temporarily store energy generated by other power stations within the system.

Hydroelectric schemes have the advantage that they can be started and stopped relatively quickly to suit the demands of the system in use. This makes them particularly useful for reserve and stand-by duties in the event of a forced outage of, say, a thermal generating plant or a transmission system.

Another advantage is that hydroelectric plant can be designed for automatic operation by remote control, as, for example, Eskom's 600 MW hydrostations on the Orange River, which are controlled from the National Control Centre in Simmerpan located 650km away.

Co-operation between the "wet" north and the "dry" south — establishing a grid of water and electricity networks — could create a food basket in Southern Africa that would provide not only sufficient food for the different populations but stimulate local industrial development and increase export potential. There could also be additional spin-offs from the harnessing of rivers. By regulating the flow of river water, the devastating effects of drought would be reduced, while improved irrigation systems would enable farmers to utilize more efficient farming methods.

Given its size and expertise, Eskom is capable of implementing and supporting such co-operation. But if a regional grid is to function efficiently it must be planned and co-ordinated by a regional body comprising representatives from all the countries involved. Eskom is willing to supply any technical and administrative support required, provided that political obstacles are removed and capital investment raised.

The existence of generation sources and infrastructure would have the effect of spurring local economies into accelerated growth by creating jobs and wealth. Botswana, Swaziland and Zimbabwe have large coal resources which could be mobilized to the advantage of the entire region. In time, link-ups could be made further to the north, such as Zaire, where the Zaire River offers enormous potential.

In view of South Africa's limited water resources it would be expedient to have a look at the average flow of major rivers in the subcontinent. Table 1 indicates the comparative flows of rivers in South Africa and elsewhere, shown in cubic metres per second:

Table 1

Orange River at Hendrik Verwoerd Dam	216
Tugela River at mouth	146
Umzimvubu River at mouth	94
Cunene River at Ruacana	180
Okavango River inflow into swamps	365
Zambesi River at Cahora Bassa	2 370
Zaire River at Inga	approx 25 000

It will be seen that the combined flow of the Orange and Tugela Rivers, the two largest in South Africa, is about the same as that of the Okavango, which almost completely evaporates in the swamps!

At the other end of the scale are the massive flows of the Zambesi and Zaire Rivers, which are 10 and 100 times respectively higher than the Orange River. Such rivers are therefore ideal for the building of large conventional hydro schemes for the supply of base load. Table 2 shows some of these schemes that have been built on the subcontinent:

Table 2

Name	Capacity(MW)	River	Country
Hendrik Verwoerd	360	Orange	South Africa
Vanderkloof	240	Orange	South Africa
Ruacana	240	Cunene	Namibia
Kariba South	750	Zambesi	Zimbabwe
Kariba North	600	Zambesi	Zimbabwe/Zambia
Kafue	900	Kafue	Zambia
Cahora Bassa	2 075	Zambesi	Mozambique
Inga	712	Zaire	Zaire
Nkula A+B	104	Shire	Malawi
Tedzani	40	Shire	Malawi

The Hendrik Verwoerd and Vanderkloof dams are a by-product of the Orange River scheme constructed by the Department of Water Affairs (DWA). They are designed for a load factor of 10 per cent based on 98 per cent assurance of water supply. As may be seen, the Hendrik Verwoerd dam generates 360 MW for 10 per cent of the time.

Had it been designed for continuous operation (base load) capacity would have been only 36 MW.

Eskom pays the DWA a tariff for the amount of hydroelectricity generated as a contribution towards the costs of the dam. Without this joint venture it would not have been economically viable to build the two hydro schemes with their combined capacity of 600 MW. As a result of this joint venture the costs of water supply are reduced. The advantages of such multipurpose schemes are evident and it is hoped that more will be built in the future.

What are the future prospects for large conventional hydro schemes in the Southern African subcontinent? First, as far as South Africa is concerned, Eskom has conducted preliminary studies on the Upper Orange River, upstream of Aliwal North. This scheme would supply peak load at an assured load factor of 10 per cent and with a capacity of 240 MW, calculated after allowing for the total envisaged abstraction by the Lesotho Highland Water scheme.

Eskom has also conducted studies on the Tugela River in association with an extended water transfer scheme to the Vaal Basin. Two of the schemes, namely Mvumase and Kotongweni, each with a capacity of 1 500 MW, are of particular interest. Here, the natural river flow could only support a load factor of 8 per cent, which is unacceptably low. Consequently, the schemes would be designed for pumped-storage operation.

This combination of "natural" generation and pumped storage would thus allow an increase in the load factor so that the prevailing conditions demanded by the system could be suited. The megawatt capacity for such a combination can be much larger than for conventional hydro alone, while operating costs would be lower compared with "pure" pumped-storage schemes, because of less pumping.

Let us next look at the Transkei. Of particular interest is the Umzimvubu Basin, with its average flow of 94 cubic metres per second at the river mouth. Based on a load factor of between 20 per cent and 30 per cent, a capacity of 1 000 MW is indicated as total for a number of stations. Possibilities also exist on the Bashee and Kei rivers but with smaller capacities. These may be of interest to the Transkei Electricity Corporation.

Moving outside the Republic there is first Namibia. Here, the Cunene River downstream of Ruacana has an average theoretical potential of about 1 200 MW at a 100 per cent load factor. Preliminary studies indicated a total installed capacity of 1 560 MW in nine separate power stations operating at 50 per cent overall load factor.

In Mozambique, on the Zambesi downstream of Cahora Bassa, we find the following potential of four hydrostations, based on a 100 per cent load factor (base load):

Table 3

	Regulated flow in m^3/s	Capacity in MW
Mepanda Uncus	2 660	1 230
Baroma	2 660	360
Lupara 1	2 930	630
Lupara 2	2 930	1 170
TOTAL		3 390

At Cahora Bassa (present capacity 2 075 MW) a second 1 600 MW power station is planned on the North Bank, designed to increase total capacity to 3 675 MW. Because the exploitable energy would remain virtually unchanged, the load factor would reduce to about 60 per cent. It has been calculated that it would be more economic to spend capital on new schemes downstream rather than increase capacity at Cahora Bassa.

A 100 per cent load factor would also be advantageous, for example, for transmission lines connecting to South Africa, because at a lower load factor the carrying capacity would have to be higher for the same energy.

As far as Zimbabwe/Zambia on the Zambesi is concerned, the combined capacity at North and South Kariba is 1 350 MW. Although Eskom is presently investigating the feasibility of installing an extra 2 x 150 MW at Kariba South, the total capacity available at Kariba would be used up by Zimbabwe and Zambia.

Table 4 shows future hydrostations in Zimbabwe.

In Zaire on the Zaire River, the site at Inga, which has one of the largest hydro potentials in the world, could justify a capacity of 40 000 to 50 000 MW, while the total capacity that could be installed has been estimated at about 100 000 MW. This is greater than the

Table 4

Name	Output (MW)	Load factor (%)
Victoria Falls	300	64
Batoka Gorge	1 600	71
Devils Gorge	1 600	64
Mupata	1 200	64
TOTAL	4 700	67

total installed hydro capacity in the United States, which in 1986 was 84 152 MW.

We shall now look at pumped storage schemes. In comparison with conventional hydro schemes, the water released during generation by a pumped storage plant is not allowed to flow away. Instead, it is stored in a lower reservoir. During peak demand periods generation occurs and pumping from the lower to the upper reservoir is carried out during low demand periods.

In the Republic, thermal power stations supply the necessary pumping energy, which is then stored as potential energy in the upper reservoir. About 75 per cent of this pumping energy is achieved during the generating cycle, which is economic because peak energy is more valuable than off-peak energy. Off-peak energy for pumping is supplied at incremental coal costs whereas full coal costs are applicable for peak demands.

Another advantage is that because it is impractical — and expensive — to shut down and then restart a thermal plant, especially over weekends, pumping load during low system demand is welcomed.

With the pumped storage system, the same water is used over and over again. Thus the water supply is required only for the initial filling and to make up any losses caused by evaporation. As a result, such schemes can be constructed away from major rivers having large capacities. In the Republic, pumped storage offers the only possibility for the utilization of a large capacity hydro plant, such as the 1 000 MW scheme at the Drakensberg, which compares with the 360 MW conventional hydro plant at Hendrik Verwoerd.

Pumped storage systems are used by all industrialized countries and constitute the only practical and economic method to store large amounts of energy. By making use of today's technology, unit sizes can be increased to 400 MW, while heads up to 800 metres can be utilized for operating single-stage reversible pump turbines. Within the Southern African subcontinent three pumped storage schemes are available, all in South Africa, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Location	Capacity (MW)	Operated by
Steenbrass	180	Cape Town City Council
Drakensberg	1 000	Eskom
Palmiet	400	Eskom
TOTAL	1 580	

Eskom's pumped storage schemes are multipurpose and were built and financed jointly by Eskom and the DWA. In addition to performing pumped storage operations for Eskom, water is pumped for the DWA, making this multipurpose application — between the electricity supply authority and the water supply authority — unique in the world. Thus, at Drakensberg, water is pumped from the Tugela to increase the water supply in the PWV area, while at Palmiet water is pumped from the Palmiet River to augment the water supply of the greater Cape Town area.

Of particular importance is the multipurpose application of the 1 000 MW Drakensberg scheme. In 1974, the DWA commissioned the Tugela-Vaal water transfer scheme to deliver 330 000 cubic metres per day. To meet the growing water demand the supply from the Tugela had to be increased in 1981 to 950 000 cubic metres per day, or 11 cubic metres per second. Investigations for a joint scheme between Eskom and the DWA revealed that major financial spin-offs would result from such a venture, as shown in Table 6.

The 21 per cent saving corresponds to about R300 million in 1990 money terms. The costs are lifetime costs and the cost saving by the DWA was apportioned equally between the two organizations.

During the last drought the water pumped by Drakensberg from the Tugela was of vital importance. From 1979 to 1986 the cumulative natural

Table 6

	Costs to DWA (%)	Costs to Eskom (%)	Total costs to country (%)
Each organization builds own scheme	30	70	100
Joint scheme	22	57	79
Saving effected	8	13	21

flow in the Vaal River was only about 30 per cent of the long-term average flow. From 1983 to 1987 a total of 1 612 million cubic metres of Tugela water was used, which was about 43 per cent of the demand during this period.

Eskom recently completed an inventory of pumped storage sites in the mountain range from the Limpopo to the Transkei. Of the 1 000 sites located, 87 were selected for high-level assessment and, from these, advanced feasibility studies were conducted on 8 of the most favourable sites. Eskom has also co-operated with private consultants, as in the feasibility study on the Hogsback pumped storage scheme, under contract to the Ciskei government.

What is the present situation regarding the question of water and energy transfers in Southern Africa? At present, a number of schemes are in operation on the subcontinent, including South Africa. These are owned and operated by private organizations, the oldest schemes having been in operation for about 70 years. However, many of these schemes have been decommissioned during the last 20 years or so, and very few new schemes have been built or refurbished.

Although Eskom has carried out a series of feasibility studies we have found such schemes uneconomic, even for such favourable sites as the Spioenkop Dam. The parameter we use for these studies — the specific cost in R/kW — was found to be high for small capacities, and was further burdened by transmission line costs. The conclusion was that small hydro schemes cannot compete in areas served by Eskom's interconnected network.

However, the situation could be different in areas not connected to Eskom's system and small hydro schemes could become economic in comparison with diesel generation, or the construction of transmission lines to connect to Eskom's system.

As far as future prospects for small conventional hydro schemes are concerned, there are many areas within the subcontinent that are not connected to the electrical grid. But since electricity from even a small hydro plant would bring about an improvement in the quality of life of the people, it is therefore worthwhile to pursue the implementation of such schemes. Design should be simple and standardized so that costs may be reduced. This could be achieved by developing and manufacturing a electromechanical plant by local industries, thus eliminating imports; construction of civil works by local contractors without the need of a sophisticated construction plant or highly-skilled labour; and operation and maintenance by local inhabitants using a minimum of training.

Part of Eskom's vision, and perhaps the grandest part, is to facilitate the establishment of a subcontinental Southern African electricity network as shown in Figure 1. This network would

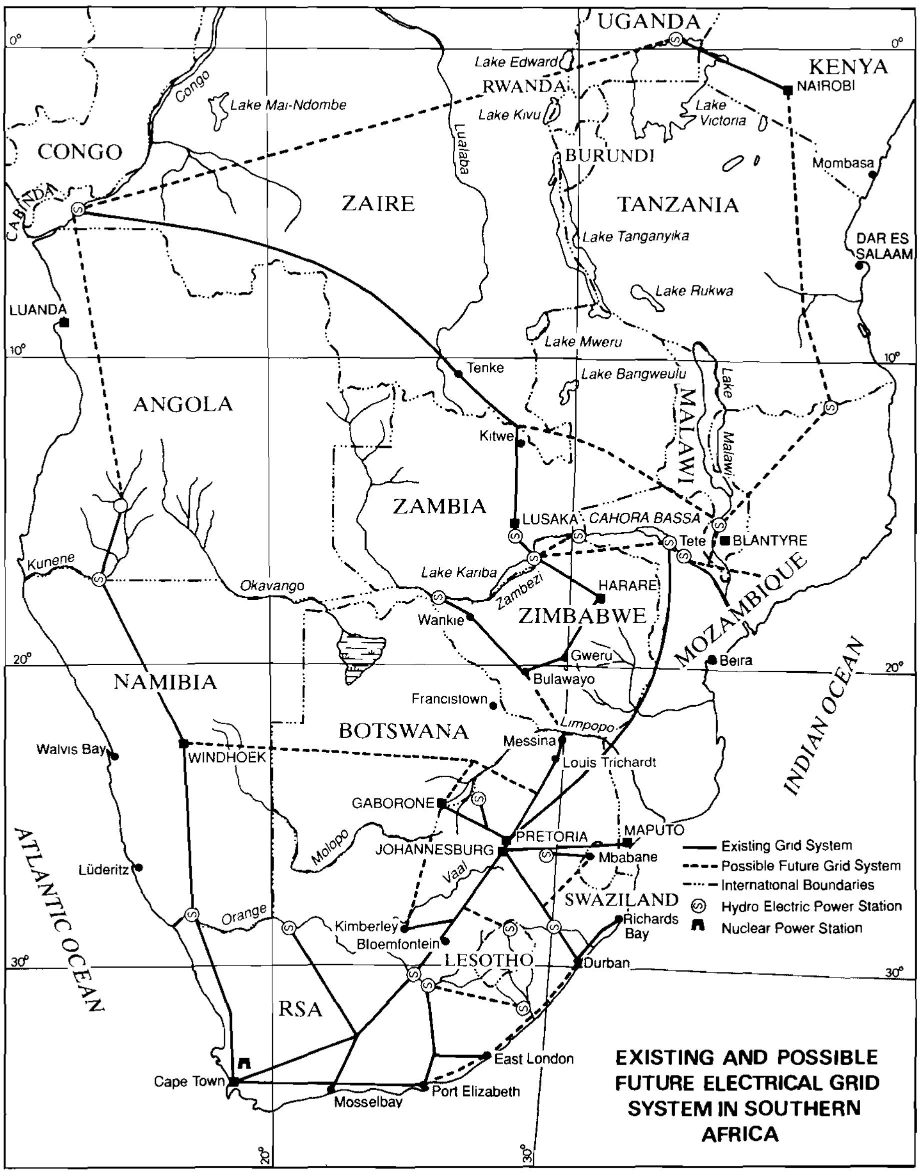

Figure 1

have the effect of harnessing the vast hydro potential in the North, thus providing cheap electricity for the benefit of the entire subcontinent.

It has been estimated that about 100 million people in the subcontinent have no access to electricity. The irony is that this applies to countries with some of the largest untapped hydro potential in the world. If such vast supplies of hydro-electricity could be generated from a renewable, pollution-free source, it would remove the need to burn coal from a limited non-renewable source (in 1988 Eskom consumed 64,5 million tons).

In order to achieve Eskom's vision of making electricity available to all throughout the Southern African subcontinent, I make the following recommendations:

— A subcontinental electricity network, incorporating large hydro schemes, should be pursued as a priority. Progress has already been made by Eskom through establishing contacts with neighbouring electricity utilities.

— Establishing a long-term master plan between South Africa and the independent and self-governing states for the exploitation of water resources. Such a plan would address water supply, including water transfer schemes, and the incorporation of hydro systems, either conventional or pumped storage.

— On small hydro, collect the worldwide knowledge of similar developments and construct pilot schemes in South Africa in conjunction with local industry, in order to gain experience and expertise. This venture may require subsidized funds.

Conclusion

It is a known fact that all Southern African countries provide South Africa with manpower. The logical step would be to sell something more lucrative than unskilled labour: water and power. South Africa could save its coal resources by channelling them into the export market. At the same time, sufficient water supplies could be provided to augment her own limited resources, thereby enabling her to import power from countries and thus avoid the exorbitant cost of building additional coal-fired power stations.

And finally, such co-operation would produce a further important spin-off, namely, that the benefits deriving from this co-operation would accrue to the indigenous peoples of Southern Africa.

The intraregional transfer of technology

J B Clark, President of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Pretoria

Introduction

In discussing intraregional technology transfer in Southern Africa it is important that we have a shared understanding of the concept of technology transfer, the impact and value of science and technology on our nation, the existing South African situation and, also, how intraregional technology transfer actually occurs. In addition, I will focus on specific issues, including human resources and industrial trade issues, and the key performance indicators involving science and technology regarding existing areas of collaboration in Southern Africa.

Finally I will draw a number of conclusions.

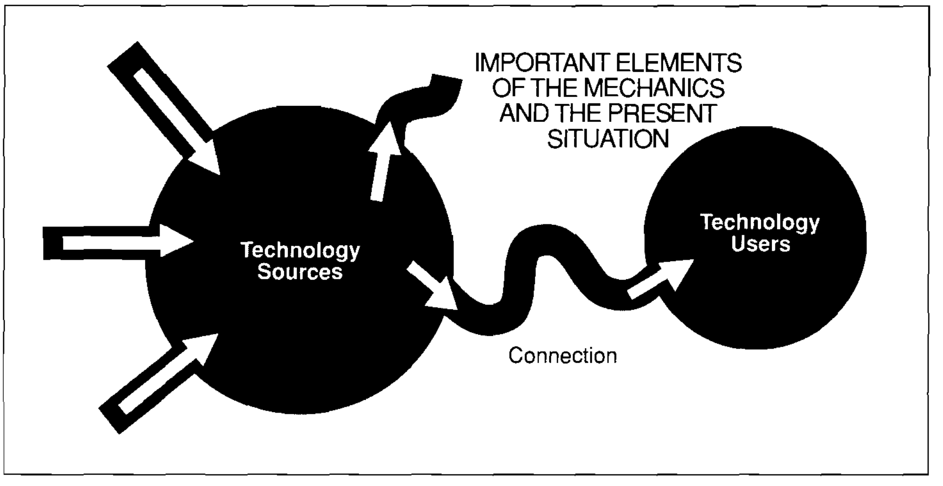

Figure 1

The process of technology transfer

An extremely simple diagram (Figure 1) highlights the process of technology transfer. There are three common elements including the source of technology, the user of technology and finally the relationship or connection between the source and the user.

This might seem like a simplistic statement, but experience shows that in each one of those areas, the technology transfer process can be undermined. Technology transfer is an extremely complex process, very difficult to perform effectively.

The impact of science and technology

What is the impact of science and technology on the creation of new products and processes: the incorporation of science and technology into services; and, finally, the role of science and technology as a part of decision taking. All this can be condensed into a single question: "Is science and technology of value to a nation?"

There have been numerous efforts to quantify the return on investment in science and technology. The Office of Technology Policy Assessment in the United States concluded in the mid-1980s that it was indeed impossible to evaluate the return on investment on science and technology in the way that one would measure returns on investment in a business. However, three major studies have attempted to evaluate returns from science and technology at a macro-economic level.

In the early 1950s Solow looked at the impact of science and technology on economic growth in the United States over a period of almost a century. This work was extended by Gee into the 1980s. Studies have also been done by the European Economic Community. These studies indicate that, typically, 40-90 per cent of economic growth in the developed nations of the world is directly attributable to the implementation of new science and technology (Figure 2).

In other words, the value of science and technology for the nation does not lie in the pursuit of science or technology for its own sake, but in the benefits a nation derives from the implementation of the products of science and technology. Of course, it is debatable whether one can actually separate the process of creating new scientific and technological knowledge from its implementation.

We can accept that science and technology constitutes a major impetus to

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND ITS IMPACT ON ECONOMIC GROWTH

- Returns in excess of 20% per year and social returns on excess of 40% on private R&D expenditure *(Office of Technology Assessment, O TA-TM-SET-36, April 1986)*
- Solow estimated $\frac{7}{8}$ of economic growth attributable to "Technical change in broadest sense" (Including the better education of the work force.)
- Other studies show that 40 - 90% of economic growth was attributable to technological advances, gains in knowledge or similar innovation related factors.

Figure 2

the economic growth of any nation, irrespective of the level of its national development.

The existing South African situation

If we consider gross expenditure on research and development as a percentage of gross domestic product, the developed nations of the world today are typically spending between 2,7 and 2,8 per cent of their gross domestic product on research and development. In South Africa we currently spend between 0,7 and 0,8 per cent of our gross domestic product (Figure 3). Furthermore, we have been allocating a declining percentage of our gross domestic product to this area over the last few years, while most of the developed nations have, over the last 10-20 years, been spending a higher and higher percentage of that gross domestic product on research and development.

South Korea is a typical example. South Korea spent less in the early 1950s than we are currently spending on research and development, is now spending more than the United States in percentage terms, and the Koreans plan to spend in excess of 4,5 per cent of their gross domestic product on research and development by the end of the century.

More important, though, is not *how much* we spend, but who spends the money. In the developed nations of the world, Japan and the United States for example, you will find that about 65 to 70 per cent of the spending is by the private sector. The balance is made up of spending by the government.

In the developing nations of the world the situation is reversed. South Africa falls into this second category. If we compare ourselves with a typical African country, then it is clear that there is not much difference between us in expenditure patterns. The government is therefore a major contributor to research and development spending in developing countries (Figure 4).

How are we doing technologically? South Africa has in fact been a net importer of technology (Figure 6).

What is more significant is that if we consider the extended debate regarding value addition to South Africa's minerals, we find the same situation (Figure 7).

How is our private sector doing? Let us compare ourselves with the OECD countries by looking at spending on research and development in private sector companies as a percentage of sales. In general, South African private sector operations in the electrical machinery environment, paper and pulp, rubber and plastics, and fabricated products industries, spend less than half as much as their counterparts in OECD countries, if spending is measured as a percentage of sales (Figure 8).

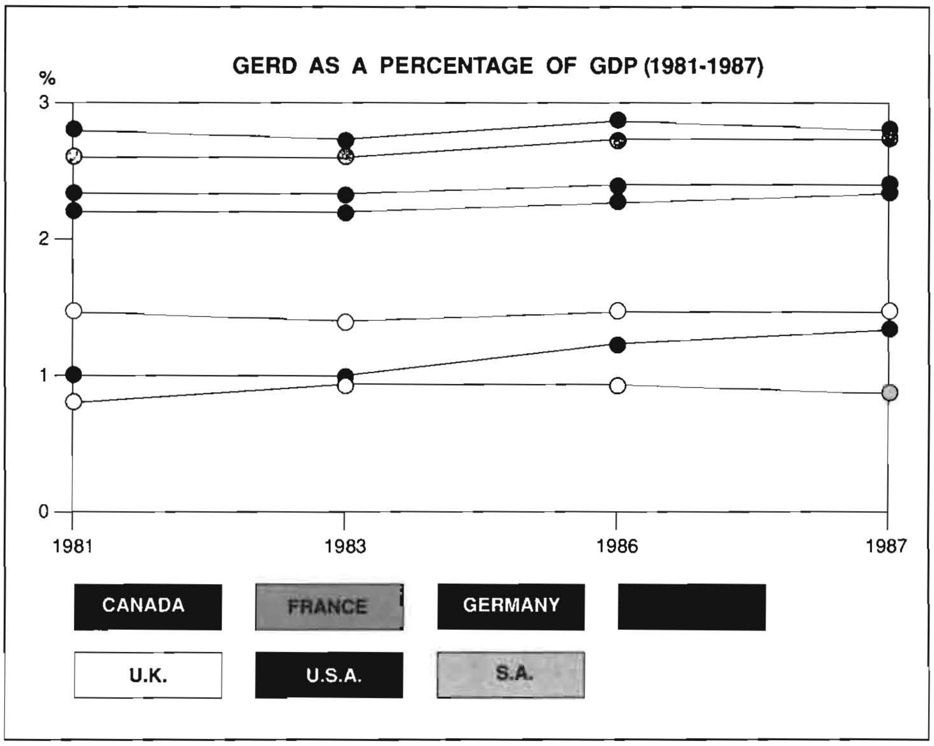

Figure 3

For the past decade our situation has worsened. From 1975 to 1987 our receipts stayed fairly constant but the payments for technology through copyright and licensing carried on rising (Figure 5).

If one looks at the technology balance of payments and then categorizes industry in South Africa in terms of high, medium and low technology one finds alarming trends. Most of the positive contributions in trade terms comes from the low-tech side of the spectrum not medium- or high-tech. In fact, for a significant period of time in both medium- and high-tech environments

Total world expenditure on research and development is $208 million (1983 figures). South Africa's research and development spending at that time was something like R0,64 billion — today it is about R1,88 billion. South Africa currently spends about 57 to 60 per cent of the total research and development money spent on the African continent (Figure 9).

In the African context it means that the Southern African region of Africa is

RELATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO R & D

COUNTRY		GS	PS
Japan	1984	20	80
UK	1981	26	74
USA	1984	29	71
West Germany	1983	40	60
France	1984	46	54
Netherlands	1982	48	52
Average		35	65

GS = Government
PS = Private Sector

COUNTRY		GS	PS
S Korea	1982	41	59
Rep of China	1986	60	40
SA	1985	72	28
Cent African Rep	1984	74	26
Brazil	1982	77	23
India	1982	86	14
Average		68	32

Figure 4

the dominant investor in research and development.

Having categorized South Africa's past performance as a significant investor in science and technology, when seen from an African perspective, we need to be aware of the fact that, when measured in world terms, we are an extremely modest investor. We are a net importer of a significant amount of technology and we have a very fragile socio-political situation now, in which science and technology does not even feature on the national agenda.

Intraregional technology transfer

How does intraregional technology transfer work? How does it take place?

The first thing worth noting is that intraregional technology transfer occurs as an integral part of a number of other activities and not as an event in its own right. More specifically, technology transfer takes place through people. At all times the process of linking the user to a source of technology depends on people.

Second, technology forms an integral part of industrial equipment and operating systems. Therefore, by transferring advanced machinery and advanced equipment, one is in fact performing technology transfer.

Finally, all traded products implicitly contain technology. Ultimately, the

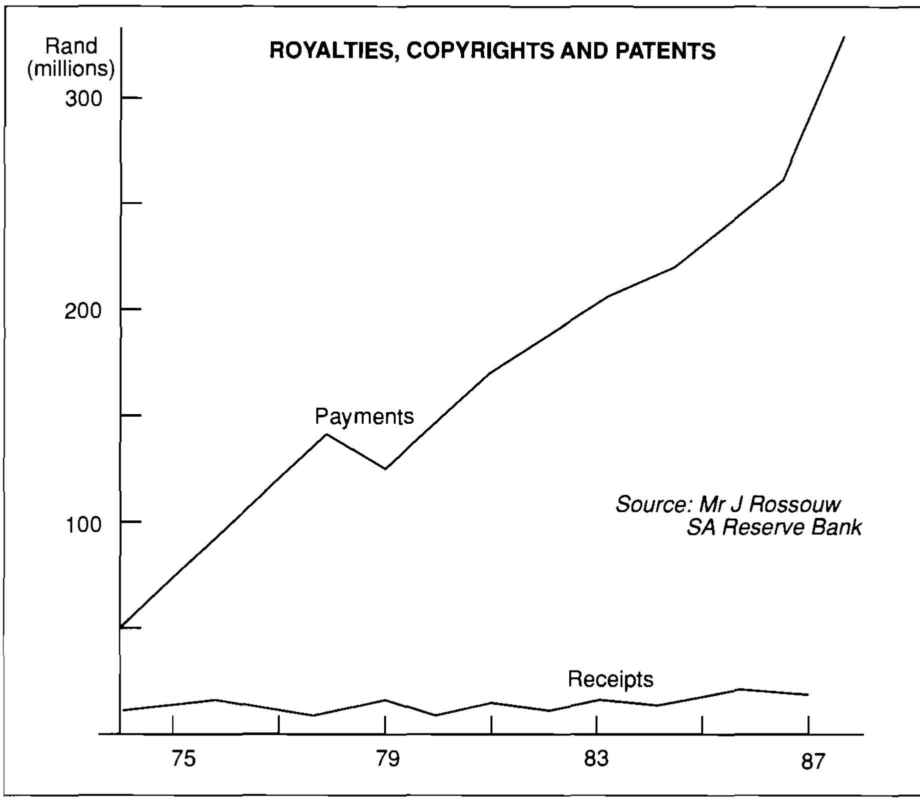

Figure 5

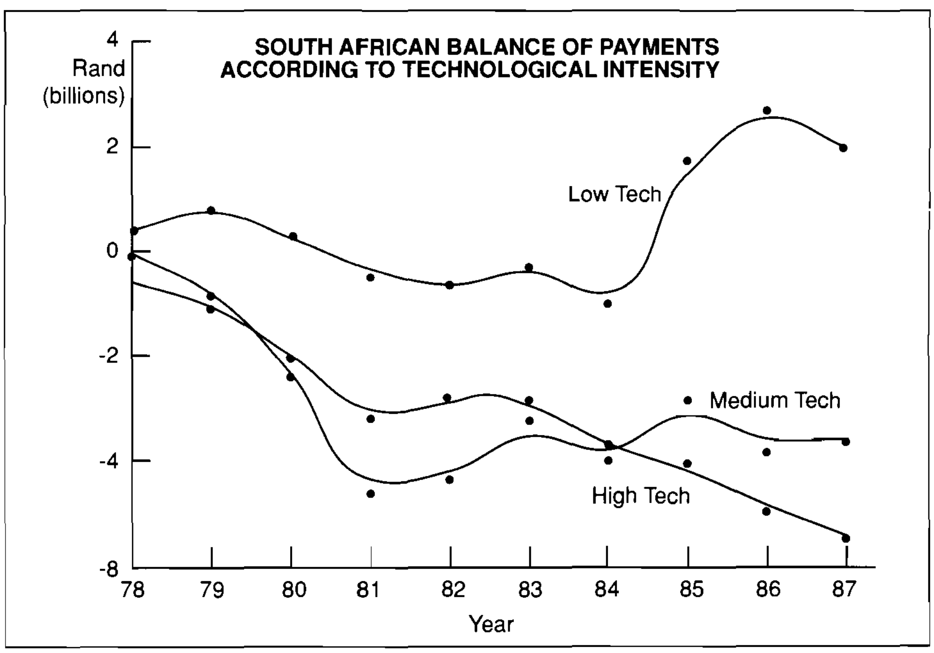

Figure 6

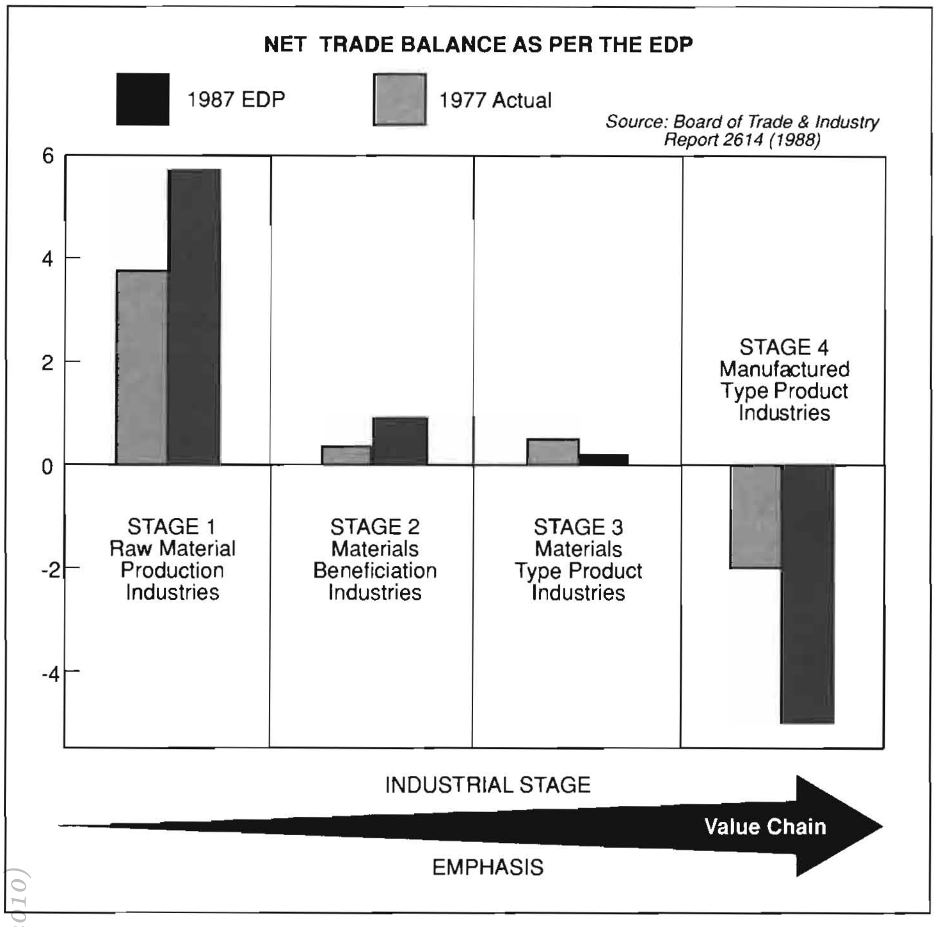

Figure 7

R & D EXPENDITURE 1983

Total world expenditure on R & D	$ 208 billion
South Africa's R & D expenditure in 1983/84	$ 0,644 billion
% R & D expenditure as part of world R & D	0,319 %
Africa's total % R & D as part of the world R & D	0,56 %

AFRICA'S R & D DISTRIBUTION

South Africa	57 %
Rest of Africa	43 %

Figure 9

Number of Scientists and Engineers per million population

AREA	NUMBER
North America	126,200
Israel	87,250
Italy	82,515
Developed Countries	70,452
America	56,956
Europe (incl USSR)	48,600
Oceania	48,213
World Total	23,442
South Africa	16,566
Developing Countries	8,263

Figure 10

infrastructure of any nation has bound up with it a significant amount of technology. Simply put, the very fact that we are able to build roads in Southern Africa that meet the harsh demands of the climate, requires a certain level of technological sophistication.

Let us consider the human resource situation in Southern Africa and compare ourselves to the world at large. Figure 10 indicates that scientists and engineers compare as follows:

— the average for the developed countries is some 70 000 per million.

— the world average is 23 000 per million.

— in South Africa we have 16 500 per million.

— developing countries have about half the South African figure.

It is important to remember that we are limited with regard to human

R&D EXPENDITURE AS PERCENTAGE OF SALES - 1983

INDUSTRY	OECD	SA
Electrical Machinery	4,40	2,09
Non-Electrical Machinery	1,60	1,35
Automobiles	2,70	0,06
Fabricated Metal Products	0,40	0,10
Industrial Chemicals	2,30	1,16
Rubber, Plastics	1,20	0,11
Paper, Printing	0,30	1,16
Textiles, Footwear, Leather	0,20	0,03
Non-ferrous Metal	1,00	0,21

Figure 8

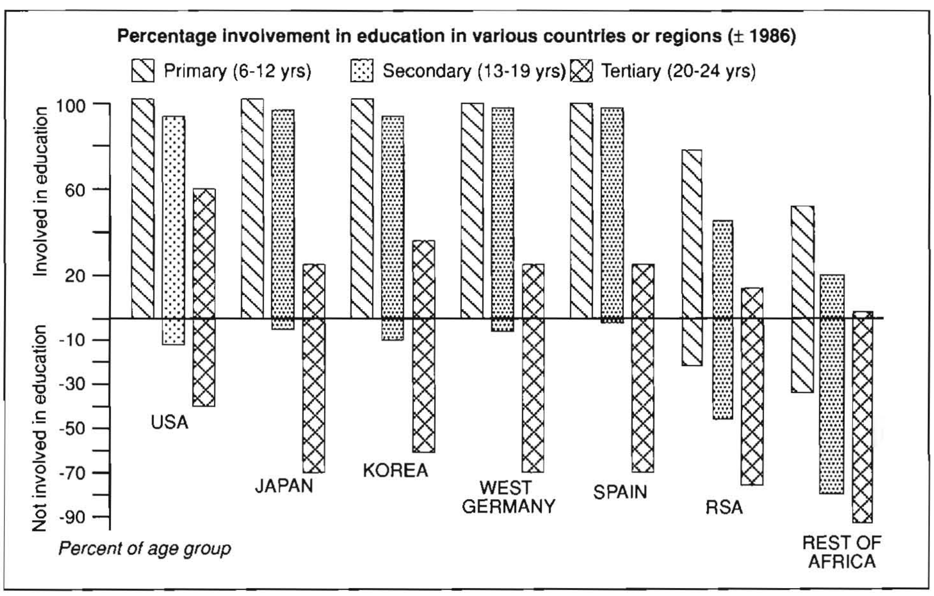

Figure 11

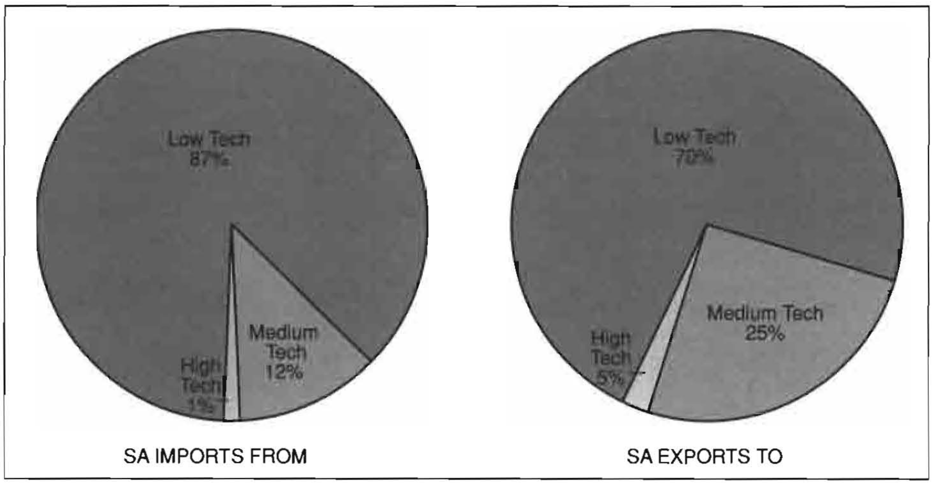

Figure 12 Zimbabwe 1985

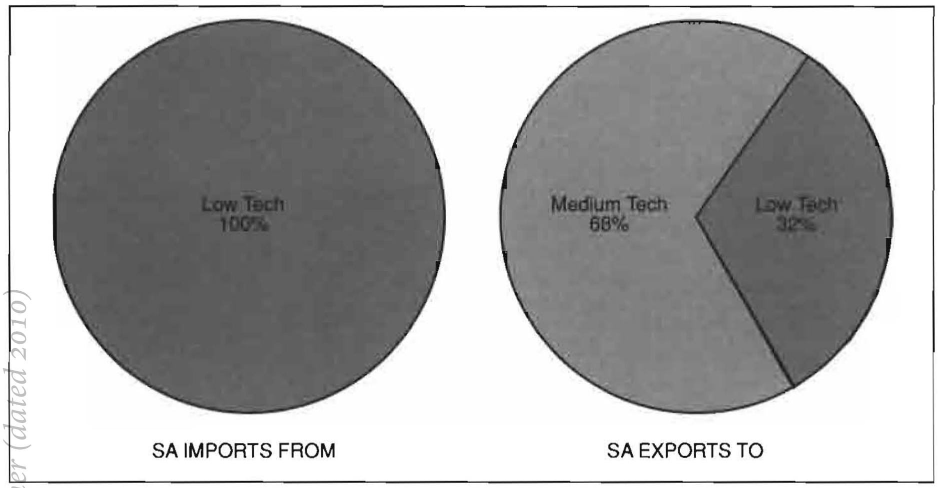

Figure 13 Zambia 1985

resources in everything that we do.

Figure 11 highlights the situation in South Africa and the rest of Africa and the huge challenges we face in the educational environment. Even primary school education is not available to all the people in our country, let alone tertiary education.

In the past, because of educational inequalities, it has predominantly been the white population that has supplied our scientists and engineers. This situation will have to change as we move forward in the new South Africa. In South Africa, each year more than 2 500 Bachelors degrees are awarded in the natural sciences and engineering, while close on 1 500 postgraduate degrees are awarded. In our neighbouring countries, Zimbabwe is the largest single producer of graduates.

If we look at postgraduate degrees awarded, we see that Zambia in 1986 awarded 3 postgraduate degrees in the engineering sciences and 6 in the natural sciences, in a population of about 7,2 million.

In this paper on intraregional technology transfer one could ask why am I concentrating on human resources? It is because I would like to make the point that the human resource is the key factor in the link between the source and the user. The fact that there are 11 000 students from neighbouring countries studying through the University of South Africa is an important contribution to technology transfer.

Furthermore, we have a number of foreign workers who move from neighbouring regions into South Africa and work in the industries of our country. This is an integral part of the technology transfer process. What parts of the economy are absorbing those people? The mining community is the dominant player, with 84 per cent, agriculture 4 per cent, services 8 per cent, and manufacturing and construction 5 per cent. Many of the people working in industrial environments receive training in the application of science and technology, and, upon their return home, are a potential source of technology transfer because they bring back with them enhanced technological skills.

Technology transfer also takes place as an integral part of the goods traded between the nations in this region. It is useful for us to classify particular sectors such as aerospace, office machines and equipment, electronic components, drugs, instruments, electrical machinery, and others, in terms of their technological or scientific content or their research and development content. These sectors of the economy are generally thought to comprise the high technology part of industry. Medium technology refers to the automobile industry, chemicals, other manufacturing industries, non-electrical machinery, rubber and plastics, and nonferrous metals. The low technology component of industry refers to stone, clay and glass industries, and food, beverages, tobacco, shipbuilding, petrol refineries, ferrous metals and so on.

Figures 12-15 classify the intraregional trading patterns in different technological categories for Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Swaziland. Let us consider these trade patterns from a technological perspective.

At no stage should the terms low, medium and high technology be interpreted as indicating a value judgement. High technology is not necessarily "good" and low technology "bad" — these are simply terms used internationally.

The conclusions we can draw based on these trade patterns are the following: on the one hand I think that it should be fairly obvious that the goods South Africa has been importing from its neighbours have predominantly fallen in the low technology category of industry, with some medium technology items. Our exports to the region fall mainly into the medium technology category, with some activity in the low technology and a little in the high-technology category.

Further evidence of science and

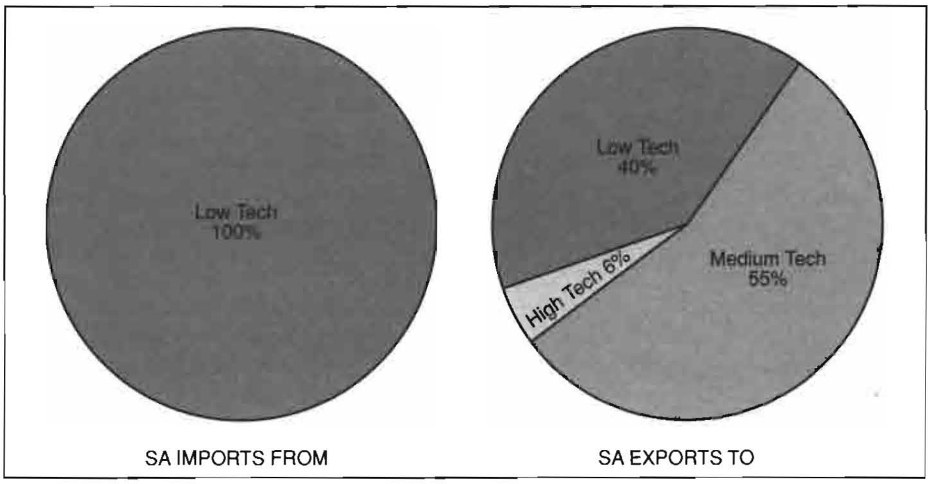

Figure 14 Malawi 1984

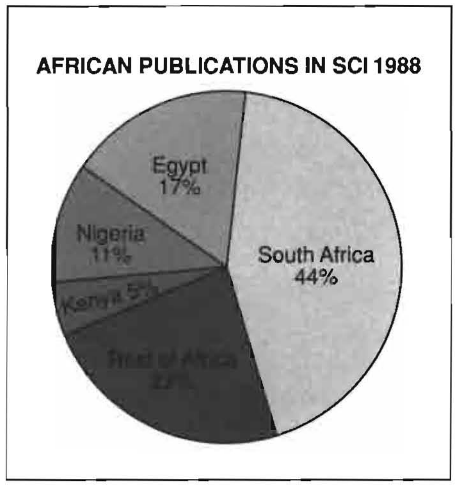

Figure 16

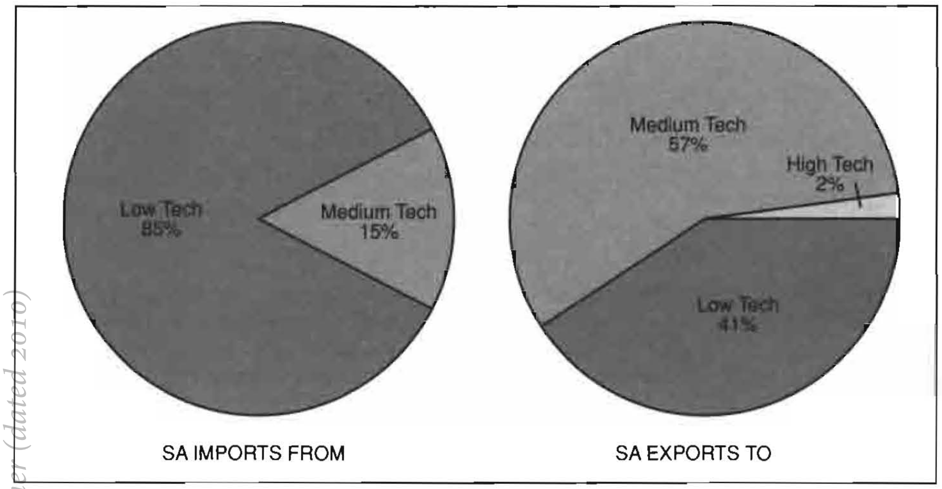

Figure 15 Swaziland 1984

Number of Scientific Publications of Southern African Countries in SCI 1989

South Africa	1613
Zimbabwe	78
Zambia	27
Malawi	17
Botswana	11
Namibia	10
Swaziland	7
Mozambique	6
Lesotho	2
Angola	0

Figure 17

Co-Authorship Patterns in Southern Africa – 1988

Country	Co- Author Publication US-UK-Canada	Southern Africa
South Africa	160	10
Zambia	9	1
Zimbabwe	12	0
Malawi	9	0
Swaziland	3	0
Mozambique	2	0
Botswana	1	0
Lesotho	1	0

Figure 18

technology interactions in the region can be found in terms of the outputs of research and development.

The major output of much of the spending on research and development is in the form of scientific publications. The science citation index (Figure 16) shows us that in 1988, 44 per cent of the research papers emerging from Africa as a whole came from South Africa, 17 per cent from Egypt, 11 per cent from Nigeria, 5 per cent from Kenya and 23 per cent from the rest of Africa. Of the number of scientific publications that were produced in Southern Africa, Figure 17 shows that South Africa produced 1 613, Zimbabwe 78, Zambia 27, Malawi 17, Botswana 11, Namibia 10, Swaziland 7, Mozambique 6, Lesotho 2 and Angola none.

I constantly talk about science and technology. Natural science publications are of course the major output of scientific endeavour. Patents are the major output of technological effort. This is the case worldwide, and you will notice that while South Africa produced 1 125 patents in the world index in 1989, none of its neighbours produced any patents.

Intraregional technology transfer is built on the relationship between people who are working together. What evidence do we have when we look at the current situation that people are working together in the field of science and technology? We find evidence of such co-operation by looking at authorship/co-authorship patterns. Figure 18 shows the co-authorship pattern between the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and the countries of Southern Africa and indicates that, of the publications produced in 1988, 160 publications were co-authored. Our scientists engaged in interaction primarily with their counterparts in the USA, Canada and the UK. What is interesting is that co-authorships in the Southern African region exist, albeit on a modest scale.

Concluding remarks

At the outset a simple image of technology transfer was used. It is a process that transfers something from a source of technology to a user of technology. Usually the transfer process involves human beings. As a region, we spend extremely modestly on science and technology, when measured in world terms. We also have fundamental limitations regarding the human resources available to us at high levels of training, particularly at postgraduate level. This is true of South Africa and Southern Africa, but also of much of Africa. South Africa has, in the past, been investing in this field as part of its industrial development process and therefore a large concentration of investment (in African terms) in Southern Africa. This gives us the potential for doing exciting things in this part of Africa.

When we then look at intraregional technology transfer as it exists today we measure it as a product of the goods, the services and the infrastructure in the region, and if we look at it in terms of the interactions between human beings involved in the process of science and technology, we have to recognize that, first, there are limited contacts now, and second, that current interaction is in line with the development priorities of this region — largely in the low and medium technology categories of industrial development, when measured in world terms.

If this process is to be enhanced because we know that science and technology is of value to a nation we will have to reconcile the conflicting demands made in the socio-political arena with the available resources. It is important for us to note that in Southern Africa we are going to have to protect and nurture this very important element of our long-term development potential.

In South Africa we are currently dealing with a particularly delicate situation. In the past we invested almost disproportionately — when measured in African terms — in this important element of our developmental process. However, the community is a mobile one and technology, once lost, is extremely difficult to regenerate. It is not something that one can turn on or off or put on a shelf. It is something that has to be nurtured and kept alive.

By virtue of our past investment, we are an important potential source of technology in the region. The current requirement in South Africa is for us to balance the need for high technology in our export-oriented industries, medium technology in the run-of-the-mill industries and low technology in our emerging communities. This requirement has allowed us to develop a very specific advantage in what I would call "Africa-specific technology".

One simply cannot take technology out of the developed countries of northern Europe and North America and transfer it directly to the African situation. South Africa and the whole of Southern Africa is, however, a net importer of technology and this generates special demands for the customization of technology for the region.

Ultimately people-to-people contact is a fundamental starting point. I would like to conclude by highlighting one of the initiatives that we have undertaken in the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). During this time of change in our society, we have established accommodation on the CSIR's site to allow us to house visiting scientists from elsewhere in Africa. They will be able to work at the CSIR on projects currently under way in collaboration with 14 African states. I believe that we are going to have to continue developing fresh approaches to the problem of closing the distance between people that have to work together to perform technology transfer in Southern Africa.

Regionalism in South Africa: Constraints and possibilities

Fanie Cloete, Professor of Development Studies at the Rand Afrikaans University, presented this paper at a conference organized by the Human Sciences Research Council on "Regionalism in South Africa" on 15 February 1991 in Pretoria. In it he considers the arguments for and against regionalism in South Africa.

Introduction

Terms such as "regionalism", "decentralization" and "autonomy" are fashionable buzz-words today in the vocabularies of political analysts and constitutional lawyers. This follows an observable trend in the practices of governments in industrial and developing countries worldwide: governmental activities are being increasingly exercised at subnational, regional and/or community levels in societies; and for a variety of reasons.[1]

The topics of regionalism, autonomy and decentralization are also popular among local scholars as well as political and constitutional engineers in South Africa.[2] A question naturally cropping up is: Why are these constitutional phenomena currently so much in fashion ?

In this paper the following topics will be addressed:

- the main types of regionalism will be distinguished and the current debate on decentralization versus non-centralization will be summarized;
- some reasons for the current popularity of regionalism will be briefly summarized;
- the most important Third World constraints on regionalism will be identified; and
- against this background, the possibilities for regionalism in South Africa will be briefly explored.

Types of regionalism

Regionalism can mean different things to different people. I will not attempt to give an exhaustive survey of semantic (and sometimes real) differences here. Instead, a widely used operational definition emanating from the Council of Europe will be adopted for my analytical purposes. The Council distinguished regional government from central and local government in clear terms. It defined "regional structures" as

> ... all institutions between the level of commune and central government, irrespective of whether they come directly below the level of central government or are nearer to municipalities.[3]

"Local structures", on the other hand, include according to the Council

> ... all types of non-central administrative authorities which do not fit into the above-mentioned definition of regional structures. The crucial factor for deciding whether a structure is regional or local, is whether a territorial unit is further subdivided into *independent* [*my emphasis*] bodies. One can speak of local structures only when authorities are not subdivided.[4]

It is clear from the Council of Europe report that it regards the central governmental level as the highest or sovereign government level in the state.

This definition of regional structures is comprehensive. It can include one or more levels of government, irrespective of their composition and functioning *vis-à-vis* central or local governmental levels. Regional structures can further be of either a federal or unitary character. The term "regionalism" can then logically be used either in a descriptive or prescriptive way. It can be used to describe the regional approach to government, or to refer to the theoretical justification for or rationalization of geographically intermediate or regional structures of government.

Within this definition, regional government can take a variety of forms. The following types of regional structures may be identified :

Scale reduction types (top-down)

This conception of regionalism assumes that a central government already exists, exercising specific functions at the highest level of government. The technique of decentralization is used to disperse power to smaller units of government.[5]

Scale enlargement types (bottom-up)

In contrast to scale reduction, scale enlargement is normally found at lower levels of government or in smaller territorial areas where the execution of governmental power and functions are for various reasons deemed unsatisfactory.[6] The techniques of centralization or consolidation of powers and functions are then used to create a larger-scale jurisdiction either within the state concerned (regional services councils in South Africa assembled from a number of different local authority bodies) or when creating an altogether new state (the United States of America replacing the Confederated States).

Unitary types

Unitary regions are autonomous regions within a state which can exercise to a specified degree certain decentralized powers determined by the central government. These regions, however, are in the final analysis totally subordinate to the authority of the central legislature (for example: if the state wishes unilaterally to revoke the region's powers).[7] Three types of decentralized powers may be identified in unitary systems :

— deconcentrated administrative functions
— delegated legislative, executive and administrative discretionary powers and functions, and
— devolved legislative, executive and administrative powers and functions.[8]

Federal types

Federal regions differ from unitary regions in one crucial respect: they are not created unilaterally by the grace of the central government but through an agreement negotiated with representatives of the different regions which provides for distinct spheres of jurisdiction and powers and functions that can only be changed with the consent of all the participants. This agreement or compact is sometimes regarded among the negotiating representatives as an irrevocable pact.[9] I personally, however, doubt whether irrevocability should be a characteristic of federal pacts. This would run counter to the principle of legislative sovereignty.

In contrast to a decentralization of powers and functions from higher levels, or a centralization of certain powers and functions at higher levels, some scholars maintain that the theoretical operating principle for federal regionalism is that of "non-centralization".[10] In practice, however, one finds that the phenomenon of "creeping centralization" pervades all systems of government, even federal ones. In an authoritative study of regionalism by the Council of Europe it was found that

> ... (e)ven in federal systems like Austria, Switzerland and the Federal Republic of Germany this is the "natural" tendency, calling for periodic clearing out operations. Consequently, the retransfer downwards of administrative functions, in which the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany for example were heavily involved, is regarded simply as a corrective to faulty development rather than administrative reform as such.[11]

Ronald Reagan's so-called New Federalism had a similar centralizing effect on inter-governmental relations in the United States. These examples point to the inevitable conclusion that before a federal system is created, federal powers are vested in other bodies and at other levels of government. A process of scale reduction (decentralization) or scale enlargement (centralization or consolidation) must then be used to restructure and re-allocate powers in a federal way. Once a federal system is established, however, an additional third principle (non-centralization) comes into play to describe and justify the new power relationship that has been created among the different levels of government. This relationship will be valid until re-negotiated according to the procedures established jointly at the outset. These procedures can themselves of course also be amended in the proper way.

Federalism is a sophisticated and complex political system which relies on a perpetual and delicate balance of integrative and disruptive forces in society. There are only a few examples of durable and model success stories, all in highly industrialized states: the principal examples are the United States of America, the Federal Republic of Germany, Australia, Austria and Switzerland.

Why consider regionalizing?

Governmental activities are increasingly exercised at lower levels for three reasons principally:

Political reasons

Regionalization can promote grassroots democracy in that it enables regional and/or local interest groups to participate more directly in decision making and in the distributive processes of government in matters concerning them. This allows for a greater degree of self-determination — particularly the local identification and resolution of community and regional problems. It therefore helps to do away with decisions imposed unilaterally from outside the region or locality.

Socio-economic and administrative reasons

Regionalization can also promote more effective and efficient government by creating or utilizing existing regional and/or local administrative, technical and economic infrastructures to provide a wide range of services. This replaces the provision and control of uniform services from central or local levels which may not address the locally identified needs of regional communities.

Lines of authority are normally shorter and better defined than in a more centralized system, too. This can speed up decision making and policy implementation if correctly exploited. It can also in this way contribute to the stimulation of the development of rural regions and communities. Through privatization and deregulation, power can be decentralized to the regional private sector — if it exists, if it is interested in participating, and if it can effectively take over certain state functions. This will stimulate economic growth.

Ethnic or cultural reasons

In many instances political autonomy is requested by the residents of culturally or ethnically distinctive regions or communities. Decentralization of power to such regions or communities at their own request, without endangering the security of the state, can contribute to political and social stability.

The most important variables for determining the success or failure of attempts at ethnic conflict regulation through regionalism, are:

— whether the conflicting interest groups are geographically concentrated or dispersed over the country;
— whether regional autonomy will increase regional or ethnic nationalism to the extent of possible secession by that ethnic group or region, thus endangering the integrity and security of the state;
— whether regionalism will obstruct effective nation building by entrenching ethnic differences instead of promoting a new national identity;
— whether regionalism is the best, or only possible, instrument for achieving a feasible compromise between the national interest and regional or ethnic interests; and
— whether societal forces in the state

concerned can cope with the complex balance of interests and power necessary to sustain a *federal* regional system successfully over time.

Third World constraints on regionalism

The characteristics of the Third World are not conducive to strong and effective subnational, regional or local government: a variety of systemic constraints usually complicate the successful application of regionalism in developing countries. These constraints will now be summarized.

Normative constraints

Strong value commitments are needed from political leaders and the bureaucracy at central level to the decentralization of effective decision-making and executive powers to regional governmental levels, and to the provision of effective enabling and supporting powers to obtain staff and finance the regional government's activities. This implies a ready acceptance by national political and administrative élites of a reduction in their empires and a loss of direct control over certain state functions. These commitments are frequently lacking in the existing élites of Third World countries, which normally have very centralized governments, because they result in a loss of both power and influence to new regional élites.

Value commitments are needed from regional élites too. They must be willing to shoulder on their own the responsibility for exercising certain powers and functions. In most instances such élites will welcome the opportunity to use their own discretion in policy making and implementation. In other instances where the problems to be addressed are huge and intractable they are frequently unwilling to take up this burden, especially if the necessary knowledge, skills or resources for doing the job effectively seem to be scarce or lacking.

The political cultures obtaining in Third World societies also frequently obstruct the feasible and lasting implementation of any policy. Nation-building objectives in these new states have resulted in the adoption of ideologies deliberately promoting centralized government to the exclusion of regional autonomy. The democratic participation of citizens in political processes is in many cases minimal and sometimes even non-existent. This frequently results in yawning gaps between governmental and popular perceptions of what needs should first be addressed in the society concerned. Democratic participation on the other hand enhances the stability and durability of reforms. This is, however, frequently lacking in developing countries.[12]

Material constraints

Illiteracy, poverty and general backwardness are important characteristics of developing societies. This means that few of these societies normally have available the knowledge, expertise, trained staff, infrastructures (transport and communications networks, housing, shopping, office, storage and manufacturing facilities), technology, finances, and so forth required to execute complex or large-scale government functions — even at central government level. A transfer of responsibilities to lower levels normally requires more resources of this sort. The fact is, such resources are frequently almost non-existent in such societies, nor is there any realistic hope of creating them in the short or even medium term. The result is that policies are drawn up at central level and executed through regional offices of the central government without sufficiently involving regional communities in the process. This unfavourably affects the value commitments of élites at all levels as well as the effectiveness, efficiency and durability of the development programmes themselves.[13]

Scholars specializing in empirical research into decentralization in the Third World have found that normative considerations are more important constraints on successful decentralization than material considerations.[14] A genuine value commitment to the establishment of subsystem autonomy normally leads to serious efforts to create the material conditions for success. Conversely, even with the advantages of sufficient resources for effective regional autonomy, a lack of real commitment by élites to the principles and goals of regional autonomy will ensure failure as a result of creeping centralization.

Implications of constraints for regionalism

The normative and material constraints on regionalism in the Third World hold important implications for the discussion so far. It is clear that many of the conditions necessary for regionalism must be created (or developed) before regionalism can be implemented effectively. Successful regionalism must therefore be a long-term not a short-term objective in many developing countries.

Although regionalism is a political system which normally leads to a greater demand for skilled and trained human resources as well as more financial resources and administration (because of the duplication of certain services at lower levels), these problems are not insurmountable. The question is not only whether society can afford regionalism, or has the available resources to implement a durable regional system, but whether these resources can be obtained or developed. Training and experience can be acquired over time; and heavier financial burdens can be justified by an improvement in the quality of services and customer (citizen) satisfaction arising from federalism's answering for autonomy of local interest groups.

Even if these and all other conditions are favourable for the implementation of federalism, the question remains whether societal forces can cope with the intricacies of the system. Another way to frame this question is to ask whether the value system appropriate and conducive to federalism prevails, or can develop within a reasonable time, in the society concerned. We are also asking for a high degree of tolerance for certain interest groups or regions that want autonomy in order to solve problems in their own way instead of central government's ramming some uniform approach down their throats.

The value question thus remains the only real prerequisite for successful federalism. This issue is especially acute in developing societies. It is doubtful whether federal systems of an ideal type can in the medium to long run be successfully transplanted to such societies. The reason for this somewhat extreme statement is the plain fact that federalism operates with a lesser degree of success in the Soviet Union, Brazil, Nigeria and India and failed some years ago in colonial Central Africa. Complex democratic political systems designed on the theory and principles of extreme non-centralization or decentralization (federalism or devolution) are implemented differently in developing countries:

strong and effective central control is exercised over all subsystems in various direct or indirect ways (a state of emergency in India, military governments in Nigeria and Brazil and the ideology of communism in the Soviet Union).[15]

Two views will illustrate the problem: an Indian judge commented in 1977 as follows on the Indian experience of federalism :

> The extent of federalism is largely watered down by the needs of progress and development of a country which had to be nationally integrated; politically and economically co-ordinated; and socially, intellectually and spiritually uplifted. In such a system, the States cannot stand in the way of legitimate and comprehensively planned development of the country in the manner dictated by the Central Government.[16]

The other illustration is a view expressed by Nwabueze to the effect that the practical problems experienced in Nigeria with federalism are due to the a lack of

- understanding of the true (federal) nature of the relationship between autonomous tiers of government (non-centralization?),
- sufficient acceptance of the operational requirements of federalism, and
- fidelity to the federal characteristics and principles enshrined in the Nigerian constitution.[17]

Federalism, in a word, with its delicate balance of power between diversity and unity, is a very sophisticated form of government. Even in industrial democracies where the discrepancies between rich and poor are not as pronounced as in developing countries, the federal balance is difficult to maintain (as in the case of Canada). In younger countries, nation-building objectives are regarded as more important than entrenching minority rights. In fact, minority rights are regarded as obstacles to effective nation building (example: Zimbabwe). The prospects for successful federal regionalism are therefore not very good in most Third World countries (which suffer from many relevant constraints) unless they can be effectively overcome.

Nation building has already been accepted by all significant political interest groups in South Africa as an urgent priority. But federalism is not the only model of geographical autonomy which may be appropriate. One can think of a number of other types of regional autonomy, using a wide range of constitutional mechanisms. There is for example not much difference between strong "federal" governments such as those of Nigeria and India, and a weak unitary government that is effectively decentralized such as Spain. In both instances effective minority rights enforcement should provide sufficient protection for minorities who fear domination and suppression. The geographical decentralization of decision making and policy implementation within a unitary system to regions desiring such autonomy is an important and potentially successful conflict-regulating mechanism in society. The implementation of this type of autonomy must therefore be seriously considered where feasible.

Another important point to bear in mind when establishing a new constitutional order is that it always proceeds by trial and error until a relatively stable system, appropriate to local circumstances and balancing opposing interests effectively, has developed. Now a federal system is by nature very rigid. This strength may simultaneously also be a fatal weakness, making change impossible if the need for it should arise. In extreme instances it may allow small minority groups to exercise a veto over the majority's wishes. This flaw *inter alia* contributed to the failure of the Lebanese and Cypriot experiments in constitutional engineering. Political systems in developing states must therefore be flexible in order to be able to change shape when needed — without endangering the position of minorities.

Adding to these difficulties the economies of most Third World countries are today in a desperate state, with hyperinflation and with huge debts which cannot by any stretch of the imagination be repaid. This, linked to a weak world economy (fast deteriorating into a world-wide depression brought on by *inter alia* the war in the Persian Gulf), makes it highly improbable that the conditions necessary for successful federal regionalism could be created in the foreseeable future in most developing countries.

Against this background, unitary regionalism probably more feasible and preferable in the Third World.[18]

The outlook for regionalism in South Africa

South Africa is one of the strongest Third World countries. It has well developed agricultural, manufacturing, distributing and military sectors with relatively good economic and technological capabilities and infrastructures which compare very favourably with most other Third World states. It can be argued that South Africa is in fact the strongest power in Africa and one of the strongest in the Third World.

South Africa also suffers from many of the characteristic social ills of Third World states, however: illiteracy, poverty, shortages in food, housing, health services, employment opportunities, skilled labour, and so forth. A compounding factor is political conflict, resulting from certain remnants of colonial discrimination not only still present in many sectors of society but dominant in others.

Federalism or decentralized unitarism ?

Federalism is not an option new to South Africa. Federalism was considered for the new state in 1910; but lost out to unitarism, thought at the time to possess merits for the task of nation building among the four disparate colonies. The result was that four relatively autonomous provinces were established as the Union of South Africa.

In 1959 the Progressive Party split off from the official opposition, the United Party, on a policy platform of federalism, a policy taken over by all successors of the Progressive Party including the current Democratic Party.

The most detailed proposal yet for a federal model in South Africa came in 1987 from the KwaZulu-Natal *Indaba*.

Until 1987 the governing National Party consistently and vehemently rejected federalism. Today, the NP is in favour of a federal-type model in which are contained effective minority guarantees.

The African National Congress still rejects such a proposal because it is seen to be an attempt to retain the privileged position of whites and detrimental to the objective of nation building (the very argument that sank the federalism cause in 1910).

The points made in the previous few paragraphs are not encouraging for federalism in South Africa's future. This, however, does not exclude the choice of another federal-type regional model in order to achieve and reconcile goals such as economic growth, development, political self-determination, grassroots democracy, ethnic conflict regulation, and so forth. Rondinelli and Nellis have found that a decentralization of governmental power and functions to regional and local levels in Third World societies is an important instrument of development.[19]

To my mind, these arguments all point inevitably to a strongly decentralized unitary state rather than a well-entrenched and rigid federal balance of power for South Africa — even in the face of the current opposition to such steps by the leading political resistance movements in the country. Such a system may evolve over time into a more pronounced federal state, or even in the opposite direction, depending on a number of considerations. Constitutional mechanisms such as the optimum re-delimitation of wards or constituencies, and the use of multi-member constituencies linked to transferable-vote electoral systems, would facilitate this approach to guaranteed representation on a non-racial basis.

Effective and extensive regional autonomy may on request be considered for existing functional economic development regions such as Natal-KwaZulu, the Eastern Cape including Transkei and Ciskei (if those states wish to be re-incorporated in the RSA), the Western Cape, the Orange Free State (maybe including the Northern Cape), the Western Transvaal (including Bophuthatswana on request), the Northern Transvaal including Venda and Lebowa, and the Eastern Transvaal including Gazankulu and Kangwane. The precise number and boundaries of regions are not crucial points at this stage.[20] They will have to be negotiated by representatives of the various interest groups. What is important is clarity on the degree of autonomy and the powers of these regions.

Experience has proved that if sufficient resources exist, large degrees of autonomy are effective. This includes as far as possible full fiscal autonomy, although admittedly South Africa's regional economies will probably not allow of this. Some financial subsidizing of poorer regions by richer regions will therefore have to be considered.[21] Revenue sharing would have to be introduced in order to make the regions as self-sufficient as possible.

The Spanish experience with unitary regionalization may in some respects be instructive. The Spanish government introduced an asymmetrical and phased-in process whereby powers were gradually devolved over a period of a few years to those regional legislatures capable of and willing to accept such devolution. The powers devolved are not similar in all instances. Despite a few drawbacks, such as its piecemeal character and discrepancies in the treatment of different regions,[22] the approach is still preferable to something more rigid that might lead to disaster through some regions' being weak (and so unwilling) or the contrary, when it comes to the assumption of certain demanding functions.

It is conceivable that what are today central powers in South Africa — the determination of one or more official regional languages, welfare, policing, public works and transport, all housing, education, agricultural and economic development, revenue collection, tourism and so on — could be effectively executed at regional level in addition to the powers currently vested in those authorities — planning, nature conservation, health, local government, library services, roads, horse-racing and community services for blacks.

Either an inclusive or an exclusive approach to the transfer of powers can be considered, depending upon which of the two secures the more enthusiasm and support in negotiations.

An autonomous Afrikaner state ?

A very important question is whether Afrikaners (the only ethnic group who will probably request an explicit geographical/ethnic autonomy) should be allocated land for the purposes of establishing such a state. In principle, such a step would be in accordance with prevailing international norms. Israel and the West Bank provide a precedent which can be cited in support. The following conditions for any autonomy of this nature will have to be met:

- Autonomy should be granted only on request by a voluntary minority group conforming to the requirements of international law.
- It should not be on a racial basis.
- It should not negatively affect non-members of the minority concerned.
- It should be feasible (on points such as the minority's numbers, geographical concentration, impact on other services, availability of qualified staff to administer autonomy and so on).
- It must be affordable.
- It should not endanger state security.
- It should comprise an area
  - with historical/symbolic value for the Afrikaners, and one to be deliberately set aside for this purpose (example: parts of the Free State and Northern Natal);
  - that is not reserved for people on a racial basis but in order to allow Afrikaans-speaking people who wish to settle there to obtain financial and/or other assistance to do so while non-Afrikaans-speaking people who are already living in the region and who wish to relocate also enjoy the same assistance to do so;
  - in which ownership of land should otherwise change hands through normal market forces only;
  - where all residents have full political rights and the regional government of the area is forbidden to discriminate against any resident on the basis of his/her race.

In the absence of a clearly definable area for this purpose, a deliberate policy decision would have to be taken by central government to create such a region if it is sufficiently clear that such a step would not exacerbate conflict but would, in fact, defuse potential conflict in future. This option should of course also be considered, on request, for other ethnic groups — always subject to the same provisos.

Conclusions

If Smith[23] and Rondinelli[24] are correct in their assertions that political considerations are the most important considerations influencing the success or failure of decentralization, the success of regionalism will depend on whether a political compromise on the degree of regional autonomy desirable in a future South Africa can be reached by the major participants in the negotiation process.

The dismal history of federalism in the Third World does not bode well for the prospects of federal regionalism in South Africa. It seems as if unitary regionalism is still the order of the day, irrespective of resistance by some interest groups.

Regionalism can be an important development instrument in a new South Africa if treated correctly. It also seems as if a separate region, for Afrikaners who wish it, should be considered seriously, subject to certain conditions.

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The Ports of South Africa: The Cape ports

Trevor Jones, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Economics at the University of Natal, Durban, concludes our series on the ports and harbours of sub-Saharan Africa.

Four major harbours are located along the coastline of the Cape Province. These are the established general cargo ports of Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London; and the deepwater bulk export port of Saldanha. In addition, the Walvis Bay territory on the Namibian coast still formally falls under the administrative control of the Cape, thus leaving management and control of all five harbours in the hands of Portnet, the harbours division of Transnet. The minor Cape ports — Mossel Bay, Port Nolloth and Lamberts Bay — handle trivial cargo volumes and will not be considered in this article.

The role in the overall transport infrastructure of South Africa of the three traditional general cargo or "liner" (regular shipping services) ports of the Cape is very different from that of Durban. In the past, all four ports acted as maingates of trade for the entire region, and in particular for the industrial heartland of the PWV area. But since the advent of containerization in the mid-1970s, Durban has increasingly pre-empted this trade, leaving the catchment areas of the Cape ports to shrink to their immediate regional hinterlands. There are some notable exceptions to this somewhat sweeping generalization — such as the movement of certain bulk minerals and the capture of substantial cross-border traffic by the Eastern Cape ports — but the overall direction of change can be discerned in the pie charts below, which indicate the shares of total traffic enjoyed by the four ports, in the mid-1950s and late-1980s respectively.

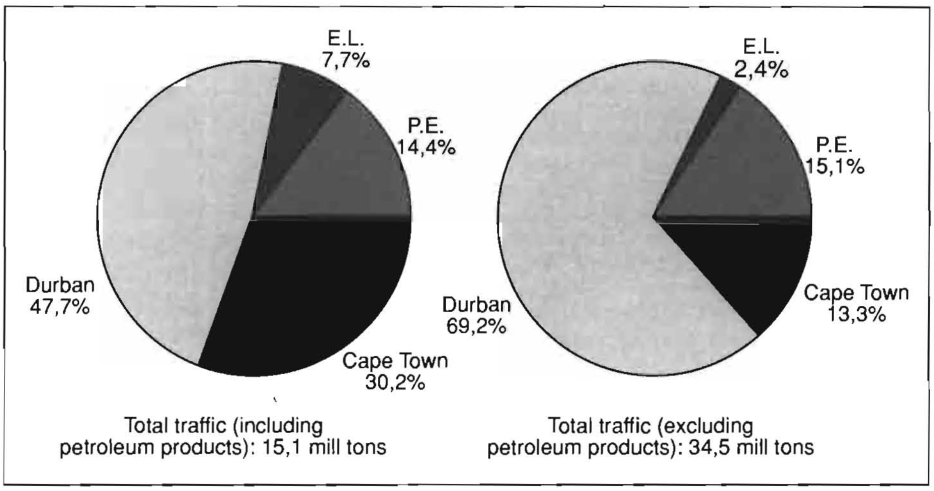


Figure 1 Cargo handled at Durban, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London: 1955 and 1988

It will be seen that Durban has captured a larger slice of the increasing cargo cake; that Cape Town's share has fallen from a little under a third to approximately one-seventh of the traffic flows listed; that Port Elizabeth's relative performance has remained fairly unchanged in quantitative terms (principally because a falling share of liner traffic has been offset by bulk mineral exports); while East London has all but ceased to function as a fully-fledged deepsea liner port. In aggregate, total cargo tonnages (excluding classified petroleum products) handled at Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London have fallen by a little less than 30 per cent over the last decade, from some 14 million tons annually in the late 1970s to 10 million tons in the late eighties. With static or falling cargo flows handled by increasingly productive unitized techniques, all three of these Cape general cargo ports are presently characterized by idle capacity and low berth occupancy rates.

Cape Town

The port facilities in Table Bay harbour, Cape Town, are located in four relatively distinct areas: the Alfred Basin, the Victoria Basin, the Duncan Dock and the Ben Schoeman Dock as

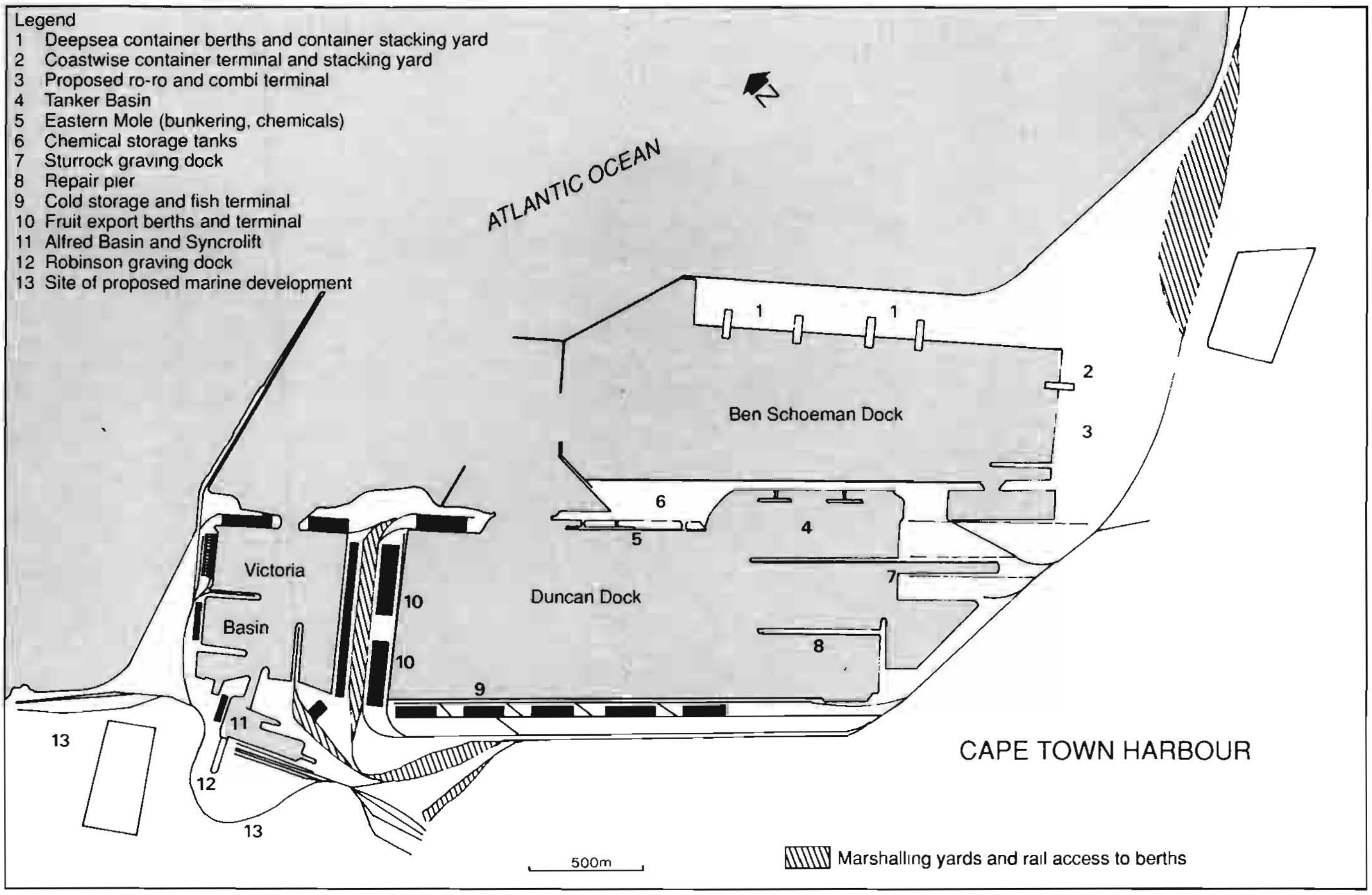


Figure 2 Cape Town (Table Bay) harbour: General layout 1991

shown on the general port layout below. The development of protected port facilities can be dated to mid-Victorian times, with the commissioning of the enclosed Alfred Basin in 1870, the construction of the larger Victoria Basin taking place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The port was to move closer to its present configuration during the 1930s, when quays were constructed to the east of the original Victorian dock system, culminating in the completion of the Duncan Dock in 1945. Finally, when it became clear that Southern African seaborne trade could not ignore the "container revolution" sweeping through world shipping from the late 1960s, construction was initiated of an outer harbour basin to accommodate a dedicated container terminal. This Ben Schoeman Dock and its landside container-handling facilities were completed in 1977 in time for the official switch to full containerization in that year.

In physical terms, the Table Bay dock system is a large one, offering a total of 11 000 metres of berth. By no means all this quay space is available for commercial shipping, as the fishing industry now occupies the lion's share of facilities in the antiquated Alfred and Victoria Basins. These waterfront areas have also recently been the focus of major property developments effected through the establishment of the Victoria & Albert Waterfront Company, a Portnet subsidiary, which has orchestrated and partially financed the renovation of large sections of these two old docks into a major tourist attraction comprising several restaurants, a hotel, a maritime museum and (planned for the somewhat longer term) a major marina development in the area behind the Alfred Basin. While these developments have both revitalized a run-down section of the port and provided the city of Cape Town with a unique tourist asset, they have not been entirely welcomed by commercial fishing interests, who fear that the transformation of usable port facilities into non-marine related tourist assets will ultimately disadvantage their industry.

The centre of gravity of the modern working port is thus firmly located nowadays in the Duncan and Schoeman Docks. The Duncan Dock handles what remains of the port's breakbulk general cargo traffic, using 11 berths served by a total of 67 wharf-cranes. While these facilities are seldom in heavy demand, considerable seasonal activity is still recorded during the deciduous and citrus fruit export seasons. A portion of this high-value trade is containerized. But the bulk of it is still transported in palletized form on specialized reefer (refrigerated) vessels, utilizing a 12 000 cubic metre privately operated fruit export terminal. The use of the latest generation of pallet-friendly reefers makes possible exceptionally high loading rates, so allowing Cape Town to retain its position as the principal fruit export outlet of the subcontinent. The port's role as a specialized conduit for refrigerated cargoes will be further strengthened in 1991 when a cold-storage facility for frozen fish will be commissioned at Duncan Dock's F-berth. This is a joint venture between Portnet and private enterprise and will enable Cape Town more fully to exploit its geographical advantage as the natural transshipment, storage and re-export centre for the large number of deep-sea trawlers (principally Taiwanese, Korean and Japanese) harvesting the tuna resources of the South Atlantic and the squid of the Falkland's waters. Other specialized facilities in the Duncan Dock include terminals for oil and chemical tankers along the eastern mole, with an augmented area of chemical storage tanks currently under construction on reclaimed land behind the mole. Finally, the Duncan Dock offers substantial berth and landside areas for transit shipping and ship repair activities. The relatively deep water (up to 15 metres at certain berths) and an absence of length restrictions on visiting vessels makes Cape Town a better proposition than Durban for bunker, victualling or repair calls by the large classes of wet- and dry-bulk carriers other than loaded VLCCs.

Turning now from the largest vessels to some of the smallest, the port also does considerable business supplying and repairing South Atlantic fishing fleets, while it is also the base port for diamond recovery vessels operated by De Beers off the west coast. The ship repair facilities available are extensive, the showpiece being the 360-metre Sturrock Graving Dock at the south-eastern end of the Duncan Dock. The largest single graving dock in the southern hemisphere, the Sturrock Dock can accommodate vessels up to some 100 000 deadweight tons (dwt). Ancillary repair facilities include a 4-berth repair pier, the smaller Robinson drydock and a Syncrolift situated in the Alfred Basin. The latter is particularly heavily patronized by the fishing industry.

The essential *raison d'être* for the Ben Schoeman Dock remains the handling of container cargoes: two berths serviced by a dedicated gantry crane are set aside for coastal container and roll-on roll-off vessels, and a further three berths, equipped with four container gantries and backed by a stacking area, are used by deepsea box vessels. With an annual throughput of some 160 000 TEUs (or about one-third of Durban's container traffic), Cape Town's container terminals are severely under-utilized, partly because the initial investment in box-handling assets was based on too optimistic a vision of future trade.

Cape Town harbour

Port traffic

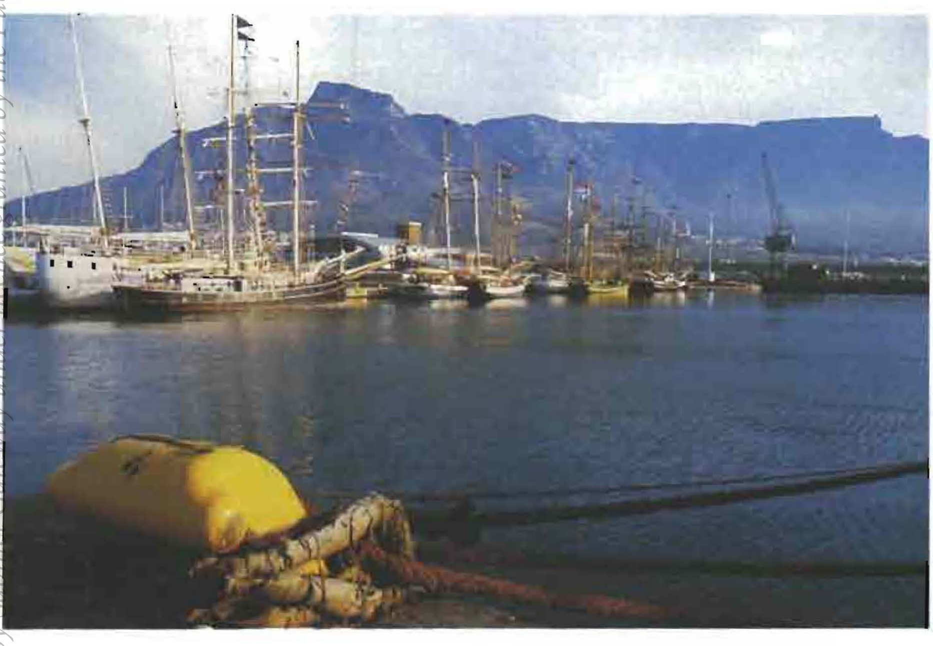
Total cargo volumes handled in the port of Cape Town have remained relatively static at some 4,5 million tons annually since the mid-1980s. Of this total, roughly half is containerized, and the remainder is handled by more conventional breakbulk techniques. Bulk cargoes are conspicuous by their (virtual) absence, the port thus remaining essentially a liner port. Outward (export) flows have generally outstripped inward cargo volumes, the limited import figures being dominated by chemicals, timber and capital goods.

The largest contributor to exports, in both volume and value terms, is fruit: Table Bay annually ships some 650 000 tons of deciduous fruit (apples, pears and so forth), with some 100 000 tons of citrus and increasing quantities of tropical soft fruits (avocados, litchis and so on). The fruit trade is a seasonal one, with deciduous exports rising sharply from February to peak in May and June, while the smaller citrus flows peak in spring. Prospects for the fruit

Cape Town harbour

trade appear highly promising, the port management anticipating a 30 per cent increase in volumes over the next five years. The expected growth in tropical fruits, forecast to overtake citrus in the not too distant future, is particularly interesting, and represents one of the few instances of Cape Town's remote location being used to its advantage. Although these commodities generally originate in the Eastern Transvaal and Natal, their highly perishable nature dictates a route ensuring the shortest transport time to European and North American markets. This can best be achieved by road haulage to Cape Town for on-carriage by the shortest sea-route to these markets.

A further substantial trade with some upside potential is the transshipment and re-export of fish, which currently accounts for some 130 000 tons annually, but which should benefit from the new cold storage terminal. Other commodities offer less favourable prospects. Steel exports have fallen in recent years; the export of maize and wheat has all but ceased (to the extent that the port's grain elevator is now used principally as a storage and domestic distribution silo); and attempts to re-route coal exports through Table Bay foundered on high landside rail costs after a small number of experimental shipments in the mid-1980s.



Cape Town harbour

Outlook for the port

With the exception of the areas identified above, overall growth prospects for the port of Cape Town do not appear particularly rosy. Its role as an effective entrepôt for the highly industrialized Transvaal has been emasculated by sheer distance (a 1 530-kilometre rail journey between Cape Town and the Witwatersrand compared with the 700 kilometres between Durban and the Reef), and by the increasing pursuit by Spoornet of cost-related rail tariffs. Limited cargo volumes move into the interior by road, but the effective hinterland of the port has shrunk to the Western Cape region, an area that has experienced a rate of growth slower than that of the national economy overall. What is more, the centre of economic gravity within the Western Cape has shifted from manufacturing to the services sector, a trend that further reduces the area's likely potential in the production of physical, tradeable goods. Grandiose ideas recently punted by the commercial community to re-establish Cape Town as the country's "western terminal port" to control the subcontinent's Atlantic trades seem unlikely to come to fruition. The extensive marine infrastructure of the port is thus likely, for the foreseeable future, to remain severely under-utilized.

Port Elizabeth

Of the traditional general cargo ports on the South African seaboard, Port Elizabeth was the last to develop into a modern sheltered harbour. Situated at the mouth of the Baakens River in Algoa Bay, Port Elizabeth came into being in the early nineteenth century, its early development being intimately associated with the fortunes of the British settler community in the Eastern Cape. Port Elizabeth quickly established itself as the principal port for the region but, up to the inter-war years, its facilities

Port Elizabeth harbour

remained remarkably primitive. In its early phase of development, until the 1880s, little more than an open roadstead partially sheltered by Cape Recife was available for surfboats operating from its beaches — although in the late nineteenth century the construction of iron jetties permitted vessels anchoring off to work cargo into lighters. Port Elizabeth continued to operate as a lighterage port until well into the 1930s, by which time construction of an artificial port protected by breakwaters had commenced. These developments left the layout of the port very close to the present configuration as shown in Figure 3: nine general cargo berths were provided at the Charl Malan and "Number Two" Quays, while a single oil berth was situated on the south-east side of the harbour basin. The only significant changes to this basic marine infrastructure were to come in the late 1950s, with the construction of two further deepsea general cargo berths plus a coaster berth; and with the commissioning of a specialized ore export terminal in 1963. The cargo-working capabilities of the port were, however, to undergo a transformation following the decision to introduce full container facilities; to accommodate a fully fledged container terminal and stacking yard, the Charl Malan Quay was approximately doubled in width, while four general cargo berths were sacrificed to provide two container berths equipped with two 40-ton gantries capable of handling the largest deepsea and coastal container vessels. As a result, Port Elizabeth has been able to retain its status as a mainline port of call for the prestigious Conference lines' container services to north-west Europe and the Far East. The port also forwards deepsea boxes to East London by coastal feeder container services.

Apart from its container terminal, the principal facilities of the port include six general cargo berths, a recently refurbished fruit export terminal operated by the Citrus Exchange, and the ore loader. The latter initially handled bulk exports of both iron and manganese ore, but following the commissioning of Saldanha Bay as a dedicated iron ore outlet in the mid-1970s the Port Elizabeth terminal has handled various grades of manganese from the Hotazel/Postmasburg areas of the northwestern Cape only. The terminal comprises a bin storage area (equipped with mobile stackers and reclaimers) with a capacity of some 350 000 tons, supplying a shiploader with a loading rate of 1 300 tons per hour.

With a minimum water depth of 12,2 metres at the ore berth (and 14,5 metres in the port approach channels), Port Elizabeth is able to handle bulk vessels up to the smaller Panamax types of about 60 000 dwt. These and the smaller handy-sized bulk carriers are eminently suited to the export parcel sizes typically shipped by South Africa's two principal manganese ore producers, hence draught limitations and terminal capacity in Port Elizabeth are not severe constraints upon the country's export

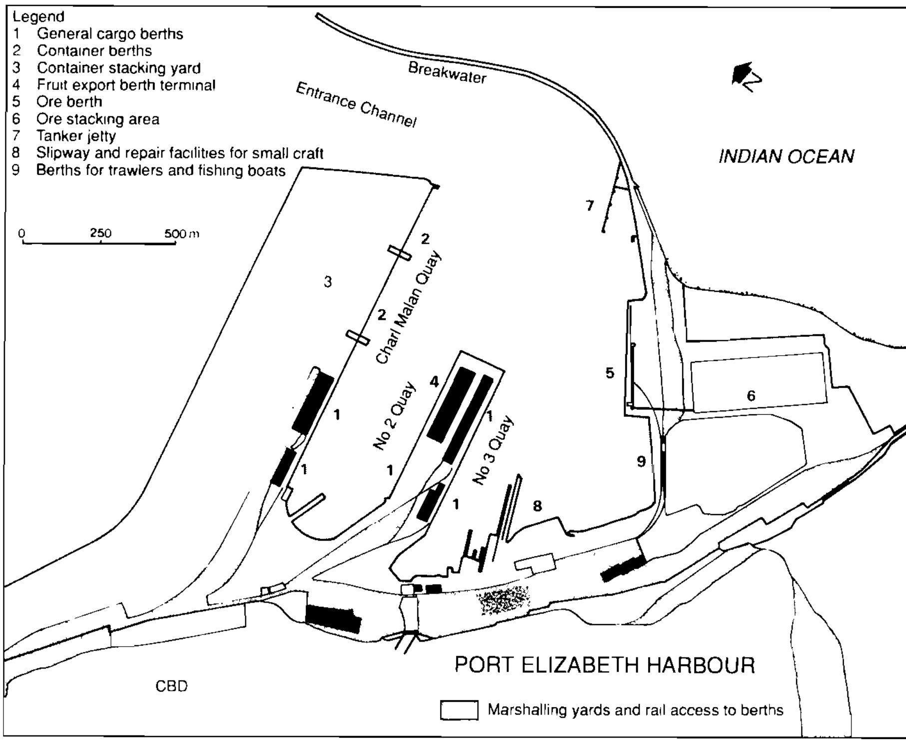


Figure 3 Port Elizabeth harbour: General layout 1990

performance. The inherent annual capacity of the terminal, over 6 million tons, is in fact well above the 2 to 2,5 million tons of ore exports passing annually through the port in recent years.

Port traffic and prospects

Total cargo handled in Port Elizabeth harbour has fluctuated between 3,5 and some 6,5 million tons annually during the 1980s, export generally exceeding inward freight by a factor of well over three to one. In quantity terms, the largest single contributor to export volumes is clearly manganese ore, but other notable commodities include citrus and deciduous fruit from the Langkloof and Sundays River areas, which accounted for about 250 000 tons during the 1990 export season; mainly containerized wool exports; steel and ferrochrome. The latter two commodity groups represent over-border traffic from Zimbabwe, and illustrate the strong links forged between Algoa Bay harbour and Central Africa. The limited matrix of imports is dominated by knocked down cars (CKDs), vehicle components for the local car assembly plants, and chemicals.

Current traffic levels leave the port with significant spare capacity: in 1990, physical berth occupancy rates were recorded of 49 per cent for the ore terminal, 26 per cent at the container berths and 35 per cent at the general cargo quays. A considerable increase in activity could thus be accommodated with the port's existing facilities, but most indicators point to a fall rather than a rise in cargo volumes in the short and medium terms. The immediate hinterland of the port — the Greater Algoa Bay area — and indeed the whole of Development Region D (the Eastern Cape, Ciskei and southern Transkei) have experienced two decades of economic stagnation and decline, with Gross Geographic Product (GGP) per capita standing at approximately half the national average. Within the region in fact, as Davies argues, the dictates of grand apartheid gave growth points in or near the bantustans preferential access to resources at the expense of the Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage area. This metropolitan region has been further weakened by the migration of a portion of its key vehicle assembly industry to the Transvaal. So it is that overall prospects for an upsurge in the demand for seaborne tradeables from within the port's immediate catchment area appear poor. Looking further afield, Port Elizabeth has continued to act as an entrepôt for the south-western Free State and the southern Transvaal, but the resolution of congestion problems in the Natal ports, plus the pursuit of cost (and therefore distance) related Spoornet tariffs have militated against any strengthening of this role. Moreover, the retention of the important Zimbabwean export staples is by no means assured, since it is quite likely that both steel and ferrochrome will be diverted either to Richards Bay or Maputo at some time in the future.

The prospects for the port are not, however, unrelievedly bleak. Increases in high-value fruit exports are anticipated as growing areas are extended and overseas markets expand in a post-sanctions trading climate. The port is also seeking to carve out a niche for itself in the high-value import market segment (such as capital goods, machinery and vehicle components), where the very existence of idle harbour capacity can be turned to advantage by virtually assuring immediate handling and despatch of time-sensitive goods. These and other specialized activities notwithstanding, the ultimate future of the port must be determined by the economic fortunes of the Eastern Cape region; unless the regional priorities of the new South Africa change in favour of this area, both the port and its hinterland seem set to continue operating at low ebb.

East London

If the picture presented by Cape Town and Port Elizabeth is one of substantial ports whose capacity is sadly underutilized, the overall impression given by East London is one of virtual inactivity. South Africa's only river port, the Buffalo harbour was equipped with coherent port facilities well before its neighbour in Algoa Bay. After decades of silting problems, and the failure of tidal scour methods to overcome them, the advent of more modern dredging techniques in the late 1880s permitted ocean-going vessels to utilize riverside wharves. Further protection of the port by the extension of breakwaters, deepening of the entrance channel, provision (and later widening) of a turning basin for larger vessels, and development of berthage on both the east and west

East London harbour

banks of the river proceeded during the first half of this century. This permitted East London to operate as a mainstream general cargo port serving most of the principal liner companies trading with Southern Africa. A radical change in the status of the port was, however, to follow the advent of full containerization, as deepsea container terminals were constructed only in Durban, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, thereby effectively cutting off East London as a direct port of call for major foreign-going liner carriers. Deepsea services to the Border port are maintained by roll-on roll-off vessels, but most container cargoes enter and leave the port on coastal feeder vessels.

In physical terms, Buffalo harbour remains a reasonably large and well-equipped port, offering a total of ten berths for commercial shipping on a little over 2,5 kilometres of quay length. In addition, good repair facilities are provided by the Princess Elizabeth graving dock, commissioned in 1947, which can accommodate vessels up to some 200 metres in length. Apart from general cargo berths served by conventional wharf-cranes, specialized facilities include a single tanker berth, a roll-on roll-off berth on the east bank, and a coastal container quay (suitable only for vessels with their own shipboard box gantries) and adjacent stacking area on the west bank. The one single showpiece of the port is undoubtedly the grain elevator, which came on stream in 1966 and was refurbished and expanded in 1973. A storage capacity of 75 000 tons and a loading rate of 1 800 tons per hour make this the foremost maize export terminal in Southern Africa, and one favoured by the Maize Board over Durban's smaller and older elevator. Unfortunately, the goal of establishing East London as the country's leading maize export port has been only partially successful, as the routeing of exports is determined largely by the geographic location of maize surpluses; and only if these originate in the southern and western Free State is East London the least-cost trade outlet.

The effective relegation of East London to secondary status is reflected by the port's recent traffic performance. After handling an average of 2,7 million tons of cargo annually during the 1970s, total port traffic fell below 2 million tons in 1985, and slumped further to 0,8 million tons in 1988, only to revive somewhat on the back of higher maize flows the following year. The extreme volatility of these tonnages is principally a function of the port's reliance on maize as a base, for the vagaries of weather and agricultural conditions in the maize growing areas result in exports fluctuating from zero to a figure as high as 3 million tons. (The Maize Board, it must be said, anticipates a slow secular decline in exports as the residual between average production and domestic consumption levels shrinks.) Other significant export magnitudes include containerized fruit, forest products and substantial volumes of Zairean and Zambian copper diverted from their natural export pathways by the closure of the Benguela railway, and problems on the Dar-es-Salaam route. This high-value cargo is generally shipped out on the ro-ro vessels operated by the deepsea Conference lines. The principal single contributors to the very limited level of imports are CKDs and vehicle components for the local Mercedes assembly plant.

With the exceptions of maize and Central African copper, the future traffic base of the port must, it is conjectured, come from the Border area itself, as the 1 000-kilometre rail distance to the Witwatersrand makes East London an unlikely maingate for Transvaal traffic. In the Border and its neighbouring bantustans several economic growth points have been established without, however, significantly reviving the fortunes of the port.

The abysmal under-utilization of East London harbour makes this centre a potentially attractive candidate for the establishment of South Africa's first port-based export processing zone. The possibility of such a customs-privileged facility, based on the import, processing and re-export of commodities through what would in practice be a "free port", has recently been enthusiastically received by local industrial and commercial interests; but it will require a massive increase in economic activity to bring the port back to anything approaching its former status.

Saldanha Bay

Situated some 150 kilometres north of Cape Town on the Cape west coast, Saldanha Bay offers what is arguably the finest natural harbour on the South African coastline. Were it not for an inhospitable hinterland and the absence of a local water supply, Saldanha rather than Table Bay would surely have been the natural choice as the subcontinent's early harbour-settlement. In fact, it was not until the 1970s that significant commercial port facilities were developed when the decision was taken to establish a deepwater port planned

Saldanha harbour

exclusively for the bulk export of iron ore from the Postmasburg/Sishen area of the northern Cape. Considerable volumes of iron ore had previously been routed through Port Elizabeth, but draught restrictions in the Eastern Cape port made it unsuitable for a mass export drive designed to establish South Africa as one of the world's major iron-ore exporting countries, competing with suppliers such as Australia and Brazil. The only basis for truly high-volume export performance was going inescapably to be sea carriage in "Cape-sized" bulk carriers (larger than 120 000 dwt) offering the lowest freight rates. The new port at Saldanha was thus built with water depths (23 metres) and facilities capable of accommodating fully laden bulk carriers up to 250 000 dwt.

The initial investment in both the port and the associated 860-kilometre rail link to Sishen was undertaken by Iscor, who also supplied the locomotives and rail wagons. The first ore moved through the port in September 1976. Soon thereafter it became apparent that both harbour and railway line would cater for traffic emanating from sources other than Iscor. Whereupon it was decided by government that control of the entire Sishen/Saldanha project should be assumed by the national transport services. Saldanha is thus presently controlled by Portnet.

The harbour facilities are simple, if massive: the centrepiece is the double-berth ore jetty equipped with two shiploaders able to sustain a loading rate of 7 000 tons per hour. On shore, an ore stockpile area with a capacity of 3,5 million tons receives rail wagons and feeds the loading berths. Other port facilities include a single multi-purpose cargo quay and a berth for petroleum products. The traffic performance of the port reflects both the overwhelming dominance and considerable volatility of iron ore cargoes — tonnages of bulk ore shipped (primarily to Far East destinations) having fluctuated in response to cyclical changes in demand from a high of 17 million tons in 1979/80 to a low of 8,6 million tons in 1986 but recovering to some 15,6 million tons by 1989.

Although the export of iron ore remains the fundamental business of Saldanha, it is not the only commodity handled, for the single multi-purpose cargo berth, completed in 1980, is used mainly for the export of high value lead and copper concentrates from the Blue Mountain Minerals (Goldfields) mining operations in the Aggeneys and Gamsberg areas of the northern Cape. Annual flows of around 150 000 tons are handled, moving by road to the railhead at Sishen, and thence by dedicated rail wagons to Saldanha.

In the initial planning phase of the Saldanha port complex, grandiose ideas for the industrial development of the Saldanha area and the future diversification of the port were mooted. These included the suggested establishment of a steel fabrication works and the construction of a pair of "supership" drydocks capable of handling the largest types of VLCCs and bulkers using the Cape sea route. The ship repair complex has never seen the light of day; and although some considerable steel work for the current offshore oil from gas (Mossgas) project has been undertaken at Saldanha, the port remains essentially a conduit for ore exports.

Walvis Bay

With the exception of the small and primitive facilities provided at Lüderitz, Walvis Bay offers the only usable deep-sea harbour on the Namibian coast. This reliance on Walvis Bay is greatly complicated by the status of the port, which presently remains part of a South Africa-administered enclave in the recently independent state of Namibia. The origins of this unusual and it is to be hoped temporary situation date back to 1878, when Britain took possession of the harbour. Incorporation in the Cape Colony followed in 1884, control passing to the Union government from 1910. After World War I, what had been German South West Africa was placed in South Africa's care as a mandated territory, and for practical reasons the Walvis Bay enclave was administered from Windhoek from 1922 to 1977. At that point, what appeared to be the imminent independence of Namibia precipitated a presidential decree that placed the enclave, again as part of the Cape Province, under direct South African control. The response of the United Nations to this took the form of Security Council Resolution 432 of 1978, which declared that "the territorial integrity and unity of Namibia must be assured through the reintegration of Walvis Bay within its territory". Namibia's independence in early 1990 was nevertheless achieved without any such integration.

The facilities of this disputed port are fairly extensive, its possessing a total of eight general cargo berths and a single tanker berth; but total port traffic of 0,7 to 1 million tons annually in recent years is well below the harbour's capacity. Principal commodities shipped include fish products (although overfishing has reduced what was once the world's largest pelagic fishing industry base); copper and lead from the Tsumeb mines; uranium; fluorspar from the Otjiwarongo area; and substantial quantities of salt transported to Durban in small coastal bulk carriers. Inward cargoes are dominated by inputs for the Namibian mining sector, and by a well-developed "grocery" trade from South Africa carried by coastal container vessels. Like East London, Walvis Bay has emerged from the container revolution a secondary port; and in the absence of shore-based box handling facilities, it relies primarily on deepsea liner calls by ro-ro vessels backed up by coastal feeder services.

The facilities and present traffic base of the port are, to be candid, considerably less interesting than its final status and prospects. However sound South Africa's constitutional claims to the territory may be, its retention of the enclave appears to make little practical sense as the port, at present utilization levels, is at best marginally profitable; it plays no vital role in South Africa's overall transport infrastructure; and any leverage over the Namibian state conferred by its strategic location must surely become increasingly irrelevant to policy-makers in the new South Africa. The protestations of different South African ministers to the contrary, Swapo officials and senior Portnet executives privately concede that transfer of the port and its environs to Namibia will probably be effected sooner rather than later. This could be excellent news for the harbour, which is not only the natural entrepôt for Namibia's seaborne trade, but also enjoys strong geographical advantages over East African ports as a natural gateway for the Atlantic trade of Zambia, southern Zaire and western Botswana. Here Walvis Bay can offer substantially shorter sea routes to Latin American, North American and northwest European markets. The traffic base to warrant a trans-Kalahari or trans-Caprivi rail link may not yet be broad enough; but the port is already actively marketing its facilities in Central Africa, and has witnessed an upturn in road-hauled cargoes from this extensive area. There can be little doubt that these flows will increase when the status of the port is finally clarified.

Walvis Bay harbour

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Middle Africa's economic islands of development — Thirty years on

Denis Fair, Senior Research Fellow at the Africa Institute, contributes a second article on the economic islands of tropical Africa.

In the early 1960s, when independence came to most tropical African countries (those between the Sahara and Southern Africa), William Hance showed that no less than 85 per cent of these countries' exports came from a number of "islands of development" covering only 5 per cent of the region's total area.[1] These economic islands had resulted from the penetration in colonial times of the West's modern market economy into a region in which the vast majority of the population were still engaged in subsistence production. This penetration took different forms. In some areas, notably Uganda and Cameroon, African peasant farmers were encouraged to produce cash crops for export; in others, European-run plantations or estates were established; in others again, European farmers were settled on alienated land, as took place in Kenya; and mines were opened where resources could be profitably exploited — as in Zaire and Gabon.

The conventional wisdom of the time regarded this penetration of formerly self-sufficient and closed societies as necessary for their integration into the wider world,[2] since it was assumed that from these islands of development modernization would diffuse to the remainder of the continent. Critics, however, have claimed that the colonial period was rather one of exploitation; that African countries suffered the inequity of unequal exchange in their trade relationships with the industrialized world, and that their vast rural areas, where the bulk of the population lived and traditional economies persisted, served either as labour reservoirs or were left untouched.

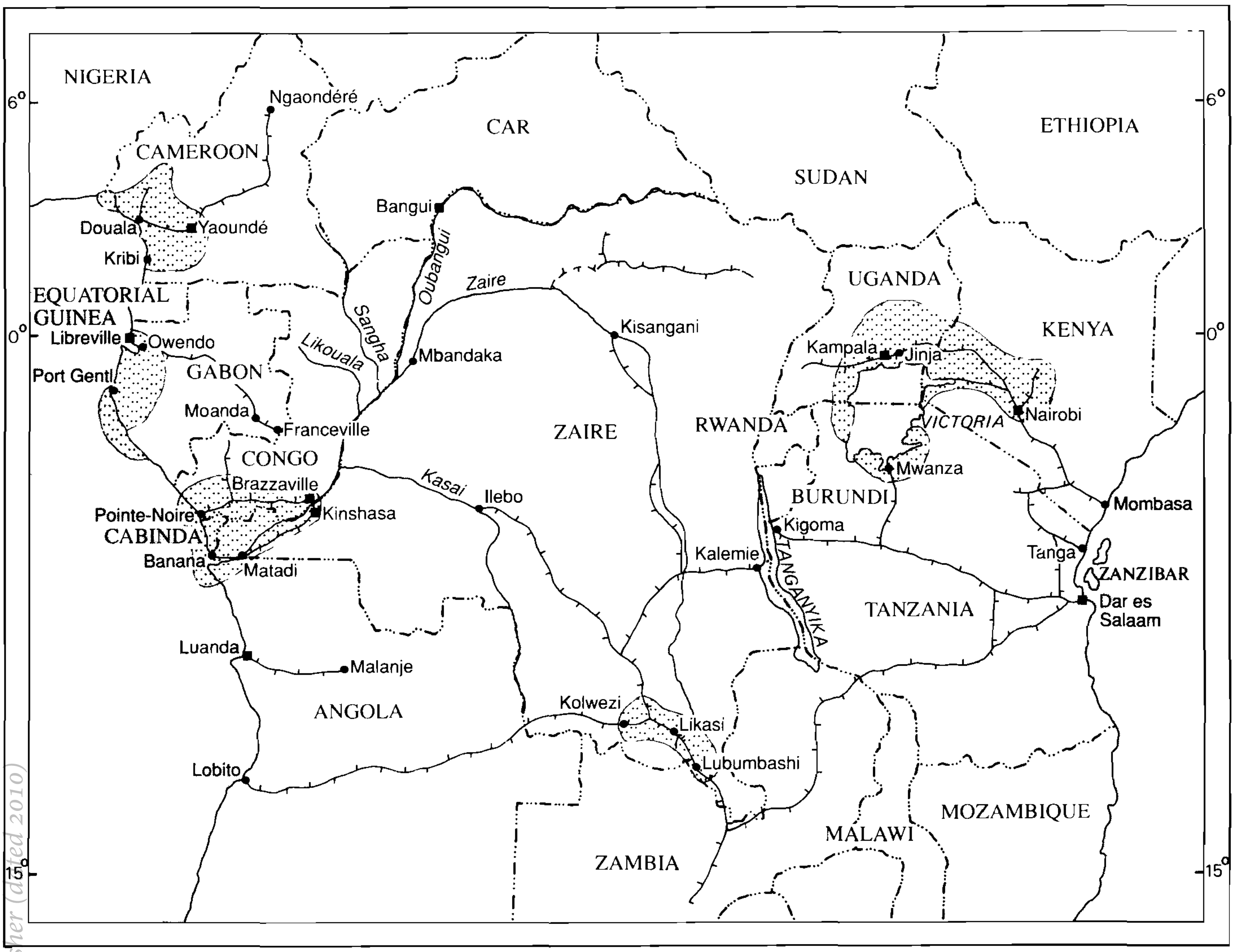
Nevertheless, as Rimmer points out, although tropical Africa's exports account for only 1,3 per cent of the world total, this export of crops, minerals, other raw materials and some manufactured goods "(has) been and will continue to be the only important medium of economic growth in Africa".[3] The performance of these islands of development over the past thirty years of independent rule is thus, for better or worse, of central importance to the fortunes of the countries in which they are to be found.

In a previous issue of this journal the islands of development in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi were considered. The present article takes in the sweep of middle Africa astride the equator between the latitudes of 5°N and 12°S.

In 1960 the twelve countries of this region[4] accounted for 37 per cent of the value of exports from tropical Africa, the greater bulk of this amount coming by far from six comparatively small enclaves. These were the agricultural zone of south-western Cameroon, the timber zone of north-western Gabon, lower Zaire/Congo and Cabinda, Luanda and the coffee uplands of western Angola, the Shaba (formerly Katanga) Copperbelt of Zaire, and the agricultural borderlands of Lake Victoria and the adjacent Kenya highlands. Over the past thirty years these regions have undergone significant change: propitious where oil discoveries were turned to good account but disastrous where, as in Angola and Uganda, human conflict sapped whatever economic strength was inherited from the colonial period. Today five of these enclaves — Angola's coffee region no longer qualifies — account for 75 per cent of exports from the twelve countries concerned.

South-western Cameroon

This corner of Cameroon comprises only one-fifth of the country's area but, containing 75 per cent of the population (10,7 million in 1988), has been the focus of the country's modern economic growth. The Germans, after 1884, established agricultural plantations there and built two short railway lines to serve them. The French, after 1914, expanded coffee and cocoa plantations, developed the port of Douala, improved the road network and extended the main railway line to Yaoundé, the capital. At independence in 1960 a British trusteeship territory which had been governed as part of Nigeria was added as West Cameroon. So it was that, at that time, from the rich south-western forest zone and the hilly fertile lands of West Cameroon, there came virtually all Cameroon's diverse agricultural exports, most of



Middle Africa's major economic islands

them produced by African smallholders and some coming from the plantations of the Cameroon Development Corporation — cocoa and coffee accounting for 50 per cent of the country's exports; bananas, palm oil, tea, rubber and timber made up the balance. At Edea, near Douala, the Alucam smelter, established in 1958, produced aluminium from imported Guinea bauxite with power derived from its hydroelectric plant on the Sanaga River. Aluminium accounted for 15 per cent of exports in 1960. All these activities lay within 300 km and less of Douala and four minor ports. Only small amounts of export cotton and some pastoral products from the drier north originated outside this economic island of the south-west.

Since 1960 a number of important developments have taken place. In 1974 the railway, the Transcameroon, was extended 620 km from Yaoundé to Ngaoundéré to help open up the less developed northern region. In 1977 exploitation started of off-shore oil deposits near the Nigerian border, and an oil refinery at Limbe north-west of Douala was built in 1981. Oil exports, accounting for 55 per cent of the total in 1985, encouraged public and private investment including, mainly in the south-west, the construction of tarred roads and expensive railway realignments between Douala and Yaoundé, expansion at the port, new international airports and a second hydroelectric power station on the Sanaga River — a third one also being planned.

The result of these developments was two-fold. First, the economic imbalance between the south-west and the rest of the country increased, a trend the Cameroon government is attempting to offset by promoting smallholder farming, agro-industry and road, power and urban projects in the Upper Benue River basin. Second, and especially within the south-west itself, an imbalance between rural and urban areas intensified. In 1960 only 16 per cent of the population were urbanized; heavy migration to the towns has since raised that proportion to 40 per cent. The resultant loss of able-bodied workers has reduced agricultural productivity, already jeopardized by excessively small holdings and ageing plant and tree stock. The government launched a major programme in 1986 to modernize and diversify agriculture in which 75 per cent of the labour force is still engaged.

Unfortunately, Cameroon's steady economic growth and positive trade balances suddenly ended in 1986 when oil prices collapsed and falling cocoa and coffee prices placed additional strains on the economy, now in a period of austerity and structural adjustment. This has necessitated the shelving of a number of major projects planned particularly for the south-west. These include two deep-water ports, road and rail links and the exploitation of natural gas and iron ore deposits near Kribi. Since Cameroon's oil reserves are expected to be seriously depleted if not exhausted during this decade, unless recently resumed exploration reveals new sources, the government's action to rehabilitate the country's agriculture and develop and regenerate its rich forest resources has been wise. Food self-sufficiency and rural production are the chief priorities of the current sixth national development plan. Clearly, the greater development of the country's renewable resources offers a more viable economic future than do its non-renewable, limited and wasting oil resources.

North-western Gabon

Rain-forest covers 80 per cent of Gabon. The country was formerly part of French Equatorial Africa and gained independence in 1960. Before oil production started in 1957, and manganese mining in 1962, softwood timber from a small coastal enclave, covering about one-eighth of the country's area, comprised 94 per cent of Gabon's total exports. Logs were floated down the rivers to the small lighterage harbours of Port-Gentil and Libreville, the capital, around which French influence had first been established in the mid-nineteenth century. Only a small proportion of the logs were processed locally for plywood and veneer. The country possessed no railways; roads were few and rudimentary; there was no electric power network; and the two main towns had a combined population of only about 75 000. Gabon's total population was less than half-a-million, most of whom were engaged in subsistence production.

Since independence Gabon's economic geography has been completely transformed. Its rich natural resources have been the target of substantial foreign and domestic investment and its previously small export enclave is now one of tropical Africa's important economic islands. This transformation took off with oil production in the Port-Gentil area from which now comes 70 per cent of Gabon's mainly off-shore output and where are centred the oil-refining and oil-servicing industries and the major loading facility at Cap Lopez. Port-Gentil is now a deepwater harbour. Oil production has spread southwards both along the coast and more recently inland, reaching a near record output of 10,4 million tons in 1989. When prices peaked in 1985 oil accounted for 83 per cent of the country's exports.

The Libreville/Port-Gentil zone has been further strengthened by the construction of the 650 km Transgabonais railway to Franceville completed in 1986. This line now serves the uranium and manganese mines at Moanda first opened in 1961 and 1962; it gives access to new timber areas; and makes the new deepwater terminal at Owendo a major port for the shipment of bulky raw materials: previously manganese was exported solely by cableway and rail to the Congo port of Pointe-Noire. In addition, two new hydroelectric power stations now supply most of Gabon's electricity, 80 per cent of which is consumed in the two main towns. All these developments have generated a strong migration from the rural areas, principally to Libreville and Port-Gentil which now have a combined population of over 330 000 or more than a quarter of Gabon's total 1,2 million.

For all its wealth — per capita gross national product (GNP) is by far the highest in tropical Africa — Gabon has all the characteristics of an enclave economy in which "much of its recent growth has had little impact on the welfare of the majority of the country's inhabitants".[5] Only 24 per cent of the labour force are in paid employment — and 25 per cent of that force are expatriate. Income inequality is severe, 75 per cent of the country's GNP going to 2 per cent of the population. Industrial unrest and riots in mid-1990 were the inevitable outcome. Although Gabon has always enjoyed a favourable balance of trade, thanks to its oil, this fell by 90 per cent in 1986 with the drop in world oil prices and a depressed market for timber and minerals. New oil finds have since extended the life of Gabon's oil reserves and world prices have improved. The government, however, is aware of the country's heavy dependence upon oil and minerals and the need to diversify exports by expanding production into the neglected rural and agricultural sectors.

Lower Zaire/Congo

This small region (which includes the Angolan enclave of Cabinda) encompasses the cities of Kinshasa and Brazzaville and their respective ports, Matadi and Pointe-Noire. In 1960 when Zaire and Congo gained independence the only exports from this zone were modest amounts of timber, palm products and bananas. Matadi's main export commodity was copper from the Shaba mining region. Kinshasa's population in that year numbered less than 500 000 and Brazzaville's less than 100 000.

Over the past thirty years changes have been substantial. First, oil was discovered in the 1960s in the 250 km long coastal zone from north of Pointe-Noire to the estuary of the Zaire River and the northern tip of Angola. Second, exploitation of the massive hydroelectric power potential of the Lower Zaire River commenced in the 1970s. Third, costly improvements to the rail, road and port infrastructure have been made. And, last, the populations of Kinshasa and Brazzaville have grown six-fold to nearly 3 million and 600 000 respectively.

Oil from on-shore and off-shore installations along the coast totalled 31 million tons in 1988. Oil now accounts for 90 per cent of the value of Angola's exports, for 78 per cent of the Congo's and for 9,5 per cent of Zaire's. Thirty years ago, in 1960, coffee from the hinterland of Luanda was Angola's major export, but production was cruelly cut back by civil war and oil overtook coffee as the leading export in 1973.

The first Inga hydroelectric power station was built on the Zaire River in 1972, on the 350 km stretch of water which plunges 270 m over falls and rapids between Kinshasa and Matadi, in order to supply these two towns. The second station was built in 1982 in conjunction with a 1 725 km transmission line to the Shaba mining region, the principal area of demand. Plans were also made to utilize this electric power for an aluminium smelter and industrial zone to be built on the Zaire River railway, this to run to a deep-water port proposed for Banana. These ambitious projects have been abandoned, but the bridge was completed by the Japanese in 1983 and now carries a road only.

When civil war broke out in Angola in 1975 the 2 100 km Benguela railway to the port of Lobito, which handled more than half of Shaba's copper exports, was closed to traffic. In addition to turning to Dar es Salaam and South African ports, it therefore became imperative to rehabilitate Zaire's seriously run-down 2 700 km river and rail route — the *voie nationale* — from Shaba to Matadi. This undertaking was also necessary in order to help revive a flagging national economy, severely set back by the political chaos immediately following independence and by disastrous economic policies in the early 1970s. Improvements under way since the mid-1980s have been made to port facilities at Kinshasa and Matadi and to the tortuous railway linking the two cities built in 1897, and also to the road, the latter responsible for 60 per cent of the freight carried. Matadi's traffic totalled 1,5 million tons in 1988 of which 16 per cent were mineral exports.

Similar improvements, completed in 1985 and involving the realignment of track and refurbishing of equipment, have been made to the Congo-Ocean railway between Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire, a link originally opened in 1934. Port facilities at Brazzaville, where the line meets river transport serving the northern congo and the Central African Republic (CAR), have also been improved and expanded. At the coastal terminus, Pointe-Noire, the installation of bulk loading facilities for oil, manganese (from Gabon) and timber (from Congo and CAR) have been added since 1960. These, with other facilities, make Pointe-Noire one of the best equipped ports in all Africa. The port now handles 9,5 million tons annually and the population of the town has grown to 300 000. But much of the 2 million tons per year of manganese export traffic originating in Gabon could be lost as that country increasingly diverts manganese traffic to its own port of Owendo. Thus, if the project eventuated, present talk of bridging the Zaire River from Kinshasa to Brazzaville and diverting some Zaire traffic to the efficient Congo-Ocean railway would have important implications for Pointe-Noire.

While the resource base — the country's oil reserves seem assured for at least the coming 20-25 years — and greatly improved infrastructure guarantee a stable medium-term future for the lower Zaire/Congo region, developments since 1960 have tended to intensify the old regional imbalance. Eighty-two per cent of the Congo's population of 2 million, virtually its entire urban population, and the bulk of its agricultural forestal and industrial activities are all located in the southern 25 per cent of the country, facing the vast, comparatively underdeveloped and underpopulated regions of the centre and north. Similarly, with investment since independence having been focused mainly on Lower Zaire and Shaba, 75 per cent of Zaire's economic output is generated by these two regions alone to the detriment of much of the rest of the country and widening the rural/urban income gap. Moreover, the uncontrolled drift of population to Kinshasha and other large towns — 39 per cent of the population (national total: 34 million) are now urbanized — has led to high rates of unemployment and an inadequate provision of public services of all kinds.

Shaba Copperbelt

Zaire's Shaba copper mining region and its neighbour, the Zambian Copperbelt, form "one of the most remarkable metallogenetic zones in the world".[6] In 1960, despite its location far from coastal outlets, it ranked as tropical Africa's richest island of development but has been superseded since then by the oil-producing southern coast of Nigeria. The Shaba section, grouped around the towns of Lubumbashi, Likasi and Kolwezi, extends in a belt 300-400 km long and 50 km wide. The Belgian company, Union Minière du Haut Katanga (UMHK), started mining here in 1911 more than 20 years before serious exploitation of the Zambian (then Northern Rhodesian) deposits began. Other minerals from the region include cobalt, Shaba possessing no less than 65 per cent of the world's reserves. Copper production increased rapidly after 1950 and the Korean War from 176 000 tons to 280 000 tons on the eve of Zaire's independence in 1960. Production was also boosted by the introduction of new techniques for the treatment of copper and cobalt concentrates and by the opening of a new electrolytic refinery. Fifty per cent of final-state refining was done locally, the remainder in Belgium. In 1960 copper, cobalt, zinc and uranium from Shaba accounted for 60 per cent of Zaire's exports, their being routed mainly to Belgium and Europe via Lobito and Matadi. UMHK employed up to 2 000 skilled expatriate workers and an African labour complement of 21 000.

Sprung suddenly upon the country by the Belgians, the first years of independence were politically turbulent. Katanga (as Shaba then was) seceded, but with United Nations military assistance was regained in 1963. Much of the national economy suffered severely, especially agriculture. Fortunately, copper mining was less affected. In 1967 UMHK was taken over by the government-owned Gécamines (General Mining and Quarrying Company). In 1968 and 1969 prices for its metals rose strongly and by 1970 Shaba's copper and other minerals accounted for 77 per cent of the country's exports, the production of copper reaching 373 000 tons. In that year, with diamonds, tin, gold and manganese produced in other areas, minerals overall made up 89 per cent of the total value of Zaire's exports.

Copper production reached 495 000 tons in 1973, with the expectation that it would rise to 800 000 tons by 1977. However, major setbacks followed. World copper prices collapsed by 40 per cent in 1975; the Lobito export route was closed in that year; and in 1977 and 1978 rebels attacked the town and mining installations at Kolwezi causing substantial damage and the death or flight of many skilled expatriate workers. Plans to increase production were abandoned and output has since remained around 500 000 tons per year, equal to about 6 per cent of world output. Production fell as low as 400 000 tons in 1990.

In the 1980s Shaba's copper, cobalt and zinc continued to represent between 50 and 55 per cent of exports. So vital is this contribution that, with World Bank and other financial assistance from the international community, a major five-year programme aims at maintaining production levels and improving productivity. A new refinery planned for Kolwezi will further reduce dependence upon the Belgian plant.

The role of the Shaba mining region has to be seen within the context of Zaire's vast natural resources — and its ailing national economy. An ambitious policy of nationalization and Zaireanization of the economy in the early 1970s was aimed at more fully utilizing resources to turn the country into a modern industrial state. Prestigious and expensive projects were embarked upon, including the Maluku steel mill (now minimally operative) near Kinshasa. The policy failed; the government did not possess the management skills required to run a centralized economy; the confidence of the private sector was lost; and the country fell deeper into debt with a high level of government spending and the economy's vulnerability to volatile world prices.

In 1960, local manufacturing catered solely for the domestic market and the position remains virtually the same today. Not only is the regional market too restricted to encourage the export of manufactured goods but even this local market is limited by the country's weak infrastructure which makes distribution uneconomic outside the main manufacturing centres in Kinshasa and South Shaba.[7]

Despite its mineral wealth Zaire has a per capita GNP of only $150 (1987) and ranks among the four poorest countries in the world. Only 7 per cent of its working population are engaged in paid employment, and 66 per cent being still dependent upon subsistence farming. Moreover, urban unemployment is very high — as high as 40 per cent in Kinshasa, less in Kolwezi but possibly 70-80 per cent in other towns. The elements of an enclave economy are also present here, the Shaba copper mining region itself forming a geographic enclave.

With 45 per cent of national revenue coming from Gécamines, Zaire will continue to rely heavily on the Shaba mining region. It possesses the world's richest undeveloped copper deposits and has reserves sufficient for 40 years (World Bank, 1989). Encouraging, too, is that expatriate staff number less than 300 so that, from a total complement today of almost 40 000, Zaireans now account for 87 per cent of senior staff. The figure was 24 per cent in 1968. These plus factors, however, are offset by rising competition from Chile's low-cost copper mines and from substitute materials such as aluminium and optical fibres, the latter now replacing copper in the telecommunications. Moreover, owing to surplus production and world recession, copper prices have fallen 35 per cent in two years. The price of cobalt, a strategic mineral, has shown strength since the outbreak of the Gulf War. There is a need to diversify Zaire's exports, notably to rehabilitate and develop its rich agricultural and forest resources, sectors in which 80 per cent of its population are concerned. As Hance observed in 1972, mining cannot be expected to solve the problems of African development and particularly the need to generate employment. With a few notable exceptions, agriculture will be the sector requiring prime government attention for several decades to come.

Kenya Highlands and Lake Victoria borderlands

This fertile, well-watered region dominates the economy of East Africa. Of its potential the East Africa Royal Commission wrote in 1955 "that it is as a region that all this fertile country demands basic investment in roads, railways, water supplies and schools, in proper land usage and, above all, in mobility of persons so as to become an interdependent economic whole and the heart of a modern civilization in East Africa". The region under discussion covers about 20 per cent of the land area of the three East African countries Kenya, Tanzania an Uganda. At the time of their independence in 1961-63 it accounted for 60 per cent of their population (then totalling 24 million), for 70 per cent of the value of their exports and for 70 per cent of the electricity they consumed. These proportions are of much the same order today with East Africa's population now 63 million, its exports (in US dollar terms) and its electricity consumption four times greater, and the population of its largest towns, Nairobi (1,4 million), Dar es Salaam (1,1 million) and Kampala (530 000), more than five times greater.

In Kenya 70 years of colonial rule had given the Highlands a political, economic and social duality: a settler-dominated market economy derived from 3,1 million hectares of land alienated in the early 1900s — the "White Highlands" — producing 80 per cent of Kenya's exports, and a number of ovecrowded communally-held tribal reserves producing mainly for subsistence and acting as sources of labour for the 4 000 white farmers who, in association with the colonial administration, imposed a strong and cohesive hold upon the country.

In Uganda, as a protectorate, land alienation was minimal and, as in Tanzania, African smallholders dominated production.

The prospect of the three East African territories merging in some political federation never materialized, although their economic interdependence had been well established by the British rulers. After independence they did in fact establish an East African Community, only to see it collapse in 1977 through economic jealousies and political distrust. Today about 10 per cent of Kenya's exports go to Uganda and Tanzania.

The Kenya Highlands

Agricultural exports from the Highlands are still the mainstay of the Kenyan economy. They contributed 61 per cent of the total at independence in 1963 and 67 per cent in 1987, coffee and tea alone accounting for 29 per cent in 1963 and 48 per cent in 1987. After the transfer of over 1 million acres (405 000 hectares) to African ownership in the early 1960s, the rise of a prosperous smallholder class has been remarkable and ensured the continuation of Kenya's distinctively agricultural export base. In competition with estates and large farms, smallholders have increased their share of coffee production from 45 per cent in 1962 to more than 65 per cent in 1988, their share of tea from virtually nil to 52 per cent, and their output of pyrethrum from 25 per cent to 78 per cent. They also account for 49 per cent of the sugar-cane crop, produced mainly for domestic consumption in the lowlands bordering Lake Victoria. In all, smallholders now contribute more than 75 per cent of their country's total agricultural output and for over half its marketed output.

Kenya has always been East Africa's leading industrial country; but the sector is small (12 per cent of GDP) and exports have gone to neighbouring African countries rather than overseas. Government is now moving away from its longstanding industrial policy of import substitution to one favouring production for export. Petroleum productions from the refinery at Mombasa, established in 1963 and using imported oil, is the single most important manufactured item exported.

Over the years since independence a number of external factors have given Kenya an economic history of mixed fortunes. During the early years of independence economic growth was rapid — the "Kenya miracle" — but oil price rises, international recession, collapse of the East African Community, drought, volatile prices for its major export commodities and declining tourist numbers have all exerted negative impact upon trade balances and foreign exchange reserves, necessitating structural adjustment programmes and financial assistance from international sources in recent years.

Internally, too, disturbing trends have appeared. Rapid population growth, the highest in the world, has put increasing pressure on Kenya's limited area of arable land — one-fifth only of the country's total area yet its economic heartland — the remainder being arid and semi-arid marginal and pastoral country. The result has been a growing number of uneconomic agricultural holdings, increased landlessness, environmental degradation, a migration to marginal lands (and especially to the towns), and a dangerously skewed income distribution. In the rural areas alone a great gap now exists between the more prosperous cash-crop farmers and the majority producing mainly for subsistence. With population figures estimated at 32 million by the year 2000 the government admits that Kenya's agriculture is "at the crossroads".

Concurrently, urban growth resulting now both from natural increase and migration from rural areas continues at a rapid pace with no equivalent rise in remunerative employment or urban services to accommodate the growth in numbers. Towns have increased from 48 in 1969 with a population of 1,08 million to 172 with 4 million people in 1988. Nairobi alone now accounts for 1,4 million — as against half a million in 1969 and a quarter of a million in 1962.

To help offset these trends steps are being taken to intensify agricultural production, develop the pastoral and irrigation potential of marginal areas, encourage migration to smaller towns, and support informal manufacturing and service activities in these smaller centres that will not only back up agriculture in the surrounding areas but also promote employment.

The Uganda lake borderlands

Westwards from Kenya the island of development sweeps in a broad arc through Uganda round the northern and north-western shores of Lake Victoria, embracing some of the finest agricultural land in East Africa. These lands at the time of independence in 1962 produced the bulk of Uganda's exports, coffee accounting for 45 per cent of the total, cotton for 19 per cent, tea for 4,5 per cent and copper 8 per cent. But whatever promise the East Africa Royal Commission held for Uganda's peasant-dominated agriculture was destroyed during the eight years of terror and devastation imposed by the regime of Idi Amin from 1971 onwards from which the country has not yet recovered. Amin's overthrow in 1979 was followed by a steady decline as ethnic and political factions vied for power. Only in 1986 did some stability return with President Museveni's leadership.

Until the mid-1950s cotton was Uganda's chief export, but production collapsed during the Amin years and is only now recovering. Coffee has increasingly dominated exports. Although official sales fell by half from 215 000 tons in 1972 to 110 000 tons in 1980, coffee was virtually the only export during these difficult years, much of it being smuggled out of the country. Exports recovered to 186 000 tons in 1988. Unfortunately the abolition of the International Coffee Organization's quota system in 1989 has meant falling coffee prices and serious consequences for foreign exchange earnings, especially now that this commodity accounts for no less than 97 per cent of Uganda's exports. Tea production, responsible for nearly 6 per cent of exports in 1962, deteriorated in the 1970s when foreign owners abandoned their estates. No tea has been planted since 1978 and exports are still minimal. The production of other commodities such as sugar, tobacco and copper is being restored in an effort to encourage export diversification. The once thriving manufacturing sector, centred in Jinja and Kampala, the 32 year old Owen Falls hydroelectric power station and the road and railway system are also candidates for rehabilitation. Tourism, once an important earner of foreign exchange, is recovering slowly. Health and education services and living conditions in both urban and rural areas deteriorated during the Amin years to appalling levels, for any recovery from which massive international aid has been necessary.

Although still burdened by an excessive dependence upon revenue from coffee, by a severe shortage of foreign exchange and by high external debt, slow economic progress is being made thanks to greater political stability and radical monetary and fiscal reforms. That such self-inflicted damage could have been done to a country so rich in natural resources and development potential is almost incomprehensible.

Tanzania

The lake borderlands of Tanzania make only a small contribution to East Africa's major island of development — some coffee from the western shores of the lake and, more importantly, cotton, Tanzania's second main export, from the southern shores. Elsewhere in Tanzania the source areas of its export commodities occur in scattered, climatically-favourable pockets at the coast or in upland localities, none of which qualify as major islands of development. Locally important are the slopes of Mounts Kilimanjaro and Meru, the major sources of its chief export, coffee. The total tonnage exported, however, is only one-fifth of that of Kenya and Uganda combined. The chief city, Dar es Salaam, is virtually an island of development on its own, much of its growth in recent years being traceable back to the widening hinterland of its port, now reaching into Zambia, eastern Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda.

Conclusion

Two issues were raised at the beginning of this article. First, to what extent have the "islands of development" described here contributed to the economic health of their countries since independence? and, second, to what extent have they contributed specifically to the welfare of their less developed peripheral areas? Overall, the performance of the economies of tropical Africa has not been encouraging. The World Bank indicates that in the 1960s the volume of exports grew by 6 per cent per year but then stagnated or declined in the 1970s necessitating adjustment and economic recovery programmes sponsored by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in the mid-1980s.

A 1990 United Nations report states that the failure of the commodity sector has been central to Africa's economic crisis. Commodities account for 85-95 per cent of export earnings, the majority coming from our limited "islands of development". Between 1970 and 1988 Africa's market share for cocoa, coffee, cotton and copper fell by 20-40 per cent arising, according to the UN report, not only from adverse external factors — commodity prices collapsed in the 1980s to a degree not seen in more than 50 years — but also from ill-advised government policies, poor transport and infrastructural frameworks, and few incentives to overseas investors. Even the oil producers (which showed rapid growth) found themselves in serious difficulties after the collapse of oil prices in 1986 and, although prices have recovered somewhat since then, all have had to resort to strict financial discipline and a reduction in government spending. Moreover, as the World Bank states, the outlook for significant price increases in most primary commodities remains poor.

Yet, as the World Bank points out, if the economies of tropical Africa are to grow they must earn foreign exchange to pay for essential imports. And to do this they must reduce their dependence upon unprocessed primary commodities, expand into more advanced processing and other manufacturing industries, cut production costs, diversify into new products and aggressively penetrate the growing markets of Asia. In short, the countries of tropical Africa must become more competitive in an increasingly competitive world.

Against this background a diffusion of modernization and development from the economic islands to the less developed peripheral areas could not have been expected — either substantial or rapid. In good years, and with much financial assistance from the international community, most of the countries under discussion, especially the oil producers, directed their scarce resources, understandably, to enhancing growth mainly in the developed areas and hardly at all in those areas which contributed little to the earning of foreign exchange. The results have been foreseeable: first, a growing regional imbalance between the islands and the peripheral areas; second, massive migration to the urban centres to the detriment of agriculture and the rural areas together with unemployment and deteriorating living conditions in the larger cities; and, third, the creation of enclave economies and their accompanying inequalities and inequities. Fourth, in some countries the economic health of the island of development itself is in question. Kenya is concerned with maintaining the viability of its agricultural heartland in the face of rapidly rising population numbers while Uganda and Angola struggle to regain the viability of theirs after years of internal conflict.

Clearly, these countries of middle Africa suffer from both a narrow sectoral base — too few unprocessed export commodities — and a narrow geographical or spatial base — limited areas of export production. These, together, render them vulnerable to the many internal and external factors that daily govern their economic health.

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The war in Western Sahara

Dr Simon Baynham, Chief Researcher in Political and Strategic Studies at the Africa Institute, examines the politico-military conflict in Sahara in its historical, regional and global context.

At first sight, Western Sahara appears to have few attractions, either to its unknown number of inhabitants or to neighbouring states and the wider international community. Yet since 1976, when the Spanish abruptly pulled out without handing over formally to any sort of local leadership arrived at through any principle or process of self-determination, its 267 000 square kilometres have been the scene of ferocious fighting between the Polisario liberation movement and the Moroccan military. And as in many other continental conflicts — in Zaire, Angola and the Horn of Africa for example — the war in Western Sahara has been complicated and intensified by the intervention of major outside powers. In many respects this territorial squabble has parallels with the long-running dispute over pre-independent Namibia; for we are talking about vast areas of uninhabitable terrain, a small population, rich mineral deposits, the proximity of militarily powerful neighbours, a botched imperial legacy in which the end of European colonial dependency was ambiguously, indeed dangerously, abrupt, and big power rivalry.

For nearly fifteen years, the political and military war has been characterized by a bewildering maze of shifting alliances focused principally on the Muslim states of the Maghrib (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia). Briefly stated, the conflict is rooted in Rabat's "historic claim", disputed by its Arab neighbours, to the phosphate-rich territory and in the aspirations and demands for self-determination on the part of the Polisario nationalists. In this essay, I will first outline the origins of one of Africa's least-known but bloody and costly wars in order to place the post-colonial conflict correctly into its regional and global setting.

The colonial legacy

The origins of the conflict in Western Sahara can be traced back to 1884 when Spain successfully laid claim to the 1 000-kilometre Atlantic coastline between Morocco and Mauritania and declared a protectorate over Western Sahara.[1] Two broad concerns informed Spain's motives here: first, the loss of its Latin American colonies in the nineteenth century and its persistent interest in acquiring colonial possessions nearer home by way of compensation; second, a strategic concern to protect its vital Canary Islands off the north-west coast of Africa. To begin with at least, Madrid's effective physical presence was confined to the coast, which was formally annexed on 26 December 1884. An expedition into the interior reached Adrar Temar in 1886; but the frontiers of the territory were not finally established until the Franco-Spanish Agreements of 1900, 1904 and 1912. A comprehensive administrative system reaching deep into the hinterland was not in evidence until 1935, the year before General Franco (commander of the Spanish Foreign Legion from 1923 to 1927) led a Fascist revolt against the Government and proclaimed himself El Caudillo.

Under Spanish sovereignty, the Saharan desert possession was at first divided into two areas, Saguia el-Hamra in the north and Rio de Oro in the south. But on 14 January 1958 the Spanish Sahara was officially established as a single overseas province, with a governor-general responsible to Madrid and entitled to send three elected representatives to the Cortes. Already, however, Madrid's authority was being challenged, not only by the region's indigenous inhabitants but also by territorial claims from Morocco and Mauritania. Before looking at these demands for an end to Spanish occupation, however, some data on the geographic, demographic and economic profile of this arid African wilderness will be in order.

Territory and people[2]

Known as the Spanish Sahara until 1975, the disputed territory is not much larger than Great Britain or Oman. It is bordered by Morocco to the north, by Algeria for less than thirty kilometres at its north-eastern tip, and by Mauritania to the east and the south. The Atlantic is its western boundary. During the colonial era, official census-takers recorded such wide-ranging estimates of the territory's nomadic tribes and sedentary population as to inspire little confidence even in their approximate accuracy. With a view to holding the long-promised referendum on the province's future, the Spanish colonial authorities conducted a special count in 1974. Published in 1975, the census put the largely Islamic population of mainly Arab and Berber descent at some 74 000.

Eight main ethnic groupings may be identified: the key ones are the traditionally pro-Moroccan Tekna in the north; the Reguibat, who once dominated the central region and are now the backbone of the Polisario nationalists; and the Ould Delim of the south, traditionally pro-Mauritanian. The distribution of this population has changed dramatically in the fifteen years or so since the 1974-1975 census; the vast majority of the territory's people are now concentrated either in the northwestern area under Moroccan control[3] or in refugee camps in neighbouring Algeria.[4]

The dominant urban centres of Western Sahara are the capital, El Aaiun, Dakhla (formerly Villa Cisneros), La Guera and Smara. The main resources of the territory are the high-quality phosphates around Bu Craa. It is from Bu Craa that the Spanish constructed a 96-kilometre conveyor belt to transport these valuable phosphates to the Atlantic port at El Aaiun. Until the mining of phosphates started in 1972, the Spanish Sahara's exports were confined mainly to fish and some livestock and animal products. It so happened that the first phosphate shipments from Bu Craa coincided with the beginning of a spectacular surge in global demand and price.[5] As a consequence, Morocco's determination to wrest control of the Spanish Sahara hardened in 1973-1974, as did Madrid's resolve to maintain its grip upon the province. Nevertheless, as detailed below, Spain handed over its possession to Morocco and Mauritania following a trilateral agreement arrived at during 1975.

Challenges to Spain

The first serious challenge to Madrid's authority in Spanish Sahara occurred in 1957-1958 in the shape of a Saharawi guerrilla revolt. Spurred on by the outbreak of the Algerian war of independence in November 1954, and reinforced in their determination by the independence of Morocco and Tunisia in March 1956, Saharawi rebels rose in revolt for the first time since the pacification of 1934.[6] They were encouraged by the activities of the Jaich at-Tahir (Army of Liberation) in southern Morocco who assisted the insurrectionists by attacking certain targets over the border in Spanish Sahara. The guerrillas were suppressed in 1958 by a combined military force of some 9 000 Spaniards and 5 000 Frenchmen. The ferocity of these motorized and paratroop units struck a devastating blow at the rebels and their Moroccan backers, effectively incapacitating the nationalist movement for well over a decade.[7] Nonetheless, the seed of resistance to colonial rule had been firmly planted within the province, although it was not until 1973 that the next phase of guerrilla activity began, after the founding of the Polisario Front (an acronym for Frente Popular para la Liberacion de Saguia El Hamra y Rio de Oro) in the same year.

Meanwhile pressure on Spain accumulated from other quarters. In December 1965 the United Nations called upon Madrid to dismantle its colonial apparatus in the territory; and in the following year a UN Resolution was passed urging Spain to hold a referendum to allow the inhabitants of the province to determine their own destiny. The Spanish government's position during the mid-1960s was that its African possessions were integral provinces of Spain and not therefore entitled to self-determination. But, in the face of further international pressure, Madrid concluded that self-determination might be manipulated so as to ensure Spanish control of the 5 billion tons of phosphates firmly estimated to lie beneath the territory in 1965. Franco consequently announced in 1967 the establishment of an assembly of Saharan notables and elected officials, the Djemaa, whose task it would be to advise Madrid on the process of independence.

In theory, therefore, the wheels of Spanish Sahara's independence had been set in motion. In retrospect, however, the practical purpose is seen to have been the engineering of delaying tactics and the perpetuation of the Spanish presence. In actual fact Madrid was to hold on to its Saharan province for just eight more years. Between 1967 and 1973 the UN General Assembly adopted seven resolutions affirming Spanish Sahara's right to self-determination and independence. Over the same period, these selfsame declarations were faithfully repeated, again and again, by the OAU Council of Ministers. And in February 1973 the Djemaa took matters into its own hands by adopting a declaration in which it asserted the population's desire to decide their own future by means of a referendum; and requested that, in the interim, existing legal institutions be gradually extended so that "the people of the Sahara will have a greater share in the functions and powers of its internal administration".[8]

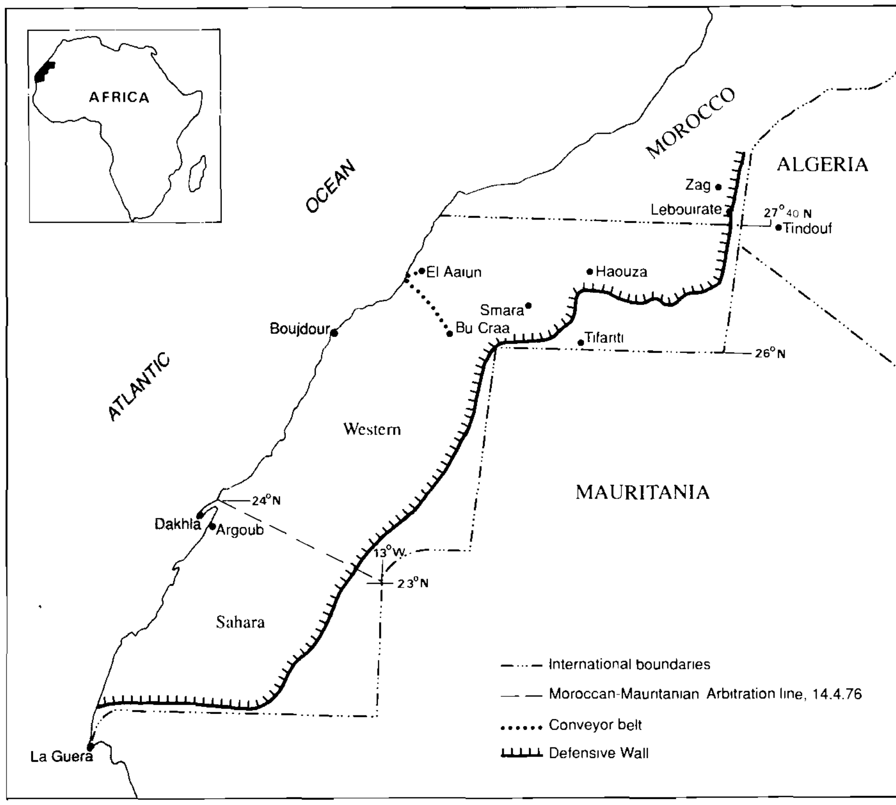
This body-blow from within to Madrid's plan of action, together with increased UN/OAU diplomatic activity and the 1974 coup in Portugal,[9] had two important repercussions: first, it compelled Spain to serve formal notice in August 1974 of its intention to hold a referendum in the colony in the first half of 1975; second and related to the above, it spurred Morocco to dramatic action. King Hassan at once deployed military forces along Morocco's southern frontier and prevailed upon the UN General Assembly to postpone the referendum in order to provide time for the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague to give a consultative assessment of Moroccan and Mauritanian claims to the territory.

These territorial ambitions have been succinctly summarized by War on Want's Programme Officer for North Africa and the Middle East.

> These claims were only made explicit in the mid-fifties, but they were argued in terms of early pre-colonial affinities and allegiances. Morocco in particular invoked 16th and 17th century incursions into the Western Sahara by its sultans to legitimise its claims. It went as far as inventing a theoretical empire, 'Greater Morocco,' which included not only the whole of the Western Sahara, but parts of Algeria and Mali, and all of Mauritania. Mauritania's own claim was thus something of a precaution against Moroccan expansionism. If Morocco acquired the whole of Western Sahara it would have a common border with Mauritania. Mauritania's interest was therefore to split the territory and control the southern portion, as a buffer between itself and Morocco.[10]

Since, however, neither the outcome of the ICJ's ruling nor of an eventual referendum could be accurately predicted, Rabat and Nouakchott took precautionary measures. At some point in October 1974, Morocco's Hassan and President Moktar Ould Daddah of Mauritania entered into a clandestine agreement on a future partition of the territory. A year later, on 14 October 1975, a UN investigative mission reported that the majority of Saharans whom it met in the territory were "categorically" for independence and opposed to the territorial claims of Morocco and Mauritania. Two days later, the ICJ determined against the

Moroccan and Mauritanian case for annexation. It found "no legal ties of such a nature as might affect the application of ... the principle of self-determination through the free and genuine expression of the will of the peoples of the Territory".[11] To the world at large it seemed that a true decolonization of the Spanish Sahara was only one step away. But this was not to be; the ICJ ruling set the stage for a massive Moroccan incursion into this desert territory.



Western Sahara

Saharan invasion

Within three weeks of the ICJ announcement, 350 000 unarmed Koran-bearing civilian Moroccans crossed the border in a well-orchestrated demonstration to lay claim to the Spanish territory. The "Green March", as it was called, was presented to the international community as a spontaneous expression of Morocco's national will. But it was also designed to force Madrid's hand.[12] In this latter objective the march was singularly successful. As the marchers crossed into Spanish territory, units of the Moroccan military forces moved towards the towns of Bir Lehlou, Farsiya, Tifarti, Haouza and Jdiria. Morocco, indeed, had already quietly moved troops into remote parts of the Spanish colony during the preceding month.

Spain's internal political crisis as General Franco lay on his death-bed meant that a military response to Rabat was out of the question. It was certainly true, as one observer put it, that

> If the crisis with Morocco degenerated into a war, Spanish officials knew that the Moroccan forces would be no match for their much larger and better equipped army and air force. The Spanish armed forces numbered 302 000 men, five times more than the 61 000 FAR [*Forces Armées Royales*, of Morocco], and the Spanish air force had twice as many combat aircraft. There were at least 20 000 Spanish troops, including crack Foreign Legion regiments, in Western Sahara, and many more thousands in reserve in the Canary Islands. But the domestic political ramifications of a military confrontation with Morocco as Franco lay dying would be incalculable ... The Spanish population was in no mood for war.[13]

Against this military and political backdrop, the Spanish authorities permitted the marchers to progress a few kilometres deep into their territory before halting their advance. By then, it was clear to all that Madrid would agree to a partition and that the international community would be powerless to intervene. For this reason, and because it had accomplished its mission, King Hassan called off the march on 9 November, three days after it had began. Five days later, on 14 November 1975, a tripartite agreement was signed in Spain by which Madrid agreed to withdraw from the territory by the end of February 1976 and transfer administrative authority to a joint Morocco-Mauritanian administration. However, the Rabat regime revealed its determination to force the pace by quickly securing a major physical military presence in the territory. Between November and December 1975 the Moroccan armed forces seized large areas of Spanish Sahara and gained control of several key towns including the centre of the phosphate-mining complex at Bu Craa and the capital, El Aaiun. The last vestiges of the Spanish military presence were withdrawn in January 1976, four weeks before the date laid down under the terms of the tripartite agreement.

The territory was formally partitioned between Morocco and Mauritania in April. Morocco secured the greater part of the spoils, the northern two-thirds containing most of the known mineral wealth. Mauritania obtained the left-overs from the carve-up, stretches of sand in the extreme south with two small towns and no known resources. Thus Madrid's withdrawal did not lead to independence for the people of Western Sahara. Indeed, as the Moroccans and Mauritanians attempted to decolonize the territory out of its very existence a new and quite different conflict against not European but African invaders began to take shape.

Polisario's initial response

Co-ordinated political activism, as distinct from traditional tribal resistance to Spanish rule, began in a fashion similar to nationalist movements elsewhere in Africa, that is, within a small circle of the educated elite. Their political activities led to the formation in 1968 of the *Mouvement pour la Libération du Sahara* (MLS), the precursor of Polisario, born at a clandestine congress on 10 May 1973.[14]

As noted earlier, according to the

terms of the tripartite accord, Spain had agreed to withdraw from the Sahara on 28 February 1976. And it was on the eve of this date (at midnight on 27 February) that Polisario proclaimed the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). At the same time, a Polisario government-in-exile was established in Algeria, a step that led an incensed Rabat to break off diplomatic relations with Algiers. During the first half of 1976, between 75 000 and 150 000 civilian refugees fled from Moroccan military operations designed to pacify the local population. About half of these fled across the Algerian border to the area south of Tindouf where the authorities trained and armed Polisario guerrillas for raids into Western Sahara. This force became the Saharawi People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Recognizing their inability to dent the heavily defended army garrisons of the territory's urban settlements, Polisario opted for a strategy of guerrilla penetration into their surrounding desert areas — especially sabotage operations against the economically-important conveyor belt carrying phosphates from Bu Craa to the coast. But mindful of the military might of the Moroccan forces, Polisario's strategists at first concentrated their guerrillas against the much weaker Mauritanians, who were soon to discover that the costs of administering and holding the zone they had annexed far outweighed the revenues derived from its occupation. In short, the SPLA'S primary aim was to knock Nouakchott out of the war, an objective achieved with relative celerity since Mauritania was in no condition — economically or militarily — to sustain a prolonged conflict of attrition against the Polisario forces.[15]

Political and military circumstances inside Mauritania were equally inappropriate. As Hodges has remarked:

> Ould Daddah had simply been unable to generate the kind of enthusiasm for his Saharan policy which King Hassan had aroused in Morocco. Moreover, from a purely military standpoint, it would be impossible for the Mauritanian army, with only three thousand men plus some two thousand in paramilitary units and a handful of ancient Defender aircraft, to patrol the country's long desert frontiers effectively and police a territory of about four hundred thousand square miles, an area twice the size of France.[16]

Thus, although Mauritania received substantial military assistance from both Morocco and Giscard d'Estaing's French administration — a development which greatly soured Franco-Algerian relations — Polisario was able by mid-1978 to call a halt to its audacious Mauritanian offensive.

A *coup d'état* in Nouakchott effectively ushered in a cease-fire. The economic costs of the war — exacerbated by repeated drought, declining exports and humiliating military reverses — sparked off a revolt by President Daddah's armed forces. During the night of 9-10 July 1978, the military ousted the government and established a Military Committee for National Recovery, a development enthusiastically welcomed by the war-weary population.[17] After more than a year of procrastination and indecision, and to Morocco's considerable consternation and fury, Nouakchott signed a peace agreement with Polisario in Algiers on 5 August 1979. By the terms of this accord, Mauritania relinquished its territorial claims to what had temporarily been its part of Western Sahara and acknowledged the legitimacy of Polisario's objectives. The power vacuum thus left was promptly destroyed by Morocco; King Hassan occupied the southern territory and declared it a Moroccan province.

Polisario had now broken the Morocco-Mauritanian axis and, for the first time, was able to concentrate its military and diplomatic resources against Rabat. It is to this bitter and enduring conflict with Morocco — and the war's broader regional and global ramifications — that the remaining sections of this article will be devoted. First, to the armed operations during the decade or more since Mauritania's capitulation to the Polisario guerrillas.

The desert war: 1979-1990

The peace treaty between Nouakchott and the Polisario Front opened the latest phase in the evolution of the Western Sahara war, a phase now into its twelfth year. With the enforced removal of Mauritania from the conflict, Morocco and its backers were left to face Polisario alone. But Mauritania's withdrawal has led to no lessening of Rabat's determination to stay in the Sahara. Indeed, on 3 March 1980, on the occasion of the nineteenth anniversary of his accession to the throne, King Hassan proclaimed that the Western Sahara was an "integral part" of Morocco and its annexation "an irreversible historical fact".

Since Mauritania's withdrawal from the war the Polisario Front has launched a number of large-scale attacks on Moroccan strongholds in the disputed territory. One of the key targets of the SPLA guerrilla offensive has been the phosphate-mining complex at Bu Craa, linked to the Atlantic port at El Aaiun by a 96-kilometre conveyor belt. Polisario's stated long-term strategy is to wage a war of attrition and make the conflict so disastrously expensive for the Rabat government as to provoke opposition from the Moroccan masses. But although Hassan's forces have sustained serious losses, these have not been on the scale publicized in Polisario communiques.

Polisario guerrillas have bases in the Western Sahara itself, in parts of southern Morocco and in Algeria and Mauritania. From the beginning, Polisario operational strategy and tactics have been nothing more nor less than updates in the old tradition of rapid desert raids. Its forces are organized into basic operational units of 10-15 soldiers — about enough for three Land Rovers. These are reported to be part of battalions some 350 strong. The Land Rover remains Polisario's preferred means of transport and attack and the Kalashnikov AK-47 its favourite light weapon. Units cross the desert at high speed to rendezvous for concerted attacks. The soldiers' knowledge of the terrain is so complete that they can navigate at night without the use of headlamps. Officially, Polisario maintains that most of its armaments have been captured from enemy forces, but the majority of its equipment — including armour, mortars and SPG-9 anti-tank missiles — are known to have been supplied by Algeria and Libya.

As the military successes of the SPLA guerrillas became more frequent and daring, the Moroccan armed forces were obliged to abandon many of the more remote posts occupied in the early part of the war. Elsewhere a gradual process of consolidation was initiated in which the defences of the larger urban centres such as El Aaiun, Bu Craa, Smara, Argoub and Boujdour were greatly reinforced.[18] The hallmark of Morocco's counter-strategy has been the construction of a defensive "wall", or system of "walls", now some 2 500 kilometres in length, behind which lie the major population centres and anything of economic value. These were begun in 1980, when (in a bid to present annexation as a fait accompli) Morocco also started a settler incentive programme bringing many thousands of Moroccans across the border to live in Western Saharan towns.

The Moroccan "wall" fortifications provide a continuous line of defence stretching from a point near Zag in south-east Morocco to La Guera on the southernmost Atlantic tip of the disputed Saharan territory. This wall is made up of two bulldozed banks of sand (each over two metres high), fronted by barbed wire, minefields, and occasional artillery placements, radar and modern electronic surveillance devices. These defences are manned along the wall's entire length, defenders making use of protective ditches and elaborate underground dugouts. Ten kilometres behind the lines are mechanized and artillery units equipped with 120-mm artillery pieces, AML-90 armoured cars and AMX tanks. Still further in the rear are Rapid Intervention Forces sited in camps 30 kilometres behind the primary barrier. Their role is quickly to concentrate superior Moroccan fire-power at any point within hours of a major Polisario attack.[19]

Although these fortifications require the presence of some 80-100 000 troops to keep the SPLA fighters at arm's length, they have proved very effective. Polisario guerrillas on foot can pierce the wall at night; but they have been unable to use their mobility to take and hold ground behind it. The defences have also prevented their bringing in wheeled and tracked vehicles other than in a frontal assault which the Rapid Intervention Forces can stifle with overwhelming power.

Mainly operating loosely in the area between the fortifications and the Western Saharan borders with Mauritania and Algeria, Polisario's military response has been to launch pinprick attacks and mortar barrages against the wall, with occasional heavier assaults at night. However, because of the risk of Royal Moroccan Air Force attacks, the guerrillas cannot maintain permanent bases in these areas. SPLA soldiers themselves are trained at an Algerian military academy close to Tindouf where large numbers of Saharawi refugees are sheltered, educated and fed. In a major battle at Oum Dreiga in September 1988, Polisario deployed a mechanized infantry battalion consisting of 30 armoured personnel carriers backed by heavy artillery, and two motorized infantry battalions.[20] Their equipment is almost all from the Eastern bloc, mainly supplied by Algeria and Libya.

As I have said, the Polisario Front's military strategy is one of attrition, designed to keep King Hassan's forces in a constant state of alert in the hope that ultimately the Moroccan economy will be unable to sustain the war's enormous costs in both troops and armaments.[21] Moroccan sources give the strength of their forces in the territory as 82 000 men; Polisario claims the figure should be 167 000. Independent sources suggest a figure nearer 95 000. Polisario forces are estimated at 8 000. Moroccan casualties since 1976 are conservatively estimated to be in the region of 18 000 dead and wounded.

Foreign interests and objectives

Considerations of space do not permit an exhaustive analysis of outside support for the two key actors, Morocco and the Polisario Front; but because of the extensive involvement and influence of external players in the dispute, the international dimension of the conflict will be addressed by looking briefly at the interests and role of Mauritania, Algeria, Libya, Spain, France, the USA and the USSR.

Mauritania

Because Mauritania's involvement in the Sahara has been described in some detail above, it is sufficient for our present purposes to say that Nouakchott's role in the conflict has been negligible since the coup against President Daddah in July 1978 and the subsequent peace agreement with the Polisario Front in August 1979. For the past decade and more Mauritanian authorities have kept as low a profile as possible. Mauritania's military setback at the hands of Polisario, together with the territory's economic precariousness, suggest that Nouakchott will keep its head down until the status of Western Sahara is eventually resolved.

Algeria

Unlike Mauritania, Algeria — undoubtedly the most powerful state in northwest Africa and sharing almost 30 kilometres of common frontier with the Western Sahara — has played a central role in the evolving Saharan conflict. Because Algiers has been (and continues to be) Polisario's chief source of military equipment, logistics and training, its critics have argued that what we have here is an attempt at Algerian hegemony and ideological domination in the region. And although Algeria has not made any formal claims to the Western Sahara, it has been noted that a victory there by a pro-Algerian Polisario would facilitate Algerian access to the Atlantic ports of El Aaiun and Dakhla for the future transport of iron-ore exports from the Tindouf area.[22]

Diplomatic relations between Algiers and Rabat, which were broken off in March 1976, were restored in May 1988. This followed some softening in official Algerian criticism of Morocco's occupation of the Western Sahara. Nevertheless, Algeria continues to insist on direct negotiations between Rabat and the Polisario Front, together with the withdrawal of Moroccan military and administrative personnel from the disputed territory, as a prelude to a UN-sponsored referendum free of any foreign restraints — a position echoing Polisario's demands. Meanwhile the kingdom's relations with socialist Algiers remain delicate. As King Hassan recently stated in an interview with the French press: "Our relationship with Algeria is excellent; however, it becomes schizophrenic with respect to the Western Sahara conflict. We pretend it doesn't exist."[23]

Libya

Colonel Gaddafi's regime has also for long been a staunch ally of the Polisario Front. Indeed, for the first two years of Polisario's existence (1973-1975) Libya was the movement's major provider of matériel. Any explanation of Tripoli's involvement in this enduring conflict can start at either or both of two points. First, at the ideological level, Libyan leaders oppose Hassan as a feudal and pro-Western monarch in an era of radical Arab socialism. As Damis has written, "As a good Nasserist and Third Worlder, Qadhafi has given high priority to extending Libya's influence in Africa, propagating the Islamic faith, and promoting revolutionary programs and regimes in Third World countries."[24] The second factor that may explain Libya's disposition is the matter of France's support for Morocco and French military activities directed over many years against Libyan-backed Frolinat rebels in Chad. However, although Gaddafi's hostility to Hassan rules out prospects of a rapprochement between Tripoli and Rabat, Libya "seriously questions the economic viability of an independent Saharan state ... and would prefer to see the territory federated with another country, preferably Mauritania."[25]

Spain

Successive Spanish administrations have attempted to maintain cordial relations with both Rabat and Algiers while exploiting the ambiguities in the Madrid Tripartite Accords of 14 November 1975. The Madrid Accords, it will be recalled, led to the withdrawal of Spain from its Saharan territory and the transfer of authority to Morocco and Mauritania on 27 February 1976. Madrid has since consistently reaffirmed the position that its international responsibilities in the Western Sahara ended on that date. The Accords gave Spain a 35 per cent interest in the exploitation of Saharan phosphates as well as certain fishing rights. In return for promoting Moroccan territorial ambitions, Madrid also persuaded King Hassan to announce that he would not pressure Spain concerning the precarious presidios of Ceuta and Melilla until Madrid recovered Gibraltar.[26] Spain, together with France and the United States, has also been a major supplier of armaments to Morocco for its Saharan military operations. This has naturally antagonized Algeria which has, intermittently, supported the campaign for the independence of the Canary Islands. Given the strategic significance of the Canaries to Spain, it is not difficult to comprehend why Madrid has continued to walk a delicate tightrope on the Saharan issue: on one hand it exports arms to Rabat, while refusing to recognize Moroccan sovereignty in the territory; on the other hand it accepts, in principle, the right of the Saharan people to self-determination — while baulking at recognition of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic. In short, Spanish self-interest lies at the heart of Madrid's flexible — and often contradictory — balancing act.

France

Overwhelmingly more significant than the influence of any other European state is that of France, the country that colonized Morocco, Mauritania and Algeria in the nineteenth century. As the former imperial ruler in all three north-west African states, France has a more substantial involvement with those countries than has any other power, and retains important political, economic and cultural ties. Although Paris has been the leading arms supplier to Rabat — a role that has complicated its relationship with Algiers — it has maintained a policy of formal neutrality on the Saharan issue, neither recognizing Moroccan sovereignty in the territory nor recognizing the SADR. Yet despite its claimed neutrality, France has played a leading part in the armed conflict for the Western Sahara. Limited French military intervention began as early as 1976 when it became apparent that the Mauritanian Army was no match for the Polisario fighters.[27] And activating Franco-Mauritanian co-operation agreements, French Jaguar air strikes against SPLA columns operating in Mauritania started in December 1977, the official pretext being that they were necessary in order to protect the 3 000 French citizens working in Mauritania. France's direct military intervention ended following the July 1978 coup d'état against Mauritania's President Daddah, after which Paris was able to forge something of a political rapprochement with the Algerians. Since then, Paris has attempted to maintain good relations with both Rabat and Algiers. Officially, therefore, the position of the French administration is one of non-interference; in practical terms, however, Paris has shown itself to be decidedly pro-Moroccan.[28] Forty thousand French expatriates live in Morocco, where a friendly leader, massive French investment and trade (much greater than that with Algeria) and a geopolitically strategic location account for French political leanings.

The USA

Although Washington does not recognize Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara (though it does lend some diplomatic support to Hassan in international debates on the territory), there can be no doubt about the USA's alignments in north-west Africa. Broad strategic considerations have impelled the Ford, Carter, Reagan and Bush Administrations to support Morocco, more or less openly, "in spite of Algeria's much greater importance to US business interests."[29] Rabat is considered in Washington as a moderate voice in Middle Eastern and African affairs, while Algeria is viewed as dangerously radical and a centre of revolutionary anti-American terrorist activity. These perceptions gained ground during the Gulf crisis and the war against Iraq's Saddam Hussein in early 1991. For these reasons — and because in May 1982 Morocco granted access and transit facilities to the US Rapid Deployment Force — Washington has been a major source of military aid to Morocco, though on a smaller scale than France. During the 1970s, political upheavals in Portugal and Spain, which threatened US air-base rights in both states, enhanced Morocco's importance as an American ally in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Put simply, the justification for the large-scale military assistance provided to Rabat by Washington, in the words of the Reagan Administration's official budget request to Congress in 1985, is that "it helps to maintain the stability of a pro-Western country which has played a moderating role in the Arab world vis-à-vis Israel" — and provides US military forces with crucially important strategic facilities.[30] As the war in the Sahara enters the 1990s, the likelihood of an American volte-face in this region of the Maghrib appear remote in the extreme.

The USSR

As Zoubir notes, "For decades the Soviet Union has portrayed itself as the natural champion of national liberation movements ... [yet] the Soviets have shown little interest in extending support to the Saharawi people in their struggle for independence".[31] The Soviets, in fact, have repeatedly emphasized their neutrality in the Saharan issue by articulating their support in principle for Saharawi self-determination (but not actually recognizing Polisario) while simultaneously never denying Rabat's claims to Western Sahara. The reasons for the maintenance of Moscow's low profile in the conflict lie in its political ties with Algeria and its economic ties with Morocco.

The USSR's economic relationship

with Rabat centres on two key commodities: Moscow is Morocco's second largest supplier of crude oil and a major purchaser of Moroccan phosphates. Indeed, the extent of the Soviet trading relationship with the Arab kingdom is staggering. In 1974, the two states signed a $5 billion agreement for supplies of 5 million tons of Moroccan phosphate; to begin in 1980 and double to 10 million tons from 1990 to 2005.[32] At the same time — and in contradistinction to Washington's ties with the two major powers in north-west Africa where the relationship is opposite to that of Moscow — the USSR has heavy commitments in Algeria. Because of Algeria's revolutionary ideological orientation, the Soviet Union and Algiers invariably find themselves on common ground where it concerns international issues. This symbiotic relationship in the political and diplomatic arena helps to explain Moscow's role as the most important armaments supplier to the Bendjedid regime. Indeed, it has been estimated that up to 90 per cent of Algerian arms are of Soviet origin.[33] In short, Moscow's commercial interests in Morocco are to a large degree balanced by its ideological and military commitments to Algiers. For these reasons, and reflecting in reverse Washington's multifaceted objectives and interests in the region, the Soviet Union has maintained an official policy of neutrality in the Western Sahara.

Conclusion

Although Morocco has been able to fend off the SPLA's offensive and hold on to the territory's valuable phosphate resources, Rabat has concluded that the conflict cannot have a military solution. That is why King Hassan informed the French media in December 1988 that he was willing to talk to the Polisario Front. The subsequent Marrakesh meetings (which took place in early January 1989) represented a breakthrough in the war, "not least because the mere acknowledgement of the Front's existence was in itself a de facto recognition of the Saharawi liberation movement".[34]

A combination of circumstances seems to have persuaded the two adversaries that the old absolutes should be rejected in favour of a negotiated settlement based on a referendum. For Morocco, the huge costs of the fighting — estimates start at about $350 million a year — together with the accelerating rapprochement with Algeria[35] and Rabat's declining importance to the United States (despite the 1990/91 Gulf War)[36] in the new climate of détente, point to the need for compromise and reconciliation. Meanwhile Polisario is confident that, with more than seventy countries having recognized the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, it is in a strong position to build on its diplomatic achievements to date.

But there are a number of practical problems and obstacles involved in organizing the referendum that both sides in principle now say they want. Even if the security situation were to improve, there is the crucial question as to who would be eligible to vote. Both Polisario and Morocco assert that the roughly 74 000 Saharans recorded by Spain's colonial administrator in 1974 "are not difficult to account for — though, ironically, each side claims a majority live under its control".[37] But what about the Moroccan military presence in the territory, the status of Rabat's administrators in the interim, and the problem of Moroccan settlers who remained in what was then Spanish Sahara after the "Green March"? All these issues remain unresolved, yet are central to the implementation of a referendum on the future status of the territory — which Polisario in any case believes Rabat will attempt to rig.

Thus despite some flexibility and a wide variety of mediation attempts by the UN and the OAU, the contending parties remain locked in what some diplomats believe to be irreconcilable positions. It is unlikely that partition would solve the problems of the region mainly because the only valuable section of Western Sahara lies well within the defensive wall; and this, quite naturally, Morocco would be loathe to relinquish. Yet while there is no immediate prospect of a solution, some observers have conjectured that neither side will ultimately wish to go for broke in an all-or-nothing referendum.[38] If this proves to be so, a compromise might be found by granting some recognition to Rabat's claim of "historic sovereignty" while recognizing a high degree of Saharan autonomy. Indeed, one Polisario leader, Ahmed Haj, has suggested that a new Saharan state could join a federation "within the context of the building of the Grand Maghrib".[39] If some such middle way could be negotiated, 1992 might mark the year of regional reconciliation in North Africa's long-running and forgotten war.

Postscript

Just before going to press in May, news of an apparent breakthrough in the Western Sahara problem was announced by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr Javier Perez de Cuellar. The UN plan will attempt to end the 15-year war by initiating a cease-fire followed by a vote on the future of the territory. The proposed referendum, planned for January 1992, will offer some 74 000 people a choice between independence and integration with Morocco.

The UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara — or Minurso as the plan is known — is similar to the long and complex operation that brought Namibia to independence in March 1990. At its peak the $200 million Minurso plan will involve more than 2 800 military and civilian personnel, who will monitor the reduction of Moroccan troop levels and the confinement of the soldiers of both sides to designated locations. The Mission will also arrange the release of political prisoners, register voters, administer the referendum and monitor the voting.

Under the proposed plan, Morocco is to reduce its forces in the territory to 65 000 men within eleven weeks of the cease-fire. The referendum itself is due to take place about twenty weeks after the cessation of hostilities. The UN operation calls for the presence of a military contingent some 1 700 strong, to include 550 military observers, an infantry battalion of 700 men, an air support group of 110, together with a signals unit, a medical team, a company of military police and logistical support. The plan was unanimously approved by the UN Security Council on 29 April.

Notes and references

1 The roots of the conflict can, in fact, be taken back to the 1400s. As early as the fifteenth century, Portuguese and Castilian expeditions raided the Atlantic coast of the Sahara in search of slaves. And by the Treaty of Cintra in 1509 Portugal recognized Spain's right to establish herself in West Africa. Numerous razzias from the Canary Islands occurred in the sixteenth

century, but Spain had no physical presence in the territory until late in the nineteenth century when Captain Emilio Bonelli founded Villa Cisneros in 1884. See James Firebrace with Jeremy Harding, *Exiles of the Sahara*, London: War on Want, 1987, p 5; and Colin Legum (ed), *Africa handbook*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969, p 461.

2 Most of this geographical and statistical data is taken from Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, *The Western Saharans*, London: Croom Helm, 1980, pp 113-127; and "Western Sahara," *Background Brief*, July 1988, published by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London.

3 A 1982 census carried out by the Moroccan government gave a total figure of 164 000, which presumably includes thousands of settlers from Morocco itself.

4 With an estimated population of 165 000, these include nomads from Algeria and neighbouring countries, some of whom belong to the same tribes as the Western Saharans.

5 With estimated reserves of some 5,2 billion tons of high-quality phosphates, Western Sahara has the fourth richest deposit in the world.

6 For full details, see Tony Hodges, *Western Sahara: The roots of a desert war*, Westport, Connecticut: Lawrence Hill & Company, 1983, chapter 5.

7 The uprising and its bloody suppression are described by Hodges, *op cit*, chapter 7.

8 Report of UN mission, quoted in John Gretton, Western Sahara: *The fight for self-determination*, London: Anti-Slavery Society, 1976, p 27.

9 The impact upon Madrid and Rabat of the armed revolution in Lisbon has been described as follows: "During 1974, the revolution in Portugal and Portugal's rapid withdrawal from Africa were also a major factor in the Moroccan decision to mobilize a Saharan campaign. In Rabat's view, the lesson of Portugal would not be lost on the Spanish, who could be expected to see the heavy liability of trying to hang on to one of the last remaining colonial territories in Africa. Over the years, Spain had maintained consistently good relations with Africa and the Arab world. Thus, King Hassan had reason to believe that Spain would now be willing to negotiate the surrender of the Western Sahara." John Damis, *Conflict in northwest Africa*, Stanford: The Hoover Institution, 1983, p 51.

10 James Firebrace and Jeremy Harding, *op cit*, p 6.

11 International Court of Justice, *Western Sahara: Advisory opinion of 16 October 1975*, The Hague, 1975.

12 Spain's susceptibility to pressure was exacerbated by the 82-year old Franco's poor health. During this period, he became seriously ill, providing both Rabat and the pro-Moroccan lobby in Madrid with additional political leverage. Franco died on 20 November 1975, two weeks after the "Green March" began.

13 Tony Hodges, *op cit*, p 215.

14 For information on the social origins and educational background of early nationalists, see John Gretton, *op cit*, p 30. Polisario's military campaign against the Spanish falls outside the main boundaries of this article but Gretton (p 31) describes the early period of the armed struggle as follows: "For the first year, the going was very tough. The Spanish forces did all they could to stamp out the movement, and it is from that time that most of the atrocity stories date: shooting of the wounded, prisoners slung along the sides of patrol cars, and so on besides the usual torturing. Thereafter, it became something of a phoney war, more of a sparring match with occasional flare-ups. ... During the first two years, up to July 1975, they fought just under 50 major engagements, for the loss of under 30 killed or taken prisoner."

15 *Ibid*, p 243. A detailed description of the Polisario military campaign against its Mauritanian adversaries, and an account of the vital logistical support the movement received during this time from Algeria, is provided by Tony Hodges, *op cit*, pp 242-246.

16 *Ibid*, p 243.

17 The adverse consequences of external military operations on the internal pattern of African civil-military relations is an enduring theme in the literature of post-colonial African politics. See, for example, my own study of the impact of one West African state's military adventurism in the Congo: Simon Baynham, *The military and politics in Nkrumah's Ghana*, Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1988, especially chapter 5.

18 David Seddon, "Morocco and the Western Sahara", *Review of African Political Economy*, no 38, April 1987, p 27.

19 Details of this three-tier structure supplied to the author by Stephen Ellis, unpublished mimeograph, 1989.

20 *Ibid*.

21 As Tony Hodges, *op cit*, p 13, has remarked, "The Saharan conflict is a classic example of a war of attrition. The guerrillas do not have to break through the Moroccan defence lines and seize El Aiun to achieve their objectives. They simply have to remain a permanent threat, forcing King Hassan to keep a high number of troops and a vast arsenal of weaponry in the Sahara, at a cost, in financial terms, that Morocco can ill afford. Polisario's strategy hinges, in fact, on the belief that Morocco will be unable to sustain this war indefinitely and that, if King Hassan does not end it, he will eventually lose his throne."

22 Another observer of the scene has described Algeria's motives in somewhat different fashion: "... Algerian support for the Polisario in the Western Sahara can be more accurately described as a wish to deny the Sahara to Morocco." David Lynn Price, *The Western Sahara*, Washington, DC: The Washington Papers/Sage Publications, 1979, p 24.

23 Quoted in *New African*, no 261, June 1989, p 38.

24 John Damis, *op cit*, p 113.

25 *Ibid*.

26 For details, see Phillip C Naylor, "Spain and France and the decolonization of Western Sahara: Parity and paradox, 1975-87", *Africa Today*, vol 34, no 3, 1987, pp 7-11.

27 In January 1976, the French government also agreed to sell 21 Mirage F-1s to Morocco. Damis has expanded on the French military input in some detail: "In the context of the Western Sahara conflict, the major feature of Franco-Moroccan cooperation has been France's role as the principal supplier of weapons to Morocco's armed forces. The Moroccan military has been primarily French-equipped since independence, and arms deliveries since 1975 have been a natural outgrowth of a long-term military supply relationship. Recent French arms supplies to Morocco have been on a large scale and span the entire spectrum from light arms to heavy weaponry to a Crotale anti-aircraft missile system. These armaments include 60 Mirage F-1CH jet interceptor aircraft, 24 Fouga strike planes, 24 Alpha jet tactical support aircraft, 40 Puma troop-carrying helicopters, and 400 VAB armored personnel carriers. The total value of French arms sales to Morocco between 1974 and 1981 is probably in the range of $1.5-2.0 billion, not including weapons supplied through military credits." John Damis, *op cit*, p 116.

28 As one observer adds: "France has tried with difficulty to maintain a degree of equilibrium and neutrality; it would have liked a referendum in the Sahara, but it will go no further. It will not do anything to jeopardize the King, considering him preferable to a military regime. Apart from a few convinced socialists, the French Administration is skeptical about the creation of a Saharan state; Mauritania's difficulties in surviving are too well known." Nicole Grimaud, quoted in Phillip C Naylor, *op cit*, p 15.

29 Tony Hodges, *op cit*, p 355. However, this support does not extend to the recognition of the Polisario Front or the SADR.

30 *Western Sahara Newsletter*, no 4, September 1985.

31 Yahia Zoubir, "Soviet policy toward the Western Sahara conflict", *Africa Today*, vol 34, no 3, 1987, p 17.

32 David Lynn Price, *op cit*, p 64. On the same page, Price expands on the size of the Moscow-Rabat trading relationship: "The next stage ... opened in January

1978, in a deal described by King Hassan as the 'contract of the century.' The contract was a long-term barter deal involving a Soviet investment of $2 billion in a phosphate mine at Meskala, south Morocco. It is the largest single investment in Morocco since independence in 1956, and is probably the largest single investment by the Soviet Union in the developing world."

33 "Although the Benjedid regime has taken steps to diversify military supplies, up to 90 percent of Algerian arms are of Soviet origin, including some of the latest and most costly equipment exported by the USSR. The Algerian Army is equipped with 650 T-54, T-55, T-62, and T-72 medium-sized tanks and 830 BTR armoured personnel carriers, and the Algerian Air Force's 295 combat aircraft include 60 MiG-17s, 90 MiG-21MFs, 20 MiG-23BMs, and 10 MiG-25Rs. ... As a result of several large arms deals since 1975, Algeria has became the fourth largest purchaser of Soviet weapons among Third World countries." John Damis, *op cit*, pp 128-129.

34 Yahia Zoubir, "The Western Sahara conflict: Regional and international dimensions", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 28, no 2, June 1990, p 225.

35 Shortly after the 1989 Morocco-Polisario talks, President Chadli Bendjedid of Algeria went to Rabat on the first state visit between the countries for twenty years. For further details of the warming relationship between Rabat and Algiers, see Farouk Sankari, "The Western Sahara conflict", *Journal of Third World Studies*, vol VII, no 1, pp 163-164.

36 The 1991 Gulf War had little direct impact on the Saharan conflict. However, following Morocco's condemnation of Iraq over the invasion of Kuwait, Baghdad announced that it was considering recognition of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic in Western Sahara. Morocco committed troops to the United States-led UN force against Iraq, raising fears that Iraq would use Mauritania, where it has considerable influence, to channel military assistance to the Polisario guerrillas. At the time of writing (early 1991) there is no sign that this has in fact happened.

37 *Africa Report*, March-April 1989, p 55.

38 Privately, Polisario is known to have fears that a vote, even if free and fair, might not go in its favour. This is because Morocco has put considerable effort into building up the infrastructure of the territory and in so doing has changed the lives of many Saharawis. This may have succeeded in winning over the majority of the population.

39 Africa Report, *op cit*.

The Natal violence and its causes

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The complexity of the Natal violence derives from the variety of conflicts being waged within its geographical area.

The first of the Natal conflicts takes the form of an intra- and inter-community conflict which, as Stavrou and Shongwe have argued, manifests itself in violence between various factions within communities.[1] This conflict is generally thought to revolve around the allocation and control of resources within the community, but it extends beyond the material level to include deeper psychological needs that have remained unsatisfied. These influence the behaviour of certain sections of the population, particularly younger people. Related here is an inter-generation conflict characterizing relations between these young people and older members of the community. The second conflict is between elites who have coalesced into different political organizations. This conflict reflects an underlying feeling of insecurity within these elites derived both from their fear of, and perceived need for, an incorporative strategy in order more successfully to oppose apartheid. These emotions manifest themselves in these different organizations' emphasis on the incorporation of the wider population into structures that fall under their control. At the same time, they need to act against any dissent that might manifest itself within either their organization or the wider society outside.[2]

The third conflict lies within the white community, particularly the academic community, and relates to the *problématique* concerning the appropriate methodology to be followed in researching this violence.[3]

Research on the Natal violence may be divided into two schools. The first stresses that the violence is the manifestation of a power struggle between Inkatha and the United Democratic Front (UDF), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), and the African National Congress (ANC).[4] Another important actor on this view is the State, whose tentacles extend into all the different conflicts mentioned above.

The second school may be termed the "structural school"[5] in that its main premise is that the underlying causes of the conflict lie in the structural imbalances of the land and housing shortages, high unemployment and poverty. These are the source of a great frustration among community residents, particularly young people, as such socio-economic conditions inhibit their opportunities and any realization of their expectations. The net result has been the creation of apathy, alienation and volatility in the general population, quite petty events often acting as catalysts that allow conflict to turn to open violence.

The majority of the research, conducted into the causes of this Natal violence does not, indeed, show a perfect dichotomy of viewpoint but combines both sides in a dominant-subordinate nexus, emphasis in each instance depending upon the approach adopted by the school in question. Although this article will concentrate on identifying the general causes of the conflict, it must be borne in mind that there are particular elements unique to any given area that often (as have been indicated above) act as catalysts in the creation of violence. These reflect the material hardships facing communities or the insecurities experienced by certain individual persons. Such petty issues are often the spark that converts conflict into violence.

The author's approach to the study of the violence makes room for both schools, but seeks to integrate them by introducing a superordinate denominator: individual human needs. The value of this approach lies in its reliance upon the individual person as the prime unit of analysis rather than upon abstract and ideologically-loaded terms such as "mob" and "the masses". This approach has been developed by John Burton,[6] an Australian academic who specializes in the field of international conflict. The Burtonian approach to conflict locates the sources of international conflict within domestic socio-political institutions. The process of social change undermines the ability of these institutions to satisfy universal human needs for security, recognition, control, distributive justice, response, meaning, and a need to be perceived as acting in a rational manner.[7] The result is the delegitimization of these structures and all who are part and parcel of them, resulting in the growth of socio-political instability and ultimately a systemic crisis.

Solutions adopted at one time or another by those with influence within these institutions include recourse to authoritarian leadership. Another involves attempts to legitimate elite control of the decision-making process by proposing simplistic responses to what is perceived by entrenched interests as deviance. In reality these "deviant" acts indicate a failure to satisfy individual human needs. In Burton's opinion, these are mere "pseudo-solutions" in that they fail to adequately address the true causes of the conflict and in fact merely exacerbate them. Burton notes that the power politics approach fails to address human needs which are simply swept aside or denied in the course of negotiation. The reason for this lies in a failure to distinguish between the human needs mentioned above, which are non-negotiable, and other values and interests which may enjoy changing priorities. For the very same reasons any settlement reached is likely to be of short duration.[8]

Burton's thoughts and reasoning can be of use in attempts to reconcile the views of the "power struggle" and "structural" schools of analysis on the Natal violence. The inter-organizational conflict being waged between Inkatha and the UDF, Cosatu, and now the ANC, indicates a need on the part of members within each organization's top and middle leadership for personal security, for recognition, for a sense of participation in future political deliberations, and a need to be accepted as following rational policies. On another level any satisfaction of the human needs of the inhabitants of settlements affected by the violence is being checked at every turn by the socio-economic hardships. These hardships include obstacles in the way of participation in the formal economy and local political structures. Such obstacles favour the creation of frustration and anxiety which in turn contribute to the generation of conflict and eventually violence.

The underlying cause of the "power struggle" between Inkatha and the UDF, Cosatu and the ANC has its roots in the incorporative strategy adhered to in black politics since the formation of the ANC in 1912 largely in response to the divisive nature of white minority rule. Its effect on organizational arrangements has revolved around moves to centralize control of resources within one unified movement. The problem for each organization and its leadership of course lay in how other organizations were to be accommodated within one such unified movement. Hence the major questions concerned what was to be the order of priorities in the unification process and who should draw up such a list. This *problématique* favoured the development of tensions in the relations between the elites within each organization and, to a lesser degree, between the lower-order members of each.

The rationale behind these fears led to the incorporative strategy's not only governing relations between Black political organizations but to its also forming the basis for the mobilization strategy and organizational structures adopted by each organization. The emphasis in every organization has thus fallen on varying degrees of democratic centralism.[9] But at the same time two counter-phenomena have made their appearance. The first has been the tendency inherent in the centralization process for some members to be marginalized, excluded from both general participative and, especially, decision-making structures. Another feature common to both UDF and Inkatha has been the growth of structures enjoying a large measure of autonomy, an independence from the regional and national leadership. One example of this might be the local autonomy enjoyed by youth organizations that have affiliated to the UDF.[10] Another example, this time within Inkatha, is provided by the warlords who have been granted a degree of independence thanks to their potential for controlling areas in which Inkatha is weak. Nevertheless, the extent of this autonomy remains within the limits imposed by the organizations themselves and, although this development may have given rise to secondary causes and actors, has not constituted the fundamental cause of the conflict.

The next focus of my argument falls upon the tensions inherent in the organizational structures of the parties to the conflict.[11] These tensions are related to the failure of any one party to secure the allegiance of such a significant proportion of the population that other parties are denied the resources that would otherwise have been available to them.

Little has been written on the nature and problems of UDF structures except in very romanticized and determinist ways. The problems facing the UDF can be seen as being short-term and immediate in nature. The first problem lies in the physical insecurity that faces both local UDF leaders and, more importantly, rank-and-file membership. The sources of this insecurity have their origin in attacks by Inkatha supporters and State harassment. The second problem is related to the UDF's need to be seen as rational, not only in the eyes of its opponents, but also in the hostile views of the UDF and Cosatu expressed in the media.[12] The next category of problems are inherent in the organization itself and arise from the decentralized nature of UDF structures. The autonomy of local affiliates in relation to the regional and national leadership has not only made difficult any attempts at control from above, but has crystallized into conflict on generation lines. This has had important consequences for efforts designed to reach some sort of settlement between the warring parties. UDF leadership's attempts at peace have frequently led to tensions between them and more youthful members, owing clearly to the latter's exposure to State repression and attacks by Inkatha members.[13] Another problem lies in the excesses committed by these selfsame young people in their attempts to bring about an adequate legal system and a greater sense of distributive justice. Although residents have tended to favour this move, overzealousness by youths in meting out justice in matters concerning family relations has tended to alienate them from their elders.[14] These feelings may be gauged by the extent of support Inkatha is said to enjoy among the older generation, evidenced by its ability to mobilize significant sections of the adult population, on occasion, against younger members of the community.

Recent initiatives on the part of the UDF leadership aimed at the introduction of a greater degree of centralization can be seen as an attempt to reach two goals. The first concerns the adoption of a single political strategy by the UDF leadership.[15] This revolves around a campaign to isolate Inkatha and Buthelezi, a move likely to ensure popular approval among UDF grass-roots supporters and cadre leadership alike. The second goal is purely administrative and revolves around a drive towards centralization for its other perceived or supposed benefits. The proposed launch of the South African Youth Congress (Sayco) in Natal can be seen as an effort to bring about greater co-ordination and control of local affiliates.

The tensions inherent in Inkatha can be divided into two categories.[16] The first category of tensions arise from Inkatha's bridging act between "modern" and "traditional" social structures. The second is to be found in the contradictions arising from the mobilization of people on the grounds of opposition to apartheid, while still controlling the homeland structures responsible for maintaining the abject conditions in which people find themselves. Inkatha's use of traditional social institutions such as chieftainship to secure membership, has created a problem of priorities within the organization itself. The hierarchical nature of traditional Zulu society has been transferred to the movement. But this has brought with it two problems. The first lies in the unpopularity of the chiefs within their communities owing to allegations of corruption and nepotism.[17] The second lies in the tensions generated by the need to accommodate challenges from below. These, ultimately, point to some desire for greater participation in society and in the organization. This is borne out by the questioning of Inkatha's strategy by members of its Youth Brigade.[18]

Another source of tension is the growth of vested interests within the movement, resulting in an emphasis on a degree of democratic centralism. Any accommodative strategy on the part of Inkatha's top leadership thus has the effect of marginalizing significant sections of Inkatha's membership, relegating them to subordinate and passive roles within the movement. Related to this is the exclusion of people who fall outside the boundaries of the movement altogether. Reasons here are rooted in financial constraints and a lack of people to recruit and organize members.[19] Another consequence expresses itself in the autonomy which certain sections of Inkatha appear to enjoy. An example are the attacks by Inkatha vigilantes on ordinary members of the organization who happen to find themselves in communities that have borne the brunt of violent confrontations.[20] This appears to indicate that shortcomings exist within the hierarchic structure of the organization, to the extent that sections of the membership are being excluded through some alliance between central leadership and individual persons or groups within communities. The converse may also hold; many actions are committed without the sanction of the central leadership thanks to this apparent decentralization or autonomy within Inkatha's hierarchic structure.

The second major problem internal to Inkatha is to be found, as we have already indicated, in the overlap of Inkatha structures and those of the homeland administration. The patronage benefits available to Inkatha leadership made homeland participation at one time appear more attractive. But the participation also gradually proved a locus for community dissatisfaction. This arose from the inability of local government structures to satisfy the material and psychological needs of the people.[21] At the same time their dissatisfaction soon ran up against the adoption of a conservative stance on the part of Inkatha's leadership, that is, a position favouring the status quo. This stance originated in reaction to the challenge not only to the material benefits enjoyed by local elites but also to intangible benefits such as status and expectations. The fact that community resentment has manifested itself in the guise of material grievances largely camouflages a deeper lying cause of the violence that eventually erupted.

This underlying cause has manifested itself as a normative crisis which has its roots in the nature of the prevailing cultural system. The vested interest in the status quo enjoyed by certain members of Inkatha, owing to their participation in existing structures, led to the labelling of both these grievances and youth behaviour as deviant — and their delegitimization by way of appeals to traditional culture. The coercive reaction to this on the part of certain sectors of Inkatha was legitimized through appeals to the same culture. But as violence has progressed, so have new cultural concepts come to the fore. These embody feeling for and elements of egalitarianism which have arisen from a shared experience of the workings of a modern economy and the ideology inherent in its educational impact. It is important to note that these experiences preceded the violence.

The normative crisis is in itself both defining and obscuring two underlying causes at all levels of the conflict. The first cause lies in the underdevelopment of the regional economy with its push/pull characteristics.[22] The workings of a modernizing economy in Natal have attracted people from rural areas cherishing expectations of better opportunities in general in or near urban centres. But the limited ability of the economy to absorb this influx of people has condemned many of them to a subsistence existence in the peripheral settlements that surround the urban centres of Durban and, to lesser degree, Pietermaritzburg.[23] The lack of material resources has an unfavourable impact on the ability of inhabitants to satisfy their needs for security and control of their environment. Any attempts on their part to protest against their conditions are likely to be discouraged by those who enjoy vested interests in the community and rely on the delegitimizing context of traditional culture to oppose any protests. This, in itself, constitutes an attack on the need of urban and peri-urban actors to be perceived as conducting their everyday political lives in a rational manner.

The second major cause lies in the nature of the political system and the way in which resources are allocated. Many observers ascribe the fundamental cause of the Natal violence to apartheid. Upon closer investigation of the nature of apartheid, indeed, a number of facts do appear conducive to violence. The first lies in the stereotypes generated by apartheid ideology which appear to legitimize the conflict as merely "black-on-black violence". This picture has, in many instances, formed the premise for the approach adopted by the media.[24] The second fact are the urbanization policies adopted as the century has run its course. These have sought to undermine the process of urbanization through a mixture of coercive tactics, such as forced removals, and a tendency to supply services to residents on a selective basis — indicating no attempt at pro-active planning. The third fact resides in attempts to engineer political activity through the creation of local government structures which, however, held no power with which to ensure an authoritative allocation of resources to alleviate the socio-economic inhibitions which residents had to face. The net effect of this was to deny people genuine participation in the political system with the result that the extent of control they enjoyed over their lives was minimal. The fourth fact is to be traced back to the insecurities experienced by the dominant, white economic and political interests which found a remedy in the use of coercion against any potential challengers to the policy.

These many social and political influences led eventually to the adoption of an incorporative strategy by black political groups.

Conflict at another level, too, derives from the two underlying causes treated in our previous paragraphs. This conflict is built into the social fabric present in the black communities which ring the country's great urban centres. The conflict here does not take on the form of a simple dichotomy which pits the "haves" against the "have-nots". Research points to the existence of certain "factions" within each community, with the unifying force being control of and access to material resources.[25] At the same time the influx of people into these settlements results in pressure being generated on existing social and authority structures, this happening in one of two ways.

In the first way, pressure manifests itself in the form of dissatisfaction with the inability of existing structures to provide the material and psychological resources necessary to satisfy the inhabitants' human needs. A smaller conflict, too, is discernible with "generation" characteristics. This however cannot be seen as a rough dichotomy between the youth element and the remainder of the community. What has happened is that certain social institutions have acted as the focus of the conflict. The actions of local government structures, and even central and provincial government, have generated certain community responses. Concurrently, the nature and content of schools organization have acted as a source of conflict between school authorities and students. Here, those with vested interests in the status quo are brought into confrontation with those nurturing rising expectations and demands. The former fear a loss of status within the community, while the latter seek new ways of social organization that will allow them to escape the frustrations propagated by society's failure to satisfy their needs for meaning and control of their environment and their future.

The second way in which the pressure on existing social and administrative structures shows itself is in the use of these structures themselves as a rallying point in the struggle between entrenched residents and relative newcomers to the peri-urban settlements. Another conflict now emerges owing to the need of certain individual persons or groups within the community to acquire control over the allegiance of other local inhabitants in order to further their own political or economic interests. These persons or groups rely on control over material resources and existing structures to secure their ends.[26]

Is the course of the conflict, a number of different process causes have made their appearance. The first is the idea of revenge. This has often led people to forget the original causes of the conflict; and it has been legitimized by the development of a "culture of violence" within this society.[27]

Coupled to this has been a breakdown in the legitimacy of the existing legal apparatus, with the effect that people no longer perceive it to be an objective dispenser of distributive justice.

Other process causes include the geographical spread of violence set off by the warring factions' mobility and the organizational spread of violence through the permeation of conflict into other sectors of society. These include the general community, the universities and the labour force.

Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to offer some insights which, it is hoped, will contribute to further analyses of the Natal violence. An attempt has been made to combine, on an even-handed basis, the two schools of thought on the causes of the violence in Natal by appealing to the concept of individual human needs. The power struggle between Inkatha and the UDF, ANC and Cosatu reflects the existence of elite insecurities, while the intra-communal conflict indicates the unhappy effects of structural imbalances in the wider community upon the human needs of all inhabitants of the region. What is apparent is that both "conflicts" in their own way constitute a true political struggle. But a careful distinction must still be made so as to discern the nature of micro-conflicts internal to both the organizations concerned and the wider society beyond them.

Notes and references

1 See S Stavrou and L Shongwe, "Violence on the periphery — Part Two: The Greater Edendale complex", *Indicator SA*, vol 7, no 1, 1989, pp 53-57 and *idem*, "Underdevelopment — Natal's formula for conflict", *Indicator SA*, vol 7, no 2, 1990, pp 52-56.

2 For mention of this, see J Brewer, "From Ancient Rome to KwaZulu: Inkatha in South African politics", in S Johnson (ed), *South Africa: No turning back*, London: Macmillan, 1988. The dynamics of this occurring within UDF structures was explained during an interview with Steve Collins on 26 June 1990 in Durban.

3 For an extension of this view, consult P Bell, "The struggle for Natal", *Leadership*, vol 9, no 4, 1990, pp 39-42. Here a summary is provided of the debate between John Aitchison of the Centre of Adult Education at the University of Natal, and Gavin Woods, Executive Director of the Inkatha Institute concerning, among other matters, the question of interpreting the violence.

4 Among adherents of the "power struggle" school, I would include the works of John Aitchison. For example see J Aitchison, "The civil war in Natal" in G Moss and I Obery (eds), *South African Review* 5, Braamfontein: Ravan Press, 1989, pp 457-473; J Jeffreys, "Rocky path to peace in Natal", *South African Labour Bulletin*, vol 14, no 5, 1989, pp 62-71; D Booth, "A strategic divide — Townships on contested terrain", *Indicator SA Issue Focus* entitled "Political conflict in South Africa — Data trends 1984-88". See also D Niddrie, "Into the Valley of Death", *Work in Progress*, no 52, 1988, pp 6-15. This view is also popular in the media's account of the violence. For examples of this see C Louw, "Stryd tussen Inkatha en UDF: Persepsies van 'n bloedige konflik" and C Gutuza, "Trapped in the carnage", *Die Suid Afrikaan*, no 14, 1988. Interview conducted with Repression Monitoring Group on 26 June 1990 in Durban.

5 Adherents of the "structural" school include Gavin Woods, who has expressed this perspective in articles such as "Rebels with a cause — The discontentment of black youth", *Indicator SA*, vol 7, no 1, 1989, pp 63-65. Also in an interview conducted on 27 June 1990 in Durban. Another researcher who has adopted this approach is S Stavrou in a trilogy of articles. These include S Stavrou and A Crouch, "Molweni: Violence on the periphery", *Indicator SA*, vol 6, no 3, 1989, pp 46-50; and S Stavrou and L Shongwe, *op cit*.

6 J Burton, *Global conflict — The domestic sources of international crisis*, Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books, 1986.

7 *Ibid*, pp 139-140.

8 *Ibid*.

9 Interview with Rob Evans on 25 June 1990 in Durban.

10 Interview with Steve Collins.

11 Insights into the tensions inherent in both organizations' structures were provided by Professor Douglas Irvine in a paper

delivered at a recent Idasa conference held in Durban. A summary of sections of Professor Irvine's paper appeared in The *Financial Mail* of 29 June 1990, pp 48.

12 Interviews with Steve Collins on 26 June 1990 and Peter Kerchoff of PACSA on 27 June 1990.

13 Interview with Steve Collins.

14 Interview with anonymous Inkatha member in KwaMashu on 28 June 1990.

15 The question of the appropriate strategy to be adopted against Inkatha has remained a contentious one within both the UDF leadership and between it and local affiliates. An example of this is the criticism levelled by UDF regional executive president, Archie Gumede, against the joint ANC, UDF, Cosatu, Sayco national stayaway of 2 July 1990.

16 These contradictions have formed the basis of John Brewer's inquiry into Inkatha. See J D Brewer, *After Soweto: An unfinished journey*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986.

17 N Gwala, "Class alliances in the struggle against Inkatha", *South African Labour Bulletin*, vol 13, no 3, 1988, pp 85-90.

18 J D Brewer, *op cit.*

19 Interview with Musa Zondi held on 26 June 1990 in Durban.

20 For an example of this see Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi — Chief with a double agenda*, London: Zed Books, 1988, p 162.

21 J D Brewer, "Internal black protest" in J D Brewer (ed), *Can South Africa survive? — Five minutes to midnight*, Bergvlei: Southern Books, 1989, pp 184-205.

22 J May, "The push/pull dynamic: Rural poverty and urban migration", *Indicator SA*, vol 6, no 1/2, 1989, pp 59-63.

23 S Stavrou *et al, op cit.*

24 Proceedings from interviews with Steve Collins, Peter Kerchoff and Musa Zondi.

25 See S Stavrou *et al, op cit.*

26 *Ibid.*

27 Interviews with Steve Collins and Rob Evans. The cyclical nature of the violence was vividly portrayed in a BBC documentary entitled "Inside story — South Africa's killing fields".

AFRICA MONITOR

Africa monitor
October to November 1990

Marita Snyman

NORTH AFRICA

Algeria

On 3 October the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) received another blow following its defeat in the **local elections** in June 1990 with the resignation of Mr Rabah Bitat, president of the National Assembly. Bitat had continually criticized the government's reform programme. Abdelaziz Belkhadem was elected president of the National Assembly on 4 October. On 8 October Pres Bendjedid denied rumours that he would step down before his mandate expired in 1994 and also confirmed his intention of calling legislative elections in early 1991.

In the meantime, on 4 October, a former prime minister, Kasdi Merbah, resigned from the FLN's central committee and announced his intention of creating his own political party, which was described as "progressive" and would seek support among companions of the late Pres Houari Boumedienne. Another former prime minister, Abdelahmid Brahimi, also resigned from the central committee out of opposition to the FLN's economic reforms. Trade unionists protested in Constantine on 14 October against the skyrocketing cost of living which they blamed on government reforms to liberalize the economy. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Hamrouche appealed for more co-operation from foreign banks and investors, to ease the transition to a market economy (AA 12/10; C 15/10; JA 16/10; ARB 31/10; E 3/11; AED 5/11).

On 8 November the **World Bank** announced a loan to Algeria of US$65 mn to support a pilot programme for improving the quality of its higher education. Under the programme, the government would develop ways to make universities more cost-effective and relevant to industry's labour needs (WBN 8/11).

(Domestic gas distribution — see Mali.)

Chad

The government of Pres Hissène Habre was ousted in the beginning of December by the Patriotic Salvation Front led by **Idriss Déby**, a former army chief, who triumphantly entered N'Djamena on 2 December. The rebel group operated from Sudan's Darfur province. Directly after the first rebel attack on 10 November, Pres Habre accused the Libyan and Sudanese governments of being responsible for the conflict. He then appealed to France for help. France refused to intervene in what appeared to be a civil war. Both Libya and Sudan denied involvement in the attack. Déby's forces inflicted heavy losses on Habre's forces in a campaign lasting only three weeks. Gen Déby dissolved parliament on 3 December and promised to introduce a **multiparty system**. His government had also shown initial signs of wanting to be on good footing with all its neighbours as well as with the French, who would retain a military presence. Habre was granted political asylum in Senegal. (SWB 16/10, 12/10, 13/10, 14/10; WA 25/11; S 27/11, 3/12, 5/12, 7/12; E 1/12; B 3/12; BD 3/12, 4/12).

Egypt

On 12 October the Speaker of the Egyptian parliament, the *Majlis*, Dr Rifaat al-Mahgoub, was **assassinated**. He was a close confidant of Pres Mubarak and in constitutional terms, the second most important person in Egypt. The killing came at a difficult time for Pres Mubarak, who enjoyed widespread support for his tough policy of opposing the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and sending 20 000 Egyptian troops to help US troops in Saudi Arabia. The United States cancelled Egypt's military debts, estimated at US$7 bn. Egypt still received its usual US$815 mn in economic aid and US$1,3 bn in military assistance (ARB 31/10; FG 2/11; AC 23/11; AA 23/11).

Egypt's two principal sources of foreign currency earnings — workers overseas and tourism — have been sharply reduced since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The country's economy was expected to suffer a loss of US$700 mn revenue from the workers and US$2 000 mn from tourism per year as a result. The Group of Seven industrialized nations planned a special aid package for Egypt, Turkey and Jordan, and Denmark, Germany and Canada increased their aid to Egypt. In the meantime, loss in revenues for the Suez Canal was estimated at as much as US$400 mn a year as oil shipments would be diverted to other routes. On 19 November it was announced that tolls for nearly all ships using the **Suez Canal** would increase by 6 per cent from 1 January 1991 (AED 1/10, 8/10, 22/10; C 20/11).

Parliamentary elections were held on 29 November to replace the 1987 parliament, which was declared null and void by the Egyptian courts on 19 May, because the opposition had been denied the chance to compete fairly. However, this time opposition parties (the Wafd, the Socialists and the Muslim Brotherhood) boycotted the elections, saying that without judicial monitoring it would also be rigged. Consequently the ruling National Democratic Party gained a comfortable victory (KT 18/10; E 17/11).

Libya

An extensive government reshuffle took place on 7 October. The official news agency, JANA, denied that the changes signified any shift in government policy (AED 15/10; ARB 31/10).

At a meeting in Tripoli on 20 November, the foreign ministers of Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria representing their governments and those of Togo and Mali, appealed to Col Gaddafi to "use his moral influence and leadership in Africa to help restore peace to **Liberia**". In addition, the president of the Liberian interim government Prof Amos Sawyer, said in Nigeria that the interim government would be prepared to meet the Libyan government. The rebel army, National Patriotic Front for Liberia, is said to receive arms from Libya and Burkina Faso (SWB 11/10; WA 26/11).

(Alleged involvement in coup — see Chad.)

Morocco

On 12 October King Hassan told his parliament that a feasibility study would be conducted on the relaunch of Morocco's **oil shale** development projects. Moroccan oil shale reserves are among the biggest in the world, with an estimated total of 100 bn tonnes and high levels of content. He said with oil prices rising as they would as a result of the Gulf crisis, it was in Morocco's interest to cover its oil needs from its own shales. For the immediate future, Morocco would have to find an extra US$400-450 mn to cover the cost of oil imports in 1991. Aid worth US$5,2 mn from the Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation (PCIAC) was promised in October to help drill three oil wells along Morocco's shoreline. Italian state oil company Agip would conduct seismic tests and drill wells, and the US Maxus Energy Corporation also signed a technical evaluation agreement with Morocco (AMM 10/90; AEM 25/10; AED 5/11, 19/11; AA 9/11).

On 22 October King Hassan received South African Pres de Klerk in Rabat where the foundations for full diplomatic relations and trade links were laid. Landing rights for South African Airways (SAA) were also discussed. Moroccan foreign minister Abdallatif Filali would visit South Africa in early 1991 to discuss these arrangements. (S 23/10; SWB 23/10; ARB 31/10).

The book, *Notre ami le roi*, (Our friend the king), by Pierre Pean and published by the French publishing house, Fayard, was causing severe royal anger in Morocco. It is a highly unflattering biography of the king, who ordered the buying of the entire stock at FFr4 mn (US$800 000). But the sale put the book at the top of the best-seller list, and Fayard promptly ordered another 80 000 copies. French foreign minister, Roland Dumas, visited King Hassan II on 9 November to explain that the French authorities had nothing to do with the publication (SWB 13/11; AA 23/11).

Sudan

Lt-Gen el-Bashir said on 1 October at the UN world summit for children that he was ready to declare a permanent **cease-fire** with the rebels and resume stalled peace talks. This followed after three high-ranking officers, dismissed from the army after the 1989 coup which brought El-Bashir to power, declared their willingness to collaborate openly with the SPLA. The SPLA offered to release 1 800 prisoners of war to these northern officers, in order to form an armed core. One of the officers, former head of the armed forces, Gen Fathi Ahmed Ali, called on troops to join forces and overthrow the military government. Meanwhile, the government planned to lay treason charges against the three officers who would be tried in absentia. Another coup attempt in early November was given as the grounds for the execution of eight military personnel.

At a time when the civilian food situation worsened considerably each day, and social unrest was on the increase, the military junta's survival looked to be in the balance (KT 2/10; ION 6/10, 24/11; AED 15/10, 29/10; ARB 31/10, E 24/11).

Aid officials estimated in November that up to 9 mn people in Sudan faced **starvation** in 1991, indicating that the famine would be even worse than the 1984-85 disaster. The government was also accused of failing to cooperate fully in relief efforts, by denying that the country faced a disastrous famine and deliberately neglecting the southern regions. Both sides in the war accused relief agencies of trying to supply the other side. In September, government soldiers stopped a train-load of grain destined for the south and kept it in the rain until it was unfit for human consumption, while the SPLA threatened to shoot down aircraft going south without their clearance. In an effort to change the situation, the US government decided to divert 90 000 tons of wheat destined for the Sudan to Djibouti in early October, insisting that Sudan would receive no more US wheat until Khartoum facilitated the movement of relief food throughout the country. The shortage of food drove over 15 000 people from Western Sudan to the outskirts of Khartoum in September alone (NA 11/90, 12/90; C 2/11; AED 5/11, 3/12; AC 9/11; TS 13/11).

(*Alleged involvement in coup — see Chad.*)

Tunisia

On 19 October former Tunisian security chief, Mohamed Larbi Majhoubi, was jailed for four years for abuse of power. He was dismissed as secretary of state for national security in August 1990 (ARB 31/10).

The **World Bank** approved a US$12 mn loan towards the US$34,7 mn Employment and Training Fund Project. The project was not designed to create jobs, but to encourage private companies which would, in turn, boost the labour market. The government would provide US$9,7 mn, local enterprises US$8,5 mn and USAID US$4,5 mn (AED 22/10, 29/10).

WEST AFRICA

Benin

On 4 October diplomatic relations with South Korea were restored, making Benin the third African country in a month to establish links with Seoul (after Zambia and Malawi). Diplomatic ties were severed fifteen years earlier on ideological grounds (SWB 8/10; ARB 31/10).

Around 2 mn Beninoise went to the polls on 10-11 November to elect more than 4 000 local **community representatives**. The newly elected officials immediately encountered problems as thousands of local community workers began a three-day strike on 14 November in protest against the non-payment of salary arrears (WA 2/12).

The constitutional **referendum**, which was first scheduled for August, but since then twice postponed to 9 and 16 October, was set for 1 December. Twenty-four political movements emerged to contest legislative and presidential elections set for February and March 1991. The proposed constitution itself was controversial, particularly a provision that election candidates must be aged between 40 and 60 (SWB 23/10, 24/10; ARB 31/10).

Burkina Faso

On 8 November Burkinabe authorities presented to local press 19 people arrested in December 1989 for allegedly plotting against the state. They included Train Raymond Poda, justice minister under the late Thomas Sankara, Mosbila Sankara, a cousin of the late Sankara and Lt Tibo Ouedraogo. The three were described as the brains behind the plot. Observers said they were paraded to refute rumours that they had been executed (SWB 11/11).

Cape Verde

After four days of discussions between the ruling African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV) and the Democracy Movement (MPD) which ended on 22 September it was decided that legislative **elections** would be held in January 1991 and presidential elections in February or March. From 3 to 5 November the MPD held its first party congress. Mascarenhas Monteiro was announced the MPD's candidate for the forthcoming presidential election; he is a former supreme court judge (SWB 2/10, 5/11, 8/11, 13/11; JA 16/10; ARB 31/10).

Pres Pereira visited Angola from 31 October to 2 November (SWB 1/11, 5/11).

Côte d'Ivoire

At the opening of the ninth congress of the ruling Côte d'Ivoire Democratic Party (PDCI) on 1 October, Pres Houphouët-Boigny proposed the creation of a new post of prime minister. He also announced that he would run for a seventh consecutive five-year term. On 28 October Pres Houphouët-Boigny won a resounding victory in the country's first multiparty **presidential elections** amid allegations from the opposition Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) that the whole election contest had been a "massive fraud". The president won 86 per cent of the votes. The FPI's candidate, Laurent Gbagbo, also received the support of other opposition parties (SWB 3/10, 8/10, 16/10, 24/10, 30/10; JA 9/10, 23/10; WA 21/10, 11/11; B 30/10; C 30/10; BD 30/10; ARB 31/10; AC 23/11).

On 7 November the Côte d'Ivoire parliament amended article II of the constitution to enable the parliament's speaker to become president and complete the current mandate with full powers in the event of the head of state dying, resigning or being unable to fulfil his functions, thereby ending speculation about Pres Houphouët-Boigny's **successor**. On the same day, Alassane Dramane Ouattara, governor of the Central Bank of West African States, was appointed the first prime minister of Côte d'Ivoire. He was also charged with taking on the collapsed economy as economy and finance minister.

Legislative elections were held on 25 November and the PDCI won 163 seats, the FPI 9, the Ivorian Workers' Party 2 and independents 2. On 30 November Pres Houphouët-Boigny installed a new government, abolishing 11 ministries and dismissing three-quarters of the cabinet (SWB 29/10, 8/11, 9/11, 21/11, 27/11, 1/12; KT 8/11; AED 12/11, 26/11; JA 20/11; WA 25/11; C 26/11; SS 1/12).

The Gambia

The Gambian government received a **grant** of 300 mn yen (US$2,5 mn) from the Japanese government following discussions in Tokyo between Pres Jawara and Japanese Pres Toshiki Kaifu. The money would be spent on rehabilitation at Kotu power station and a proposed project covering rural water supply and rural electrification in the country (WA 2/12).

Ghana

A Ghanaian, Dr Esther Afua Ocloo, became the first woman to win the "Africa Prize for Leadership", an annual award given by The Hunger Project, an international non-profit organization. She shared the award with former Nigerian Head of State Gen Olesegun Obasanjo. Dr Ocloo started Ghana's first indigenous food-processing industry in 1943 and today employs mainly women (AB 10/90).

On 14 November Ghana became the second country after Niger to launch the Ecowas (Economic Community of West African States) travelling document which would be valid for travel in the subregion. The purpose of this document is to enhance the economic, social and cultural integration between member countries (SWB 17/11; WA 9/12).

During a visit to Ghana at the beginning of October, the UK minister for overseas development, Lynda Chalker, signed four new **aid agreements** with the government covering a US$18,8 mn balance of payments support for 1990/91 fiscal year, the rehabilitation of water supplies for 11 towns, assistance with waste disposal in Kumasi and the setting up of an operations research unit in the ministry of health. Also, in a bid to assist a number of least developed countries (LDC), France announced the cancellation of US$66 mn debt owed by the Ghanaian government (AED 15/10, 5/11).

Guinea

During the first week in November, students in Conakry went on **strike**, demanding an increase in their grants, saying they could barely afford food and accommodation. They also protested the quality of the teaching and facilities. The strike lasted for more than a month, and clashes with the police and armed forces were reported, with three students killed by police on 23 November. The Guinean government delivered an ultimatum to the students to return to their classes before 30 November, otherwise the university would be closed down. The system of paying students began under Sekou Toure, but with the slump in the economy, benefits had to be cut (SWB 9/11, 24/11, 29/11, 30/11; AC 3/12).

Japan decided to reschedule Guinea's commercial debt according to an agreement signed between the two countries. Guinea's trade debt to Japan was contracted in dollars and yen, and amounted to US$5 732 mn and Y83 630 mn (ARB 15/11; AED 10/12).

Guinea-Bissau

On 8 October a five-day discussion on Guinea-Bissau's transition to **multipartyism** began and a programme was drafted envisaging the establishment of a presidential system of government, the legalization of other parties, democratic local elections and the recognition of a number of civil liberties (SWB 11/10; ARB 31/10).

Liberia

Despite initial reports of a cease-fire in late September, the fighting continued in Liberia, with more groups apparently joining in. Apart from about 1 000 government troops, led by Doe's self-appointed successor as army chief, Gen David Nimley; Prince Johnson's rebels; Charles Taylor's rebels and the Ecowas Cease-fire Monitoring Group, Ecomog, a dissident force of some 1 000 Krahns and Mandingoes massed on the Guinea/Liberia border to assert the claims of Doe's people. There were also rumours that a former government minister, Dr Boima Fahnbulleh, had an army of his own waiting to enter the fray.

The Ecomog force, having been increased in size from 4 500 to more than 9 000 with the addition of Nigerian soldiers, and under the command of Nigerian Gen Joshua Dogonyaro, began slowly to gain control of the capital **Monrovia**, assisted by the remnants of the government forces and Prince Johnson's rebels. On 20 October Ecomog announced it controlled Monrovia. The legitimacy and constitutionalism of the interim government, headed by Amos Sawyer, was questioned, especially by Taylor, but he was reminded that all political parties, all thirteen counties and the Liberian churches took part in the proceedings in Banjul in August where the interim government was initiated. Sawyer flew into Monrovia on 21 November to set up his administration. He was sworn in on 22 November at a ceremony attended by Prince Johnson's rebels, government soldiers, Ecomog guards and diplomats from the USA, UK, Nigeria and Egypt.

In the meantime, it was estimated on 13 October that there were 190 000 **refugees** from Liberia in **Côte d'Ivoire**, 100 000 in **Sierra Leone** and 320 000 in **Guinea**. Altogether, 10 000 people were believed to have been killed since the start of the conflict, though not all deaths could be ascribed to military activities. Famine was described as the main cause of deaths, killing up to 50 people a day. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) decided to send more than 50 000 tons of food to Liberian refugees in the above-mentioned countries and Liberia itself. The shipment was worth nearly US$30 mn.

Finally, the various protagonists agreed to a **cease-fire** on 28 November. The accord was reached after all-night talks arranged by Gambia's president, Sir Dawda Jawara in Bamako. It was also decided that the Ecomog forces would remain in Liberia for up to a year to protect the new government, which intended to hold elections within 12 months. Speculation on the reasons for Taylor's change of heart (he controlled most of the countryside) abounded, but it seemed that he had encountered increasing difficulties, especially after Libyan support dried up following a visit to Tripoli by a West African delegation. Arms and ammunition were reportedly sent to Liberia via Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire. Taylor's position inside the NPFL also seemed to become unsure, with his fears of being overthrown and the subsequent execution of certain NPFL leaders. Horrific accounts of his actions during the fighting surfaced, such as the murder of many trapped Nigerians and Ghanaians in retribution for Ecomog's operations (C 10/10, 11/10, 31/10; S 10/10, 29/11; AA 12/10; AC 12/10; E 13/10; SWB 15/10, 17/10, 23/10, 21/11, 26/11, 29/11; ACon 15/10, 22/10, 5/11; WM 18/10; WA 21/10, 28/10, 4/11; AN 22/10, 12/11; AED 29/10, 5/11; BD 31/10, 29/11; ARB 31/10, 30/11; NA 11/90; KT 23/11).

(Appeals to Gaddafi — see Libya.)

Mali

During the weekend of 20 to 21 October thirty soldiers were reported to have been killed in another clash with **Touareg** rebels at Marat in the north of the country. On 9 October the Malian ministry of foreign affairs and international co-operation published a white paper on the attacks that took place in the beginning of June, blaming Libya for using the Touaregs in an effort to establish an Islamic republic. The government also stressed its commitment to improve the living conditions of Mali's nomadic population, claiming the initiation of a number of development projects (SWB 15/10, 24/10; ARB 31/10, 30/11).

Two new organizations had been set up in Bamako to lobby for the introduction of a **multiparty** system. On 19 October the formation of a National Committee of Democratic Initiative (CNID) was announced, followed by news of the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (Adema) on 25 October. Although the ruling Democratic Union of Malian People (UDPM) deferred any further discussion on multipartyism until its next congress in March 1991, pressure mounted on the government to introduce changes sooner. A third organization, Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP), was formed by a group of expatriates living in Gabon, also calling for multipartyism (SWB 29/10, 5/11; WA 11/11; ARB 30/11).

Algeria and Mali created a domestic gas distribution company, which would help Mali cut down on deforestation and aid the fight against desertification. Agreements on co-operation in the fields of science, transport and telecommunications were also discussed (ARB 16/10).

Mauritania

Amnesty International said on 2 October that blacks in Mauritania were "disappearing" and being killed on an unprecedented scale. It also said that hundreds of Fulani-speakers were executed, detained and tortured solely because of their ethnic origin. Furthermore, it accused the authorities of waging war against civilians under cover of operations against insurrection or external aggression (SWB 2/10, 24/10; S 2/10; AED 22/10).

Telephone and telex **links** were restored between Mauritania and Senegal on 28 October after being suspended since July 1989. The step was seen as an attempt by the Mauritanian authorities to try to solve the crisis between the two countries (SWB 1/11; ARB 15/11).

Niger

Pres Saibou told members of the national assembly on 15 November that he had decided to adopt a **multiparty** system. Proposals were made by the committee responsible for revising the constitution, created in September to revise the national charter and constitution. The next step was to submit draft amendments to the national institutions to decide on the details of implementation. Saibou added that a national conference would be held once political parties had been created. A religious party, the Umma Islamic Front (FOI) was formed for the first time in Niger. Its objective was to transform Niger into a truly Islamic society.

The decision to allow other parties in Nigerien politics came against a background of a **wave of strikes** sparked by the country's structural adjustment programme. Pres Saibou then cancelled portions of the IMF-backed austerity programme. The director of information for the planning ministry, Ben Adj, said the tough programme was doomed to failure because of corruption and a lack of political will to see it through.

Students, however, remained dissatisfied and demonstrated on 16 November against the government's education policy. They also demanded a trial to punish those responsible for the killing of seven students on 9 February during demonstrations (AED 8/10, 10/12; SWB 11/11, 17/11, 24/11; WA 25/11; ARB 30/11).

Nigeria

The restructuring of the Nigerian army which started in August continued with the announcement that, for reasons of economy, the force would be pruned to about 60 000 (SWB 11/10, 23/10; ARB 31/10).

On 16 November Nigeria's former minister of petroleum resources, Prof **Tam David-West**, was found guilty by a special military tribunal on the recovery of public property on a two-count charge of economic sabotage and abuse of office. He was sentenced to ten years imprisonment. Suspicion that the trial was politically motivated arose when the suspect evidence on which the conviction was made, became public. He was the only southerner to have held the post of petroleum minister (AC 15/10, 29/10, 26/11; SWB 19/11; AA 23/11).

Local government election campaigns by the two political parties (the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republic Convention (NRC)) began on 20 October. Pres Babangida was said to have hinted that unrest in the local elections in December and the national census in 1991 could jeopardize a return to **civilian rule** by October 1992. He said these events were tests of the people of Nigeria. The warning came after some of the primary election results to nominate candidates to contest the 8 December elections were cancelled following reported cases of court injunctions, protests and rowdy crowds. (SWB 24/10, 5/11, 24/11; AC 5/11; WA 11/11; ARB 30/11).

Angolan rebel leader Jonas **Savimbi** visited Nigeria during mid-October, causing diplomatic unease between the two countries. The authorities in Luanda were unhappy that Nigeria received Savimbi without extending to Angola the courtesy of a briefing before and after the visit (G 18/10).

Estimates at end November showed that there was a 72 per cent **increase** in Nigerian **oil revenue**. Oil producing companies reached a production capacity of 2 mn barrels a day, making it possible for Pres Babangida to promise assistance packages to some of Nigeria's neighbours, suffering from the high oil prices in the wake of the Gulf crisis (E 3/11; SS 4/11; AA 23/11; WA 2/12).

An expected loan of US$500 mn from the **World Bank** to support budgetary and financial policy was cancelled because of disagreements over government spending. A similar loan for 1991 might be in jeopardy unless agreement can be reached about public expenditure. The stumbling block was the Ajaokuta steel complex, which had already cost more than US$4 000 mn since work began 10 years ago and would probably need to have another US$2 000 mn spent on it before becoming operational. Britain, Japan and the EC also withdrew from commitments worth more than US$200 mn (AED 19/11; ARB 15/12).

(Award to Obasanjo — see Ghana; Prominence in Ecomog force — see Liberia.)

Senegal

On 9 October, nine Senegalese opposition parties decided to **boycott** municipal and rural elections scheduled for 25 November, in protest against the electoral laws which, they said, allowed fraud and habitual falsification of results. An opposition demonstration took place on 14 November in Dakar, protesting against the government's restrictive media policy. The demonstration led to violent clashes with police, who charged the crowd and used tear-gas (SWB 23/10, 16/11, 30/11; ARB 31/10).

On 12 October eight people were killed and several others seriously wounded in a village in **Casamance** during a fresh attack by separatists belonging to the Casamance Democratic Forces Movement (MFDC). At the end of August and beginning of September, clashes between the army and Casamance separatists had led to the death of about 40 people. By 10 November more than 1 600 Senegalese had fled the fighting and sought refuge in Guinea-Bissau. In the meantime, evidence surfaced that the Casamance rebels were receiving **Iraqi weapons** via Mauritania. There were also reports that the rebels were assisted by senior officers from the Guinea-Bissau army (ARB 31/10, 30/11; SWB 5/11, 12/11; WM 16/11; AC 23/11).

(Telephone links restored — see Mauritania; Visit by Pres de Klerk — see South Africa.)

Sierra Leone

The Constitutional Review Commission started work on 13 November to revise the one-party constitution, hoping to pave the way for a **multiparty** democracy. The country had been an official one-party state since 1978. Critics felt, however, that Pres Momoh should institute full multiparty elections directly, rather than "tinker with the system" (WA 28/10, 11/11; AED 19/11; ARB 30/11).

The Sierra Leone government finally made it clear that it could not accept any more Liberian refugees. Before the decision, there had been disagreements on the number of refugees. It complained to the Ecomog forces that the 200 000 refugees are beyond the capacity of Sierra Leone to cope with from either humanitarian, shelter, health or security point of view. The influx of **Liberian refugees** had brought fortunes to others — business boomed, and landlords had a field day raising rent — but the influx of refugees stretched facilities to their limit. The crime rate also soared, as well as the illegal diamond trade (AA 26/10, 23/11; WA 25/11, 2/12; AB 12/90).

Togo

On 5 October violent **demonstrations** began in Lomé at the palais de justice when soldiers expelled students who had come to watch the trial of two people who were accused of having distributed anti-government pamphlets. The interior minister, Gen Amuyi, said that 170 people were arrested, 92 of them not Togolese citizens, which led to accusations of "international machinations" organized from Ghana. The idea of a plot was immediately denied by lawyers in Lomé, who said the demonstrations were simply for political change. They called on Pres Eyadéma to declare himself publicly in favour of multipartyism and to call a national conference with the aim of forming a transitional government. Subsequently, the central committee met on 10 October in order to sort out the details for a future political and institutional democracy and to set up a commission to draft a new constitution. A constitutional committee was set up at the end of October, composed of 60 people including former ministers from successive Togolese regimes, lawyers, teachers, students, peasants, representatives of all the religious faiths, traditional leaders. They would draft a constitution which would be studied by government at the beginning of 1991 and submitted to a referendum in December 1991 (SWB 8/10, 10/10, 11/10, 16/10; AED 15/10; AC 22/10; WA 28/10; ARB 31/10; 30/11).

On 2 November a spokesperson for the **South African** department of foreign affairs confirmed that the country had established a mission in Lomé to represent its interests (S 1/11; WA 25/11; ARB 30/11; AED 10/12).

CENTRAL AFRICA

Cameroon

The exiled secretary general of the outlawed Union of the Cameroon People (UPC), Ngou Woungly-Massaga, quit to form a new party, the Party of People's Solidarity, drawn from former UPC cadres. On 14 October a statement by the UPC was published, accusing Massaga of "anti-democratic behaviour and embezzlement". The UPC had been operating in exile since Cameroon's independence in 1960. Massaga congratulated Pres Biya on his move towards multipartyism and requested to be allowed to return home (SWB 29/10; ARB 30/11).

On 8 November Pres Biya announced the creation of a National Committee for the Rights and Freedom of Mankind. The committee would deal with all complaints regarding **individual freedom**. In doing so, it had the right to visit penal establishments and police stations (SWB 13/11; ARB 30/11).

Central African Republic

Police broke up a meeting of the opposition Co-ordinating Committee for the Convening of a National Conference on 13 October in Bangui, unleashing three days of **street fighting**. Opposition supporters set up barricades and official vehicles were set on fire. Forty people were injured, among them diplomats. Only on the morning of 15 October calm was restored, but events still overshadowed the first ever congress of the ruling Centrafrican Democratic Rally (RDA) which was due to open on 18 October. In the meantime the government denied reports that Zairean troops had been called in to help restore order in the city. During its congress which took place from 18 to 23 October in Berberati, the RDA reasserted its authority over the country's political life. The organizer of the congress, Sammy Macfoy, said that the country would run the risk of a civil war if a **multiparty** system were introduced (SWB 15/10, 17/10, 23/10; ARB 31/10, 30/11).

Public and private sector workers went on **strike** on 21 November to press for improved working conditions and higher pay. Public transport, factories and businesses came to a standstill. The strike was called by the country's sole central labour body after negotiations with the government broke down. The country's 6 000 teachers had been on strike since 17 October (SWB 5/11, 7/11, 23/11, 24/11; C 19/11, 23/11).

Congo

On 15 November a total of 22 political parties were officially registered and would be legalized in January 1991 after parliament had modified the constitution and adopted a law on the parties. Among the parties registered were: the National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP) and the Assembly for Democracy and Social Progress (RDPS). The former intended to wage war on "nepotism, tribal practices and the centralization of power in the hands of a few individuals". Several former members of the ruling PCT joined the UNDP, amongst which a former foreign minister and co-founder of the PCT, Pierre Nze. Another new party is the Congolese Liberal Party (PLC) which promised to encourage private initiative. The army agreed to quit politics, give up party membership cards and medals and return to barracks by January 1991 (SWB 9/10, 5/11, 19/11, 28/11; JA 16/10; ARB 30/11).

A **wave of strikes** hit Congo in October. The government decided on 14 October to halt the planned privatization of the petroleum products distribution and commercialization company, Hydrocongo, whose personnel had been on strike since 11 October. It was followed by a strike by college and school teachers demanding improvements in their living standards and working conditions. The government ordered the temporary closure of schools and colleges in the capital. Then it was the turn of the Congolese journalists, who began striking on 21 November and returned to work on 28 November after talks between the Federation of Workers of the Ministries of Sport, Science, Education, Information and Culture announced that negotiations with the government were under way. Civil servants however, continued with the strike (SWB 16/10, 5/11, 7/11, 23/11, 28/11; AEM 25/10; AED 12/11; ARB 15/11).

A **stand-by agreement** of US$39 mn with the IMF had been agreed after 4 months of negotiations. The government still had to cut jobs in the public sector, with its more than 73 000 employees taking up more than half the national budget. The government tried in the past to cut 10 000 jobs by lowering the retirement age from 55 to 50, but ran into vociferous opposition from the labour unions (AMM 10/90; ARB 15/11).

Equatorial Guinea

A cabinet reshuffle took place on 16 October, principally in the economic sector. The changes were seen as being based on the need to tackle the economic crisis (AED 29/10, 5/11; ARB 31/10).

A resolution on the acceptance of **political pluralism** was adopted during a regular plenary session of the ruling Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea (PDGE) central Committee held in Malabo from 8 to 21 November. The decision was taken in the light of the current political developments in the world (SWB 27/11; ARB 30/11).

Gabon

A second round of elections took place on 21 October. The Gabonese voted only in 62 out of the 120 seats: the 32 seats where procedures had previously been annulled because of fraud and vandalism, and the 30 seats in which balloting had not been completed. The parties to be represented in the National Assembly were: the Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG) — 63 seats; Morena Bécherons — 20 seats; Gabonese Progressive Party — 18 seats; Morena-Originel — 7 seats; the Union for Gabonese Socialism (UPSG) — 6 seats; the Gabonese Socialist Union (USG) — 6 seats. Pres Bongo had managed to put himself above the electoral tumult, adopting the role of arbiter between the parties. He **compromised** his opponents by personally granting them the means to finance their respective political campaigns: in the early stages of the electoral process, each party received CFAFr20 mn; then after the first ballot, each of the six parties with at least one successful candidate received another cheque for CFAFr30 mn, as well as a truck. The latter payment was viewed by some critics as "the price of silence".

The transitional government resigned on 19 November and the new **multiparty parliament** was sworn in on 27 November. The new prime minister, Casimir Oye Mba, was also the previous head of the transitional government. A new cabinet was announced on 27 November, with the president's conservative old guard largely replaced, although his son, Ben Ali Bongo, was retained as minister of foreign affairs. The major portfolios went to PDG members. (AC 28/9; SWB 25/10, 1/11, 8/11, 13/11, 16/11, 23/11, 24/11, 29/11; ARB 31/10, 30/11; AED 3/12).

Two **women** was appointed **generals** in Gabon. It was a first, and a victory for the women's struggle in the country. The former defence minister had said previously that if it depended solely on him, no woman would even wear stripes (SWB 14/11; ARB 30/11).

Sao Tomé and Principe

On 26 October Prime Minister Celestino Rocha da Costa left for Portugal for a two-week visit. He planned to hold talks with his Portuguese counterpart, Anibal Cavaco Silva, and also would attempt to further contacts with the business community with a view to more Portuguese investment in Sao Tomé and Principe (SWB 31/10).

Several thousand people took part in a demonstration on 23 November to press for "urgent" **multiparty presidential elections**. The "climate of instability" prevailing in the country as a result of the "excessively long transitional period" before the effective establishment of a multiparty state was denounced (SWB 30/11).

Zaire

On 6 October Pres Mobutu announced that a **full multiparty system** would be allowed in Zaire, reversing the government's previous decision to permit only three political parties. Although the opposition parties initially welcomed the announcement, they expressed concern a month later in a joint statement over the stalled situation and warned that they would boycott a conference of French-speaking countries scheduled to take place in Kinshasa in 1991 "if the democratic process begun in Zaire does not follow its normal course". The situation worsened when the first scheduled rally of the opposition Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) was cancelled by the government, saying that the new law to introduce full-blown multipartyism had not been passed yet. Several people were arrested and others injured by the Zairean army. On 23 November, the National Assembly voted by an overwhelming majority for the adoption of an amendment to the constitution which allowed for a multiparty system (SWB 8/10, 9/10, 7/11, 8/11, 13/11; ARB 30/11).

On 10 October Zairean authorities reported a **military build-up** on the Angolan border with a view to attacking Zaire. Angolan military authorities denied these allegations and said the story was a fabrication to create a scapegoat for Zaire's own internal problems. Ironically, on 23 November the "Jornal de Angola" claimed the Zairean government was trying to destabilize Angola, mentioning Zairean soldiers on the border with Angola. It also accused Zaire of sending troops to help Unita (SWB 12/10, 26/11; ARB 31/10).

State prosecution authorities said on 25 October that a Congolese suspected of helping to blow up a French airliner over the Sahara desert was under interrogation in Kinshasa. The mid-air explosion of the DC-10 UTA airplane took place on 19 September 1989, killing all 170 people on board (SWB 29/10).

Under legislation passed on 5 November in the US Congress, all military and economic aid to Zaire was cut. Zaire would lose US$4 mn in military aid, while US$40 mn in economic aid would have to be funnelled through humanitarian agencies with no direct link with the Zairean government. Reasons were given as "the existence of a **cleptocracy** in Zaire that has driven the standard of living lower than it was at the time of independence three decades ago" and the Lubumbashi student massacres, which followed Mobutu's promises of democratic reform (AA 9/11; AED 12/11; ARB 30/11).

Zaire and Zambia fixed 1991's **cobalt price** at US$11 per pound. The agreement on the price was reached during a meeting between Zambia's Metal Marketing Corporation and Zaire's Gecamines held in Lubumbashi. The two countries are the world's biggest producers of cobalt. The news came shortly after a cave-in at one of Zaire's five mines in October, causing panic among traders (MSE 24/10; AA 26/10; FG 2/11).

EAST AFRICA

Burundi

A meeting between the Burundian prime minister, Adrien Sibomana, and his Tanzanian counterpart, Ndugu Joseph Warioba, took place on 1 October in Kigoma (western **Tanzania**). Warioba said he was satisfied with the implementation of the co-operation agreements in the economic, transport, security and cultural sectors concluded by the two countries in 1989 (SWB 1/10).

Comoros

On 17 October a French mercenary suspected of leading the thwarted coup in August, **Max Vieillard**, was shot dead during the night by police. He was previously one of the lieutenants in **Col Denard's** presidential guard. In the meantime, two of Denard's other men, Dominique Malacrino, alias Commandant Marques, and Jean Paul Guerrier, were arrested in France the same week on charges of murdering Pres Abdallah in 1989. Previously on 14 October, a French national, Vincent Nave, was killed and another seriously wounded by gunshots at a nightclub called Le Terminus, owned by Dominique Malacrino. Nave, also an ex-mercenary, was the manager of the club. The two killings were described as contract killings, put down as squaring of accounts. After a few days, five former Comorian members of the presidential guard were arrested in connection with Nave's murder, to which they admitted guilt. They were apparently organized into a commando unit by Pres Djohar's son-in-law, Mr Nassur (C 19/10; S 20/10, 22/10; ION 20/10, 27/10).

Pres Said Mohamed Djohar appointed a new government in Comoros in mid-October, thus ending more than a month of political crisis after the resignation of Said Ali Kemal as minister of state in charge of the the economy and commerce. The former minister was actually regarded as the Comorian prime minister, a post not provided for by the constitution. Four new ministers had been added to the eight already serving in the cabinet (ION 13/10; SWB 23/10; ARB 31/10).

Pres Djohar visited Mozambique from 24 to 16 November for talks with Pres Chissano on bilateral co-operation (SWB 28/11).

Djibouti

On 27 September a grenade was thrown at the French military contingent, killing one person and wounding 17. Written threats were sent to the US and French embassies before the attack, signed by a "*Comité secret du mouvement de la jeunesse arabe djiboutien*" and the group claiming responsibility for the attack was the "*Mouvement de la jeunesse djiboutienne*". Both groups seemed to be local movements, but attempts to draw links between the attack and a possible Iraqi element were made. A number of people had been arrested after the attack, many of them from the Gadabursi community, an ethnic group considered foreign by most of the ruling fundamentalist Issas (SWB 3/10, 11/10, 12/10; ION 6/10, 13/10, 20/10, 27/10; AA 12/10; ARB 31/10).

The **sea border** between Djibouti and **Somalia** was closed from 12 October for an indefinite period. The land frontier between the countries was already closed in May 1989 because of the fighting in Somalia. The step followed an incident after thirty armed Somalis crossed the border and penetrated eight kilometres into Djibouti territory. A confrontation with Djibouti soldiers took place but no casualties were reported. Later, on 31 October three Somali military officers seeking political asylum in Djibouti were referred to the UNHCR. In addition, about 160 Somali refugees arrived at a Djibouti border post, the incidents again illustrating Djibouti's permanent exposure to the overflow of the civil war in Somali (SWB 11/10, 13/10, 6/11; SWB 31/10; ION 10/11).

A cabinet reshuffle took place on 25 November. The shuffle was seen as an attempt by Pres Aptidon to wield more power (SWB 27/11; ION 1/12).

Ethiopia

Negotiations between the government and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), which collapsed in Nairobi in November 1989, were revived at unannounced **talks in Washington** on 2 October. Ethiopian foreign minister, Tesfaye Dinka, headed his delegation and the EPLF delegation was led by Ali Said Abdallah. US Secretary of State, Herman Cohen, replaced Jimmy Carter in sole charge of the negotiating process. Dinka and Cohen met again in Addis Ababa on 13 November to discuss bilateral relations and talks with the EPLF. In reaction to the talks, the EPLF said it welcomed the US involvement (ION 20/10; AN 12/11; SWB 16/11; AED 26/11; ARB 30/11).

On 1 November Ethiopia announced a new agreement to allow all Ethiopian Jews (**Falashas**) to leave for Israel. The mass emigration of Jews from Ethiopia began with a clandestine airlift in 1984 which relocated 12 000 people. Ethiopia halted the operation in 1985, leaving many families divided. The airlift resumed in 1989, but slowed down to a trickle during middle 1990, and there were allegations by members of the US Congress that Addis Ababa was putting pressure on Israel to send it advanced weapons in exchange for allowing the emigration. About 15 000 to 22 000 (numbers from the different sources vary) Jews remained in Ethiopia, with about 600 expected to emigrate during November. In the meantime, because of the massive influx of Jews from the Soviet Union, Israel experienced difficulties coping with the Falashas from Ethiopia (AA 9/11, 23/11; AN 12/11, ION 17/11; ARB 30/11).

The EPLF announced that the port of Massawa, which it captured in February, would be opened for the transport of **emergency food aid**, the only way a successful relief operation in northern Ethiopia could be guaranteed. This followed after the Ethiopian government warned for the first time that more than 4 mn people were at risk from starvation in 1991 and appealed for international assistance. Relief efforts in 1991 would be concentrated in Eritrea and Tigre. The UK minister for Overseas Development, Lynda Chalker, announced on 15 October that the UK would send 19 000 tonnes of food aid to Eritrea, Tigre, Wollo and Hararghe provinces through the World Food Programme. Hararghe would also receive 5 000 tonnes of cereal (AED 22/10; C 22/10, 21/11; DN 22/10; ION 24/11; ARB 30/11).

(*Meeting with rebel groups — see Somalia.*)

Kenya

Koigi wa Wamwere, a former MP who lived in exile in **Norway** since 1986, was arrested together with three others in Nairobi on 9 October. The Kenyan government alleged he was the leader of a group of dissidents who spearheaded anti-government campaigns and that he was in possession of weapons and ammunition. He was charged with treason on 19 October. Wamwere had been the government's most vocal and persistent critic abroad and was the self-declared leader of an opposition group, the Kenya Patriotic Front. Wamwere's mother was also detained and released after three days of questioning. On 22 October Kenya **broke off diplomatic relations** with Norway after accusing the Norwegian government of conspiring with political dissidents to overthrow Pres Moi's government. Norwegian diplomats and their families were told to leave the country within a week. In 1989, the Norwegian government gave Kenya KS180 mn (£15,6 mn) in aid and was about to give the same amount when a cut of 20 per cent was announced, amid expressions of concern at the human rights record of Pres Moi's government. The court case started on 15 November amid claims by Wamwere and his co-accused that they had been tortured while in custody (MSE 10/90; WR 12/10, 19/10; ION 13/10, 27/10; SWB 15/10, 23/10, 30/10, 2/11, 16/11; KT 20/10, 23/10, 24/10, 29/10; SAI 20/10; C 23/10; AC 26/10; AA 26/10; E 27/10; ARB 31/10, 30/11).

Kenya's longest-serving cabinet minister lost his government post and his seat in parliament on 22 November after being declared bankrupt with debts of more than £400 000. Paul Joseph Ngei was minister of manpower development and employment since independence in 1963 (ARB 30/11).

On 23 November, Ajuma Oginga Odinga announced the launch of a second political party, an illegal move under Kenya's one-party constitution. Odinga, one of Kenya's most powerful opposition politicians and leader of the Luo, said an open democratic process was necessary to wipe out what he called political hooliganism and thuggery, prevent looting of the state by senior politicians and establish a system of accountability so that corruption could be eliminated (KT 24/11, 28/11, 29/11; C 24/11; SWB 26/11, 29/11; ARB 30/11).

In a declaration broadcast on the radio on 24 November, Pres Moi said that non-profitable state-owned firms would be privatized in the near future. State-owned firms in Kenya accounted for 40 per cent of the GDP (ARB 15/12).

On 28 November Pres Moi accused foreign journalists, particularly the BBC, of constantly provoking the Kenyan government (SWB 1/11, 2/11; ARB 30/11).

South Africa's foreign minister, Pik Botha, made a surprise visit to Kenya on 30 November where he had a formal meeting with Pres Moi. Apparently the question of air links between the two countries was high on the agenda. In October, **Kenya Airways and South African Airways** announced that they had agreed to begin flights between Nairobi and Johannesburg in December. Deputy president of the ANC, Nelson Mandela, subsequently criticized the move and Pres Moi ordered the suspension of the plans. However, after Botha's visit, SAA announced the flights were going ahead (SWB 16/10; AA 9/11; C 21/11, 30/11; B 30/11; ARB 30/11).

(Deteriorating relations — see Uganda.)

Madagascar

On 6 and 7 November the National Assembly revised the **electoral code**. The reform, which should theoretically enable all new parties to put forward candidates in the elections, was still subordinate to the regulations governing the organization of by-elections to take place on 3 February 1991. The ruling party tried to limit the possibility of all the political groups legally constituted to date putting foward candidates. To this end, one article stipulated that the printing costs of voting slips would be at each party's expense, and would not be refunded unless it won at least 10 per cent of votes. The opposition platform then had to decide if it would present joint candidates at the by-election, and whether or not it could finance them (ION 10/11; ARB 30/11).

Mauritius

On 6 November the Mauritian parliamentary session opened, in an atmosphere strewn with political quarrels over the speaker in the Assembly, Ajay Daby, whose dismissal the new MSM-MMM government majority had called for, while the opposition formed by the Labour Party and the PMSD boycotted the session. The conflict was triggered by the speaker's refusal to take a position on the draft bill put foward by the MSM-MMM coalition aimed at converting the status of Mauritius into a republic. The conflict turned into a **constitutional mini-crisis**, with the speaker resisting the government's attempts to oust him by refusing to allow the prime minister's motion to be debated in the House. Matters were resolved when a draft bill to amend the constitution in order to facilitate the dismissal of the parliamentary speaker was passed on 27 November. An MSM member of parliament, Mr Seetaram, was appointed to replace Daby (ION 10/11, 17/11, 24/11, 1/12, 8/12; AA 23/11).

Rwanda

On 1 October 1990 a group of heavily-armed rebels of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), entered Rwanda from Uganda and advanced along the Kagitumba valley towards Gabiro. The rebel force was composed chiefly of **Tutsi refugees**, or the descendants of refugees who had fled Rwanda since the Hutu majority seized power there in 1959. Many of them were recent deserters from Ugandan President Museveni's NRA, and they were led by Major-General Fred Rwigyema, sometime deputy commander of the NRA and, until November 1989, Uganda's deputy minister of defence and still a member both of the National Army Council and the National Resistance Council.

Estimates of the size of the **invading force** ranged from 500 to 10 000, though the RPF itself eventually claimed to have 7 000 men under arms. The Rwandan armed forces, numbering less than 6 000 in all, recoiled under the initial shock and the rebels penetrated to within 60 km of the capital, Kigali.

President Habyarimana was in New York at the time of the invasion, and hurried home, pausing in Brussels to request assistance. The **Belgian government** sent arms and munitions and a detachment of troops, insisting that the latter were to protect the lives of Belgian nationals in Kigali. **France**, too, despatched a small force to cover the evacuation of its citizens, should this prove necessary. In response to Habyarimana's appeal, Zaire sent a contingent of soldiers to participate directly in operations.

Uganda's initial reaction was to disclaim official knowledge or complicity in the invasion, which it condemned as a violation of Uganda's hospitality. Kampala added, however, that the Rwandan government had long been warned about the dangers of consigning so many thousands of its people to permanent exile.

By the end of the first week a flurry of high-level diplomatic activity had begun, involving the presidents of Rwanda, Zaire, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. On 15 October the Belgian prime minister led a ministerial delegation to East Africa to try to organize a ceasefire. At that stage Habyarimana was willing to accede to requests for international commissions on corruption and human rights, and would talk to the rebels in exchange for a ceasefire. The RPF refused to negotiate unless Habyarimana resigned.

Although it was not known at the time, **Rwigyema** had been killed on the second day of the invasion and the RPF followed at first orthodox military tactics and then guerrilla methods, suffering a series of costly defeats by the end of the fourth week. By 24 October the rebels were ready to talk, but a ceasefire lasted only three hours, as the government accused them of breaching the agreement. By the end of the month, with his troops on the offensive, Habyarimana had hardened his position, demanding that the RPF withdraw from Rwanda prior to negotiations.

Perhaps sensitive to charges of human rights violations, or simply seeking to defuse other domestic opposition, in mid-November Habyarimana announced the acceleration of the programme of domestic **political reform**. The National Consultation Commission, which was gauging public opinion about multiparty politics, would speed up its work so that a constitutional referendum could be held on 15 November 1991. A little later it was announced that new identity cards would be issued, ommitting any reference to the ethnic group of the bearer.

The RPF dismissed Habyarimana's talk of democratization as deceit and continued to mount operations from the relative safety of **Kagera park** in the north-east. Most observers agreed that the mere pressure of so many refugees on the societies of neighbouring states had been almost bound to result in violence of this kind sooner or later. If peace was to be restored some broader solution would have to be found to this problem (KT 6/10, 11/10, 24/10, 6/11; SWB 15/10, 17/10, 20/10, 23/10, 25/10, 27/10, 5/11, 15/11, 26/11; WR 19/10; AC 22/10, 23/11; AN 22/10; TS 23/10; WA 29/10; TWR 31/10; ARB 31/10, 30/11; AE 11/90; AD 11/90; MSE 11/90; AED 5/11; JA 14/11).

Seychelles

Former minister of foreign affairs, Maxime Ferrari, who had stepped up opposition to Pres René's regime in the preceding months, visited the US from 25 September to 3 October. The purpose of his visit was to gather support for his drive for a democratic state. His son, Jean-François Ferrari, was arrested three times and interrogated by the police on 3 and 5 November after having publicly circulated two documents advocating **multiparty** politics and democracy. He was also received by Pres René, who reiterated his position regarding democratic change in the islands, emphasizing that he had no intention of introducing a multiparty political system as he did not judge it to be suitable (ION 20/10, 10/11, 24/11).

Somalia

On 7 October the government announced its intention of adopting a more liberal constitution and that a nationwide referendum to approve the constitution and **multiparty elections** would be held in the next 12 months "if conditions permit". The cabinet decided to introduce the new constitution temporarily and ahead of schedule because of the economic crisis. Pres Barré also stepped down as secretary-general of the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party, which he had formed and led for more than 14 years. The reason for this move was that under the new constitution, the president may hold no other office. He had, however, been replaced by a son-in-law, Ahmed Suleiman Abdullah. (SWB 9/10, 12/10, 13/10, 30/10; AC 15/10; ION 20/10; ARB 31/10; AE 11/90; NA 11/90).

A 33 per cent increase in petrol prices and a 46 per cent rise in diesel prices led to **demonstrations** which rocked Mogadishu on 22 October. It degenerated into a series of violent clashes with police and the army, two demonstrators being killed and dozens wounded (ION 27/10; AED 29/10).

Pres Mengistu of Ethiopia recently met representatives of the three opposition rebel groups to offer them military aid, fuel, medicine and food in an effort to strengthen their resolve to oust Barré from power. When confronted by the Somali government on 12 November, the Ethiopians denied aiding the rebels and referred to Ethiopia's commitment to applying the agreement with Somalia in April 1988 (SWB 23/10; ION 17/11; ARB 30/11).

(*Sea border closed — see Djibouti.*)

Tanzania

A meeting of the **South Commission** was held in Arusha on 6 October, attended by the presidents of Tanzania, Angola, Botswana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia. Julius Nyerere, the chairman, presented the Commission's final report to what he said was the Commission's 10th and final meeting, because it had reached the end of its three-year mandate (SWB 9/10, 10/10, 11/10).

On 29 October Pres Mwinyi was **re-elected** for a second five-year term, taking 95,5 per cent of the vote in a single candidate poll. He was sworn in on 8 November and immediately pledged further reforms to liberalize the economy and crack down on corruption. In the parliamentary elections on 28 October, 33 MPs lost their seats. The cabinet was reshuffled on 9 November and John Malecela, a former high commissioner to the UK, replaced Joseph Warioba as prime minister. Warioba was appointed local government minister. Warioba's replacement came as no surprise. Hailing from the same region as Julius Nyerere, he had been criticized for his handling of government affairs during some parliamentary sessions which had been quite turbulent. He was also strongly attacked for his attitude during the university crisis. A new foreign minister was also appointed, Hassan Diria. Pres Mwinyi announced the formation of a commission to examine recommendations on which system — single or multiparty — should be followed by Tanzania (AC 15/10; SWB 23/10, 7/11, 9/11, 10/11, 12/11; MSE 24/10; S 26/10; ION 27/10, 3/11; C 29/10; LT 1/11; KT 3/11; DN 9/11; AED 19/11; ARB 30/11).

The new Zanzibar president, Dr Salmin Amour, was sworn in on 25 October after winning the Zanzibar elections on 21 October. He was the sole candidate. (KT 24/10; SWB 25/10, 27/10, 1/11; S 26/10; DN 26/10; ARB 31/10; ION 3/11).

According to the minister for industries and trade, Cleopa Msuya, the country's trade deficit was about to rise by US$43 mn in 1990/91. He said exports for 1990/91 would rise to US$650 mn, while imports would rise to US$1 420 mn, leading to a deficit of US$770 mn. An economist at the University of Dar es Salaam, Samuel Wangwe, said one of the causes of the economic crisis was the stagnation of the export sector, which is dominated by traditional exports like coffee, cotton, tea and sisal, volumes of which had stagnated or declined in addition to the deterioration in the terms of trade (AED 29/10; ARB 15/11).

(*Meeting with Sibomana — see Burundi.*)

Uganda

Pres Museveni held talks with Prime Minister Thatcher in **London** at the end of September, after which he travelled to **Denmark** for talks with Prime Minister Paul Schlueter. Schlueter said Uganda was on the top priority list of the Danish development co-operation programme. Ugandan Prime Minister Kisekka then paid a visit to China, where he was received by Prime Minister Li Peng. Libyan leader, Col Gaddafi, visited Uganda from 23 to 25 October (SWB 1/10, 11/10, 20/10, 26/10, 29/10; S 24/10).

Despite hopes that relations between Kenya and Uganda had finally improved after the restoring of diplomatic relations on 17 August, Pres Moi of **Kenya** on 20 October announced the expulsion of all refugees and aliens engaged in criminal activities or politics. More than 1 200 of them, mostly Ugandans, were repatriated to Uganda. In retaliation, Ugandan police swooped on Kenyans living in Kampala and other major towns and deported an unspecified number. These were more examples of the already uneasy relations between the two countries, a situation which began back in 1976 when Pres Amin laid claim to a large area of Western Kenya (KT 29/10; SWB 31/10, 5/11; AC 12/11).

As chairman of the OAU, Pres Museveni addressed the PTA summit in Swaziland on 24 November, commenting on the refugee situation, debt and the Gulf crises (SWB 26/11).

Coffee exports in the year to 30 September fell nearly 25 per cent by volume and 50 per cent by value (from US$301 mn in 1989 to US$150 mn). Finance minister, Crispus Kiyonga, blamed falling world coffee prices for much of the drastic fall in coffee earnings. Coffee exports provide about 95 per cent of Uganda's foreign exchange earnings. Hoping to achieve better prices on the world market, at the beginning of October the government announced stricter quality controls for coffee (A 10/90; AED 29/10; MSE 11/90; ARB 15/11).

(*Tutsi invasion from Uganda — see Rwanda.*)

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Angola

The fifth round of **peace talks** between the Angolan government and Unita ended on 20 November in Estoril, Portugal, without a cease-fire agreement. During the US- and USSR-observed talks, each side accused the other of lacking the will to work towards a cease-fire. The deadlock over Unita's demand for recognition and differences on how to merge the two armies caused the break in negotiations. Unita said it would uphold a cease-fire of its own until the next talks were held in January 1991 (C 13/10, 19/11, 20/11; SWB 13/10, 11/11, 19/11, 23/11, 26/11; E 24/11; AED 26/11; ARB 30/11).

In the meantime, the **US Congress** voted to make further aid available to Unita, set at US$60 mn, conditional on both sides holding to the talks, and to the Soviet Union halting its military aid to the MPLA. US$30 mn military aid was released immediately. The vote was welcomed by the Angolan government which, in turn, formally decided on 25 October to adopt multipartyism, but only foresaw elections three years after a ceasefire. Unita welcomed the decision as a step foward but questioned the need to wait three years for elections (SS 13/10; BD 24/10, 29/11; TWR 24/10; SWB 27/10; ARB 31/10; AN 12/11; AED 19/11).

The Angolan government tried to replace the old currency with a new one. Called "**new kwanza**", it caused confusion, long queues and panic buying since its introduction on 22 September. Plans to devalue the kwanza by 50 per cent, from 29,92 to the dollar (where it had been pegged since independence), to 60 new kwanza to the dollar were delayed while officials "assess the impact of the currency change and establish how much currency there was in circulation". The step was taken to reduce the amounts of currency simply being hoarded, itself a manifestation of the failure of a centrally controlled economy and the government's recourse to the printing press to recover deficits. People were required to hand in their old kwanza notes at the banks in exchange for the new ones, where they received only 1/20th of their money, receipts being issued for the balance (AED 1/10, 29/10; AA 12/10, 26/10; C 22/10; MSE 24/10; ARB 15/11).

(Visit by Pereira — see Cape Verde; Visit by Savimbi — see Nigeria; Military buildup on border — see Zaire; Abductions — see Namibia.)

Botswana

On the weekend of 6 October, ten South Africans were detained by Botswana police after the uncovering of what the police called a Black Conciousness Movement of **Azania** training camp in Lobatse and the discovery of two bodies near the town (B 11/10; S 11/10; SWB 15/10).

Botswana and Namibia agreed in principle to build two new **highways** which would provide a link between the landlocked hinterland countries and Walvis Bay. The **Trans-Caprivi** Highway would be tarred eastward to Katima Mulilo, south to enter Botswana at Ngoma and then east again to link up with the tarred road leading to Zambia. The **Trans-Kalahari** would run from Jwaneng, in southern Botswana, to Buiterpos in Namibia, which is already linked to Windhoek. The extention of road links would enable both Botswana and Zimbabwe to export beef, agricultural products and minerals through Namibia as well as setting up a joint marketing venture for selling beef to Europe (S 2/10; AED 15/10).

Lesotho

On 6 November King Moshoeshoe was **dethroned** and replaced by his son, only a few days after the press in Lesotho reported that the king was about to return to the country from six months in exile. The rumours started when Gen Lekhanya visited King Moshoeshoe in London in October (on the way back from a visit to the USA) to encourage him to accept the condition of abstaining from politics and to return to Lesotho. The general had been accusing the king all along of violating his oath of office and breaking Lesotho's laws. The king refused, saying he would return on condition that the present government was dissolved.

The new 27-year-old king, formerly known as prince Mohato, was sworn in as **King Letsie III** on 12 November, taking an oath not to involve the monarchy in any way in politics. Gen Lekhanya promised multiparty politics soon, to follow the constituent assembly he set up the previous July. He also stressed his military government's initiatives to return the country to civilian rule in 1992 (C 13/10, 7/11, 9/11, 13/11; SWB 16/10, 1/11, 8/11, 10/11, 14/11; LT 1/11, 8/11, 15/11; B 7/11, 13/11; S 7/11, 8/11, 13/11, 14/11, 30/11; BD 7/11, 8/11, 13/11; TS 13/11; E 17/11; ARB 30/11; NA 12/90).

Malawi

On 10 October the **Africa Watch** group released a report on Malawi, entitled "Where Silence Rules: The Suppression of Dissent in Malawi". Africa Watch, an international group established in 1988 to monitor and promote respect for **human rights** in Africa, took a strongly worded, hard line against the government's human rights record, amply supported by a lengthy string of cases of detention without trial, torture, starvation in prison and murder. It described how in March 1990 police shot dead more than twenty people in Lilongwe and because of the government's tight control of the press the event was never reported. It further presented new evidence that the Banda government resorted to "political murders" of officials who had suggested reform. Africa Watch appealed to Western governments to exert pressure on Banda's government to end the brutalities. It also said political power in Malawi, once held solely by life-president Kamuzu Banda, was in practice shared with his "official hostess", Cecilia Tamanda Kadzamira, and her uncle, John Tembo. Malawian officials reacted strongly against the report, denying the allegations of human rights abuses (BD 11/10; S 12/10; AED 15/10; AC 22/10; C 30/10; WM 2/11).

Mozambique

On 2 November the Mozambican parliament approved a new constitution to turn the country into a **multiparty democracy** when it came into effect on 30 November. The 200-article constitution commits the state to political pluralism and a market economy, including private property rights, and guarantees press freedom and an independent judiciary. All references to socialism had been deleted, and the name of the country changed from the People's Republic of Mozambique to the Republic of Mozambique. During parliamentary sessions to debate the new constitution, the issue of nationality was heatedly debated, taking on a racist tone with clauses restricting nationality to those with direct ancestors born in Mozambique, to prevent whites and Indians from recovering property and goods confiscated from them after independence. Renamo rejected the new constitution, saying the people should have been consulted before it was drawn up. The very first new party in the process to be legalized, *Uniao Naçional Moçambicana* (Unamo), announced in Maputo that it intended to back Pres Chissano in the presidential elections in 1991. Unamo, an off-shoot of Renamo, had been enjoying good relations with the president and some Renamo military commanders joined Unamo rather than surrender directly to the government army (MSE 10/90; C 12/10, 22/10, 3/11; B 12/10, 2/11; S 23/10, 5/11; AA 26/10; BD 26/10, 2/11, 5/11; InfA 27/10; AED 29/10, 12/11; SWB 31/10, 5/11; SN 3/11; ARB 30/11).

Further **negotiations** between the government and Renamo took place in Rome from 10 November, lasted three weeks and ended in the announcement of a partial ceasefire on 1 December. The ceasefire was initially limited to the two vital transport routes, the Beira and Maputo corridors. The 6 000 Zimbabwean troops, one of the main stumbling blocks in the previous talks, would be limited to 1,8 miles on either side of the railway lines. Eight countries, including the US and USSR, would monitor the agreement. Other problems remained, such as the new constitution. Renamo opposed a multiparty system, saying a coalition between itself and Frelimo was the answer (C 27/10, 13/11, 20/11; ION 27/10, 3/11; InfA 27/10; WA 29/10; B 12/11; TS 12/11; SWB 12/11, 19/11, 27/11; WM 16/11; E 24/11; S 29/11, 30/11; ARB 30/11).

South Africa granted a US$20 mn loan for work on the Cahora Bassa hydroelectric project and would also deliver rations to the value of US$350 000 for the regular army employed in guarding the site. On 1 November the South African government also granted a loan worth R2,36 mn for the management of the Matola coal terminal and the rehabilitation of Maputo port (AEM 11/10; ARB 16/11).

(Visit by Djohar — see Comoros.)

Namibia

On 8 October 15 men reportedly wearing Angolan army uniforms abducted 18 people from northern Namibia into Angola. One of the captives escaped back to Namibia and reported the incident. According to the escapee, Daniel David, the Fapla soldiers said they had an agreement with Pres Nujoma according to which Namibians should be prepared to fight for Fapla. Namibian police began an investigation (Rep 10/10; SWB 12/10).

On 23 October the government named a former Swapo commander accused of torturing suspected spies and dissidents as head of the army. Solomon Dumeni Hawala was referred to as the "**Butcher of Lubango**", a town in southern Angola where Swapo had one of its camps. In reaction to the appointment the DTA said it could cost Namibia dearly in foreign investment and aid. Other groups, including the National Society for Human Rights (NSHR) and the Council of Churches in Namibia, also condemned the appointment (AC 12/10; C 24/10, 25/10, 27/10; S 25/10, 26/10, 29/10; SWB 27/10, 29/10; MSE 11/90; WM 1/11).

On 9 November the Namibian parliament approved a motion to request the International Committee of the Red Cross to help find missing Namibians. The move was seen as an attempt to divert attention from the **detainee issue**, which opposition parties and human rights organizations refused to let go. The Red Cross was expected to reply that it could not investigate past deaths and also would be unable to look into the detainee question as it was unable to secure access to prisons in Angola or Zambia, but it would continue to search for missing people at the request of families (SS 11/11; Rep 13/11, 14/11; ARB 30/11).

The governor of the Central Bank of Namibia, Mr Wouter Benard, resigned on 22 November, saying he disagreed with the finance ministry over the bank's level of autonomy. Six days later he withdrew his resignation after the cabinet refused to accept it. Benard was appointed to the post in March 1990 and is paid by the IMF (S 23/11; BD 26/11, 29/11).

(*New highways — see Botswana.*)

South Africa

On 8 October ANC and government delegations met to discuss continuing **violence** which had particularly affected Transvaal in the preceding weeks. After the meeting a joint communiqué reported that "note was taken of the different current perceptions concerning the causes and handling of the violence". On 11 October the ANC, however, released its own version of discussions at the meeting, saying that tensions remained. Progress was made on the matter of indemnity, Pres de Klerk announcing that the granting of indemnity would be discretionary and would only apply to political offences committed before noon on 8 October. This was expected to facilitate the readmission of up to 20 000 exiled members of the ANC and other groups.

On 18 October De Klerk announced the lifting of the **state of emergency** in Natal, declaring that conditions had "sufficiently stabilized". His statement was overshadowed by an upsurge of violent protest as thirteen town councils in the Transvaal, Orange Free State and eastern Cape cut off essential services to black townships because of unpaid bills. The timing of the cuts closely corresponded with the formal repeal of the **Separate Amenities Act** on 15 October.

The National Party (NP) started its provincial party congress on 19 October with the unanimous adoption of a proposal to open up the National Party to all races.

Zephania **Mothopeng**, the leader of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) died of cancer-related pneumonia on 23 October.

On 29 October ANC national executive member **Mac Maharaj**, whose detention in July had strained ANC-government relations, was charged along with eight others with planning to overthrow the government.

ANC Deputy President Mandela undertook a six-country tour of Asia, including India, Indonesia and Japan, one of the primary aims of which was fund-raising. De Klerk also went abroad, holding talks with Prime Minister Thatcher in London on 14 October, and visiting the Netherlands on 23 and 24 October. Brief stop-over talks with King Hassan of Morocco and Senegalese Pres Diouf were also included.

On 1 November **Odile Harrington**, a South African convicted and imprisoned as a spy in Zimbabwe in 1987, was released and returned to South Africa, apparently at the request of the ANC. The release appeared to confirm speculation that South African agents imprisoned in neighbouring countries were to be involved in the amnesty and repatriation process being negotiated by the ANC and the South African government.

In a whites-only by-election in Randburg on 7 November, the NP won the seat held previously by the DP's Wynand Malan who had retired from politics. The DP did not contest the by-election.

On the same day, during a national ecumenical conference of over eighty Christian churches and religious organization, the newly elected moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church, Pieter Potgieter, confessed his church's guilt at the role it had played in establishing **apartheid** and said that he now considered the policy to be wrong.

On 13 November Justice Louis Harms published his report into the activities of army and police counterinsurgency units. His commission investigated allegations about the activities of **"death squads"** but found that there was no evidence to support claims that the police operated such squads, and no concrete evidence to implicate the army's now disbanded **Civil Co-operation Bureau** (CCB) in the assasination of a number of anti-apartheid campaigners in mysterious circumstances. The report was, however, critical of the CCB, stating that there were strong suspicions that its operatives had been involved in "more crimes of violence than the evidence shows".

A joint ANC-government statement issued after a meeting between De Klerk and Mandela on 27 November indicated that both sides were committed to **peaceful negotiation**, and confirmed that their dialogue was to continue. (K 10/90, 11/90; AE 11/90; SWB 2/11, 9/11; E 3/11; AC 9/11; TWR 14/11; JA 14/11; AR 12/90).

(*SA representative in Lomé — see Togo; Pik Botha's surprise visit — see Kenya; Cahora Bassa loan — see Mozambique.*)

SA - TBVC States

Transkei — On 22 November a **coup attempt** in Transkei failed. It was poorly organized, thirty men took part and eleven of them, including the leader, a former member of the military council, Col Craig Duli, were killed. Gen Holomisa expressed his suspicion that South Africa was behind the coup attempt. On 23 November South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha reacted strongly to the allegations, saying that as Holomisa had come to power through a coup d'état, he was not sure of the support of his people and therefore continually accused others. A meeting between Holomisa, Presidents Ndamase and De Klerk to clarify relations was held on 3 December (SWB 23/11, 24/11; S 23/11, 24/11, 27/11; BD 23/11, 26/11, 27/11; VW 23/11; C 23/11, 24/11, 27/11; B 23/11, 24/11; ST 25/11; SS 25/11).

Bophuthatswana — Pres Mangope continued his campaign against the ANC by releasing a statement on 12 October that said that elements of the ANC and its affiliates were conspiring to overthrow the government and **assassinate** him. The allegations were denied by the ANC, which demanded the immediate release of its members from prison. On 13 November the organization staged a stayaway to force the reincorporation of the homeland into South Africa, after which more of its members were arrested. On 18 November the ANC and the Bophuthatswana government held talks, announcing afterwards that relations between them had been improved. The next day, however, the ANC branch leader for Mafikeng, Job Mokgoro, was detained and alledgedly assaulted by Bophuthatswana police. By 26 November all 48 ANC members who had been detained since 12 November, were released (C 13/11, 19/11, 20/11; SWB 13/11, 14/11, 28/11; S 14/11, 19/11; ION 17/11; B 19/11, 27/11).

Swaziland

On 14 November clashes between students and police took place after students boycotted classes at the University of Swaziland for three days to protest against the refusal by university authorities to readmit a student accused of attending an illegal meeting of the People's United Democratic Movement, **Pudemo**. The Kwaluseni campus of the university was then closed indefinitely. On 15 November the student, Sebelo Dlamini, together with a lecturer, Ray Russon, fled to the US embassy and requested asylum to avoid being arrested. The two were out on bail, after being acquitted on the charge of high treason earlier the year, but convicted of participating in an illegal meeting. They were ejected from the embassy on 17 November, fled to South Africa and were handed back to the Swazi authorities on 22 November. Meanwhile, on 16 November King Mswati announced the immediate dismissal of justice minister Reginald Dhladhla. No reason for the dismissal was given, but speculation was that it had been the result of a crisis over human rights after Dhladhla was allegedly responsible for sending paramilitary police to eject students from the university a few days earlier (TS 13/11, 16/11, 19/11, 20/11, 23/11, 26/11; C 15/11; SWB 16/11, 17/11; SS 17/11; SN 17/11; AA 23/11).

King Mswati was elected chairman of the **PTA** on 23 November, taking over from Pres Moi of Kenya (SN 24/11).

Zambia

On 2 October Pres Kaunda dismissed as "absolute rubbish" demands by multiparty campaigners for an **interim government** to function until elections in October 1991 and calls for him to step down from power. He said that a constitutional commission would be appointed, comprising the multiparty advocates, churches, labour representatives, United National Independence Party (Unip), government, the judiciary and the Law Association of Zambia. Among his own proposals for a new constitution were: a 150-member parliament; the abolition of nominated MPs; Parliament to elect its own speaker and parliament and president to serve five-year terms, with the first presidential term under the new constitution for seven years. However, on 6 October police prevented the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) from holding a meeting in Lusaka, despite an assurance by the government that opposition groups could hold meetings. On 19 October a bill to legalize political parties other than Unip was published (C 3/10; SS 7/10; SWB 8/10; KT 8/10; AC 8/10; MSE 24/10; NA 11/90).

Pres Kaunda **reshuffled** the cabinet on 1 November, dropping two ministers and promoting an ambassador and five ministers of state to full ministers. Decentralization Minister Michael Sata was fired because "he has been saying very bad things about us. I think he has become intolerable and I cannot hold my patience any longer." Sata is believed to be a sympathizer of the MMD (SWB 3/11; ARB 30/11).

On 7 November a **prayer breakfast** was held in Lusaka. OAU chairman Yoweri Museveni, Presidents Chissano, Masire, Lekhanya, Buyoya and Kaunda, Transkeian leader Holomisa and South African foreign minister Pik Botha attended. Observers described the meeting as a desperate attempt by Kaunda to regain credibility in Africa as a regional peacemaker. Significantly, Pres Mugabe declined the invitation (S 7/11; B 8/11, 27/11; SWB 9/11; SS 10/11; WM 16/11; AC 23/11).

The government had budgeted an expenditure of K50,1 bn for 1991 as compared to 1990's K29,9 bn (10 kwacha = US$0,22), taking into account the sharp rise in oil prices. The government also announced plans to increase the involvement of the private sector in the economy and the removal of restrictions on imports and exports (ARB 15/12; S 19/11; AED 26/11).

(*Cobalt price fix — see Zaire.*)

Zimbabwe

On 30 October some seventy lecturers at the University of Zimbabwe staged a peaceful **demonstration** to protest against legislation that provides for greater **state control** over the university's affairs. In the meantime, students at the Bulawayo Polytechnic had joined their counterparts at the University of Zimbabwe in boycotting classes since 25 October to protest against the legislation. The students' demonstration on 25 October was quelled by riot police and more than 480 students were arrested. The university authorities indefinitely postponed the examinations (C 26/10, 30/10; BD 30/10, 31/10; FG 2/11; SWB 2/11; AC 12/11).

In the beginning of October the government lifted **price controls** on all but ten products and services — the start of a long-promised five year trade liberalization programme. The prices of basic foods such as beef, bread, cooking oil and staple maize meal would still be controlled by government. Under the programme the government also planned to allow more imports, give industry more foreign exchange and let foreign investors repatriate a larger percentage of profits (AED 8/10).

The EC lifted an 18-month **import ban** on the country's beef which was prompted by a sporadic outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the major beef producing areas. Because of the ban, Zimbabwe's beef exports shrank from Z$100 mn to only Z$15,5 mn in 1990, but were forecast to rise to Z$125 mn in 1991 (AED 12/11; DN 13/11).

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*; ANews — *Africa News*; AP — *African Preview*; AR — *Africa Report*; 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*; FG — *Financial Gazette*; FM — *Financial Mail*; F&T — *Finansies & Tegniek*; G — *The Guardian*; H — *The Herald*; I — *The Independent*; IMF S — *IMF Survey*; InfA — *Informafrica*; 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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